

Maya Daniels - First Responder of the Year 2018

Sunstar Paramedics would like to recognize Paramedic Maya Daniels as the 2018 First Responder of the Year. Maya was born in St. Petersburg, Florida. She graduated from Gibbs High School in 2008 from the Pinellas County Center for the Arts program. Growing up in theater she always thought her first true love was acting. It wasn't until after graduating high school that she found her love for medicine.

Prior to starting EMT school her grandmother became ill. Maya states that her grandmother was the strongest person she had ever known. Her grandmother became very vulnerable and fragile. Maya and her mother spent their days at her grandmothers bedside caring for her. During this pivotal moment in her life she felt the most afraid but also the most useful. When she was administering her grandmothers meds and taking her blood sugar, Maya felt as though what she was doing what really mattered. It was during this time that Maya felt her purpose.

Ms. Daniels started her career with Sunstar in November of 2012. She states that, "being a Paramedic gives her purpose, not just because of the interesting medical cases or the glow of the lights; but because we as paramedics come at the most vulnerable and most fragile time in a person's life." It is during that time that we create comfort and compassion, sometimes just by holding a person's hand.

Since Maya's employment with Sunstar she has become a very valuable asset. She advised that she has done her best to make compassion a top priority. As an FTO she teaches compassion and empathy to her trainees so that they may provide not only quality medical care to our community, but kindness as well. It is Maya's goal to continue to serve our community through humility and education. When I think of Maya I see a true dedicated employee who loves what she does daily and lives by our CARE PLUS Values.

Customer accountable – Maya never approaches a scene with an ego. She seamlessly integrates with other EMS professionals, achieving the best possible outcome for the patient. Maya is a true team player.

Attentive to human needs – Maya strives to always do the right thing no matter what the situation.

Respectful- Maya shows great respect to her co-workers, her fellow First Responders, patients, customers and the citizens of Pinellas County. She treats others the way she would like to be treated and she takes care of her patients like she would want her family to be taken care of.

Ethical- Maya states “she always does the right thing for her patients.” She does what is right because it’s right, not because someone is watching her. Her Integrity alone is something to be admired. Maya goes above and beyond with the small things.

Partnership- When I asked Maya about her partnerships throughout our community she stated that she steps in wherever she can assist, at ER’s, facilities, with our first responders and police departments.

Lead by Example – Since Maya started in 2012 she has been a preceptor and Field Training Officer. Maya’s idea of a great day is to do what’s right, make her supervisors day easier and take care of her patients.

Understanding - We are all taught in EMT and paramedic school that when someone calls 911 or needs assistance, in their mind it is a true emergency. Sometimes, the best call, is when you have an opportunity to make someone’s day brighter by just treating them kindly or understanding their need. EMS professionals have a desire to help others in need. Maya sees this as an opportunity to listen, offer help, to hold someone’s hand or to just say “you do matter!”

Safe- As a Preceptor and FTO Maya is very safety conscious in every aspect of her job. She strives to be her best daily and holds others around her to that same standard. Maya has an overall rating of 5 in our driving standards, which is the top score. Using First Pass, Maya’s clinical skills are consistently rated high with an overall ALS rating of 100%.

Maya displays a commitment to excellence on a consist basis. There is not just one great call or great story that makes Maya a great nomination; her everyday commitment to her patients, partners, citizens of Pinellas county and Sunstar Paramedics makes her the ideal nomination. We are very proud to have Maya on our team and as a leader.