



January 16, 2025

Dear Chief Robert Torres,

On behalf of the Firefighter Cancer Initiative from Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of the University of Miami Health System and Miller School of Medicine, it is our honor to announce you have been chosen to receive the **Innovation Award** for Lauderhill Fire Department's meritorious contributions to the cause of health and wellness for Florida's firefighters. Congratulations!

The award comes with our highest recognition and appreciation for your dedication to public safety and support for science in service to the community. As the Firefighter Cancer Initiative celebrates its 10th year, now is an opportune time to acknowledge contributors to the success of this initiative.

The Innovation Award from the Firefighter Cancer Initiative is a result of Lauderhill Fire Department's groundbreaking approach to firefighter health and safety. Under your leadership, the department has implemented advanced strategies for cancer prevention, including the introduction of innovative protective gear and decontamination protocols. The department has also been a pioneer in promoting early cancer detection through routine screenings and proactive health education for firefighters. As Chief, you have championed the development of comprehensive wellness programs and collaborated with other fire departments and organizations to share best practices and enhance cancer prevention efforts. These initiatives, coupled with the department's commitment to reducing carcinogen exposure, demonstrate your leadership and dedication to protecting the health of firefighters and setting a new standard in the industry.

The award will be presented on **Monday, February 24 from 3-4pm** at the Fire State Fire College located at 11655 NW Gainesville Rd, Ocala, FL 34482. The event is part of the Firefighter Cancer Initiative's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, where a firetruck will traverse the state from Miami to Tallahassee to bring additional visibility to the Firefighter Cancer Initiative's mission.

The Firefighter Cancer Initiative uses science to leverage policy to reduce the cancer burden for firefighters. In its first 10 years, the Firefighter Cancer Initiative's research helped change Florida laws and policies that influenced action around the country. Accomplishments include workers' compensation for Florida firefighters diagnosed with certain types of cancer, improved decontamination practices, a firefighter cancer registry, and requirements for new firefighters to undergo health training. Your role in this work has been crucial to its success.

In preparation for the award, please RSVP with your availability by **February 3, 2025**, and include a high-resolution headshot photo (preferably 300 dpi) for use in Sylvester promotional materials. Please send your response to Sylvester contact Nicole Sardina at nsardina@miami.edu.

Thank you for your efforts in support of the Firefighter Cancer Initiative's mission to protect those who are sworn to protect us. We look forward to recognizing you on Monday, February 24 from 3-4pm at the Fire State Fire College located at 11655 NW Gainesville Rd, Ocala, FL 34482.

With deep appreciation,



Erin Kobetz-Kerman, PhD, MPH  
Chief Health Equity Officer/VP for Health Equity  
John K. and Judy S. Schulte Senior Endowed Chair in Cancer Research  
Associate Director for Community Outreach and Engagement, Sylvester  
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Alberto J. Caban-Martinez, DO, PhD, MPH CPH, Fellow CR  
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