

President Bob, Vice Presidents Bob and John, distinguished members of the board of directors and members of The Hudson Valley Firefighters Association. I have stood before this group on many occasions, as a Past Director and Past President of this Association, as a FASNY Trustee and Life Member and Past Chief of Lake George Fire Department. Today I stand as proud uncle. I am up here this time to nominate my niece, Jessica Benjerman, for the office secretary of this organization.

Jessice is the next generation of our family stepping to the plate to serve Hudson Valley. She joined the Lake George Fire Department in 2017. Our bylaws require a member to be at least 18 to join, but that is not where her volunteer service started. It began much earlier than that as a junior member of the auxiliary, as well as a junior member of the fire company at the age of 16. But even then, her volunteer service to the community began earlier than that. Jessica, like many members of our family, grew up with public service as part of our family creed. Jesse has volunteered her services, time and talents in many areas of the Lake George community.

Once Jessica had completed basic firefighter, she was eligible to request her gear number changed and ask the membership to issue her grandfather's number. She's very proud of her upbringing and the community values that were instilled in the entire family. The tradition of retiring a number after a member passes away is a fire service tradition that runs deep with Lake George. A number can only be reissued to descendants of the family and Jessica proudly displays 38 on her gear. With my dad's number on her helmet, it is a constant reminder to serve with honor and integrity.

Jessica's volunteer service extends beyond the fire service as she has served as an acolyte with the Saint James Episcopal Church; she served as a volunteer with local youth groups and has been instrumental in many areas of the community to continue to make Lake George a better place to live and grow. Jessica is employed as an aid in the Lake George School District where she works with a handicapped student. Her job is to do what she can to allow this student to learn and enjoy a normal day at school. She has served in many offices and committees with the Lake George Fire Company and currently is serving as Warren County Vice President for the Valley.

Jess' organizational skills and attention to detail are second to none and She has been instrumental in organizing last year's convention which was run by the association, and again with this year's convention, hosted by the Lake George Fire Company. For these, and many other reasons, I am proud to stand before you and nominate another member of the McKinney blood line to serve this great association.

Thank you,

Thomas McKinney