



Humboldt Bay Fire News Release

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May 28, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject : HBF to Swear in New Dive Team

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Humboldt County has been without a formal dive rescue team since the 1990's. Since then, many volunteer divers have used their time, equipment, and expertise to help fill that void, assuming their own risk and associated liability.

After the unfortunate death of 19-year-old kayaker Nick Brunner in Trinidad, CA in June of 2020, where volunteer divers found and returned Nick's body to his family, the recognition of need for a formal team became undeniably apparent. Nick's family reached out to the divers who recovered him and asked that any donations in Nick's name go toward the creation of a dive team for Humboldt County.

An informal group formed and began to develop a concept, initially fighting barriers of logistic and financial support. After finding a home in Humboldt Bay Fire and support from HBF Chief Sean Robertson and Humboldt State University, the team reached out to the National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI), who have a nationally-recognized public safety diver training program. The dive team members will attend a NAUI training in August, honing their skills in areas such as searches, body recovery, evidence recovery and documentation, etc. as they relate to emergency calls for service.

The dive team will be supported by Humboldt Bay Fire as a special volunteer program, and be staffed by volunteer members who will use their personal equipment. The initial six volunteers are local, professional divers giving their time to provide this essential service for Humboldt County.

Humboldt Bay Fire will be hosting a swearing-in ceremony for the members of the Dive Team this Thursday, June 3rd at 4pm. Physical attendance to the ceremony will be invitation-limited, and we invite the public to view the ceremony live on Facebook @HumboldtBayFire and shortly thereafter on our YouTube Channel.

After the team members have been sworn in, they will go through their remaining formal training in August with plans to be fully operational in Fall 2021.

Ongoing donations to the volunteer dive team can be made to: <https://gofund.me/e3493e13> or to Coast Central Account number 354141 "Humboldt Dive Team." Donations will be used to fund equipment and training for volunteer dive members.

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