

BOOMERANG PRODUCTIONS MEDIA

HIGH SCHOOL 9-1-1

Press & Discussion Guide

Director: Tim Warren Time: 86mins
Producer: Kelli Joan Bennett Year: 2016

Trailer: www.highschool911.com/trailer

Accolades: Selected to participate in the U.S. State Department sponsored and USC School of Cinematic Arts produced diplomatic film envoy program, American Film Showcase. Director Tim Warren toured through Russia in the fall of 2017 sharing the film, leading discussion groups and teaching master classes at educational institutions and community organizations. He is scheduled for a diplomacy trip to Ukraine in early 2018.

Awards: Winner of the Ken Fitzgerald and Ruby Carr Emerald Award—honoring a film reminding viewers that each of us can be a force for good in the world—at the Coronado Island Film Festival. Best Documentary San Diego Int'l Kids Film Festival, Best Documentary San Pedro Int'l Film Festival, Impact Doc Award—Award of Merit

Film Summary: What are teenagers capable of? Experience a heart-stopping, inspirational year with Darien EMS-Post 53 — the only ambulance service for the 20,000 residents of Darien, Connecticut — as it covers a deadly stretch of highway, responds to over 1,500 emergency calls, and is run by high school teenagers.

HIGH SCHOOL 9-1-1 explores this one-of-a-kind organization through the eyes and voices of the high school students running it. The film opens minds, shatters stereotypes, and sheds light on what teenagers are capable of when given the opportunity by the adults in their lives.

Goal: The film strives to inspire and empower teenagers and to motivate the adults in their lives — parents, educators, school administrators, community leaders — to create opportunities for them to become empowered, learn by doing, and make a difference in their communities.



www.HIGHSCHOOL911.com
www.IMDB.com/title/tt2736168/
www.highschool911.TUMBLR.com

www.FACEBOOK.com/HighSchool911
www.TWITTER.com/HighSchool911
www.INSTAGRAM.com/highschool911

BoomerangProductionsMedia.com

IMDb REACTIONS TO THE FILM

Relatable

mindywusoccer 11 January 2018

★ 10/10

Completely opened my eyes

godfreydf 27 December 2017

★ 10/10

High School 911 will take your breath away

rekoch-61149 3 December 2017

★ 10/10

High School 911 opens eyes and hearts.

hoppinjohns-68210 29 November 2017

★ 10/10

Empowering Youth

audleypaul 24 October 2017

★ 10/10

The film was enjoyable and I recommend it.

jordan_tepoel 29 October 2017

★ 9/10

simply an unforgettable movie.

kire1975 4 September 2017

★ 10/10

Epic film

cjc-33272 28 August 2017

★ 10/10

Extraordinary, thought provoking and inspiring

holdtvictoria 22 June 2017

★ 10/10

Exceptional Documentary

Stephanie Weyant 3 June 2017

★ 10/10

Changed my mind about teens.

brpoll 17 April 2017

★ 10/10

Informative and inspirational

Woody 6 April 2017

★ 10/10



WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING?

Sylvia Jaunzarins @jaunzarins ·

Every teenager needs to see this film! What a great accomplishment.

Mark Stolaroff @Stolaroff

This is a GREAT doc!

Eleanor Anderson, MD @eleanorander

Why I went to medical school:

[@ HighSchool911](#)

Wendy L. Macdonald @wendylmacdonald

When we treat teens with respect & believe in them, they're motivated to be the best they can be. #mondaymotivation #ParentingTeens

Lisa @happilymadmama

Wow! What an incredible documentary about an incredible bunch of teens! Please check out the trailer...it's amazing!

Kate @outreach_kate

I had the privilege to see this movie

[@heartlandfilm](#) don't miss [@_HighSchool911](#)

Katy ISD EMT Program @KISDEMT

This makes me proud as a high school EMS educator.

Matt Weatherford @mweatherford21

Wish they would have had that when I was in high school. #HighSchool911

CANSARK9 @CANSARK9 ·

[@OttawaMedvents](#) have you seen [highschool911.com](#)? Inspiring story of what youth can achieve.

CDN TIM KERN

"Why doesn't every community do this?"

babble

SAMANTHA WOOD

"I know the question on everyone's minds is, How can these high schoolers be qualified to provide emergency medical services? The short answer: lots and lots of training."

REVIEWS
FROM PARENTS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

"I immensely enjoyed this documentary through the intimate perspectives of high school students like me, doing what they are passionate about for a community and for a greater cause. What stood out most to me about this film was the reality of impact on not only the students, but also on peers, family members, townsfolk, and more. A valuable reminder of community service and the greater good, the documentary simultaneously emphasizes the power and capabilities of young people."

M.W. – Age 17
Hanover High School
Hanover, NH

"This film not only documents the incredibly unique story of Post 53, but opens eyes to the reality of what High School students truly are capable of. Having worked with numerous health care providers of all ages, it is clear that these Students and EMTs are as professional and efficient, if not more than others out there. Age is simply a number. The organization itself is set up in such a way that it nurtures and empowers these young individuals through accountability and self-leadership. The organization appears to instill that it is a privilege, not a right to be a part of it, and because of that the students rise to the challenges. Coupled with the incredible support of the school, the Police Department, the Fire Department, the parents, supervisors, and others... these EMTs are championed and lead by example. Hats off to all involved, and all who made/continue to make this possible. Post 53 is a light for others to follow."

L.F. – RN, Paramedic, EMT Instructor
Nashoba EMS
Bolton, MA

"I had no idea that this movie would have such an impact on me! I was immediately drawn into the lives of the students and the individual stories as well as enticed by the big picture in every frame of the film. The story was about empowering capable, intelligent, dedicated, young adults who are passionate about what they are doing. In addition to the extensive training and field work these students undergo, they are helping those in need in their town as well as surrounding communities, and in many cases saving lives. The director was able to capture unique moments that many will never witness, filming perspectives and angles which would captivate any audience. It's an inside look into the lives and souls of the people who started, cultivated and continued unparalleled service of an emergency response system, run by teenagers. The compilation of students, patients, adult supervisors and family of Post 53 was seamlessly produced in this engaging, thought provoking film about a town who saw a need for something and legitimized teenagers to effectuate their intent. I hope this movie will inspire other towns to follow Darien's lead with innovative thinking and steadfast, extraordinary citizens."

V.H. – Middle School Teacher
Milford, CT

REVIEWS

FROM PARENTS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

"Last Saturday, I went to a screening of the documentary High School 9-1-1 at the San Pedro Film Festival and was blown away. The film is about an EMS unit in Darien, CT, 100% run and governed by high school teenagers. The unit has been operational for 50 years (I'm not kidding, teenagers run the whole thing) and services the surrounding communities 24/7. The messaging—that teenagers are capable of remarkable things and will rise to the occasion if provided the opportunity—is so contrary to what we believe to be true as parents and as a society. I often think (unfairly) that my 15-year old can't see past her homework and sport, and, sadly, maybe she feels the same. What's incredible about the film is that the participants aren't any more remarkable than our own teenagers; they are regular teenagers who became remarkable because of an opportunity. The first words out of my mouth after the credits rolled were "every kid and parent needs to see this." It's that inspiring."

S.J. – Parent
Co-Founder of Valley Charter School
Los Angeles, CA

"Most documentaries bore me, but this one was a roller coaster of emotions. It didn't always stay on one topic or person, but explored the lives, challenges, and work the people in this film faced. This film shows the potential teens or "young adults" have if they are given the opportunity. People can do amazing things and these young adults help prove this. The amount of time, effort, and skill put into making this film is outstanding. This is truly a must watch documentary that anyone can enjoy!"

W.F. – Age 15
King City High School
King City, MO

"I was lucky enough to recently see this movie at the Darien library through an event our elementary school set up. I was blown away by it. I have lived in Darien for 7 years and I never truly knew what Post 53 was all about. This movie opened my eyes to that and that extraordinary teenagers that are involved in it. I was in tears with some of the stories that inspired these kids to become part of Post 53 and the lives they saved. As a dance studio owner myself I believe in empowering children to make a difference in this world and this movie just reinforced that kids are capable of incredible things."

D.F. – Parent
Tokeneke PTO
Darien, CT

"Great documentary!! With everything that's wrong in the world today, this movie is a refreshing documentary showcasing every day kids doing something extraordinary. If you ever think 'kids' aren't capable of dealing with life and death situations as well or better than adults, this is a must see. Communities around the US should take note."

C.D. – Parent and EMS Volunteer
San Diego, CA



HIGH SCHOOL 9-1-1

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FILM THEMES

UNDERESTIMATING THE CAPABILITIES OF TEENAGERS

Teenagers are capable of extraordinary things when given the opportunity by the adults in their lives. Teens tend to achieve expectations adults establish. Thus, setting the bar too low can be just as detrimental as setting the bar too high in terms of the success of a young person's individual growth.

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH RESPONSIBILITY

Adult Advisors at Darien EMS-Post 53 mentor young members and teach them a multitude of managerial, critical thinking and emergency medical skills and then give them the responsibility to implement what they've learned by running their own EMS organization. By being given the responsibility to practice the skills they've been taught, the teenage members become empowered to succeed.

LEARNING BY DOING

Education has long been focused on book knowledge and creating strong test takers. Darien-EMS Post 53 was founded on the principle "learning by doing," for when knowledge is put into practical use that is when true knowledge is not only obtained but, more importantly, retained.

TEENAGERS EXPERIENCING THE ADULT WORLD

Should a 14, 15, 16, 17 year old child be exposed to intense emergency calls, calls that may result in death? There are, and will always be, strong opinions as to whether it is detrimental to a teenager's mental and emotional health now and in the future to experience these situations. In the end, it is up to individual parents to determine whether they want their child to see life and death up close. For the nearly 1000 Post 53 alumni who have gone through the program over the last 50 years, as well as the countless adults who have supported the organization, the benefits of experiencing these situations far outweigh the negatives. Above and beyond the extensive training the teens go through, and the psychological safeguards put in place, what the members of Darien EMS-Post 53 gain from these experiences is a perspective on life and its fragility as well as a set of coping skills that serve them well as they face their own life challenges as an adult.

FILM QUOTES

"When you're thinking of a teen you're not thinking of someone who's about to go save someone's life."

—Christopher Calahan, 17, Senior

"Being a member of Post 53, the biggest thing I learned was responsibility, and it wasn't just being responsible for your homework and your actions like you learn in high school, it is being responsible for everyone."

—Kate Kevorkian, 17, Senior

"These are great skills that they are developing so if they miss a class here or there, 'who cares?' It is a real life experience and it is a very valuable experience."

—Richard DiPasquale, Teacher, Darien High School

"It was a real reality check for me when I joined this organization. I didn't realize what life is and how bad stuff happens to people in this world."

—Martin Hannon, 16, Junior

"If a teenager is emotionally well put together to begin with they can handle {these situations} and they will actually grow emotionally as a result of it."

—Maud Purcell, Psychotherapist, MSW, LCSW, CEAP



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How would you describe the feeling you were left with once the film had ended?
2. What are your reactions to the film, the organization Darien EMS —Post 53, and the teenagers who run it?
3. As an adult, did the film change the way you look at the capabilities of teenagers? Did the teenagers in the film break any stereotypes you believe about young people?
4. As a teenager, how did the film make you feel? Did it open your mind about what you yourself are capable of?
5. Teenagers are, in many ways, at the mercy of their parent's, teacher's, adult's decisions especially in regards to how/what/when they learn and the responsibility they are allowed to have. In which ways have you been positively or negatively impacted by the type of education you have received and the level of trust and responsibility you have been given?
6. What personal experience of "learning by doing" and/or responsibility have you had? How did it impact you?
7. Many current education systems seem focused on grades and test taking. How do you think applying the concepts from the film to education would help or hurt young people's learning ability and future?
8. Is there a specific need, issue, problem in your community that teenagers could be empowered and supported by adults to take action to address?
9. What will you take away from the film? Will you apply it to your life?

NOTES:

[illegible]

FILM FACTS and MORE INFO

- ◆ Darien EMS-Post 53 is in its 50th year of operation.
- ◆ Post 53 was the first Boy Scout Explorer Post in the country to accept female members.
- ◆ Director Tim Warren was a member of Darien EMS-Post 53 serving as VP of Operations his senior year of high school. The four years in the organization forever changed his life in a positive way.
- ◆ Of the nearly 1000 teenagers who have completed four years of membership in Post 53 over the last 50 years, approximately half have gone on to medical school or related medical fields while the rest have become successful in business and other fields including the entertainment industry.
- ◆ “If a teenager is given the opportunity to do something, they’ll do it.” —Bud Doble, Founder of Darien EMS-Post 53
- ◆ The filmmakers collected over 1200 hours of footage for the film over the course of a year. It took 9 years to complete. #NeverQuit
- ◆ “Learning by doing” is often referred to as a theory of education by American philosopher John Dewey. He theorized that learning should be relevant and practical, not just passive and theoretical. He believed that each child was active, inquisitive and wanted to explore.
- ◆ “To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness.” —John Dewey

LEARN more about the film www.HighSchool911.com

LEARN more about Darien EMS Post 53 www.post53.info

**HOW TO BRING
HIGH SCHOOL 9-1-1
TO YOUR SCHOOL**



- 1) CONTACT YOUR HEAD OF SCHOOL, PRINCIPAL, PTA OR PARENT EDUCATION COMMITTEE
- 2) DISCUSS AREAS WHERE HIGH SCHOOL 9-1-1 WOULD BEST SCREEN FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS AT YOUR SCHOOL:
 - A. As a compliment to current curriculum, classes or electives—science, service, religion, leadership
 - B. As part of the parent education program
 - C. As a stand-alone assembly
- 3) DISCUSS THE EDUCATIONAL THEMES OF HIGH SCHOOL 9-1-1 AND HOW THE FILM CONNECTS WITH THE GOALS AND MISSION OF YOUR SCHOOL.
 - A. Underestimating The Capabilities Of Teenagers
 - B. Empowering Young People Through Responsibility
 - C. Learning By Doing
 - D. Mentorship
 - E. Teenagers Experiencing the Adult World
- 4) CONTACT BOOMERANG PRODUCTIONS FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT A SCREENING AND FILMMAKER TALK.

Tim Warren tim@boomerangproductionsmedia.com or Kelli Joan Bennett kelli@boomerangproductionsmedia.com

FILMMAKERS



The film's director, **TIM WARREN**, was a member of Darien EMS—Post 53 during his high school years. Tim has spent the last two decades as an Executive Producer/Show Runner, overseeing 100's of people at a time, on shows like *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* and *Bar Rescue* as well as a multi-camera director having twice been nominated by The Director's Guild of America for work on SPIKE's *Ink Master* and *Pros vs. Joes*.

Warren is the owner and CEO of Boomerang Productions Media, Inc. Launched in 1996, BPM incubates, develops and produces a wide range of television, film, documentary and alternative media programming for all US and international audiences. The company's name derives from its founding principle of creating projects with both positive intentions and positive actions in order to achieve positive results.

Although he didn't go into the medical field, the life skills Tim learned in Post 53—making quick decisions under extreme stress, working with others and just plain not giving up—have been invaluable to him including the making of *High School 9-1-1* which took nearly a decade to complete.

FILMMAKERS



The film's producer, **KELLI JOAN BENNETT**, is an American actress, producer, writer, entrepreneur and advocate of creating from what you have. She produced and starred in the film, *Collusions*, a cerebral crime mystery with Tom Everett Scott and Tembi Locke. She was founding partner of Scriptapalooza, Inc. a company that has launched and continues to launch countless writers' careers. Her companies have been featured in Entrepreneur Business Start-Ups, Vanity Fair, Entertainment Weekly, and Variety. She graduated with a degree in Theatre Arts from California State University, Fullerton. Under her new banner, Think Outside The Box Inside The Box Media, she has three feature films in development. Up next she will produce the indie feature film *Death Over 3 Bottles of Wine*, which she wrote and will star in. *High School 9-1-1* is her first documentary as producer and editor.

SCREENING EVENTS



TIM WARREN is available for speaking engagements to lead discussion groups as well as to deliver Keynote Addresses and to teach Master Classes. Subjects include:

- **“Emergency Medicine Applies to Everything Including Reality Television”** - 45 Minute Keynote Speech - Warren uses photos and videos from his television and film career and speaks about how the skills he learned as a member of Darien EMS-Post 53 have applied to his successful career as a top-level Executive Producer/Show Runner and Multi-Camera Director.



- **“Story Structure”** - A Three Hour Master Class - The class begins with screening *High School 9-1-1* then Warren walks students through his creative process by breaking down, act by act, scene by scene, his documentary and how he and his team were able to edit 1200 hours of footage to create an 86-minute film.



- **“Single and Multi-Camera Directing”** - One to Two Hour Master Class - Warren uses video examples from his television and film work to clearly explain how to properly cover a scene based on the number of cameras a director has at his or her disposal.

- **“Film Diplomacy”** - 45 Minute Keynote Speech - Warren discusses how film can be used to breakdown cultural barriers and lead to greater understanding by highlighting his diplomatic work in Russia and Ukraine with the American Film Showcase - The U.S. State Department-sponsored and USC School of Cinematic Arts-produced film envoy program.

CAST



**CHRIS (17) — Senior, EMT,
Vice-President of Operations**

In the wake of his father's recent death from brain cancer, Chris finds purpose and meaning in the EMT work he does. On a journey to heal from the devastating loss, he grounds himself in Post 53 to live his family's motto, "Live Like You Were Dying," (the title of a song by Tim McGraw) and to discover his true calling in life.



**CECILLIA (13) — Freshman
Candidate (to become a member of
Post 53)**

For Cecillia and her Korean emigrant parents becoming a member of Post 53 would be an American dream come true. Ever since she saw the Post 53 sticker on a car, she has wanted to become a member of the organization. She wants to become a doctor when she grows up and Post is the perfect starting point. But will she be voted in?

CAST



**MARTIN (16) — Junior, EMT,
Ambulance Driver in training**

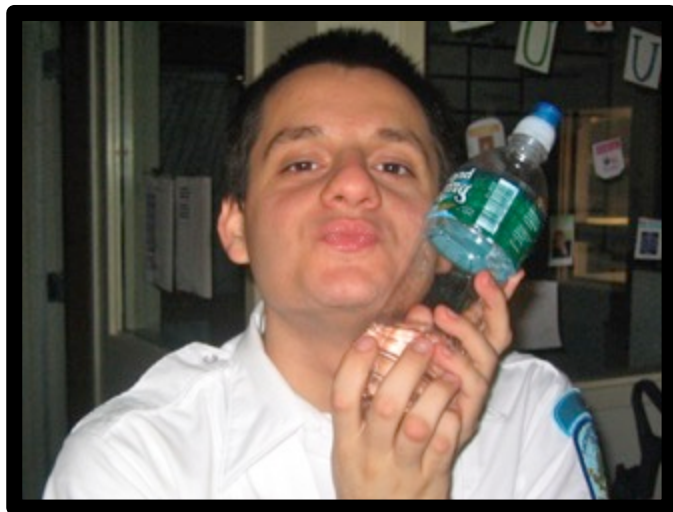
Facing death on the ambulance has given Martin a better understanding of the fragility of life than most kids his age. He also knows what it is like to be the middle child. Living in the shadow of his older brother, a past Post 53 president, Martin is determined to be elected to the highest office in the organization on his own terms. But will he become president?



**INES (15) — Sophomore,
EMT in training**

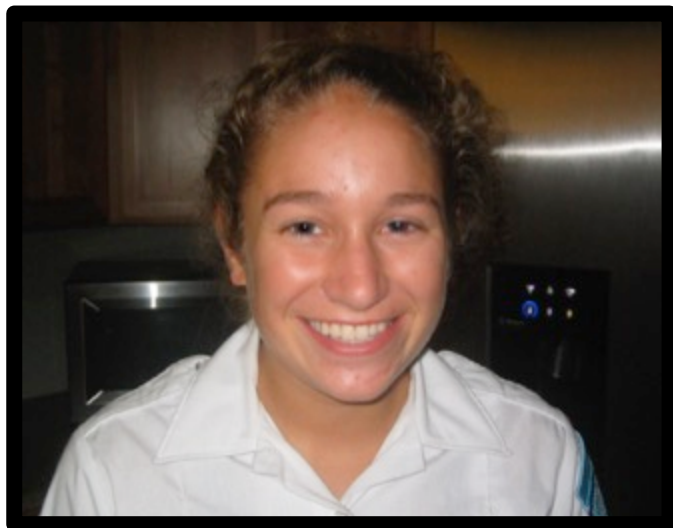
Incredibly close with her Spanish/Mexican family, a sophomore in Post, Ines can't wait to become an Emergency Medical Technician. But the training is intense and rigorous. She works harder than she imagined preparing for the state of Connecticut's Emergency Medical Technician certification to earn the coveted role of EMT on the ambulance. But will she pass the test?

CAST



ANTHONY (17) — Senior, EMT, Secretary

The fun loving class clown, Anthony—an Albanian American from a big catholic family which, “makes life a little more hectic,” he says—likes to have a good time, but when an emergency call comes in, he flips the switch and transforms before your eyes.



KATE (17) — Senior, EMT, Treasurer

Perky, hyper *and* a cheerleader, Kate is not a book you should judge by its cover! She shatters the stereotype of a ditzy teenager and wins hearts with her smarts, skills and compassion all while perfectly juggling school, cheerleading, family and her Post 53 duties. All these commitments add up to an 80-hour work week but Kate wouldn't have it any other way, thriving on the structure and the responsibility.

CAST



SARAH (16) — Senior, EMT, President

Diplomatic Sarah is the calm, fearless leader of the organization. At 16, she was elected president of Post 53 by the membership. With that position comes huge responsibility to lead her peers and maintain the reputation of the teen-run ambulance corps, 24/7/365.



**MIKE (17) — Senior, EMT,
Vice-President of Programming**

The only child of divorced parents, Mike divides his time between homes and finds his sense of cohesive family from the other members of the organization. “All the time we spend dedicating down at Post, I consider them my family.”

CAST



**MEREDITH (17) — Senior, EMT,
Vice-President of Training**

The daughter of an adult advisor at Post 53 who has been there for the past 27 years, Meredith grew up around the organization. She eats, breathes and lives for it and serving her community. “You get changed by these calls. Even if it’s a broken wrist, you’re changed for the better because you learn to be more compassionate.”



Allison (17) — Senior, EMT

While not an elected officer of the organization, Allison is no less passionate about the organization and no less proficient in her skills. Faced with one of the most difficult calls an EMT can experience, Allison puts her training to the ultimate test to save a patient in cardiac arrest who happens to have the same name and age as her father.

SPECIAL APPEARANCE



Chris, his family and Sarah backstage with Tim McGraw.

Actor and Singer **TIM MCGRAW** appearing in the film was an auspicious experience of synchronicity and destiny for the filmmakers, a key cast member and his family, and their personal family motto of living life to the fullest.

SPECIAL APPEARANCE



Director Tim Warren with Tom McDonald at the NY1 offices.

Veteran New York City Sports Anchor **TOM MCDONALD** was cared for by Post 53 at his greatest time of need. He says, *“If you empower young people and challenge them and create an environment that stimulates them, that’s a win win situation. And look at me, I’m sitting here talking because of that. I am alive because of the young people at Post 53, period.”*

CAST TODAY
(Spoiler Alert)



Chris Calahan

Chris graduated from Bates College with a degree in neuroscience.



Chris Calahan

He attends Harvard Medical School and plans to go into pediatrics.



Martin Hannon

Martin graduated from Villanova University with degrees in history and economics.



Martin Hannon

Martin has been accepted into medical school and plans to serve as a physician in the armed forces.

CAST TODAY
(Spoiler Alert)



Ines graduated from Colby College with a degree in neuroscience.



She is a Clinical Research Coordinator at Mass General Hospital and is applying to medical school.



Cecilia graduated from Cornell University with a degree in human development.



She is currently attending the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University.

CAST TODAY
(Spoiler Alert)



Sarah Streeker

Sarah graduated from Dartmouth College with a degree in neuroscience.



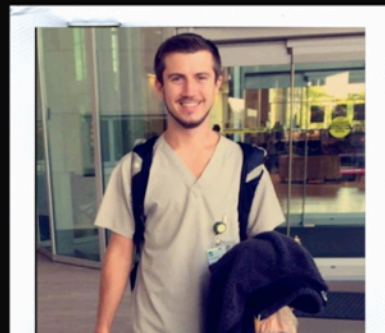
Sarah Streeker

She is now in medical school at Emory University.



Mike Martindale

Mike graduated from Villanova University with a degree in nursing.



Mike Martindale

He is a travel nurse working on cardiac step down intensive care units.

CAST TODAY
(Spoiler Alert)



Anthony Duska

Anthony graduated from the University of Connecticut with a degree in nursing and public health.



Anthony Duska

He is a Charge Nurse at Stamford Hospital pursuing his Advance Practice Nursing degree.



MEREDITH Koch

Meredith graduated from Boston College with a degree in biology and got her masters in mechanical engineering at the University of Vermont.



MEREDITH Koch

She is a Clinical Specialist for Medtronic's Cardiac Rhythm and Heart Failure Division in Boston.

CAST TODAY
(Spoiler Alert)



KATE Kevorkian

Kate graduated from Santa Clara University with degrees in communications and public health.



KATE Kevorkian

She works as a project manager at Design Within Reach in New York City.



Allison Hyde

Allison graduated from Boston College with a degree in nursing.



Allison Hyde

She is currently a pediatric ICU nurse at New York Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital.



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