

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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August 28, 2015



### **Contact:**

Diana L. Klink  
757.514.4104  
757.359.1845

Tim Kelley  
757.514.4103  
757.871.3039

### **SUFFOLK FIREFIGHTER BRINGS HOME SILVER MEDAL FROM WORLD POLICE & FIRE GAMES**

SUFFOLK, VA (August 28, 2015) What started in a spinning class at the YMCA has turned into a 10-year-long passion for Suffolk Fire & Rescue Master Firefighter John Michael Gray. The 38-year-old Suffolk native returned home earlier this summer from the World Police & Fire Games in Fairfax, Virginia with a silver medal in the Men's 35+ Cycling Street Time Trial Competition.

Gray trained for eight to ten months to work toward peaking for the games which brought together firefighters, police officers, customs and corrections officers from around the world to compete in over 65 sporting events. The Street Time Trial Competition featured riders racing against the clock. Gray averaged 26.5 miles per hour over the 10 mile course. Gray said, "I wasn't sure how well I had done. I felt like I was almost slow. When the final results came in, I was in shock and speechless to be standing on the victory platform. My silver medal meant a lot to my family and I."

Gray, who also finished 9<sup>th</sup> in the Men's 35+ Criterion Competition, said he trains on his days off of work, unlike his European counterparts who are given three to five month's paid time off to train.

A 16-year veteran of the Suffolk Fire & Rescue Department, Gray had placed first in the State in the Time Trial Competition prior to the World Games. He is looking forward to the U.S. Cycling Nationals next year in Winston Salem, North Carolina, where he can continue to strive for gold. Gray is also planning to return to the World Police & Fire Games in 2017 in Montreal, Canada.

Throughout the year, Gray rides as an individual as well as with a team of 6 riders, four of which are local firefighters.

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