



NEWS FROM

# ULSTER COUNTY

County Executive Jen Metzger

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## Ulster County Celebrates 73 New Firefighters at Graduation Ceremony

**KINGSTON, NY** - On Monday evening, July 29, Ulster County Fire Services held a graduation ceremony at SUNY Ulster for 73 men and women who completed their basic training. The graduates represent departments from Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, and Sullivan Counties, and had either attended one of the Basic Exterior Firefighter Operations and Interior Firefighter Operations Courses, collectively known as Firefighter I, or the Ulster County Summer Program.

This comprehensive firefighter training program, totaling 129 hours, combines exterior and interior firefighting skills. The course begins by preparing new firefighters for exterior operations, covering topics such as personal protective equipment (PPE), self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) inspection, fire department communications, building construction, fire behavior, and modern fire control research. It then progresses to interior structural firefighting, focusing on SCBA use and air management, firefighter survival techniques, building fire search and victim removal, tactical ventilation, forcible entry, hoseline advancement, and coordinated fire attack strategies.

Throughout the program, students learn essential skills including fire prevention, hazardous materials response, vehicle and wildland firefighting theory, and initial company operations, providing a well-rounded education for aspiring firefighters to operate safely and effectively.

“Our volunteer firefighters are the backbone of our community's safety and well-being, and I want to congratulate the 73 men and women for successfully completing this rigorous professional training program,” **said Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger.** “They stand ready to serve, and we are grateful for their dedication, courage, and commitment to keeping us safe. I’d like to thank our Ulster County Department of Emergency Services, which manages

the training program for all the fire services in the County, and to our dedicated and talented team of County and State Instructors who conduct these training sessions.”

“These 73 graduates have completed a demanding firefighter training program that prepares them for the diverse challenges of firefighting,” **said Everett Erichsen, Ulster County Department of Emergency Services Director.** “We've taught to their potential, not their limitations, equipping them with essential skills for the challenges that lie ahead. Their dedication proves their commitment to public safety. As they step back into their firehouses, they carry with them not just the tools we've placed in their hands, but the unyielding spirit of service that defines true firefighters.”

“Over the past year, Ulster County has completed three Firefighter 1 training programs. The programs have led to 73 firefighters being trained. These firefighters are members of departments from across Ulster County, as well as departments from Dutchess, Orange & Sullivan County,” **said Mike Gaffney, Ulster County Department of Emergency Services Deputy Director/Fire Coordinator.** “Last evening, we had the distinct pleasure of hosting a graduation ceremony to recognize their dedication to their communities, and accomplishments of completing the Firefighter 1 Course.”

For more information on the Ulster County Emergency Services Volunteer Program, and becoming a volunteer, visit: <https://codev.ulstercountyny.gov/emergency-volunteer/>

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