

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Tim Lewis and I am the Fire Explorer Coordinator for the San Miguel Fire District. I composed this letter in response to a request from the parent of a young person interested in pursuing a career in the fire service. It outlines, in a general way, the different options available to high school age young people who are interested in becoming Firefighters here in San Diego County.

As far as what your son or daughter can do now, there are several Explorer Programs in the county for High School age young men and women. We have one and so do the La Mesa, Chula Vista, Viejas and San Diego City Fire Departments. Our program is currently full and I will not be doing another recruitment until January. If you would like me to place your son or daughter on our interest list please e-mail me his or her name, address, and an e-mail address. I will contact everyone on the list when I start my next recruitment. La Mesa, Chula Vista, Viejas or San Diego City may have an opening earlier so if you would like to get him or her involved sooner you may want to call one of those departments.

There are a couple of different ways to pursue a career in the fire service after graduation from High School. If you are planning to send your son or daughter to a four year college I would do so, and have him or her major in public administration. Once he or she graduates from college he or she can then get their emergency medical technician certification and start working as an EMT, which is required for a year before they can be eligible for paramedic school. Almost all fire departments require candidates to be a paramedic now. While working as an EMT he or she can continue to get more fire department specific training at local community colleges and apply for a position as a Reserve or Volunteer Firefighter. If hired he or she will gain valuable experience, which is almost always a necessity to acquire a full-time paid Firefighter position. We also have a Reserve Firefighter Program here at San Miguel. After one year as an EMT he or she can go to Paramedic school, also offered at local community colleges. Once he or she is licensed as a Paramedic they will be eligible to be hired as a full-time paid Firefighter.

If your son or daughter has aspirations of promoting any higher than the rank of Captain into an upper management position a four year degree is necessary. If a four year college is not an option that is desired or can be afforded at this time then you can just use the same plan outlined above minus the four year college and have them attend Miramar or Southwestern Community Colleges here in San Diego County. They offer two year degrees in Fire Technology and Paramedicine. They could attend one of these two year colleges while working as an EMT. If they choose to go this route they could be hired by the time they are 20 as apposed to 24 if they went directly to a four year college. A Firefighter can obtain a four year degree after they start their career by taking classes at a University or on line if they decide they would like to promote into an upper management position in the fire service.

If you have any further questions, or you would like your son or daughter's name added to our interest list you can contact me through this e-mail.

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Sincerely,

Engineer / Explorer Coordinator

Tim Lewis