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Firefighter Risk & Resilience Study Newsletter Summer 2020



An Overpass Tribute



<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/12/17/fallen-firefighter-honored-crowds-overpasses-during-procession/959910001/>

September 11th, 2001 is a day that will forever be remembered by our nation. It was on this day the World Trade Center was struck by two hijacked planes. The New York Fire Department rushed to the scene as soon as the news broke and went into action, braving the burning Twin Towers in efforts to help people evacuate. In extraordinary displays of heroism, 343 firefighters lost their lives rescuing civilians from the wreckage. To this day, the attack on September 11th is arguably the single deadliest incident throughout history for firefighters.

This year on September 11th, firefighters in Mesa County, Colorado lined the sides of various overpasses in a tribute to their fallen comrades who sacrificed their lives for our country almost twenty

years ago. The firefighters stood in silence for 343 seconds in memoriam of each of the 343 brave men and women who passed away. Dirk Clingman, one of the county's community outreach specialists explained in an interview that "the tribute served not only as a sign of remembrance, but also a reminder of how public safety as an organization always comes together to help each other out."

This touching overpass tribute is not the first of its kind, as it is a phenomenon whose frequency has steadily been increasing over the past few years. These tributes vary not only by location but by size as well, ranging from a single firefighter who lost his life after suffering injuries fighting flames in North

Carolina to tens of fallen firefighters in California who gave their lives to protect citizens. Civilians often offer their support during these tributes as well, honking as they drive by or pulling over to the side of the road to respectfully witness from a distance. Clemmons fire chief Jerry Brooks explained the meaning behind these tributes in a single sentence: "It's a part of a brotherhood and we've had a loss." Although firefighters are all too frequently lost to their line of duty, these overpass tributes are a simple yet powerful way to ensure that they will not be forgotten.

<https://www.kjct8.com/2020/09/12/firefighters-honor-those-who-lost-their-lives-on-911/>

<https://www.firehouse.com/home/news/10461697/nc-firefighters-line-bridges-to-honor-comrade>

What's New at the WRI?

The WRI welcomes a new therapist and a new BEAR intern!

Jane Zimmermann

Jane joined the WRI in June 2020 as a practicum therapist. She is currently enrolled in Baylor University's Psy.D. program and expects to graduate in 2023. Prior to joining the WRI, Jane completed clinical training rotations at the Baylor Psychology Clinic and the Baylor University Counseling Center in Waco, TX. She also received a Masters in Psychology from The Fuller School of Psychology in Pasadena, California before moving to Texas to pursue her doctorate.

Jane's research interests include the ways in which various character strengths lead to wellbeing outcomes in high-performing populations such as elite athletes or military personnel. Her clinical interests are similar: she loves helping people identify and pursue wellbeing in psychotherapy. In her spare time, Jane enjoys participating in all things related to fitness, watching movies, and hanging out with her friends and/or German Shepherd, Frank.

Kyle Krautkramer

Kyle joined the WRI as a BEAR in June 2020. He is a junior psychology and economics major at Baylor University. Originally from Grapevine, TX, Kyle regularly volunteers at the Family Health Center in Waco and is passionate about providing accessible healthcare to underserved populations. Outside of class, Kyle spends his time working alongside a Baylor graduate student on her dissertation studying the effects of financial burdens and uncertainty on parental stressors of children with cancer. He is also an active member of the university's Phi Gamma Delta chapter.

After graduating, Kyle plans to pursue a doctorate in clinical psychology and become a professor, researcher, and licensed psychologist specialized in anxiety-related and obsessive-compulsive disorders.

Fun Fall Recipe!

Pumpkin Coffee Cake Muffins with Cinnamon Honey Butter

Ingredients:

3/4 cup salted butter, melted
 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
 2 tsp vanilla extract
 2 eggs
 1 cup pumpkin puree
 1/4 cup milk
 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
 2 tsp baking powder
 1/2 tsp baking soda
 1 tsp cinnamon
 1 tsp pumpkin pie spice
 1/2 tsp kosher salt



Streusel:

3/4 cup all-purpose flour
 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
 1 tsp cinnamon
 6 tbsp cold salted butter, cubed
 4 oz cream cheese, cut into 16 cubes

Cinnamon Honey Butter:

4 tbsp salted butter, room temperature
 2 tbsp honey
 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Line 16 muffin tins with paper liners.
2. In a large bowl, mix together the butter, brown sugar, and vanilla. Add eggs, one at a time, until fully incorporated. Add pumpkin and milk, beat until smooth and creamy. Add flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, pumpkin pie spice, and salt. Mix on low speed until batter is completely mixed.
3. To make the streusel, combine flour, brown sugar, and cinnamon in a medium bowl. Add the butter and mix the it into the flour until a crumble forms.
4. Divide the batter among the prepared pan. Push one cube of cream cheese into each muffin. Evenly sprinkle the streusel over the batter. Bake 23-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
5. While batter is baking, make the cinnamon butter. In a small bowl, combine the butter, honey, and cinnamon.
6. Serve the muffins warm or at room temperature smeared with cinnamon butter.

Spotlight on Service

In our newsletters, we highlight firefighter service outside the line of duty from the cities in our study. In this newsletter, we focus on Fairfax, VA.



<https://www.wusa9.com/article/features/producers-picks/fairfax-county-firefighters-aim-to-reduce-carcinogens/65-68ed23e4-6fbe-4cb4-a933-900c3142c544>

Fairfax Fire and Their Role in the Crackdown on Carcinogens

When buildings and vehicles are up in flames, firefighters and first responders flee to the scene with no hesitation. While the jobs of first responders are risky by nature, Fairfax firefighters wondered what hidden exposures might be present at such fire scenes.

In November 2019, firefighters in Fairfax, Virginia took part in a new study aimed at reducing the exposure of first responders to deadly carcinogens. Carcinogens include any substance that could prove lethal and is capable of causing cancer in living tissue. Such chemicals can hang onto the gear worn by firefighters, even being taken back to the fire station after the blaze has been put out. These carcinogens cause troubling health issues and safety risks to those firefighters on duty, which explains why firefighters

are twice as likely to get skin cancer, testicular cancer, and mesothelioma, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

Partnered with the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Research Foundation, this four-phase study aimed to improve equipment that could filter through carcinogens, thereby providing protections in hopes to reduce firefighter health issues. Through the course of study, it was learned that personal protective equipment (PPE) did tend to retain harmful carcinogens.

In the first phase, firefighters dressed in full PPE and were put in a "washing room" meant to simulate a heavy smoke and ground exposure environment. The gear was then hosed down with a non-toxic spray that simulated toxic carcinogens. After multiple decontamination rinses, fluorescent lights were used to photograph the amount of non-toxic spray that remained on the firefight-

er's gear, including the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), the mouthpiece used by firefighters.

Jamie Little, a firefighter for Fairfax County and member of the NFPA Respiratory Protection Equipment Committee, said that the preliminary testing done was just the start for this project. This project could provide vital research information on how cancer-causing chemicals in fires are understood. This first phase of testing provided a baseline analysis so researchers can move forward with phases two and three and so forth. Their hope is to eventually move into conducting live-fire testing and looking further into the actual cancer-causing chemicals that fires produce.

<https://www.wusa9.com/article/features/producers-picks/fairfax-county-firefighters-aim-to-reduce-carcinogens/65-68ed23e4-6fbe-4cb4-a933-900c3142c544>

<https://www.firehouse.com/safety-health/cancer-prevention/news/21116102/fairfax-county-va-department-fire-group-team-up-for-firefighter-gear-study>

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Moving? Changing your phone number?

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our information.

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