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### State Fire Academy Graduates 23 in May

The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's South Carolina Fire Academy graduated 23 students, Friday, May 11, 2012, from its eight-week firefighter candidate school in Columbia. Keynote speaker was Assistant Chief Jamie Helms, Columbia Fire Department.

The firefighters from 14 fire departments across the state and one out-of-country fire department 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 superintendent Shane Ray 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 May 11, 2012:

- **Jared Bingel**
  - **Charles Chambers**
  - **Mickey Cooke**
  - **William Cue**
  - **Jacob Davis**
  - **Wendell Davis**
  - **Lewis Dewberry**
  - **Amelia Durante**
  - **Charles Eaton**
  - **Ryan George**
  - **Brendan Horlbeck**
  - **Peter Janowski**
  - **Philip Judge**
  - **Eben McCauley**
  - **Quintin McWilliams**
- **Boiling Springs Fire District**
  - **Union Public Safety**
  - **Columbia Metro Airport Fire Department**
  - **Aiken Public Safety**
  - **Southside Fire Department**
  - **Aiken Public Safety**
  - **CSR**
  - **Florence Fire Department**
  - **Bluffton Township Fire District**
  - **CSR**
  - **Hilton Head Fire Rescue**
  - **Boiling Springs Fire District**
  - **Burton Fire District**
  - **Boiling Springs Fire District**
  - **Isle of Palms Fire Department**

- **Jason Nix**
  - **Vincent Pierik**
  - **Bryan Rhodes**
  - **Davis Taylor**
  - **Joseph Templeton**
  - **Aaron Topley**
  - **Mitchell Whitt**
  - **Mark Zimmerman**
- Union Public Safety**
  - Irmo Fire District**
  - Durbin Creek Fire Department**
  - Batesburg-Leesville Fire Department**
  - Laurens County Fire Department**
  - CSR**
  - Aiken Public Safety**
  - Columbia Metro Airport Fire Department**

The following awards were presented:

**Order of the Maltese – Peter Janowski, Boiling Springs Fire District**

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 Faith, 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 – Charles Eaton, Bluffton Township Fire District**

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

**Pride of the Battalion – Philip Judge, Burton Fire District**

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

This award is chosen by the full-time instructor staff that has worked with the seven-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.