



Herstory: Women in Firefighting

First Woman Firefighter

The first woman firefighter ever in the United States was in 1818 in NYC at Oceanus Engine #11. She was a slave by the name of **Molly Williams** and worked side by side the other firefighters in the company. Her service was best known during a big blizzard that year when there was a shortage of male firefighters due to an influenza outbreak.



First Women in the FDNY

In 1982 the first group of women were hired as part of the FDNY, including **Brenda Berkman**, who is often credited as the first female firefighter because she led the charge to allow women to become firefighters in the FDNY.

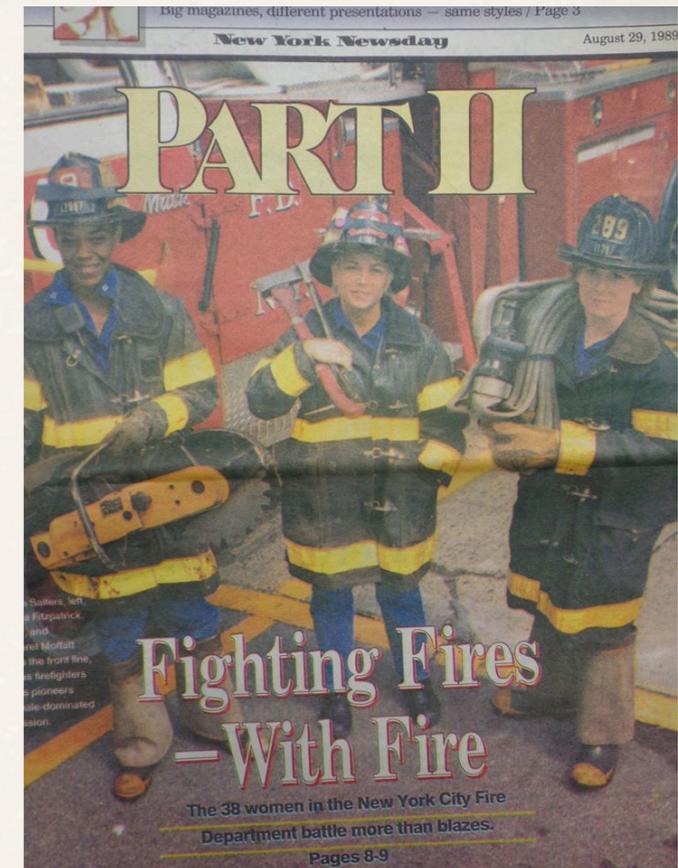


This first group of women were a diverse group comprised of women of different backgrounds and experiences.

Pioneers



In 1984, **Cecelia Cox** was the first woman assigned to a ladder company – Ladder 9 in the East Village.



In 1992, **Joann Jacobs** and **Margaret Moffatt** were the first women to become Fire Marshals. FM Moffatt later became the woman who has worked the longest in the FDNY. She retired in 2013 as Supervising Fire Marshal after 31 years of service.



Moving Up the Ranks



In 1994, **Rochelle Jones** became the first woman to get promoted to Lieutenant. In 1999, she was promoted to become the first woman captain.



In 2003 **Rochelle Jones** was promoted to Battalion Chief, which is the highest rank a woman has yet to achieve in the FDNY. She worked in Battalion 33. In 2005, **Daiana Mielnik** was assigned to this firehouse to work in Engine 276. Later on, **Eileen Gregan** was assigned as a battalion firefighter to the same firehouse.



Promotions



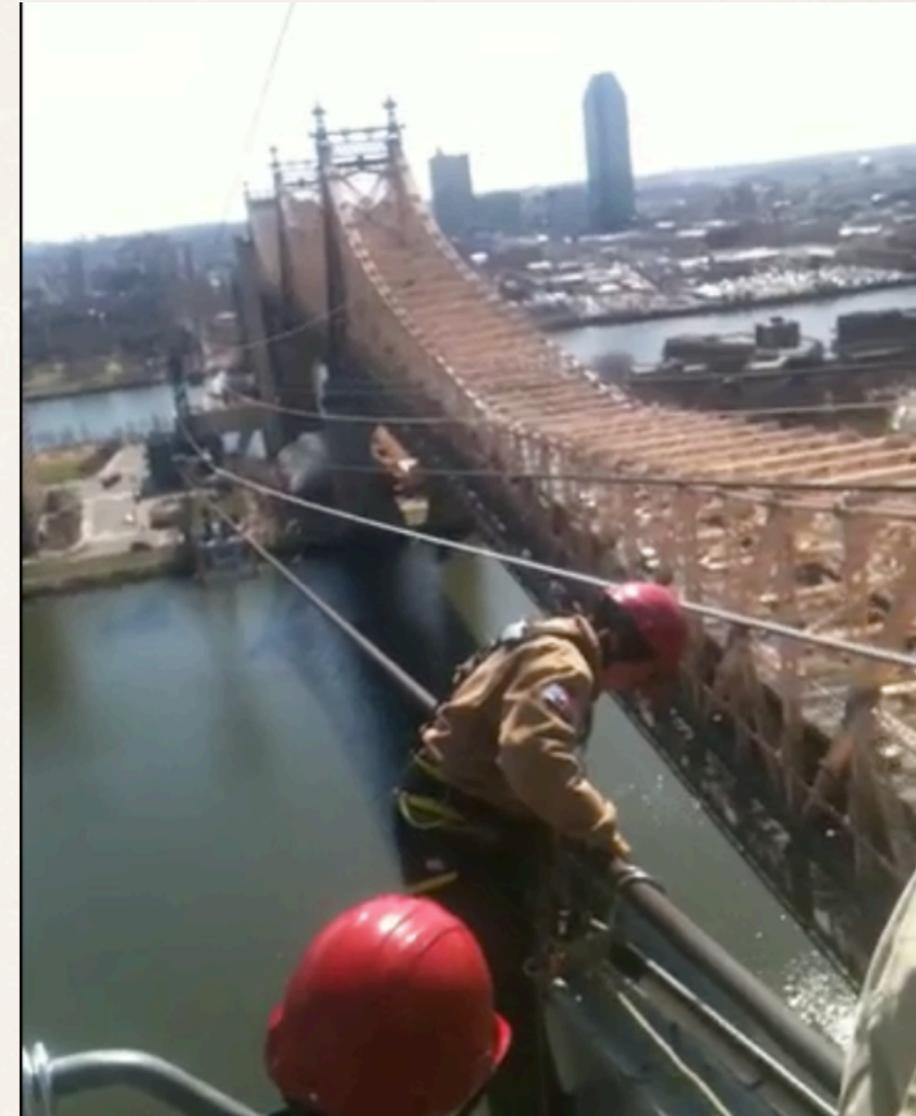
In 2000, **Aisha Ricca** and **Tracey Lewis** were the first women to get promoted to firefighter from EMS. In 2008, FF Ricca was promoted to Fire Marshal. In 2014, FF Lewis was promoted to Lieutenant.

In 1986, **Ella McNair** became the first woman chauffeur. In 2001, McNair became the first African American woman promoted to Lieutenant.



Special Operations

In 2005, **Adrienne Walsh** was the first woman to be assigned to a rescue company and SCUBA team member. She later became an instructor. Today, she is a Lieutenant assigned to Squad 18 in the Special Operation Command in Greenwich Village.



Celia Thompson was the first woman to work in a Squad company in S-270.

Moving Forward

In 2005, **Daiana Mielnik** became a firefighter, joining her sister **Kinga Kusek**, who became a firefighter in 2003. They become FDNY's first working firefighter sisters and are first generation Polish-Americans. Firefighters Mielnik and Kusek both work in Brooklyn.



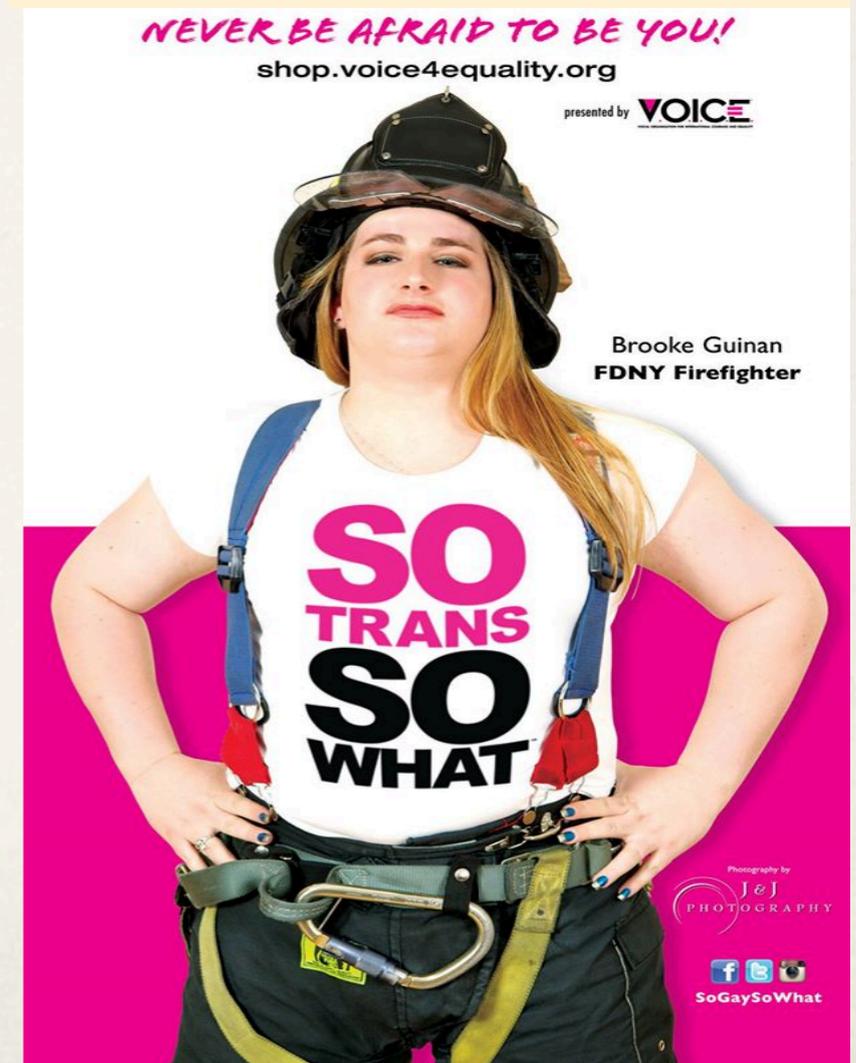
In 2005, **Sarinya Srisakul** became the first and only Asian female firefighter in FDNY. She works at Engine 5 in the East Village, and is the current President of the United Women Firefighters.



In 2008, **Joy Flores, Sophy Medina, Sarina Olmo** and **Jennifer Quiñones** were the first graduating class of all Latinas. Joy Flores is the first woman to graduate as a squad leader. FF Flores and FF Medina are the first women who applied and graduated from the FDNY Training Academy as military veterans.



In 2012, **Georgia Brooke Guinan** became the first trans-woman firefighter in FDNY. She currently works in Astoria, Queens and is the LGBT Events Coordinator for the Office of Recruitment and Diversity in the FDNY.



Increasing Numbers

The graduating class of June 2014 marked the first time the FDNY has had 41 women firefighters since 1982. The record was broken again in the following graduating class, which pushed the numbers to a new high of 44. Due to a retirement, we are currently at 43 women firefighters and expecting more with the next graduating class.

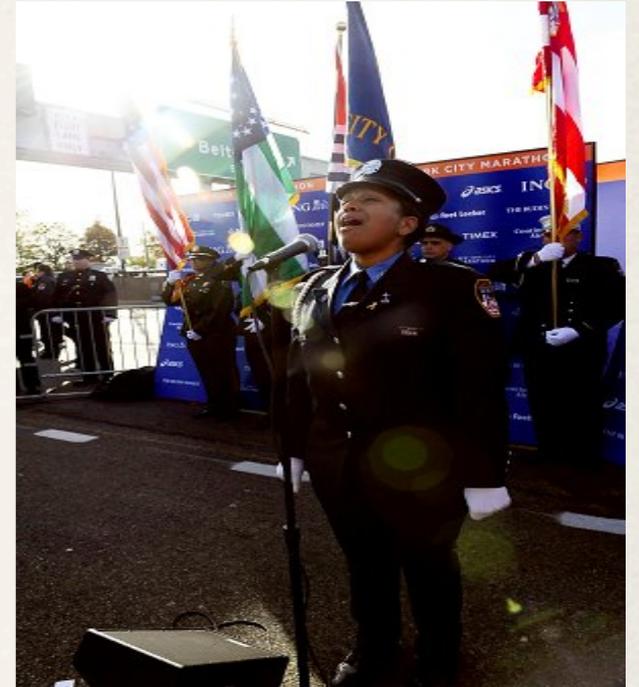


The UWF runs a training program to help achieve the goals of increasing the number of women firefighters.

Women Firefighters and Advocacy



In 2015, Firefighter Regina Wilson made history by becoming the Vulcan Society's first woman President. She also previously served as UWF President from 2009-2012. She is also the first and only woman who is an FDNY singer and member of the Ceremonial Unit.

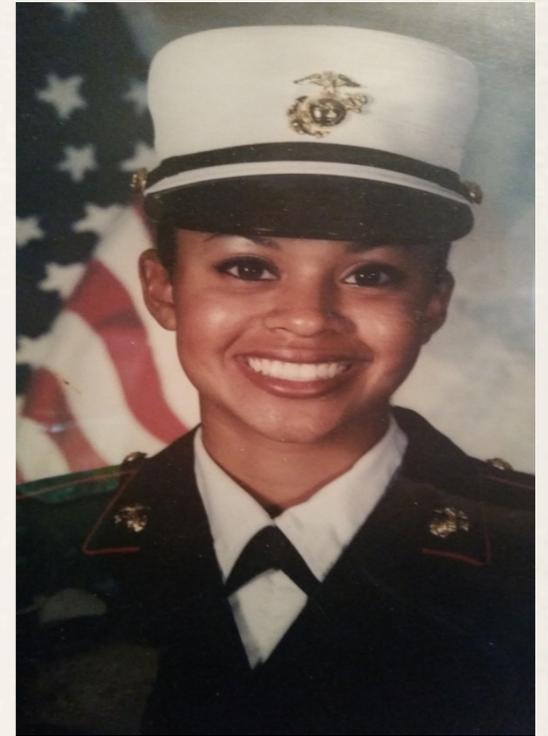


Women firefighters are active in the FDNY's other groups, as well as groups outside the department. **The United Women Firefighters** members are also very active in the advocacy and sisterhood of women firefighters and gender equality.



Women Firefighters in the Military

- ❖ Women in the military have great success within the FDNY. Military vets get 5 extra points on the entrance exam, with active duty service. Military vets can also subtract one year off their age for every year of active duty service.
- ❖ Once vets become firefighters, they can use their military status as extra points on a promotional exam.
- ❖ Many women firefighters are vets. There are also many women who are in the reserves and are able to balance both careers while being in the fire service.

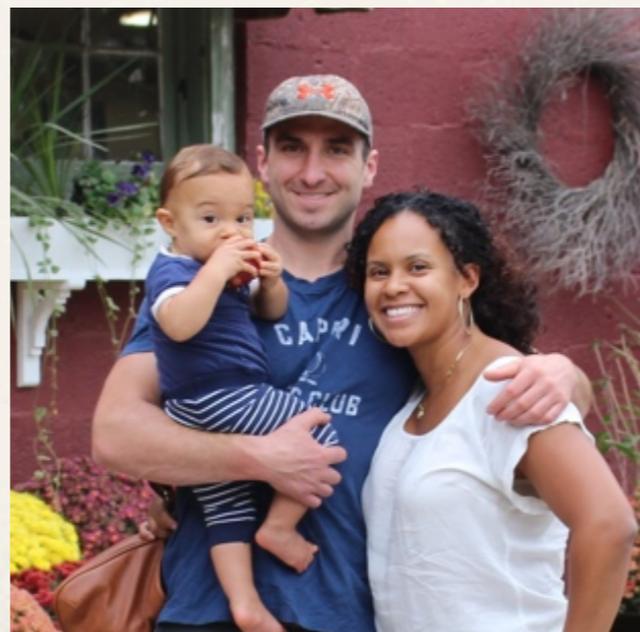
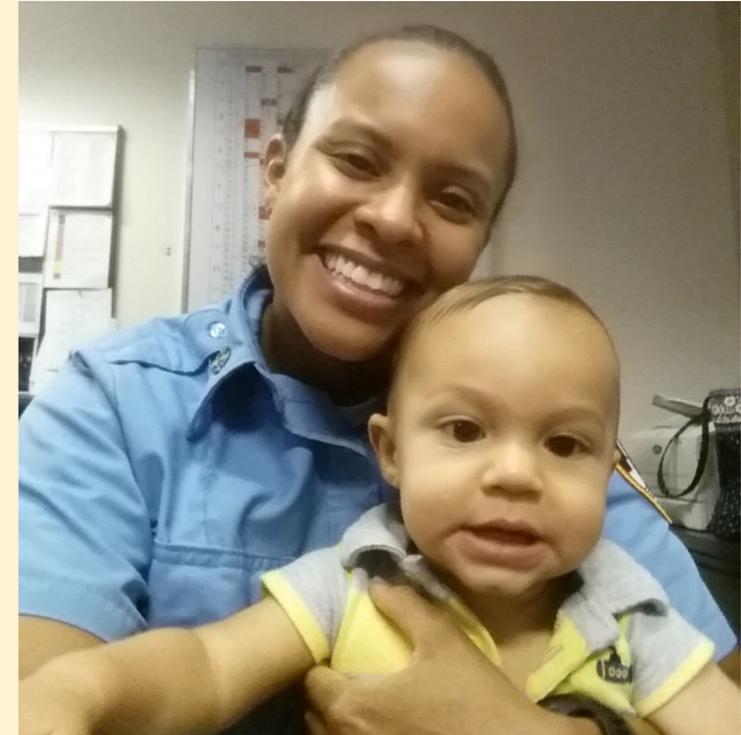


Women Firefighters and Family



The FDNY is a great career for mothers because of the flexible scheduling and the great benefits.

About 1/3 of the women firefighters currently in the FDNY have children or are expecting!



Diversity



Women firefighters are an extremely diverse group of people.

We represent many racial groups and ethnicities, speak many languages, have many LGBT members and we represent every borough in New York City.

UWF Training Program

- ❖ **The United Women Firefighters (UWF)** have been conducting training programs for women candidates for decades. It is a great way to get physically fit for CPAT and fire academy as well as an excellent way to meet other women candidates and women firefighters who can give you invaluable advice along the way.



We train every **Tuesday at 7:30pm** and every **Sunday at 12 noon** at **NYSC at 30 Wall St** in Manhattan. You need a medical waiver and you must wear a red t-shirt and bring a 50lb weight vest to all trainings. Write to: womenrecruitsfdny-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

UWF Sisterhood

The United Women Firefighters is a sisterhood like no other. You will be considered a part of our family when you join our group. There are few women firefighters in the FDNY but our numbers are steadily increasing.



We want to see more and more successful and happy women firefighters amongst our ranks.

