



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
South Carolina Fire Academy
141 Monticello Trail • Columbia, SC 29203
Phone: 803-896-9800 • Fax: 803-896-9856 • www.llronline.com



Ken Kerber, Superintendent

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Lesia Kudelka, Communications Director
S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
(803) 896-4376
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State Fire Academy Graduates 19 in December

The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's South Carolina Fire Academy graduated 19 students, Friday, Dec. 5, 2014, from its eight-week firefighter candidate school in Columbia. Keynote speaker was Chief Paul Caldwell, Chester City Fire Department.

The firefighters from 15 fire departments across the state underwent a 320-hour training program of classroom and hands-on firefighting skills development.

The in-depth training, offered quarterly at the Fire Academy, includes emergency responder first aid training, hazardous materials operations training, auto extrication, flammable liquids and gas firefighting, rescue training, and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Firefighter I and Firefighter II levels.

"This is a very challenging program that requires team work, in-depth study, extensive hands-on training with live fires, eight practical skills evaluations and seven written tests to meet the National Fire Protection Association standards," Fire Academy Branch Chief Lenny Busby, said. "I am pleased with the students and our staff; they have shown extreme commitment to service by completing this challenging and comprehensive program. Our state and their communities will be better served as a result of their efforts."

The following students graduated Dec. 5, 2014:

- Jacob Artale, Cowpens FD
- Ryan Boggs, Walker McElmoyle FD
- Coby Cappiello, Six Mile FD
- Joshua Cheatham, City of Newberry FD
- Seth Coley, Center Rock FD
- Matthew Conoly, Glass Mountain FD
- William Crews, Brunson FD
- Richard Fulbright, Piercetown FD
- Emerson Harper, Beaufort FD
- Andrew Harris, North Augusta FD
- Shawn Hogan, Isle of Palms FD
- Juan Carlos Negrón, Beaufort FD
- Billy Pressley, Chester FD
- Jacob Smith, Crosswell FD
- Denise Starvkowicz, Ridgeland FD
- Kyle Stevens, Belmont FD
- Jadon Stewart, Six Mile FD
- Hunter Van Dam, Beaufort FD
- Mason Wheat, Isle of Palms FD

The following awards were also presented:

Order of the Maltese – Ryan Boggs, Walker McElmoyle FD

The Maltese Cross is a firefighter's badge of honor, signifying that he or she works in courage – a ladder rung away from death. The Eight Obligations of The Maltese Cross are: Live in Truth, Repent of Sins, Love Justice, Be Sincere and Whole-Hearted, Have Faith, Give Proof of Humility, Be Merciful, and Endure Persecution.

This award is chosen by the part-time instructors and the students of the class.

Chief Robert Frick – Andrew Harris, North Augusta FD

The Chief Robert Frick Award is given to the student with the highest grade point average.

Pride of the Battalion – Andrew Harris, North Augusta FD

The Pride of the Battalion award is given to the student who has demonstrated "Leadership, Integrity, Determination and Good Value."

This award recipient is chosen by the full-time instructor staff who worked with the students during the eight-week program.

The Fire Academy provides emergency services training to the municipal fire service - both paid and volunteer - airport crash rescue departments, industrial fire brigades and emergency teams and service organizations including EMS, law enforcement and military from around the state and the world. The Fire Academy is accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress for 14 NFPA firefighter levels.

The Fire Academy and the State Fire Marshal's Office make up the Division of Fire and Life Safety, which is a division of the S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.