

Assistant Fire Marshal Nikki Johnson presented with City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Cecilia Gallardo-Daly presented the City Manager Leadership Award for September to Assistant Fire Marshal Nikki Johnson.

“Every day, Nikki brings compassion, a strong spirit of service, and a genuine commitment to her team and community,” Gallardo-Daly said. “She takes pride in her work and approaches it with a high degree of professionalism and dedication to her craft, always mindful of how her actions and efforts contribute to the larger goals of Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue. I am happy to present her with this award.”

Johnson joined Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue in 2020. Over the past six years, she has progressed from Code Enforcement Officer to Fire Protection Specialist and ultimately Assistant Fire Marshal.

As her role has grown, so have the duties and responsibilities she has taken on. Most recently, during a period of transition for the department, she served as the Acting Fire Marshal.

She embraced the added demands with grace, helped maintain continuity within the Community Risk Reduction Division, and kept the day-to-day work moving. At the same time, she provided guidance and mentorship to staff and helped others develop professionally.

Beyond the department, Johnson currently serves as President of both the CMCEA and the Orange County Fire Prevention Officers Group. Being elected by her peers to lead two very different organizations speaks volumes about how she is regarded by the employees she represents and by her colleagues.

in the fire prevention community.

That same spirit of service and compassion is evident in her work with the community. For several years, Johnson spearheaded Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue's participation in the Spark of Love Toy Drive, coordinating the effort and helping make sure local children and families received some extra support during the holidays.

She volunteers with Pawsative Approach Animal Rescue and has spent years rescuing, fostering, and finding homes for cats and kittens in need.

She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Arizona and an Associate of Arts degree in Fire Science from Santa Ana College.