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**South Carolina
Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation**

South Carolina Fire Academy



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State Fire Academy Graduates 17 in May

The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's South Carolina Fire Academy graduated 17 recruits, Thursday, May 8, from its eight-week firefighter candidate school in Columbia. These firefighters underwent a 320-hour training program of classroom and hands-on firefighting skills development. The keynote speaker was Asst. Chief of Fire Operations Sean Wargny, City of West Columbia.

"Today, we celebrate graduation and welcome these new members to the South Carolina fire service," State Fire Academy Superintendent Jason Pope said. "The past eight weeks have been a challenging program requiring commitment, passion, and dedication. These recruits have worked together as a team, performed extensive hands-on training with live fires, and passed intensive practical skills evaluations and written tests to meet the National Fire Protection Association standards."

The comprehensive 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.

"From this day on, these new firefighters will be dedicating their lives to serving their communities and the state," Pope said. "All of us at State Fire are proud of their accomplishments. I also want to commend the dedicated Fire Academy instructors who brought the recruits through these weeks of instruction leading to graduation."

The following recruits graduated

- Brandon Brown, Aiken Department of Public Safety
- Dallas Callahan, Greer Fire Department
- Zachary Elicks, Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue
- David Ferreira, Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department
- Nathaniel Folsom, St. Andrews Public Service District
- Jacob Gardner, Sumter City Fire Department
- Brady Gearst, Gaffney City Fire Department

- John Hasselbacher, Gaffney City Fire Dept.
- Evan Lanier, Jasper County Fire-Rescue
- William Massey, Aiken Department of Public Safety
- Brandon Morgan, Boiling Springs Fire District
- Caleb Norwood, Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue
- Scott Saylor, Aiken Department of Public Safety
- Aijai Schultz, Jasper County Fire-Rescue
- Nathan Siebert, St. Andrews Public Service District
- Devin Tanner, Aiken Department of Public Safety
- Tyler Yates, Sullivan's Island Volunteer Fire Department

The following awards were also presented:

Order of the Maltese: David Ferreira – Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department

The class recruits choose this award recipient who most exemplifies the eight perfect points of the Maltese Cross in the Firefighter II candidate program. The Maltese Cross is a firefighter's badge of honor, signifying that he or she works in courage. The Eight "perfect points" of the Maltese Cross include: Live in Truth, Repent of Sins, Love Justice, Be Sincere and Whole-Hearted, Have Faith, Give Proof of Humility, Be Merciful, and Endure Persecution.

Chief Robert Frick: Scott Saylor – Aiken Department of Public Safety

The Chief Robert Frick Award is presented to the recruit who achieves and maintains the highest academic grade point average in the Firefighter II candidate program.

Pride of the Battalion: David Ferreira – Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department

The instructor staff who work with the recruits during the eight-week program choose this award recipient. The Pride of the Battalion award is presented to the recruit who exemplifies teamwork and camaraderie in the Firefighter II candidate program.

The Fire Academy provides emergency services training to the municipal fire service - both paid and volunteer. These include airport fire and rescue departments, industrial fire brigades, 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 the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board) for multiple NFPA firefighter levels.

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