



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
South Carolina Fire Academy
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For Immediate Release:

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State Fire Academy Graduates 19 in March

The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's South Carolina Fire Academy graduated 19 recruits, Friday, March 3, 2017, from its eight-week firefighter candidate school in Columbia. Keynote speaker was Battalion Chief Michael Bowers, Awendaw Fire Department.

The firefighters from 12 fire departments across the state, as well as two open enrollments, 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, March 3, 2017:

- Checkley Barker, Awendaw-McClellanville Consolidated Fire District
- Fred Brutsky, New Prospect Fire Department
- Angelica Calci, St. Johns Fire District
- Timothy Crain, Boiling Springs Fire District
- Forrest Dart, MCAS Beaufort Fire & Emergency Services
- Gina Easler, Aiken Department of Public Safety
- Branden Elling, Pine Ridge Fire Rescue
- Joel Fera, Belmont Fire Department
- Ryan Freeland, St. Johns Fire District
- Ed Galo, Aiken Department of Public Safety
- Tyler Harding, Open Enrollment
- Deva Imel, Cayce Department of Public Safety
- Vincent Korzeniowski, Dorchester County Fire
- Kyle Sargent, Santee Fire Department
- Jeffrey Sparks, Simpsonville Fire Department
- Colt Taylor, Open Enrollment
- Corey Taylor, St. Johns Fire District
- Julia Viznyak, Boiling Springs Fire Department
- Jermayne Waltower, Aiken Department of Public Safety

The following awards were also presented:

Order of the Maltese – Tyler Harding, Open Enrollment

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 – Angelica Calci, St. Johns Fire District

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

Pride of the Battalion – Corey Taylor, St. Johns Fire District

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.