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MEDIA ADVISORY

Mayor Gary McCarthy Announces Schenectady Fire Department's Newest Captains

SCHENECTADY – Mayor Gary McCarthy announced the promotions of the following firefighters to Fire Captain:

Lt/PM Gary Coppola:

Lieutenant/Paramedic Gary Coppola is regarded very highly by the command staff of the fire department and by the rank and file. He joined the department in March 2000, and is considered an exceptional company officer. He was the recipient in 2011 of the Schenectady Fire Department Medal of Merit for rescues he carried out at 763 State Street as the officer on a two-man truck crew. There was unanimous agreement from the interview committee that he is extremely qualified for promotion. He maintains an excellent level of physical fitness and has competed in area road races, including the Schenectady Firefighters Run 4 Your Life.

Lt/PM Ronald Baier

Lieutenant Baier is the senior lieutenant being considered for promotion, and is number two on the Civil Service list. He joined the department in September 1990, and was promoted to lieutenant in May, 2000. Lt. Baier is a well-respected officer who likes seeing things done the right way. As part of the NYS Urban Search and Rescue Team, he served at Ground Zero after the terrorist attacks of 9-11. This involved hands-on and complex operations under highly stressful conditions. He continues to train and serve with the NYS USAR team as the Technical Team Manager, and was deployed in 2012 to assist at several areas around the state. Lt. Baier has an outstanding record of training outside the department and his level of expertise in technical rescue is unmatched on the department. He has been the recipient of the Schenectady Fire Department of Merit and several Departmental Commendations. He is in very good physical shape and sets a good example for younger firefighters.

Lt/PM Anthony Helstowski

Lieutenant/Paramedic Anthony Helstowski is currently assigned to Engine 4, Platoon 2. He is also an active member of the US Air National Guard stationed at Stratton Air Base, and was deployed to Iraq with his unit in 2010. In part made possible by his military training, Lt. Helstowski helped train members of the Schenectady Fire Department Tactical Medical unit which responds as a resource to the SPD Special Operations Team. Lt. Helstowski joined the department in 2001, and was promoted to Lieutenant in 2006. Because of his military experiences, he brings an understanding of necessary leadership skills and a varied and practical awareness of conflict management and resolution to the department. Lieutenant/Paramedic Helstowski was twice awarded the Schenectady Fire Department Medal of Merit for fire rescues. He is very physically fit and sets a good example for other members of the department.