



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
South Carolina Fire Academy
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Ken Kerber, Superintendent

For Immediate Release:

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State Fire Academy Graduates 24 in February

The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's South Carolina Fire Academy graduated 24 students, Friday, Feb. 27, 2015, from its eight-week firefighter candidate school in Columbia. Keynote speaker was Chief Herbert Williams, Town of Mt. Pleasant Fire Department.

The firefighters from 13 fire departments across the state 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 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 Feb. 27, 2015:

- Christopher Alley, Glendale FD
- Vincent Ashe-Arriola, Mt. Pleasant FD
- Dusty Bussart, Sumter FD
- Thaddeus Coe, Aiken DPS
- Carson Couch, Greenville City FD
- Kevin Dawson, Mt. Pleasant FD
- Justin Driver, Fairplay FD
- John Houston, Mt. Pleasant FD
- William Hultman, North Augusta FD
- Ross Johnson, Pine Ridge FD
- Graham Kent, Mt. Pleasant FD
- Dustin Kreinbrook, St. Johns FD
- Anthony Nelson, Aiken DPS
- James Olson, Mt. Pleasant FD
- Devante Payne, Sumter FD
- Justin Rafferty, Hampton County FD
- Joshua Satterfield, Easley FD
- Christopher Mitchell, St. Johns FD
- John Smalls, Jr., Eadytown Rural FD

- Francisco Viquez, Aiken DPS
- Kevin Wimberly, Sumter FD
- Robert Wise, Aiken DPS
- Thomas Woods, Summerville Fire & Rescue
- Timothy Northen, St. Johns FD

The following awards were also presented:

Order of the Maltese – John Smalls, Jr., Eadytown FD

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 part-time instructors and the students of the class.

Chief Robert Frick – William Hultman, North Augusta FD

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

Pride of the Battalion – Vincent Ashe-Arriola, Mt. Pleasant FD

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

This award recipient is chosen by the full-time instructor staff who worked with the students 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.