



LAKELAND
FIRE DEPARTMENT

F.O.C.U.S.

Fire-Service Opportunity and Career for
Underprivileged Students Scholarship Program

In Partnership with Polk County School's Hearth Project

Application Packet 2019

Our Vision

To be the best public safety organization focused on providing superior customer service.

Table of Contents

About the Lakeland Fire Department	2
The Fire Service Provides Opportunity	2
What the Sponsorship Opportunity Provides	3
Qualities Desired in a Candidate	4
Physical Requirements.....	4
Admission Requirements	4
Timeline	5
Who Should Apply.....	6
How to Apply	7

Attachments:

Applicant Checklist

Lakeland Fire Department Career Information

About the Lakeland Fire Department

The Lakeland Fire Department began as a volunteer force in January of 1909 following three catastrophic fires that destroyed numerous businesses, houses, hotels, and offices in the downtown area. On August 16, 1916 the City of Lakeland adopted Ordinance Number 201, which specified the organization of a full-time, paid Fire Department. The department has since been dedicated to maintaining the utmost level of emergency response services to the citizens of Lakeland. The LFD's superior level of integrity and sense of duty are what drive the department to maintain the high level of service the citizens of Lakeland have come to expect. Through reliable response and public safety awareness the LFD can always be counted on to reduce loss of life and property in its community.

In Brief:

- LFD is an Advanced Life Support (ALS) non transport department
- Has 172 employees
- Composed of 7 Fire Stations, an administration building, training center, and vehicle maintenance facility
- Has an 84 square mile response area made up by the City of Lakeland and portions of surrounding communities
- In 2018, LFD responded to approximately 26,500 calls, performed 7,000 fire safety related inspections, reviewed 1,000 construction plans, and provided over 300 public education programs

The Fire Service Provides Opportunity

Many of the men and women that serve in the LFD today received an opportunity at a new life as a result of joining the fire service. LFD recognizes how important the chance at a new life filled with the stability can be to a homeless student. So as a result the *Fire-Service Opportunity and Career for Underprivileged Students Scholarship* was developed in 2013 to provide the necessary training and support to become a certified firefighter, potentially leading to a career in the fire service for an underprivileged student in the Lakeland area.

A career as a firefighter provides stability, structure, a second family, and the ability to give back to the community in a very real and direct way. In addition to the stability and opportunity for personal growth a career as a firefighter can offer, the job also comes with ample opportunity to receive extensive professional development and educational degrees that in turn may lead to promotions and higher levels of pay.

Learn More About Firefighting and the Fire Service. Watch LFD's Film:

Fully Involved: What it means to be a Lakeland Firefighter

Available for viewing at www.lakelandgov.net/LFD, www.facebook.com/LakelandFD and on You Tube on the Lakeland Fire Channel

What the Sponsorship Opportunity Provides

The process of becoming a certified firefighter is both mentally and physically challenging. In addition, the expense associated with attending fire standards can be burdensome to a homeless and / or low-income student. So to provide an opportunity for a student who may have otherwise not considered pursuing a firefighting career, the Lakeland Fire Department will provide financial and professional support to the selected candidate to offset other challenges the person may have faced in the past.

The sponsorship on behalf of the Lakeland Fire Department Provides:

- Paid tuition to Ridge Career Center's Fire Standard Program
- Paid books and materials necessary for required course work
- Paid uniforms required for fire standards program
- Direct mentorships by active duty LFD firefighters and administration
- Paid exam fees for all exams

The entire package is valued at over \$3,000 of financial support and a priceless amount of mentorship from some of the state's finest and most experienced firefighters.

The sponsorship does not provide guaranteed completion of the fire standards program. Candidates will need to apply themselves and graduate based on their own merit. Students will be expected to provide their own transportation to and from the Ridge Career Center campus, located in Winter Haven, Florida.

The sponsorship does not guarantee employment with LFD upon the selected student's graduation. However upon successful completion of the program the candidate will be highly encouraged to apply with the Lakeland Fire Department.

Qualities Desired in a Candidate

The candidate should be:

- Dependable: Someone that is consistently there when you need them to be, responsible, and timely.
- A Team Player: Team work is essential in the fire service. Firefighters work and live together so being a good team player is essential to success as a firefighter.
- Compassionate: Firefighters are public servants, always putting others before themselves, so a potential candidate should demonstrate caring for others and a strong desire to help those in need.
- Committed: The fire standards process and additional follow up examination and certification can take nearly a year and half from beginning to end. There are approximately 10 weeks of fire standards training, followed by a semester of EMT course work, followed by testing and certifications that would be required before an aspiring firefighter can seek employment as a firefighter. Additionally the application process can add many months to the equation in today's competitive job market for firefighters. Candidates need to be able to stay dedicated to the end goal and be consistently self-motivated to see it through to the end.

Physical Requirements

The minimum standards program students would participate, as well as the Candidates Physical Abilities Test (CPAT) required of all newly hired firefighters are both very physically demanding.

The selected student needs to be physically able to complete rigorous exercise, heavy lifting, and extended periods of exertion.

Admission Requirements

Although this opportunity is being afforded by the Lakeland Fire Department, the candidate must still meet all of Ridge Career Center's requirements for admission.

Ridge Career Center Admission Requirements:

1. You must be **18 years** of age or older by first day of class.

2. High School Diploma or GED required
3. Valid Driver's License
4. Pass TABE test with 10.0 or better in Reading, Language and Math (Free for HS Students)
5. Pass Agility test*
6. Pass Drug test*
7. Complete Medical Physical - EKG and hearing exam required*
8. Meet all required deadlines
9. **You must attend the mandatory meetings.** Absence or tardiness will result in automatic dismissal.

** Fees paid by the Lakeland Fire Department on behalf of FOCUS scholarship awardee*

AGILITY Test

This is a timed test of your physical abilities in running, climbing, pushing, lifting, and pulling. This test must be passed in order for you to be accepted into the Fire Training Program. All of the above areas are described in the Student Packet that you will receive at the initial mandatory meeting.

Criminal Background Check

If you have a felony conviction or any misdemeanor convictions involving moral turpitude, you may not be permitted to take the State Licensure Exam at the end of the program. If there are any problems, you will be notified. Again, persons with a felony conviction may not be permitted to take the State exam. If you have any questions in regards to criminal backgrounds, please come see us or call us at the fire academy. The selected applicant is subject to a background check.

The Fire Technical Certificate Program for Firefighting is a comprehensive course consisting of lectures, practical, and "LIVE" fire training. This is a very intense program, physically as well as academically designed to prepare the student to become a State Certified Firefighter.

Timeline

January 2019 - The search begins. School based counselors and/or administrators will identify candidates that show potential and interest in becoming a firefighter.

May 2019 – Applications due at the end of the month.

June 2019 – Formal interviews of potential candidates with selection panel.

Late June / Early July 2019 – Student is selected.

Summer of 2019 – All preliminary exams, requirements, etc. are to be completed by selected student in preparation for first semester of minimum standards at Ridge Career Center.

Fall of 2019 – Selected student must attend mandatory meetings required by Ridge Career Center's Fire Program. Two to four meetings at most.

January 2020 – Selected student will begin minimum standards program.

Who Should Apply

Any interested student that meets the following criteria is encouraged to apply.

- 1) **All interested students that meet the Polk County School Boards' definition: The term "homeless children and youths " (See Below) **OR** that are low income with a household income of less than \$30,000 per year.**

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and

(B) includes:

- children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing , economic hardship, or a similar reason (doubled up);
- are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- are abandoned in hospitals;
- are awaiting foster care placement;
- children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purpose of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described above.

- 2) Students that meet, or will meet, the physical and admission requirements (See above for details) by the start date of Ridge Career Center's Fire Standard Program.

How to Apply

All application packets need to be submitted to DeeDee Wright and Nakita Scott of Polk County School's Hearth Project. Students are welcome to submit their application packet to their teacher, guidance counselor, or other school based faculty member that can ensure delivery to Hearth Project staff in a timely manner.

The completed applicant packets will only be accepted by LFD from the Hearth Project or from a Polk County Schools employee / representative. .

Application Packets Must Include:

- Applicant's Resume
- Applicant's Letter of Interest explaining his/her interest in the fire service and why they should be selected. 1 minimum. 3 page maximum.
- Copy of School Transcripts. School counselor or HEARTH project employees can provide a copy.
- Completed Checklist with applicant's signature (See Attachment)

Interested and qualified students must submit a complete application packet by May 21, 2019 to Hearth Project staff or their school's College/Guidance Counselor. Students not familiar with the Hearth Project may also send / drop off their application packets directly to the Lakeland Fire Department at Attn: FOCUS Scholarship Program, 701 E Main Street, Lakeland, FL. 33801

Hearth Project Contact Information:

Address:

1915 S Floral Ave / Po Box 391
Bartow, FL 33830

Phone Number:

(863) 534-0801

Email:

deedee.wright@polk-fl.net
nakita.scott@polk-fl.net

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Carefully read the following information and initial in the provided space next to each item to indicate that you accept and understand each of the following:

	Initial Here
I have carefully read the entire Lakeland Fire Department <i>FOCUS</i> Scholarship Program Information Packet.	
I qualify for this program by meeting Polk County School's definition for homeless children and youth or by coming from a low income home.	
I currently meet, or will meet by the first date of enrollment, all physical requirements required for entry at Ridge Career Center's Fire Academy.	
I currently meet, or will meet by the first date of enrollment, all admission requirements for entry at Ridge Career Center's Fire Academy.	
If selected, I intend to begin minimum standards (Fire Academy) in January 2019.	
I will be 18 years of age by January 2019.	
If selected, I agree to meet any future requirements set forth for me by both the Lakeland Fire Department and Ridge Career Center's Fire Academy.	
If selected, I understand that this is a scholarship opportunity that will cover all expenses associated with attending minimum fire standards in exchange for satisfactory completion of the program. The Lakeland Fire Department withholds the right to cease financial and professional support if expectations are not met.	
If selected, I understand that I am subject to a criminal background check.	

I hereby give permission to the Lakeland Fire Department to release a copy of my resume, transcripts, and personal statement to the scholarship selection committee. I certify that the information submitted in this application packet is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any misrepresentation, falsification, or failure to supply required information in connection with this application may result in the rejection of my application. I agree to notify LFD of any additional information or changes that arise during the application process. If awarded a scholarship, I authorize the Lakeland Fire Department to release information to the public about my application, as well as updates about my academic progress and grades. I also agree to allow my name and/or photograph to be used in public information about the program and to be released by the Lakeland Fire Department.

Applicant Name (Print)

Date

Applicant Signature

About LFD

The Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) is dedicated to maintaining the utmost level of emergency response services to the citizens of Lakeland. LFD's strong sense of integrity and duty are what drive the department to maintain such high levels of service to the citizens of Lakeland. Through reliable response and public safety awareness LFD can always be counted on to reduce loss of life and property in its community.

In Brief the Lakeland Fire Department:

- Provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) services and is a non-transport career fire department
- Employs 171 personnel
- Maintains 7 fire stations, an administration building, training center, and vehicle maintenance facility
- Services an 84 square-mile area that includes the City of Lakeland and portions of unincorporated Polk County
- Serves approximately 102,000 people within its service area. Responds to approximately 24,500 calls for service, performs 4,000 fire inspections, 1,000 construction plans, and provides over 900 public education programs annually.



Lakeland Fire Department



Contacts

701 East Main Street
Lakeland, FL 33801

Phone:
863-834-8200

Fax:
863-834-8295

Email:
lfadmin@lakelandgov.net

www.lakelandgov.net/lfid



Lakeland Fire Department

Career Information



TO BE THE BEST, WE NEED THE BEST



Commitment to Serve

A career in the fire service is not a job, it's a calling. The men and women that make up the Lakeland Fire Department are public servants committed to putting the needs of others before their own. The work of a firefighter is both physically and emotionally demanding and requires only the most dedicated individuals who can wholeheartedly keep to the department's creed of Honor, Duty, Integrity, and Trust.

The Lakeland Fire Department is at the beck and call of the citizen of its community. As an organization LFD is dedicated to being the best public safety organization, focused on providing superior customer service. Potential applicants need to meet and exceed the department's expectations of outstanding moral character and servant leadership to ensure the health and safety of the people it serves.



Pay and Benefits

Firefighters Base Salary
Firefighter / EMT: \$41,946 - 62,269
Firefighter / Paramedic: \$48,946 - 72,661

11 Paid Holidays

New Year's Day
MLK Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day and Day After
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
Floating Holiday*

*One per year

Incentive Pay

Technical Rescue Team - \$1,200
Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting - \$1,200

Totals represent annual amount

Annual Leave

144 Hours < 5 Years
180 Hours 5-15 Years
240 Hours 15+ Years

Totals represent annual amount

Paid Sick Leave

12 Days Annually

- Fire Pension
- Tuition Assistance
- Uniform Allowance

How to Apply

The City of Lakeland is a drug-free work place and an equal opportunity employer.

The Lakeland Fire Department utilizes the National Testing Network (NTN) and requires a Candidate Physical Abilities Test (CPAT) of all applicants.



All interested applicants must apply through both the City of Lakeland's NEOGOV applicant system as well as through the NTN. For more information about the department visit www.lakelandgov.net/lfd. To apply visit www.lakelandgov.net/employment-services.

EXCELLENCE IS REWARDED