Longview American Legion Award Given to Local Firefighter

Kelso- Cowlitz 2 Firefighter and Marine Corps veteran Brad Yoder recently received this year's Longview American Legion Firefighter of the year award. Each year Longview American Legion Post #155 honors those in law enforcement and the fire service for going beyond their call of duty and serving their community. When determining award recipients the Legion looks at cadidates' community service, professional career, letters of recognition, and heroism. Firefighter Yoder was chosen this year for his leadership and guidance in Cowlitz 2's high school fire science program, the establishment of the 9-1-1 memorial, and other various responsibilities he undertakes.

Brad began his career at Cowlitz 2 Fire and Rescue as a volunteer in February of 2004 and was hired as a full time employee in June of 2006. Brad served his country in the Marine Corps and earned the rank of a Lance Corporal. The award was presented by Longview American Legion Post #155 representative and Kelso Police Chief Andrew Hamilton.

Brad Yoder is a lead instructor at the high school Fire Science program located at Cowlitz 2 fire and Rescue's headquarters station in Kelso. Started in 1996, the program teaches fundamentals of firefighting, community involvement, integrity and discipline. The program teaches students from all over the county and has helped produce 7 career firefighters and countless volunteers.

Brad and members of the fire science program built a memorial site to honor those lost on September 11th. It was unveiled last year on 9/11. An actual piece of steel from the World Trade Center, released by the Port Authority of New York/New Jersey, will accompany the memorial in the upcoming months. The memorial is located at 701 Vine Street in Kelso and is open to the public.

The American Legion, chartered by Congress in 1919, is devoted to mutual helpfulness and is the nation's largest veterans' service organization. They are committed to mentoring and sponsorship of youth programs in their communities, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting a strong national security, and continued devotion to their fellow service members and veterans. This information and more can be found at their website: http://legion.org/