



National Volunteer Workforce Solutions



The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), in partnership with the International Association of Women in Fire and Emergency Services (iWomen), and the Volunteer and Combination Officers Section of the IAFC, is pleased to be undertaking a national initiative of the Volunteer Workforce Solutions (VWS) program, to assist combination and volunteer fire departments with the means to improve their ability to recruit, retain, and manage the volunteer of the future.

Beginning this December 2015, this significant competitive awarded grant will be applied during the next three years to increase the number of women and other under-represented groups among volunteer firefighters in communities across the United States.

This national initiative is made possible through a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant for volunteer recruitment and retention. This phase will run from December 2015- 2018.

The SAFER grant will address the questions:

- Who is the volunteer firefighter of the future?
- How do departments adapt to recruit and retain them?

The program will work with a national advisory committee, subject matter experts from the field, and ten pilot departments interested in leveraging turnkey marketing and training solutions for enhancing their volunteer recruitment strategies and efforts.

Outcomes include:

- Leadership support through the development of a *Volunteer of the Future Toolkit for Fire Chiefs*
- A volunteer management technology solution
- Recruitment and retention support, including development of unique recruitment strategies based on overcoming barriers to inclusion
- A national online portal for volunteer departments to access training and technical assistance including templates, online trainings, mentorships, and webinars
- A study on the state of the volunteer fire service

“We need to do a better job making our fire departments more reflective of the communities we serve. Part of that means providing a clear and expanding leadership track.”

**Fire Chief Rhoda Mae Kerr
IAFC President & Chair of
the Board**

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