



[Home](#) > [Press](#) > [Press Releases](#) > February 9 - Installation Ceremony for New Fire Chief and Officers



HELP CENTER

How Do I...



February 9 - Installation Ceremony for New Fire Chief and Officers

CITY OF NEWARK HOLDS INSTALLATION CEREMONY FOR NEW FIRE CHIEF AND 35 SENIOR FIRE OFFICERS

***Veteran Firefighter John G. Centanni takes oath of office as Fire Chief;
3 Deputy Chiefs, 12 Battalion Chiefs, and 20 Captains are sworn in;
City swears in Raul Malave III as its first Latino Battalion Chief and Rufus Jackson as youngest African-American Deputy Chief***

Newark, NJ – February 9, 2011 – Mayor Cory A. Booker, the Municipal Council, Business Administrator Julien X. Neals, Esq., Fire Director Fateen A. Ziyad, and other dignitaries held an installation ceremony yesterday for the City of Newark's new Fire Chief John G. Centanni and 35 senior fire officers, at St. Lucy's Roman Catholic Church, located at 118 Seventh Avenue in the North Ward. Deputy City Clerk Kenneth Louis administered the oaths of office. Representing the Newark Municipal Council was Council Member-At-Large Carlos M. Gonzalez.

"We are privileged to promote leaders with experience, courage, and wisdom. All of these men have distinguished themselves in work and by their character," said Mayor Booker. "Chief Centanni has led his colleagues by example, rising through the ranks, serving with courage. Newark is one of the most diverse fire departments in our nation and today I'm proud that we are swearing in our first Latino Battalion Chief and youngest African-American Deputy Chief. The joint leadership of Fire Director Ziyad and Fire Chief Centanni will take our Fire Department to an even higher level which will continue to make Newark a stronger, safer, prouder city."

"It is always an incredible event to see great individuals rise through the ranks while getting the recognition for what they have dreamed of, worked at and diligently studied for. Promotions are the culmination of those things combined. As the Fire Director and having personally been through this amazing process, it gives me such a rewarding feeling to promote these men of outstanding character and dedication knowing that they sincerely earned this. I salute them and their families for a job well done and wish them well in their new rank," said Director Ziyad.

At the time of his appointment, Chief Centanni was serving as Provisional Fire Chief. A Newark native, the 45-year-old Centanni joined the Newark Fire Department at age 20, and has served in the Department ever since, rising to the rank of Deputy Chief in 2010. He holds numerous city, county, state, and federal emergency response and fire science certifications, and has also held senior positions in the Newark Firefighters Union. He also holds nine commendations for valor and service.

"I would like to thank former New ark Fire Director David Giordano; Fire Director Ziyad; Business Administrator Neals, and Mayor Booker for giving me the opportunity, honor, and privilege to be part of the leadership team for the City of New ark, particularly the New ark Fire Department. I am looking forward to continuing the positive strides that we are making while holding firm to the protection and safety of the firefighters and citizens of the City of New ark," Chief Centanni said.

Chief Centanni was appointed Firefighter on April 21, 1986, and assigned to Engine Company 6, one of the City's busiest. He was promoted to Captain in 1998, and served in a variety of leadership positions until November 2005, when he was promoted to Battalion Chief. During that time, he served as Executive Officer to the Fire Chief and as Chief of Special Operations, as well as Chief of Staff in the Office of the Fire Director. When promoted to Deputy Chief in January 2010, he continued in his role as Chief of Staff. He was appointed Provisional Fire Chief on October 8, 2010.

Chief Centanni served a term on the Board of Trustees for the New ark Firefighters Union, from 1994 to 1996, then as its Executive Board's Recording Secretary from 1996 to 1998. In 1997, he received the New ark Firefighters Union "Unionist of the Year" Award. He has also served as a Planning Official and Municipal Coordinator of the Office of Emergency Management in East Hanover, where he and his family reside. He holds certificates from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Division of Fire Safety, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Amtrak, The State of New Jersey State Police Office of Emergency Management, the International Association of Firefighters, the National Fire Academy, the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Domestic Preparedness, Essex County College, and the Essex County Prosecutor's Office. Chief Centanni has been married for 24 years to his wife Joan and is the father of three children.

"Fire Chief Centanni is a man of outstanding character and ability and will take this Department to greater heights," said Business Administrator Neals.

Councilman-At-Large Gonzalez said, "I congratulate all the new fire officers for rising up the ranks and commend them for their leadership and commitment to protect and serve New ark's residents."

Also taking their oaths of office were three deputy chiefs, 12 battalion chiefs, and 20 captains. Among them was the New ark Fire Department's first Latino Battalion Chief, Raul Malave III and youngest African-American Deputy Chief, Rufus Jackson.

"I am very proud to have achieved the rank of Battalion Chief in the New ark Fire Department. I am further honored and proud of the fact that I am the first Hispanic Battalion Chief in the history of this great department. I recognize the responsibility that such an accomplishment carries and will do my best to be a positive role model in the community and to fellow members of the department. I welcome the opportunity of assisting in the development and implementation of Director Ziyad and Fire Chief Centanni's vision for the New ark Fire Department," said Battalion Chief Malave, a 15-year veteran of the department. A New ark native, his father comes from Rio Piedras and his mother from Villalba, both in Puerto Rico.

"As a young man growing up in New ark, it was always my aspiration to be a Firefighter, so as I stand here today, I must admit that this moment is very overwhelming for me and my family," said newly-sworn Deputy Chief Rufus Jackson. "I have been with the department for 16 years and through my tenure, I have learned that the only way to achieve your goals in life is that you must work hard at it and continue to strive. I love my career and my appointment to the rank of Deputy Chief is a testimony of my ability of working hard. I am forever grateful to be given this opportunity to continue serving and protecting our great City and its residents." At age 37, Jackson became the youngest African-American to be promoted to Battalion Chief, and at age 39, he becomes the youngest African-American promoted to Deputy Chief.

In addition, two fraternal twins took their oaths of office: Rayvon Adams as Captain, and Raynard Adams as Battalion Chief. Both brothers were born and raised in New ark. They will not serve together, though, as Capt. Adams serves on the third tour in the fourth Battalion, while Battalion Chief Adams serves on the second tour in the Fifth Battalion.

"We always did everything together as kids, school, the Army, and as firefighters. Being firefighters was just something we wanted to do for a long time. Our goal was to come on the job together, get promoted together, and retire together and that is still our goal," said Capt. Adams. "We helped each other prepare. Raynard became a captain before me, so he showed me a lot of the material I needed to study, and worked diligently before the exam. I would evaluate his work and he would evaluate me. It took us three years, but it was well worth the wait." Capt. Adams noted that his lower rank is due to his taking time to gain a Bachelor's and Master's Degree from Jameson Christian College in Theological Studies.

Four officers of Portuguese descent were also promoted during the ceremony. Among them was Captain Jose C. Alves, who was born in Trasmontes, in Montelegre County, Portugal. He came to New ark at age nine and

has lived in New ark for the past 37 years. His 20-year-old son, Stephen, a Rutgers-New ark junior, is training to become a New ark firefighter.

“I’ve been w ith the Fire Department since 1996 and in this new leadership role, I look fow ard to providing mentorship and guidance to a great team of firefighters as we work together to keep New ark’s residents safe,” said Capt. Alves, w ho is assigned to Firehouse Engine 13, located in the North Ward.

Since 2006, the New ark Fire Department has opened new and renovated fire stations, and added new vehicles to its inventory. In 2008, the Department graduated the 39th Recruit Class of 18 recruits from the Fire Academy. In October 2009, the New ark Fire Department unveiled its new 41-foot-long Hazmat and Heavy Rescue truck w hich w ill provide firefighters w ith a w ide array of state-of-the-art equipment, including a 9,000-pound w inch, a 9,000-w att light tow er, a Robotic Search Camera to investigate disasters areas difficult to access, and extrication tools for car crashes.

Over the past four years the New ark Fire Department has also purchased three new fire engines; tw o ladder trucks, and several support and utility units, reducing the average age of its vehicles to close to 50 percent. The Department also saw a restructuring that led to a 67 percent reduction in overtime, as w ell as the creation of the region’s first Urban Search and Rescue Unit, as w ell as the employment of new technology, such as voice-amplified face pieces, a new CASCADE rehabilitation and tank filling apparatus, and a state-of-the-art Voice Alert System.

The New ark Fire Department also has a number of specialized units, including an Arson Unit, a Hazardous Materials Unit, a Fireboat, a Confined Space Rescue Team, a Foam Tanker, and a Cascade Unit, w hich responds to emergency scenes to fill air bottles. In addition, the Department is one of only nine in the State of New Jersey w hose Metro Strike Team has a Collapse Unit, to deal w ith collapsed buildings. Most of the Department’s specialized units are assigned for regional response, to assist neighboring communities that lack such equipment and training.

For information about any City of New ark program or policy, contact the Non-Emergency Call Center at **(973) 733-4311**.

-NEWARK-

Contact: New ark Press Information Office: **(973) 733-8004**
pressoffice@ci.newark.nj.us

About the City of Newark, New Jersey

New ark, commonly referred to as Brick City, is the third oldest city in the United States and the largest in New Jersey, w ith a population of more than 280,000 people. New ark sits on one of the nation’s largest transportation super-structures including an international airport, major rail connections, major highway intersections and the busiest seaport on the east coast.

With a new Administration as of July 2006, New ark continues to see signs of a strong revival. In population, it is one of the fastest grow ing cities in the northeast. Its six major colleges and universities are further expanding their presence. The production of affordable housing has doubled, businesses are returning and crime is going down. There is still much w ork to be done but New ark is on its way to achieving its mission: to set a national standard for urban transformation.

Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/cityofnewarknj

LIST OF NEWARK FIRE DEPARTMENT CANDIDATES FOR OATH OF OFFICE

Chief

John G. Centanni

Deputy Chief

Rufus Jackson
James Wendt
Michael Witte

Battalion Chief

Raynard Adams
 Damian J. Emerick
Jeffrey R. Burke
 Michael Kormash
Donald T. Cocchi
 *Raul Malave III
James Costa
 Michael Reed
Steven P. DeCeuster
 Daniel Snyder
Brian Donnelly
 William Weidele

Captain

Rayvon L. Adams
 Jose C. Alves
Rafael Aneses
 Barry J. Barbera
Anthony Barisciano
 John Brown
Gerrell A. Elliott
 Artur S. Evaristo
Kelton L. Hall
 Gregory Highsmith
Robert H. Holland
 James Kupko
Matthew Marciniak
 John P. Meixedo
Steve W. Ostertag
 Mark V. Piserchio
Michael K. Quinn
 Carlos A. Rivera
Imre B. Szigeti
 Daniel M. Yanuzzi



[SITE MAP](#) | [SECURITY AND PRIVACY POLICY](#)

© Copyright 2004-2009 City of Newark, NJ. All rights reserved.

920 Broad Street, Newark, NJ 07102 (973) 733-6400