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Youth fire science program to host first graduation ceremony

OMAHA, Neb. — The Junior Firefighter Cadet Program will host its first graduation and second induction ceremony at the Howard Kennedy Elementary School on Wednesday, Sept. 30, at 5:30 p.m. The program is a partnership between the D.R.E.A.M. afterschool program at Howard Kennedy Elementary School, the Omaha Fire Department, and the EMS and fire science programs at Metropolitan Community College.

Omaha Fire Department chief Bernie Kanger and battalion chief Tim McCaw and other members from participating organizations will present the cadets with rank badges, certificates and recognition for their hard work at the ceremony. New cadets will also be presented with a badge indicating their new involvement in the program.

“The graduation ceremony is an opportunity to showcase the students’ hard work and great teamwork they displayed throughout their first year,” said McCaw. “We hope it has given them some interest in the public service field and allowed them to have some fun along the way.”

“The program has been a perfect addition to our programming at Howard Kennedy Elementary School because it teaches students to work together and help the community,” said Raymone Sazone, site director for the D.R.E.A.M. after-school mentoring program at Howard Kennedy Elementary School.

In its first year, the Junior Firefighter Cadet Program is meant to give students an opportunity to learn about fire science and EMS fields while being part of a group. Additionally, the program aims to give young students a clear pathway from 4th grade through college through various fire science and EMS initiatives. The students engage in fire department operations, fire safety, discipline, physical fitness, citizenship, volunteerism and career planning.

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Metropolitan Community College, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, is a comprehensive, public community college that offers affordable, quality education to all

residents of Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy and Washington counties. Founded in 1974, MCC has the largest enrollment out of six community colleges in Nebraska and is the second largest postsecondary institution in the state. MCC serves more than 40,000 unique credit and noncredit students.