



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Fire Chief Douglas E. Riley Selected as the 2020 Florida Fire Chief of the Year

Lakeland, FL – With great pride, the Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) is excited to announce that the department’s Fire Chief, Douglas E. Riley, was selected as the 2020 Florida Fire Chief of the Year.

The prestigious award, presented by the Florida Fire Chiefs’ Association (FFCA), is given to a Fire Chief in the Florida Fire Service that demonstrates an exceptional level of leadership, integrity, and service. The selection is made by a body of peers.

Fire Chief Doug Riley shares “I am extremely humbled and honored to receive this award. I have the privilege of working alongside the best support staff in the business. I accept this award on behalf of all the men and women that make the Lakeland Fire Department the great organization that it is. It is surreal to be recognized with this honor, for doing a job that already feels like a reward in itself, because of how much I love and enjoy it.”

This award marks the third time a Lakeland Fire Department Fire Chief has received the distinguished honor in the history of the award: Charles Deal (1978), Jack Alford (1994), and Douglas Riley (2020).

The award was presented to Fire Chief Riley at the January 19, 2021 City of Lakeland Commission Meeting as a surprise by Coral Springs’ City Manager, Frank Babinec, the 2017 recipient of the award. The regularly scheduled award ceremony, held every summer by the FFCA, was postponed due to COVID-19.

Selection criteria includes leadership, innovation, professional development, integrity, service to the public, and contributions to the fire service in the state of Florida as a whole. You can learn more about the nomination and award process at <https://www.ffca.org/ffca-edc-awards>.

More about Fire Chief Douglas E. Riley:

Douglas E. Riley was appointed Fire Chief of the Lakeland Fire Department in December 2017. Chief Riley was hired as a firefighter with the City of Lakeland on March 9, 1987. Throughout his career he has held the following positions;





LAKELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

DOUGLAS E. RILEY, FIRE CHIEF
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Driver/Engineer (March 1992), Fire Lieutenant (January 1995), Battalion Chief (June 2004) and most recently Assistant Chief of Operations, which he has served as since January 2010, prior to his promotion to Fire Chief.

Douglas graduated from Lakeland Senior High School in 1984. He earned Associates degrees from Polk Community College in both Fire Science and Nursing. He graduated from the University of South Florida with a bachelor's degree in Business in 2012. In addition to his degrees, Douglas holds certifications as a: Registered Nurse, Paramedic, Fire Officer I, Fire Instructor, and Fire Inspector.

He is a graduate of the Florida State University's prestigious Certified Public Manager program and the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association's Emergency Services Leadership Institute. He is certified as a Florida Public Employer Labor Relations professional. He is a graduate of the International Association of Fire Chiefs' (IAFC) 2018 Fire Service Executive Development Institute. Douglas is a member of the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association (FFCA) as well as the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Douglas currently serves as the FFCA's First Vice President, having served as Regional Director and Secretary / Treasurer prior to his current office. He is also a board member for the PACE Center for Girls. Additionally, Douglas is very involved in his community; he has made community service and philanthropy in Lakeland a cornerstone of his administration. Douglas is a graduate of Leadership Lakeland and a member of the Lakeland Rotary Club.

More about the Lakeland Fire Department:

The Lakeland Fire Department was established as a career-department in 1916. The department has seven stations serving approximately 110,000+ people in the City of Lakeland. The department has 179 employees, of which 156 are emergency response personnel. In 2020, the department responded to 26,000 service calls in its 84 square-mile response area, which includes the city limits as well as portions of unincorporated Lakeland.

The department offers a wide range of services which includes heavy rescue, technical rescue, fire prevention, fire code enforcement, fire investigation, aircraft rescue and firefighting, and in-house fleet maintenance; all in addition to fire suppression and emergency medical response.

The Lakeland Fire Department is also passionate about being an active participant in its community and consistently giving back through philanthropic efforts and through non-emergency services such as community outreach and preventative public education.

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