

## High School Students Gain Work Ethics and Leadership Skills Learning Fire Science at Private Boarding School

French Gulch, CA— Students are learning more than just fire behavior and fire fighting at Nawa Academy, a private boarding school located in Northern California that enrolls students who are non-traditional learners and those with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). They are also learning how to work as a team, developing problem solving and leadership skills.

Nawa Academy began the Fire Science course in 1994, under the direction of Ben Sundoen, who serves as the school's Vice-Principal and Fire Chief. Today, it is one of the most popular elective courses offered. "Our fire academy is not solely about training fire fighters," says Chief Sundoen. "It's also about taking young adults who have not had much success in their lives and giving them the tools necessary to create their own

success stories." The group focuses on community involvement and awareness as well as work ethics to create an atmosphere of dialog, respect and empowerment. Training is offered in fire behavior, basic wildland fire fighting, Incident Command structure, radio communications, navigation, and natural resource management. In addition,

the students learn how to operate the two wildland fire fighting engines located on campus.

"My greatest accomplishment is watching my fire fighters graduate and knowing they have gained valuable skills and experiences that will help them in whatever situation they find themselves in," says Chief Sundoen. "Whether it

is going on to become professional fire fighters or any other career they have chosen."

Now in its 20th year, Nawa Academy provides a hands-on learning approach for students in middle school and high school, who may have learning differences, as well as students who have not

achieved to their potential. "We are proud to offer students a hands-on education, in an environment based on encouragement and accomplishment," says Serena Hull, the Director of Admissions.

To learn more about Nawa Academy, log on to: [www.nawaacademy.org](http://www.nawaacademy.org).

