

# Texas Fire Sprinkler Contractors Association

## Scholarship Application

Donald G. Bowman

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## **Fire Protection Contributions**

By:

Donald G. Bowman

After graduating high school I truly had no idea of what I was going to do with my life. I had always admired police officers and firefighters but did not understand what it took to become either. I spoke to some local firefighters in Dallas Texas who suggested I get some college under my belt before applying for a position. They also suggested taking a class to get an Emergency Medical Technician license, stating "it would make me look better when applying for a firefighter position". I began to take their advice but it didn't lead to becoming a firefighter. Instead, I ended up working for a private ambulance company in Dallas for four and a half years. During this time I also got married, obtained my Fire Inspector Certification, and earned an Associate of Science with Emphasis in Mathematics.

I spoke to several of my fire inspection instructors about different aspects of the fire industry. I was amazed when they told me of the vast employment options that existed in the world of fire. As the classes continued I learned about Fire Control Units, sprinkler systems, and fire codes just to name a few. Once I completed the class, I decided to follow in my instructors footsteps and peruse a Bachelor Degree in Fire Protection and Safety Technology from Oklahoma State University. It was not until this point that I began to truly identify the possibilities which lay ahead.

With three semesters left to go I have already accomplished quite a bit. At the end of my first semester I was selected for two internships. The first was with the Stillwater Fire Department. Working in a team setting, a group of interns including myself, worked diligently on producing Driver/Operator Standard Operating Guidelines which adhere to the most current NFPA guidelines and state regulations. While working on these guidelines I was selected by the Assistant Chief of Administration to produce a program which encompassed all the material covered in the 2008 NFPA 1851 standard. Additionally I worked with the Assistant Chief to produce standards related to NFPA 1852. Lastly, I took the initiative upon myself to help ease the Department of some financial burdens by researching what it would take to allow the Fire Department to accept interns who were awarded federal aid in the form of a Work Study. Although this has not yet come through it is being reviewed by OSU's legal counsel.

My second internship was with ConocoPhillips. I worked at the Sweeny Refinery in Old Ocean Texas as a Safety Intern. Because I had not yet been exposed to the safety aspect of the Fire Protection and Safety Degree this was a considerable learning experience. At ConocoPhillips, I worked alongside every member of the safety department and each person contributed a great amount to the learning experience I attained over the summer. I was able to participate in air monitoring, radiation controls and safety standard inspections. Additionally I was assigned to write Fire Pump testing procedures for all the firewater pumps that the Sweeny Refinery is responsible for maintaining. I also wrote procedures for conducting theoretical flow calculations and hydraulic gradient testing. To accompany each of these responsibilities I developed documentation records and an excel program which automatically calculates and records the gpm changes which occur when additional fire hydrants begin flowing.

Although ConocoPhillips has offered me a return internship for the summer of 2009, I have declined. I feel my current position as a student allows me to explore the job market and identify the kind of career I want. If I committed all of my summers to working for one company which is only able to utilize a couple of the aspects of my degree, then I will be limiting myself. Upon graduation I want to know I will be happy with my career choice. Taking internships with companies that are able to subject me to a broader working scope will allow me to make the most informed decision.

For the summer of 2009 I am looking forward to working for Rolf Jensen and Associates in their Dallas Texas office. Consulting seems to be the direction I will most likely head towards because it will offer the widest scope. The kind of atmosphere RJA offers is what I was looking for when I came to OSU. Eventually I will work for a company of this caliber and through them be able to contribute greatly to the fire protection industry.

The most influential factor in my decision to study fire protection is based on the fact that it gives me the opportunity to save lives through proactive measures. Firefighters save others by risking their own lives and for that they are heroes in my book. However, that is not the only way to save someone in a fire situation. Not only does a fire protection specialist have the opportunity to save the lives of people in a burning building they also have an opportunity to save the lives of the firefighters by reducing the need for them to enter the structures. I enjoy knowing that when my studies at Oklahoma State University are complete I will be afforded the opportunity to develop, design, and initiate new methods for controlling fire which will result in less risky situations for fire victims and firefighters. In the book "Principles of Fire Behavior" by James G. Quintiere, the author states that "roughly 1 in 700 people will die by fire in the United States over your lifetime." The main objective of my studies in fire protection is to make sure that this number is decreased dramatically by the end of my life. In this way, I will be saving lives and working towards the greater good.

# Donald G. Bowman

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## Summary

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- Experience in management
- Extensive experience with customer communication
- Ability to direct under hectic circumstances
- Capable of recognizing hazards and take action

## Education

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Bachelor of Science in Fire Protection and Safety Technology  
Oklahoma State University Stillwater, OK

Expected Dec 2010  
GPA: 3.30

Associate of Science with Emphasis in Mathematics  
Eastfield Community College Mesquite, TX

May 2007  
GPA: 3.33

## Experience

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**Fire Intern** Jan 2008 – Present  
Stillwater Fire Department Stillwater, OK

- Compose driver/operator standard operating guidelines
- Research and create standards compliant with NFPA 1851
- Create recording and filing practices for ensemble and SCBA inspections
- Incorporate Federal Work-Study Program into the Stillwater Fire Department intern hiring process

**Safety Intern** May 2008 – Aug 2008  
ConocoPhillips Sweeny Refinery Old Ocean, TX

- Developed firewater pump testing procedures
- Created theoretical firewater flow testing procedures
- Designed recording documentation for various aspects of the firewater system
- Standardized method of creating safety standards

**Customer Service Representative** July 2007 – May 2008  
Oklahoma State University Colvin Center Stillwater, OK

- Provided information related to a variety of recreation programs
- Assisted patrons with checking out athletic equipment
- Responsible for general maintenance of work and equipment areas

**EMT/Station Supervisor** Jan 2003 – July 2007  
Greater Dallas Emergency Medical Services Dallas, TX

- Provided company operational guidance to employees
- Presented monthly reviews of company standing
- Maintained detailed records on employees and patients
- Organized employee scheduling
- Handled employee discipline including termination
- Created confidential detailed patient care reports
- Participated in general maintenance and upkeep of station and equipment

## Certifications

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- Licensed Texas Emergency Medical Technician Basic Oct 2002 – Present
- Licensed Fire Inspector I June 2005 – Present

## Memberships

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- Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society (Member) 2005 – Present
- Sigma Kappa Delta National Honor Society (Member) 2006 – Present
- Oklahoma State University Fire Protection Society (Member) 2007 – Present
- American Society of Safety Engineers (CEAT Rep/Events Chairmen) 2008 – Present
- Society of Fire Protection Engineers (Member) 2008 – Present