

# Mission Valley ROP receives donated fire truck

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PHOTOS BY WILLIAM MANCEBO

In these days of budget cuts and cost consciousness, it's wonderful to see the spirit of generosity and sharing alive and well in our communities.

Mission Valley Regional Occupational Program (ROP) was the setting for a special presentation held September 17 in conjunction with the Fremont Fire Department.

Dignitaries from the Tri-Cities area, ROP administrators, Fire Science students, the Fremont Fire Chief and other fire safety officers were in attendance to witness the donation of a firetruck from the Fremont Fire Department.

According to Fremont Fire Chief Bruce Martin, the firetruck sustained damage when assisting at an auto accident on Hwy 101. A truck involved in the accident backed into the fire truck crushing its right front side and cracking the windshield.

"We are donating this 1990 Pierce Fire Engine, which was part of our fleet and lasted in service almost 15 years," explained Chief Martin. "After the accident, it was considered totaled. The vehicle is safe, but is a loss and would cost too much if the department had to repair it. So, when we heard that MVROP needed one, it was offered to be donated."

The school's Auto Body/Painting and Refinishing class, led by instructor John Cimino, will need about three to four

Established 40 years ago, MVROP has been extremely successful in serving high school and adult students with career preparation and quality hands-on learning, leading to employment and career advancement. It operates under a JPA (Joint Powers Agreement) with Fremont, Newark and New Haven Unified School Districts.

Mission Valley ROP Superintendent, Charles Brown, says the donation was definitely needed. "The Crown Victoria 1972 firetruck, used by our Fire Science Program students, has not functioned for the past year and a half and there were no replacement parts available for it anymore. Chief Martin of the Fremont F.D. said they would find a donation, which they generously did."

"We're really pleased and happy to be here today," responded Chief Martin. "The fire engine is a symbol; it's a tool to provide services, but mostly it represents the dedication of the people who help to serve our community. This engine went out on over 20,000 calls to help the citizens of Fremont and made a difference to our community. We hope that the students learn about fire safety and aspire to this career."

President Ray Rodriguez, of Newark Unified School District and President of the Governing Council of ROP, reminded those in attendance that the city of Newark currently has a firetruck on loan to Mission Valley ROP, with the future potential for it to also be donated to the school.

Now in his fourth year of teaching at MVROP, he outlined the curriculum the students follow.

"During the first year or level one, students learn the professional firefighter standards from the NFPA (National Fire Protection Agency). There is also book work and hands-on work with ladders, full hose, search and rescue and breathing apparatus."

Jacquez says, "Being hands-on you get the most out of the class. Students get the time to learn techniques to make it easier to accomplish tasks and they work as a team to help each other."

Second level or second year returning students are taught how to drive and operate a firetruck. "It takes some getting used to as it's obviously different than a car," explains Jacquez. "The firetruck is bigger, handles differently when turning and you have to plan out your route. You're taught how to drive safely in this massive vehicle and to maneuver close to the proximity and position when arriving at your destination."

To gain more experience, Fire Science students are encouraged to get involved with the Explorer Program through the Fremont Fire Department. This volunteer program allows teens to actively assist the fire department. Combining experience in both ROP and the Explorer Program will make the student more successful if pursuing a career in firefighting.

"Just as much as the skills needed and the job itself I stress character building to



months to repair and repaint it before returning the fire truck to the Fire Science program.

Currently, there are 120 students enrolled in the Auto Body/Painting and Refinishing Department and 35 students in the Fire Science Program. They are all full-time high school students who attend a two-hour session as part of their daily classes.

Fire Science Instructor, Sal Jacquez, retired from the Santa Clara Fire Department, has years of experience he wanted to share with his students. "I personally believe if you're retired, you need to have something to do," says Jacquez. "That's why I'm teaching Fire Science. I'm still involved. I like providing this opportunity to high school students."

my students. I encourage them to keep their record clean, to be honest, respectful and trustworthy," says Jacquez.

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