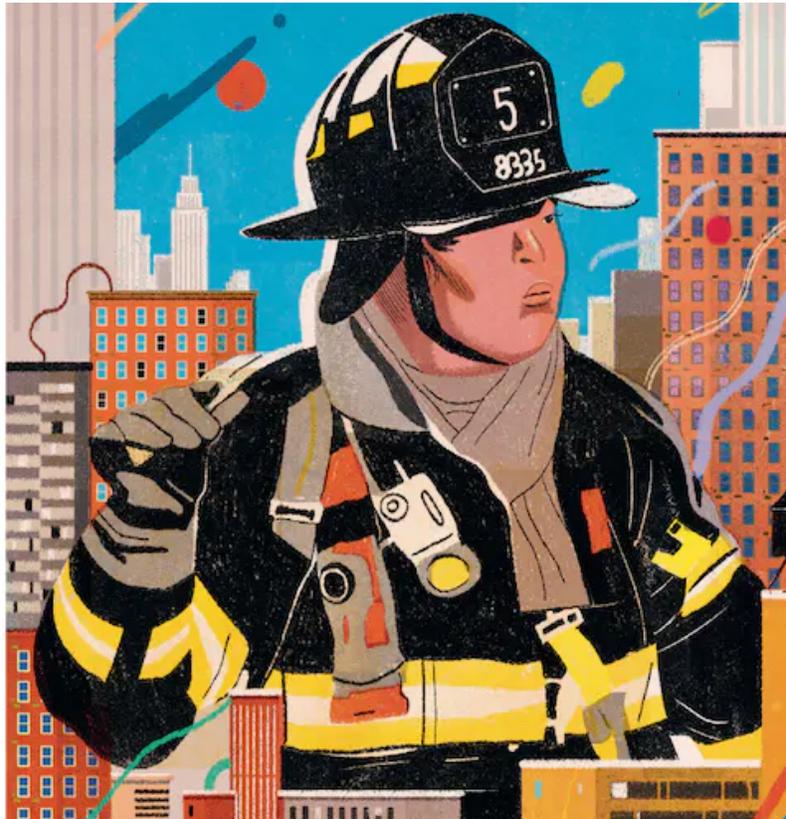


# Sarinya Srisakul, firefighter

By Rebel Girls, adapted by Newsela staff on 03.25.21

Word Count **340**

Level **390L**



"The main thing about being 'heroic' is helping others," says Sarinya Srisakul. She is the first Asian American female firefighter in the New York City Fire Department. Illustration: Lisk Feng/Rebel Girls

Sarinya Srisakul was born in New York. She grew up there. Her family came to America from Thailand. It is a country in Southeast Asia. One day, Sarinya told her father some news.

"Dad," she said, "I've signed up to become a firefighter!" She was so happy.

Her father was not happy. He said it was not safe for a woman to fight fires. "There aren't any Asian people in New York's fire department," he also said. Still, Sarinya would not give up.

She went through a hard training camp. Firefighters learn how to do their job at these camps. It lasts three months. She was the only woman in the camp. Sarinya was also one of the only ones who was not white. It was very hard. Still, she made it.

She learned how to fight different fires. Some fires happen in kitchens. Others happen in cars.

She learned how to use really tall ladders, too. They are the ones on fire trucks that reach up to high places.

## Something New Every Day

Firefighters deal with all sorts of emergencies. They must be ready for anything. So, it is important to keep fit. Sarinya began to bike from home to work. It helped her stay in shape.

Every day when she walked in the fire station door, she faced something new. One day an elevator got stuck. One day there was a car accident. Another day, there was a flood. She never knew what the next day would be like.

Sarinya loves being a firefighter. "You get to help people," she says. People can be so scared in an emergency. Sometimes it is good to see "a face like your own," she says.

Sarinya also speaks more than one language. This helps a lot in New York. People there are from all different places. Not everyone speaks English.

Today there are many more women in the fire department than there were when Sarinya started. Sarinya is happy about that. Still, she hopes more Asian women become firefighters, too.

## Write Prompt

Write a short paragraph that explains the central idea of the article. Use at least two details from the article to support your response.

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## Quiz

- 1 What is the article MAINLY about?
- (A) Sarinya Srisakul and the many jobs she has had.
  - (B) Sarinya Srisakul and her work as a firefighter.
  - (C) Sarinya Srisakul and her arguments with her father.
  - (D) Sarinya Srisakul and how she feels about being Asian American.
- 2 What is the section "Something New Every Day" MAINLY about?
- (A) how a person must be in shape to be a firefighter
  - (B) the many different challenges firefighters deal with
  - (C) why more women are deciding to become firefighters
  - (D) why fewer Asian women are interested in being firefighters
- 3 WHY did the authors write this article?
- (A) to persuade more women to become firefighters
  - (B) to explain why firefighters should get more respect
  - (C) to describe an Asian woman and her work as a firefighter
  - (D) to entertain with a fun story about women who are firefighters
- 4 What question do the authors want to answer in this article?
- (A) Who is Sarinya Srisakul?
  - (B) Where was Sarinya Srisakul born?
  - (C) How hard is it to become a firefighter?
  - (D) Why are there so many Asian American firefighters?