



## UC Davis Fire Department Gets Students Involved

*By Ryan Depew, NFPA*

The University of California Davis campus is located just outside of Sacramento, CA. There are a little more than 32,000 students enrolled at the university, which covers approximately 9 square miles of California's Central Valley. The university is protected by UC Davis Fire Department's 36 career firefighters and up to 15 student firefighters at any given time. The UC Davis Fire Department has been providing the students on campus with an education in all aspects of campus fire safety, from prevention to mitigation, and has proven to be a great example for university and college campuses across the country.

The department provides multiple public education events throughout the year including a "Picnic Day" and "FD Day on the Quad". In April, "Picnic Day" provides students with the opportunity to learn and ask questions about fire and life safety. In October, at "FD Day on the Quad" students can learn proper techniques for using a portable fire extinguisher, experience the work involved with spraying water from a real fire hose, and gather other information on fire and life safety. In addition, the department provides fire safety talks to dormitory residents and conducts annual fire drills for the dormitories on campus.

The UC Davis Fire Department provides all students on campus with information on fire prevention and emergency preparedness, but only a select few are fortunate enough to be accepted into the department's Student Resident Firefighter Program. The UC Davis Fire Department has been getting students involved with emergency response and fire mitigation since the program's inception in 1955. Students are given the opportunity to train, work, and respond to incidents on the University's campus and surrounding communities, as determined by mutual aid agreements with the City of Davis Fire Department and other local agencies.

Students who are interested in the program must make their way through an application process similar to that of most fire departments throughout the country. They are required to pass a physical agility test, interview process, and graduate from the fire academy. Once their training is complete, students are required to work four 14 hour shifts, one 24 hour shift, and attend two training sessions every month. In exchange for their service, the students receive a private room at the Fire and Police Dormitory and compensation for responding to calls when they are not on shift. UC Davis Fire Department responded to 1049 incidents during the course of 2008 and Student Resident Firefighters were involved with 614 out of the 1049 incident responses.

Fire and life safety education and the opportunity to participate in emergency response and hazard mitigation is providing the students of UC Davis with a well rounded knowledge base of campus fire safety. The UC Davis Fire Department sets a fine example for ways in which fire service agencies in or around university and college campuses can integrate the student population into the overall fire service mission of protecting lives and property.

More information about the UC Davis Fire Department is available at their website and in their annual report at <http://fire.ucdavis.edu/>.

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