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DSPS Communications

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Wisconsin DSPS Presents Check to Fox Valley Technical College *Youth Firefighter Training Grant to benefit local fire departments, area students*

Appleton -- The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) on Thursday presented a ceremonial check for \$15,405 to Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC), [one of four recent winners](#) of a DSPS Youth Firefighter Training grant.

“Most of the work our department does is rooted in safety and protecting Wisconsin citizens, from regulating our state’s licensed professionals to building plan review. But the work that may be most directly related to safety is our work with the state fire service,” DSPS Secretary Dan Hereth said. “Gov. Evers is committed to bolstering all sections of our state’s workforce, and we’re proud to play a small part, through these grants, in helping attract the next generation of firefighters.”

FVTC will use this grant to help fund a High School Fire program, through which FVTC will offer a Firefighting Principals course at the college to students at several local high schools who are interested in volunteering or starting a career in the fire service. The four-credit course will teach fire behavior and fire control techniques, and it will meet all requirements of Firefighter I certification in Wisconsin.

The college has been involved in a high school program previously, but this funding will help pay for a change in the model that will see the students transported to and trained at FVTC’s state-of-the-art Public Safety Training Center.

“We have all the access to the equipment. We have a beautiful facility here,” said FVTC Public Safety Dean Jon Sorenson. “It’s critical to have that funding to make that collaboration take place and, ultimately, train the youth in the fire profession.”

The collaboration also includes multiple fire departments in the area, including Winneconne, Chilton, Fox Crossing, Freedom, and Kimberly.

“We’ve been looking for opportunities to get high school students involved. It all comes down to recruitment and retention for us,” said Winneconne/Poygan Fire Chief Ryan Krings, a 36-year veteran of the fire service. “When we started, I thought if we could run this program successfully, and I could pull one student out of every semester to be a volunteer firefighter with us, that’s my recruitment right there. I think the first semester we had three students in the course and two of them are still in our department as volunteers.

High schools involved in the collaboration include Hilbert, Kaukauna, Kimberly, New London, Omro, and Oshkosh North.

About DSPS: DSPS issues more than 240 unique licenses, administers dozens of boards and councils that regulate professions, enforces state building codes, and maintains the Wisconsin Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which is a key tool in the multi-faceted public health campaign to stem excessive opioid prescribing. A fee-based agency, DSPS is self-sustaining and receives no general fund tax dollars for its day-to-day operations. With five offices and 250 employees throughout Wisconsin, DSPS collaborates with constituents and stakeholders across a wide range of industries to promote safety and advance the economy.