



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024

San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Hosts Women's Fire Prep Academy

FOURTH ANNUAL EVENT OFFERS OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO TRAIN WITH PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS

SAN DIEGO – With a goal of attracting more women into the fire service, the City of San Diego Fire-Rescue Department's (SDFD) fourth annual Women's Fire Prep Academy is now in full swing. Twelve women and 12 men are learning a variety of fire service skills from firefighters at the SDFD training facility.

"We are pleased to offer this valuable opportunity for those interested in the fire service to receive hands-on training alongside professional firefighters," said Fire-Rescue Chief Colin Stowell. "The fire service overall has a difficult time recruiting women to this career and the WFPA is a great stepping stone toward becoming a firefighter."

The Women's Fire Prep Academy is open to those who are 18, have a current emergency medical technician certificate and a high school diploma or GED. There are six Saturday sessions offered each year and this is the fourth year that SDFD has offered this training academy.

Participants learn a variety of skills from professional firefighters including how to effectively use and maintain the self-contained breathing apparatus firefighters wear while fighting fires, hose control, how to safely maneuver ground ladders and how to use a chainsaw. Familiarity with the apparatus and hydrants are also part of the training.

Participants also learn workouts that will help them achieve the level of fitness required to be a firefighter. The training that participants experience in this program can help them successfully complete a fire academy, ideally with SDFD, and potentially open the door to a fulfilling career in public safety.

This program is also considered a valuable tool to increase the number of women in the fire service, as SDFD currently has 56 women firefighters, representing a little over 5% for the department.

Since the Women's Fire Prep Academy launched in 2021, several participants have completed the program and there are currently two women fire recruits in the 98th Basic Fire Academy on their way toward becoming firefighters with SDFD. Past participants were hired by other agencies such as CAL

FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service.

The SDFD Women's Fire Prep Academy is provided at no cost to participants and is funded by the City of San Diego with support from the [San Diego Fire Rescue Foundation](#) and private sponsors.

WHAT: Media availability

WHO: David Gerboth, Assistant Fire Chief, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department
Robert Logan, Deputy Fire Chief, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department
Selena Laniel, WFPA coordinator, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department
Participants

WHEN: Saturday, Feb. 17, 2024, 9 – 11 a.m.

WHERE: SDFD Training Facility
2580 Kincaid Road
San Diego, CA 92101
Directions: Interstate 5 to North Harbor Drive. North Harbor Drive to McCain Road. Take McCain Road until it ends and turns to the left. The training building will be in front of you.
Park along the red curb. Please be mindful not to obstruct fire apparatus.

VISUALS: SDFD WFPA instructors and participants working on hose control, ground ladder manipulation, chainsaw orientation and use of the self-contained breathing apparatus.

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