

A brief history of:
LEE GILLUM, EMT-P
Montgomery County Hospital District's
2006 Employee of the Year

If life always went according to the plans of youth, Lee Gillum, EMT-P, would not be the Montgomery County Hospital District's *2006 Employee of the Year*; he might just as likely be working on the design of the next supersonic passenger plane or the replacement for the space shuttle.

When Lee was a Junior at McKinney (Texas) High School he was accepted into the Aerospace Engineering Program at Texas A&M. However, his work as a trainer in the school's athletic program got in the way when he was offered a scholarship to A&M as a student trainer for the football team. As it turned out, a degree in engineering was not part of the curriculum to those on athletic scholarships.

"I only had 'physical education' and 'health' available to me, and I did not want to be a coach, so the obvious choice was health," Lee recently said of the academic decision that was put to him.

Lee made his choice and, in 1989, earned a Bachelors of Science Degree in Public Health Education. Some years later, he followed that degree with a Masters of Public Health in Public Health Policy and Management (Texas A&M Health Science System's School of Rural Public Health).

It was during his undergraduate days that the EMS bug bit. Among the extracurricular activities that Lee pursued was volunteering for the Texas A&M EMS program. (During his time with A&M EMS he developed a long-standing friendship with, now, MCHD CAO, Allen Johnson.)

Lee's first job out college was as a Clinical Research Coordinator with a company that did medical research. He showed great promise in that job and was recognized by pharmaceutical giant, Parke Davis, for his work on one of their programs. However, the call of EMS would eventually take him away from medical *research* and put him squarely back into medical *reality*.

In the years that followed, Lee, like most "up-and-coming EMSers," began a career path that included multiple jobs, held simultaneously and, often, overlapping one with the other. The untrained eye might very well see his employment history as filled with a jumble of positions held in a jumble of organizations, including: *Paramedic* with Gold Star Ambulance (1990-1992); *Paramedic* with Offshore Pipeline International (1990-1991); *Paramedic/Firefighter* with the College Station Fire Department (1991-1997); *Training Assistant* with the College Station Fire Department (1994-1996); *Fire and Rescue Coordinator* with Texas World Speedway (1992-1995); *ER Critical Care Technician* with College Station Medical Center (1998-2002); *EMS Program Coordinator* at Blinn College (1993-2002); and *Medical Specialist* with Texas Task Force 1: Urban Search and Rescue Team. However, those in the know, will quickly recognize that each of the components of Lee's past has brought him valuable experience, important education and opportunities to improve both himself and his organization. In fact, Lee's career has been filled with recognized success and growing responsibility.

In April 2002, Lee joined the MCHD team and now holds the dual title of *Paramedic III* - where he mans a shift on Squad 25 in Bentwater - and *Clinical Educator* - where he is responsible for a multitude of projects and programs.

In his role as a *Clinical Educator* Lee is afforded the opportunity to work closely with field personnel. His duties with the Education Department include, among other things: designing and implementing system databases to track personnel records; managing the database that tracks controlled substances; developing and deploying new products; tracking personnel EMS Continuing Education courses; coordinating initial EMS courses; and coordinating and conducting specialty training courses.

Lee recently said of his work as a *Clinical Educator*, "I look at my job as helping the people in the field do their jobs better because, in the end, they are my real bosses. I work for them."

And, it's that attitude - coupled with his experience, education, talent and commitment - that likely caused his fellow MCHD team members to select him as their *2006 Employee of the Year*.