

39 Local Firefighters Graduate State Firefighting Academy

State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey and Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Director David C. Evans announced the graduation of the 259th class of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's fifty-day Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program on December 8, 2017. Shawn Hay graduated and will serve in the New Bedford Fire Department.

"This rigorous professional training provides our newest firefighters with the basic skills to perform their jobs effectively and safely," said State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey. The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA), a division of the Department of Fire Services, offers this program tuition-free. The ceremony took place at the Depart

39 Graduates from 22 Fire Departments

The 39 graduates, four women and 35 men, represent the 22 fire departments of: Arlington, Athol, Auburn, Billerica, Charlton, Concord, Danvers, Duxbury, Falmouth, Gardner, Gloucester, Harwich, Lexington, Nantucket, New Bedford, Newton, Randolph, Revere, Salem, Saugus, Sharon and Truro.

The guest speaker was Truro Fire Chief Timothy Collins, who is the first full-time fire chief for the town, has been in the fire service for 20 years and a paramedic for 27 years. He comes from a firefighter family. His grandfather was a lieutenant with the Boston Fire Department, his great uncle was a Cambridge fire chief, an uncle and cousin served the Arlington Fire Department and another relative serves on the Seattle, WA Fire Department. He holds a degree in fire science and is working towards a degree in leadership at Northeastern University. He offered the graduates some friendly advice on

important qualities to bring to the job every day: integrity, professionalism, and compassion, as well as the need to constantly train to prepare to respond to the unexpected.

Today's firefighters do far more than fight fires. They are the first ones called to respond to chemical and environmental emergencies, ranging from the suspected presence of carbon monoxide to a gas leak. They may be called to rescue a child who has fallen through the ice or who has locked himself in a bathroom. They rescue people from stalled elevators and those who are trapped in vehicle crashes. They test and maintain their equipment including self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), hydrants, hoses, power tools, and apparatus.

At the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy they learn all these skills and more from certified fire instructors who are also experienced firefighters. Students learn all the basic skills they need to respond to fires and to contain and control them. They are also given training in public fire education, hazardous material incident mitigation, flammable liquids, stress management, confined space rescue techniques, and rappelling. The intensive, ten-week program for municipal firefighters involves classroom instruction, physical fitness training, firefighter skills training, and live firefighting practice.

Basic Firefighter Skills

Students receive classroom training in all basic firefighter skills. They practice first under non-fire conditions and then during controlled fire conditions. To graduate, students must demonstrate proficiency in life safety, search and rescue, ladder operations, water supply, pump operation, and fire attack. Fire attack operations range from mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple-room structural fires. Upon successful completion of the Recruit Program all students have met national standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001 and are certified to the level of Firefighter I and II, and Hazardous Materials First Responder Operational Level by

the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, which is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications.