

National Fire Protection Association's
"Educator of the Year"
Nomination for Tracy Koslowski

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Nomination Submitted By:

Angie Fimbres

Public Education Volunteer

Drexel Heights Fire District

520-883-4341

afimbres@drexelfire.net

“Educator of the Year” Nominee:

Tracy Koslowski

Public Education/Information Manager and Fire Marshal

Drexel Heights Fire District

5030 S. Camino Verde

Tucson, AZ 85735

520-883-4341

520-883-3314

520-744-4153

tkoslowski@drexelfire.net



Meet Tracy...

Tracy Koslowski is a third generation firefighter. Her father and grandfather both worked for Fire Department of New York- FDNY. Tracy got involved in the fire service right after high school while attending a summer cadet program with the Tucson Fire Department. After completing the program Tracy went to Pima Community College to get her Fire Science Degree and go through the Fire Academy. While going to school, she volunteered with the Tucson Fire Department's Public Education Division. She received an Award of Service from the City of Tucson for her work with public education. In 1996, Tracy was hired by Northwest Fire Rescue. Most of her duties included fire prevention and public education. She worked there for seven years and was their Deputy Fire Marshal. In 2003, she was hired by Drexel Heights Fire District as the Public Education/Information Manager. Tracy has received Employee of the Year awards while working at Northwest Fire Rescue and Drexel Heights Fire District.

In this current role she oversees all of the District's public education programs. She is the Public Information Officer representing the District with the news media. In 2010, the District's Fire Marshal retired in the crux of economic downturn. The District turned to Tracy with her fire prevention background and asked her to step into taking on the Fire Marshal duties along with her other assignments. This year Tracy will celebrate 20 years in the fire service.

Tracy's formal education includes completing her Certified Public Manager from Arizona State University in 2007. In 2008, she completed her baccalaureate studies. Tracy attended Cogswell Polytechnical College, the chosen National Fire Academy program for the region for Fire and Emergency Service Higher Education Programs. Her degree is in Fire Administration with a minor in Fire Prevention studies. Tracy graduated Magna Cum Laude and was her class Valedictorian.

1. How long has this fire and life safety educator been using NFPA's educational programs (Risk Watch®, Learn Not to Burn®, Remembering When™, or NFPA Fire Prevention Week materials)? (20 points)

Tracy started using NFPA's Learn Not to Burn® program when she was a volunteer at Tucson Fire Department in 1993. She has continued to teach the NFPA's Learn Not to Burn® Preschool Program in the community today, 20 years later. Through the Fire Departments she has been associated with, she has taught Learn Not to Burn® lessons in over 140 schools.

Tracy began teaching NFPA's Risk Watch® program when it first came out while working at Northwest Fire Rescue. She still teaches these lessons in every elementary school in the community on a monthly basis.

In 2008, Tracy introduced the NFPA Remembering When™ program to the Drexel Heights Fire District community. She has continued to teach that program in conjunction with the District's Senior Citizen Fire Academy for the past six years.

Tracy has been involved with promoting NFPA's Fire Prevention Week Campaign since 1993. She presents the governing boards with proclamations every year. Tracy did expand Fire Prevention Week into Fire Prevention Month activities, so they could reach as many people as possible. Developing school characterization programs are a big part of her efforts. These programs get the kids singing about safety to help them remember what to do. Since the program started, Tracy has created a trading card that matches the theme and reinforces the NFPA Fire Prevention Week topic and safety messages. For the past 10 years, Tracy has taken Drexel Heights Fire District Fire Prevention Month programs to all of their schools visiting over 40,000 elementary kids.

2. What makes this educator outstanding? Give specific examples of innovative ideas and activities that make this educator unique. Please include photographs, activity sheets, handouts, etc., that clearly demonstrate excellence and innovation. Describe goals and objectives. (This portion of the application should demonstrate how the educator has used NFPA materials in the community. This is the section to showcase the nominee's accomplishments.) (50 points)

(Photographs, trading cards and activity song sheets are attached at the end of the nomination form.)

Tracy is recognized as a leader in Arizona when it comes to public education programs. Numerous Fire Departments across Arizona rely on Tracy for her knowledge of NFPA Programs. She is involved in various committee work, does NFPA 1035 training, and is the go-to person for new public educators. Some of her innovative programs are a direct result of the needs of her communities. Here are some examples:

After arriving at Drexel Heights Fire District, there was an immediate community need. The District was responding to multiple public injuries and deaths resulting from **All Terrain Vehicle** (ATV) crashes. Being in the rural southwest, ATV recreation is very popular. To address this need she created an ATV Safety program that includes school safety lessons and a family safety skills course. The program involves partnerships with ATV Safety Instructors and the Arizona Game & Fish Department. The number of injuries from ATV crashes has been reduced by 57% after the program started five years ago.

Early on as a public educator Tracy saw a need where safety issues needed to be addresses with a specific target audience. Middle schoolers and high schoolers are often responsible for being left alone or as care takers for younger family members. Tracy implemented a **Babysitting Training** course which incorporates important life safety skills such as kitchen safety, fire safety, CPR, first aid, handling and caring for babies, poison prevention, and resume writing. These lessons come from the NFPA Risk Watch® lesson plans. Over the past 17 years, Tracy has educated over 900 babysitters.

In 2009, Tracy's newest innovative project for the preteen and teenage target group came into realization. With childhood obesity on the rise Tracy wanted to address this issue. She also determined that this population was getting injured in vehicle crashes. Two very different issues but both risk areas needing to be addressed. Tracy's District was awarded support from the Assistance to Firefighters, Fire Prevention Grant. She developed the **Fire Fit Cadet Program** inspired by her own cadet experiences with a concentration on physical fitness and seat belt safety. The program includes some basic firefighting skills, fire ground and calisthenics physical fitness activities, nutrition, vehicle passenger protection and fire and life safety training. The seat belt and fire safety portions of this program come from NFPA's Risk Watch® curriculum. The program was instantly popular and included partnerships with the local hospitals and peer fitness fire trainers.

Tracy has written and successfully received numerous grants relating to **Wheeled Sports Safety**. Through these grants Tracy has been able to develop programs like bicycle rodeos as well as provide bike helmets for thousands of children. Helmets are not just passed out but fitted for each child so that they can be assured protection. Countless classroom presentations from NFPA's Risk Watch® have provided second and fourth graders with the skills they need to be safe on their bikes, scooters, skate boards and roller blades.

Child Passenger Safety is an important issue with keeping the children of the community safe while riding in vehicles. Tracy was one of the first in Pima County Arizona to receive the Car Seat Technician training. Tracy not only teaches child passenger safety to parents but also provides safety seats to those families at no cost. In all, they have installed 636 car seats and 821 booster seats.

With the District's populations including many seniors and low income families, Tracy created **Safety Fair** events to get as many safety messages out to the community as possible. Drexel Heights Fire District partnered with NFPA's Safe Community project. The events would include Risk Watch® topics and would reach 5,000 residents at each event.

With Arizona being second in the nation for drowning incidents and the District responding to multiple water incident calls each year, Tracy saw a need for **Water Safety** efforts. She is very passionate about this topic and sits on local, state and national drowning prevention boards to bring back the very latest to the community in outreach for this issue. Tracy spearheads projects like Water Watcher Tags, Water Walks, April Pools Day Events, Drowning Impact Awareness Month, Water SMART Babies, and Water Safety Is For You First Grade Program. All of these programs include collaborative efforts with many other community partners. The school's classroom presentations are from NFPA's Risk Watch® program.

While senior safety projects have always been a part of public education efforts, Tracy had a vision for a new exciting way to educate seniors. In 2008, she took NFPA's Remembering When™ program and created a **Senior Citizen Fire Academy**. Program topics consist of fire service orientation, Remembering When's™ fire safety, Remembering When's™ fall prevention, disaster preparedness, senior nutrition and CPR training. Since the program started over 300 seniors have participated and become ambassadors for Drexel Heights Fire District.

One of Tracy's most innovative efforts has to be her creation of a **Public Education Volunteer Team** for our Fire District. As soon as the economy took a turn for the worst, Tracy was proactive, realizing that the public education efforts were going to be the first projects cut when finances were strained. She created and trained a volunteer force who could keep the public education programs going in the community while alleviating overtime expenses for the District. The Volunteers are highly trained by Tracy in NFPA 1035 standards and Fire & Life Safety Educator classes. The Volunteers are teaching NFPA's Learn Not to Burn®, Risk Watch® and Remembering When™ programs in the schools.

These are a sampling of Tracy's more innovative projects. She of course has instituted various other programs that are on-going like CPR and First Aid trainings, home safety checks, smoke alarm installations, preschool lessons, juvenile firesetter intervention/education, fire safety trailer, career days, love of reading, and classroom presentation for every grade level and special needs groups. NFPA's Learn Not to Burn®, Risk Watch® and Remembering When™ programs are integrated in these projects as well.

Tracy demonstrates time and time again how you can take a successful curriculum like NFPA's and adapt it to fit the needs of the community in a creative way. Every one of her programs is evaluated either by skills testing, pre/post testing or other evaluations tools. This has been a testament to her success in that her programs are always being modernized and enhanced for the prosperity of the community.

3. Include letters of support from nominee's fire chief, fire marshal, school system official, community center director, older adult center director, community leaders, or other residents of the community. Letters should support how the educator has made a positive impact on community safety using NFPA materials. Maximum of 5 support letters. (20 points)

Drexel Heights Fire District

5030 S. Camino Verde, Tucson, Arizona 85735-8971
Phone: (520) 883-4341 Fax: (520) 883-3314
www.drexelfire.net

Board of Directors
James Bertrand, Chair
Cheryl Cecil, Clerk
Laura Dailey
Charles Mendonca
David Tornbom

Fire Chief
Douglas Chappell

February 6, 2013

NFPA Public Education Division
"Educator of the Year"
One Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169

Re: Nomination of Tracy Koslowski, Drexel Heights Fire District, Tucson, Arizona

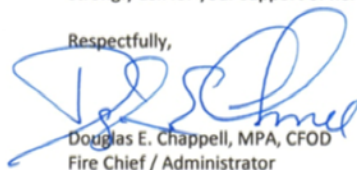
I strongly support and endorse the nomination of Tracy Koslowski for the NFPA *Educator of the Year*. Tracy Koslowski currently serves as the Public Education and Information Manager for the Drexel Heights Fire District in Tucson, Arizona. Manager Koslowski has held this position since July, 2003.

Manager Koslowski has been responsible for numerous innovative and complete safety information programs both in the Fire District, regionally, as well as state wide. Manager Koslowski has been an active member of the Arizona Fire and Burn Educators Association developing programs and instructing both at conferences and in workshops across the state. On a regional basis, Manager Koslowski has been an officer and member of the Safe Kids organization developing and promoting various safety related programs including safety fairs and events. In addition, Manager Koslowski has served as a board member and committee chair for the local chapter for drowning awareness and prevention.

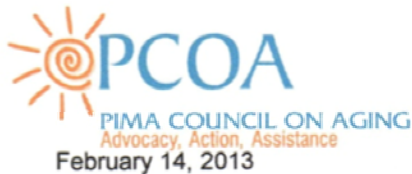
In her nearly 10 years in Drexel Heights she has created various safety initiatives including the Family Safety Program, Mini-Muster Program, FireFit Program, Water Safety Program, Babysitter Training Program and a Senior Safety Academy. In addition, she has developed and nurtured a senior citizen volunteer corps which now comprises her Safety Team which conducts residential safety inspections with smoke detector and fire extinguisher installations, staffing of the fire district's safety trailer, and most notably the annual characterization program which is presented in all of the District's schools in October. All of her programs utilize NFPA materials and tools.

Manager Koslowski is truly an innovator and visionary in the area of fire, burn and overall safety programs for all age groups. I cannot think of a more deserving public safety minded individual and strongly ask for your support of her nomination.

Respectfully,



Douglas E. Chappell, MPA, CFOD
Fire Chief / Administrator



Area Agency on Aging – a nonprofit organization since 1967

NFPA Public Education Division

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great admiration that I write this letter of support to recommend Tracy Koslowski, Public Education/Information Manager, Fire Marshal for the Drexel Heights Fire District for the "Educator of the Year" award.

I have known Tracy for the past four years, working with her through our Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) a Program of the Pima Council on Aging. In June of 2009, Tracy and I collaborated on a partnership between RSVP and Drexel Heights Fire District (DHFD) to develop a volunteer program. July 2009, Tracy created a volunteer program for the DHFD to help assist with their public education programs.

Her determination began with implementing the program with the application process, developing the training, putting together the volunteer assignments which included: administrative functions, public education, fundraising and public relations as well as making sure to provide continuing in-service training to the volunteers.

Her ability to achieve and put forward ideas for developing programs in the Tucson's southwest side have highly benefited the community for children and our senior adults. She has demonstrated her strong leadership to inspire, motivate and teach volunteers to assist in running the volunteer program. Through Tracy's support and supervision currently eight trained senior volunteers help with scheduling schools to come out to the trailer that volunteer helped fix. This trailer is used as a hands on teaching tool to demonstrate fire safety issues to elementary age children. The volunteers make presentations about the Senior Citizen Fire Academy program to community groups recruiting seniors as participants, this is a safety education program for seniors. The volunteers also teach portions of the Senior Citizen Fire Academy which enhances DHFD's program tremendously by having seniors teaching seniors.



3407 E. Broadway Blvd. • Tucson, AZ 85710-4050 • 520-796-6644 • Fax: 520-796-7677 • www.uwtucson.org • e-mail: info@uwtucson.org

Tracy has played a major role in bringing these safety education programs to the community and clearly has made a strong impact on the children who have gone through the fire safety trailer. She has helped establish positive education programs for the senior population in the Drexel Heights community.

I believe Tracy has shown and continues to show her skills, talents and dedication towards safety education awareness in the Drexel Heights community. One of her strongest qualities I have observed over the years is her understanding and sincerity to work with senior volunteers. She has motivated and encouraged these volunteers to help her educate others regarding "Fire Safety Prevention".

In closing, I would sincerely recommend Tracy Koslowski who is truly deserving of the "Educator of the Year" award.

Sincerely,

Cecilia Salaz, Program Director
Retired & Senior Volunteer Program
Pima Council o Aging

Drexel Heights Fire District

5030 S. Camino Verde, Tucson, Arizona 85735-8971
Voice: (520) 883-4341 Fax: (520) 883-3314
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Board of Directors
James Bertrand, Chair
Cheryl Cecil, Clerk
Laura Dailey
Charles Mendonca
David Tornbom

Fire Chief
Douglas E. Chappell

February 20, 2013

NFPA Public Education Division
"Educator of the Year"
One Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169

To whom it may concern:

It is with great pleasure to nominate Tracy Koslowski for the NFPA Educator of the Year. Speaking on behalf of all the Drexel Heights Fire District Public Education Volunteers, we were attracted to our volunteer position because of Tracy's warmth, enthusiasm and her sincere concern for the residents young and old.

Tracy is dedicated to public education and teaching crucial programs like NFPA's Learn Not To Burn, Risk Watch and Remembering When. Every October we celebrate Fire Prevention Month by conducting school assembly programs using the NFPA Fire Prevention Week themes. Tracy's passion for the safety of the children in the community shines through in how much she puts into the programs.

Since Tracy started the volunteer program in July of 2009, we have dedicated over 5,000 hours to public education programs and reached over 28,000 people. The programs we help with include home safety checks, fire safety trailer, classroom presentations including special needs groups, senior citizen fire academies, special events and so much more. Through working on these projects with Tracy our passions in helping others in the community have been deepened.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our nomination of Tracy for your most distinguished Educator of the Year award!

Yours in fire and life safety,

Angie Fimbres
Les & Norene Craig
Gerry & Garree Innis
Gary & Norma Richardson
Norma Quihuis
Doug Fink
Sue Stensel

**Johnson Primary School
Tucson Unified School District
6060 South Joseph Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85757
(ph) 520-908-3800 (fax) 520-908-3801**

February 21, 2013

To whom it may concern,

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for Tracy Koslowski to as an Educator of the Year. As the Principal at Johnson Primary, I have worked with Ms. Koslowski for many years and again directly this school year.

Ms. Koslowski provides high quality education to our students in a number of ways. Each Fall she produces a spirited Fire Prevention Month Safety show. Using firefighters and volunteers, a wide variety of critical safety messages are taught to students in an engaging, appropriate, and professional manner. She always includes the NFPA Fire Prevention Theme. The kids love the program (and the adults laugh and sing as well). The messages are carefully scripted to ensure student learning. Ms. Koslowski brings this popular event to our students each year, with a totally different show but continuing to focus on critical home and life safety learning.

Johnson is a complex school with unique challenges and opportunities. It serves a diverse population of Native American and Hispanic students, 90% of whom qualify for free/reduced lunch. Ongoing meaningful education is so important for the children of our community.

In addition to the annual Fire Prevention Month Safety Program, Ms. Koslowski has provided NFPA Risk Watch lessons to all our grades. Once our Kindergarten students complete the lessons, it is culminated with a visit to the EDITH fire safety trailer. Our First Graders wrap up with a terrific Water Safety program, and our Second Graders take part in an annual mini-muster with fire-fighters and volunteers.

Ms. Koslowski always carries herself in a professional manner. Her passion for making a difference in students' lives is apparent and she is persistent in providing long-term learning that will help our students and their families. Our school and community is better due to her dedication to promoting safety in their lives.

Sincerely,

Dan Weisz

Dan Weisz
Principal, Johnson Primary School

- 4. Is the educator a member of any NFPA technical committee, task force on disabilities, urban task force, public education network, Risk Watch® Safe Community network, or Education section? Has the educator ever attended the NFPA annual conference or received a Remembering When™ scholarship or public educator scholarship to attend the conference? (5 points)**

Tracy is a member of the NFPA and she is part of the Public Education Committee. Currently, she is assisting with the Education Section Board Nominating Committee. In 2010, she received a public education scholarship to NFPA's annual conference held in Las Vegas, NV.

In addition to NFPA, Tracy is heavily involved in other public education networks. Early on in her career she became involved with the Arizona Fire & Burn Educators Association (AFBEA). She has served on numerous boards with AFBEA including AZ Juvenile Firesetter Task Force, State Public Education Training Committee, Desert Southwest Fire & Life Safety Educator's Conference, Characterization Conference, Western Fire Chief's Public Education Team '99 Conference and AFBEA Membership. In 2005, she was awarded the AFBEA State Fire & Life Safety Educator of the Year. Recently, Tracy was successful in getting AFBEA as the hosting agency for an upcoming Vision 20/20 Model Evaluation Class for the region.

Next to fire safety, drowning prevention is Tracy's second passion when it comes to life safety prevention. She is very active in the local, state and national associations that tackle these issues. They include the National Drowning Prevention Alliance, Board Member of the Drowning Prevention Coalition of Arizona and on the Water Safety Team for Safe Kids Pima County.

Tracy is the current Chairperson for the Safe Kids Pima County Coalition. Through this group she is deeply involved in child passenger safety, water safety, bike/pedestrian safety, and home safety. She has been successful incorporating NFPA's Risk Watch® curriculum to achieve the Safe Kids goal of injury prevention for kids 14 and younger.

Being an active member of the National Fire & Life Safety Educators Yahoo group, Tracy is able to keep her finger on the pulse of the public education world and network with other Public Educators from across the country. She also participates in the Vision 20/20 initiative, working towards a comprehensive national strategy for fire prevention.

5. Please include any additional remarks to support nominee as the NFPA “Educator of the Year”. (5 points)

Tracy was selected to sit on Arizona Department of Health Services Child Fatality Review Team for Pima County. This team reviews every single child death in the county. Collectively the team of experts from various fields provides recommendations to Arizona regarding the prevention of child deaths. This has become one of Tracy’s motivation factors for educating NFPA’s programs.

Tracy is one of just a few public education instructors for the state of Arizona. She teaches Fire & Life Safety Educator I and II classes to the NFPA 1035 standard. She keeps current with the NFPA reports from the Educational Message Advisory Committee. Tracy believes strongly that more consistent messaging with fire and life safety behaviors will create a louder voice and have a greater impact on the community. She has been a presenter at public education conferences throughout Arizona.

Finally, we would just like to add that on top of managing all of Drexel Heights Fire District’s Public Education Programs, she is also the agency’s Public Information Officer and Fire Marshal. Tracy belongs to numerous local, state and national organizations in both of these arenas. Tracy has an elevated level of commitment to her work, no matter which hat she is wearing. Her high intensity and passion for her work is infectious to all. She is the whole package when it comes to public education and she is a visionary. It is because of all these reasons, that her Public Education Volunteer Team, are honored to nominate Tracy Koslowski for the NFPA Educator of the Year!

SUPPORTING MATERIALS (from Question #2)

The 2012 Fire Prevention Month trading card (front and back), which 4,000 kids received this past October. This program had a super hero theme that the kids really related to. Tracy makes sure that the backs of the trading cards always have the key safety messages reinforced.

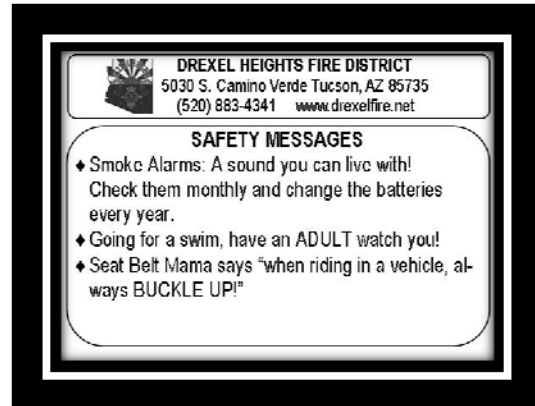
The NFPA Fire Prevention Week theme is continually one of those messages.



Drexel Heights Fire District "Community Safety Fair" reaching over 5,000 people and incorporating NFPA Risk Watch® safety behaviors and NFPA's Safe Community.



Below is the 2010 Fire Prevention Month trading card (front and back), which was a Grade School Musical theme. The safety messages on the back of the card reinforced the 2010 NFPA Fire Prevention Week theme, Smoke Alarms: A Sound You Can Live With. Tracy recruited a local musician to create a safety song for the program that was included this message. Two years later the kids are still singing this safety song! (The kid's handout with song lyrics is included.)



SMOKE ALARMS:

A SOUND YOU CAN LIVE WITH

*Smoke Alarms, a sound you can live with
You know you are a friend of mine
You keep me safe, both day and night*

*Smoke Alarms, a sound you can live with
You've got that watchful eye
You watch for smoke, all of the time*

*I'll check your battery
Always once a month...yeah
And I'll be there
To replace them once a year
I'm telling you dear*

*Smoke Alarms, a sound you can live with
I just cannot describe
How you make me feel
When I'm tucked in at night*

*Smoke Alarms, a sound you can live with
You know that I'll treat you right
I'll keep you clean, all of the time*

*I'll check your batteries
Always once a month...yeah
And I'll be there to change you
Once a year...ya, ya, ya*

*Smoke Alarms, a sound you can live with
I need you by my side
You keep my family safe,
Both day and night...no doubt, ya*

*Smoke Alarms, a sound you can live with
I hope more folks realize
You're the best
You're the best, in anyone's home*

*Smoke alarm
Smoke alarm
Yes my smoke alarm
Smoke alarm
Smoke alarm
A sound you can live with*

These photos were taken during the Senior Citizen Fire Academy where participants 55 and older learn about fire safety and fall prevention via NFPA's Remembering When™ curriculum.



The Fire Fit Cadet Program encompasses some issues that middle/high schoolers are at risk for. One is injuries/deaths from riding in vehicle not restrained. After covering motor vehicle safety from Risk Watch® in the classroom, the cadets observe Firefighters using the Jaws of Life in a simulation of a car crash. This target group is also at risk for issues related to obesity.

So the Fire Fit Cadets learn about exercise and eating right.



The Drexel Heights Fire District's EDITH fire safety trailer is used after the kids complete their NFPA Risk Watch® fire safety classroom lessons.



Tracy having kids demonstrate their new Stop, Drop & Roll safety skills that they learned from her Learn Not to Burn® presentations.

