

PRESS RELEASE



Fire Chief Lonnie Croom Announces Retirement

Downey, CA, February 19, 2014: After 30 years of dedicated service to the citizens of Downey, Fire Chief Lonnie Croom will retire on August 1, 2014.

Chief Croom began his career with the Downey Fire Department in 1984, after participating as one of the original members of the Downey Fire Explorer Program. He was hired as a Firefighter in 1984 and was promoted to Paramedic in 1988, Engineer in 1995, Captain in 1996, and Deputy Fire Marshal in 2008. He was appointed as the Fire Chief in 2010.

"During the last three decades, I have had the honor of serving the City of Downey alongside the most dedicated group of men and women who give their all every day to keep our community safe," said Chief Croom. "From early on, I had decided that my retirement from the Downey Fire Department would come when I felt I had fulfilled my service to the community. I feel that time has come and I am officially retiring in August of this year. My retirement is bittersweet. I am excited at starting a new chapter in my life, but it's also surreal knowing that I will be leaving my Downey family. I would like to thank all of those who have helped me throughout my career and have shared the same vision of protecting and serving the community."

Chief Croom has led the Fire Department through the most difficult recession in the City's history. During his tenure, he has made significant changes to Downey's traditional Fire service delivery model. These changes have significantly enhanced the department's ability to react and assist with medical and related calls for service, which have nearly doubled in number since 2000.

"Chief Croom's contributions to the Downey community have been invaluable and can be attributed to the success of the Fire Department. We consider ourselves extremely fortunate to have had Chief Croom lead a group of talented and dedicated individuals. We extend our sincere gratitude to Chief Croom for his many years of service and loyalty to the Downey community," said Mayor Fernando Vasquez.

"I am extremely proud of what Chief Croom has accomplished during his 30 year tenure in Downey. Chief Croom has been a true asset to our organization and his tireless work ethic and commitment to the City and community is admirable. We wish him and his family a happy and healthy retirement and offer our most sincere and heartfelt thank you for his many years of service to our City," expressed City Manager Gilbert A. Livas.

Chief Croom's initiatives have also led to the creation of a comprehensive emergency vehicle replacement plan and increased revenue from enhancements to the emergency transportation program.

"I would like to express my appreciation for the exceptional job Chief Croom has done during his years with the City. His hard work and dedication have led to significant changes that have positively impacted our Fire Department. He deserves to be commended for all of his accomplishments, including his loyalty and commitment to the City of Downey," said Mayor Pro Tem Luis Marquez.

Councilmember Roger Brossmer expressed, "Anybody who knows Chief Croom, knows he genuinely cares about Downey and knows he takes great pride in his department and in his City. As a Downey resident, I value that. I value him as our Fire Chief and I wish him all the best in his upcoming retirement."

Chief Croom is a true product of Downey. He was born at the original Downey Community Hospital and raised in the community. He attended Unsworth Elementary, East Middle and graduated from Downey High School.

"I appreciate Fire Chief Croom for his hard work and commitment, not only to our Fire Department, but to our entire community," commented Councilmember Alex Saab. "His actions demonstrate how much he cares for our City and how proud he is to be a true product of Downey. He was raised in this community and there is no doubt he loves his City. Thank you, Chief Croom, for your dedication, leadership and service to our residents."

Chief Croom is a believer in giving back to his community. He has spent countless hours serving as a member of the Downey Los Amigos Kiwanis, a Board Member for the YMCA, and an advisor for Warren High School's Key Club.

"We feel extremely blessed to have had Chief Croom be part of our Downey family for 30 years and to have represented our fine Fire Department. He is a true man of character and I have an immense amount of respect for him and for all he has accomplished. We are excited for him as he begins a new chapter in his life and we will miss him dearly," said Councilmember Mario A. Guerra.

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