

Captain Maldonado blazes trail for City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Fire Captain Eliasar Maldonado with the February City Manager Leadership Award.

Maldonado is a Costa Mesa native and a graduate of Estancia High School, where he played basketball for four years.

“I admire Captain Maldonado’s dedication to the youth of this very community where he was raised and attended school,” Farrell Harrison said. He is passionate about the fire profession and has been an outstanding mentor to our Fire Cadets. We are lucky to have him, and I am thrilled to give him this award.”

Maldonado became a Fire Explorer for the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue department (CMFR) during his junior year of high school. After being in the program for two years, he decided this was the path he wanted to follow and registered at Santa Ana College for the Fire Technology Program.

He became a reserve fighter with Santa Ana Fire Department after completing the fire academy in 2002. After testing with numerous departments, as luck would have it, it was his hometown of Costa Mesa who offered him a firefighter position in July 2004. He was promoted to Captain in February 2019

Throughout his tenure with the City and the Fire & Rescue Department, he has remained active with many committees within the department and has a strong passion for teaching and training. He was a part of the department’s legacy Fire Explorer Program, now updated to the Fire Cadet Program, and he continues to be at the helm of the program, coaching,

leading, and mentoring Costa Mesa youth.

Chief Stefano said this about Captain Maldonado, “he is an exceptional individual on all levels, highlighted by his exceptional ethical leadership, inspiring work ethic, and his powerful example of what success looks like, particularly as it relates to a healthy work-life balance and placing the highest priority on his family. Eliasar is a shining example of our absolute best and what the Costa Mesa Fire Family is all about.”

Maldonado holds an Associate’s degree in Fire Science and Fire Administration from Santa Ana College. He is actively pursuing his Bachelor of Arts degree in Organizational Leadership at Bradman University.