



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation



141 Monticello Trail
Columbia, SC 29203
Phone: (803) 896-9800
FAX: (803) 896-9856
www.scfa.state.sc.us

South Carolina Fire Academy

Henry D. McMaster
Governor

Emily H. Farr
Director

For Immediate Release: Sept. 29, 2023
Contact: Susan Duncan, Office Manager
S.C. Division of Fire and Life Safety
(803) 896-5790

State Fire Academy Graduates 19 in September

The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's South Carolina Fire Academy graduated 19 recruits, Friday, Sept. 29, 2023, 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 Captain Ben Crenshaw, Clemson University Fire Department.

"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:

- Robert Britt - Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue
- Jose Camacho-Dimas - Bluffton Township Fire District
- Nicholas Cataloni - Hardeeville Fire Department
- Ajanie Colbourne – Antigua & Barbuda Fire Department
- Lauren Duncan - St. Andrews Public Service District
- Kevon Gorham - St. Andrews Public Service District
- Robert Joyner - Kershaw County Fire Service
- Brandon Lee - Sumter Fire Department
- Jessica Martin - Hardeeville Fire Department
- Noah Martin - Patrick Rural Fire Department
- Daniel McGlone - Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue
- Charlotte McMann – Central Berkeley Fire & EMS
- Aiden Morel - Bluffton Township Fire Department
- Walker Motley - Sumter Fire Department
- Nail Prekop - Lady's Island - St. Helena Fire District

- Austin Rabon - SC Army National Guard
- Andrew Reinhardt - Bluffton Township Fire District
- Shane Riehl - Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue
- Karl Simpson - Lady's Island - St. Helena Fire District

The following awards were also presented:

Order of the Maltese: Andrew Reinhardt - Bluffton Township Fire District

This award recipient is chosen by the class recruits. 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.

Chief Robert Frick: Robert Britt - Hilton Head Island Fire Rescue

The Chief Robert Frick Award is awarded to the recruit with the highest grade point average.

Pride of the Battalion: Lauren Duncan - St. Andrews Public Service District

This award recipient is chosen by the instructor staff who worked with the recruits during the eight-week program. The Pride of the Battalion award is given to the recruit who has demonstrated "Leadership, Integrity, Determination, and Good Value."

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 the 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.