

United Fire Conference Classes:

Rethinking Trauma: The Resiliency Matrix

Captain Dena Ali, Raleigh (NC) Fire Department

Are our responses to trauma predictable? Why do different people react differently to trauma and stress? A common misconception is that response to stress occurs in a vacuum and the response is based solely on stress. The truth is that post-traumatic stress symptoms are normal responses to trauma that for most people will resolve and even lead to growth. Lack of support after the event is more predictive of PTSD than the trauma itself, and when recovery is inhibited, post-traumatic stress can lead to PTSD. However, safety and trauma are incompatible, and the greatest form of safety comes from the support of others. Nobody is immune from the effects of trauma. However, we all have the power to control how trauma shapes us and to move successfully through trauma and grief. This class will use evidence-based research to demonstrate that we have the power to manage our responses to trauma and adversity. Firefighters equipped with coping skills are much more likely to experience growth from adversity and trauma.

Handling Personnel Issues in the Workplace

Chief John Alston, New Haven (CT) Fire Department

While conflict is generally viewed as negative, counterproductive, and destructive, if foreseen and handled properly, it becomes a tool for enhancing productivity and development, cultivating healthy relationships, and improving communication and mutual understanding. Traditionally, the fire service has been slow to embrace the softer skills of human resource management and the development of interpersonal skills. This class will cover common business practices and issues that are unique to our noble service. Through active discussion, instruction, and short group exercises, participants will identify what works and what possibilities lie ahead.

COVID-19 Response: Doing More with Less Through Data-Driven Decisions

Battalion Chief Phil Ambrose, Glendale (CA) Fire Department/Founder, HazMatNation.com

The advantage of being in a smaller large department is that you can wear many hats; the disadvantage to being in a smaller large department is that you wear many hats. The instructor is a battalion chief assigned to a regional dispatch center, which provides 911 service to 13 agencies including a large airport. When news from Wuhan first surfaced, he was privy to early intelligence and was called to meetings with city management to speak on what to expect. The following weeks became a blur that would test everyone's capacity. Several forward-looking decisions by city management and the fire chief helped the organization tackle a large complex challenge with limited resources. It used a proactive approach that best used the resources it had, which were early 911 screening, early coordination, creating an incident action plan with extensive data tracking, and identifying problem areas early. Efforts included providing assistance to the medically fragile and assisted living facilities, which greatly reduced the overall risk of large-scale problems.

Fire Officer Excellence

Deputy Chief (Ret.) Anthony Aвило, North Hudson (NJ) Regional Fire and Rescue; Director, Monmouth County (NJ) Fire Academy

This class will seek to challenge both current and prospective fire officers regarding preparation, attitude, philosophical approach, and operational and organizational skill both in the hard environment (on the fireground) and in the soft environment (the areas and time when you are preparing yourself and your subordinates for the fireground). The outcome of the 1% of the time we spend on the fireground is based on the actions, discipline, and leadership we display; the other 99% of the time is in the soft environment. This course will address officer and departmental responsibility as it relates to the full-contact leadership mantra: “Allow NOTHING to interfere with your ability to maintain the ready and in-service status of your command.” We will examine foundation-level reasons for emergency ground failures and discuss organization-level controls and mechanisms to address and prevent them. Departmental and company-level expectations will be a focus of this discussion and why departments fail in the hard environment and the relationship this failure has to the soft environment. There will be a major emphasis on the importance of the "nothing showing environment" and its impact on the "something showing environment" with a “What You Permit You Promote” philosophy.

Today’s Safety First Culture vs. High Performance: What Is Too Safe?

Chief Michael Barakey, Suffolk (VA) Fire & Rescue

Reduction of firefighter injury and death continues to be an initiative of the fire service. The ability to provide progressive, aggressive, and responsive firefighting and rescue services is desired but is often complicated by the “safety first culture” that has overtaken the fire service over the past decade. As the fire service moves to a safety first culture--i.e., no breathing apparatus in the cab of fire trucks, clean cabs, carcinogen reduction measures, and transitional fire attack models (SLICERS/DICERS)--the ability of competent fire officers and firefighters to make aggressive and progressive critical decisions that place firefighters into difficult environments while citizens’ lives are on the line is curtailed. Furthermore, at times, this new culture is preventing firefighters from engaging in, and learning how to engage in, critical incidents; thus, firefighters are more prone to injuries and death when engaging in these critical incidents. This class will dissect the “safety first culture” and demonstrate the need to find the happy medium between safety and performance.

Incident Management Team/Operations Section Chief Roles & Responsibilities during the COVID Response

*Deputy Chief of Operations (Ret.) Leonard Carmichael Jr., Trenton (NJ) Fire Department/
NIMS Type 3 Operations Section Chief*

This class will cover the day-to-day duties of the Operations Section chief (OSC) as part of an Incident Management Team (IMT) during the COVID response mission. Using the Operational Planning “P,” the participants will understand the planning needed for the OSC as it relates to the COVID response and all interactions needed with all other IMT members daily. This class will also address the various meetings, briefings, NIMS ICS forms, and the full Incident Action Plan including initial response and assessment, incident briefing, strategies and tactical implementation, and lessons learned locally and nationally from the COVID pandemic response.

Scenes from the Back Page

Lieutenant Michael N. Ciampo, Fire Department of New York

Fire Engineering’s back page “On Fire” column comes to life in this interactive and thought-provoking class with photos and videos of the incidents brought to life in words. They say “a

picture is worth a thousand words,” and the street-smart tactics and tips presented in this class, along with photos and videos of the incidents discussed on the back page, will enhance your firefighting knowledge and skills.

Understanding Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and Its Impact on Fire Service Personnel

Battalion Chief Daniel DeGryse, Chicago (IL) Fire Department; Director, Rosecrance Florian Program

In everyday life, people turn to alcohol and drugs for pleasure and sometimes to cope. In the fire service, the line between pleasure and pain relief can seem clear but become blurred. It is important we seek healthy means to address the cumulative stress, traumas, and exposures we encounter and manage every day throughout our career. When use turns to abuse and possibly a diagnosable disorder in our profession, we are affecting not only ourselves, our families, and our livelihoods but also our coworkers and the citizens we serve. Learn the general consequences of a substance use disorder (SUD); why we may be susceptible to increased use; barriers to change; the impact it has on the individual, family, and fire service community; and what we can do to address it.

Firefighter Peer Support: An Inside Job

Coordinator Brandon Dreiman, Indianapolis (IN) Fire Department Office of Wellness & Support

This class examines the relationship between traumatic stress, sleep deprivation, and alcohol use disorder in the fire service. It next discusses what we do and do not know about firefighter suicide and provides specific guidance about what to do when confronted with a suicidal firefighter. Next, the five methods of engagement used in fire service peer support to proactively and reactively address behavioral health and addiction issues are described. Finally, seven key qualities of a clinician who wishes to work with firefighters are evaluated, which will allow attendees to assess the specific characteristics that firefighters deem valuable in a clinical setting. All of this provides a well-rounded discussion of the major behavioral health, cultural, and treatment issues facing the fire service and the best practices to address them and provide for recovery.

Lightweight and New Construction and Its Effects on the Fire Service

Captain (Ret.) Michael Dugan, Fire Department of New York

Every fire department in America is seeing an influx of lightweight construction. Are you ready to fight a fire in one of these buildings? Do you know the risk and the dangers? These types of building injure and kill firefighters. What is your department's plan? If you don't have one, this class will help.

Situational Awareness: The Seven Deadly Sins of the “Situationally Unaware”

Captain (Ret.) Mike Gagliano, Seattle (WA) Fire Department

This is a situational awareness class like none you've ever taken. Derived from the instructor's 33 years of going to fires, this presentation examines some of the common reasons well-intentioned firefighters make mistakes on the fireground. The insights are not complex scientific theories or long problem-solving algorithms and allow the students to use their own experiences to solidify the knowledge. Learning some of the key reasons our ability to read the situation gets cloudy is the best place to start. This training will open your eyes to some things you are doing wrong and didn't even realize were happening. Students will be challenged to honestly

evaluate how they approach their mission and will be asked hard questions about their priorities as firefighters. Most importantly, the information gained in this class can be immediately applied at fires and easily shared with others on the crew. Getting better at evaluating the situation accurately is a skill that can be improved. We'll enhance that skill and have a great time doing so.

Command, Control, and Company Officers

Chief Billy Goldfeder, Loveland-Symmes (OH) Fire Department

What keeps chiefs up at night? *Forget that.* What keeps chiefs sleeping well at night? SOLID COMPANY OFFICERS. This class will cover the role of the company officer related to firefighter survival—the successes and failures. It will demonstrate why the most critical investment a department can make is in its company officers, specifically related to the survival of the firefighters and the public.

What Is Real Risk Management?

Gordan Graham, Research Consultant

This class will begin with some very brief comments on the “cause” of tragedies in any occupation or profession, focusing on the difference between “proximate” cause and those problems “lying in wait,” sometimes for years, that went ignored and really led to the given tragedy. Then learn how to proactively address these problems lying in wait and what the consequences are when these issues are ignored. Then Graham will fully explain the breadth and depth of “real risk management” and how it applies to the attendees’ specific organization; the “Ten Families of Risk” and how to identify the “real” risks their organization faces in each of these families; and how to build processes to address these identified risks and help prevent future problems from occurring.

Interior Benchmarking for Go and No Go with Modern PPE

Chief William Greenwood, T.F. Green International Airport

This graphic and interactive class is based on the instructor’s near-miss experience when his personal protective equipment (PPE) was on fire. Learn how to determine the limitations and thermal insult thresholds for better Go/No Go decision making for your PPE and SCBA! Identify how it works to protect you under fire. Witness physically damaged turnout gear and SCBA from past close calls. Learn the Interior Benchmarking Concept to learn five easy steps for greater interior situational awareness. Ask these simple and easy questions--What do I see, what do I hear, what do I feel, where exactly am I, and how much air have I used to get here?--during your next interior operation to calculate and even prevent bad things from happening.

Size-Up for Safety and Effectiveness

Captain Bill Gustin, Miami-Dade (FL) Fire Rescue; and Technical Editor, Fire Engineering

This class will examine why the strategy chosen by first-arriving companies and the tactics they perform can be entirely appropriate in the initial stages of a firefighting operation but may become ineffective and unreasonably dangerous later in an incident. Learn why size-up isn’t just performed on arrival but must continue throughout the duration of an incident; why size-up must be performed from two perspectives--inside and outside a fire building; why a red flag should go up when an inside size-up and outside size-up are not in agreement; and why experienced firefighters do not operate at every phase of a firefighting operation with the same strategy,

tactics, or level of risk. This class will also examine factors to consider in an ongoing size-up that continuously evaluates the risk to civilians and firefighters vs. the intended benefits.

Training Future Company Officers

Operations Chief Amy Hanifan, McMinnville (OR) Fire Department; President, Women In Fire

Many classes focus on the leadership skills needed to prepare for promotion. This class takes a different approach in teaching those already in officer roles how to prepare future company officers. The focus is on professional qualifications, training priorities, and mentoring. The instructor will draw from an Acting in Capacity program that she led the development of, as well as industry best practices. Training company officers will assist organizations that need officer development resources.

Your Guide to a Rewarding Fire Service Journey

Captain Aaron Heller, Hamilton Twp. (NJ) Fire District #9

There are so many things we are not told when we join the fire service. The good and bad things we will see, the people we will meet, and the joy and pain we will experience are rarely explained to our potential firefighters when they begin their fire service journey.

This class will paint a picture for attendees of all ranks and experience levels as to what strategies have worked for many successful firefighters. Explore proven tactics and skills to effectively navigate a journey from probationary firefighter to fire chief to help you find where you and your leadership skills fit best along the career ladder. Find your place within this amazing and rewarding profession of the fire service.

The Courageous Fire Officer: It's Not Just When Crossing the Threshold

Chief Jason Hoevelmann, Florissant Valley (MO) Fire Protection District

As fire officers we are charged with the responsibility of those members we are privileged to work for. With that responsibility comes the requirement that we be courageous in those difficult and challenging moments that can have enormous implications for us as officers and for our members. The leadership and courage that fire officers routinely display on the fireground by crossing the threshold must be matched in the firehouse with the same degree of enthusiasm and skill. This class will discuss how to meet these challenges head-on and with confidence, even though it's some of the most difficult issues we deal with as officers—but it is also one of the most important things we must do to maintain respect, trust and accountability within our crews and companies.

Breaking Our Silence

Captain (Ret.) Angela Hughes, Baltimore County (MD) Fire Department; Past President, Women in Fire

When good people are silent, they allow racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and all other forms of oppression to persist unchallenged. Fire service personnel should be inspired and equipped to provide respectful support and advocacy, rooted in justice, for their colleagues and all communities they serve. Personnel must also be trained and empowered to intervene in oppressive or hurtful behaviors they witness. In this class, participants will practice their skills of intervening in oppressive behaviors while working to rebuild trust using real-life fire service scenarios.

A Review of the Deadly 2019 Alpine Motel Fire in Las Vegas and a Tactical Discussion on Center Hallway Buildings

Captain Clark Lamping, Clark County (NV) Fire Department

The Alpine Motel was an occupied, dilapidated three-story motel in an economically stressed section of Las Vegas. The owners of this building were cited multiple times in the past years for numerous fire and life safety code violations. On Dec 21, 2019, the City of Las Vegas suffered its largest loss of life in its history with six civilian deaths and 13 injuries when a fire broke out in this motel. This class will review this the tragic fire and tactical considerations for fighting fires in center hallway buildings; discuss how the victims died; and explore if we, as a fire service, are doing our best to educate our citizens on fire and public safety. Would a better public education program have prevented this fire from so tragic?

It's Still the Best Job in the World! Leading Through Tough Times

Chief (Ret.) Rick Lasky, Lewisville (TX) Fire Department

Today more than ever, fire service leaders are facing tougher times--reduction in funding resources, budget cuts, staffing cuts, unfunded mandates, personnel problems, that whole "culture" thing, and a long list of other obstacles and challenges, all of which have a direct impact on service delivery. On the other hand, nobody said that being the leader was going to be easy. Learn what you need to face these tougher times and still enjoy the most incredible profession in the world!

Mediocrity Is Not an Option

Chief (Ret.) Richard Marinucci, Farmington Hills (MI) Fire Department

When someone calls 911, they think they have a serious emergency and expect the best possible service. They don't get a choice of what department will respond and can't shop around for the best deal. Fire departments have the responsibility to deliver quality service every time out the door. To do this, five elements that need to be considered: people, equipment, training, policies, and leadership. Organizations need to strive to provide the best by continually improving their operations with these elements. This class will look at each component and suggest areas to evaluate and improve.

EMT and Firefighter Collateral Stress of the COVID-19 Pandemic; Fire Preparation and Response During Protests and Riots in New York City

Battalion Chief Stephen Marsar, Fire Department of New York

The first part of the class will discuss the surprising stressors that resulted from the COVID-19 Pandemic's EMS response, which are just now coming to light. Stress reduction techniques and suggestions will be offered to help stem the potential post stress reactions to this unprecedented call for help. The second part of the class will illustrate the dynamic and dramatic preparation and response of the FDNY's 6th Battalion units during the first two nights of the protests, riots, and looting following the death of George Floyd. The presentation will spur a discussion on how the chiefs working in the FDNY's 6th Battalion kept their members safe while responding through thousands of protestors and agitators, hundreds of NYPD police officers, and garbage strewn streets to extinguish almost 100 fires—including police cars full of ammunition, one report of a police officers trapped in a burning patrol car, and multiple calls reporting structural fires.

Understanding Water Mapping

Lieutenant (Ret.) Ray McCormack, Fire Department of New York

Effective fire attack is centered on water mapping. Stream composition along with placement and impact reaction are factors that help achieve extinguishment on the fireground. This class will demonstrate how to maximize water mapping under multiple fire attack situations.

Reputation Management in the Fire Service: Preventing Member Derailment

Firefighter/PIO Candice McDonald, Sebring & Winona (OH) Fire Department

In an era of citizen journalism and human error, the fire service is not exempt from making headlines for the wrong reasons. Like preparing for emergencies, departments need the strategies to mitigate reputation threats and a plan to build stakeholder relationships. This class will offer participants strategies to safeguard the firehouse from damaging behaviors while protecting the integrity of the fire service. Topics covered include developing a social media balance, preventing theft, discrimination, and poor member behavior.

Officer Development and Leadership Success in the Volunteer Fire Service

Fire Commissioner/Past Chief Thomas Merrill, Snyder (NY) Fire Department

This class focuses on the unique challenges volunteer fire officers face on the firematic (operations) side of the organization as well as the often-forgotten administrative side. Far too many officers are simply elected or appointed and receive very little or no training and are left to “fend for themselves” as they try to earn respect and gain the confidence of their membership while trying to learn about the jobs they are expected to perform. In addition, they are also expected to become instant leaders within their organization and provide immediate solutions for any challenges or problems brought to their attention. Aspiring officers will learn ideas that can assist them in gaining support from their fellow members and help them earn appointment to office or win that dreaded volunteer fire department election. Useful tips and information are provided to newly promoted officers that that will help them get off to a successful start and begin earning credibility and respect while at the same time developing competence and gaining confidence in their new role. The class focuses on eight proven leadership disciplines that all fire department members can use to create and maintain a more unified and harmonious operation.

Developing the Seven Steps to Mastery on the Fireground

Captain Doug Mitchell, Fire Department of New York; and Deputy Chief Dan Shaw, Fairfax County Fire & Rescue

Mastery is an often-misunderstood term within the fire service that means to many that you have reached the pinnacle of skill development. In reality, this term defines the constant and ongoing process to achieve a high level of competence in the needed skills for success. The fireground is no different and demands a high level of mastery. This class will review the seven essential steps that the individual and the company level on every fireground in America need to master regardless of staffing or department size. The class will provide detailed information on each step along with a strategic plan to train and hone the skills to execute them on the fireground.

Evolution You: Fire Service Leadership

Captain Doug Mitchell, Fire Department of New York; and Deputy Chief Dan Shaw, Fairfax County Fire & Rescue

We routinely are tasked to operate in rapid deteriorating and toxic environments. We

are the first and the last lines of defense for our citizens from the ravages of fire. We are problems solvers, doers, fixers of all things. We do what we do not as individuals but as teams. The cadence to which the teams performs is largely from the expectations that the leaders set forth preemptively. Competence, compassion, and communication are just a few noted characteristics of successful leaders. The run comes in and we respond. But who must lead the charge and make decisions in the best interest of those who summoned us? Effective and efficient leadership is paramount. Leaders must prepare themselves and their crew for the proverbial “fire of their career” every time they go out the door. This mindset encompasses three phases of preparation: physical, mental, and tactical. This class will delve into leadership examples and challenges found in every department and rank.

Leadership, Engagement and Making a Difference

Senior Planning Specialist Gregory Noll, South Central (PA) Regional Task Force

If your life was a movie, what would the end of the movie be like? When your family and friends sit around the kitchen table and talk about you, what will they say and how will they remember you? What was your impact? Did you leave things better than you found them? In simple terms, did you make a difference? Fire officers and fire instructors are the true “change agents” of the fire service. Yet, any individual at any level of the organization has the potential to make a difference. Being able to lead and to influence change at any level within your area of responsibility can be both challenging and overwhelming. At the end of the day, how can you make a difference? This class will look at those “buckets” that directly influence your leadership and ability to engage your peers: character, leadership, priorities, mentorship, team building, engagement, and collaboration.

The "New Normal": Fire/EMS Budgets After COVID-19

Steve Pegram, Chief, Goshen Township (OH) Fire and EMS

After the COVID-19 pandemic spread across our country, schools, businesses, and industries closed for several months. This has had an immediate short- and long-term effect on revenue that funds local fire and EMS departments and has forced businesses to reassess short- and long-term business models. What will be the “new normal” in your community? How will the changes in the business community like telecommuting, more work from home and less office space occupancy, online vs. in-person shopping, and delivery vs. eating in restaurants affect your fire and EMS budgets now and into the future? This class will examine the impact on fire and EMS budgets and how these changes impact property taxes, income/earnings tax, sales tax, as well as fundraising activities. Learn to prepare for the “new normal” and what models for funding and federal programs are available to help.

Lost in the Fog of the Fireground

Assistant Chief Joseph Pronesti, Elyria (OH) Fire Department

A book on military leadership and command from a former Marine who fought in World War II describes the term “lost in the fog of war.” It refers to both the literal fog created by the dust, smoke, and debris of the battlefield and, more importantly, the mental fog of confusion and uncertainty created by lack of knowledge of the enemy. The instructor reviews the lessons from one fire under his command where he became “lost in the fireground.” He shares this experience as an example so future command officer do not make his mistake of getting “lost.”

Managing Heat Stress and Hydration During Training

Battalion Chief David Rhodes, Georgia

Heat-related injuries are more common in candidates participating in recruit training academies and multiday training courses than one may think. These injuries have led to dozens of public safety officer line-of-duty deaths and thousands of injuries and near misses. Most instructors believe having the students drink enough water is the solution, but they couldn't be more wrong. Effective heat injury prevention includes proper screening, field medical test, hydration and caloric control measures, weather monitoring, and closely managing the students' time in and out of their personal protective equipment. This class goes beyond the National Fire Protection Association rehab standard and provides easy to implement strategies that can greatly reduce or eliminate these injuries.

Structure Fire: Primary Search

Battalion Chief (Ret.) John Salka, Fire Department of New York

This new program is a discussion about a basic yet vital task at every structural fire: the primary search. Although many fire departments eventually get a search team into the fire building, it is often greatly delayed. This program concentrates primarily on residential structures and asks the questions, What tactics should be initiated first at a house fire? What should be the next tactic initiated? Exactly when should a search team be deployed? Do search teams need to be equipped with a hoseline or can they simply enter and search the house? You may be surprised by some of the answers.

Leadership Through Training

Battalion Chief of Training & Special Operations Stephen Shaw, Fort Lauderdale (FL) Fire Rescue

The opportunity to teach our own is an absolute gift. It provides an angle; a conduit; a platform. It is an opportunity to engage with every member of your agency. Make no mistake—you do not have to belong to your Training Division to be a leader through training. All members in the fire service serve as trainers, whether they intend to or not! Are you maximizing your effectiveness as an instructor? This class discusses the role all instructors have as leaders and influencers. It delves into ways we can maximize that influence before, during, and after we train. It provides practical advice that is immediately deployable. Training is influence, and influence is leadership. How will you lead through training today, tomorrow, and in the future?

Evolution, not Revolution: Urban Fire Dynamics Boot Camp

Battalion Chief Daniel Sheridan, Fire Department of New York

Certain aspects of the job were drilled into us in probie school and then reinforced throughout our early years by the senior members. Using the Underwriters Laboratories studies, learn whether some of these myths were correct or why they were correct at the time but now have changed. Examine fires from the Fire Department of New York in which certain things were done that almost resulted in a firefighter fatality. Topics include control the access door, coordinate attack with vertical ventilation, smoke is fuel, cool as you advance, apply water from the best position, isolate fire, fire flows, and lightweight materials and their effect on fireground.

Advances in Structural Firefighting PPE Capabilities and Decontamination

Jeffrey O. Stull, President, International Personnel Protection, Inc.,

The instructor will provide an update on new technology as structural firefighting protective clothing evolves to better address exposure to smoke and fireground contaminants in addition to new best practices for effective cleaning of fire gear. The class will cover new features and testing methods for firefighter PPE that can inform fire departments in their selection and procurement efforts. Learn the importance of effective cleaning and hygiene as applied to PPE in terms of on scene primary exposure reduction, advanced cleaning and sanitization, specialized cleaning for reducing firefighter exposure to persistent contaminants that can become the basis of fire service best practices, and the full range of PPE as applied to turnout gear (garments, helmets, hoods, gloves, footwear) as well as SCBA.

Principles of Truckmanship

Firefighter Christopher Tobin, St. Louis (MO) Fire Department

Walk into a firehouse, and the workbench probably has a layer of dust on it. That's a problem. This class aims to bring back the culture of craftsmanship in our trade, starting with the tools, techniques, and requisite skills a truckie must possess before, during, and after the fire. Topics will include discussions on our blue collared influences and where mission creep has led our focus; hand tool maintenance, techniques, and tips; what truck work on the fireground actually is; overhauling methodology in legacy construction; and other basic tenets of truckmanship you won't find in textbooks.

Leadership Is . . . Damn Hard Work

Peter Van Dorpe, Chief, Algonquin-Lake in the Hills (IL) Fire Protection District/President, International Society of Fire Service Instructors

“Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration”--Thomas Alva Edison

There are literally tens of thousands of books on leadership readily available to us, all with a simple point and click. Several hundred of these books are geared specifically toward the fire service. Numerous YouTube videos and TedTalks are available to us at any moment, right in our pockets, packs, and purses. Every fire academy in the world dedicates a significant portion of its training curriculum to teaching leadership. Officer development is at the top of every fire chief's “to do” list. And yet, virtually every survey of firefighters and fire officers reveals that there is a leadership vacuum and that we all struggle with how to fill it. Why is this so? Perhaps we focus too much on looking for inspiration and motivation (very necessary indeed) and neglect the perspiration (i.e., the damn hard work) that effective leadership requires. What does the *work* of leadership look like? How does it feel? How do you know when you are doing good work? Let us look at the hard work of leadership and try to discover some ways to put that plethora of inspiration and motivation to good use.

Biowarfare Building Blocks: What the Fire Service Needs to Know About Synthetic Biology

Private Robert Wagner, Indianapolis (IN) Fire Department

Synthetic biology will ultimately drive biothreats to the forefront of the CBRN spectrum. From novel virus pandemics to bioengineered weapons, the current challenges with biodetection and biodefense will be exacerbated as the complexity gaps in building and employing bioweapons are closed by emerging technology. Just as the Cold War brought the science of radiation to the forefront of civil defense during the Nuclear Age, synthetic biology and genome editing should be driving our conversations on hazardous materials and CBRN response in the Technological

Age. Although the fire service often avoids lofty conversations of science and national security, refusing to address this problem may find us grossly unprepared in the future. While students will walk away with an understanding of synthetic biology and its implications for the fire service and hazardous materials response industry, this course will strike up an important conversation we should be having about this emerging threat.

All Politics Is Local: How Firefighters Can Make an Impact at the Federal Level

Bill Webb, Executive Director, Congressional Fire Services Institute

There is an axiom often cited on Capitol Hill that "all politics is local" when describing the legislative process. Each year, Congress appropriates more than \$1.2 trillion in discretionary spending (this excludes approximately \$3 trillion in mandatory spending). While members of Congress base their decisions to appropriate funds on many factors, the most important factor is the input they receive from their constituents--the individuals who vote them in and out of office. Members of the fire and emergency services should not rely on others to lobby on their behalf; every firefighter should take an active interest in advocating for federal legislation and programs that benefit all firefighters and emergency services personnel. With more than 25 years of experience in Washington, DC, working with members of Congress and Administration officials on federal public safety legislation and programs, the instructor will offer his insight on the craft of lobbying and explain what's at stake if the fire service is silent on Capitol Hill while other constituencies are vocal.

PANELS

Budgeting and Purchasing: The recent events have revealed several interesting and challenging aspects of our budgeting and purchasing processes. Many lessons and innovations were learned and can help us to improve the future of how we budget and purchase.

Staffing and Operations: The staffing and operations in many organizations were affected recently and many organizations employed alternative deployment and staffing models. Some of these models may continue into the future. Panels will look at staffing in a wide variety of settings and organizations.

Lessons Learned Overall from COVID-19: All fire service organizations and agencies were affected in some way during the recent pandemic. Many lessons were learned with regard to directives, deployment, infection control, communications, budgeting and purchasing, legal, moral, and ethical decision making as well as many, many other topics. The panel will discuss the broad range of lessons learned locally and nationally from the pandemic.

Labor and management: This panel will discuss labor/management issues arising from our recent worldwide emergency. It will also investigate the ways relationships improved and in some instances were strained or deteriorated. The panel will offer suggestions on how to maintain and improve labor/management relations.

Wellness: Firefighter health and wellness has been and always will be an extremely important topic. Added recent stress highlighted the need for continuing focus on the methods, instruments, and administration of these programs. This panel will investigate health and wellness for the fire service into the future.

Decon, PPE, and the Fire Service: The recent pandemic heightened the awareness of the need for infectious control and the vulnerability of our members overall. Concurrently, studies are underway regarding personal protective equipment--its attributes, limitations, care, and maintenance. This panel will discuss all of these topics.

Medical Issues in the Fire Service: The fire service has always been involved in the medical issues of the community whether it be simple or complex. The panel will review medical concerns for the fire service overall and in light of our recent experiences with infectious disease.