



For Immediate Release:

Contact: Susan Duncan, SC State Fire (803) 896-5790
Bob Holmes, CIU, (803) 518-8200

Date: Jan. 27, 2020

SC State Fire and CIU Partner to Improve Community Fire Readiness

Columbia International University (CIU) is partnering with SC State Fire to help improve community fire readiness. Together, these efforts support the Fire Safe South Carolina program.

As part of the partnership, CIU students will be trained in home safety visits at 11 a.m. January 29th by State Fire's Community Risk Reduction Section Chief Josh Fulbright in CIU's Shortess Chapel. The training will be followed at 11:45 a.m. by a side-by-side burn demonstration in the CIU parking lot (second one on the right). The demonstration, narrated by State Fire Marshal Jonathan Jones, will show the difference between a residence protected by fire sprinklers and one that is not.

The demonstrations are made possible by grants from [Town/Gown Fire Safety Community Service Project](#) and [Sound Off with the Home Fire Safety Patrol](#). With the "Town/Gown" grant project, college students are encouraged to work alongside firefighters to conduct home safety visits and install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

"We are grateful for the CIU partnership," State Fire Marshal Jones said. "We are excited to know these students are adding fire safety to their class schedule this semester and are willing to serve their community statewide into the future."

CIU Dean of Students Rick Swift says the students are looking forward to the training.

"By conducting these home safety visits, our students are helping to make communities safer and learning fire safety at the same time," Swift said. "The partnership with SC State Fire will foster dozens of alarm installation events throughout 2020."

Fulbright says saving lives depends on the presence of working alarm technology and education.

"With 71 fire deaths in South Carolina in 2019, we are well aware that community partnerships help reduce the number of fatalities," Fulbright said. "That is why this partnership with CIU is so vital."

As part of the "Sound Off" grant program, 18 South Carolina fire departments and teachers from each of their jurisdictions will continue partnering with local elementary schools to raise awareness of the importance of working smoke alarms. These "Sound Off" representatives will be in attendance Wednesday for a one-day training course at CIU. Also, firefighters will conduct home safety visits and install free alarm technology for these students when requested.

These types of training sessions are made possible through partnerships with [American Red Cross](#), [Campus Firewatch](#), [Columbia International University](#), [Fire Safe SC](#), [First Alert](#), [FEMA Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Managers](#), [Michael H. Minger Foundation](#), [Michigan Public Health Institute](#), [National Fire Sprinkler Association](#), and [Young Minds Inspired](#).