



Media Release

Date: July 9, 2021
Release: Immediate
Contact: Ron Morgan, IAFF Local 1660, 503-806-2673
Interviews: Peer Support Responders available for TV, Zoom, and phone interviews until Monday, 07/12

Tualatin Valley Firefighters Deploy to Florida to Provide Peer Support to Rescue Workers

Tigard, OR- In response to the recent building collapse in Surfside, Florida, the International Association of Firefighters requested the services of Tualatin Valley Firefighters' Peer Support Team.

Firefighters Jeff Campbell, Brandon Henry, and Kyle Leonard were deployed for six days to provide peer support counseling to urban search and rescue workers, firefighters, and their families who were affected by the Champlain Towers South condominium collapse.

The building collapse was a tragic event requiring a nationwide response. Fire departments across the Miami region and urban search and rescue workers from around the United States were deployed to the scene to search for victims. Peer Support Team Lead Jeff Campbell said, "Our primary role was to assist Miami Dade firefighters and their families work through and process mental health issues related to the building collapse."

In the past few years, there has been increased awareness of post-traumatic stress disorder and job-related mental health illness in fire and emergency services. It is estimated that 20 percent of firefighters and emergency responders will suffer some form of job-related mental illness or PTSD during the life of their careers.

Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue and the Tualatin Valley Firefighters Union partnered in 2018 to create a Peer Support Team. More than 60 people were trained in a two-day event from various work groups from within the agency. Through ongoing training and awareness, Peer Support Team members are available 24 hours a day to help someone in need, debrief crews following a difficult call, and assist fire departments in the region.

Tualatin Valley Firefighters Union:

The Tualatin Valley Firefighters Union represents over 700 members throughout the Portland metropolitan area.

###