

A 24-hour shift at his uncle's fire station solidified Robbie Wienserski's career choice, and he is now a firefighter at HFD station 60

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*- Robbie Wienserski*

# HEAT RISING

## Taylor High School graduate, Houston firefighter, and calendar model Robbie Wienserski is saving lives and raising funds for burn victims

Written by Kirsten Cornell | Select photography by Candace Cook

**G**rowing up, Robbie Wienserski had superior role models to look up to. Robbie's father, Al Moriera, is a Houston police officer and his uncle, Dan Wienserski, is the captain of the Houston Fire Department. Both served as a guiding light to a career path of service.

"One day my uncle invited me to spend a 24-hour shift at the fire station with his crew and that day changed my life forever," says Robbie. "I realized the impact that the job had on the community and that I could really make a difference in people's lives."

### Mustang Motivation

Robbie appreciates the small-town feeling that growing up in Katy provided with big city amenities available in nearby Houston. Being a member of the Mustang football team at Taylor High School (THS) also played a huge role in his young life. "I was very active in football and loved every second of it," he says. "The teachers and coaches were also some of the best out there. I still keep in touch with a few to this day, and they meant a lot to me throughout high school."

He also credits his mom Cheryl Wienserski with being a constant source of encouragement and support. "I wasn't sure what I wanted to do coming out of high school, but I knew that a regular desk job just wasn't for me. She supported me no matter how many times I changed my mind," he adds.

A 2010 graduate of THS, Robbie found his passion and has now been with the Houston Fire Department (HFD) for three years and works out of station 60.



### A Brotherhood

Joining HFD is not for the faint of heart or uninspired. Prior to applying to the department, Robbie had to complete emergency medical technician (EMT) training as well as attend fire school and complete all certifications. After he was hired, he then attended HFD's fire academy. "It was tough. If I didn't have my full heart into it, I'm not sure I would have stuck around," he says.

Currently he works as a firefighter/paramedic and switches between riding in the back of the fire truck and the ambulance. The weight of responsibility that comes with

the job is not lost on Robbie. "As a firefighter you have to be comfortable with being uncomfortable. We respond to most people's worst day in their lives thus far," he says. "You have to be calm and take charge of a scene, because when things go bad, everyone is looking at you to do your job and help them out." Robbie stresses that there is no better feeling than having the chance to save someone's life and make a difference.

The solidarity and brotherhood among each other is like nothing he has ever experienced. "I don't have friends at



work, I have brothers and sisters. I know that they will risk their lives to save mine, and I would do the same for them," he adds.

### Mr. July

In 2016 Robbie tried out for Houston Fire Fighters Burned Children's Fund calendar and was chosen as Mr. July. The first round of tryouts includes a picture with their shirts off and an interview with some of the charity board members to see if they are right for the job. If they move on to the second round, firefighters visit Camp Janus, a summer camp for children who have suffered burn injuries, and learn more about what it means to be involved with the charity. "That was really eye-opening and one of the most amazing experiences I have ever had," Robbie adds.

Calendar proceeds help provide community fire safety, prevention education, and aid to children in the Greater Houston area who have been burned or injured in accidents, fires, and other incidents. "A lot of guys at the station like to mess with us [for being in the calendar], but many of them don't realize all of the charity work we do," he says. In addition to being a part of the calendar, participants attend events, raise money for the fund, and visit Camp Janus.




Robbie says that firefighters are some of the best cooks he has ever met, which is why he has to work hard to stay in calendar shape

Robbie's fans will be delighted to know that he has been chosen to participate in the 2017 calendar as well. "Getting to be a part of the calendar for two straight years is an honor," he adds. "It is a lot of work, but very rewarding." KM



KIRSTEN CORNELL is the lead associate editor of Katy Magazine. Some of her favorite memories growing up were hanging out at the fire station with her dad, a 32-year veteran on the force.



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