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NET Health Announces Our 2022 W.T. “Doc” Ballard Award Recipients

Friday, July 1, 2021 – Tyler, Texas

The Northeast Texas Public Health District (NET Health) is pleased to announce the co-recipients of the 2022 W. T. “Doc” Ballard Award for Excellence in Public Health, our highest accolade for outstanding service contributing significantly to the enhancement of public health.

“Doc” Ballard, a registered professional engineer for the Texas Department of Health and mentor to NET Health, was a leader in protecting the health of the public. His expertise and administrative skills ensured the environmental controls crucial to the quality and safety of public drinking water and public food service, proper disposal of waste, and the monitoring of radiation.

Judges for the selection of the annual “Doc” Ballard Award include two members from the Northeast Texas Public Health District’s Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer of NET Health, one representative from the Texas Department of State Health Services Region 4/5 North and one representative from the Smith County AgriLife Extension Office.

NET Health recognizes Meteorologist Mark Scirto, Smith County Fire Marshal Jay Brooks, and Tyler Fire Chief David Coble as co-recipients of the 2022 “Doc” Ballard Award.



Mark Scirto is the Chief Meteorologist for KLTV 7. Mark graduated in 1982 from the University of St. Thomas in Houston with a degree in Meteorology. From 1980 to early 1987, he worked in Houston at Wilkens Weather Technologies, forecasting for oil rigs and refineries all over the world. Mark also worked for several radio stations in Houston before joining KLTV in January 1987.

Mark remained as the original Daybreak Meteorologist for four years before moving to KPLC-TV Channel 7 in Lake Charles, Louisiana, where he worked as Chief Meteorologist for three years. While in Lake Charles, he was awarded First Place in the Louisiana A.P. for Best Weathercast.

In 1994, he re-joined KLTV and has been nominated for a Dallas Press Club Katie Award, an honor no other meteorologist in our area has ever received. Mark has held the Seals of Approval from the National Weather Association and the American Meteorological Society since 1989.



Jay Brooks was appointed as the Smith County Fire Marshal in 2014 and then again in 2019. He also serves as the Smith County Emergency Management Coordinator and chairman of the Local Emergency Management Committee.

In 1998, Marshal Brooks served Smith County as a volunteer recovery diver and firefighter/EMT-B. He became a peace officer and joined the Smith County Fire Marshal's Office in 2008 as a volunteer deputy and is a Certified Fire and Explosion Investigator and a Certified Vehicle Fire Investigator by the National Association of Fire Investigators.

He holds a BBA and an MBA degree from LeTourneau University and has studied engineering at Texas A&M and Eastern Kentucky University. He holds a Master Peace Officer Certification, Arson Investigator Certification, Fire Inspector Certification in addition to extensive FEMA Emergency Management Training Certifications.

Chief David Coble started career in 1984 with the Fort Worth Fire Department reaching the rank of Executive Assistant Fire Chief. He served as interim Fort Worth Fire Chief before retiring in 2016, then being selected for the position of Tyler Fire Chief on September 28, 2016.

Chief Coble earned an Associated of Applied Science in Fire Service Administration from Weatherford College, a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Dallas Baptist University, and a Master of Business Administration degree from Texas A & M University - Commerce. He also holds certifications through the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) as Master Structure Firefighter, Advance Instructor, Master Fire Inspector, Hazardous Materials Technician and Head of Department.

In addition to his fire service duties, Chief Coble serves as the Managing Director of Emergency Services for the City of Tyler and the Emergency Management Coordinator. He further serves the community through Leadership Tyler, the Salvation Army, the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce, and as the City of Tyler's Liaison to Veteran Groups in Smith County.



About the Northeast Texas Public Health District (NET Health)

NET Health serves a vital function through our Departments of Immunizations, Tuberculosis Control, Laboratory Services, Vital Statistics, Public Health Emergency Preparedness, Disease Surveillance, Environmental Health, WIC (Women, Infants and Children) & Community Outreach.

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