

'GLAD I COULD HELP'

Affinity Living Group employee uses job training to save woman's life

A visit to a Hickory restaurant quickly turned into an adrenaline-packed, life-saving opportunity for 24-year-old Janaya McCrimmon.

McCrimmon is a medication technician at Autumn Village, an assisted living community in Beulaville. McCrimmon was in Hickory attending a course through the Affinity Living Group Academy, a job-training program offered by Affinity Living Group, which manages Autumn Village and other assisted living communities across the Southeast, and Catawba Valley Community College.

Wednesday evening after a full day of training, McCrimmon, along with her roommate for the trip, Anderia Highsmith, and other attendees, headed to Outback Steakhouse for dinner.

"We were waiting in line to be seated and my roommate noticed something was happening over at this table," McCrimmon said.

Nearby, a woman had begun choking on a piece of her steak.

"She was turning red but at the same time starting to lose



Janaya McCrimmon, 24, a medication technician at Autumn Village, an assisted living community in Beulaville, used her training to save a woman's life on a recent visit to a Hickory restaurant.

her color because she was losing oxygen," McCrimmon said.

The woman's husband was starting to panic and the

staff at the restaurant were looking for help. McCrimmon spoke up to let the staff know she was trained to help, and rushed to the

woman's aid.

"Anderia helped me get ahold of her," McCrimmon said. "I gave one good push and nothing came out, but with the second push we got it out."

The woman, finally able to breathe again and ultimately able to finish her dinner, was in tears as she thanked McCrimmon and the others for their help, McCrimmon said. Although the situation was intense, McCrimmon said springing into action came naturally.

"I'm used to doing it so I wasn't scared," she said about performing the Heimlich maneuver. "I was willing to help and just happy that I didn't have to do CPR and was able to save her."

Despite her comfort level with the procedure and ability to remain calm, McCrimmon admitted the situation was one she never expected to happen.

"I'm used to helping residents in our facility, but I never thought I would have to help someone in the streets, out in public," she said. "I'm glad I had the training I needed to do that. She could have died if I hadn't been there, so I'm glad I could help."