



NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NFFF and W.S. Darley & Co. Announce Winners of the 2024 Thought Leadership Essay Competition

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) and W.S. Darley & Co. (Darley) are thrilled to announce the winners of the 2024 Thought Leadership Essay Competition, a platform that celebrates the fire service's forward-thinking leaders. Founded by Congress in 1992, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) honors fallen firefighters and supports their families, providing resources, counseling, and educational assistance. NFFF also collaborates on initiatives to prevent firefighter fatalities and injuries nationwide.

This year's theme, "Overcoming Resistance to Change in the Fire Service," inspired 85 innovative essays from fire service members nationwide, offering solutions to drive adaptability, inclusivity, and resilience. Jamie Howarth, Battalion Chief of Anne Arundel County Fire Department, earned first place with a thought-provoking essay on fostering inclusivity and securing organizational buy-in, while Chris Paskett, Battalion Chief of Eugene Springfield Fire Department, and retired Fire Chief Chris Truty of Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District rounded out the top three winners, each recognized for their contributions to enhancing fire service leadership.

"Supporting and uplifting the rising voices in the fire service is central to our mission at Darley," said Paul Darley, CEO of Darley. "We're proud to collaborate with NFFF and contribute to this writing platform that inspires innovation and empowers leaders to shape the future fire service." The competition, sponsored by Darley in partnership with the NFFF, allowed participants to voice solutions that spark dialogue and build a more adaptable, progressive fire service.

"The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation is honored to team up with Darley to support the essay project. The essays demonstrate the high caliber of firefighters serving our communities

who stand ready to drive progress and put great ideas into action” said Victor Stagnaro, CEO of the NFFF.

The competition, sponsored by Darley in partnership with the NFFF, allowed participants to voice solutions that spark dialogue and build a more adaptable, progressive fire service. Winners were awarded monetary prizes, with Jamie Howarth also invited to present her essay at the Texas A&M Leadership Conference in January 2024. As the program continues to grow, NFFF and Darley invite fire service members to participate in next year's competition, contributing to a platform that cultivates leadership and encourages impactful change across the industry. Stay tuned for the 2025 competition details and visit [here](#) for more details on the competition. Join the movement toward shaping the future of the fire service. Winning essays can be found [here](#).

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