



LAKELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fire Chief Gary Ballard is President of the Florida Fire Chiefs Association

Lakeland, FL – The Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) is proud to announce that its Fire Chief, Gary Ballard, is the new President of the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association (FFCA). The FFCA is the largest and leading advocacy and professional education organization for fire & emergency services professionals in the state of Florida. Fire Chief Ballard was officially inducted as president on Tuesday, July 21, 2015 at a ceremony held in Naples, FL.

Fire Chief Ballard has a total of 40 years of experience in the fire service, 38 of which are with LFD. He started in 1977 as a Firefighter and rose through the ranks to become Fire Chief at the department in 2010. Along the way he has amassed a tremendous amount of experience and leadership skills that will allow him to excel in this new role as president and continue to advocate on behalf of fire professionals throughout the state while proudly representing the City of Lakeland.

It is important to note that the FFCA was founded by Lakeland's longest serving Fire Chief, Charlie Deal, in 1958. Fire Chief Deal served as the FFCA's very first President and now that legacy has come full circle with Fire Chief Ballard at the helm of the organization. "Chief Deal was instrumental to my professional development and encouraged me to become more involved with the Fire Chiefs Association. Since joining, I have served as a regional coordinator for the FFCA's State Emergency Response Plan for ten out of my fifteen years with this organization. I've also served on the Board of Directors for the past five years. His [Deal] incredible vision and value for professional development is what has allowed both the FFCA and the Lakeland Fire Department to become the leaders, respectively, that they both are today within the fire service." explains Fire Chief Ballard.

With Chief Ballard in this new leadership position, he will undoubtedly continue to expand those efforts and improve the quality of the state's fire service. The term as president is for one year.

More about FFCA: Since 1958, FFCA has served career, combination, and volunteer fire departments. FFCA is Florida's leading advocacy and professional education organization for fire & emergency services professionals. It specializes in promoting and supporting excellence in fire & emergency services management. FFCA programs help members maintain and develop their management and leadership skills. Additionally, the FFCA advocates on behalf of the fire service in regards to state and national policymaking. The organization is headquartered in Ormond Beach with a satellite office in Tallahassee. FFCA represents approximately 1,800 members throughout the state. For more information please visit <http://www.ffca.org/>.

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Gary Ballard, Fire Chief

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