

# COMMON VOICES

April 2, 2009

Pictured Left to Right:  
Gail Minger, Amy Acton, Donna Henson, Vickie Pritchett, Bonnie Woodruff, Vina Drennan, and Justina Page.



## Acceptance of Senator Paul S. Sarbanes Fire Safety Leadership Award

On behalf of the Common Voices Coalition we thank you --- to the Congressional Fire Services Institute & National Fallen Firefighters Foundation for your leadership, and to State Farm Insurance and VFIS for your corporate support.

To Senator Paul S. Sarbanes, we honor you as you are the inspiration for this award, and we assure you that we are humbled and honored....and truly understand the significance of carrying your fire safety message forward.

Tonight, we say thank you to the pioneers. You all know who you are, and many of you are in the room tonight. Common Voices has a simple message, one that Fire Sprinklers Save Lives. To the pioneers who blazed the trail for us to be able to follow today, we salute you.

Thank you to the National Fire Sprinkler Association for your vision for Common Voices and for providing us the foundation to work towards our goal of Fire Safe Homes in America. John Viniello, Aus Marburger, Wayne Gey, Gregg Huennekens, and Jim

Dalton....you have made a difference in our lives. To the Phoenix Society and its Executive Director Amy Acton....you are the reason we do what we do...for the survivors.

We accept this award on behalf of Capt. John Drennan, Michael Minger, Amos Page, Dominic Passentino, Ben Woodruff and all of those lost to fire. We honor their memory by working hard each and every day to educate regarding the important role that fire sprinklers play in our overall community fire protection plan. We advocate to others to join us, to work with us, and we strive to prevent future tragedies.

Life is full of milestones, and tonight is a special one for our Coalition. Common Voices brings our fire problem to life by sharing real life stories of both tragedy and hope. Tonight, the greatest way that we can all honor the spirit of this award and Senator Sarbanes is to pledge to do something. To take action, to play a part. America's fire service is under siege today by some in the homebuilding industry. Last September in Minneapolis, we showed

that the perceived "sleeping giant" was indeed awake....are we still awake?

We must stay involved in the building and fire codes process. We believe that you as local fire service leaders know what is best in your own communities. Do not let these groups take control of your state codes and laws. As a matter of fact, we encourage you to strengthen them.

Please touch your challenge coin, everyone should have one at their table. Absorb it's message...Fire Sprinklers Save Lives. Please take action when you get back home and help us ensure that Everyone Goes Home to the firehouse and that those whom you protect are as safe as they can be.

Again, on behalf of Common Voices, we thank you. Let our voices join together for fire safety and our legacy be in lives saved.

*Acceptance delivered by Vickie Pritchett at the CFSI dinner on April 2, 2009.*