2020 Chief Sandy Davis Safety Officer of the Year Awarded

The Fire Department Safety Officers Association (FDSOA), in conjunction with the IAFC Safety, Health & Survival Section, and MSA are pleased to announce the winner of the 2020 Chief Sandy Davis Safety Officer of the Year Award is Battalion Chief/Health & Safety Officer (HSO) David Picone of the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department.

Picone is the first certified HSO in the department’s history, and since his certification has developed over ten policies specifically governing the health and welfare of the department members. The department has developed a strong Behavioral Wellness Program under the leadership of Chief Picone. The program includes a peer support network and chaplain teams, a family support network, spousal peer support team, and the first ever Chaplain Facility Canine Program. All together, these efforts have reduced the stigma of seeking help.

Picone also developed a relationship with the risk management division, proving invaluable for members filing behavioral health and cancer claims. A seamless process was developed that is now copied by departments all over southern California.

Outside of SDFD, he started the first ever H&S Section of the San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association and pushed to not only bring training to the area, but to have an HSO on every department.

The Safety Officer of the Year Award is named for Sandy Davis, a chief of safety who dedicated his career to the Shreveport (La.) Fire Department and the Louisiana Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. He made it his mission to increase firefighter awareness about the importance of wearing PPE. It is with that same dedication that Chief Picone has devoted himself to the health and safety of the members of the SDFD.
The Fire Department Safety Officers Association (FDSOA) was established in 1989 as a non-profit association, incorporated in Massachusetts. In 2013, the offices moved to Michigan. Its mission is to promote safety standards and practices in the fire, rescue and emergency services community. The association is led by a volunteer board of directors and has a small staff to handle the day-to-day operations. The association is dedicated to the issues that affect the critical role of the safety officer in protecting and promoting the safety and health responsibilities of fire departments, communities and first responders. FDSOA works to helps fire departments achieve proficiency and promote the recognition of training, skills and a secure future. In May 2016, FDSOA won the Paul S. Sarbanes Fire Service Safety Leadership Award for its work over 28 years, “as an organization fully dedicated to the health and safety of the nation’s firefighters.”

FDSOA can be found on the web at www.fdsoa.org. Please follow FDSOA on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.