



MSA Honors Illinois Firefighter With Fireslayer of the Year Award

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Single-Handed Apartment Rescue Earns National Recognition

PITTSBURGH, April 28 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Firefighters from the Calumet Park Fire Department near Chicago, Illinois respond to hundreds of calls each year. The heroic actions of one individual, however, during a particular call on April 15, 2005, have earned Lieutenant Jeff Kraft the Fireslayer of the Year (FOTY) Award. The Fireslayer of the Year Award, now in its sixth year, is presented annually by global safety equipment manufacturer MSA (NYSE: MSA). Lieutenant Kraft was recognized for his actions during a special ceremony today at the annual Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC), held in Indianapolis, Ind.

On the evening of the April 15 alarm, only three Calumet Park firefighters were on duty. The call was for a three-story apartment fire. Despite the limited resources available, and the many risks and uncertainties associated with multi-level fires, Lieutenant Kraft made the decision to quickly enter the burning building on the first floor to search for victims.

With back-up support snarled in traffic and flames extending from the second floor to the roofline, Lieutenant Kraft entered the building multiple times. In his search for victims, Lieutenant Kraft discovered a 70-year old woman on the third floor in serious condition suffering from smoke inhalation. He removed his air mask facepiece, shared his air and carried her to safety. Upon re-entering the blaze, he found a second trapped victim -- a middle aged man -- and, likewise, assisted in his evacuation. Due to the thorough training and tremendous dedication of Lieutenant Kraft, no lives were lost in the incident.

MSA created the Fireslayer of the Year Award in 2000 to honor the outstanding achievements by individual firefighters and departments who serve as role models for others. At the presentation ceremony in Indianapolis, Lieutenant Kraft was presented with a special leather New Yorker Cairns Helmet(R) and a commemorative plaque recognizing his act of heroism. In addition to this award, MSA will make a \$5,000 donation on behalf of the Calumet Park Fire Department to the International Association of Fire Fighters' (IAFF) Burn Foundation, which benefits the Firefighters' National Children's Burn Camp and vital burn research, rehabilitation and education programs. To date, MSA has donated \$30,000 to the IAFF Burn Foundation in conjunction with the FOTY Award.

Nominations are submitted throughout the year via MSA's website, <http://www.msafire.com>, and the award recipient is selected by a committee comprised of fire service industry experts and MSA associates. Their stories are shared by MSA as inspiration to all firefighters who share in a common mission...to protect life.

"We are very proud to sponsor the premier recognition program to honor firefighting excellence," said Eric Beck, director of marketing and product planning. "MSA's goal is to recognize firefighters whose actions serve as models for commitment and courage. The Fireslayer of the Year program is representative of MSA's long-standing association as a leader and innovator in the development of fire service safety equipment. And as past award ceremonies have shown us, it is a very emotional event when this award is bestowed to an individual because it represents such a high level of commitment and dedication among firefighters."

About MSA

Established in 1914, MSA is the world's leading provider of quality products and services that protect people's health and safety and the environment. For more than 50 years, MSA has designed and manufactured cutting-edge, high-technology products for the fire service industry, including thermal imaging cameras, portable gas detection instruments, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and the best-selling CairnsHelmets(R) Fire Helmet brand of head protection. The fire service represents MSA's largest market. The company has annual sales of more than \$900 million, with manufacturing operations throughout the United States and more than 30 international locations.

SOURCE MSA

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