



OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FIRE MARSHAL

JB Pritzker, Governor
Matt Perez, State Fire Marshal

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Governor Pritzker and Fire Marshal Perez Honor Fallen Firefighters

Firefighters gather to honor four fallen firefighters during the 29th annual Fallen Firefighter Memorial and Medal of Honor Ceremony

Springfield, Ill- Governor JB Pritzker and State Fire Marshal Matt Perez joined firefighters to honor and remember four fallen firefighters at the 29th Annual Fallen Firefighter Memorial and Medal of Honor Ceremony. During the ceremony, the Governor and Fire Marshal also honored firefighters who went above and beyond on the job, displaying courage, pride and honor while protecting communities across the state.

"This memorial is dedicated to the firefighters of Illinois, who have given their lives in the line of duty, and to those firefighters who heroically lead with courage, pride, and honor," **said Governor JB Pritzker**. "Michael, MaShawn, Medhi, and Garrett will live on in our memories, in the lives of those they've saved, and in the hearts of those they've touched. May their memories be a blessing."

"Today at the Fallen Firefighter Memorial, we honored four of our bravest brothers who gave their lives in service to the people of Illinois," **said Illinois State Fire Marshal Matt Perez**. "We will be forever grateful for their courage and ultimate sacrifice in the performance of their duties. They put the lives of others ahead of their own, which is our highest calling. I also want to personally thank every firefighter who was recognized today for their bravery in the line of duty during the Medal of Honor Ceremony. Illinois is home to a fire service that is second to none."

Loved ones of the fallen firefighters were presented with the "Death Duty Gold Badge" by the Fire Marshall during the ceremony. This year's honorees include:

- Firefighter/Paramedic Michael Pickering of the Chicago Fire Department
- Firefighter MaShawn Plummer of the Chicago Fire Department
- Lieutenant Garrett Ramos of the Sterling Fire Department
- Firefighter Mehdi Mourad of the Wabash Fire Protection District

"As firefighters, our members took an oath to protect the citizens and property of the various communities across Illinois. Each one of us take that oath very seriously. Today we honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. We will never ever forget them or their families. We also honor those whose actions went above and beyond the call of duty," **said**

Chuck Sullivan President of Associated Fire Firefighters of Illinois. “While they will all say they were “Just doing their job” we all know it takes courage, guts and determination to do this job. The Associated Fire Fighters of Illinois (AFFI) proudly stands with our brothers, sisters and their families on this day, and every day.”

Additionally, one firefighter was awarded the Medal of Honor. This is the highest award given by the State of Illinois to a firefighter for an act of outstanding bravery or heroism, by which the firefighter has demonstrated in great degree the characteristics of selflessness and personal courage above and beyond the call of duty, under adverse conditions, with the possibility of extreme personal risk.

- Lieutenant Brian Kulaga, Cicero Fire Department

Seven firefighters were honored with the Medal of Valor award. The award is given by the State of Illinois to a firefighter for an act of heroism or bravery that clearly demonstrated courage and dedication in the face of danger while in the performance of duty. Recipients include:

- Firefighter/EMT Richard Drabik, Chicago Fire Department
- Firefighter/Paramedic Colin Fuhrmann, Collinsville Fire Department
- Lieutenant Chad Busick, Danville Fire Department
- Engineer Jason Milakovich, Evergreen Park Fire Department
- Lieutenant Adrian Avelar, Sterling Fire Department
- Firefighter Lucas Pfister, Sterling Fire Department
- Firefighter Jeff Kimpel, Sterling Fire Department

Fifteen firefighters received the Firefighter Excellence Award for an act of service in the line of duty, demonstrating excellence and professionalism in service to their fellow Illinoisans. Recipients include:

Calumet City Fire Department

- Firefighter Scott Hinko

Centralia Fire Department

- Firefighter Drake Tate

Centralia Fire Protection District

- Engineer Ross Smith

Champaign Fire Department

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- Engineer Brian Smith

Danville Fire Department

- Firefighter Easton Hoskins

Galesburg Fire Department

- Captain James Pendergast
- Firefighter Kyle Harms

Lockport Township Fire Protection District

- Firefighter/Paramedic Dustin Vandermeir
- Firefighter/Paramedic Christopher Isabelli

South Holland Fire Department

- Firefighter/Paramedic Steven Devaney
- Firefighter/Paramedic Alex Heavey
- Firefighter/Paramedic Justin Wenk
- Firefighter/Paramedic Luke DeYoung

Sterling Fire Department

- Lieutenant Garrett Ramos
- Firefighter Nick Hammer

In addition, twelve units received the Firefighter Excellence "Unit Citation" Awards for an act of service in the line of duty, demonstrating excellence, teamwork, and professionalism in service to Illinois residents. Recipients include:

Bensenville Fire Protection District, Incident #21-3340

- Battalion Chief Angel Reyes
- Lieutenant Nevin Hahn
- Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Sochacki
- Firefighter/Paramedic Andrew Walter
- Firefighter/Paramedic Zach Schneeberger
- Firefighter/Paramedic Mateo Valadez

Calumet City Fire Department, Incident #21-4139

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- Captain Tim McGanonn
- Captain. Ron Tenzera
- Engineer Steve Drew
- Engineer Mike Ball
- Engineer Aaron Borowski
- Firefighter Rick Graser
- Firefighter Chris Pierce
- Firefighter Steve Uthe
- Firefighter Alex James
- Firefighter Cesar Garcia
- Firefighter Ryan Banks

Calumet City Fire Department, Incident #21-2470

- Captain Mike Flanagan
- Captain Tom Dukups
- Lieutenant Ryan Hornback
- Engineer Chris Sullivan
- Engineer Eric Wieser
- Firefighter Bryan Lowery
- Firefighter Joe Okichich
- Firefighter Nick Panzcuk
- Firefighter Mike Peterlin
- Firefighter Piepenbrink
- Firefighter Chuck Schultz
- Firefighter Dan Vasilak

Centralia Fire Department, Incident #21-1790

- Lieutenant Robert Smith, Jr.
- Firefighter Jeff Kleiboeker (Huey Ferris Boulder Fire Protection District)

Champaign Fire Department, Incident #21-0003629

- Lieutenant Mike Bayless
- Engineer William Bleich
- Firefighter James Rear
- Lieutenant Jason Rector

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- Engineer Russ Houston
- Firefighter Paul Doyle
- Lieutenant Mathew Plutz
- Engineer Stephen McConkey
- Lieutenant Chad Pruitt
- Firefighter Alex Kocher
- Firefighter Evan Brewbaker
- Lieutenant Bradley Diel
- Engineer Jeremy Allen
- Firefighter Justin Kaiser
- Lieutenant Chip Haake
- Engineer Cole Hunt
- Firefighter Elliott Kraft
- Firefighter Zachary Tish

Chicago Fire Department, Incident #21-006-1733-00

- Firefighter/EMT David Pae
- Captain/EMT Robert Fleckenstein
- Firefighter/Paramedic Mario Cerna
- Firefighter/Paramedic Wilfredo Rodriguez

Collinsville Fire Department, Incident #21-00057

- Lieutenant Chris Castens
- Firefighter/Paramedic Jim Wilderman
- Firefighter/Paramedic Daniel Gullledge
- Firefighter/Paramedic John Canull
- Firefighter/Paramedic Justin Verner
- Lieutenant Frank Arnold
- Firefighter Eric Freeman
- Firefighter David Badgett

Danville Fire Department, Incident #21-0002378

- Captain Sean O’Kane
- Firefighter Kaleb Thompson

Evergreen Park Fire Department, Incident #21-2308

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- Captain Frederick Vollinger
- Acting Lieutenant Andrew Turner
- Engineer Raymond Fineron
- Firefighter Austin Cangelosi
- Firefighter Justin Rehnquist
- Firefighter Michael Murphy
- Firefighter Thomas Simich
- Firefighter Robert Williams
- Firefighter Colin Zofkie
- Firefighter Anthony Schickel
- Firefighter Larry Whitehorn

Galesburg Fire Department, Incident #0000734

- Firefighter Anthony McKillip
- Firefighter Kyle McGee
- Firefighter Andrew Johnson

South Holland Fire Department, Incident #21-4300104

- Firefighter Edward Ritzema
- Firefighter/Paramedic Eric Kearney
- Firefighter/Paramedic Tony Bruegmann
- Firefighter/Paramedic Michael Lampkin
- Firefighter/Paramedic Jon Sloop (Glenwood Fire Department)
- Firefighter/Paramedic Steve Pelc (Glenwood Fire Department)

Homer-Sidney Fire Protection District, Incident #21-0000181

- Lieutenant Jeremy Richards
- Firefighter Mike Brann
- Lieutenant. Corey Lilly

The State Fire Marshal Life Safety Award is given in recognition of the extraordinary efforts performed by individuals in furtherance of fire prevention and life safety. Three Life Safety Awards were presented. Recipients include:

- Anthony Rodkey, Countryside Fire Protection District- Fire Department
- Scott Johnson, OSFM Personnel- Operations

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- Fred Schneller, OSFM Personnel- Administration

The awards presented today recognized heroic actions during 2021. Nominations were reviewed and winners selected by the Illinois Fire Fighting Medal of Honor Committee.

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