National Volunteer Fire Council ANNUAL REPORT







NVFC MISSION

To provide a unified voice for volunteer Fire/EMS organizations.

This Mission will be accomplished by:

- Representing the interests of the volunteer fire, emergency medical, or rescue organizations at the U.S. Congress and federal agencies
- Promoting the interests of the state and local organizations at the national level
- Promoting and providing education and training for the volunteer fire, emergency medical, or rescue organizations
- Providing representation on national standards setting committees and projects
- Gathering information from and disseminating information to the volunteer fire, emergency medical, or rescue organizations



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR





On behalf of the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC), I want to thank you for helping to make 2023 another successful year. We were able to support the volunteer fire and emergency services in a variety of ways, from advocacy and training to resources and programs, and focus on issues that are critical to you.

Our annual Training Summit conference saw a record number of attendees, and we launched two new in-person training events – the Regional Wildland Symposium and the Partners In Training (PIT) Crew hazmat train-the-trainer initiative. Our Virtual Classroom has expanded to more than 40 courses and close to 100 webinars, and we offer a robust monthly online training series featuring webinars, Roundtable Talks, and Coffee Talks.

We were excited to partner with John Deere, Hold Fast Features, and Vignette on a feature-length documentary that tells the story of our nation's volunteer firefighters and emergency medical providers. This powerful film was released in select theaters as well as streaming and DVD/ Blu-ray. But even more importantly, hundreds of local departments have used the film to host recruitment events and garner community support.

We released many new tools and resources over the past year to help local departments best serve their communities. Working with our partners, we were also able to give away over \$1 million in gear, equipment, products, scholarships, stipends, and grants that are being used to equip departments and make our nation's volunteer responders safer and better prepared to do their jobs.

The NVFC has long served as the voice of the volunteer emergency services on a national level, and our advocacy was on full display in 2023 as we continued to fight for you. The NVFC provided testimony before Congress on two occasions and has been an unwavering voice in asking Congress to reauthorize and fund the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG), Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants, and U.S. Fire Administration (USFA).

We were thrilled to expand our membership to over 33,000 members in 2023. You are the reason we exist, and your support makes us stronger and better able to serve you. When we stand together, we can achieve our many goals – from getting legislation passed, to addressing critical issues in health and safety, recruitment and retention, training and education, and much more. If you are not yet a member, I encourage you to join at **www.nvfc.org/join** to be part of the NVFC community and take advantage of all of the benefits of membership.

Read about our 2023 initiatives in this Annual Report. To learn more about any of the initiatives or to access resources, visit **www.nvfc.org**.

Sincerely,

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Steve Hirsch, Chair



GOVERNANCE

The NVFC Board of Directors is made up of up to two directors each from 47 state fire associations. Officers are elected by the board for two-year terms. The Executive Committee is comprised of four officers, the chair of the Legislative Committee, the chair of the EMS/Rescue Section, and five NVFC directors elected by the board who serve two-year terms.

The board meets as a whole twice a year – once in the spring and once in the fall. The 2023 spring meeting was held in Arlington, VA, on May 19-21 while the fall meeting was held in Cooperstown, NY, on September 21-22.

Officers:



Chair Steve Hirsch



2nd Vice Chair Paul Acosta



1st Vice Chair Dallas Renfrew



Secretary/Treasurer Bob Guthrie

Executive Committee:

Paul Acosta David Bullard Bob Guthrie Steve Hirsch Brian McQueen Sheri Nickel Bill Offerman Eric Quinney Dallas Renfrew Pat Thompson Reid Vaughan

Committees:

- Audit
- Bylaws
- Communication & Technology
- Conference
- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
- EMS/Rescue Section
- Executive
- Finance
- Hazmat Response
- Health, Safety, and Training
- Homeland Security
- Legislative
- Membership/Awards
- Nominating
- Recruitment and Retention
- Standards & Codes
- Volunteer Advocacy
- Wildland

Affiliated Organization

• NVFC 21st Century Fund





NVFC BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

Alabama Firefighter's Association Curtis Shirley C.R. (Reid) Vaughan

Alaska State Firefighters Association Sara Garcia Dorianne Sprehe

Arizona Fire Chiefs Association Bobby Apodaca Joseph DeWolf

Arkansas State Firefighters Association Rob Ingram Jeff Jones

California State Firefighters' Association Richard Brown Eddie Sell

Colorado State Fire Fighters Association Paul Acosta

Connecticut State Firefighters Association Lew Clark Robert Guthrie

Delaware Volunteer Firefighter's Association Willard "Bill" Betts Norman (Jay) Jones

Florida Fire Chiefs' Association Tim Diamond Robbie Whitfield

Georgia State Firefighters Association David Bullard

Illinois Firefighter's Association Bill Offerman Robert Reason

Indiana Volunteer Firefighters Association Jack Kerney Jean W. Smith

lowa Firefighters Association Roger Bissen Marvin Trimble Kansas State Firefighters Association Steve Hirsch Dan Romine

Kentucky Firefighter's Association Pat Thompson

Louisiana State Firemens Association Guy Bonin Kenn Fontenot

Maine State Federation of Firefighters Ken Desmond Joseph Guyotte

Maryland State Firemen's Association Eric Bernard David Lewis

Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association Dr. Michael Goldstein Joseph Maruca

Michigan State Firemen's Association Cliff Messing Paul Wayco

Minnesota State Fire Department Association Judy Thill Dave Yurczyk

Mississippi Firefighter's Association Jennifer Williams George Stevens

Fire Fighters Association of Missouri Rob Erdel Keith Smith

Montana State Volunteer Firefighters Association Jerry Brothers Kevin Moritz

Nebraska State Volunteer Firefighters Association Joel Cerny Justin Scamehorn

Nevada State Firefighter's Association Mike Heidemann Steve McClintock

* List reflects Directors on 12/15/23.

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NVFC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

New Hampshire Association of Fire Chiefs Charles Corey Frank Fraitzl

New Jersey State Firemen's Association Brian Foley George Heflich, Sr.

Firefighters Association of the State of New York Brian McQueen Ken Pienkowski

North Carolina State Firefighters' Association Tim Bradley Quentin Cash

North Dakota Firefighter's Association Allan Klein David Lautt

Ohio State Firefighters' Association Rodger Sansom Gary Zehring

Oklahoma State Firefighters Association Cliff Davidson Sheri Nickel

Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association Steve McClintock Jason Servatius

Firefighters' Association of the State of Pennsylvania Paul Lukus Robert Timko

Rhode Island State Firefighters' League Kevin Quinn Mark St. Pierre

South Carolina State Firefighters' Association Jack Kirlin Keith Minick

South Dakota Firefighters Association Charlie Kludt Jeremy Walla

Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association

P.J. Duncan Melvin Martin

State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas Kendall Hunting Dallas Renfrew

Utah State Firefighters' Association Brent Marshall Lance Nay

Vermont State Firefighters' Association Robert Kilpeck Bob Patterson

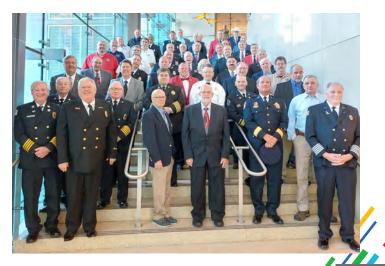
Virginia State Firefighters Association Ken Brown John. S "Pete" Kirby

Washington State Fire Fighters' Association T.J. Nedrow Andrew Schaffran

West Virginia State Firemen's Association Thomas Miller

Wisconsin State Firefighters Association Chris Klahn Philip C. Stittleburg

Wyoming State Firemen's Association Eric Quinney Lawrence Erdmann



FINANCES

Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2023

	12/31/2023
Assets	
Cash	\$ 701,747
Accounts Receivable	615,206
Other Current Assets	123,173
Investments	1,237,492
Fixed Assets, net	55,248
Other Long-Term Assets	0
Operating Lease ROU Asset	0
Total Assets	\$ 2,732,866
Payables Accrued Liabilities Deferred Revenue Operating Lease Liability	\$ 142,970 74,643 129,639 0
Total Liabilities	\$ 347,252
Net Assets	
Without Donor Restrictions	2,160,888
With Donor Restrictions	224,726
Net Assets, Ending	2,385,614
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 2,732,866

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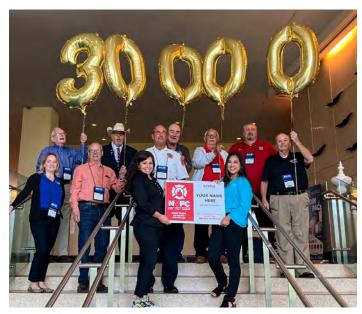
This financial information is preliminary, unaudited, and subject to revision upon completion of the Council's closing and audit processes.

MEMBERSHIP

The NVFC surpassed 30,000 members in 2023, including individuals, states, and corporations. Individual membership is just \$21 per year and comes with a variety of benefits, including:

- Access to the First Responder Helpline
- All courses free in the NVFC Virtual Classroom
- \$10,000 AD&D insurance policy
- Access to the Volunteer Voices online member community
- Eligibility to apply for members-only giveaways, grants, and scholarships
- Eligibility to apply for the Volunteer Firefighter Support Fund
- Educational discounts to online universities and fire service training
- Discounts on various products and services from NVFC partners

Not a member? Learn more about all benefits and join at **www.nvfc.org/join**.



The NVFC surpassed 30,000 members in 2023.



ADVOCACY

The NVFC has representatives on 22 National Fire Protection Association standards-setting committees and represents the volunteer fire and emergency services on numerous national workgroups and task forces. The NVFC also had representatives on all six of the U.S. Fire Administration's 2023 workgroups.

The NVFC advocates on Capitol Hill for legislation that will benefit the fire and emergency services. Members can also take action to assist with these efforts through the NVFC Legislative Action Center, which is offered through the VoterVoice platform. In 2023, 3,803 letters to Congress were sent through the NVFC's Action Center to help support critical emergency service legislation.

The NVFC demonstrated support for several fire/EMS priorities in 2023 by taking the following actions:

- On March 22, Chief David Comstock of the Western Reserve Joint Fire District in Ohio testified on behalf of the NVFC at a hearing on "Improving Rail Safety in Response to the East Palestine Derailment" held by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. The hearing provided an opportunity for the NVFC to raise awareness for the need of critical funding for first responder training, equipment, and health screenings.
- On May 11, NVFC Georgia director David Bullard testified on behalf of the NVFC at a hearing on "Reauthorizing the U.S. Fire Administration and Fire Grant Programs: Evaluating Effectiveness and Preparedness for Modern Challenges" held by the House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space, and Technology's Subcommittee on Research and Technology. The hearing provided an opportunity for the NVFC to express the importance of reauthorizing AFG, SAFER, and USFA.
- In June, the NVFC issued a position statement regarding the complexity of federal grant application compliance. It addressed obstacles that are cumbersome for volunteer fire departments and made recommendations for addressing these obstacles. In November, the NVFC submitted comments to FEMA regarding the simplification of the grant process, which were consistent with the recommendations laid out in the position statement.
- In August, the NVFC released a joint statement with other national fire service organizations to strongly oppose proposed cuts to the AFG and SAFER grants and call upon Congress to restore this critical funding.

- The NVFC emphasized the need for Congress to reauthorize AFG, SAFER, and USFA at a multiorganization fire service open house on Capitol Hill in September and a Capitol Hill screening of the documentary *Odd Hours, No Pay, Cool Hat* in November.
- The NVFC strongly supported a letter sent by 71 Members of Congress to House Speaker Mike Johnson and Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries on November 22 that requested that the Fire Grants and Safety Act (H.R. 4090/S. 870), which would reauthorize AFG, SAFER, and USFA, be included in the FY 2024 National Defense Authorization Act.

While the NVFC supports several pieces of legislation that have been introduced into the House and Senate in 2023, the top priority is to get Congress to reauthorize AFG, SAFER, and USFA. Authorization for these important fire service programs lapsed on September 30, 2023, and without action, AFG and SAFER will cease to exist on September 30, 2024.



NVFC board member David Bullard testified before Congress about the importance of reauthorizing AFG, SAFER, and USFA.





PROGRAMS

The NVFC administers groundbreaking programs and campaigns for the fire and emergency services.

Fire Corps™ helps fire and EMS departments enhance their services by engaging with community members to assist with non-emergency tasks, such as fire prevention education, administration, public relations, fundraising, incident pre-planning, and more. **www.firecorps.org**



The **Heart-Healthy Firefighter Program™** provides tools and resources to reduce heart attacks by helping responders focus on nutrition, fitness, and healthy lifestyle choices, as well as assists departments in starting and expanding a health and wellness program. www.healthy-firefighter.org



The **Make Me A Firefighter™** campaign helps fire departments recruit and retain volunteers. It includes a department portal to advertise volunteer opportunities, customize recruitment materials, and access tools to assist in increasing department staffing. Potential volunteers can go to the public web site to find local volunteer opportunities. **www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org**



The **National Junior Firefighter Program™** helps departments develop, grow, enhance, and promote a local junior firefighter program to foster the next generation of firefighters, garner new recruits, and provide youth with valuable life skills such as teamwork, leadership, responsibility, and commitment. **www.nvfc.org/juniors**



The **Share the Load™ Program** provides tools, resources, and training to help individuals and departments proactively address behavioral health and support our nation's emergency responders. **www.nvfc.org/help**



The **Wildland Fire Assessment Program** is a joint effort by the U.S. Forest Service and the NVFC to provide fire service volunteers with training and resources to conduct safety assessments for homes located in the wildland-urban interface. **www.nvfc.org/wfap**









Recruitment and Retention

The Make Me A Firefighter campaign has 9,665 departments registered in the department portal, or 38% of volunteer and combination departments in the U.S. There are 5,696 volunteer opportunities posted through the campaign. Since the program launched, there have been 3.85 million clicks on opportunity listings and 38.696 volunteer interest forms completed through www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org.

The following resources and tools were released in 2023 to help with volunteer recruitment and retention:

- Odd Hours, No Pay, Cool Hat This 90-minute documentary showcasing the volunteer fire service was created through a partnership between the NVFC, John Deere, Hold Fast Features, and Vignette. The film was released in select theaters; is available on streaming, DVD, and Blu-ray; and there have been 244 completed or confirmed community screenings by fire departments to help recruit new volunteers and increase community support.
- Ride With Us Two new episodes of this web series were released to show the public what it's like to be a volunteer firefighter. The first new episode examines what it means to join the firefighter family, and the second episode teaches viewers about ladder trucks and some of the non-operational volunteer roles available.

- Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer **Emergency Services** – This U.S. Fire Administration guide, developed in partnership with the NVFC, aims to equip volunteer departments with the tools, strategies, and insights to overcome recruitment obstacles and retain their valuable volunteers.
- Junior Firefighter Program Starter Kit Developed with support from California Casualty, the second edition of this toolkit helps departments build the framework for a successful youth program.
- Fire Service Discrimination & Harassment **Toolkit** – Women in Fire partnered with the NVFC on this new resource to help both volunteer and career first responders prevent, identify, and respond to discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in the workplace.

The NVFC received its third SAFER grant in May 2023 to continue and expand upon its recruitment and retention initiatives, including the Make Me A Firefighter campaign.





The volunteer fire service documentary Odd Hours, No Pay, Cool Hat premiered at an event at the John Deere headquarters in Moline, IL, on April 22, 2023, along with a panel discussion.



HEALTH & SAFETY



The NVFC received a 2023 Power of Associations Gold Award for the **Psychologically Healthy Fire Departments** (**PHFD**) initiative. This behavioral health initiative supports responder wellbeing through the following resources and training:

- The Directory of Behavioral Health Professionals, which includes over 200 vetted providers ready and equipped to help responders and their families with any behavioral health issues. In 2023, the directory moved from a PDF to a searchable, online tool.
- *PHFD: Implementation Toolkit*, which assists department leaders in fostering wellbeing among their members through six key categories.
- *Creating a Psychologically Health Fire Department* training course, which is available online and in-person to empower leadership to promote and support a healthy, high-performing workforce.
- New in 2023, departments can now make the commitment to be a Psychologically Healthy Fire Department and be featured on a special webpage.

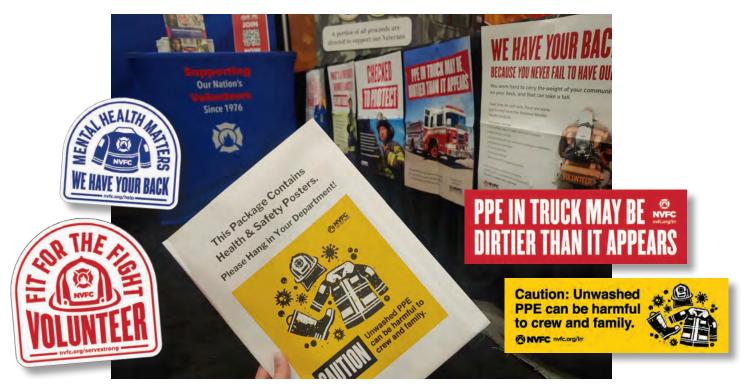
The seventh issue of the *Firefighter Strong* newsletter was mailed to all U.S. volunteer and combination fire departments in June and is also available online. It featured articles and resources relating to first responder health and safety.

A series of new **health and safety posters** and stickers were distributed to departments to motivate their members to focus on health and follow best practices to increase their safety and wellbeing.

New **animated videos** were released on critical health and safety issues, including:

- Smoking cessation
- Dangers of distracted driving
- Exposure risk reduction on the fireground
- Exposure risk reduction after the fire scene

In September, the NVFC was awarded another Fire Prevention and Safety grant to continue to support health and safety initiatives.



The NVFC released packets of health and safety posters and stickers for departments to hang up to motivate and educate personnel.



TRAINING

The NVFC Virtual Classroom contains more than 40 courses, and in 2023, there were 4,141 course registrations. There are also more than 90 recorded webinars in the Virtual Classroom, with more than 2,000 registrations in 2023. All courses are free to NVFC members and webinars are free to all. Select courses are available for CEUs. Several new courses were added in 2023, including:

- Creating a Health and Fitness Program in Your Department: A Two-Part Course
- Volunteer Fire Service Culture: Essential Strategies for Success
- Autism Awareness for the Fire Service
- Collaborative Programs: Pipeline Safety and Response

The NVFC held 17 Train Strong webinars in 2023, with 2,908 live attendees. Eleven Roundtable Talks were held, with 986 live attendees. A new virtual training series, R&R Coffee Talk, was established to give volunteer responders the opportunity to discuss various issues facing the fire service in a more informal and conversational way. Four of these events were held throughout the year.

The NVFC hosted two training conferences in 2023. The inaugural Regional Wildland Symposium was held March

17-18 in Box Elder, SD, and focused on issues relating to wildland fire response and mitigation in the Plains region. Eighteen of the 75 attendees received travel stipends. The NVFC Training Summit took place June 23-24 in Oklahoma City, OK, and focused on responder health and safety, volunteer recruitment and retention, and emergency service leadership. Of the 150 attendees, 55 received a stipend to assist with travel and conference costs.

Thanks to a Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) grant, the NVFC launched the Partners In Training (PIT) Crew program. Through the initiative, the NVFC hosted eight in-person train-the-trainer events to hundreds of first responders across the country in 2023. The courses provide attendees the knowledge and skills needed to train others in their department and communities on hazmat safety and response. At least eight more train-the-trainer events will be held in 2024.

In addition, NVFC staff and subject matter experts presented at 19 conferences and events nationwide.

Learn more about the NVFC's training initiatives and view the upcoming training schedule at **www.nvfc.org/trainings**.



The NVFC hosted many training events in 2023, including the NVFC Training Summit in Oklahoma City, OK, and the inaugural Regional Wildland Symposium in Box Elder, SD.





PARTNERSHIPS

The NVFC routinely develops and implements partner programs with other organizations, agencies, and corporations to support local fire and EMS departments. Following are highlights from the 2023 partnership programs and initiatives.

Anheuser-Busch Emergency Drinking Water Program

Anheuser-Busch partnered with the NVFC to provide emergency drinking water to keep firefighters hydrated during wildfires and other long incidents. In 2023, Anheuser-Busch donated 2.5 million cans of water to 1,061 volunteer fire departments in 47 states. Since the program began in 2019, over 8.9 million cans of water have been delivered to nearly 2,500 departments across almost all 50 states. In 2023, Anheuser-Busch also donated \$15,000 to the NVFC through the Brew Across America charitable event.

Brooks Hero Collection

Brooks and Academy Sports + Outdoors partnered with the NVFC for the second time to create exclusive first responder shoes and socks. The Hero Collection featured special designs that recognized the courageous spirit of our nation's firefighters and medical workers and the positive impact running can have on mental health and wellness. A portion of the proceeds benefited the NVFC and Beads of Courage.

CHEMTREC® HELP Awards and Laptop Giveaway

Five fire departments with NVFC members were awarded \$10,000 each through the 2023 CHEMTREC® HELP (Hazmat Emergencies Local Preparedness) Awards. These grants bolster the departments' hazardous materials incident response capabilities and preparedness. Since the awards launched in 2019, \$165,000 has been donated to 17 departments. In addition, CHEMTREC donated 12 refurbished laptops to volunteer departments in a special holiday giveaway.

Columbia Southern University (CSU) Scholarships

Two NVFC members were awarded a scholarship to attend CSU. Each scholarship covers up to 60 hours towards one online degree program. Since the partnership began in 2009, 30 NVFC members have been awarded scholarships to achieve their educational goals.

DripDrop Hydration Giveaway

DripDrop Hydration partnered with the NVFC to donate 547,000 servings of its electrolyte drink mix to volunteer fire departments to provide fast hydration to volunteer firefighters battling wildfire and other long incidents. This was the fourth year of the partnership, with over 1.7 million servings donated since 2020.

General Motors Roadway Safety Grant

The NVFC received a third grant from General Motors to focus on first responder roadway safety. The grant will allow the NVFC to continue educating the driving public on how to properly pass an emergency scene and the importance of avoiding distractions while driving as well as train responders on proper traffic incident management and electric vehicle incident response.







PARTNERSHIPS



Motorola Solutions Foundation Grant

The NVFC received its eighth consecutive grant from the Motorola Solutions Foundation, the charitable arm of Motorola Solutions. The grant will allow the NVFC to expand upon critical training initiatives for the volunteer fire and emergency services.

MSA and DuPont's Globe Gear Giveaway

MSA and DuPont, in partnership with the NVFC, awarded a total of 52 sets of turnout gear and 52 helmets to 13 volunteer or mostly volunteer departments in need. MSA also sponsored NVFC memberships for the first 500 applicants. Since the program began in 2012, 715 sets of gear and 260 helmets have been provided to 160 volunteer departments in need.

MSA Cairns® XF1 Fire Helmet Giveaway

MSA also partnered with the NVFC to give away two MSA Cairns® XF1 Fire Helmets to NVFC members in 2023. This was the third year of the helmet giveaway.

PHMSA Pipeline Response Toolkit and Training

PHMSA continued its partnership with the NVFC to improve pipeline incident preparedness and response through the Fire Department Pipeline Response, Emergency Planning, & Preparedness (FD PREPP) Toolkit and supplemental online training.

Safety Stand Down

The NVFC annually partners with the International Association of Fire Chiefs' Safety, Health, and Survival Section; National Fire Protection Association (NFPA); Fire Department Safety Officers Association; and International Association of Fire Fighters for Safety Stand Down. The 2023 event took place June 18-24 and focused on lithiumion battery safety and incident response. More than 55,000 visits were made to the Safety Stand Down web site and 5,150 people took the Safety Stand Down quiz. The NFPA provided 200 quiz-takers with a Safety Stand Down challenge coin.







AWARDS

The NVFC annually recognizes excellence in the fire service through its achievement awards. The following awards were presented in 2023.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Sponsored by Lincoln Financial Group LeRoy Koopman (SD)

Chief James P. Seavey Sr. Health and Wellness Leadership Award

Award co-sponsored by VFIS and Ward Diesel Filter Systems Chief Mahlon Irish Jr. (NY)

Junior Firefighter of the Year

Sponsored by California Casualty Kyra Kozey (NY)

Junior Firefighter Program of the Year

Sponsored by California Casualty East Norwich Junior Program (NY)









NVFC CORPORATE MEMBERS



The NVFC is grateful for the support and partnership of our Corporate Members. Below are our Chairman's Club, Supporter, and Champion members. View the full list of corporate members at **www.nvfc.org/corporatemembers**.



CONTACT THE NVFC



The NVFC is here for you. Contact the office with any questions or to request information.

National Volunteer Fire Council 712 H Street NE, Suite 1478 Washington, DC 20002 202-887-5700 1-888-ASK-NVFC (275-6832) www.nvfc.org



X @nvfc

🧿 @mynvfc



National Volunteer Fire Council

JOIN US

We've got your back. Join the NVFC and help support our initiatives while taking advantage of great benefits. **www.nvfc.org/join**

This annual report is dedicated to the memory of Ron Roy, WA director, and Ken Wettstein, CO director.

NVFC Staff:

Chief Executive Officer Sarah Lee, CAE

Deputy Chief Executive Officer Dr. Candice McDonald

Chief of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Ryan Woodward

Chief of Communications Kimberly Quiros

Communications Coordinator Cierra Orlyk

Chief of Training and Education Rachel Buczynski

Engagement Manager Meg Goldberg

Membership Manager Alyssa Dara

Membership Coordinator Laura Towers

Program Manager Lori Shirley

Program Manager Caroline Stachowiak

Program Coordinator Maggie Mojab

Office Manager/Executive Assistant Lorraine Higgins

