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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 02/18/19

North Collier Fire Training Center Recognized as 2018 Florida Fire Service Training & Education Provider of the Year

The Florida Fire Training Directors' Association has announced that the North Collier Fire Training Center was chosen as *the 2018 Training & Education Provider of the Year* for the State of Florida.

The Center is certified by the Florida State Fire Marshal's Bureau of Fire Standards and Training as an official firefighter training center, and is the only one in Collier County, and one of just 44 in the entire state.

The recognition is based on several factors including program curriculum, innovations in training methods, diversity of programs, instructor qualifications, and student mentorship.

Partnering with Florida Southwestern State College, the Center has more than 20 certified fire service instructors who represent fire agencies from around southwest Florida, and who help to facilitate the Center's 95-98% student pass rate.

"Our training center is an integral part of our community's firefighter recruitment efforts," said James Cunningham, Fire Chief for North Collier Fire. "The six months of training time shared by the instructors and students is a win-win for both. Not only are students becoming certified firefighters, but they also are provided the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities to their instructors, instructors who play a role in the hiring processes back at their own agencies."

The District will be officially recognized at the April 1, 2019 Fire Service Awards ceremony in Tallahassee, Florida at the Capitol Building, and hosted by Florida State Chief Financial Officer and State Fire Marshal Jimmy Patronis.

This is the second time the Center was chosen for the award, with the first recognition in 2015.

"Our training center enables men and women to become certified in the most honorable profession of firefighting. For these men and women to have roots in our area, and remain here as first responders only makes for a stronger community," concludes North Collier Fire Battalion Chief of Training Michael Jimenez.

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North Collier Fire Control and Rescue District is an independent special fire district that responds annually to more than 19,000 calls over a 264 square mile area of Collier County, Florida. The all-hazards agency's response includes medical response by Firefighter/EMTs and Firefighter/Paramedics as well as marine, dive and beach rescue, hazardous materials, and technical rescue. Visit www.northcollierfire.com for more information.

Florida SouthWestern State College is Southwest Florida's largest and one of the most affordable institutions of higher education. Annually serving nearly 22,000 students globally, FSW offers a variety of nationally ranked, career-focused academic programs with two- and four-year degrees, and professional certifications. Students are also active in clubs and programs catered to their interests. FSW debuted its intercollegiate athletics program in January 2016. Visit www.FSW.edu for more information.

The **Florida Fire Training Directors' Association** represents the State's Certified Training Centers. The FFTDA mission is to provide information and coordination for fire training in Florida. The FFTDA works closely with the Florida Bureau of Fire Standards and Training to accomplish these goals. Visit www.floridafiretraining.org for more information.