

<b>Executive/Manager Category</b>	
<b>Nominator</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Charlotte King
<b>Company:</b>	Snowden & King Marketing Communications
<b>Nominee</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Kelvin Cochran
<b>Title:</b>	Fire Chief
<b>Organization:</b>	Atlanta Fire Rescue

**Give up to three examples of how this person demonstrates Integrity:**

It is a rare individual that can give up a position at the national level and believe that they can make a bigger impact in serving their home town. Atlanta Fire Chief, Kelvin Cochran is that man. First, he really believes his higher calling in protecting the lives of every citizen, every tourist, and every firefighter. He takes it very personally. Rather than dwell on the problems caused by the economic downturn of the past several years Chief Cochran returned to Atlanta in 2010 and immediately focused on stabilizing the core vision of Atlanta Fire Rescue as an “all hazards” fire department. Bottomline, he has systematically worked throughout the community to insure that any emergency that is not related to law enforcement, will be addressed by Atlanta Fire Rescue.

Secondly, as the U.S. Fire Administrator, “America’s Fire Chief” confirmed in 2009, he reached out to his colleagues across the country to set and implement sweeping initiatives that would push the boundaries of difficult priorities. Although the country was facing significant economic challenges and municipal budgetary constraints, Chief Cochran addressed important priorities to enhance the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), reduce line-of-duty deaths and injuries and strengthen fire-prevention and life-safety programs. At the core of his role to save lives, rather than using a top-down approach, he leveraged his leadership with other Fire Chiefs to implement these initiatives.

Most important when a nearby County, for budgetary reasons, was unable to hire a class of new recruits, Chief Cochran hired all of the class at AFRD so that the new recruits would have employment. In every decision he makes, he is committed to saving lives through elevating the practices and professional of firefighters everywhere.

**Give up to three examples of how this person demonstrates Respect:**

Chief Cochran upon his return to Atlanta focused his considerable energy in developing a comprehensive Strategic Plan that has become a model for other municipal departments throughout Atlanta. Many executives develop strategic plans that sit on a shelf so they can check it off a list. Within his first 18 months he found ways to engage his staff, and seek out their input at all levels in the strategic planning process. For many, it was the first time they had been listened to. To ensure

that this became a real-time “play book” for delivering the highest performance to Atlanta, he has taken his Strategic Plan on the road. If he’s speaking at Rotary, he engages his audience in the AFRD Strategic Plan. When he’s delivering training, it includes the Strategic Plan. When he invited FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate to a 2012 Breakfast of Business Leaders, it included the AFRD Strategic Plan. Ultimately he is hyper focused on achieving the goals of the plan to address hazardous operations, improving firefighting capacity, and saving firefighters lives. His style is to collaborate with other community stakeholders in a shared leadership model.

When AFRD was faced with the allegations of cheating on a fire promotion exam, Chief Cochran exerted his leadership example by communicating to his department that there would be no “chest beating”, retribution, or adverse treatment of any of the members of the Department – at any time. He has even addressed insubordination and performance improvement with an ability to reassign personnel in a lesser role without diminishing the person. His respect for his team’s opinions and input is sacrosanct and he demonstrates that with meetings where his people are encouraged to debate, disagree, and share differing opinions with the goal of achieving the best ideas. It’s not easy when lives are at stake but he makes it work by valuing the process of shared accountability. His team has flourished with this approach.

### **Give up to three examples of how this person demonstrates Responsibility:**

As Shreveport Fire Chief he has been widely acknowledged for his role in helping Shreveport respond to Hurricane Katrina, the sheltering of evacuees and in rebuilding the New Orleans Fire Department. Municipal leaders often take a second seat to corporate CEO’s. Chief Cochran is skilled in balancing the return on investment with advising City Council on expanding AFRD funding higher than ever before. He’s not selling consumer goods but everyday he’s managing strategies for the quarter million visitors through Hartsfield Jackson airport. In his short time returning to Atlanta, his operating budget is razor thin but he’s aggressively pursued 5 million to purchase additional fire apparatus, 2 million to improve fire stations, and open a new station at Atlantic Station. Talk about hit the ground running, to stem the tide of reduced services and brownout’s at many community fire stations, he acquired 9 million to fund 75 new firefighter positions.

His department doesn’t compete for market share but he has successfully leveraged the collective momentum of Atlanta’s stakeholders through the Atlanta Emergency Preparedness Institute. In less than 5 years, the Institute is now a field-tested tool linking the FEMA federal preparedness model to local communities, with more than 50 major corporations, 24 governmental agencies – municipal, state, federal and foreign consulates and 25 NGO’s. From the beginning, Chief Cochran has shared this newest emergency preparedness initiative with more than 30 other Fire Chief’s from across the region.

**Please relate an incident or tell a story that shows how this person demonstrates Leadership Character. Examples may include professional or community involvement:**

Chief Cochran devotes his time in concrete ways to make the Fire Profession transformative. He has mentored other municipal leaders, he looks for opportunities to showcase his youngest recruits, and he is in constant demand as an inspirational speaker at the national level. He truly exhibits a servant leaders heart and his faith is a factor in his leadership. He balances his many leadership roles as a member of the board of visitors of the National Fire Academy, V.P. of the International Association of Fire Chiefs with his role with Boy Scouts, Salvation Army, and Volunteers of America. He has worked tirelessly to elevate his profession by applying lessons learned at the National level and authoring two chapters for Chief Fire Officers Desk Reference, published by Jones and Bartlett Publishers: Chapter 1 "Leadership and Management" and Chapter 25 "The Fire Chief of the Future.

In 2012, one of his trusted advisors, a contractor became ill with a life-threatening condition and became completely disabled. Over a 4 month period, Chief Cochran took the time to call with words of encouragement and then he patiently waited until her recovery to begin her assignment anew. He cares about the individual person, his community and his profession. In 2012 he was named FIRE CHIEF's 2012 Career Chief of the Year