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## ConFire welcomes 24 new firefighters

By Nick Marnell



Photo ConFire

desk," Cross said. "I am psyched and ready to go!"

The new firefighters joined companies throughout the district beginning the week of Feb. 18.

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With the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District poised to open Lafayette Fire Station 16 in the spring and increase the size of some of its crews from three to four, the district added two dozen new firefighters to its ranks Feb. 14 at the Academy 52 graduation ceremony, the culmination of a grueling 20-week training program under the leadership of Assistant Fire Chief Lon Goetsch.

"You were selected out of over 1,000 candidates," Fire Chief Jeff Carman told the graduates. "Tonight, the 24 of you told us we made the right decision."

New probationary firefighter Amanda Cross - kneeling, second from left - opened the evening by belting out the national anthem to the standing-room crowd at the Leshner Center in Walnut Creek. She comes from a family of firefighters, including her dad and her brother. "From the time I was little, I could never imagine working at a