

**From Paramedic to Chairman: The Inspirational Journey of Dr. Jeff Goodloe in
Emergency Medicine**

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In the dynamic community of emergency medicine, each physician has a unique story of inspiration that shapes their journey. Among them, Dr. Jeff Goodloe stands out for his remarkable leadership and service to the field. His transition from paramedic to emergency medicine physician to serving as Chairman of the National Board of Directors for ACEP is a story of inspiration, showing how a single moment can shape an individual's life.

Dr. Jeff Goodloe's path to becoming an emergency medicine physician was profoundly influenced by a brief, yet pivotal interaction with a paramedic on his college campus. The paramedic, radiating a sense of purpose, was sharply dressed in navy pants and a bright white shirt. Dr. Goodloe remembers telling him, "It looks like you're doing something important." The paramedic responded with enthusiasm, "Do you know all the cool stuff we get to do to help people? You should look into it." This short conversation, lasting just a few minutes, served not only as a moment of inspiration but also as the catalyst for Dr. Goodloe's unwavering commitment to a journey of learning, service, and striving to make a significant difference through emergency medicine.

Throughout his career in EMS and emergency medicine in Oklahoma, Dr. Goodloe's career accomplishments are unmatched. He is attending physician at Hillcrest Medical Center in Tulsa, OK, Professor of Emergency Medicine at the OU Department of Emergency Medicine, Chief Medical Officer for the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) in Tulsa and Oklahoma City and Medical Director for the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, former national President of the Emergency Medicine Residents Association (EMRA), among many others. One achievement that stands out is his tenure as the Director of the **Oklahoma Center for Prehospital and Disaster Medicine**, where he has played an instrumental role in responding to natural weather hazards. These situations often complicate the logistics of patient transportation and care, especially when major snow and ice disrupt normal work operations for extended periods. Therefore, Dr. Goodloe emphasizes the importance of teamwork in EMS and emergency medicine when faced with such challenges. Collaboration with various groups becomes essential, particularly when basic infrastructure, such as electric power, is compromised. Dr. Goodloe views the recurring cycles of these disasters as opportunities for learning and improvement. He views each year as an opportunity to acquire new insights, a process he enjoys and describes as vibrant and energetic.

Continuing to demonstrate his dedication and service to the field, Dr. Goodloe currently serves as the Chairman of the National Board of Directors for the **American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP)** and is a long-term board member at the **Oklahoma College of Emergency Physicians (OCEP)**. This year, his role has allowed him to focus on cultivating

leadership skills and empowering members in their approach to patient care. He reports that the National ACEP is critically examining opportunities for their members and seeking ways to build on them, enhancing their appeal to medical students, residents, fellows, and attending physicians. This effort aims to strengthen the college today and improve the care that will be provided to patients in the years ahead. When students or residents ask about becoming involved, Dr. Goodloe often quotes the old truism, "90% of success is just showing up." He describes involvement as offering to help with building a house. According to Dr. Goodloe, "Anyone showing interest and expressing a willingness to help will be welcomed by the team, handed a brush, and guided on where and how to paint." Dr. Goodloe believes it is very easy to get involved; for example, one can do so by reaching out to a board member and expressing curiosity about their work. He notes it is about taking that initial step to learn more and to be part of something impactful. For Dr. Goodloe, serving on the ACEP board and being elected as Chairman is not merely a position of prestige but an honor and a humbling experience that emphasizes the collaborative essence of the profession.

Looking ahead in his career, Dr. Goodloe envisions himself, ten years from now, continuing much of what he loves doing today: seeing patients, making a difference, teaching, and inspiring medical students and residents. His passion for emergency medicine drives his hope to remain actively involved in various aspects of the field. Aware that no day is promised, he aims to continue contributing positively to the field of emergency medicine, even though he acknowledges he won't be on the ACEP board forever. He values the opportunities provided by the college and hopes to continue being of service. Reflecting on the significant impact of his encounter with the enthusiastic paramedic, Dr. Goodloe is keen on inspiring future generations, extending his influence beyond just graduate medical education to potentially include primary and secondary education. His commitment to emergency medicine is not just about his own journey but also about improving opportunities for those who will follow, sharing the joy he has experienced in the hope that others will find the same fulfillment in their career path. He states, "I think there are many times in life where people think, 'I wish I had,' and emergency medicine gives all of us an opportunity to genuinely say, 'I'm so glad I did.'"