



CITY OF HARRISONBURG
FIRE
DEPARTMENT

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(Above) Assistant Chief Deputy Clerk of Rockingham County Court Alena Almeida delivers the Oath of Office to new HFD firefighters.

Six New Firefighters Join Ranks of Harrisonburg Fire Department

HARRISONBURG, Va. – Six new firefighters who recently graduated from Recruit Class #12 of the Central Shenandoah Valley Regional Fire-Rescue Academy have joined the ranks of the Harrisonburg Fire Department.

The swearing-in ceremony, a moment that reflects the culmination of a rigorous hiring process coupled with a challenging full-time recruit training academy that lasted 22 weeks, took place Aug. 22. Family and friends were invited to take part in a special ceremony held at James Madison University's Memorial Hall.

The following personnel successfully completed the academy:

- David Carl, originally from Catasauqua, Pa., will be assigned to Engine Company 2
- Beckem Cole, originally from Pottstown, Pa., will be assigned to Engine Company 3
- Chase Crosby, originally from Elizabethville, Pa., will be assigned to Tower Company 1
- Ryan Johns, originally from Schuylkill Haven, Pa., will be assigned to Engine Company 1
- Alexander Kreh, originally from Madison, Va., will be assigned to Engine Company 3
- Robert Smith, originally from Hanover County, Va., will be assigned to Engine Company 2

Recruits obtained certifications for Firefighter I, Firefighter II, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Hazardous Materials Awareness/Operations, Introduction to Technical Rescue Awareness, Passenger Vehicle Operations/Technician, Low Angle Rope Rescue Operations, Firefighter Rescue & Survival, Fire Service Elevator Rescue and Emergency Vehicle Operators Course (EVOC) Class I/II/III during the academy. More training will take place now that the firefighters have been assigned to their stations.

“We are deeply grateful for the partnership with our regional fire departments,” Fire Chief Matthew Tobia said of the fire-rescue academy. “Our recruit training staff, led by Captain Larry Bennington, is second to none in providing these new firefighters with the essential skills and, more importantly, commitment to living our core values. This educational experience will form the foundation for their entire careers.”

The Central Shenandoah Regional Fire Academy is a cooperative effort among fire departments in the Central Shenandoah Valley who provide facilities, instructors and staff to deliver all aspects of recruit training. This effort allows the regional departments to hire individuals without prior training to begin careers as firefighters with their respective department, opening doors to opportunities previously offered only to individuals who have already completed training on their own. This is the 12th academy class to graduate since the regional program began in 2020.

The Harrisonburg Fire Department is an ISO-Class II All-Hazards agency providing essential emergency and non-emergency life safety services to the public who live, work and travel in Harrisonburg. More information about the Fire Department is available on-line at www.harrisonburgva.gov/fire or on Facebook[®] and Instagram[®].

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 56,879 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.

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