

Volunteer firefighters have protected the Estes Valley since 1907. This [#EstesValleyFirefighter](#) series will introduce you to the unique individuals who keep that tradition alive, celebrating their contributions to our fire department and the role they play in our Estes community.

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William Harkins moved to Estes Park the summer of the Woodland Heights fire and couldn't do anything to help while the fire ravaged the West side of Estes Park despite the experience he brought with him. He filled out an application for the EPVFD the next day. Last month, FF Harkins taught wildland firefighting skills to the entire department, and is a great example of how our members use challenges to grow and share with others.

William earned the Firefighter of the Year in 2016, recognizing his hard work learning new skills and sharing what he had learned with others. Before arriving in Estes Park, he worked on dispatch system development and disaster relief, as well as a wildland squad boss fighting fires across the US. Now, he owns a home in our community and just started a new business development company.

He enjoys teaching others in areas like business skills, wildland and structure firefighting, CPR, AED, first aid, even boxing and kickboxing. He is well rounded with diverse interests which have enriched his own character and may explain why he describes these personal benefits of volunteering with the EVFPD: duty, respect and integrity.

It's no surprise that William's spare time interests include white water rafting and camping, business management, hiking (Mount Everest) and spelunking (upstate New York). With all of his family back in their hometown of Albany, NY, William is developing new family bonds among his community and fire district peers. One of his long-term goals is to "foster a culture of change and growth" in the world. The District and the community benefit from William's interests and willingness to share.

