



SOUTH CAROLINA STATE FIRE

a Division of South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

South Carolina Fire Academy

141 Monticello Trail • Columbia, SC 29203

(803) 896-9800

www.statefire.llr.sc.gov

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Amy Williamson
amy.williamson@llr.sc.gov
(803) 429-4201

September 26, 2025

SC FIRE ACADEMY CELEBRATES RECRUIT SCHOOL GRADUATION

Columbia, S.C. – The South Carolina Fire Academy proudly announces the graduation of 18 firefighter recruits from its rigorous 320-hour Recruit Program. The ceremony was held today at the Academy's Columbia campus, marking the beginning of these graduates' service to communities across the state.

- Jadiel Ayala Santana: Hilton Head Island Fire/Rescue
- Myles Benjamin: Virgin Islands Port Authority
- Charles Blakenship: St. Andrew's Public Service District
- Ryan Bohr: Hilton Head Island Fire/Rescue
- Dorian Day: Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department
- Joseph Donovan: Jasper County Fire-Rescue
- Makayla Gentry: Beaufort/Port Royal Fire-Rescue
- Edwin Golden Batista: Virgin Islands Port Authority
- Bradley Grasser: Lady's Island-St. Helena Fire District
- Wyatt Haroutunian: Hilton Head Island Fire/Rescue
- Kevin Hickey: Bluffton Township Fire District
- Jeremiah Hockman: Aiken Department of Public Safety
- Albert Hucks: Aiken Department of Public Safety
- Jacob Peters: City of York Fire Department
- Simeon Remsen: St. Andrews Public Service District
- Lukas Simons: Greenwood City Fire Department
- Simon Steward: Bluffton Township Fire District
- Luke Wooten: Ware Shoals Volunteer Fire Department



"Graduation day represents the culmination of weeks of commitment and sacrifice from these recruits," said SC Fire Academy Superintendent Jason Pope. "We are proud of their accomplishments and grateful for the dedication they have shown to the fire service and the citizens of South Carolina."

During the ceremony, awards were also presented to recognize outstanding performance:

- **Order of the Maltese:** Albert Hucks (Aiken Department of Public Safety)
The recruits choose this award recipient. The Maltese Cross is a firefighter's badge of honor, signifying that they work 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.
- **Chief Robert Frick:** Ryan Bohr (Hilton Head Island Fire/Rescue)
The Chief Robert Frick Award is given to the recruit with the highest grade point average.
- **Pride of the Battalion:** Kevin Hickey (Bluffton Township Fire District)
This award recipient is chosen by the instructor cadre who worked with the recruits during the program. The Pride of the Battalion award is given to the recruit who has demonstrated "Leadership, Integrity, Determination, and Good Value."



Our mission is to be the focal point for service and support to save lives and property.