



L&C Offers High Schools Fire Science Academy Dual Credit

by Jan Dona

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GODFREY – Lewis and Clark Community College has teamed up with area high schools and fire departments to form the Fire Science Academy (FSA).

The purpose of the FSA is to help incoming high school seniors take the initial steps needed to become a volunteer, on-call or full-time firefighter.

L&C Fire Science Program Coordinator Ed Burnley says the idea came from Wood River Fire Chief Wade Stahlhut and East Alton-Wood River High School Superintendent Rob Miller.

“The motivation was a recent decline in recruitment and fire department applications across the area,” Burnley said. “The hope is area fire departments will see an increase in the number of people interested in becoming a firefighter.”

According to Burnley, the FSA will serve as a first step to an Associate in Applied Science in Fire Science for those considering a career in a fire service-related field.

“These students will complete the cognitive and psychomotor components of an entry-level volunteer, paid on-call or full-time firefighter,” he said. “Emphasis will be placed on the state certification courses of Basic Operations Firefighter, Hazardous Materials Operations and Emergency Medical Responder.”

Other components of the curriculum include Fire Service Vehicle Operator, American Heart Association (AHA) CPR and National Incident Management System (NIMS) 100 and 700.

Students in the program will receive traditional classroom instruction, which will be reinforced with hands-on practical applications.

“As students progress through graduated skill evolutions, drills are added with increasing complexity to challenge and evaluate firefighter capabilities,” Burnley said. “These drills simulate real life emergency scene situations.”

The FSA is a dual-credit partnership with the high schools. Upon successful completion, the student will earn high school credit, along with 15.5 college credits.

Currently, the program is offered at East Alton-Wood River High School, Roxana High School, Alton High School and Civic Memorial High School in Bethalto, with Edwardsville High School set to begin in Fall 2023.

For more information about the Fire Science Academy, contact Burnley at (618) 468-4914 or eburnley@lc.edu.

To learn more about L&C’s High School Partnership and Dual Credit opportunities, contact Director Yvette McLemore at (618) 468-5050 or ymclemor@lc.edu.