

# Student's dreams live on despite father's death in highway incident

Roadway Worker Memorial Scholarship helps aspiring doctor pursue goal

By Pamela Gould, ATSSA Staff

**Emily Hause was just** weeks into her first year of college last September when she received an early morning call that her father had been struck by a car while working on a roadway project.

Her first thought was that he was already gone but Barry Hause survived several days before succumbing to his injuries at a Lansing, Mich., hospital on Sept. 30, 2019.

Letting him go was made easier because Emily's father had told her a year earlier that he would never want to be on indefinite life support. When both a neurosurgeon and trauma surgeon said on day four of his hospitalization that he would have begun recovering if that were a possibility, she and her father's siblings—an aunt and an uncle—knew what that meant.

"When he was actually gone, part of me was at peace because we believe in God and he was in heaven with my grandpa," she said. "But it was really sad to think I would live most of my life without him."

She grieved because he wouldn't be there to walk her down the aisle at her wedding or see the children, she would one day have, or continue bragging about her plans to become a doctor.

Barry Hause's death was one of two in the state within a month last year, prompting Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Director Paul C. Ajegba to issue a statement about the importance of attention while traveling through work zones.

"At MDOT, our goal for the driving public and the workforce is zero deaths," Ajegba said then. "No death is acceptable, and we will remain vigilant in our efforts to ensure the safety of the private industry and public employees doing the vital work of building and maintaining our roads."

Hause, 54, was working for a private company, making repairs at night to

concrete pavement on Interstate 96 near Portland, Mich., when he was fatally injured on Sept. 23, 2019.

Kevin White, an MDOT maintenance worker died Oct. 23 after getting struck by a tire from a truck that passed the shoulder of another interstate where he was clearing large debris. The 48-year-old man was the first MDOT employee killed on duty in a work zone since 2008, according to agency statistics.

Ajegba was part of MDOT's plans for the 2020 National Work Zone Awareness

Week kickoff event that was canceled due to the pandemic and is expected to be part of the 2021 event, also hosted by MDOT. Last fall's accidents were a tragic reminder of the need for that week.

"MDOT employees across the state are grieving the loss of one of our own," Ajegba said at the time. "Coming in the wake of the death of another road worker, it is a stark reminder of the risk these men and women take to help all of us travel safely each day."



Emily Hause and her father, Barry Hause, celebrate her graduation from Eaton Rapids High School in Eaton Rapids, Mich., in May 2019. She recently started her second year of college.

**COMMITTED TO THE DREAM,  
RELIEVED TO HAVE HELP**

When Emily Hause left home to begin her college studies at Grand Valley State University in August 2019, she was launching plans to become a pediatric endocrinologist. She set her mind on that path as a result of her experience living with Type 1 juvenile diabetes and felt her background would be an asset as a doctor.

When she needed to miss 2½ weeks of classes because of her father's accident, she said her professors were supportive. They even helped her catch up afterward, enabling her to make the Dean's List her first semester.

Her desire to become a doctor wasn't dimmed by the death of her father but the financial burden looked steep.

When her father's employer passed along information about The American Traffic Safety Services Foundation and its Roadway Worker Memorial Scholarship, she found a glimmer of hope.

This spring, she was one of 14 students awarded a scholarship for the 2020–21 academic year. The scholarship program is competitive and offers up to \$10,000 annually for the dependents of roadway workers killed or permanently disabled in work zone accidents. Students who demonstrate a strong commitment to volunteerism are eligible to apply for an additional \$1,000 scholarship given in honor of Chuck Bailey, a roadway safety industry member who died in 2002.

To date, The ATSS Foundation has awarded 88 Roadway Worker Memorial Scholarships and 21 Chuck Bailey Memorial Scholarships for a total value of \$313,000, said Lori Diaz, associate director of The Foundation.

"It's helpful, extremely helpful," Emily said. "It was really nice to know there was a group out there that honors those who were lost."

She also learned about the National Work Zone Memorial and was pleased that her father's name will be added to it.



Emily Hause, age 4, enjoys a county fair with her dad, Barry Hause.

As the anniversary of her father's death approached, Emily was reflective.

She planned to be at home during the week her father was hospitalized and spend it with her mother, aunt, and uncle.

The firsts of the past year were tough.

Her 19th birthday came six days after her Dad's death. Then Thanksgiving and Christmas quickly followed. The holiday that hit hardest, though, was Father's Day.

She was her father's only child and though her parents divorced when she was eight, she and her Dad were close.

"I probably spent every weekend with him," she said.

They went to movies, made dinner, or visited with his extended family at a nearby campground.

He knew of her dreams, told everyone about them, and encouraged her to work hard to achieve them.

That was one of the things that helped her get back on track after he was gone. She now has her first year of college behind her and still wants to be a doctor but may pursue trauma surgery instead of endocrinology. Over the summer, she took an 11-week course to become an



Barry Hause played a role in Emily's dance recital when she was four.

Emergency Medical Technician to get her first experience delivering patient care.

"I want to be successful and I know my Dad wants that for me," she said. "It was helpful to remember that. ... This is what my Dad would want me to be doing." 🌸

To reach Pamela Gould, [pamela.gould@atssa.com](mailto:pamela.gould@atssa.com).