National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

2011 Annual Report
MISSION STATEMENT

To honor and remember the nation’s fallen firefighters, provide assistance to their families and coworkers, and work to prevent firefighter fatalities.

Since its creation by Congress in 1992, the non-profit National Fallen Firefighters Foundation has developed many programs to fulfill this mandate. Grants and donations from individuals, organizations, corporations, and foundations fund many of the Foundation’s programs.

SURVIVOR PROGRAMS

“It truly helps even more as time goes on to know that someone cares and remembers. I will never forget everyone who has reached out to me from your Foundation and still do.”

THE FIRE SERVICE SURVIVORS NETWORK

A core group of family members of fallen firefighters make up the Fire Service Survivors Network. These dedicated individuals volunteer to assist newly bereaved families and help the Foundation with projects throughout the year and during the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend. There are now a total of 393 Network members from 44 states and the District of Columbia. Members of the Fire Service Survivors Network assisted with:

- Contacting newly bereaved families and offering emotional support. Survivors of 2011 fallen firefighters were carefully matched with Network members. These matches took into account similarities between the newly-bereaved survivor and Network member. For example, widows with young children are matched with widows from previous years whose children were young when their firefighter died. This outreach provided peer-to-peer support for fire service survivors which is a key element in the healing process.
- Sending Remembrance cards to all survivors on the date of their firefighters’ deaths. Personal messages from Network members let other survivors know that they were remembered on the anniversary date of their firefighter’s death. In 2011, 141 Network members sent 3,187 cards.
- Activities in support of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend, such as sewing black bands for fire service badges, helping with family registration, greeting families being honored, making luminary bags, and other Family Day activities. More than 150 family members returned to assist, provide support, and network with families of fallen firefighters being honored.
SCHOLARSHIPS

Many children tell us that their fallen firefighter stressed the importance of getting an education, and our scholarship helps them attain that goal. Since 1997, the NFFF’s scholarship program has given spouses, life partners, children and stepchildren of firefighters honored at the National Memorial the opportunity to pursue their personal, educational and career goals.

For the 2011-12 academic year
  • A very generous donation from the Motorola Foundation enabled the Foundation to award $205,000 to 78 recipients
  • ICMA-RC awarded $25,000 to 20 recipients and MasterGuard awarded 2 $2,000 scholarships for a total of $29,000.
  • The Foundation and its partners combined awarded $234,000
  • Scholarships were awarded to 78 recipients.
  • 74 children, 2 stepchildren, and 2 spouses
  • 7 families had two members who received scholarships
  • 40 are previous recipients
  • 38 are new recipients
  • 12 scholarship recipients are survivors of firefighters killed on 9/11
  • recipients range in age from 18 to 37
  • 53 are survivors of volunteer firefighters
  • 25 are survivors of career firefighters
  • Scholarship recipients hail from 26 different states
  • New York has the greatest number of recipients with 19
  • Missouri comes in second with 8 recipients

Recipients will attend institutions in 30 different states and are preparing for careers ranging from Culinary Arts to Criminal Justice. Two recipients are enrolled in a Fire Science program.

RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ON SURVIVOR BENEFITS

A comprehensive research project on Federal, state, county, and local benefits for the families of fallen firefighters was undertaken. The updated information was posted in the State Benefits section of the Foundation’s website: www.firehero.org.

SIXTH FIRE SERVICE SURVIVORS CONFERENCE

The 6th annual Fire Service Survivors Conference took place May 1-6, 2011, in San Antonio, Texas. The conference was held in conjunction with the Foundation’s Local Assistance State Team (LAST) training, and an annual meeting of the Everyone Goes Home® State Advocates. It was beneficial for both survivors and fire service members to meet and learn about the Foundation’s programs. There were 84 survivors and 76 members of the fire service in attendance.

GRIEF SUPPORT RESOURCES FOR SURVIVORS

A Lending Library of books dealing with the subject of grief and recovery is available for survivors. Brochures are also available free of charge.

  • Provided 511 grief brochures to survivors in 11 states—Alabama, Arizona, California, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, and Texas—and the territory of Puerto Rico.

Staff often receives requests for grief resources or counseling from families and coworkers. These requests are fulfilled either by information available from the Foundation or by finding counseling services in the area where the family lives.

“We are so thankful for the support that you give families who have lost loved ones that helped others and the community. I know and feel that my father is proud of me, and he would be thankful to know that I have some help paying for my education.”

“We the time at the conference is so empowering. Each one has helped me get stronger, learn new ways to help me move forward, get to know other spouse survivors, and really boost my confidence when it’s time to rejoin reality...It felt so good to laugh and have fun! It brings such lightness to my soul and the biggest smile to my face when I think about it.”
Six issues of The Journey, a publication of articles written by survivors, were published and mailed exclusively to survivors. Each issue included a section authored by Department of Justice staff, “Did You Know,” with information on the Public Safety Officers Benefits program. In their own words, survivors wrote about issues they faced after their loved ones died. Survivors contributed articles on:

- The loss of their firefighter—written by teenagers
- Sticking points of grief
- Forgiveness
- Dreams completed
- Paying it forward
- Inspiration
- Coping with holidays

Four issues of the Foundation newsletter, Facing Tomorrow Together, reached over 6,000 survivors and members of the fire service. Articles contained information on:

- Annual Fire Service Survivors Conference
- Scholarships and Public Safety Officers Educational Assistance benefits
- 9-11 Remembrance
- Holiday concert
- Fundraisers—stair climbs, golf tournaments, softball tournament
- Fallen firefighter tributes and remembrances
- Tribute to Sparkles, The Fire Safety Dog
- NASCAR fundraisers
- Highlights of the 2011 Memorial Weekend
- CFSI Dinner
- Better Angels - A Tribute to 9-11 FDNY firefighters
- Remembering Hal Bruno
- Corporate sponsors and donors

Continued sponsorship of The Link, a special biweekly newsletter for the immediate next-of-kin of FDNY firefighters killed at the World Trade Center. The Link reaches 960 households and more than 2,400 FDNY survivors and members of the FDNY community. Foundation staff provided design, editorial support, printing and postage for the newsletter.

In 2011, the National Fallen Firefighters received a Fire Act Grant that allowed the Everyone Goes Home® to develop and refine programs aimed at reducing line-of-duty deaths and injuries.

**TAKING CARE OF OUR OWN®**

Taking Care of Our Own® training helps prepare fire service officers for a line-of-duty death, including how to make notification to the family. There were 14 deliveries of the training to 352 attendees in California, South Dakota, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Oregon, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Idaho, Ohio, Maryland and Montana.

**LOCAL ASSISTANCE STATE TEAMS**

“Great class - I learned a tremendous amount about LAST and PSOB.”  

The Local Assistance State Team (LAST) Program is a collaborative effort between the Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. The Foundation realized that, to best assist families and departments who had lost a firefighter in the line of duty, they needed to have trained personnel on the ground and available to help when requested within six hours of a death. This could only be accomplished by developing a team of trained responders in each state who could be deployed immediately upon notification of a line-of-duty death. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation began training personnel in these functions in October 2006 and has continued this training across the country wherever potential team members are available. Funds from the Department of Defense, Bureau of Justice Assistance grant make this vital program possible.
When a line-of-duty death is reported to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, the co-ordinator of the Local Assistance State Team (CAST), in that state is notified; and they immediately make contact with the chief of the affected department or his/her designee and offer the assistance of the Local Assistance State Team. That assistance can include operational support to ensure the continuance of service to the community, any and all needed support to the family of the fallen firefighter, planning and coordination of funeral activities, assistance in obtaining behavioral health counseling for family and department members, and the preparation of local, state and federal benefit claims. These teams may perform many important functions, their primary responsibility, when requested, is to assist with the preparation and submission of the Public Safety Officers’ Benefits (PSOB) claim. The Local Assistance State Team will only assist after being requested and then will operate in a transparent manner behind the scenes to accomplish their tasks.

During 2011, there were 17 LAST trainings in Kansas, Nebraska, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Montana, Oklahoma, Georgia, Ohio, Virginia, New Jersey, Wyoming, Iowa, Minnesota, New York, Maryland, Arizona and Oregon, attended by 525 fire service members.

LAST teams assisted with 56 firefighter fatalities during 2011.

LAST AND ADVOCATE SUMMIT

Coordinators of the Local Assistance State Teams (LAST) and Advocates from across the country participated in a mini summit held in conjunction with the Survivors Conference held in San Antonio, Texas. The summit provided an opportunity for the members of the fire programs to meet with survivors and to sharpen their skills as LAST members and advocates. All the participants learned valuable information about Public Safety Officers Benefits and information every public safety officer should be aware of. Additionally, Advocates received a Train-the-Trainer on the Leadership Accountability, Culture and Knowledge course, and LAST members were briefed on the new Behavioral Health model developed by the NFFF.

ADVOCATE PROGRAM

This year the Advocate program added functions specific advocates for metro departments and to increase our outreach to the wildland firefighting community. Both these programs have proved to be key in developing better relationships within those areas of the fire service.

LIFESAFTYINITIATIVES.COM

In 2011, fire programs launched the lifesafetyinitiatives.com website. The website is dedicated to information and research directly supporting the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. It should be the starting point for anyone, particularly fire service researchers, who requires up-to-date and accurate information. This site updates the bibliography material which Everyone Goes Home® has maintained for many years on its website. That information will now be accessed through lifesafetyInitiatives.com.

The new lifesafetyInitiatives.com website will also contain special topics and research on emerging topics that fire service researchers and writers need to know more about.

HEART HEALTH PROJECT

Heart attacks and strokes remain the leading cause of LODDs followed by motor vehicle crashes. EGH has partnered with Johns Hopkins to conduct a research study that will provide departments a means to determine a firefighters’ “heart age.” Through a medical assessment each participating firefighter’s heart age will be determined and an individualized program will allow firefighters to reduce their heart age through a proper diet and exercise. The results of the study will be made available in 2012.

International First Responders Seatbelt Pledge Program

The Roll Out of the revamped Seatbelt Pledge took place in February 2011, at the Firehouse West Conference in California. In the past year, there have been 240 new departments participating in the Seatbelt Pledge Program. Several sizeable departments including the City of Atlanta; Omaha, Nebraska; Tampa and Gainesville, Florida, have committed to the Program. The Seatbelt Program supports and promotes the following three Life Safety Initiatives:

#1 Define and advocate the need for a cultural change within the fire service relating to safety; incorporating leadership, management, supervision, accountability and personal responsibility.

#2 Enhance the personal and organizational accountability for health and safety throughout the fire service.

#4 All firefighters must be empowered to stop unsafe practices.

In a recent PSA, NASCAR driver Joey Logano encouraged firefighters to wear seatbelts: “If I don’t get to the finish line, I don’t win. If you don’t get to the scene, everybody loses.”

In the last year, Everyone Goes Home® Fire Services Programs - Seatbelt Safety Program, has launched two Public Service Announcements, several magazine articles, preparation of a PowerPoint presentation given by a survivor, generated training materials, assisted in preparing press releases for departments receiving compliance certificates, conducted surveys for first responders at the Maryland State Firemen’s Association and Firehouse Expo, formed liaisons/collaborative efforts with the Maryland State Firemen’s Association Safety Committee and the National Volunteer Safety Council to reach First Responders with the message of seatbelt use as health and safety efforts.

Worked with State Advocates to prepare presentations to the West Virginia Professional Fire Chiefs Association, Florida State Fire Chief’s Association, Texas Southwest Fire/Rescue Conference and the Alabama Fire Chief’s Conference.
In December of 2011, the Chicago Fire Department’s Everyone Goes Home® video debuted. The video highlights the need to change the culture of safety within the fire service. The video has been highly successful and requests for copies of the video have come from as far as Australia and Great Britain.

Over the past few years, the issues surrounding suicide among fire and EMS personnel have grown as death by suicide has appeared to increase. Some even called suicide an epidemic in the fire service. In July of 2011, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, as an extension of its ongoing efforts to improve the behavioral health and personal wellbeing of firefighters and their families as a critical element of its 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives (specifically, FLSI 13: Firefighters and their families must have access to counseling and psychological support), convened a summit that brought several of the nation’s leading researchers/practitioners in the area of suicide together with a wide sampling of fire service representatives to review the current “state of the science” with respect to understanding suicidal behavior and the current “state of the art” with respect to prevention and intervention. The findings of this Summit can be found in a white paper which provides an overview of the discussions and recommendations which will be utilized as starting points for strategic planning of action. The White Paper can be found on www.everyonegoeshome.com.

The Vulnerability Assessment Project (VAP) concluded its first phase in 2011. The VAP is a tool that, when deployed (free of charge) to fire departments across the country, will allow chief officers to determine where vulnerabilities for firefighter line-of-duty injuries and deaths exist in their departments. These gaps (or vulnerabilities) may include safety policies and practices, inadequate equipment, outdated and dangerous vehicles, etc. The results of the VAP will provide departments with the tools they need for improvements. Phase I was spent in the research and analysis of the kinds of risks firefighters encounter. Another goal of the research was to look for existing best practices, models and tools for risk and vulnerability assessment. In total, 3,373 academic journal articles were submitted for peer review. From those articles, 509 were selected with potential VAP implications. In addition to an audit of written material, consultants/researchers for the VAP have interviewed and attended meetings of the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA), the Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI), and the Public Risk Management Association (PRIMA). These are our nation’s leading risk think-tanks. Phases Two and Three will be completed in 2012. Testing and deployment will occur over 2013. This project is being underwritten by Honeywell, Inc.

The website was enhanced by including more resources and information for survivors. The site includes a special Family Programs section, online forms to request information and peer support, specialized grief materials, and links to other resources and organizations.

- There were 4,712,382 page views of the FireHero.org site
- There were 3,767,695 page views of the EveryoneGoesHome.com site
- A “widget” on the website featuring 2010 fallen firefighters changed each day to feature a new firefighter. It was accessed and downloaded by numerous fire service organizations and publications. After the 2011 Memorial Weekend, the widget was revised to show information on firefighters honored in previous years.

Staff continued to promote initiatives to reduce line-of-duty deaths by focusing on the impact on the survivors and communities. Presentations at fire service conferences during which survivors told the audience how the loss of their firefighter impacted their lives and their communities provided a powerful tool to promote firefighter safety. This was combined with information on how to reduce line-of-duty deaths. Presentations were very well received by the audiences.

“Consequently, fire departments will have results based on scientific analysis to develop operational and strategic plans to implement the risk reduction recommendations necessary to minimize or eliminate predictable causes of line-of-duty deaths and injuries.”

“Suicide is a complex phenomenon that is not well understood, even by many professionals called to deal with its prevention and intervention.”

“Suicide is a complex phenomenon that is not well understood, even by many professionals called to deal with its prevention and intervention.”
The National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend on October 15-16, 2011, honored 72 firefighters who died in the line of duty during 2010 and 17 who died in previous years. During the weekend, families:
- Visited the National Memorial and made rubbings of their loved ones’ names
- Visited the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel where they lit candles and placed roses in a Maltese Cross vase in honor of their loved ones
- Visited the Walk of Honor® and made rubbings of bricks placed in honor of their loved ones
- Made luminaries for their loved ones for use in the Candlelight Service
- Attended small group sessions facilitated by mental health specialists with expertise in dealing with grief. Family members were able to share their experiences and were given information and resources to help them deal with their loss. A special session for chiefs allowed them to meet with other chiefs who experienced a line-of-duty death in their department.
- Were honored by more than 300 Red Helmet motorcyclists who rode to campus and placed a wreath in honor of firefighters being honored
- Attended the Saturday night Candlelight Service that honored their loved ones
- Attended the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service on Sunday where tribute was paid to their loved ones. Each family received a badge, rose, and American flag flown over the U.S. Capitol and the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial. More than 6,000 attended.

Both the Candlelight Service and the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service were televised and streamed live over the internet, and were viewed nationwide and around the world.

“We were extremely impressed with your organization of the Memorial Weekend. It made everyone in my family feel better. It was more like a celebration of life instead of a final goodbye.”
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Chesapeake Bay Chapter
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Chairman, National Volunteer Fire Council - Washington, DC
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Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen’s Association

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Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen’s Association
Nisource Corporate Services Co
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Ocean Grove Exempt Firemens Association
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Ryan Butler
Ryan Clark
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West Valley Fire Local 2970
Westminster IAFF 2889
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Yolo Food Systems LLC
York County Chief’s Association
Z’s Automotive Inc.
### National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

#### Balance Sheet

**As of December 31, 2011**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
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<td>Furniture and equipment</td>
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<td>Less accumulated depreciation</td>
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<td>Investments at market value</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
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#### Liabilities & Net Assets

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<td>Accrued employee benefits</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>$7,350,514</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unaudited

### Statement of Activities

**For the Year Ended December 31, 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Network for Survivors</td>
<td>$2,356,184</td>
<td>$2,356,184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSOB Research Project</td>
<td>27,935</td>
<td>27,935</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification of Firefighter Deaths</td>
<td>38,324</td>
<td>38,324</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighter Awareness &amp; Outreach</td>
<td>64,833</td>
<td>64,833</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighter Prerogative Certification/ Benefits</td>
<td>18,409</td>
<td>18,409</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL REVENUE</strong></td>
<td>$1,841,544</td>
<td>$159,803</td>
<td>$2,001,347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excess Revenues Over Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$355,740</td>
<td>$917,102</td>
<td>$1,272,842</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenses** | |
| NFFF Programs | |
| Fundraising | $495,381 |
| Management and administration | $160,678 |
| Security - Fire Act | $916,017 |
| **TOTAL EXPENSES** | $1,938,353 | $1,938,353 |
| **Net Assets at End of Year** | $4,100,005 | $2,855,455 | $6,955,460 |

Unaudited
Enacted in 1976, the Public Safety Officers’ Benefits (PSOB) Program provides benefits including death, education assistance, and disability to those eligible for the program. The PSOB Office at the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice is responsible for implementing the PSOB Program. Under the PSOB Act, benefits are available to the survivors of public safety officers found to have died as the direct and proximate result of a personal injury, as well as certain eligible heart attacks and strokes, sustained in the line of duty. As defined by Congress, a public safety officer is an individual serving a public agency in an official capacity, with or without compensation, as a law enforcement officer, firefighter, member of a rescue squad or ambulance crew, and other first responders. For questions regarding this information, or for details regarding the PSOB Death, Disability or Educational Assistance Programs, please call the PSOB Call Center toll-free at 888-744-6513 or 202-307-0635, or visit PSOB online at: www.psob.gov.

**FUNDRAISERS**

The Foundation greatly appreciates the support of the fire service community and sponsors who conduct fundraisers on its behalf. Events such as golf tournaments and stair climbs help with funding to provide programs for the families of our fallen firefighters and to prevent line-of-duty deaths.