

# Fire Tax District Recruitment, Diversity & Inclusion

## Fire Commission Presentation



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# Purpose of the Presentation

- **Current Recruitment Efforts**
- **Wake County Fire Tax District Demographics**
- **ARPA Request**
- **Wake County Fire Services Recruitment Plan for Diversity & Inclusion**

# Current Recruitment & Operations

- **Volunteers** - individual departments utilize social media, Public Safety Days and “word of mouth” to advertise opportunities
- **Career** - individual departments
  - Known advertisement avenues (Indeed, websites, “word of mouth”)
- **Fire Academy** – Wake Tech, County Social Media, “word of mouth”



# Current Recruitment & Operations

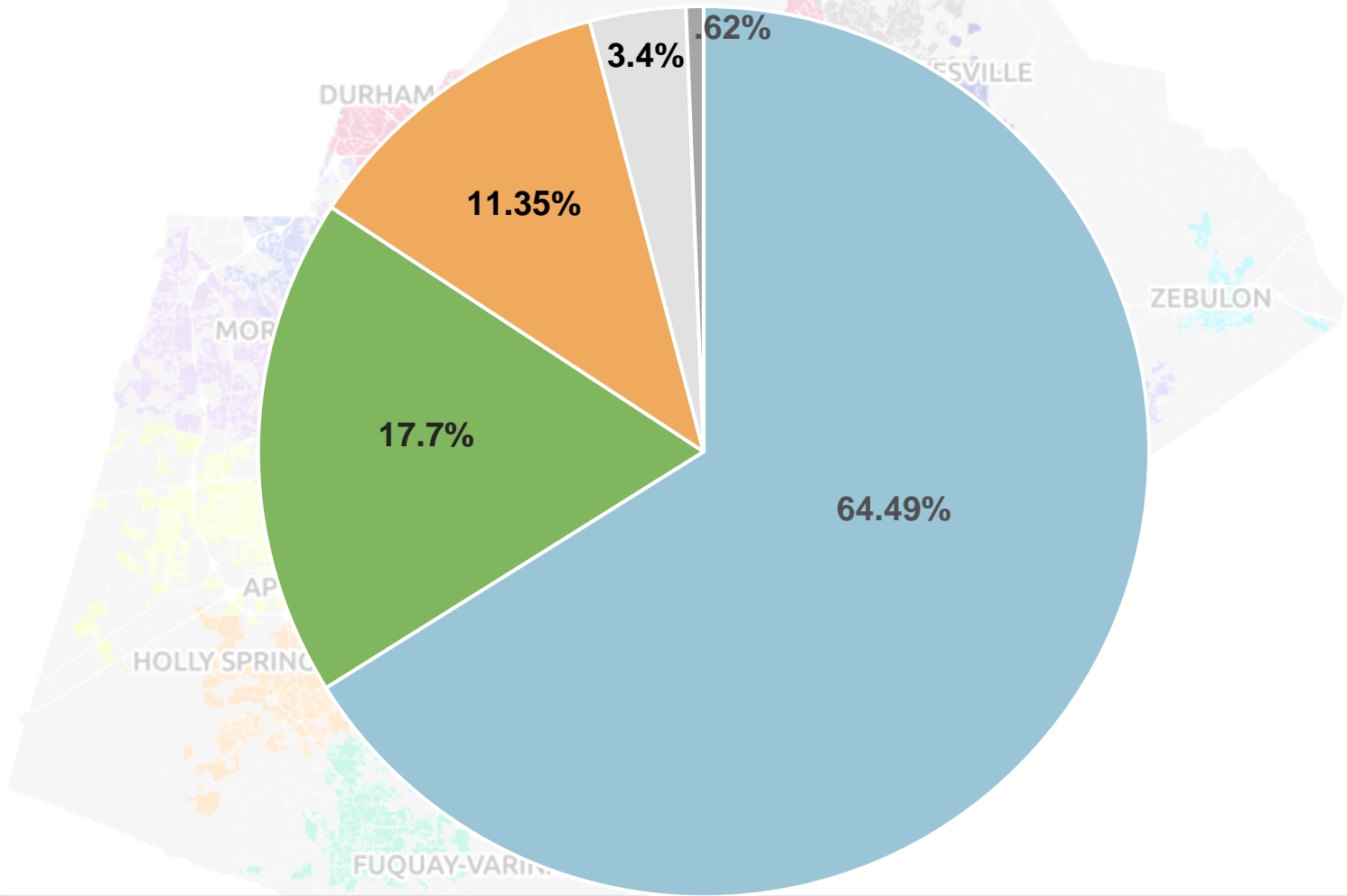
- Our applicant pool does not reflect the demographics of the unincorporated area of Wake County that we serve.
- What can we do to improve?
  - Have we asked our current diverse membership why they choose the profession?
  - Do we market our profession enough. Do we include our diverse members on marketing tools?
  - Do we engage opportunities with middle school and high school age kids at job fairs or speaking engagements?

# Current Recruitment & Operations

- Have we created a culture within our departments that would grow diversity?
- Policies & Procedures must support the department's values of inclusiveness and diversity
- Career Side – Wake County's Fire Academy is non-paid, which does not entice individuals of marginal populations

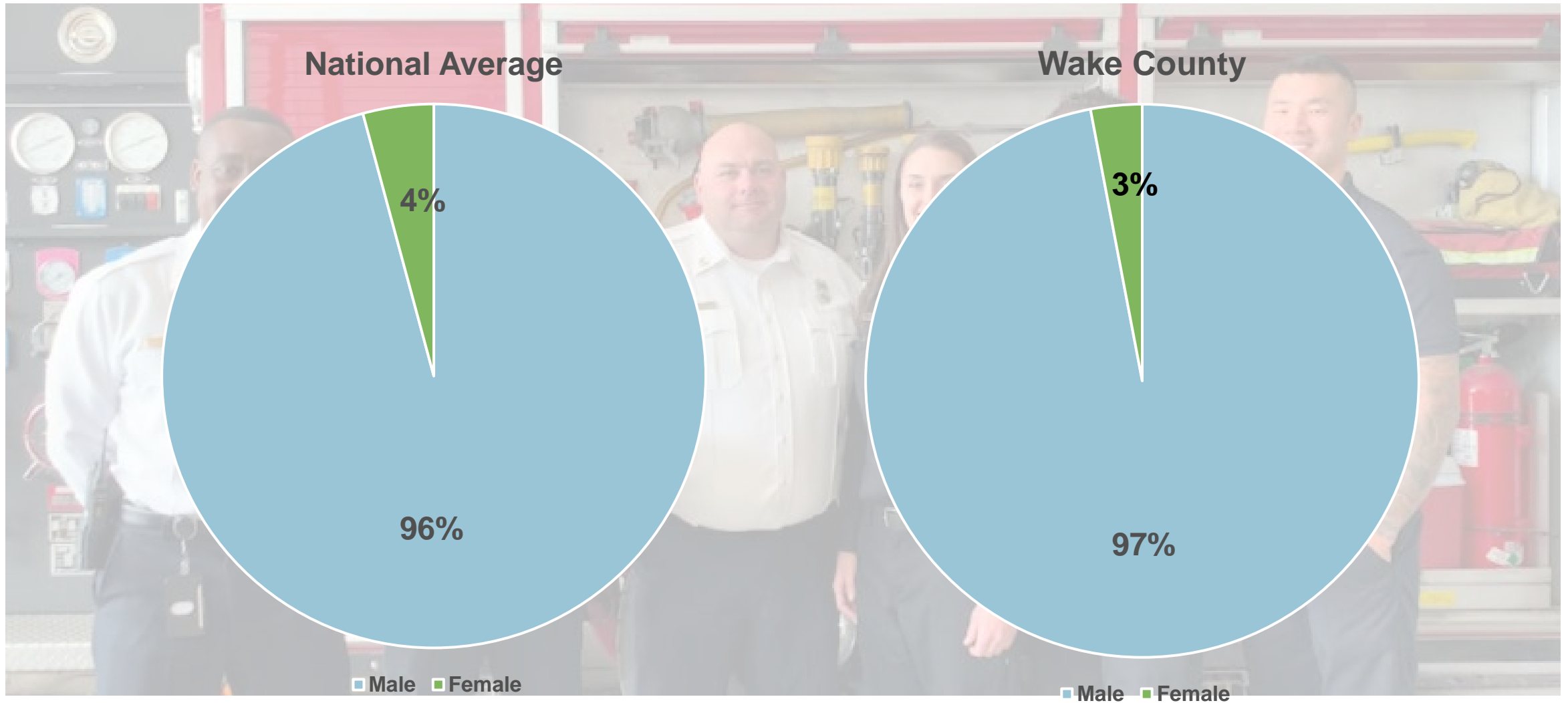
# Who do we serve? What do our communities look like demographically?

Unincorporated Wake County Demographics

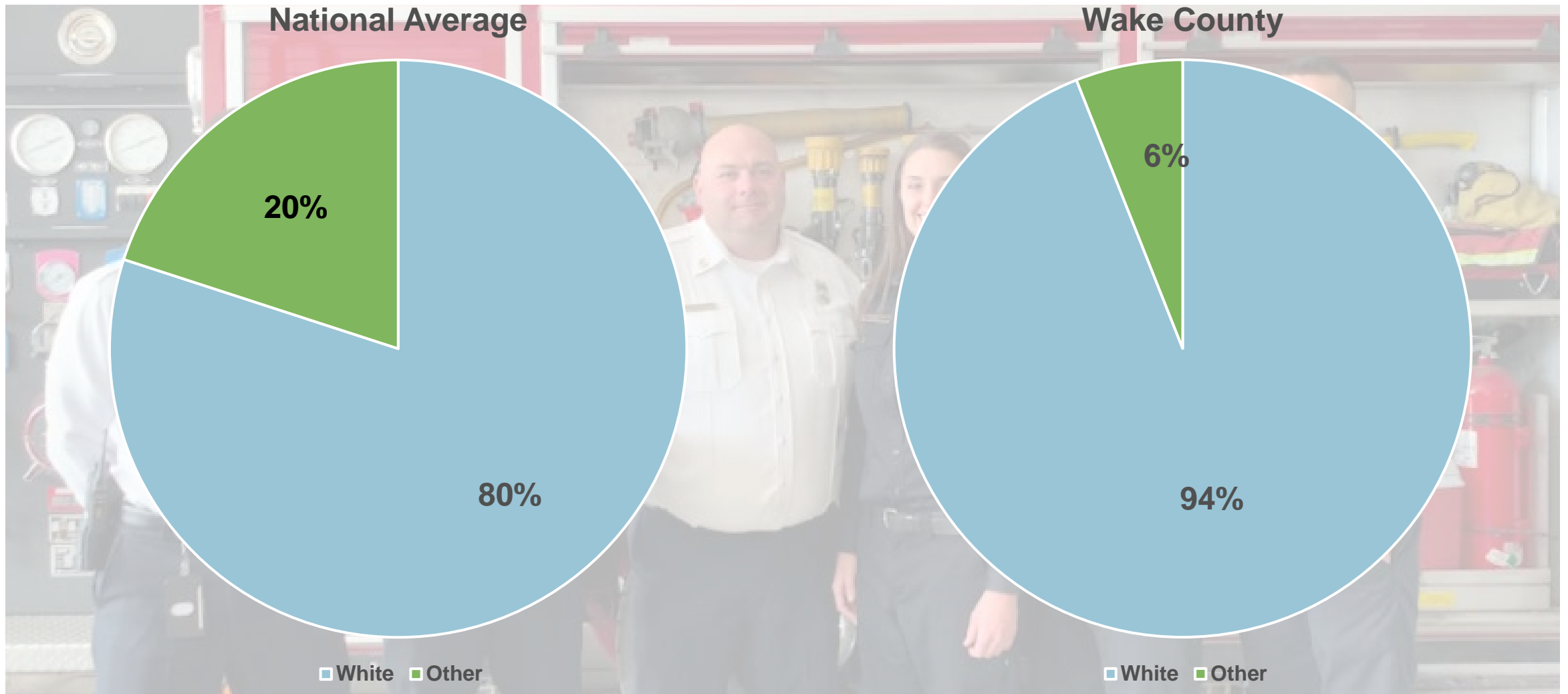


\* The minority percentages would likely be higher if we included the Tax District Municipalities

# Demographics ( Excluding Raleigh & Cary )



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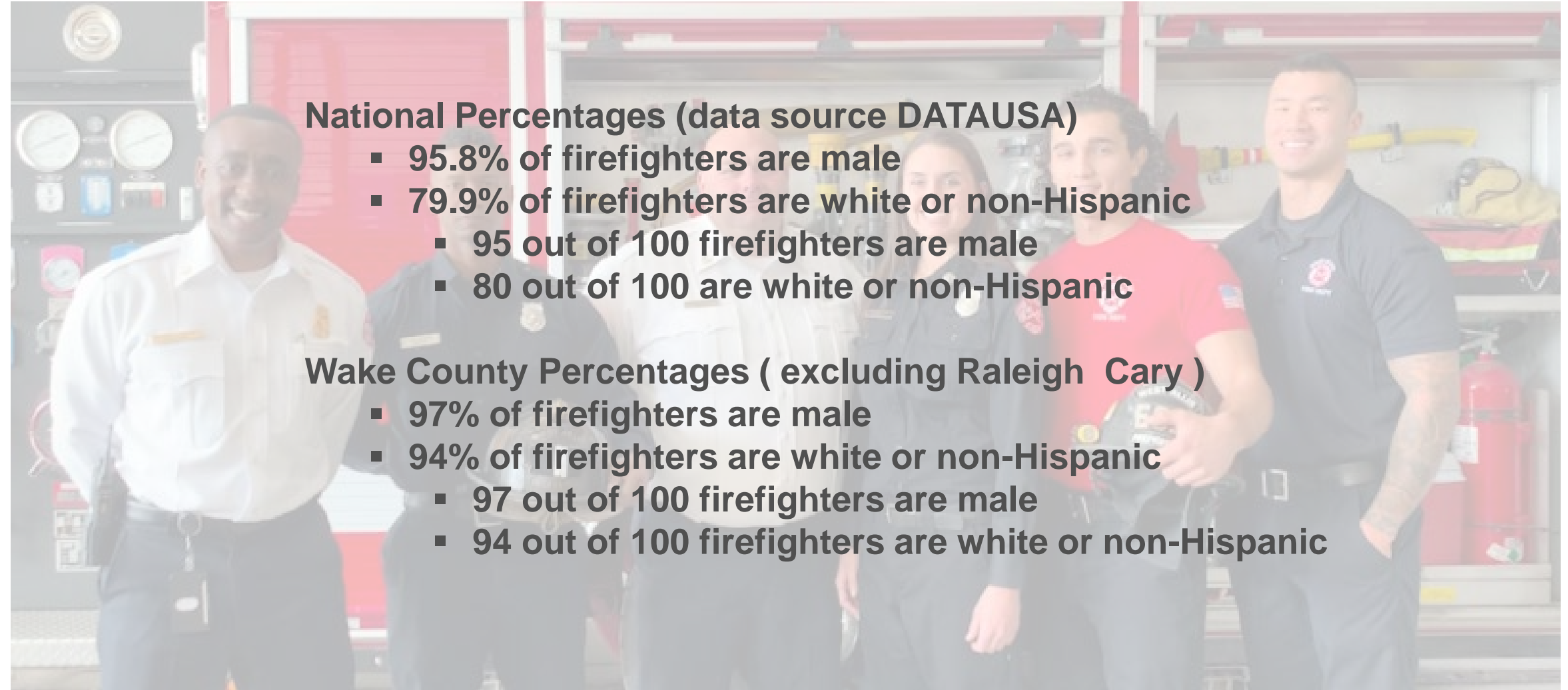
# Demographics

## National Percentages (data source DATAUSA)

- 95.8% of firefighters are male
- 79.9% of firefighters are white or non-Hispanic
  - 95 out of 100 firefighters are male
  - 80 out of 100 are white or non-Hispanic

## Wake County Percentages ( excluding Raleigh Cary )

- 97% of firefighters are male
- 94% of firefighters are white or non-Hispanic
  - 97 out of 100 firefighters are male
  - 94 out of 100 firefighters are white or non-Hispanic



A black and white photograph of a dirt road that splits into two paths, leading into a field of tall grass or reeds. A utility pole stands on the right side of the road. The sky is filled with clouds.

**Where do we go from  
here?**

# Fitting the puzzle together for Recruitment, Diversity & Inclusion

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Wake County Government is committed to help! Danya Perry has been hired as the County's first Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Director.

Danya will lead Wake County's efforts to advocate for access, equity, inclusion and diversity through innovative policies, programs and services.



# What can we do to affect change?

- **Recruitment - Revitalize & Build New Partnerships**
  - **Municipal Tax District Partners**
  - **Wake Tech**
  - **Wake County Public Schools**
  - **Faith and Community Based Organizations**
  - **Utilize Wake County's cadre of Communications Tools**

**WE ARE RECRUITING!**

## What can we do to affect change?

- Recruitment – Change the way our annual Academy Operates
- Recruits are hired with salaries & benefits. Uniforms, gear and books are paid for !

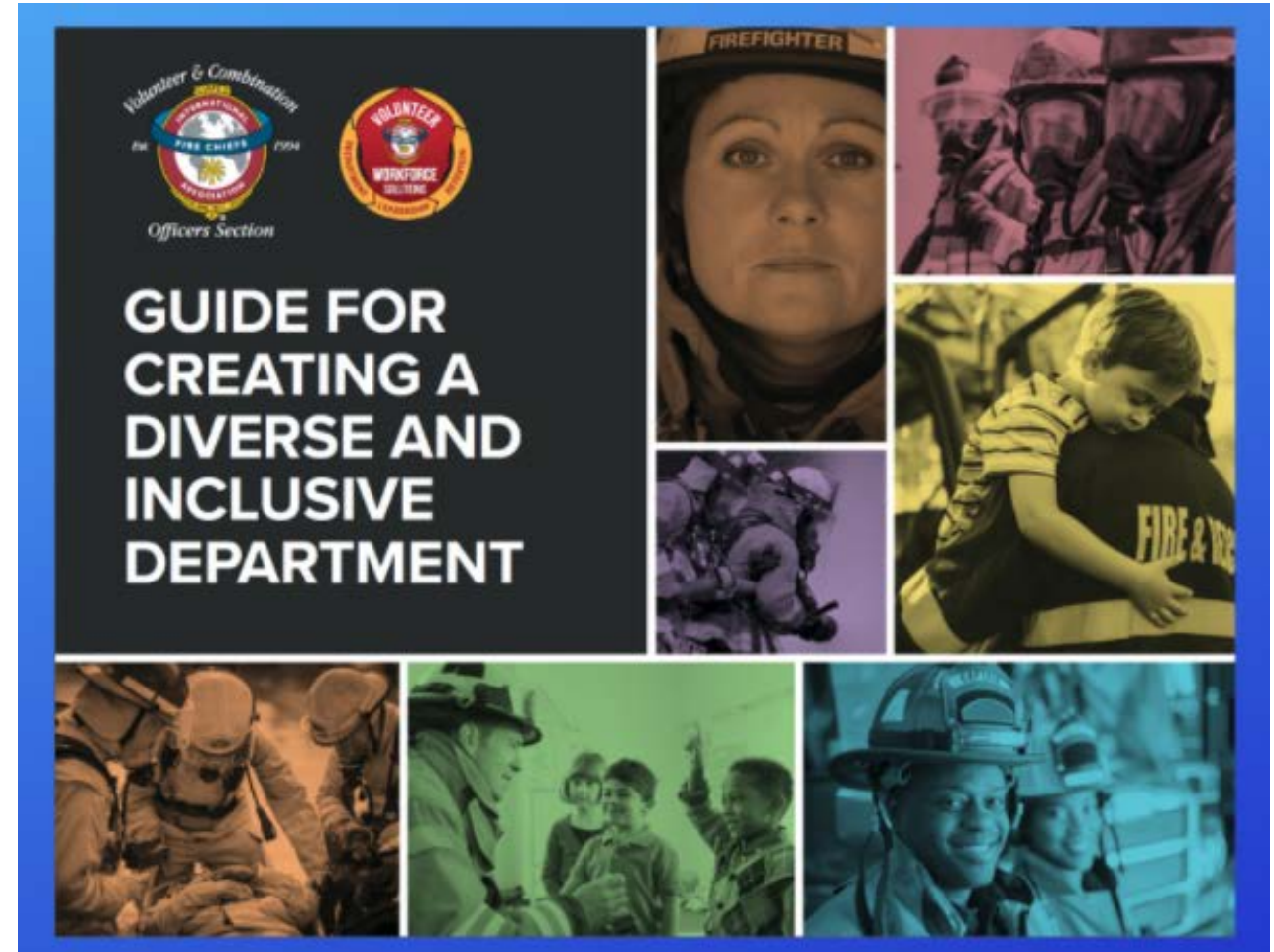
**#careerin<1year**



**WE ARE RECRUITING!**

# What can we do to affect change?

- Examine your policies & behaviors
- Educate your members
- Educate your community
- Involve external & internal stakeholders
- Be prepared to manage resistance





# Wake County Fire Services ARPA Pilot Program

- Wake County Fire Services requested funding from the American Rescue Plan Act to bolster the Fire Tax Districts ability to Recruit candidates, with an emphasis on Diversity & Inclusion
- Wake County's ARPA Review Team supported the request and elevated the project forward to the County Board of Commissioners
- At the regular meeting of the Wake County Board of Commissioners on October 18, the APRA funding request for the Fire Tax District was approved in the amount of \$2.3m, to be allocated as needed in compliance with the submitted project though December of 2024



# Framework & Highlights

- **Wake County Fire Services and its partners will focus on new recruitment strategies that target all individuals with a heart to serve in the fire service arena. This includes working with Wake Tech, Wake County Public School System and Community Based Organizations on engagement opportunities where we can provide fire service personnel of all backgrounds, race and gender to speak to interested applicants**

# Framework & Highlights

- Working with Wake Technical Community College, Wake Fire Services will evaluate the delivery of Fire & EMT classes for the 2022 Fall Academy in the areas of;
  - Block Scheduling
  - Diversity of Instructors
  - Overall Core Classes

# Framework & Highlights

- Academy is projected to start on October 1
- Late August and early September of 2022, applicants will complete a General Aptitude Test and Fitness Test
- Fire Chiefs of Departments that have been identified from data as needing additional personnel, will be then asked to hire from this pool.
- Wake County will reimburse these departments from ARPA Funding for these hires

## Other Important Items

- These new hired positions will be funded from ARPA from October 1, 2022 until:
- July 1, 2024 – New Budget for FY25 ( 21 months )
- or, after Academy Graduation, a department who received one of these positions has turnover, these positions would fall into previous funded positions
- Tax District will pick up these salaries as part of the departments normal operating budget starting in July 2024 (FY25)

# Funding At A Glance

Annual All In Salary	PPE, Uniforms, Books, Physical	Year 1 Total	Additional 9 Months * includes 3%	Total Investment
\$70,000	\$4,656	\$74,656	\$54,075	\$128,731



# Conclusion

- Opportunity to “Make it Better”
- It is going to take ALL of us working together
- We must realize that this type of change will take time
- A fire department that resembles its community in demographic makeup is more likely to be able to provide effective service and garner more respect from citizens
- A workforce of diversity & inclusion provides improved understanding of those you work for, with and around.



# Questions



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