



## Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON  
3400 – 30 Street  
Vernon, BC  
V1T 5E6

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MEDIA CONTACT: Carolyn Baldrige, Manager, Communications & Grants

TELEPHONE: 250-550-3539

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### Sparking Interest in a Firefighting Career

Sparking an interest in a future in fire services was the focus at Fire Station 1 on Wednesday, as a group of female students from School District 22 (Vernon) got a firsthand look at what it's like to work as a firefighter.

The hands-on training was led by long-time Vernon Fire Rescue Services (VFRS) member, Lieutenant Allyson Reich, who touched on all aspects of the firefighting profession.

"I am so excited to share my love of the fire service with the students here today," said Lt. Reich. "It takes a lot of courage to step outside their comfort zone. My hope for today, is that this experience helps them gain the confidence to pursue their goals and discover what ignites their souls."

During the day-long event, the students learned about specific elements of the job, such as first medical response, HAZMAT, auto extrication, confined space, over-the-bank rope rescue, structural firefighting, urban interface forest firefighting, public education, fire inspection, and fire investigation.

Students also spent time performing firefighting tasks, such as donning/doffing Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), putting on turnout gear, experiencing an elevated waterway in the aerial ladder, and an auto extrication experience.

"A couple of years ago a forest fire in Vernon really encouraged me to look into a career as a firefighter," says Grade 10 student Allie Westhaver. "I am interested in career that would be enable to me to help my community."

The students were selected for the day of training after expressing interest in a career in fire services through a written essay.

"School District 22 is excited to collaborate with the Vernon Fire Department again this year to host "Female Firefighter for a Day", said Corinne McWhinney, Principal of Career Programs,

vLearn & Academies. “This is a fantastic opportunity for students in our district to gain hands on experience in the world of firefighting. This program aims to introduce females to a profession where they are traditionally underrepresented. We are very thankful for Lt. Allyson Reich and her passion to make this event happen. She has proven to be an inspiration and positive role model for our SD22 students.”

This is the third year VFRS has hosted the Female Firefighter for a Day training event. Lt. Reich is a 19-year veteran of VFRS and Vernon's first female professional firefighter.

“I am so grateful for the support of Local 1517, Vernon Fire Rescue Services, the City of Vernon and School district 22 for making today possible,” said Lt. Reich.



*Photo above: Female students from SD22 pose with Lt. Allyson Reich during a day of training with Vernon Fire Rescue Services.*