

October 7-8, 2017



# BELLS ACROSS AMERICA for Fallen Firefighters

2017 RESOURCE GUIDE

## OVERVIEW

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) is pleased to offer this online resource guide to help you plan and market your participation in Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters, October 7 - 8, 2017. This guide contains ideas, messages, artwork, and more to help organize and promote an event in your community.

The National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend, the official national tribute sponsored by the Foundation, honors all firefighters who died in the line of duty during the previous year. Thousands attend the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend in Emmitsburg, Maryland and watch the services online. Many more volunteer to help us honor these firefighters and their families.

Bells will ring from coast to coast as a grateful nation pauses on Sunday, October 8, 2017 to honor those firefighters who died in the line of duty in 2016 and previous years. Fire departments, places of worship, and other community organizations will join the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) again for Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters, October 7 - 8, 2017. We invite you to take part in this national tribute by holding your own local Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters event.



## TOLLING OF THE BELL

Long before there were telephones and radios in use in America, fire departments utilized the telegraph to receive fire alarms from those once-familiar red fire alarm boxes which stood on practically every street corner of our Nation's cities.

When a firefighter fell in the line of duty, the Fire Alarm Office, the forerunner of today's computerized Fire Communications Centers, would "tap out" a special signal, "Five-Five-Five" over the telegraph fire alarm circuits which went to all station houses.

Done for the purpose of notification, and as a sign of honor and respect, such symbolism has been a long-honored fire service tradition which still continues in some cities today.

We utilize these traditions as symbols of honor and respect for those who have given so much and served so well. And so, for those who have selflessly devoted their lives for the good of their communities and fellow citizens, the bell tolls their last alarm, for they have gone home.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What time should the bells ring?**

Bells can be rung at any time of the day. The bells at the Memorial Chapel will ring at approximately 10 am (EST) to begin the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service. Different time zones, timing of local services and other factors play a role so you and your organization should decide what is best for your group.

### **Is there a program or script that we need to follow?**

Work with your organization to decide what is best. Some suggested service ideas could include: a moment of silence, a brief prayer, a hymn, a bell toll by members of the fire department, or any combination of these.

### **My organization doesn't have bells. What can we do instead?**

You can still have a moment of silence, prayer, song or other form of remembrance during your event. You can also ring a ceremonial bell during the service if you have one. Work with your organization to decide what's right for your event.

### **My church has multiple services on Sundays and can't ring the bells at each one. Can we just ring the bells once?**

Absolutely. You may want to have a moment of remembrance at each service and inform the congregants that the bells will ring in honor of the fallen firefighters at a certain time. Work with your clergy to decide what is best.

### **Do we have to ring the bells a certain number of times?**

You can ring the bells in any manner.

### **I'm not affiliated with a fire department, can I still organize an event?**

Yes, we want as many people as possible to show their respect for the nation's fallen firefighters and their survivors. We invite fire departments, religious organizations, community groups, scouting groups, fraternal organizations, civic associations, and high school, college and recreational sports teams.

# PLAN YOUR EVENT



## 1. Plan Your Event

Reach out to your place of worship, local fire department(s), or any community groups that you are involved in to organize a tribute for fallen firefighters. You may also want to add a special tribute to an existing event such as a sporting event, performance, or other local event.

## 2. Sign Up to Participate

We want to recognize your participation on our website, visit [www.firehero.org/bells-signup](http://www.firehero.org/bells-signup) to share your event with the NFFF. Your event will be listed on our website and pinned on our special Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters map.

## 3. Promote Your Event

Once you have planned your event, invite family, friends, and neighbors using social media, email, newsletters, and list-serves.

## 4. Hold Your Event

A remembrance can occur at any time between October 2 – 8, 2017 leading up to the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend.

## 5. Share Your Story

The NFFF would like to feature examples of events to show our families how their loved ones were honored. We would also like to give future participants ideas to plan an event in their community. Email us at [bells@firehero.org](mailto:bells@firehero.org) and/or share with [#bellsforfirefighters2017](https://twitter.com/bellsforfirefighters2017)

# MEDIA ADVISORY TEMPLATE

Customize the media advisory template and distribute to local media to raise awareness and generate participation in your event.

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact: Your Media Contact Information**

**\*\*\* Media Alert \*\*\***

**Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters**

**Event to Take Place at YOUR LOCATION**

**National remembrance honors firefighters who died in the line of duty**

**Who:** [List names of officials/dignitaries attending your event]

**What:** [Provide a brief description of the event. (e.g. YOUR ORGANIZATION joins the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and other organizations in Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters, part of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend. )

**When:** [Event date and time]

**Where:** [Event address]

**Why:** Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters is a nationwide tribute to firefighters who died in the line of duty.

# PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact: Your Media Contact Information**

## Join a Nationwide Tribute for Fallen Firefighters

### *Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters Part of National Memorial Service*

**CITY, STATE** – Since the early days of the fire service, bells have been used as a way to summon firefighters to a station, communicate the type of emergency or announce the end of a shift. When a firefighter died in the line of duty, a special sequence of five bells was tapped. The tolling of bells is still a tradition to honor the fallen during funerals and memorial services for firefighters. You can be part of a national tradition to honor the memories of firefighters who died in the line of duty and show your support for their survivors. Join the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) in Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters. This poignant tribute is part of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend, October 7-8, in Emmitsburg, MD. The moment of remembrance will occur at **DATE, TIME, and LOCATION**.

**SAMPLE QUOTE:** “Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters is a unique, grass-roots opportunity for a community to pay their respects to these brave men and women,” said **NAME**. “It is also a very meaningful way to show the survivors of the fallen that their loved ones will not be forgotten.”

More than 6,000 people, including Members of Congress, Administration officials and other dignitaries, members of the fire service, and families and friends of the fallen firefighters will attend the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service. Families will receive flags flown over the U. S. Capitol and the National Memorial. Members of the fire service, pipes and drums, and honor guard units from across the U.S. will participate in this national tribute.

A complete list of fallen firefighters being honored and a widget to display their information on your website, along with Memorial Weekend related videos, photos, media and broadcast information is available at [weekend.firehero.org](http://weekend.firehero.org).

###

# SAMPLE LETTER TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Dear Friend of the Fire Service,

The **YOUR ORGANIZATION** and our nation's firefighters need your support.

Every October, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) sponsors the official national tribute to all firefighters who died in the line of duty during the previous year. The survivors of the fallen and thousands of fire service members gather for the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend in Emmitsburg, Maryland to honor the lives and sacrifices of these heroes.

It is a time-honored tradition to ring bells during funerals and memorial services for firefighters. In keeping with this custom, the bells of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel will ring at the beginning of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service on Sunday, October 8, 2017, in tribute to the fallen heroes.

Your local fire department and the NFFF invite you to be part of this national remembrance by participating in the Fifth Annual Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters. Your participation can occur at any time during the weekend of October 7 – 8. We encourage you to work with the **YOUR ORGANIZATION** to create a tribute that is appropriate for your organization, such as tolling a ceremonial bell by members of the department during your gathering, a moment of silence, a brief prayer or a song.

Please join us and hundreds of other fire departments and community organizations in this tradition that honors the memories of the fallen and reassures the survivors that their loved ones will never be forgotten. To learn more visit [www.BellsAcrossAmerica.com](http://www.BellsAcrossAmerica.com).

Sincerely,

**YOUR ORGANIZATION**

## SAMPLE LETTER TO RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Dear Clergy Member,

**YOUR ORGANIZATION** and our nation's firefighters need your prayers.

Every October, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) sponsors the official national tribute to all firefighters who died in the line of duty during the previous year. The survivors of the fallen and thousands of fire service members gather for the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend in Emmitsburg, Maryland to honor the lives and sacrifices of these heroes.

It is a time-honored tradition to ring bells during funerals and memorial services for firefighters. In keeping with this custom, the bells of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel will ring at the beginning of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service on Sunday, October 8, 2017, in tribute to the fallen heroes.

Your local fire department and the NFFF invite you to be part of this national remembrance by participating in the Third Annual Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters. Your participation can occur at any time during the weekend October 7 - 8. We encourage you to work with a representative from your fire department to create a tribute that is appropriate for your congregation. Some examples include: ringing chapel bells, a moment of silence, a brief prayer, a hymn, or tolling a ceremonial bell by members of the fire department during your service.

Please join us and hundreds of other fire departments and community organizations in this tradition that honors the memories of the fallen and reassures the survivors that their loved ones will never be forgotten. To learn more visit [www.BellsAcrossAmerica.com](http://www.BellsAcrossAmerica.com).

Sincerely,

**YOUR ORGANIZATION**

## SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

Whereas, the United States Congress and the President of the United States have designated the day of the annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service as a day to honor firefighters and emergency services personnel who have sacrificed their lives to save others by lowering the American flag on all federal buildings to half-staff; and Whereas, an average of 100 firefighters courageously make the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty each year; and

Whereas, the events of September 11, 2001, brought national attention to the duties, responsibilities, hazards, and sacrifices faced by fire and emergency services personnel on a daily basis; and

Whereas, firefighters and emergency services personnel play an essential role in the protection of lives and property in our local community; and

Whereas, the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service marks the beginning of the annual Fire Prevention Week observance; and

Whereas, it is of major importance that we increase our efforts to reduce deaths, injuries, and property losses from fire;

Therefore, I **(title)** of the **(municipality)**, now call upon all citizens of the **(municipality)** and upon all patriotic, civic, and educational organizations to observe the day of October 8, 2017, in recognition of the patriotic service and dedicated efforts of our fire and emergency services personnel by lowering American flags on all buildings to half-staff. I encourage appropriate services and ceremonies in which all of our citizens may participate to honor fire and emergency services personnel, past and present, who, by their faithful and loyal devotion to duties, have rendered invaluable service to our community and its citizens.

I further call upon citizens of the **(municipality)** to remember all fire and emergency personnel who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their community and to pay respect to the survivors of our fallen heroes.

**(A section on Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters activities could be inserted here.)**

In witness thereof, I have hereto set my hand and caused the Seal of the **(municipality)** to be affixed.

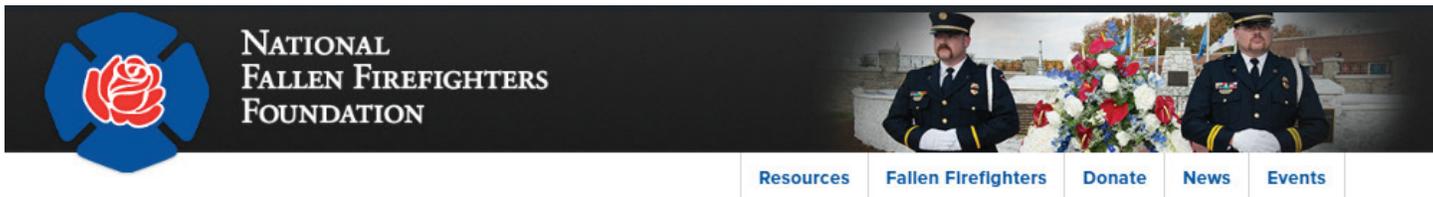
## SAMPLE SCRIPT FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS

Tomorrow, the names of 75 firefighters who died in the line of duty in 2016 and 20 who died in previous years will be added to the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial during the annual memorial service in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

We are proud to take part in the tribute ***Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters***. We ask you to pause for a moment to reflect on the great sacrifice of these brave firefighters and to think about their loved ones.

**[PAUSE FOR 5 SECONDS]**

# EVENT PRINT AND DIGITAL GRAPHICS



[Resources](#) [Fallen Firefighters](#) [Donate](#) [News](#) [Events](#)

## PROGRAM RESOURCES

### Frequently Asked Questions

» [Find Out More About Conducting Your Own Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters Event](#) «

### Downloadable Resources

[2017 Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters Flyer](#)

[2017 Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters Website & Social Media Graphics](#)



#### ABOUT THE MEMORIAL WEEKEND

- 2017 Roll of Honor
- Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters
  - [Program Resources](#)
    - [Bells Across America Flyer](#)
    - [2017 Bells Across America Graphics](#)
    - [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
  - [Watch Bells Across America Video](#)
  - [Sign Up to Show Your Support](#)
- Remembrance Books

#### ATTENDING MEMORIAL WEEKEND

#### CONGRESSIONAL FLAG CEREMONY

#### THURSDAY EVENTS

#### FRIDAY EVENTS

#### SATURDAY EVENTS

#### SUNDAY EVENTS

### Support NFFF

[MAKE A DONATION ▶](#)

[BECOME A SPONSOR ▶](#)

[SHOP TO SUPPORT NFFF ▶](#)

[BUY A WALK OF HONOR™ BRICK ▶](#)

# Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters Website & Social Media Graphics

For all Graphics visit [www.BellsAcrossAmerica.com](http://www.BellsAcrossAmerica.com)

## SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGE SAMPLES

Have you contacted your local clergy about Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters? The bells at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Chapel will ring on Sunday, October 8 to honor those who died in the line of duty. Your department, place of worship or community group can be part of this special moment, too. Go to [www.bellsacrossamerica.com](http://www.bellsacrossamerica.com) for more information.

Invite your place of worship to be part of Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters. Go to [www.bellsacrossamerica.com](http://www.bellsacrossamerica.com) for more information.

Honor your fire service brothers and sisters who made the ultimate sacrifice. Invite your places of worship and other organizations to join the NFFF for Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters on Sunday, October 8. Go to [www.bellsacrossamerica.com](http://www.bellsacrossamerica.com)

Find the invitation letter to clergy members and community organizations for Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters at [www.bellsacrossamerica.com](http://www.bellsacrossamerica.com).

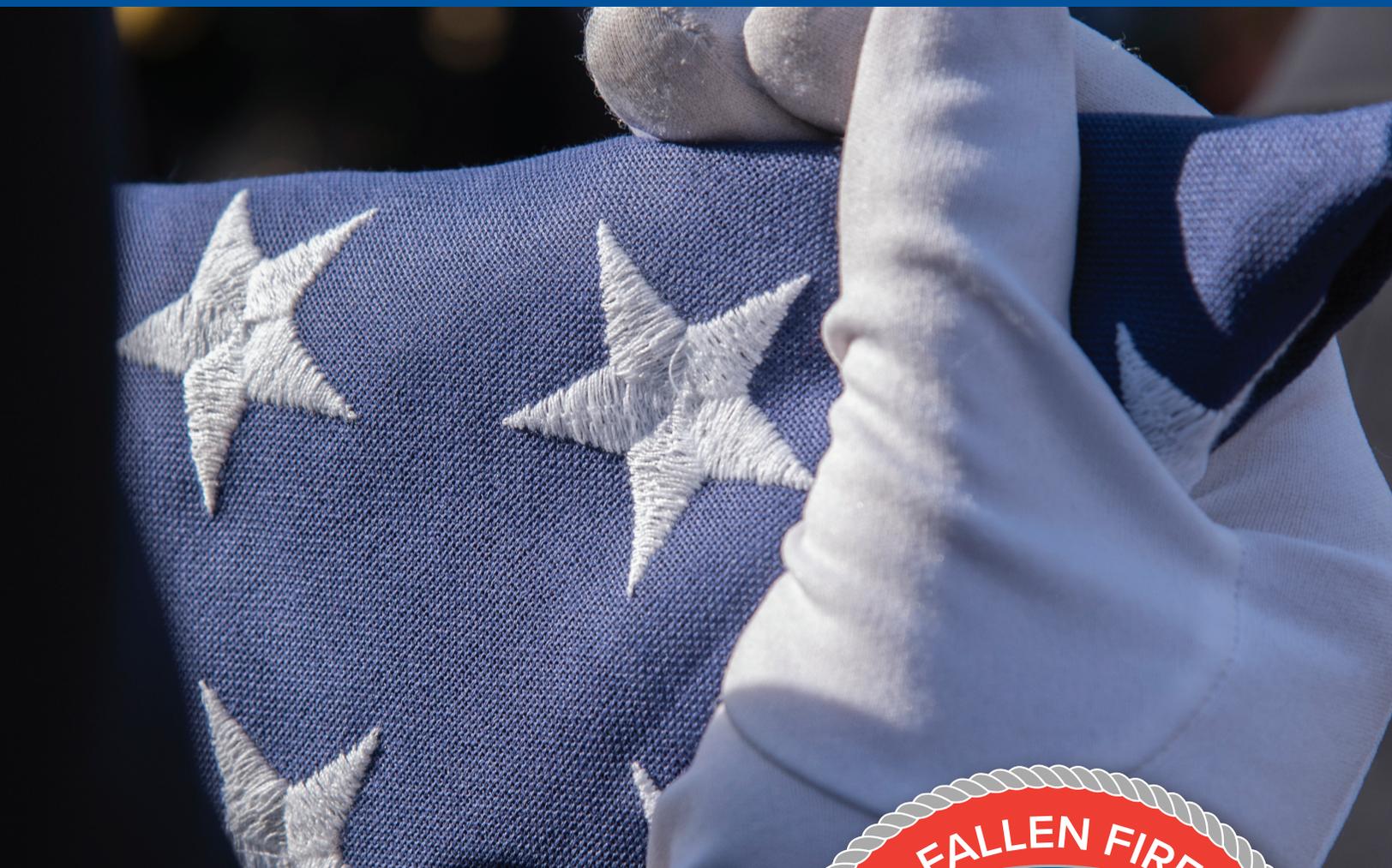
See a map of fire departments, places of worship and community groups who are participating in Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters. Go to [www.bellsacrossamerica.com](http://www.bellsacrossamerica.com).

Bells will ring nationwide on Sunday, October 8 to honor all fallen firefighters. You can be part of this remembrance. Go to [www.bellsacrossamerica.com](http://www.bellsacrossamerica.com) for information.

Communities from coast to coast will pause on Sunday, October 8 to honor our fallen heroes. Invite your local places of worship and other community groups to be part of this national remembrance. Go to [www.bellsacrossamerica.com](http://www.bellsacrossamerica.com) for more information.

For the seventh year, Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters will honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving their communities. Be part of this special remembrance. Go to [www.bellsacrossamerica.com](http://www.bellsacrossamerica.com) for information.

## MEMORIAL WEEKEND RESOURCES



### 2017 Roll of Honor

Visit our [2017 Roll of Honor online](http://www.firehero.org/fallen-firefighters) to read about the firefighters being honored this year. Profiles include a photo and biography of loved ones of each fallen firefighter. To learn more about all the fallen firefighters included in the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial visit the Roll of Honor at: [www.firehero.org/fallen-firefighters](http://www.firehero.org/fallen-firefighters).



## MEMORIAL WEEKEND RESOURCES

Each October, the Foundation sponsors the official national tribute to all firefighters who died in the line of duty during the previous year. Thousands attend the weekend activities held at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend features special programs for survivors and coworkers along with poignant public ceremonies. Learn more at: [weekend.firehero.org](http://weekend.firehero.org).

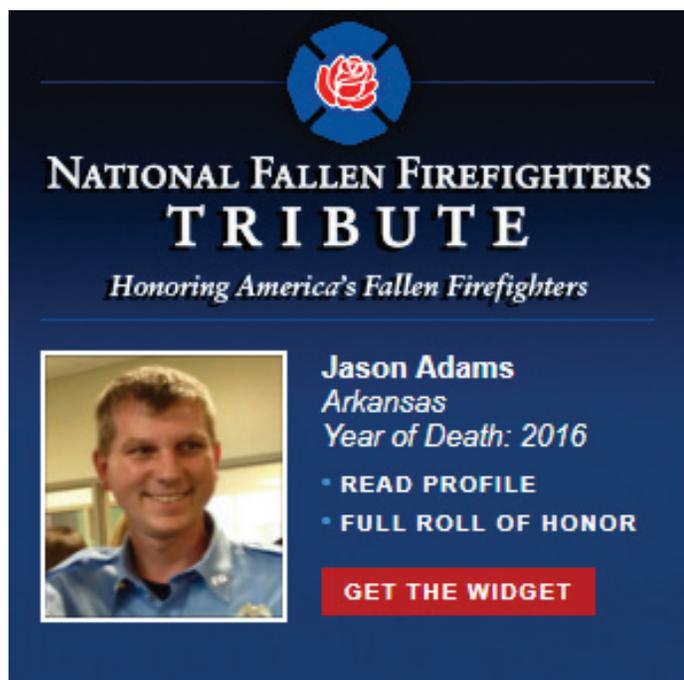
### Sign the Virtual Remembrance Banner

The Remembrance Banner is a Memorial Weekend tradition. On this virtual Remembrance Banner page you can pay tribute to a fallen firefighter or share a Memorial Weekend story.

Sign the remembrance banner at: [www.firehero.org/remembrance-banner/](http://www.firehero.org/remembrance-banner/).

### Watch or Show the Candlelight and Memorial Services Live

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation will provide live satellite broadcasts and web streaming of both the Candlelight Service and the Memorial Service. You can watch both services live on our website or find instructions to embed the video to play on your website at [live.firehero.org](http://live.firehero.org).



The image shows a screenshot of a website widget for the National Fallen Firefighters Tribute. At the top is a red Maltese cross logo with a white rose in the center. Below the logo, the text reads "NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS TRIBUTE" in large, bold, white letters, followed by "Honoring America's Fallen Firefighters" in a smaller, italicized font. On the left is a portrait of Jason Adams, a man in a blue uniform. To the right of the portrait, the text identifies him as "Jason Adams, Arkansas, Year of Death: 2016". Below this are two links: "READ PROFILE" and "FULL ROLL OF HONOR". At the bottom right is a red button with the text "GET THE WIDGET" in white.

### Watch a Forever in Our Hearts® Hero Tribute

During the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend, survivor families have a chance to record a Fire Hero Tribute video to share memories of their firefighter. You can remember these firefighters by watching their story. Visit

[www.firehero.org/hero-tribute/](http://www.firehero.org/hero-tribute/)

### Feature Heroes on Your Website

Help us honor America's firefighters who have died in the line of duty. You can pay tribute on your website by including the National Fallen Firefighters Tribute Widget. Learn more at:

[www.firehero.org/widget/](http://www.firehero.org/widget/).



**NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION**

[WWW.FIREHERO.ORG](http://WWW.FIREHERO.ORG)

**EMMITSBURG**

PO DRAWER 498  
EMMITSBURG, MD 21727  
301-447-1365  
301-447-1645 (FAX)

**CROFTON**

2130 PRIEST BRIDGE DRIVE, SUITE 6  
CROFTON, MD 21114  
410-721-6212  
410-721-6213 (FAX)