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## In Honor of Black History Month Father and Son Tradition Update



**FDNY father and son Firefighters George, second row right, and Eric Walker, first row right, were featured in our 2006 Firefighter Recruitment Campaign.**

Adorning the walls of two offices in the Office of Recruitment and Diversity is a very special father and son firefighter photo that was featured in our 2006 Firefighter Recruitment Campaign. Members of our unit view this photo frequently, so Join FDNY decided to catch up with the firefighters featured in it for an update story. And the Walker family was the first one to answer our call.

### **George and Eric Walker**

Since being featured in the photo, both George and Eric said that they have been

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# Father and Son Look to Continue Firefighter Legacy

Story continued from front page



Photo Courtesy of Berman Fenelus

**Family time for Firefighters George, left, and Eric Walker, now includes teaching Eric's 4-year-old son, Elijah, all about being a New York City Firefighter.**

added Eric, who is now 32 and reaching his ninth year at Engine 214 in Brooklyn. "It's just a great job."

And the Walkers are planning to continue the father-son firefighter legacy in the near and distant future.

George's youngest son Gaelan, 18, is gearing up to complete the next firefighter exam, while Eric's son Elijah visits Engine 214 to learn about the job whenever he's not preparing for pre-school.

"My son is four and when he visits my firehouse, he walks in and starts running the place," Eric said jokingly. "If my son and my brother become firefighters, it would be really special and historic for our family."

flourishing in a career that they love dearly. George, a veteran firefighter at Ladder 124 in Brooklyn, is looking forward to celebrating his 20<sup>th</sup> year of service in February 2015.

"Being an FDNY firefighter is the best job to have and you can learn so much working for this Department," George said.

"We've been living the dream of FDNY firefighters and we tell people that all the time,"

# 'Probie' Achieves 'Dream Deferred'

Ever since Probationary Firefighter Gary Boston was a child, he knew he wanted to be an FDNY firefighter. His uncle, retired FDNY Supervising Fire Marshal Fred Taylor, would often bring him to his firehouse, Engine 209 in Brooklyn to spend time with the firefighters there. Those experiences, Boston recalled, motivated him even more to join the New York City Fire Department.

“As a seven-year-old, my uncle taught me a lot about being a firefighter and I learned so much important information about the FDNY at such a young age,” he explained. “It has always been a dream of mine to work as an FDNY firefighter and really follow in my uncle’s footsteps.”

But his dream of becoming one of New York’s Bravest was attained later on in his life, since he pursued a career in financial services first. After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in



## **Probationary Firefighter Gary Boston**

finance from Howard University in 2006, Boston worked as an insurance underwriter for seven years. Still, even during that time, his desire to serve as a firefighter never wavered. In 2011, he decided to switch careers and follow his true calling. Since then, he said, he has never looked back.

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# Boston Follows in His Uncle's Footsteps

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To prepare for the Fire Academy, he noted that he trained five times a week, with cardio and weight lifting being a major part of his workout routine.

During most workout sessions, he said he ran four to five miles and each run was at a different pace.

He also credits the helpful advice from his mentor, Firefighter Aaron Gardner, as part of the reason why he succeeded in the Fire Academy. Whether it was in-person meetings or phone conversations, Boston emphasized that his mentor served as a great motivator and resource throughout the intense 18-week training. On December 5, 2013, Boston became one of 242 new graduates of the Fire Academy.

And now each time the 30-year-old wakes up and heads to Ladder 8 in New York City for work, he said, he is officially living out his dream.



Photo Courtesy of Gary Boston

**Probationary Firefighter Gary Boston, left, and his uncle, retired FDNY Supervising Fire Marshal Fred Taylor during Family Day at the Fire Academy in 2013.**

“Nothing in life that is great is easily achieved and I had to work very hard to become an FDNY firefighter, because this is a great job,” he said. “I’m very happy and proud to be working here.”

# 'Probies' Register for the Mentorship Program

New FDNY Probationary Firefighters joined the Firefighter Candidate Mentorship Program on Feb. 11 during Probationary Firefighters Society Day.

During the event, the "probies" were able to learn more about the program and chat with some of the senior mentors.

The program, which is now in its second round, pairs firefighter candidates and probies with existing firefighters, who serve as their mentors.



# Did You Know That?

- There are 10,282 Firefighters and Fire Officers in the FDNY.
- The FDNY has 218 firehouses.
- FDNY firefighters responded to 493,377 incidents in 2013, including 25,278 structural fires.
- Two hundred and eighty six FDNY Fire Recruits and 219 Fire Officers were trained at the Bureau of Training in 2013.
- FDNY Engine 290, Battalion 9 and Ladder 43 completed the most runs in 2013.
- Electrical, smoking, open flame (match, candle, etc.), careless cooking and appliances were the top five causes of accidental fires in New York City in 2013.



## Follow Us on Instagram and Flickr

We have expanded our efforts to provide our firefighter candidates with the latest Recruitment news and announcements. In addition to Facebook and Twitter, follow Join FDNY on Instagram and Flickr as well.

# UWF to Host Training for Candidates

The United Women Firefighters (UWF) is scheduled to host physical fitness training for women firefighter candidates in March at the New York Sports Club on Wall Street in New York City. The club is located at 30 Wall Street, New York, NY 10005. To be eligible to participate, every candidate must have a gym lock, at least a 50 pound vest, fitness clothes and sneakers, water and a medical waiver. In addition, every candidate should attend the training properly hydrated and fueled and ready for an intense workout. Please note that these workout sessions are designed to prepare candidates for the physical training at the Fire Academy. To register for the sessions, please e-mail [womenrecruitfdny-subscribe@yahooogroup.com](mailto:womenrecruitfdny-subscribe@yahooogroup.com).



## March 2014 UWF Training Schedule

March 11, 18 and 25 at 7:30 p.m.

March 16, 23 and 30 at 12 p.m.