

City fire academy receives beam from World Trade Center

Segment to become part of permanent memorial, reminder of risks faced



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By Liz F. Kay, The Baltimore Sun
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City and fire officials unveiled a poignant piece of American history on Sunday which will remind students at Baltimore's fire training academy of the commitments they make in the line of duty.

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Delivered to Maryland Saturday by the FDNY Fire Family Support Foundation, the beam was escorted by more than 75 N.Y.C. Fire Riders, said Don Maher, the group's president. It represents the risks that firefighters take every time they respond to a call, Maher said.

"They see this piece of steel and realize what they all go through," said Maher, a retired firefighter. "It kind of brings strength to everybody who sees it."

The beam will be on display in the Baltimore training center auditorium in time for graduation in August, in an area already dedicated to honoring firefighters who died in the 2001 attacks, said Deputy Chief Lloyd R. Carter.

"It gives the place real reverence," he said.

As part of the Iron and Steel Run from New York to Baltimore, the New York riders met about 40 members of the BCFD Riders Group in Delaware, who then led the procession, said Vernon Odle, president and founder of the Baltimore motorcycle group.

"The steel represents the 343 firefighters killed on that terrible day," Odle, a firefighter for 24 years, said. "To have us escort that steel honors not only Baltimore City firefighters but all firefighters nationwide."

Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake said the beam at the fire academy was a "fitting tribute".

New York firefighters "ran up the stairs as others were running for safety," she said. Firefighters

everywhere are asked to make the same sacrifices, she said.

The 9/11 Memorial of Maryland, scheduled to open in the Inner Harbor on the 10th anniversary of the attacks, will include artifacts from the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and Shanksville, Pa.

The \$2 million memorial will honor the 63 people from Maryland who died as a result.