



MEMORANDUM

TO: Hon. Mayor and Board of Commissioners
THROUGH: Clint Belk, Acting City Manager
FROM: John Mortellite, Acting Fire Chief
DATE: 2/04/2026
RE: Firefighter of the Year, Firefighter/Paramedic Joseph Calderaro

Background

The Madeira Beach Fire Department is proud to recognize Firefighter/Paramedic Joseph Calderaro as the 2026 Firefighter of the Year, honoring his dedication, significant growth, and unwavering commitment to the community he serves.

FF Calderaro began his career with the Madeira Beach Fire Department in February 2024 as a Firefighter/EMT. In his early months, he faced several challenges common to new firefighters. However, through renewed focus, a positive attitude, and a relentless work ethic, Joey demonstrated remarkable improvement. His rapid progress and commitment to bettering himself have earned him the respect of his peers and the confidence of the department's leadership.

Within his first year of service, FF Calderaro encountered two major hurricanes—Helene and Milton—which severely impacted the barrier island communities. Heavy flooding, multiple structure fires, and debris-filled roadways created dangerous and demanding conditions. During these extended operations with limited rest, Joey's strong work ethic and determination stood out. His firefighting skills were tested and continued to improve under pressure. In the summer of 2025, he completed paramedic school and is actively pursuing full county certification to function as a stand-alone paramedic. His pursuit of advanced training reflects both personal drive and a steadfast commitment to readiness, teamwork, and professional excellence.

FF Calderaro also distinguished himself during a major water rescue involving two pediatric patients following a severe jet-ski accident. Through quick decision-making, effective teamwork, and strong medical care, he played a critical role in the successful rescue and stabilization of both children. He and the responding crew members were formally recognized for their lifesaving efforts—an honor he accepted with humility.

His dedication, growth, and commitment to service exemplify the values of our department and reinforce the importance of our mission.

Revised – December 27, 2018



It is with great respect and appreciation that the Madeira Beach Fire Department congratulates Firefighter/Paramedic Joseph Calderaro on being named the 2026 Firefighter of the Year.

Fiscal Impact

Recommendation

Attachment(s):

Revised – December 27, 2018

