

KAHNAWAKE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY PROTECTION HONOURED

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Terry Diabo, Director of Community Protection for the Mohawk of Kahnawake Territory, is Canada's Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year. His award was announced last evening during the closing ceremonies at the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs' annual conference held in Niagara Falls, Ontario. Kahnawake is located off the Island of Montreal in close proximity to the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Director Diabo joined the Kahnawake Fire Brigade in 1971 and became Chief in 1980. He was promoted to Director of Operations in 1993 and held that position until becoming Director of Community Protection in 2006. The Brigade is comprised of 32 members, 50 per cent of whom are trained to provide emergency medical services as well.

The Kahnawake Fire Brigade operates from a Native philosophy based on a responsibility and desire to help, respect for every person, concern for community and an appreciation of Mohawk spiritual values.

Director Diabo's record of accomplishment has already been recognized. He was the first President of the Aboriginal Fire Fighters Association of Canada, a position that he held for 10 years and recently became a founding member of the Quebec Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators.

CAFC's Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year has become an international beacon for good will for the Fire Services of both Canada and the U.S.A., being invited annually to speak at the Junior Fire Cadet Program of Vermont's Fire & Police Academy.

Ontario Fire Marshal Patrick Burke is President of the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs. In congratulating Director Diabo, he stressed "the crucial role the volunteer fire services play as the front-line responders for local emergencies, particularly in rural or remote parts of Canada."

The volunteer fire service in Canada is comprised of 3,200 fire departments and 84,000 volunteer firefighters and their officers. They comprise 91 per cent of all departments and 77 per cent of total personnel.

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