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### **Arcata Fire District Challenges HSU Woman's Soccer Team**

Arcata, CA – March 9, 2019 – The Arcata Fire District and HSU Woman's Soccer Team spent 12 hours together last Saturday running through numerous firefighting drills, challenging the ladies both physically and mentally. The intent of the academy was to build teamwork and spark interest with them for a career in firefighter.

Battalion Chief Campbell explains, "We need more woman in the fire service. Intercollegiate athletes such as the HSU Woman's Soccer Team would make great firefighters because they are fit and team oriented, which are two traits the firefighters have in common. Coach Karver and I met to discuss this community partnership, we ran with the idea, and it worked out really well. The woman did an amazing job working through the challenges we set up for them."

The woman watched a live fire behavior demonstration then donned structural firefighting clothing and equipment. Firefighters designed the drills to challenge the woman mentally and physically. Firefighters intentionally placed the woman through scenarios and drills in which they had to rely on teammates in order to complete each evolution. They used forcible entry to get through doors and breach walls, they worked together through wire entanglement props, and they crawled through a confusing confidence obstacle course with no visibility. The woman also had the opportunity to experience extricating their coaches from a simulated car accident using the "Jaws of Life". Their final scenario required the entire team to work together to rescue three downed firefighters who were their team members.

Captain Dervedde explains, "We placed one of their teammates in the confidence course as a downed firefighter. The team had to work together to located the downed teammate and rescue them. The woman had to work together though many difficult obstacles using strength, outside of the box thinking, and good communication skills to save their teammate. They did an amazing job."

At the end of the day, the team said they learned many new ways to improve communication and teamwork, which will transition to the soccer field. The academy was a huge success and with any luck, the community will see these women on a fire engine protecting their community.

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