If there is one month in this century that signified a turning point for California fire-fighters and California firefighter unions, it is probably October of 2003.

Early in the month, a strongly pro-fire-fighter era in the halls of power appeared to have ended with the recall election that ousted then-Gov. Gray Davis and replaced him with Arnold Schwarzenegger. While the final votes were still being tallied, firefighters themselves were confronted with what, at the time, was considered a once-in-an-epoch fire siege that included the deadly and destructive Cedar Fire in San Diego County.

In the nearly 15 years since that October, California has faced two gubernatorial transitions – Davis to Schwarzenegger, and Schwarzenegger to Jerry Brown. In each case, these transitions created enormous challenges to our profession, and opportunities to move forward.

This year, California once again embarks on the long process of choosing a new leader. Another transition and, like 2003, another turning point. The decisions made by the next governor could be the most consequential yet, touching everything from how firefighters do their jobs to whether they will be able to retire with security and dignity – possibly even whether they will be allowed to negotiate contracts at all.

To fully appreciate the challenges of the future, it’s important to understand the battles of the past, and CPF’s role in shaping those decisions to the maximum benefit of California’s front line firefighters.

SECURING FIREFIGHTER PRIORITIES: A TALE OF TWO GOVERNORS

Schwarzenegger’s election in the circus-like recall posed a direct threat to the livelihoods of firefighters. The new governor was a protégé of viciously anti-labor former Gov. Pete Wilson, and, out of the gate, he sought to cut labor’s legs out in one stroke: A 2005 special election campaign with initiatives...
California Professional Firefighters

Mobile App

Includes:

- Instant access to Personal Exposure Reporting (PER), the Firefighter Bill of Rights and more
- Breaking news updates regarding state legislation and advocacy issues
- Member-only information regarding workers' comp laws, upcoming fights affecting firefighters and their families and more.

Download today on the iTunes App Store by searching “CA Professional Firefighters.”
A MAJOR CONTEST AHEAD

Elections, by their very nature, will always have consequences.
Locals up and down the state know this fact all too well. Every year we hear stories of local affiliates moving councils in a new direction or winning key, swing seats because they’ve run effective political campaigns. Supporting candidates who will stand with firefighters can change a local’s relationship with city hall in the matter of a single election cycle.

It’s happened time and time again. If anyone questions why our union places such a heavy importance on politics, they need not look any further than the stations that re-opened after the election of a sympathetic council, or the cuts avoided due to a funding measure that bore the firefighter brand. Involvement in the political process also helps for a seamless transition to the legislative work we do here in Sacramento, and this year, we’re faced with one of the most important political contests that our union has weighed in on in recent memory – the question of who will lead the state as its next governor.

The stakes are high, and the reasons are obvious.
The decisions made by the next governor will profoundly affect the future lives and livelihoods of our members on the job. On these issues, firefighters can't afford to sit out, and we can't afford lip service. We need to stand behind a candidate who, when challenges inevitably come before our profession, will stand behind us.

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Stay safe.
Citing an unflinching record of support for public safety and firefighters even in the toughest of times, California Professional Firefighters, the state’s largest organization representing front line firefighters, has endorsed Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom for governor.

“These are perilous times for our profession and our state, and it’s essential that the next governor offer more than lip service to firefighters,” said CPF President Lou Paulson. “Throughout his public life, Gavin Newsom has built a record of standing up for public safety and the men and women on the front lines, even in tough times. He has earned our endorsement.”

The unanimous vote of the CPF Executive Board capped an extensive review and interview process involving all but two of the major candidates (Republicans John Cox and Travis Allen rejected interview requests from CPF, unlike past GOP contenders).

CPF’s endorsement process centered entirely on the issues that affect firefighters on the job: staffing, pension security, privatization, firefighter health, on-the-job safety, pay and benefits, training, disaster response and the right to negotiate fair contracts. On these issues, Newsom represented a clear choice over his primary rivals, notably former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

“The next governor will play a huge role in decisions that will affect our firefighters and the people we protect,” said Tony Gamboa, president of United Firefighters of Los Angeles City Local 112. “On the central issues that affect the lives, health and safety of firefighters, we believe Gavin Newsom is the best choice for governor.”

During the Great Recession, Newsom, then the mayor of San Francisco, held the line on public safety funding, refusing to cut a single engine company despite intense political pressure. By contrast, Villaraigosa implemented rolling brownouts that, on any given day, shuttered 28 companies. Newsom also implemented long-overdue upgrades to the city’s Emergency Operations Plan, implemented emergency warning systems and sponsored a bond measure that upgraded the city’s water system.

“When our firefighters needed a champion at City Hall, Gavin Newsom stood up to those who wanted to roll back fire and emergency medical response,” said Tom O’Connor, president of San Francisco Fire Fighters Local 798. “He kept his commitment to public safety as mayor, and we believe he will stand up for our firefighters as governor.”

“As mayor and as lieutenant governor, I’ve been proud to stand with our firefighters, who put their lives on the line to keep our state and our communities safe,” Newsom said. “I’m honored to receive CPF’s support and am committed to ensuring that the men and women on the front lines are respected in deeds, as well as in words.”

Get the facts: To learn how the candidates stand on the core issues affecting the lives and livelihoods of firefighters and why Gavin Newsom is the right choice on these issues, check out www.firefightersforgavin.org.

**A “CHAMPION FOR FIREFIGHTERS”: GAVIN NEWSOM**

Strong pro-firefighter record earns Newsom CPF endorsement in 2018 governor’s race
THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships in the fire service are of utmost importance. You think of your own family, the necessity for healthy relationships with a spouse or significant other. Your relationship with children, parents, in-laws can either bring joy or heartache. Estranged relationships are invariably a source of irritation and can often lead to bitterness.

What about the firehouse?
A good crew is one that gets along, everyone pulling their share of the load. The captain cares about their crew both on and off the job. The men and women know each other’s families and sometimes have social events outside of work. The atmosphere in the station is team-oriented and everyone “has each other’s back.” The drive to the station to start the shift is filled with anticipation, not dread.

Strong relationships carry up the chain of command. Where there is mutual respect and a genuine desire to know each other beyond work tasks, the morale is good, and more is accomplished. The converse can be devastating. I’ll never forget the time a chief walked through our station, was rude and wanted to talk with one of the firefighters. After a few seconds of discussion, the firefighter politely informed him that “…I’ll respect the color of your helmet, but I’ll never respect you.” An Arctic wind blew through the office.

The relationship between the union and its members is critical. Does the leadership listen? Do they respond? Do they try to meet individual needs, if possible? Do the members support the leadership? Is there a respect for the amount of time the union officers devote to the cause? Is everyone pulling in the same direction? If the president calls for help with a project, are the members quick to respond to the need? If the relationship between the union’s leader and members is strong, it presents a united front to administration and political leaders and issues tend to be solved much quicker and with less angst.

The same holds true at the higher levels of leadership. Do your local leaders have good relationships with the chiefs and political decision-makers? If the only time the president calls the mayor is when something is needed, it will probably not go well. As in every level of personal interaction, there must be the building of mutual trust and respect for things to go well. I’m not saying that you must become best friends with that supervisor, but at least know a little of what is going on in their life.

For the CPF to be effective, the same principles hold true; there must be that “personal touch” beyond discussions of policy and the next election. Whether it’s the governor, an assemblymember, a fellow labor leader, an agency head or local leadership, effective leaders spend time cultivating those relationships. It takes time, but it’s worth it.

Hopefully, you strive to strengthen existing relationships, heal those that are strained and reach out to those you don’t really know. At every level, starting with your family, we all know how important a strong relationship is. Invest the time and all will bear the fruit.
attacking everything from public safety funding to labor’s political voice to ending secure pensions entirely.

With CPF leading a remarkable alliance, firefighters became the public face of the opposition. The initiatives were swept aside, leaving Schwarzenegger publicly chastened. In the aftermath, he vowed to be “the best friend firefighters ever had.” By the time he left office, Schwarzenegger signed nearly 40 CPF-sponsored pro-firefighter measures into law, including the Firefighters Bill of Rights, a nation’s first law protecting firefighters on the job that had been a CPF legislative focus for over two decades.

Schwarzenegger’s replacement, Jerry Brown, had a long history with firefighters and with CPF. In his first stint as governor from 1975 to 1983, Brown signed the landmark firefighter cancer presumption law and established the California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee.

Faced with a massive, recession-driven budget deficit, the famously frugal Brown righted the state’s fiscal ship, secured new revenue and took advantage of the booming economy to build the state’s reserve fund.

Having been visible and vocal supporters of Brown’s election in 2010, CPF won important victories for firefighters during Brown’s time in office. The state ended redevelopment funds that were draining money from public safety, extended survivor benefits for families of firefighters that die of job-related illnesses, and overhauled Schwarzenegger’s punitive Workers’ Comp reform. Entering his final year in office, Brown had signed 43 CPF-sponsored pro-firefighter measures.

STANDING UP FOR LOCALS

Many of the most tenacious battles come when acting on behalf of its local affiliates. To date, CPF has successfully won passage of nearly a dozen measures acting at the specific request of local affiliates, whether through direct outreach or convention resolutions.

- Additional CPF appointee to EMS Commission from CAL FIRE (CAL FIRE Local 2881);
- Mediation and transparency in bankruptcy cases (Stockton Local 456);
- Vesting schedule and employer contribution for Sacramento Metro (Sacramento Area Firefighters Local 522);
- Notification of fire agency regarding possible parole of anyone who kills a firefighter (UFLAC Local 112);
- Secure education benefits for children of firefighters who die of occupational illness (L.A. County Local 1014).

Beyond legislation, CPF has helped drive a new focus on helping local agencies get resources to address the ever-growing fire and disaster threats. Beginning with the post-Cedar Fire Governor’s Blue Ribbon Fire Commission, CPF has pushed to grow the availability of pre-positioned OES equipment, staffed by local agencies. In 2017, CPF was widely credited with a focused campaign in support of allocating direct funding for local mutual aid from the state’s cap-and-trade fund. This funding will total $50 million over two years.

STANDING UP TO THE HATERS

Schwarzenegger’s unsuccessful anti-labor pushes were hardly the only efforts to undercut firefighters and their hard-won progress. At least three separate unsuccessful initiative efforts were launched to roll back, privatize or eliminate secure pensions for new and current workers. In 2012, CPF again led a coalition of organized labor to defeat Proposition 32 – a second attempt to silence labor’s voice.

Legislatively, nearly four dozen separate bills were introduced over the two administrations that were directly hostile to firefighters. These included proposals to gut pension, Workers’ Comp, 4850 time, divert needed funds into special interest projects and even privatize fire protection entirely. Preventing bad laws is no less challenging than winning good ones. CPF’s legislative efforts ensured that none of these proposals made it to the governor’s desk, and most never even got past their first committee hearing.

A STRONG VOICE WHERE IT COUNTS

Success in shaping a pro-firefighter agenda doesn’t just happen in the halls of the Capitol. An array of state boards, commissions, task forces and working groups often are in the middle of enforcing and implementing policies established by the Legislature.

Over the past decade and a half, CPF has placed firefighters on every meaningful state commission that touches the fire service. Through the Schwarzenegger and Brown years, a total of 20 different CPF members or staffers have served on a dozen different regulatory boards, commissions and statewide entities. On those commissions or committees most central to the lives of firefighters, CPF has multiple appointments, including the State Board of Fire Services and the California Emergency Medical Services Commission.

FACING THE FUTURE

In 2018, California firefighters stand at another crossroads, as the demands on members multiply even as they face attacks on everything from engine staffing to retirement security. As a new administration approaches, these are some of the challenges firefighters and other public workers will confront:

- The Janus Decision: By the time you read this, the U.S. Supreme Court will likely have ruled to allow non-union public workers to “ride free” by ending fair-share payments for union services. Bankrolled by billionaire anti-union ideologues, the Janus v. AFSCME case is about weakening union solidarity, making it easier to attack pensions, pay, job security and everything else unions work for. CPF identified the threat early on, and its “The Union is All of Us” campaign (www.theunionisus.org) is designed to push back.

- Reforming “pension reform”: Despite CPF’s firm public opposition, the Legislature and Gov. Brown enacted the “Public Employee Pension Reform Act” (PEPRA) in 2012, creating a second-tier retirement for new hires. At this writing, the measure is the subject of a court battle, but mitigating its impact and reversing its most onerous provisions remains a high priority.

- The California Rule: Even more threatening than the effect of PEPRA is looming before the California Supreme Court, which could soon end a nearly seven-decade precedent requiring that pension cuts be offset by other benefits. Overturning “the California Rule” could lead to proposals to slash benefits to current workers.

- Meeting the disaster threat: Catastrophic fires, flooding and other natural disasters have become “the new normal” in California. And every time disaster strikes, most of the firefighters responding are from local agencies. Yet, even as the need grows, local resources continue to shrink. Recognizing the role all firefighters play in protecting our citizens from catastrophic fire is critical.

“Meeting the challenges ahead won’t be easy,” noted CPF President Lou Paulson. “If the successful battles of the past are any indication, our proud and committed union will continue to meet future challenges with strength and solidarity. When we stand as one, we win as one because the union is all of us.”
Eight days into its response to the deadly mudflows in Montecito, Santa Barbara County’s Regional USAR Task Force 12 had a grim assignment: following trails of mud, water and personal items in search of those still missing. Some two hours after the start of their shift, RTF-12 found the body of 28-year-old Faviola Calderon encased in mud – the 21st death from the debris flow.

As an RTF leader and president of Lompoc Firefighters’ Association, Local 1906, Anthony Hudley was immediately concerned about the emotional impact of the recovery on his members. Along with other union presidents on hand to respond, he made sure his team had access to peer counseling at the incident and the environment to process what had happened.

It wasn’t until he got back home, however, that Hudley found himself in need of support. “We were able to give that family closure, but we lost someone,” Hundley said. “It was hard. It’s still hard.”

Hudley’s story is one of countless untold impacts large and small that the disasters of 2017 and 2018 have had on the well-being of California’s firefighters. It was also an example of an unprecedented focus on firefighter behavioral health during and after these events. From IAFF-trained peer supporters to clinicians and substance abuse treatment, California’s firefighters – and notably their unions – mobilized to open up. “We’re still dealing with stigma that we need to break through.”

Beyond the immediate aftermath of major incidents, these experiences also point to the importance of keeping an eye on effects that show up long after the fire is out.

“Just like any call, you lock that away somewhere … good call, bad call … a lot of us subconsciously say I’ll deal with that later,” Day said. “Eventually, everybody’s going to have that moment where it catches up with them. We’ve still got some work to do.”
**NEW LEGISLATIVE YEAR UNDERWAY IN SACRAMENTO**

The second year of the California Legislature’s two-year session is up and running and California Professional Firefighters is working to advance a host of issues on behalf of our members, their families and the profession as a whole. Many bills seen in the 2018 legislative package are the product of resolutions adopted at previous CPF Biennial Conventions or via Executive Board directives.

Here’s a rundown of how things stand following the Legislature’s “bill introduction” deadline in late February. You can track these and other bills of interest as they move through the process this year on the CPF website under “Issues and Legislation.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 1116</strong></td>
<td>(Tim Grayson, D-Concord)</td>
<td>This measure would establish a confidential peer support and crisis referral service for the benefit of firefighters and other emergency service personnel. The bill retains certain confidentiality protections for communications between a peer support team member and a firefighter along with limited immunity for the peer support team member.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AB 2334</strong></td>
<td>(Tony Thurmond, D-Richmond)</td>
<td>If signed into law, this bill would require employers to report specified workplace injury and illness information to CalOSHA. The measure will also require CalOSHA to put the data on its website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AB 2380</strong></td>
<td>(Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, D-Napa)</td>
<td>In an effort to address concerns regarding the use of privately contracted fire prevention services, this bill would require the proper identification of resources as well as the adoption of standards and procedures to be followed should these resources find themselves on an active incident.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AB 2554</strong></td>
<td>(Rob Bonta, D-Alameda)</td>
<td>If approved, this bill would clarify that the surviving family members of fallen federal firefighters working at California government installations would be eligible for the same public education fee and tuition waiver currently extended to state and local government firefighters.</td>
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AB 2961
(Patrick O’Donnell, D-Long Beach)
This bill will likely be the first step in a series of actions aiming to deal with the ongoing issue of “wall time” within the state’s EMS industry by requiring local EMS authorities, or LEMSAs, to report certain ambulance patient offload times to the state EMSA for the purpose of tracking and recording.

AB 2990
(Evan Low, D-Campbell)
If signed into law, this bill would help ensure that information pertaining to the existing higher education fee and tuition waivers available to the surviving family members of a fallen firefighter are prominently displayed on the web pages of California State University, University of California and California Community College institutions.

AB 2998
(Richard Bloom, D-Santa Monica)
Continuing the CPF’s efforts to rid the Golden State of cancer-causing chemical flame retardants, this bill would prohibit the sale of juvenile products, mattresses, and upholstered or reupholstered furniture in California that use toxic chemicals.

SB 944
(Robert Hertzberg, D-Van Nuys)
This bill is an outgrowth of the state’s community paramedicine pilot programs and, if signed into law, would dictate how community paramedicine programs in California can continue.

SB 1086
(Tony Atkins, D-San Diego)
If signed into law, this bill would remove a January 1, 2019 sunset date on the 420-week from date-of-diagnosis statute, protecting surviving family members of fallen firefighters that was brought about by CPF-sponsored AB 1035 (2014)
Without the removal of the sunset, the window to apply for death benefits for surviving family members would revert back to the 240-weeks from date of diagnosis that was in place prior to CPF’s action.

SB 1124
(Connie Leyva, D-Chino)
If signed into law, this bill keeps promises to retirees by ensuring that any collectively bargained compensation, which is characterized and reported by an employer to CalPERS as pensionable compensation, cannot be subsequently and retroactively clawed back at the retired member’s expense.
A line of duty death is one of the most traumatic experiences that a department or local can endure, and when the unthinkable does occur, leadership is often faced with a mounting list of questions about what to do next.

Three departments found themselves in that unfortunate circumstance in 2017, and were able to navigate the tragedy thanks to the assistance of the California Last Alarm Service Team (Cal-LAST). Last year, Cal-LAST provided Santa Cruz, Rio Vista and Garden Grove Fire with comprehensive support after losing one of their own in the line of duty.

"Experiencing a line of duty death can be overwhelming," said Foundation Chair Lou Paulson. "There’s a lot of things that need to happen at the same time, and having the support and experience of Cal-LAST can help those that have lost one of their own during the times they need it most."

Developed in conjunction with the National Fallen Firefighter Foundation’s Local Assistance State Team (L.A.S.T) program, Cal-LAST provides departments and locals with a team of individuals who can assist with every aspect of a line-of-duty death funeral.

The primary mission of the team is to provide assistance and comfort to the family and department. All other aspects of team functionality are secondary, but are made available because of the possible needs of the families and the fire service throughout the country during a critical time.

The California Fire Foundation has been designated as the exclusive administrator of this unique and comprehensive line-of-duty death assistance program for the state of California. Funding for this program is provided by the Department of Justice.

“Cal-LAST provides comprehensive support to California fire departments that have experienced an indescribable loss,” Paulson said. “It’s an honor to help provide this critical service, and a testament to bonds present within the California fire service.”

**SUPPORT the FOUNDATION**

By supporting the California Fire Foundation, you can help further its mission to aid families of fallen firefighters, firefighters and the communities they protect.

**FIREFIGHTER LICENSE PLATES**

Sold to active and retired firefighters, as well as surviving families of fallen firefighters, the iconic California firefighters license plate lets you show your pride on cars, trucks, trailers and motorcycles. Proceeds from the sales benefit the families of California’s fallen firefighters.

**PLANNED GIVING**

Including the California Fire Foundation in your estate plan will not only help you in achieve your own philanthropic and charitable giving goals, but it will also allow the Foundation to continue its mission.

**FOUNDATION STORE**

Purchase your very own firefighter challenge coin through the Foundation store and support programs that aid families of the fallen.

**CHECK OFF CA**

Did you file for an extension? When completing your State Tax Form 540, look for the California Firefighters’ Memorial fund on line 406 under Voluntary Contributions.

**AMAZON SMILE**

When you shop through Amazon Smile, a portion of the sale is used to help support the California Fire Foundation. Switch over the next time you shop and help make a difference.
LOS ANGELES DODGERS & SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS TO HOST FIREFIGHTER APPRECIATION NIGHTS

Two of California’s most storied baseball franchises are, again, teaming up with the California Fire Foundation to show their appreciation for the state’s first responders.

Join the Foundation at Dodger Stadium on Monday, May 21st, 2018 as the Dodgers take on the Colorado Rockies in their 5th Annual Firefighter Appreciation Night. Firefighter Appreciation Night VIP Package to the event will include:

- Your ticket to the game
- An exclusive Dodgers Firefighter Appreciation Night challenge coin
- Entry to VIP pre-game reception with food and beverages at the Historic 76 Station
- Donation to the California Fire Foundation

A month later, Northern California firefighters will descend upon AT&T Park on Tuesday, June 26th, 2018 to watch the San Francisco Giants take on the Colorado Rockies in their 7th Annual Firefighter Appreciation Night. Firefighter Appreciation Night ticket package will include:

- Your ticket to the game
- Access to the pre-game Firefighter party from 5-7 pm in Lot A
- A firefighter-themed Giants trucker hat
- Donation to the California Fire Foundation

For more information about this year’s Firefighter Appreciation Events, or to purchase tickets, visit the Foundation’s website at www.cafirefoundation.org.

FOUNDATION PROGRAM ENROLLMENT AND APPLICATION DEADLINES

National Child ID Program
California’s local firefighting unions are being called upon to help keep children in our communities safe by signing up to participate in the National Child ID program.

Every CPF affiliate has the opportunity to participate in this community outreach program, in partnership with the Foundation and the American Football Coaches Association. Simply fill out a request form indicating the number of kits needed and how they will be distributed. With your help, nearly 50,000 kits have been distributed to our schools to date, helping protect kids in California.

Applications must be filled out by union presidents and are available at cafirefoundation.org.

Supplying Aid to Victims of Emergency (SAVE) Program
The Foundation’s SAVE program provides immediate financial aid to eligible fire and disaster victims. Working with firefighters throughout the state, $100 Mastercard gift cards are distributed on-scene of an incident, providing victims immediate access to purchase basic necessities like food, water or clothing. Over 15,000 victims have been assisted through the program to date, including most recently, thousands of victims of the Northern and Southern California wildfires.

SAVE is available to any officially organized fire department or district. In order to participate, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be signed by both a fire chief and union president.

The MOU and more information about SAVE are available online at cafirefoundation.org/save.

Daniel A. Terry Scholarship (DAT) Program
Funded by the Foundation, the DAT program provides higher education financial assistance to children of fallen firefighters. Providing $2,000 college scholarships, the Foundation grants awards to children of firefighters who died in the line of duty. Over 100 students have received scholarships, to date, aiding them on a path to a successful future. 2018 DAT applications are now available online, and the deadline to apply is June 1, 2018. If you know anyone that might be eligible please direct them to cafirefoundation.org for more information and to apply.

For questions or additional information about any of the Foundation’s programs, please email cafirefoundation@cpf.org or call (800) 890-3213.
CALIFORNIA PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS

PHOTO CONTEST 2017

HONORABLE MENTION

Andrew Klein
Brandy Carlos
David Loya

WINNER
Tenaya Fleckenstein
CAL-JAC LAUNCHES NATION’S FIRST FIRE SERVICE PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

For California firefighters, apprenticeship is nothing new.

Since 1982, the California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (Cal-JAC) has pioneered the apprenticeship model in the state’s fire service, creating a system of standardized training that has helped develop a fire service that, today, is the envy of the nation.

Since its inception, Cal-JAC has strived to develop a workforce that is not only equipped to face the ever-evolving demands of the profession, but also one that reflects the diversity seen across the Golden State. With that aim in mind, the Cal-JAC recently launched a groundbreaking, pre-apprenticeship program, designed to remove barriers to entry and provide a direct path toward the fire service for qualified candidates who also demonstrated economic need.

“As the labor sponsor for the Cal-JAC, training and preparing individuals for a career in the fire service is what we’ve been involved with for years,” said CPF President Lou Paulson. “This is a great opportunity to try and help folks who haven’t had the opportunity to get into an academy or EMT class, to get an opportunity for a career in the fire service, and we’re very excited about the ability to provide that.”

The program, dubbed the Cal-JAC Academy, allows candidates to complete the fire service’s entry-level physical and written testing requirements, while also earning their EMT certification. The program’s tuition, including all associated costs such as books, uniforms, travel and childcare costs, are being covered through a grant from the California Community College Chancellor’s Office, meaning candidates can attend completely free of charge. Those who successfully complete the program will be granted a guaranteed job interview with the Sacramento City Fire Department, as well as placement on the Firefighter Candidate Testing Center’s Statewide Eligibility List, which nearly 100 departments use when it comes time to hire.

“We didn’t set out to be first, but we’re fortunate to have that opportunity because we have a great partner like California Professional Firefighters leading the way,” said former Sacramento Fire Chief Walt White.

During the program’s two month application process, Cal-JAC’s outreach efforts netted a total of 228 applicants from a broad range of ethnic, gender and economic backgrounds. Of those applicants, a pool of 50 cadets was selected to make up the Cal-JAC Academy’s inaugural class. Roughly 20 percent of those candidates are female, compared current workforce numbers, which hover somewhere around five percent. The cadet pool is also ethnically diverse, with 24 percent of cadets identifying as Hispanic, and another 22 percent identifying as African-American. Currently, African-American and Hispanic firefighters make up roughly 10 percent of the workforce.

The Cal-JAC Academy’s inaugural class is a product of an extensive outreach and recruitment campaign, one which sought to interact with potential applicants through a wide variety of methods and media. Early on in the recruitment process, Cal-JAC staff organized a press event with office of Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg, and conducted extensive media outreach throughout the Sacramento region, and on digital platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Cal-JAC Academy partners, including the Sacramento Fire Department, Sacramento Area Firefighters, Local 522 and the Butte County Office of Education were also instrumental in the recruitment efforts.

“This was truly a team effort,” said Yvonne de la Peña, executive director of the Cal-JAC. “Without our partner organizations, the success of this program would not have been possible.”
GOVERNOR’S BUDGET PROPOSAL MAKES COMMITMENT TO APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Governor Brown has made good on his previous statements to retool and revitalize the state’s workforce, making a multi-million dollar commitment to job-based training programs in his recent budget proposal.

The governor’s proposed budget, which was released in January, includes $17.8 million for increased reimbursements to K-12 and community college sponsored apprenticeship programs for instructional hours provided in 2018-19, with additional one-time increase of $30.6 million to backfill shortfalls in reimbursements provided from 2013-14 to 2017-18.

“For years, the Cal-JAC has maintained that apprenticeship is the best pathway to prepare firefighters for mastering their occupational skills and ultimately achieving success in their fire service careers,” said Dan Terry, chair of the Cal-JAC. “The time-tested apprenticeship model also ensures that new firefighters will be trained to standards that allow them to meet the ever-changing challenges that face our state. It is clearly in our state’s best interest to ensure the viability of existing and future apprentice program sponsors, which serve as the backbone of apprenticeship training in California.”

According to the Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS), the overall number of active apprentices in California has increased by approximately 35 percent to 80,464 active apprentices as of December 30, 2017 – up from 53,366 active apprentices on December 30, 2014. Of those, there are nearly 9,000 registered firefighter apprentices in California, which is more than double the number from 2013.

“The huge increase in fire service apprentices is evidence that the apprenticeship model works,” said Cal-JAC executive director Yvonne de la Peña. “It’s refreshing to see the governor’s budget share our priorities when it comes to adequately funding apprentice programs, and we’re hopeful that the legislature will follow suit later this year.”

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS TARGETING VETERAN FIREFIGHTER CANDIDATES UNDERWAY

For nearly four decades, the Cal-JAC has been committed to professionalizing recruitment efforts, breaking down barriers to qualified candidates and building vital bridges between firefighter candidates and the departments for whom they wish to work.

In the early months of 2018, the Cal-JAC has continued this valuable work, while dedicating a heightened level of attention to our nation’s veterans.

In early March, Cal-JAC partnered with the Gary Sinise Foundation, a non-profit charged with serving United States veterans and their families, and the California Fire Foundation to host dozen of veterans in the Los Angeles area for an informative evening about how to launch a career in the fire service.

“Hearing from working members of the fire service was very helpful,” said Leilani Violet-Thompkins, a retired flight deck crewmember in United States Navy. “There’s definitely a correlation between the military and the fire service, specifically the training aspects. Training is so important, and constantly honing those skills, and learning new skills, is something most veterans are very familiar with.”

In addition to hearing from members of the fire service, attendees to the veteran workshop were introduced to the wide range of services available through the Firefighter Candidate Testing Center, as well as encouraged to attend the Cal-JAC’s upcoming firefighter career expo at the FCTC facility in South El Monte.

More information about the Cal-JAC’s effort to recruit and train veterans can be found at www.cffjac.org.

Governor Brown has made good on his previous statements to retool and revitalize the state’s workforce, making a multi-million dollar commitment to job-based training programs in his recent budget proposal.

The governor’s proposed budget, which was released in January, includes $17.8 million for increased reimbursements to K-12 and community college sponsored apprenticeship programs for instructional hours provided in 2018-19, with additional one-time increase of $30.6 million to backfill shortfalls in reimbursements provided from 2013-14 to 2017-18.

“For years, the Cal-JAC has maintained that apprenticeship is the best pathway to prepare firefighters for mastering their occupational skills and ultimately achieving success in their fire service careers,” said Dan Terry, chair of the Cal-JAC. “The time-tested apprenticeship model also ensures that new firefighters will be trained to standards that allow them to meet the ever-changing challenges that face our state. It is clearly in our state’s best interest to ensure the viability of existing and future apprentice program sponsors, which serve as the backbone of apprenticeship training in California.”

According to the Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS), the overall number of active apprentices in California has increased by approximately 35 percent to 80,464 active apprentices as of December 30, 2017 – up from 53,366 active apprentices on December 30, 2014. Of those, there are nearly 9,000 registered firefighter apprentices in California, which is more than double the number from 2013.

“The huge increase in fire service apprentices is evidence that the apprenticeship model works,” said Cal-JAC executive director Yvonne de la Peña. “It’s refreshing to see the governor’s budget share our priorities when it comes to adequately funding apprentice programs, and we’re hopeful that the legislature will follow suit later this year.”

For nearly four decades, the Cal-JAC has been committed to professionalizing recruitment efforts, breaking down barriers to qualified candidates and building vital bridges between firefighter candidates and the departments for whom they wish to work.

In the early months of 2018, the Cal-JAC has continued this valuable work, while dedicating a heightened level of attention to our nation’s veterans.

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For more than three decades, Jim Steiner served the citizens of Corona as a first responder and president of Corona Firefighters, Local 3757. Now, he’s hoping to serve them as their newest City Council member.

Earlier this year, Steiner, who recently retired from the Corona Fire Department after 31 years of service, announced his candidacy for Corona’s 4th District City Council seat, launching a bid that draws heavily on his long history of public service and community involvement.

“The city of Corona deserves strong leadership that listens to residents it serves,” Steiner said. “I believe that, as part of the Corona City Council, I can work with existing leadership to make our city a better place.”

Steiner is no stranger to Corona politics, having honed his skills in collaborative leadership first as Local 3757’s politics director, then as a long stint as president that saw him become one of the state’s most stalwart labor leaders, one that, in 2016, was recognized by California Professional Firefighters with the Dallas Jones Award for Political Action.

Steiner’s history of community service and recognition also extends well beyond the labor movement.

Due to his work in the community, he has been recognized as the Corona Fire Department’s Firefighter of the Year for 2003 and 2010, 2011; Ira D. Calvert Distinguished Service; 2013 UNITY Award for Community Service; 2014 Corona Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year; 2015 Corona-Norco Day of the Child – Champion of Young Children and 2016 American Diabetes Association “Father of the Year.”

“Jim Steiner was the model for local labor leader’s over the course of his career,” said CPF President Lou Paulson. “We wish him the best in his upcoming campaign, and encourage locals up and down California to stand behind Brother Steiner as he begins the latest chapter in his long history of public service.

Additional information about Steiner’s campaign for City Council can be found at www.jimsteinerforcorona.com.
CPF 2nd District Vice President

Chris Mahon

The year 2017 ended with a bang, and 2018 started the same way.

In District 2, firefighters and other first responders found themselves facing what turned out to be the largest wildfire in California history – the Thomas Fire. In that blaze alone, more than 1,000 structures burned and two people lost their lives, including Firefighter Cory Iverson. Most of the homes were lost the first night, as the mutual aid system struggled to provide resources to get ahead of the fire. Like many of you reading this, I worked the fire starting the first night. During these critical hours, we saw gale force winds push fire through drought-stressed fuel beds at amazing rates of spread. We watched as houses quickly joined the other fuels with few resources, namely engines, available to defend them.

Through the course of the night, help arrived from local agencies throughout Southern California, and that immediate help made all the difference. While many homes were lost, the potential was there to lose many thousands more. By sunrise we were working with 15 engines from 3 mixed strike teams, all local agencies, all working together and expertly engaging structure defense under extreme fire conditions. What we saw that day was the state's mutual aid system in action, and anybody that was there understands they saved lives, not just houses.

Weeks later, with the Thomas fire barely contained, 21 people lost their lives in the Montecito “debris flow.” The mutual aid system was again put to the test, sending local agency engines, USAR teams, and other specialty units to this dangerous incident.

These back-to-back disasters illustrate one point incredibly clear - the statewide mutual aid system is stressed. There are simply not enough resources available, and getting requests processed and engines on the road often takes too long.

One answer to this is the pre-positioning of engine companies.

In times of high fire danger, upstaffing additional engines in threatened areas is the only way to stay ahead. For local agencies this usually means spending significant amounts of money on overtime and other costs before there is an emergency, money they don't have in their budget. That means the same local agencies we rely on to provide 80 percent of our mutual aid resources have no funding source to pre-position equipment when and where large fires are likely to start.

The day of the Thomas Fire, the potential for a devastating fire was well-known, and some local agencies had up-staffed in anticipation. Unfortunately, not all agencies had the ability to do so. The resources which were pre-positioned helped prevent greater loss in the City of Santa Paula and other areas near the origin.

California Professional Firefighters, together with a broad coalition of stakeholders, are working to support a proposal that would provide money to fund local agency participation in the mutual aid system, including $87 million that can be used for pre-positioning, and another $13 million to make mutual aid dispatch more efficient.

With extreme fires becoming our new normal, this money, and a commitment from all mutual aid partners to use it, is critical to saving lives. When the time comes to talk to your legislators about this bill, just reflect back on what we just went through and share what you know. Nothing more should be necessary.
 CPF District 3 represents the counties of Del Norte, Siskiyou, Modoc, Humboldt, Trinity, Shasta, Lassen, Mendocino, Tehama, Plumas, Lake, Glenn, Butte, Colusa, Sutter, Yuba, Sierra, Yolo, Placer, Sacramento, El Dorado, San Joaquin, Amador, Calaveras, Alpine, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Mono, Merced, Mariposa, Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Benito, Fresno, Kings, Madera, Nevada, Tulare and Inyo.

Bobby Weist
CPF 3rd District Vice President

Merced Firefighters Get Behind Marijuana Tax

Roughly $1 million in tax revenue might be up for grabs if a proposed cannabis “sin tax” measure is approved by voters in the city of Merced, and local firefighters are working to ensure that funding for vital public safety services doesn’t get left out of the potential windfall.

The measure, which was placed on the June ballot following a vote of the Merced City Council, would tax recreational marijuana businesses at a rate of 3 to 4 percent annually, and includes the option to raise the tax up to 10 percent in the future. Early polling suggests that the measure is largely supported by Merced voters.

“It looks like the community is behind this,” said Chad Englert, president of Merced City Firefighters, Local 1479. “If the people are in favor of it, it only makes sense that we would want to go out and get a part of it.”

As a special tax, the revenues generated from the measure would be dedicated to police, fire and parks and recreation, with each entity receiving no less than 20 percent of the total. The remaining 40 percent would then be split up between the three entities at the discretion of the City Council, creating a potential for additional funding on top of the 20 percent that is already earmarked for the city’s fire department.

Englert notes that recreational marijuana use has the potential to increase the demand for public safety services in the city of Merced, so directing funding to the entities that provide those services seems like a natural fit.

“Framing this measure as a sin tax, the council is making it clear that this has the potential to impact public safety,” Englert said. “If something is going to have a significant impact on police and fire, and is going to create an additional need for us to respond, there needs to be a way of covering the cost of providing those services.”

The fate of Merced’s cannabis tax will be decided by the voters on June 5th.

Turlock Firefighters Enter Election Season Riding High

For the past two years, Turlock Firefighters, Local 2434 has been on a bit of a hot streak, one they hope to preserve through aggressive political advocacy in the upcoming election year.

In the past two years, Local 2434 has had a hand in the department’s transitioning away from an anti-labor fire chief to a much more labor friendly administration, a move that has seen hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional funding committed to training and other sorely needed resources.

“A lot of good has come in the past two years,” said Paul Arai, president of Turlock Firefighters, Local 2434.

Arai attributes many of these positive changes to the aggressive political advocacy shown by Local 2434 members, who previously helped elect Turlock’s current mayor. That positive relationship with City Hall translates to stronger ties with management when, following the retirement of Turlock’s past fire chief, Arai was a given a seat on the four-person hiring panel responsible for selecting the next fire chief.

“Labor-management relations are definitely at a high,” Arai said. “All of that is a part of us being involved, and strong with our council. These relationships have allowed us to finally overcome what could be summed up as a previous lack of leadership at the top of our department.”

Having seen the value of past advocacy, Local 2434 are now looking to continue the win streak through a contentious mayoral race in 2018.

In that contest, current Mayor Gary Soiseth will be facing off against Councilmember Brad Bates. Local 2434 had endorsed both candidates in their most recent bids for office. Local 2434 will be selecting its endorsed candidate for the latest contest following the June primary.

“It’s a very contentious race,” Arai said. “Our members will be involved, as we have been in past cycles, to ensure that public safety remains a top priority for our elected leaders.”
LIVERMORE-PLEASANTON FIRE CAPTAIN WINS BRONZE STAR FOR MILITARY SERVICE

As a fire captain, Ken Atkinson of Livermore-Pleasanton Firefighters Local 1974 has had his share of difficult calls, including being first on scene when one of his brother firefighters – Scott Walsh – came close to his death in a horrific fire.

But Brother Atkinson’s willingness to put his life on the line goes well beyond his day job in the fire service. He’s also a Green Beret, and now, a decorated war hero.

This past fall, Army National Guard Special Forces Weapons Sergeant Ken Atkinson was awarded the Bronze Star for “exceptionally meritorious service” as part of Operation Freedom’s Sentinel in Afghanistan in late 2016 and early 2017. Atkinson won his honors as part of Special Forces Detachment Alpha, which was deployed in Eastern Nangathar Province – right on the border with Afghanistan and right in the teeth of ISIS.

“We were sent into the valley three days after (the U.S.) had dropped the largest non-nuclear weapon,” Atkinson said. “My team was specifically targeting ISIS.”

Surrounded on three sides by the enemy, Atkinson’s team and its Afghan Army partners faced a nearly unrelenting small arms, mortar and artillery barrage. “We lost a few men who were in a vehicle that was blown up, and an interpreter was killed,” he recalled.

In all, Atkinson and his detachment participated in at least 14 large-scale operations, clearing dozens of ISIS compounds, targeting enemy networks and capturing illegal narcotics. In the Bronze Star Award citation declared Sgt. Atkinson’s actions were “in keeping with the finest traditions of military service and reflect distinct credit upon himself and … the United States Army.”

Atkinson’s deployment was his third since he joined the National Guard in 2012, having previously been deployed twice in Africa. But the fire service always beckons, and he’s currently “deployed” in the firehouse in Livermore-Pleasanton. And he’s passing on his own tradition to his children: One son is a Green Beret, another a Cosumnes firefighter.

ALAMEDA CO.’S AMBULANCE RFP DEEMED ‘ILLEGAL’ BY SUPERIOR COURT

In the latest turn of events in Alameda County’s ongoing ambulance procurement saga, a Superior Court has tossed out an illegal attempt by the county to prohibit the public-private model being backed by Alameda County’s firefighters.

In the decision, the court ruled that the county’s prohibition against a contractor-subcontractor, or alliance, model was indeed illegal, and ordered the county to try to scrap the tainted portion of the request for proposals that had previously drawn the ire of Alameda County Firefighters, Local 55. The suit was filed by the California Fire Chiefs Association against both the California Emergency Medical Services Authority and the Alameda County EMS Agency.

The decision is the latest development in a string of events that stretches back to 2013, when the existing provider signaled that it planned to execute a 90-day walkout provision and triggered discussions of a roughly $5 million bail-out to help offset losses by the private vendor. In the wake of these discussions, the Alameda County Fire Department, with the support of Local 55 began discussion so a public-private partnership model that would be entered into consideration during the county’s next request for proposal (RFP) period.

The idea of a public-private partnership is one that has been met with success in nearby Contra Costa county, where the county fire department has partnered with American Medical Response for ambulance care.

In October 2016, plans for an alliance model in Alameda County took an unexpected blow when the county issued an RFP that called for a vendor to provide service throughout Alameda County. The county’s RFP barred the contractor-subcontractor model, while dramatically changing how ambulance service would be provided in Alameda County, calling for the elimination of 201 funding and changing work rules for S150 transports, said Local 55 President Sean Burrows.

“The judge’s ruling that the county and state do not have the ability to prohibit a contractor-subcontractor model is a victory,” Burrows said. “I think it’s a bellwether for the state and fire departments across California, and clearly shows that the alliance model cannot be prohibited.”

“This is a major win for California’s firefighters,” said Lew Stone,secretary treasurer of CPF and a member of the state’s EMS Commission. “Not only does it uphold the position that prohibiting the alliance-style model is illegal, it puts EMSA and LEMSAs up and down the state on notice that CPF locals are talking to one another, and are ready to step up when these sorts of antics surface in the future.”

With the existing RFP has been deemed illegal, the Alameda County EMS Agency remains resistant to allowing the fire department to participate in EMS transport in the county. In the days following the ruling, an addendum to the RFP was issued, outlining a variety of restrictions that appear to be aimed at eliminating the department’s ability to bid, and signaling, if anything, that the issue is far from settled.

“While the victory in the courts was an important one, it’s far from the final fight,” Burrows said. “We’ve been dealing with this issue for more than four years, and the latest action by the LEMSA suggests that we’re not done fighting just yet.”
WHY WE SERVE

In our profession, we use words and phrases like honor, respect, courage, dedication, brother and sister. When we are elected to union office, we also use words and phrases like solidarity, dutifully abide, promote unity and harmony, promise and swear. These are powerful words with profound and potent meanings. They are the foundation of the great legacies of the leaders who have come before you. These leaders had vision, tenacity, and willpower in the face of great challenges and fortitude to provide the opportunities and benefits many of us take for granted today.

Each of us who has raised their right hand and sworn and affirmed the oath of office have inherited these rights and responsibilities.

As we take these oaths, we’re often not fully aware of the personal and professional sacrifices that will come with this honor. The role requires emotional, physical, departmental, and most importantly, the support of our families. Some aren’t able to maintain union roles for long. Those of us that do remain are truly fortunate.

We are fortunate for the opportunity to serve our members, to use our years of experience, knowledge and learned abilities on their behalf. For many of us, leadership is a calling, one that often requires we put everything aside to right wrongs, secure fair wages hours and working conditions, and work for the safety of our members and the public.

This calling centers on the unifying principle of the union movement: in solidarity, there is strength. “We will stand by our friends and administer a stinging rebuke to men or parties who are either indifferent, negligent, or hostile,” said legendary trade union leader Samuel Gompers, “and, wherever opportunity affords, to secure the election of intelligent, honest, earnest trade unionists, with clear, unblemished, paid-up union cards in their possession.”

Never have Brother Gompers’ words echoed more loudly than we do right now. Our ability to thrive as firefighters and union members depends on all those who stand with us, and beside us, and actively engage in the goals and ambitions set forth by our members and our leaders.

I cannot be prouder of the accomplishments of the California Professional Firefighters. In my 15-year tenure on the board, our accomplishments, not just as a board but as a body, are many, our track record proven and our reputation is well known as the gold standard for ALL of labor in California.

I am humbled to have been mentored by giants of the labor movement. Our very own Dan Terry, whose legacy has set the example for what all state associations should strive to be. Dallas Jones, who helped lay the cornerstone of our foundation that is the CPF. Kenny Harrell, 5th District Emeritus who taught me to always do the right thing for our members and to look dapper while doing it.

Our current leaders, notably President Lou Paulson and Secretary-Treasurer Lew Stone are proud and powerful modern-day bearers of this legacy. I’m honored to have stood alongside President Paulson, who has stood up for the members of our district and allowed them to thrive. He has never wavered from a commitment to fair and equitable treatment for our federal firefighters ... indeed for every member, affiliate and district. Secretary-Treasurer Stone has been a friend, mentor and confidant to myself and members of our district, ensuring new secretaries and treasurers have the skills and abilities to navigate their new-found positions, as well as defending and advocating on behalf of our members facing disciplinary issues and challenges to proven fire-based paramedicine.

Four decades of committed, principled leadership that has provided much for our firefighters.

So what does all of this mean? GET INVOLVED. NOW.

For well over 28 years I have dedicated my life to this union. I was taught early by my father (Local 1230-ret.) to get involved. I was shown the way by countless friends and labor leaders all whom took the time to offer advice, answer my questions and afford me the opportunity to be in the right place at the right time. I watched, listened, took mental notes and most importantly I STAYED INVOLVED.

Nothing is easy. Like many of you, I missed birthdays, school functions and other important life events most of us take for granted ... not just because I was on the fire lines but because I STAYED INVOLVED.

Unlike other labor organizations, your union leaders are right there in the firehouse. To the man, the leaders that have inspired us have skipped those promotion opportunities, awards and accolades and set aside personal ambition (and that shiny gold badge) because the cause was greater than the person. They STAYED INVOLVED.

I firmly believe that the California Professional Firefighters will continue to be the pinnacle of organized labor. I’m proud of all we’ve done to further the rights and benefits of our members and their families, and excited about the possibilities ahead. I’m honored to be fortunate enough to serve these leaders and this organization. Rest assured, we’ll continue to be strong, so long as we all STAYED INVOLVED.
If anyone ever wanted to understand why they became a firefighter, this is the year that answered their questions. The stunning disasters began with what is known as the October Fires and continued into November with the most catastrophic fire in our state’s history. CAL FIRE, Local 2881 was honored to work alongside our local counterparts doing everything possible to protect vulnerable neighbors and exposed properties.

The cause of the fires are still being investigated as we go to print. The response to the fires, however, are a matter of record. The brothers and sisters of our profession handled the continuing crisis with professionalism and courage.

THE NEED
A review of the fires revealed to the public what many of already knew to be true – that the funding for a “new natural” of regular disasters engendered and worsened by climate change and drought is inadequate.

Local 2881 supports the earmarking of the 100 million dollars to pre-position engines during days of the risk, and 13 million to enhance our over-burdened communications system.

A second separate proposal is also important to us – and that is the replacement of engines that CAL FIRE has lost since 1975, and increased staffing for the increased demands on our men and women.

There is no doubt that beyond this year we will be visiting the Legislature as a united profession to bring sense and sensibility to future funding. The cost, again, is minimal and the end results net real-world benefits that make a difference in both the suppression and recovery.

ELECTIONS
Local input, and participating in the CPF clusters, make it possible for 2881 to get a more complete picture of the candidates for the various offices that impact our profession. The legislature is ostensibly our city council or board of supervisors and it is important that we maintain an educational program explaining the importance of public safety as the policy priority.

The importance of the fire service displaying solidarity in the policy discussions has never been more critical. The same great work we do in the field needs to be duplicated in our policy and public relations outreach.

While there is no doubt that the public is always appreciative of the efforts our brothers and sisters make in situations of extreme duress, it is helpful to explain that the infrastructural needs associated with firefighting are extensive.

AN INTERESTING STATISTIC
The hotel occupancy rates in Napa and Sonoma counties are higher than they were a year ago, which prompted some optimists to opine that the recovery was occurring much quicker than anticipated. They said that the economic backbone of the state was tourists who were willing to return to beautiful California even if was scarred by the conflagrations.

The truth was a bit more telling. The increase was not due to an influx of people wanting to go wine tasting. The increase was due to first and second responders beginning to rebuild the damaged communities.

We are in a new era of risk and challenge.
A BUSY START TO 2018

This year is off to a busy start for the 7th District - Los Angeles County Fire Fighters, Local 1014, which is comprised of over 3,400 members representing firefighters, paramedics and fire service personnel.

BARGAINING

As Local 1014 members head into the fourth month following our contract expiration on midnight, December 31, we continue to work under the existing MOU and we continue to bargain alongside other public safety unions with the county to secure a fair successor MOU.

We are also beginning to bargain for our fringe benefits along with the County Coalition of Unions (CCU). We have already had one meeting with the county and the CCU has set priorities together as we set course to bargain a new fringe benefit contract. The fringe benefit contract covers benefits such as retirement, active and retiree healthcare, benefit time and other non-salary items that are important to our membership.

We have also partnered with all the county unions in concert with our CCU partners to stand in solidarity for the COLA for all county workers. This month the CCU and union leaders from SEIU will address the Board of Supervisors to alert them to the energy and position of all county unions in solidarity. This is important as all county workers along with the Los Angeles Federation of Labor makes a powerful statement from the workforce and the unions representing their respective memberships.

POLITICAL ACTION

Political action and legislative advocacy are the two fundamental purposes of our state union, the CPF. We need to take our political action and work the halls of the state Capitol to ensure our interests are protected.

Currently, there are many issues being dealt within the state, but none more important than the long-term funding for mutual aid. We need to ensure the balance between state dollars going to CAL FIRE to help them with staffing and the funding needed for municipal fire departments who provide 70 percent of the mutual aid for fires in the state. Municipal departments need to collaborate with their fire chiefs to ensure our voice is heard and our share of the money is received. This funding pays for personnel, rigs and OES staffed rigs who respond to all fires and other emergency events including pre-placement of resources in advance of major events. This also includes the OT for backfill in your stations. You understand what this means for all of our work in the union sense. Stay informed and fight for balance.

As we near election season in 2018, we will continue to be busy with CPF candidate interviews for both California State Assembly and State Senate districts that include all or portions of Los Angeles County.

Local 1014 has a long history of successful political engagement at the local, state and federal level as we work hard to elect men and women at all levels of government who will be supportive of public safety and our firefighters. From statewide legislation regarding cancer presumption – which dates back in Local 1014 to the direct engagement of our former Presidents Al Whitehead and Dallas Jones – to the Firefighter Bill of Rights and the additional hundreds of millions of dollars that the governor and legislature have allocated for firefighting resources throughout our state, our local has consistently understood the vital importance of vetting candidates and supporting those who support firefighters.

With the current threats to collective bargaining and organized labor pending before the United States Supreme Court, it is more important than ever to have political engagement at the local and statewide level so that firefighters can protect the gains that we have made in so many areas. From safe working conditions to a fair pension and retirement, Local 1014 understands that we cannot be complacent and we cannot go backwards. We will update our members and other firefighters throughout Southern California as we finalize our endorsements and plans for political action with the upcoming mid-term elections just around with the corner with a critical primary election coming up in June.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY’S INAUGURAL ARISE SUMMIT

On March 28-29, Local 1014 was proud to be a sponsor for the inaugural Los Angeles County Fire Department’s ARISE Summit. ARISE stands for “A Reason to Include and Support Everyone” so it is fitting that this year’s theme was “Women on the Fire Service: The Courage to Lead the Way.”

The Arise Summit kicked off with a recruitment fair which included our partners at Cal-JAC team and the Firefighter Candidate Testing Center (FCTC) team to help recruit the next generation of firefighters for Los Angeles County. Los Angeles County enjoys a long history with Cal-JAC and has been a leader in working collaboratively with labor and management representatives to help deliver world-class training for personnel and in recruiting an increasingly diverse workforce that reflects the community of Los Angeles County. It is critical that as a union we not only support these initiatives, but that we step up as leaders.

The current efforts led by the department do not lead to hiring the best in the state, despite the fact that oftentimes we have mentored these candidates for a career in the fire service. It is time to not only mentor and identify these top women candidates, but to hire them and add them to our membership of the best firefighters and paramedics and fire personnel in the country.

The FCTC through Cal-JAC is the answer to that problem.

Fire service oriented written testing and of course the CPAT should be all in one place. We get men and women who want to be firefighters and have earned their place on the hiring list. This has escaped our current fire department human resources division. We will take our plan directly to the county Board of Supervisors to ensure success.

Recruiting and retaining women in the fire service is a priority for our Board of Supervisors and the nation’s fire service. We can either stand by and watch the efforts of the department and the county, or we can drive the efforts through the union. Here at Local 1014, we choose the latter. We are going to actively engage in a partnership with our Local 1014 Women Firefighters (Women’s Fire League - WFL) and the Cal-JAC Women’s Commission, to recruit and retain the state’s best and brightest to Los Angeles County Fire Department. We will continue to update you on this issue as we move forward.
It's been a typically busy start to 2018 for the 3,300 firefighters, paramedics, inspectors, dispatchers, and pilots of United Firefighters of Los Angeles City Local 112.

On March 23rd, it was truly my honor to attend and speak at the 20th anniversary of one of the saddest days in the history of the Los Angeles Fire Department.

On Monday, March 23, 1998, an LAFD helicopter rushing a critically injured girl to the hospital crashed in Griffith Park, killing three LAFD members of the rescue team: 33-year-old Firefighter/Paramedic Michael Butler, 33-year-old Firefighter/Paramedic Eric Reiner and 48-year-old Apparatus Operator Michael McComb. In addition, the young patient, Norma Vides, died in the crash, bringing the total fatality count to four on this tragic day.

The helicopter, known as “Fire 3,” was transporting the young girl from the San Fernando Valley to Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, when mechanical problems caused the tail rotor to malfunction. As a skilled pilot, Steve Robinson was able to move the helicopter away from all residential areas to avoid greater harm to the general public. He attempted an emergency landing in Griffith Park, but tragically, the helicopter went down a full half-mile away from where the tail rotor was ultimately found, and the injuries and fatalities that took place were unavoidable.

While unable to work in the field due to the injuries that he endured, Firefighter Robinson chose to continue to contribute to the City of Los Angeles as a dedicated LAFD Dispatcher. Sadly, Pilot Robinson passed away 17 years later on August 9, 2015 after serving the people of Los Angeles for nearly 30 years as a firefighter, pilot, and dispatcher. Due to the severity of his injuries from this helicopter crash, Pilot Robinson’s passing was ultimately declared a line of duty death.

Before this crash in 1998, the LAFD performed more than 200 airlift rescues per year and had not experienced a fatal airlift accident in 24 years.

March of 1998 was a tough month for Los Angeles City Firefighters, as this helicopter crash killing three LAFD/IAFF members was actually the second incident in two weeks where the LAFD had lost our own in the line of duty.

We had just lain to rest Captain Joseph Dupee, who was killed while fighting a fire in a commercial structure in South Central Los Angeles on March 8, 1998. It was a very dark period for our department and our city. This crash from 20 years ago and the previous LODD earlier in the month have continued to serve as bleak reminders of just how dangerous our jobs truly are.

As we look back on these moments, we honor all of these men for laying down their lives in the attempt to save others. The courageous crew members of Fire 3 paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty, bravely trying to save the life of a young patient and LAFD Captain Dupee was killed while heroically performing his job.

Their sacrifices represent what is best about the Los Angeles Fire Department and our men and women in the field. We commemorate their selflessness by committing ourselves to living how they lived and answering the call of duty each and every day for our communities.

Our fallen brothers are deeply missed and never forgotten. God bless them and their loved ones. May they rest in peace.

CPF CONVENTION IN LOS ANGELES

United Firefighters of Los Angeles City is a proud member of the CPF and we are honored to host the biennial CPF Convention in Los Angeles from May 2 – May 5, 2018.

I am proud to be a strong supporter of the labor movement and a union firefighter in the LAFD.

But as we all know, every fire department in California has at least a few of the naysayers. Those who wonder, “Why do I pay monthly dues to IAFF/IAFF?” And, “Why are we members of the IAFF and the CPF?”

To answer these questions, all you need to do is look at March of 1998 in the LAFD.

We all know that we have dangerous jobs as firefighters. It’s what we signed up for. But in this profession that we have chosen, we can still work each and every day to make things better, safer and more secure for our members.

It is the labor movement – UFLAC working in conjunction with the CPF and IAFF – that has brought us the Firefighter Bill of Rights, cancer presumption laws, line-of-duty death benefits for family members, safer working conditions, a secure retirement and so much more.

It is the labor movement in Los Angeles that has fought to protect our dispatchers as sworn LAFD positions so we maintain the expertise that our members have gained from their time in the field and give them an opportunity to continue to contribute to the people of our city when they are injured on the job like Pilot Robinson was 20 years ago before serving as a dispatcher for more than a decade.

And it was the labor movement, in this case the CPF, which looked out for the young children of one of our firefighters who lost his life in the helicopter crash that day. When 33-year-old Firefighter/Paramedic Eric Reiner lost his life in the crash, he left behind his wife and four young children. Just a few years ago, I was honored to help present a check from the California Fire Foundation to young Lucas Reiner to help him pay for his college education.

The fire family, which includes your local union members, the CPF, and the IAFF, looks out for the young patient, Norma Vides, died in the crash, bringing the total fatality count to four on this tragic day.

The fire family, which includes your local union members, the CPF, and the IAFF, looks out for one another. We work together to make sure that federal, state, and local elected officials are working together to support public safety and our firefighters throughout California.

That’s why UFLAC is proud to be a part of the California Professional Firefighters and we look forward to hosting the convention in May. I hope to see many of you there.
CALIFORNIA FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL

Saturday, September 29, 2018
Capitol Park - Sacramento

For more information, visit
www.cafirefoundation.org/memorial