



January 2025

Dear Sir/Madam:

Applications are now being accepted for Phoenix Firecamp, a **weeklong overnight camp for teenage girls, ages 14-19, July 20-25, 2025** at the Utica Fire Training Academy. Established in 2007 by Fire Service Women of New York State, Inc. (FSWNYS), the program introduces girls to their opportunities in fire and emergency services. 229 campers, 175 from New York State, have graduated to date and the majority have become members of their hometown fire departments.

**Key points about Phoenix Firecamp:**

- A \$300 (U.S. dollars only) fee is the only cost to campers; everything else is free.
- Applicants need not have any prior experience with fire or emergency services.
- Up to 24 campers are selected annually from the pool of applicants.
- This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity; girls may only attend Phoenix once.
- The hands-on and classroom curriculum is an abbreviated version of a recruit class.
- The EMS components include CPR certification.
- Campers enjoy authentic “firehouse living”; they are housed in a converted firehouse.
- Applications, requirements, curriculum and photos are posted at: [www.fswnys.org](http://www.fswnys.org)
- The deadline for applications is May 1, 2025.

The instructors and team leaders are primarily volunteer and career women firefighters who donate their time and pay all their own expenses for the week. The Utica Fire Department provides camper housing, logistical support, equipment, EMS coverage and the use of its apparatus, firehouses and training grounds. Westmoreland Volunteer Fire Department donates transportation, hosts social events, secures area business support and coordinates the participation of other volunteer fire departments.

In 2011, FSWNYS was selected from a field of 40 nominations from throughout North America to receive the first annual Fire 20/20 Tony Pini Award for “outstanding work to build a diverse and inclusive fire department culture.”

Please call me (518-542-6583) or email ([phoenix@fswnys.org](mailto:phoenix@fswnys.org)) with any questions or for a general discussion of camp. Inquiries from interested girls are encouraged. Thank you in advance for your kind assistance.

Sincerely,

Mary Wrobel  
Co-Director, Phoenix Firecamp  
Firefighter, Nassau FD

# Phoenix Firecamp

*"I went to camp thinking I might make a friend or two; instead, I left with a family."*

*"Camp made me feel confident in myself and boosted my self esteem."*

CLASS OF 2010

Benny Kasalen  
Sam Kirsch  
Ryan Kitts  
Emily Latinsky  
Jaeho Lee  
Sam Loring  
Phoebie Mattana  
Taylor May  
Nataasha Nouri  
Isabella Oropeza  
Rachel Park  
Ryan Rubin  
Jacob Soheim  
Aiko Takashima  
Amy Welch  
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Phoenix Firecamp was created by Fire Service Women of New York State, Inc (FSWNYS), a non-profit, statewide association of women who are members of career and volunteer fire departments.

A primary mission of the organization is encouraging young women to become involved in fire and emergency services, either as a career, or as a community volunteer.

I learned that I am capable of doing tasks that I didn't think I had the strength to do.

Conducted annually during the third full week of July at the Utica Fire Academy, Phoenix Firecamp is the first such program in the Northeast.

Phoenix was established in 2007 in partnership with the City of Utica Fire Department.

## Campers

Phoenix Firecamp applicants do not need prior experience with the fire service.

A majority of the attendees live in New York State, but residents of other states may attend. Up to 24 campers are selected annually for this once in a lifetime opportunity.

### To qualify, candidates must:

- Be in good physical condition
- Be covered by medical insurance
- Be 14 to 19 years of age
- Have a positive attitude
- Complete the application
- Write a 500 word essay
- Agree to follow all rules and regulations
- Participate in all activities and classes
- Submit materials by May 1st deadline

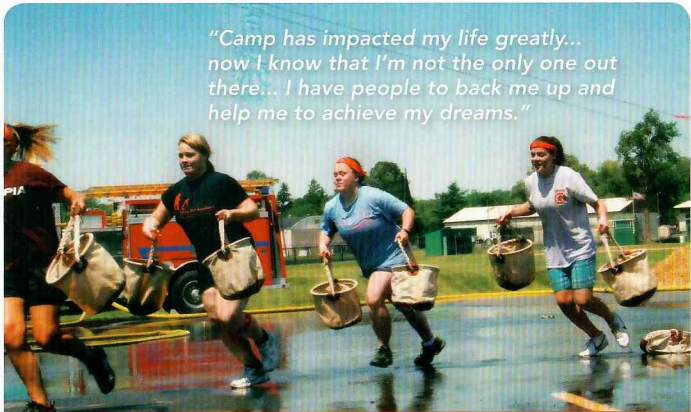
## Staff

The instructors and team leaders are all experienced female members of career and volunteer fire departments in New York State and elsewhere, who donate their time and pay their own travel and lodging expenses.

These dedicated female firefighters want to instill the concept that women have the opportunity to pursue active roles in public service and to give campers a chance to explore those possibilities. The ratio of staff to campers is one-to-one.

Should a camper decide this is an area of interest, the staff provides direction, guidance and the basic tools to succeed. Many Phoenix graduates stay in touch with their instructors and team leaders via email. The Utica Fire Department supports the camp with apparatus, equipment, lodging, training sites, EMS coverage, personnel and logistics.

Westmoreland Volunteer Fire Department donates transportation, hosts social events, secures area business support and coordinates the participation of other volunteer fire departments. The Frankfort Fire Department contributes its mobile flashover simulator for forcible entry and



*"Camp has impacted my life greatly... now I know that I'm not the only one out there... I have people to back me up and help me to achieve my dreams."*

Firematic games at social events teaches campers the importance of teamwork.

The curriculum is designed to help campers develop confidence, enhance leadership skills and broaden their problem solving abilities.

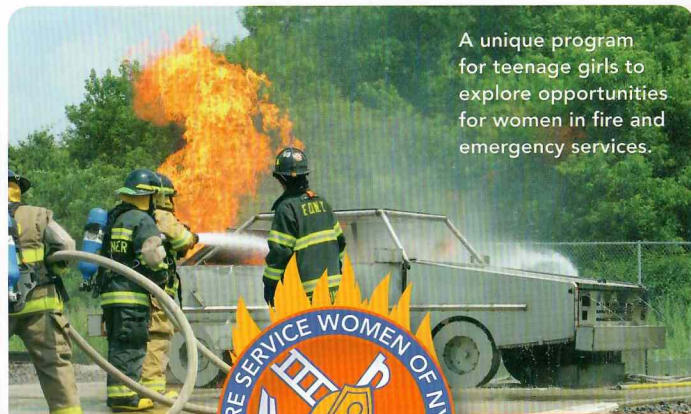
The Phoenix staff works to foster friendly competition, nurture community spirit and promote inclusiveness in a positive and safe environment.



*"The staff is amazing. They created an environment that is perfect for developing new skills."*

**Fire Service Women of New York State, Inc. (FSWNYS)** is a non-profit membership organization of women involved in career and volunteer fire and emergency services from throughout New York and other states.

The concept of FSWNYS arose in 2002 during the first annual training weekend for women firefighters held at the NYS Academy of Fire Science under the auspices of the NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control; never before had New York career and volunteer women come together for training and socializing. It was such an enriching, energizing experience that the women decided to form a group dedicated to the needs, interests and aspirations of female firefighters—for now and into the future.



A unique program for teenage girls to explore opportunities for women in fire and emergency services.

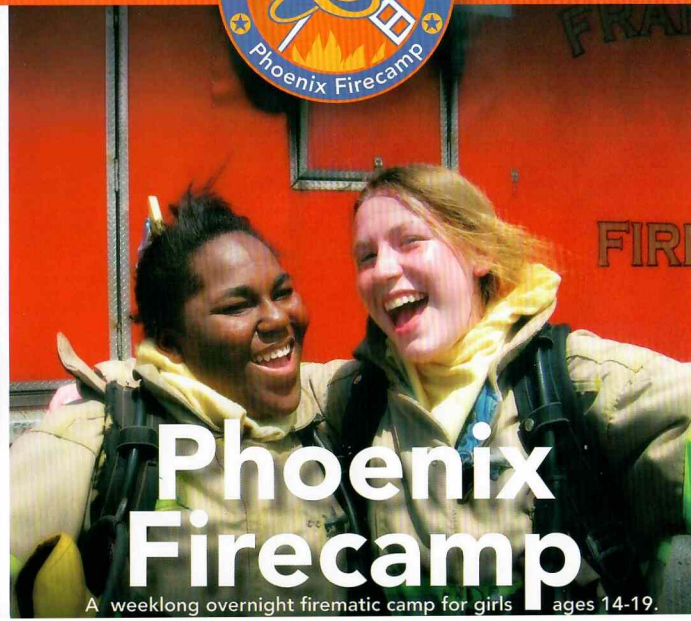
FSWNYS was incorporated September 10, 2004 as a not-for-profit corporation 501(c-3) in the State of New York and was granted tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service from that date. It is governed by a twelve member board of directors elected at large by the membership at the annual meeting. The board elects the officers and may, at its discretion, appoint individuals to serve in a non-voting advisory board capacity. Financial support comes solely from membership dues, contributions and fundraising events.

#### Our Mission:

- To encourage the participation of women in the career and volunteer fire service of the State of New York;
- To disseminate pertinent fire service information to the members;
- To provide a supportive network and communication among women in the fire service;
- To conduct an annual training weekend for fire service women;
- To annually hold Phoenix Firecamp, a week-long residential firematic camp for teenage girls.

Membership is open to all who support the goals of FSWNYS.  
[www.fswnys.org](http://www.fswnys.org)

Contact: [president@fswnys.org](mailto:president@fswnys.org)

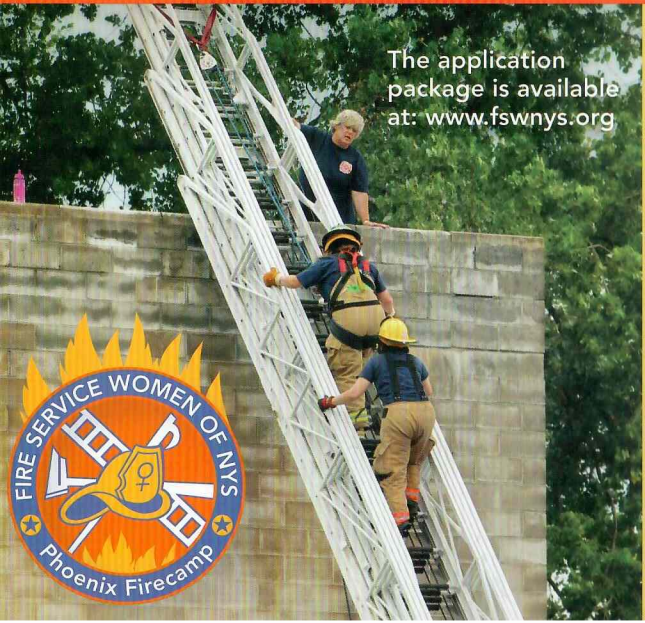


# Phoenix Firecamp

A weeklong overnight firematic camp for girls ages 14-19.



ers practice unfamiliar tasks and build confidence in their ability to meet new challenges.



The application package is available at: [www.fswnys.org](http://www.fswnys.org)



## Firehouse Living

Phoenix Firecamp offers an authentic experience in the life of a firefighter because campers are housed at the Utica Fire Academy, a former firehouse.

They share a large bunk room and are responsible for making their beds, keeping belongings in order and doing housekeeping chores, such as sweeping and dishes.

Meals are a highlight; the food is ample, varied, nutritious and prepared by a professional chef who is hired for the week.

The day begins at 6 a.m. and lights-out comes at 10:30 p.m. Personal time for relaxation is built into the program.

In the course of the week, many new friendships blossom. Campers say that getting to know girls from different backgrounds is one of Phoenix's greatest experiences.

*"I made friends for a lifetime."*



*"The experience is awesome... be strong, have respect and learn well."*

## Curriculum

The classroom and hands-on curriculum, an abbreviated version of a recruit class, introduces campers to basic aspects of fire and emergency services. Exercises include:

- + Donning gear
- + Use of SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus)
- + Search and rescue skills
- + Basics of engine/ladder company operations
- + Aerial ladder climb
- + Auto extrication and disentanglement
- + Peaked roof ventilation
- + Portable ladders
- + Forcible entry
- + CPAT Familiarization
- + Tools, ropes and knots
- + Snorkel operations
- + Nozzles/fittings/hydrants
- + Standpipes/hose roll/fold
- + Medical scenarios
- + Ambulance familiarization
- + Fire behavior/ fire safety
- + Introduction to hazardous materials
- + PT classes and fitness information
- + CPR training and certification