



Austin Fire Department

"Our Mission Goes Beyond Our Name"

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www.austinfiredepartment.org

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AUSTIN FIRE CHIEF RHODA MAE KERR ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS**
First woman to hold the office in the Association's 142-year history

AUSTIN, TX...Leading the way for women in the fire service once again, the Austin Fire Department's Fire Chief Rhoda Mae Kerr has been elected President of the International Association of Fire Chiefs' (IAFC) Board of Directors, a first for a woman in their 142-year history. Chief Kerr will be installed at the IAFC's annual Fire-Rescue International Conference in Atlanta later this summer.

"Chief Kerr has been breaking glass ceilings and paving the way for generations of women in the fire service since she began her career more than 30 years ago," said City Manager Marc Ott. "From her earliest days at Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue where she became the first female Deputy Chief after rising through the ranks, to being hired as the first female Fire Chief in Little Rock and Austin, Chief Kerr has been setting the standard for other departments and cities to follow. After five years, I still often remark that she was one of the best hires I ever made."

"Chief Kerr's election to this prestigious office is an example of our success in recruiting talented leaders who will help us become the best managed city in the country," said Assistant City Manager Rey Arellano. "Not only is it a first for a woman to hold the office of President,

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but it's **the first time** that a woman will serve on the IAFC's Board of Directors. Her election to this position just proves what we've known all along—that Chief Kerr and the Austin Fire Department are one of the best, if not the best, in the country.”

“I am incredibly humbled by the vote of confidence my peers have shown in me by electing me to this position,” said Chief Kerr. “I can't tell you how excited I am to bring the great work the men and women of the Austin Fire Department do to the rest of the fire service, both nationally and internationally. I have always prided myself on serving as an example of what women can do when we put our minds to something and I plan to showcase that even more as President!”

“To commemorate this achievement, please learn how you can support my vision for ‘Zero Fire Deaths’ in Austin through community engagement and visit my website:

www.rhodamaekerr.com/austin-fire-foundation.”

The Austin Fire Department was founded on September 25, 1857 and is now one of the 20 largest departments in the country, with 45 fire stations located throughout the city and more than 1,100 employees.

The IAFC represents the leadership of firefighters and emergency responders worldwide. IAFC members are the world's leading experts in firefighting, emergency medical services, terrorism response, hazardous materials spills, natural disasters, search and rescue, and public safety legislation. Since 1873, the IAFC has provided a forum for its members to exchange ideas, develop professionally and uncover the latest products and services available to first responders.

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