



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
South Carolina Fire Academy
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Ken Kerber, Superintendent

For Immediate Release:

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State Fire Academy Graduates 20 in May

The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's South Carolina Fire Academy graduated 20 recruits, Friday, May 13, 2016, from its eight-week firefighter candidate school in Columbia. Keynote speaker was Chief Dennis Ray, Lugoff Fire Department.

The firefighters from 12 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 recruits 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 recruits graduated Friday, May 13, 2016:

- Kyle Black, Union Public Safety
- Chase Breeden, Aiken Public Safety
- Steffon Capel, St. Johns Fire Department
- Joshua Craven, Irmo Fire Department
- David Dale, Pageland Fire Department
- Alec Faulhaber, Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue
- William Gerstenslager, Aiken Public Safety
- Jamal Glasscho, Sumter Fire Department
- Mitchell Harbin, Williamston Fire Department
- Eleanor Hunter, Aiken Public Safety
- Jeffrey Johnson, St. Johns Fire Department
- Dylan Long, Seneca Fire Department
- Ashley Lowry, Parker Fire District
- Hunter McLane, Seneca Fire Department
- Andrew Morgan, Tigerville Fire Department
- Steven Mroz, St. Johns Fire Department
- Sarah Norton, Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue
- Travis Rice, Aiken Public Safety
- Donta Stewart, Cayce Department of Public Safety
- Kevin Wrigley, Columbia Airport Department of Public Safety

The following awards were also presented:

Order of the Maltese – Steven Mroz, St. Johns Fire Department

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 class recruits.

Chief Robert Frick – Eleanor Hunter, Aiken Public Safety

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

Pride of the Battalion – Donta Stewart, Cayce Department of Public Safety

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

This award recipient is chosen by the instructor staff who worked with the recruits 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 and National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board) for multiple 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.