

# About the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

The U. S. Congress created the non-profit National Fallen Firefighters Foundation in 1992 with the mission to honor fallen firefighters and to assist their survivors in the rebuilding of their lives. The Foundation has developed many programs to fulfill this mandate.

The Foundation is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, located in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and registered as a corporation in the State of Maryland. Donations from individuals, organizations, corporations, and foundations fund many of the Foundation's programs. A grant from the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance supports programs for survivors and coworkers of firefighters killed in the line of duty.

The Foundation has developed many programs to assist survivors of fallen firefighters. Immediately after a firefighter dies in the line of duty, the Foundation provides survivors with a place to turn. Families and coworkers can receive emotional support through peer support networks. The annual Fire Service Survivors Conference offers workshops on topics of interest and provides an opportunity to network with others who have experienced the death of a firefighter. Spouses, life partners, children and stepchildren of fallen firefighters are eligible for higher education and job training scholarships.

The *Taking Care of Our Own*® training program is offered nationwide to senior fire officers, chaplains and Honor Guard commanders to provide guidance on how to prepare for line-of-duty deaths and establish pre-incident programs and procedures. An extensive website provides information on state and Federal benefits and resources, as well as immediate access to critical information on what to do after a line-of-duty death.

At the beginning of National Fire Prevention Week in



October, the Foundation sponsors the official national tribute to career and volunteer firefighters who died in the line of duty during the previous year. Thousands attend the weekend activities held at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The Weekend features special programs for survivors and coworkers along with moving public ceremonies. The Foundation partners with the U.S. Fire Administration to sponsor many of the National Memorial Weekend activities.

Since 1996, the Foundation has assisted immediate survivors of fallen fire heroes with their lodging and meals during the Weekend. This allows family members to participate in weekend activities, including sessions led by experienced grief counselors and the public tributes. Since 2002, the Foundation has provided transportation for immediate family members also.

In 2004 the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation hosted the first ever Firefighter Life Safety Summit to examine the increasing numbers of firefighter line-of-duty deaths that are occurring in America each year. As a result of that summit, 16 firefighter life safety initiatives were identified as a part of the NFFF's National program to prevent firefighter deaths. The program entitled "Everyone Goes Home" is being implemented throughout the country as a part of the core mission of the Foundation in cooperation with the United States Fire Administration to affect a 25% reduction in firefighter deaths over the next 5 years and a 50 reduction in ten. This program is one of the most critical learning experiences any fire service member can participate in.

The Foundation has established Local Assistance State Teams to assist fire departments when a line-of-duty death occurs and to help survivors who may be eligible to file paperwork for the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program administered by the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance.

A Board of Directors and an Advisory Committee guide the Foundation's activities. Members represent the private sector, fire and emergency services, fire service survivors, and government. All have demonstrated a strong commitment to fire safety.