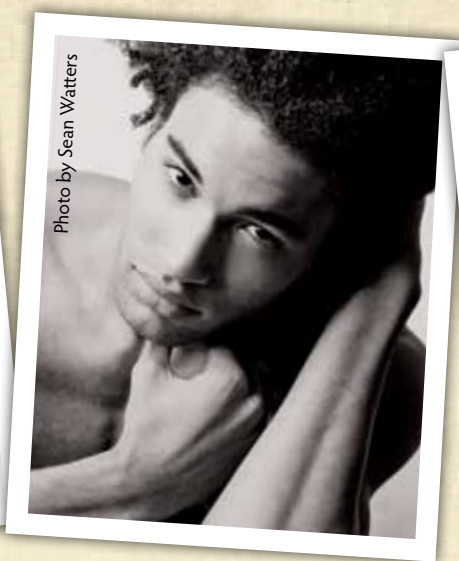


KATY'S NEXT top model

Tommie Cross-Holmes, a Mayde Creek graduate, is accomplishing his dream of modeling in New York City



Written by Cherri Northcutt | Photography courtesy of Tommie Cross-Holmes

Growing up as a student at Mayde Creek Elementary, Tommie Cross-Holmes never imagined that he would one day live in New York and have a successful modeling career. “As a kid, I was always playing outside with friends,” Tommie remembers. “My mom even got walkie-talkies so she could let me know when to come in for dinner. The only problem was, I had to stay within range,” he says.

“Tommie loved to read and play football,” his mother, Denita Holmes shares. In fact, his love of sports led him to Katy Youth Football where he met some of his lifelong friends. His dad played golf, so Tommie started playing in seventh grade. Tommie adds, “I also played football and ran track through junior high and high school.”

Dreams of Broadway

At Mayde Creek High School, Tommie was also active in choir. “He performed in Kantori and Encore choirs, and played the Beast in *Beauty and the Beast* his senior year,” Denita says. An active, good-natured young man, Tommie had dreams of playing for the NFL and singing on Broadway.

After graduating from Mayde Creek in 2009, Tommie was accepted into the musical theatre program at Sam Houston State University. While there, he also found time to play intramural football, basketball, soccer, and kickball. He was on the rugby team for the university as well as a camp counselor for incoming freshmen in his sophomore and junior years at college. “I like to meet people and be active,” Tommie says.

Photo by Phyllis Lane

Tommie Cross-Holmes, a graduate of Mayde Creek High School, is making a name for himself as a model in mainstream editorial after moving to New York City

“No matter how successful you get, don’t forget who you are, where you came from, and the people who were with you when times were hard.”

- *Tommie Cross-Holmes*

Getting the Callback

For years, Tommie's mother and several of his friends encouraged him to give modeling a try. "I said, 'That's not for me,'" Tommie recalls. "Finally in 2010, I decided to give it a shot."

Page Parkes in Houston was the second agency Tommie went for a meeting. "The only pictures we had were my senior photos from high school," Tommie admits. After meeting with Parkes, the agency signed him that day. "They set me up with my first test shoot," Tommie remembers. "I felt like a superstar in my own way."

"We were drawn to Tommie's sweet nature, cool look, and we loved the hair," says Erik Bechtol, agency director at Page Parkes. "He's always happy and has a love of the business that makes people want to be around him."

At an agency review, Tommie showed off his modeling and acting talents for other agencies and clients. "I was so nervous," he recalls. "At home later I was freaking out that I wouldn't get a callback." He did not need to worry. The next day Tommie learned that he had callbacks for eight modeling opportunities and 10 callbacks for acting. "I was like, 'Wow, this is crazy,'" Tommie says. He began modeling under the name Tommie Cross.

The Move to NYC

In August 2011, Tommie went to New York to test the waters. In his first few days, he went to casting calls and met potential clients. He then booked his first campaign for Off Broadway Shoes. A few days later he booked a TJ Maxx advertisement. Jobs with *Seventeen Magazine* and *GQ* quickly followed. "I thought that if it was going to keep going like that, I'd better find a place to live," Tommie says. Three weeks into his trip, Tommie found an apartment, and he's been in New York ever since. Tommie's "trial run" has turned into a permanent move.

Last February, Tommie met his goal of getting work with a national modeling agency when he signed with Wilhelmina Models in New York and Los Angeles. His proudest moment as a model so far was a recent commercial for Sony. "I did a Sony campaign with video game characters of me that played on the billboard in Times Square," he says. "That was a great moment."

Calling Katy Home

Tommie enjoys occasional visits with his family and to his hometown. "New York is just go-go-go, 24-7," Tommie shares. "I love coming home to Katy to just chill and relax." In Katy, he still loves playing football with old friends and watching his little brother Samuel grow up. Samuel is now a freshman at Mayde Creek High School. "I like to go back

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to Mayde Creek and talk to Coach Carter,” Tommie says. “I miss driving instead of always taking a subway everywhere.” Tommie also enjoys reconnecting with his childhood friends in Katy. “I’m still the same person. I don’t let success go to my head.”

Remember Your Roots

Tommie believes in setting goals. In the future he says, “I want to get the acting side of things going. In three years I want to shoot a TV pilot and in five years I want to be on my first feature film.” This January, he will be in Los Angeles working with Wilhelmina, LA. Tommie believes that the attitude you display determines how successful you will be in the industry.

“Modeling isn’t for everyone,” Tommie admits. “You have to get used to rejection.” Even so, he encourages people to stay positive. “Don’t be scared; get out of your comfort zone. Get out there and try.” He encourages others to not be afraid, and to remember their roots. “No matter how successful you get, don’t forget who you are, where you came from, and the people who were with you when times were hard.” **KM**



CHERRI NORTHCUTT has lived in Katy with her husband and two daughters for over 14 years.



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