

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 28, 2022



Contact:

Tim Kelley
Office: 757.514.4103
Mobile: 757.871.3039

SUFFOLK FIRE & RESCUE HONORS OFFICER, FIREFIGHTER, AND PARAMEDIC OF THE YEAR

SUFFOLK, VA (January 28, 2022) The Suffolk Fire & Rescue Department strongly believes in recognizing its own when they are found to be deserving of accolades. Fire Chief Michael J. Barakey recently announced the following well-deserved honors:

Officer of the Year: Captain Keith Johnson

Captain Keith W. Johnson started his fire service career by joining the Carrsville Volunteer Fire Department in 1998. In 2004, Captain Johnson was hired by Suffolk Fire & Rescue. He was promoted to Fire Lieutenant in 2012 and later was promoted to Fire Captain in 2016. Currently, Captain Johnson is assigned to Battalion where he serves as an Acting Battalion Chief in administration. Captain Johnson was awarded a Medal of Honor by Suffolk Fire & Rescue in 2019.

In 2007, Captain Johnson completed Suffolk Fire & Rescue's first in-house Paramedic program through Tidewater Community College. He holds numerous Virginia Department of Fire Programs Certifications. He obtained his Associate's Degree through Paul D. Camp Community College. Captain Johnson has been an instrumental part of developing Suffolk Fire & Rescue's Communication Team. He holds COML and COMT certifications and is also a certified Drone Pilot.

Paramedic of the Year: Master Firefighter Medic Bryant Dodson

Master Firefighter Medic Bryant S. Dodson was hired by Suffolk Fire & Rescue on May 1, 2017. He graduated from Tidewater Regional Fire Academy Class 144 and obtained his Paramedic Certification in 2016. Master Firefighter Medic Dodson holds an Associates of Science degree in Agricultural Technology from Virginia Tech and is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Fire Administration.

Master Firefighter Medic Dodson has been assigned to Engine 25, Ladder 5, and Engine 2. He is currently assigned as a staff instructor in the Training Division. Master Firefighter Medic Dodson is certified as technician level in the core technical rescue disciplines and attended Class 6 of the Hampton Roads Fire Officer Academy.

Firefighter of the Year: Master Firefighter Charles Mullen

Master Firefighter Charles Mullen has been with Suffolk Fire & Rescue for 20 years, serving the last 8 years as a Master Firefighter. He is currently assigned to the Marine Team which is housed at Fire Station 9 in Chuckatuck. Master Firefighter Mullen was awarded the Medal of Merit in 2020 by Suffolk Fire & Rescue for being instrumental in the development of the Department's Marine Team and procurement of Fire Boat 1.

Master Firefighter Mullen is a member and instructor of the Hampton Roads Regional Maritime Incident Response Team (MIRT). He was awarded the Port of Virginia Maritime Incident Response Team Distinguished Service Award in 2021. Master Firefighter Mullen is a certified National Association of State Boating Law Administrators Instructor and also holds several United States Coast Guard (USCG) certifications to include USCG Aux Coxswain and USCG Search and Rescue coordinator.

Master Firefighter Mullen considers one of his greatest career accomplishments as being part of a group that established the first maritime response team and water

rescue program for the City of Suffolk. He also helped write a successful Federal Homeland Security Grant which enabled design, purchase and implementation of the first all-hazards fireboat in Suffolk's history.

###