

*The International Association of  
Black Professional Fire Fighters, Inc.*

**ORGANIZED:**

Organized in Hartford, Connecticut, October 3, 1970

**FOUNDING ORGANIZATIONS:**

Vulcan Society, Inc., New York, NY  
Phoenix Society Inc., Hartford, Connecticut  
Vulcan Pioneers of New Jersey Inc., Newark, NJ  
Vulcan Pioneers of Hudson County Inc., Jersey City, NJ  
Valiants Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

The IABPFF has 180 Chapters and represents approximately 8,000 fire service professionals.

**CONVENTION SITES:**

1970 – Hartford, Connecticut  
1972 – St. Louis, Missouri  
1974 – Atlanta, Georgia  
1976 – San Diego, California  
1978 – Washington, DC  
1980 – Detroit, Michigan  
1982 – Lexington, Kentucky  
1984 – Seattle, Washington  
1986 – Buffalo, New York  
1988 – San Francisco, California  
1990 – Miami, Florida  
1992 – Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
1994 – New Orleans, Louisiana  
1996 – Chicago, Illinois  
1998 – Seattle Washington  
2000 – Barbados, West Indies  
2002 – Buffalo, New York  
2004 – Los Angeles, CA  
2006 – Fort Lauderdale, Florida  
2008 – Detroit, Michigan

**ABSTRACT AS PRESENTED TO NATIONAL FIRE  
PREVENTION AND ADMINISTRATON**

In September of 1969, black and minority fire fighters of all ranks from municipalities across the United States met in New York City for two days of discussion on the injustices that exist in the following categories: The recruitment of black youth into the fire service, firefighters-community relations with special emphasis on relations with the residents of neighborhoods inhabited by black, inter-group relations and practices in fire departments, and the need to improve fire prevention programs in the areas of greatest need, the inner city ghettos which are inhabited by our most disadvantaged, neglected and exploited citizens. The meeting was very productive and out of it was born the International Association of Black Professional Fire Fighters.

In October of 1970, the first convention of Black Professional Fire Fighters was held in Hartford, Connecticut. The constitution and the proposed structure of the International Association of Black Professional Fire Fighters were adopted.

The IABPFF is not to be looked upon as a black separatist organization and its chapters are autonomous. Since many unions, locals and city governments failed to institute an affirmative action plan in the testing, recruiting and promotional process areas, it is therefore incumbent upon organized minority fire fighters to press for wide scale reforms. And in the course of dealing with these problems, we expect to reduce the number of fire deaths and property loss in our respective communities as well as to reduce the high rate of false fire alarms. We are convinced that the black community has an abundance of untapped talent to offer the fire service. Conversely, we expect to improve the economic development and employment opportunities for minorities.

As black fire fighters, it is our challenge to make the fire service more relevant to the needs and aspirations of minority citizens. The IABPFF will insist that black and minority fire department officials become full partners in the leadership and decision making arenas of the fire service.

**PREAMBLE**

Whereas we, Black Fire Fighters, aware of the increasing complexity of our problems and those of our Brothers and Sisters within the community, feel called upon to form an organization for the purpose of studying and solving such problems in order to take our place in the vanguard of civilization. We hereby form ourselves into an organization for the purpose of cultivating and maintaining professional competence among fire fighters, and establishment of unity and brotherhood, also keeping alive the interest among retired members for the avowed purpose of improving the social status of our RACE, and increasing professional efficiency.

**PURPOSE & AIMS**

To create a liaison between our Black Brothers and Sisters, to collect and evaluate data on all deleterious conditions incumbent in all areas where minorities exist, and to compile information concerning the injustices that exist in the working conditions in the Fire Service, and implement action to correct them.

To promote interracial progress throughout the Fire Service, and to see that competent Blacks are recruited and employed as fire fighters, wherever they reside, and to aid in motivating our Black Brothers and Sisters to seek advancement to elevated ranks throughout the Fire Service.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The members of the INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS shall comprise those who are paid professional fire fighters in a Black Fire Fighting Organization, and that organization is a member of the INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS.

This organization may admit to membership Black professional fire fighting individuals where no local association within the International exists.

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## Explanation of the IABPFF Logo

David James Floyd, the first president of the International Association of Black Professional Fire Fighters, designed the IABPFF Logo. The following is his explanation of the design.

**COLORS** • Red, black and green were the colors used by Marcus Garvey's black pride or African movement of the 1930's. The "Red" is for our blood, the "Black" is for the race, and the "Green" is for hope.

**HAND** • The hand was selected because of the number five (5). The five fingers represent the five founding organizations of the International, which were Vulcan Society, Inc, New York, NY; Phoenix Society Inc., Hartford, Connecticut; Vulcan Pioneers of New Jersey Inc., Newark, NJ; Vulcan Pioneers of Hudson County Inc., Jersey City, NJ; and Valiants Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

**CLENCHED FIST** • Symbolized strength and power when the fingers (organizations) came together.

**OUTLINE OF FINGERS** • It was strongly felt by the designer that the Almighty had a guiding hand in bringing black fire fighters together from across the nation. The outline of the fingers was shaped to form the Arabic word "Allah" which means "GOD".

**FLAME** • Represents the heat that is necessary to take something old (five groups), and forge them into something new (the International).

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## REGIONS

### North Central Region

Illinois  
Indiana  
Michigan  
Minnesota  
Nebraska  
North Dakota  
Ohio  
South Dakota  
Wisconsin

### North East Region

Connecticut  
Delaware  
Columbia  
Maine  
Massachusetts  
New Hampshire  
New Jersey  
New York  
Pennsylvania  
Rhode Island  
Vermont

### North West Region

Alaska  
Idaho  
Montana  
Oregon  
Washington  
Wyoming

### Caribbean Region

Barbados  
St. Lucia  
England

### South Central

Arkansas  
Kansas  
Kentucky  
Louisiana  
Missouri  
Oklahoma  
Texas  
West Virginia

### South East Region

Alabama  
District of  
Florida  
Georgia  
Maryland  
Mississippi  
North Carolina  
South Carolina  
Tennessee  
Virginia

### South West Region

Arizona  
California  
Colorado  
Hawaii  
Nevada  
New Mexico  
Utah

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## LIFE MEMBERS

National Association for the Advancement  
of Colored People (NAACP)

## MEMBERS

National Black Leadership Round Table

*Membership Brochure*

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