

## South Tucson Fire Fighters Negotiate First MOU

June 19, 2009 – Twelve South Tucson, Arizona fire fighters – all members of Tucson Local 479 – have negotiated their first Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of South Tucson. The Local 479 members report the most significant thing to come out of the new agreement is the new open line of communication between labor and management.

Seeking to take advantage of the city's meet and confer ordinance, Local 479 fire fighters reached out to South Tucson City Manager Enrique Serna, who expressed immediate interest in the possible development of a MOU. South Tucson Chapter Vice President Andy Luna and Tucson Local 479 Vice President Brian Delfs, also an IAFF District Field Service Representative and Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona (PFFA) Trustee, represented the interests of the South Tucson fire fighters during negotiations.

"We were pleased that the city manager was open to discussing issues important to us," says Luna. "Because of this MOU, we can now discuss training, equipment and safety issues. And, eventually, we will be able to discuss the possibility of a wage increase." The South Tucson fire fighters have recently experienced some wage cuts because of the economic downturn.

In addition, the fire fighters negotiated four-person engine companies. Before the MOU, engines were required to have four fire fighters per engine, but in cases of short staffing due to fire fighter leave, off-duty fire fighters were not called back to duty.

"Now, no engine will leave the firehouse without four fire fighters on it," says Delfs. "This new provision alone will keep our fire fighters safer on the job."

The new MOU is effective immediately and will be up for re-negotiation in two years.