

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



December 2, 2020

Contact:

Diana L. Klink
(Office) 757.514.4104
(Mobile) 757.359.1845

Tim Kelley
(Office) 757.514.4103
(Mobile) 757.871.3039

**SUFFOLK FIRE & RESCUE HOSTS COMMENCEMENT
AND BADGE PINNING CEREMONY**

SUFFOLK, VA (December 2, 2020) The Suffolk Fire & Rescue Department welcomed 10 new Firefighters to their ranks following a Commencement & Badge Pinning Ceremony, Thursday, November 19, 2020, at King's Fork High School's auditorium. The event followed all COVID-19 Safety Guidelines and was live streamed through assistance by the Suffolk Media & Community Relations Department.

The graduates came from the Hampton Roads Recruit Fire Academy (HRRFA) Class 22, which was a joint Academy between Suffolk Fire & Rescue and Portsmouth Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services. HRRFA Class 22 chose the name "Hot Shots", and included a total of 26 men and women who graduated following intensive State-Certified Basic Recruit Training combined with grueling physical training that began in November 2019.

Chief Michael Barakey of Suffolk Fire & Rescue noted to Class 22 that, "You are no longer Recruit Firefighters. You are Firefighters. You are now in the rare company of being part of a profession that asks you to give of yourself above others. You will be asked to give of yourself so that others may live, because Firefighters serve without

hesitation and without judgement. To do this, you must be dedicated to the craft of firefighting. Dedication is what is important to your future in this noble profession”.

Class 22 members include the following individuals that have already reported to various Fire Stations across the City of Suffolk:

David Gross (Station 3, C Shift)

Austin Loudermilk (Station 6, A Shift)

Wesley McCaw (Station 6, C Shift)

Bryan Moore (Station 5, B Shift)

Caitlyn Mounce (Station 3, A Shift)

David Poulson (Station 1, C Shift)

Matthew Terry (Station 1, B Shift)

Bryce Thomasson (Station1, A Shift)

Nicholas Walker (Station 5, C Shift)

Robert Young III (Station 1, A Shift)

Portsmouth Fire & Rescue graduates were:

Eric Allen

Maureen Barbour

Joshua Berry

Cindy Bocanegra

Kyle Elmer

Jacob Evans

Caleb Freeman

Jonathan Glaser

Julian Jenkins

Bailey Lawhon

Trevor Lee

Charles McKenney

Bruce Mullen

Casey Raynor

John Silva

Nicolas Simmons

Suffolk Fire & Rescue Instructors included HRRFA Coordinator Lieutenant Rainey Dail, Fire Training HRRFA Lead Instructor Fire Training Officer Mary Riddick, Co-Lead Instructor Fire Medic Bryan Grasser, and HRRFA Staff Instructors Fire Medic Edward Tuck and Fire Medic Joe Jarman.

Portsmouth Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Instructors included HRRFA Director, Captain Ronnie Reeves, Co-Coordinators Lieutenant Nikki Hatfield and Lieutenant Erin Virnelson, Firefighter Alphonso Griffin, Firefighter David English, and Firefighter Eric Combs.

###