

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**Contact:**

Media & Community Relations  
Diana L. Klink  
Office: 757.514.4104  
Mobile: 757.359.1845

MDA  
Darcy Warren, Development Specialist  
804.285.2961  
dwarren@mdausa.org

## **SUFFOLK FIREFIGHTERS KICK-OFF ANNUAL FILL THE BOOT DRIVE IN SUPPORT OF MDA**

SUFFOLK, VA (May 3, 2019) The Suffolk Department of Fire & Rescue, along with Local 2801 Professional Firefighters, is once again showing its support for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) as its members kick off the annual Fill the Boot fundraising campaign to help kids and adults with muscular dystrophy, ALS and related muscle-debilitating diseases live longer and grow stronger. In fact, Suffolk will be the first jurisdiction in Virginia to begin their fundraising efforts in May. Their efforts with citizen support over the last twenty years have raised over \$702,735 to help those living in our communities affected by these diseases.

The MDA's Area Ambassadors, Logan Morean and Cole Terrill, were both diagnosed at a young age with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, an inherited, rare disorder of progressive weakness, affecting 1 in 3,600 boys typically in the United States. There is no cure for this disease and it is one of the fatal diseases MDA Covers. Life expectancy is in mid - 20's to early 30's.

This year marks the 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of IAFF and MDA partnering together. The dedicated firefighters from Suffolk Fire & Rescue and Local 2801 Professional Firefighters will be at several locations with boots in hand on Fridays and Saturdays in May (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>) asking pedestrians, motorists, customers and other passersby to make a donation to MDA at various local businesses throughout Suffolk from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., weather and call volume permitting.

Collection locations are as follows:

- Walmart, 1200 North Main Street
- Chick-Fil-A, 1018 North Main Street
- Food Lion, 1010 Portsmouth Boulevard
- Food Lion, 1575 Holland Road
- Walmart, 6259 College Drive
- Kroger, 1017 University Boulevard
- Chick-Fil-A, 6212 College Drive
- Food Lion, 2815 Godwin Boulevard
- Dollar General, 6513 Holland Road
- Dollar General, 5900 Godwin Boulevard
- J & L Food Mart, 6500 Whaleyville Boulevard
- Food Lion, 3215 Bridge Road
- Bojangles, 2912 Godwin Blvd
- 7-Eleven, 1000 Centerbrooke Lane
- Duck Thru, 6273 Holland Road

Citizens will have additional opportunities to donate as firefighters bring their boots to the Suffolk Parks & Recreation T.G.I.F. Summer Concert Series, details and dates as follows [www.suffolkva.us/1176/TGIF-Summer-Concert-Series](http://www.suffolkva.us/1176/TGIF-Summer-Concert-Series).

If you are unable to come to the collection sites or do not have cash on hand, you can easily donate to Suffolk's own Donation Website for Fill the Boot at

<https://filltheboot.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.participant&participantID=1912> and will be running throughout the entire campaign and year!

“We are thrilled to be working with Suffolk Fire & Rescue and Local 2801 Professional Firefighters for another year of Fill the Boot to help provide the funds needed to find treatments and cures for muscular dystrophy, ALS and related diseases that severely limit strength and mobility,” said Development Specialist, Darcy Warren. “The dedication of these firefighters to MDA’s mission is unwavering, spending countless hours both with Fill the Boot and MDA Summer Camp to care for the kids and adults in Suffolk. We know that their devotion to our families will make this year’s drive a success.”

Funds raised through Suffolk’s Fill the Boot events in 2019 empower families who inspire everyday Americans to help kids and adults with muscular dystrophy and related muscle-debilitating diseases live longer and grow stronger, displaying how we all can truly live unlimited no matter what limits we may face.

Contributions also help fund groundbreaking research and life-enhancing programs such as state-of-the-art support groups and Care Centers, including the MDA Care Center at The Children’s Hospital of the King’s Daughters in Norfolk, VA. They also help send more than 70 local kids to “the best week of the year” at MDA summer camp at the 4H Camp in Wakefield, VA – all at no cost to their families.

### **MDA and IAFF Partnership**

As MDA’s largest national partner, the IAFF fuels MDA’s mission to find research breakthroughs across diseases; care for kids and adults from day one; and provide families with services and support.

IAFF support for MDA began in 1954 when the organization committed by proclamation to support MDA until a cure is found, and the organization’s unwavering commitment to MDA has remained strong to this day. The IAFF raised \$100,000 for

MDA in 1955, and \$1 million in 1970, and fire fighters continue to raise the bar in their fundraising efforts. In 2016, more than 100,000 fire fighters participated in Fill the Boot events across the country and raised \$24.2 million. To date the IAFF has raised more than \$650 million for MDA.

### **About the IAFF**

The [International Association of Fire Fighters](#) represents more than 300,000 professional fire fighters and paramedics who protect 85 percent of the nation's population. More than 3,200 affiliates and their members protect communities in every state in the United States and in Canada.

### **About MDA**

MDA is leading the fight to free individuals — and the families who love them — from the harm of muscular dystrophy, ALS and related muscle-debilitating diseases that take away physical strength, independence and life. We use our collective strength to help kids and adults live longer and grow stronger by finding research breakthroughs across diseases; caring for individuals from day one; and empowering families with services and support in hometowns across America.

Learn how you can fund cures, find care and champion the cause at [mda.org](http://mda.org).

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