40th Annual
Bryant Stiles Officers School

February 25-28, 2027 | OWENSBORO CONVENTION CENTER

WWW.SFRTAREA3.ORG

40TH ANNIVERSARY
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Bryant Stiles Officers School

40th Year Anniversary

February 25-29, 2027

Register BEFORE Feb. 01, 2027 and receive a FREE tee-shirt (your size)
Register AFTER Feb. 01, 2027 and there are no guarantees of receiving your tee-shirt

Commemorative Challenge Coins will be available for purchase at the shirt sales booth



Visit

www.sfrtarea3.org

for the latest updates for the

2027 Bryant Stiles Officers School

Welcome Back to The Bryant Stiles Officers School
by the
Green River Firefighters Association

The fire departments and members of the Green River Firefighters Association welcome you back to the beautiful Owensboro Convention Center. This year we will celebrate the 40th Annual Bryant Stiles Officers School! We have once again planned a very diverse lineup of classes to assist you in becoming a better front-line supervisor and leader, with **30 NEW CLASSES**! We carefully reviewed evaluations from previous events and have listened to your requests by adding some classes that may be hard to locate on a regional basis. Please take the time to carefully review the brochure and submit your class selection requests as soon as possible, to ensure your seat. For the most recent and current information about the 2027 Bryant Stiles Officers School by the Green River Firefighters Association, visit www.sfrtarea3.org or contact us at 270-273-3187. Thanks to the following leadership of the Green River Firefighters Association and the always dependable staff of State Fire Rescue Training District 3:

President – John Dunning/Richland FD

1st Vice President – Shane Richards/Hawesville FD

2nd Vice President – Jesse Breedlove/Hanson FD

Secretary – Marc Henderson/Calhoun City FD (*Vendor Coordinator*)

Treasurer – Pat Thompson/Airport-Sorgho FD (*School Coordinator*)

Past President – Charlie Rafferty/Airport-Sorgho FD

District 3 Training Coordinator – Jimmy VanCleve (*Registration Coordinator)*

District 3 Field Office Support Specialist- Jennifer Randolph

Saturday Evening With The Vendors

The Bryant Stiles Officers School would not experience its continuous success if not for our dedicated and faithful commercial vendors. Several of our vendors have been with us from the beginning. We appreciate each and every participating vendor. Keep these dedicated vendors in mind when pondering your future personal and departmental purchases. The 45,000 square foot exhibition hall at the Owensboro Convention Center is the perfect venue to visit with friends of new and old. Each school participant will receive a door prize entry when visiting our commercial vendors. Door prizes will be given away at the conclusion of the event at approximately 8:00 pm CST.

Registration Information

Registration Form: Registration will only be available online at ***www.sfrtarea3.org***. You may enter a 1st and 2nd choice in each session you plan on attending to ensure we place you in a class of your choosing. Again, you must register online at ***www.sfrtarea3.org*.**

Choice of Classes: Most classes fill up quickly so make sure you get your registration in and payment made as soon as possible to ensure your seat in the class of your choice. Classes with low enrollment will be cancelled 2 weeks prior to school, so if you need a specific class, get your registration in and payment made as soon as possible to ensure your class makes it!

Payment of Class Fees and Confirmation: Registration fees must be submitted promptly upon application. Purchase orders from municipalities will be accepted with payment to follow immediately. **Confirmation for classes will only be sent to a valid email address upon receipt of payment!**

Deadlines and Refunds: Registration fee for a single session or the entire weekend is $80 per student for payments received prior to close of business on February 15, 2027. Registration fee will be $90 per student after February 15 and for any on-site registrations. **Refunds must be requested by email prior to February 15, 2027 to pat.thompson@kctcs.edu listing the students name, method of payment to GRFA (check or credit card), and to whom to make the refund (check to submitting party on original payment).**

Junior Firefighters/Explorers: With this conference being a lecture setting, Junior Firefighters/Explorers are welcome at the Officers School; however, you must submit a letter from the Chief of the sponsoring agency stating they are aware that the Junior/Explorer is attending and the contact information with name and phone number of the on-site supervisor of the attending Junior/Explorer.

Shirt Size: You will be asked to declare your shirt size on the registration form for a Tee-Shirt. We will only guarantee sizes for registered participants ***BEFORE February 01, 2027***. **REGISTER EARLY!**

Student Conduct: All students/participants are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner as would be expected by the representatives of your sponsoring agency/jurisdiction. Inappropriate conduct or unnecessary disruptions will not be tolerated during any events or classroom sessions of the conference and will be dealt with accordingly. Remember, you are representing your department or organization while attending this or any other public event and many wear clothing, etc. that identify you with a particular agency, so please act accordingly.

HOTEL INFORMATION

The Green River Firefighters Association would like to recommend these preferred hotels that have a long history of supporting the Bryant Stiles Officers School. These hotels *may* offer a special rate for firefighters and others attending the school, while rooms last. Please contact your hotel of choice for rates and mention the Firefighter Conference when booking.



Holiday Inn Owensboro Riverfront

701 West 1st Street

270-683-1111

Home2 Suites by Hilton Owensboro

560 West 2nd Street

270-645-5001





Courtyard by Marriott Owensboro

3129 Highland Pointe Drive

270-685-4140

Book BEFORE Feb 05, 2027 for rate: $119/night

Book your group rate for Bryant Stiles Officer's School

Best Western Plus

1018 Goetz Drive

270-689-0939





TownePlace Suites Owensboro

3365 Hayden Road

270-231-8222

Event Schedule

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 25th

8:00am – Classes in session

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 26th

7:00am-8:00am – On-Site Registration / Check-in

8:00am-12:00pm – Classes in Session

12:00pm-5:00pm – On-Site Registration / Check-in

1:00pm-5:00pm – Classes in Session

1:00pm – Joint Meeting: Kentucky Fire Commission
Kentucky Fire Chiefs
Kentucky Firefighters Association

6:00pm-12:00am – Firefighter Appreciation Party
DJ, Dancing, Prizes
Appetizers and Drink Vouchers From:



SATURDAY FEBRUARY 27th

6:30am-8:00am – On-Site Registration / Check-in

8:00am-4:00pm – Classes in Session

4:00pm-9:00pm – Saturday Evening With the Vendors

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 28th

7:00am-8:00am – On-Site Registration / Check-in

8:00am-4:00pm – Classes in Session

ALL TIMES ARE CENTRAL STANDARD TIME

Lunch will be available for purchase at the Convention Center on Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Save The Date!

2028 Bryant Stiles Officers School

February 25th – 27th, 2028

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www.sfrtarea3.org

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PRESENTS

THE 2027 FIREFIGHTER APPRECIATION *party*

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26
6:00 PM

BRYANT STILES
OFFICERS SCHOOL

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	THURSDAY CLASS	
1	Fire Suppression Systems for Sprinkler Inspectors	Richard Peddicord
2	I'm The Chief…Now What?	Adam Lyons
	FRIDAY - MORNING CLASSES	
3	Firefighter Recruitment and Retention	David Goldsmith
4	Roadmap of Success	Joshua Dixon
5	The Fireground Blueprint: Tactical Risks, Reading the Building and Modern Size-up…	Christopher Naum
6	Discipline VS Compliance: Building Self-Discipline in Leadership	Zach Mathews
7	Se7en Habits of Highly Effective Safety Officers	Frank Montes De Oca
8	Firefighter Cancer Support Network: You Fight Fire, We Fight Cancer	Marc Henderson
9	Drilling for Excellence	Keith Niemann
	FRIDAY - AFTERNOON CLASSES	
10	From All-Volunteer to Combination Staffing	John Buckman
11	The Fireground Blueprint: Legacy and Modern Residential Fires	Christopher Naum
12	Adaptive Leadership: Are you a Roadmap or a Roadblock?	Frank Montes De Oca
13	Reading People to Leading People	Zach Mathews
14	Building a Top Shelf Culture	Keith Niemann
15	First Priority: First Responder Wellness	River Valley Behavioral Health
16	How to Learn From an Extrication	Lance Wayne/Mitch Powell
17	From Need to Narrative: AFG Grant Writing for the Fire Service	Beth Bishop
	FRIDAY - ALL DAY CLASSES	
18	Fire Alarm Systems for Inspectors	Eric Grimes
19	Fire Inspector II	Tim Juett
	SATURDAY - ONE DAY CLASSES	
20	The 25th Hour: Priority Management for Chief Officers	Zach Mathews
21	Fire Ground Operations with Limited Staffing	Tim Whitham
22	Stupid Is As Stupid Does: Fire Officer Leadership, Decision Making, and Accountability	John Buckman
23	Fire Service "Specific" Leadership Essentials	John Turner
24	A View from the Street: Reading Buildings and Size-Up on Main Street	Christopher Naum
25	The Efficient Engine	Keith Niemann
26	Fire Inspector I	Tim Juett
27	The Art of Reading Smoke	Rob Backer
28	Big Box Fires: Chaos to Command	Frank Montes De Oca
29	Managing Disaster in the Bluegrass State	Jody Meiman
	SUNDAY - ONE DAY CLASSES	
30	Fireground Strategy: Commanding the Fire Ground	John Turner
31	Building the 'WE' In Your Fire Department	Tim Holman
32	Leadership Challenges: Be Ready to Lead	Tim Whitham
33	Developing a Successful Mentoring Program: You Recruited Them, Now Keep Them	Frank Montes De Oca
34	Officers' Role In Leading Volunteers	John Buckman
35	The Fireground Blueprint: Lessons, Learnings, and Leadership from the Fireground	Christopher Naum
36	The Art of Reading Smoke	Rob Backer
37	The Art of Predicting the Future…And Why Tunnel Vision Is The Modern-Day Devil	Jody Meiman
38	DISC Personality Profiling for Chief Officers	Zach Mathews
39	Leadership From the Bottom Up	Candace Ashby
	SATURDAY & SUNDAY - TWO DAY CLASSES	
40	NFA - New Fire Chief: Administrative Issues (F0761)	David Lewis
41	NFA - Leadership In Supervision: Creating Environments for Professional Growth (F0646)	Dr. Randall W. Hanifen
42	NFA - Applications of Operational Safety (F2500) (Formerly Incident Safety Officer)	David Zinther
43	NFA - Decision Making for Initial Company Operations (F0457)	James Annas, Jr., JD
44	NFA - Fire Investigation: Fire As A Weapon (F0756)	Derrick Young

SATURDAY EVENING WITH THE VENDORS

Saturday, February 27th, 2027

4:00 – 9:00 PM





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Numerous Vendors From

Across The Country!

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Meet Sparky the Fire Dog!







Green River Firefighters
2027 Meeting Dates

January 28th	District 3 Office – Greenville 4678 State Route 181 N., Greenville
February 26-28	Bryant Stiles Officers School Owensboro Convention Center
March 25th	Richland Fire Department 6310 Beulah Road Madisonville KY 42431
May 27th	Henderson FD Station #1 540 Second Street Henderson KY 42420
July 22nd	Owensboro FD Walter Freeman Training Center 1323 Daviess Street Owensboro
July 29-Aug 1	Kentucky Firefighters Association Conference Elizabethtown, KY
September 30th	Lewisport Fire Department 590 Old Mill Rd, Lewisport
October 22-24	Fall School/Owensboro Community College 4800 New Hartford Rd Owensboro 42303
November 18th	Joint meeting with Dixie/SCKFA TBD

2028 Bryant Stiles Officers School
February 25-27, 2028

Green River Firefighters Association/Kentucky Fire Commission

Ultrasound Health Screening

As a result of our continued commitment to the health and wellness of our members, Green River Firefighters Association and Kentucky Fire Commission will be partnering with United Diagnostic Services to host a health screening event on **February 26th-27th, 2027.** This event will take place at:

Owensboro Convention Center
501 W 2nd Street
Owensboro, KY 42301

UDS will be conducting early detection diagnostic testing, which has proven successful in identifying actionable pathologies to improve overall health as well as early detection for cancer and cardiovascular issues. Early detection has had a significant impact on helping prevent and reverse potential future catastrophic events.

All screenings are performed using ultrasound, making them safe, painless, and non-invasive. The evaluation includes an Echocardiogram, as well as scans of the Carotid arteries, Abdominal Aorta, Thyroid, Liver, Spleen, Gallbladder, Bladder, Kidneys, and Testicles. For females, an External Pelvic scan is also included. The entire exam takes about 30 minutes to complete.

Fasting for at least 8 hours is required for the screening and you must pre-register to participate. Individuals are allowed to drink water during this period. About 1 ½ hours prior to appointment time, start to drink 32 ounces of water so bladder is full at the start of the exam. Be sure to use the email & phone number you'd like to receive updates when registering.

Pre-registration is required. To schedule your appointment:

1. Click the [**Scheduling Link**] or scan the QR Code
2. Select your preferred appointment date and time.
3. Enter your details: first and last name, phone number, and email address.
4. Provide any additional information if required.
5. Complete payment
6. Check your inbox for a confirmation email with further instructions.

For questions, please call our Main Number (646) 553-5803

2027 BRYANT STILES OFFICERS SCHOOL
Green River Firefighters Association
February 26-28, 2027
Owensboro Convention Center-Owensboro, KY

To: GRFA Vendors

From: Marc Henderson, Exhibits Coordinator
Email: Marc.henderson@kctcs.edu Phone: (270) 499-1602

Date: 10/27/2026

Subject: **2027 Bryant Stiles Officers School**
By the Green River Firefighters Association

The Green River Firefighters Associations 40th Annual Bryant Stiles Officers School is fast approaching. This year's dates are February 26-28, 2027. The school will once again be held at the Owensboro Convention Center in beautiful downtown Owensboro. The 45,000 square ft. Exposition Hall is primed and ready for our annual **"Saturday Evening with the Vendors" on February 27th from 3:00 to 9:00pm CST.** We want to thank you for being one of these vendors and we look forward to seeing you again this year. This year we will have these options for vendors:

- 10 X 10: $200.00 Pipe and drape booth to include (1) 8ft table, skirted on three sides, (2) chairs.
- 12 X 20: $300.00 Basic open floor space for one (1) ambulance, Demo vehicle, response trailer/service equipment or applicable size of space.
- 20 X 40: $400.00 Floor Space will be utilized for multiple vehicles/equipment.
- 12 X 40: $300.00 Additional open-floor spaces **(limit 1)** can be obtained and will be utilized for longer/multiple vehicles.

Floor Space is limited this year so be sure and register early, sizes are approximate and will depend on available space/usage.
GRFA reserves the right to modify the actual size of floor space based on floor location and availability.

Corporate Sponsorships are also available this year, please contact Marc Henderson for additional information at 270-499-1602 or marc.henderson@kctcs.edu.

Registration and payment will be available on-line and can be accessed at:
www.sfrtarea3.org

Important Information

We ask that ALL vehicles and trailers be moved into the Exhibit Hall on Friday, February 26th, 2027.

Checks can be sent to:

Green River Firefighters Association, PO Box 775, Greenville, KY 42345.

For further information about the 2027 Bryant Stiles Officers School
Contact us at 270-499-1602 or marc.henderson@kctcs.edu

Bryant Stiles Officers School

40th Annual School
February 26-28, 2027
Owensboro, KY

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP
DONOR LEVELS

Information needs to be received by February 1, 2027.
Email to marc.henderson@kctcs.edu

$10,000 (Platinum)

2 Each of 20X40 Floor Space or Booths
Banner at Registration Desk
Banner in Vendor Hall
Recognition on all Conference Signage
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Flyer or Catalog Handed to Students at Registration
Meeting with Green River Executive Board Sunday Morning

$5,000 (Gold)

1 Booth or 20X40 Floor Space (Your Choice)
Banner in Vendor Hall
Ad in Brochure

$2,500 (Silver)

Free Booth Rental
Signage displayed at the school
Ad in Brochure

$1,000 (Bronze)

Sponsorship of 1 day's refreshments (morning & noon)
Signage displayed at the school.
Ad in Brochure

$500

Sponsorship of morning or afternoon refreshments
Signage displayed at the school.

OUR SPONSORS

Please take time to stop and visit our sponsors for the 40th Annual / 2027 Bryant Stiles Officers School. Without their support, we could not have such a great school for the Kentucky Fire Service!



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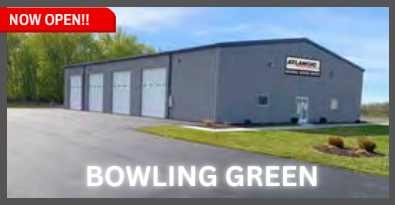
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RiverValley Behavioral Health is a proud supporter of our first responders and the amazing work they do every day to keep our communities safe and healthy. RiverValley has served the Green River region of Kentucky since 1967, offering a full range of mental health services and supports, in addition to substance use treatment, and specialized care for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

rvbh rivervalley behavioral health

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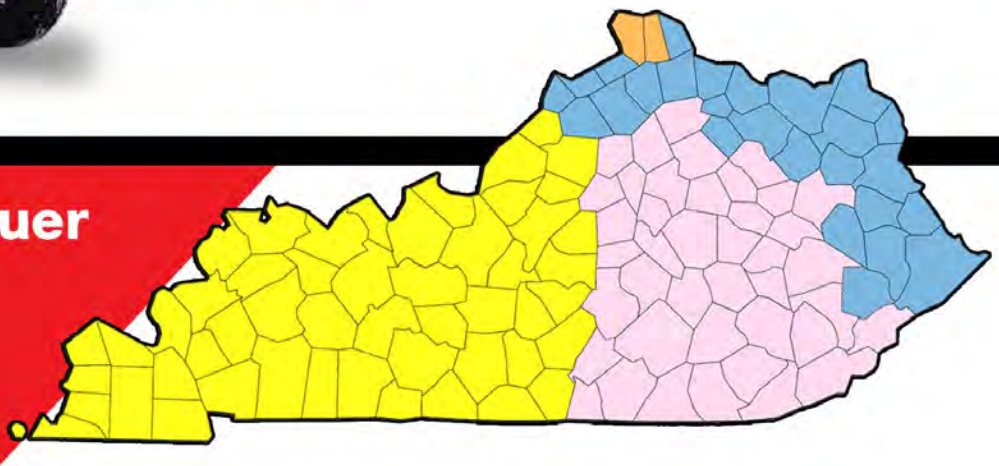
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FIREFIGHTER CANCER SUPPORT NETWORK

Since 2005, the nonprofit Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN) has provided assistance and one-on-one mentoring to thousands of cancer-stricken firefighters and their families.

Vision:
To be the global leader in firefighter cancer support, awareness and education.

Mission:
To assist firefighters and EMS providers and their immediate families diagnosed with cancer by providing badge to badge support, training and guidance.

Visit us at: **FirefighterCancerSupport.org**

1. Fire Suppression Systems for Sprinkler Inspectors

Instructor: Richard Peddicord

This class will satisfy the requirements for the six (6) hours continuing education for fire suppression system sprinkler inspectors licensed by the Kentucky Department of Housing, Building, and Construction. This will cover the code requirements, key definitions, the allowable types of fire sprinkler systems, system components, specific tests, inspections and maintenance activities, and required test duration for valves, sprinklers, gauges, alarm devices, fire department connections and fire pumps. This program includes examples and interactive discussion on how the requirements of NFPA 25 are applied.

About the Instructor:

Richard Peddicord began his firefighting experience at the age of 14 years old by attending the KY State Fire School in Lexington. After graduating high school, he volunteered with Fayette County FD. He went on to work for the Kentucky State Police. He spent more than a decade designing, installing and inspecting fire protection systems in Kentucky. Richard has dedicated his professional career to learning and sharing his knowledge of the preservation of life and property in all fire and safety related areas. Richard surpassed his childhood dream by becoming the Assistant Director for the Kentucky State Fire Marshal's Office. During his tenure with the Division of Fire Prevention, he had many accomplishments, including overseeing the initial operations of the Kentucky Safe Cigarette Program and the states sprinkler inspection program. Richard retired from the Kentucky Fire Marshal's office in 2020. Today, he serves as the Assistant Chief of the Stamping Ground Fire Department.

2. I'm The Chief…Now What?

Beyond the Fireground: Leadership, Administration & Accountability

Lead Instructor: Adam Lyons

Becoming a fire chief involves more than leading emergency operations. This course explores the administrative, legal, and leadership responsibilities of managing a Kentucky fire department. Topics include Kentucky Fire Commission requirements, training compliance, records retention, financial oversight, and governance of departments. Participants will also have the opportunity to engage in an open roundtable discussion addressing real-world challenges facing today's fire service leaders.

About the Instructors:

Adam Lyons has over 30 years of fire service experience in both career and volunteer departments. He currently serves as Deputy Chief of Fulton County Fire & Rescue and Captain/Training Officer with the Fulton Fire Department. Throughout his career, he has held various leadership positions, gaining experience in fire department operations, administration, and training. He also serves as an adjunct instructor with Kentucky State Fire Rescue Training.

Carrie Wilburn has 22 years of experience in the fire service, beginning with a volunteer department and serving the rest of her career with Lexington Fire Department. With Lexington, she held several positions including company officer and Bureau Commander of Fire Investigation and Recruiting and Hiring. Since 2024, she has served as Director of Operations for the Kentucky Fire Commission. Her background includes extensive expertise in fire service operations, investigations, recruitment, and personnel development.

Todd Warner brings more than 25 years of experience with the Kentucky Fire Commission, including three years serving as the State Fire Rescue Training District 2 Coordinator. He is also a retired Captain of the Paducah Fire Department, where he served for 23 years. From 2014 to 2022, Todd served as an Industrial Specialist with the Kentucky Fire Commission, providing specialized training and support to industry. Throughout his career, he has held numerous leadership positions, developing extensive experience in fire service operations, administration, and training. His commitment to firefighter development and public safety continues to support the fire service across Kentucky.

Dustin Staves has over 20 years of experience in fire and emergency services. He began his career in full-time roles in 911 communications and emergency medical services and has served as a volunteer firefighter with the Airport-Sorgho Fire Department since 2005. In 2021, Dustin joined the Kentucky Fire Commission as a Support Specialist with the former National Responder Preparedness Center. During his tenure, he worked closely with the team in the development of and transition to the Fire Academy of Kentucky, where he continued serving as a Training Specialist for recruit classes 004–006. In 2025, Dustin transitioned to the Operations Division of the Kentucky Fire Commission as a Training Records and Compliance Specialist. In this role, he is responsible for auditing training and financial records of more than 200 fire departments across Western Kentucky. In addition to his primary responsibilities, Dustin continues to serve as a part-time adjunct instructor and IFSAC evaluator with State Fire Rescue Training.

3. Firefighter Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment and Retention is not just a local problem; it is a nationwide problem. This class is designed for Career or Volunteer Fire Departments that have a desire to add and retain members to their organization. There will be a strong focus on volunteer organizations.
In this 4-Hour Class we will address local, state and national statistics on where we were, where we are, and where we are going. We will review some out-of-the-box ideas on recruitment.
We will address obstacles that keep your department from recruiting, as well as the changing culture and generational roadblocks.

- Historical Facts Regarding Firefighters
- Identify Key Issues Retaining Firefighters
- Identify Key Issues Recruiting Firefighters
- Generational Issues
- Using Multimedia to Recruit
- Understanding Resources that are available

About the Instructor:
Dave Goldsmith has 35 years of fire service experience in volunteer and combination departments. He is the retired Fire Chief of the Highview Protection District in Louisville, Kentucky. He served 10 years on the Kentucky Fire Commission, serving as chairman of the education committee. He is the past President of the Jefferson County Fire Instructors Association, past President of the Kentucky Regional Fire Training Academy, and former Commander of the Jefferson County HazMat Team. He also spent 15 years as an adjunct instructor at Texas A&M.

4. Roadmap of Success

The "Roadmap of Success" class offers and in-depth exploration of the success framework utilized by the Henderson Fire Department. Participants will engage in discussions centered on the strategies for becoming a firefighting preparation first department.

Key topics will include:

- Mission: Understanding the department's commitment to serving the community effectively.
- Vision for the Future: Outlining the long-term goals of what the organization wants to achieve.
- Core Values: Examining the Foundational principles, guide actions and decision-making within the department.
- Defining Success: Identifying and analyzing the metrics and milestones that characterize success within the organization.
- Training Program: An in-depth look at the organization year-round training schedule.
- Succession Planning: Identifying and developing personnel to ensure seamless transition and operational continuity.

This course aims to equip participants with the knowledge to contribute to their organization and enhance their own professional development.

About the instructor:
Fire Chief **Josh Dixon** has dedicated 18 years to the Henderson Fire Department, advancing through multiple roles including Firefighter, Engineer, Captain, and Division Chief, before becoming Fire Chief. His extensive experience covers multiple aspects of firefighting and leadership within the department. Recently, he was honored as the 2025 Career Kentucky Fire Chief of the Year by the Kentucky Association of Fire Chiefs.

5. The Fireground Blueprint: Tactical Risks, Reading the Building and Modern Size-up on Today's Fireground

Instructor: Christopher Naum

Arriving companies and personnel at today's structure fires must be able to rapidly and accurately identify key elements of the fireground, process that data based upon a widening field of variables present on today's evolving fireground and consider timely actions that address prioritized actions requiring intervention. This session will present tactical risks and key considerations for the First-Due Company, Company Officer and Commander affecting and influencing operational risk management, command and tactical safety and tactical protocols**.** Incorporating the Buildingsonfire FACTS concept for First-Arriving Construction, Tactics and Safety, with a focus on the Residential Structure (traditional and modern), The Small Foot-print Commercial Structure and the Main Street Buildings common throughout the state and region.

About the instructor:

Christopher Naum is a 50-year fire service veteran and a highly regarded national and international instructor, author, lecturer and fire officer, a distinguished authority on building construction sciences affecting fireground operations, command and tactics, he has traveled extensively throughout the USA and globally delivering training programs on building construction & architecture sciences and firefighting, fireground leadership, command management and operational safety for over thirty-seven years. He is a sought-after national keynote speaker, instructor and presenter and has served as an FDIC General Session Keynote speaker and National Fire Academy Adjunct Instructor.

6. Discipline VS Compliance: Building Self-Discipline in Leadership

Instructor: Zach Matthews

Accountability should develop people—not simply document failure. This practical, interactive course helps Fire and EMS leaders distinguish between enforcing compliance and developing the self-discipline that supports lasting performance. Participants explore how to uphold clear standards while using teaching, coaching, structured practice, and appropriate consequences to strengthen individual responsibility.

Rather than treating every performance or conduct concern as a disciplinary problem, participants learn to identify the underlying gap: unclear expectations, inadequate training, limited skill, judgment, self-discipline, or a policy violation. They then practice selecting a response that protects organizational standards while building capability and ownership.

This course is designed for Chief officers, command staff, company officers, Fire and EMS supervisors, and current or aspiring leaders responsible for standards, culture, performance, and employee development.

About the instructor:

Zach Mathews is an experienced speaker, international trainer and executive coach who inspires audiences with his fast paced and entertaining programs focused on leadership, communication, and personal growth. With over twenty-eight years in public safety, Zach brings a wealth of experience to the table. His journey has taken him from conservation officer and wildland firefighter to leadership roles such as Investigation Section commander, Training Section commander, Logistics Manager, and Office of Professional Standards commander. In 2019, the Indiana Department Homeland Security recognized Zach's leadership abilities, tapping him to teach essential skills like body language and executive leadership courses across the state.

Zach now serves as the Planning Section Chief for the Indiana Fire & Public Safety Academy where he and his staff are responsible for firefighter certifications and instructor standards. Zach also coordinates statewide executive leadership training programs to include the biannual Indiana Fire Chief's Academy, and a company officer executive leadership course taught throughout the state. Zach is a John Maxwell certified executive coach and DISC behavioral analysist who works one-on-one with fire chiefs to achieve both professional and personal goals. Zach has trained thousands throughout his career and is motivated to provide training that will positively impact the fire service. But what truly sets Zach apart is his passion for effective communication.

7. Se7en Habits of Highly Effective Safety Officers

Instructor: Frank Montes de Oca

Safety Officers have been a critical component of the Incident Command System for over 30 years. During that evolutionary period of the American Fire Service what have we learned? Have we truly improved the safety and well-being of our responders? This **4-hour** combination of lecture, discussion and group activities will focus on practices that enhance the performance of Incident Safety Officers while improving the safety of all responders. Topics will include:

- How Did the American Fire Service Get Here?
- Do Incident Safety Officers Keep Responders Safe?
- Safety Officer: Know Thyself!
- Qualification Versus Certification?
- You Be The Safety Officer!
- Can YOU Afford A Lawsuit?

About the instructor:

Frank Montes de Oca is a former firefighter/paramedic who served in Florida, Ohio and North Carolina. During his 38-year career he was appointed or promoted to battalion chief, division chief and chief of departments. A graduate of the NFA's EFO program, Chief Montes de Oca continues to serve the fire and emergency services community as an adjunct instructor for the National Fire Academy; delivering programs for OSHA, the EPA and lecturing throughout the country.

8. Firefighter Cancer Support Network: You Fight Fire, We Fight Cancer

Instructor: Marc Henderson

The harsh reality is that almost two-thirds of the firefighters battling fires today will be battling cancer tomorrow. Cancer remains the leading cause of line-of-duty deaths among firefighters. By making a meaningful contribution to our mission, to assist firefighters and EMS providers and their immediate families diagnosed with cancer through our unique support services, we can make a greater impact on our nation's heroes battling cancer.

The goals of this class will be to educate firefighters and EMS Personnel about their increased risk of developing cancer; encourage actions and behaviors to reduce or prevent exposure to occupational cancer hazards; encourage healthy lifestyle choices to further reduce cancer risk; and provide information about screenings and early detection, have conversations about culture change, and share resources available to firefighters, EMS personnel, and their families following a cancer diagnosis.

About the Instructor:

Marc Henderson is the Kentucky State Director for the Firefighter Cancer Support Network and is a cancer survivor. He was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer in 2021. He has 38 years' experience as a volunteer firefighter/EMT in Daviess County, Kentucky and has worked for the Kentucky Fire Commission for 17 years, currently serving as the Region 1 Coordinator Marc served as the Green River Firefighters Association Secretary since 2006, and was the Kentucky Firefighters Association President in 2024. He serves on the Bryant Stiles Officers School Board and is the Vendor Coordinator for the school. He also is the School Coordinator for Kentucky State Fire School held each June in Lexington.

9. Drilling for Excellence

Instructor: Keith Niemann

The citizens we protect deserve nothing less than EXCELLENCE on the fireground. The only way to achieve fireground excellence is to ensure that you are Drilling for Excellence. From instructing recruits to company-level training, there are only so many hours allotted so every drill has to count. This class will discuss building your training program so participants can get the most out of each drill. We will break down several of my favorite training drills and discuss how the building blocks of a "Crawl-Walk-Run" format are essential for success.

About the Instructor:
Keith Niemann is a 27-year member of the Wichita Fire Department and is currently assigned as an Acting Battalion Chief over the Special Operations Companies. ACH Niemann spent his career assigned to Kansas' busiest engine companies before overseeing WFD's recruit academy for five years. ACH Niemann is President of the Wichita FOOLS of Oz and Chairman of the Wichita HOT fire conference.

10. From All-Volunteer to Combination Staffing

Instructor: John Buckman

The volunteer fire service has a long and proud history of providing emergency services to communities throughout the United States. However, changing demographics, increasing emergency response demands, declining daytime volunteer availability, growing training requirements, and changing community expectations are challenging the ability of some all-volunteer fire departments to maintain reliable emergency response capabilities.

For many communities, the question is no longer whether volunteers are valuable. The question is whether the existing staffing model can consistently provide the level of emergency service the community needs and expects.

Transitioning from an all-volunteer department to a combination department is one of the most significant organizational decisions a fire chief and governing board may face. It affects finances, operations, culture, leadership, personnel management, and the department's relationship with its community.

This four-hour course examines how to determine when combination staffing is necessary, how to evaluate available options, and how to manage the transition without destroying the volunteer organization that built the department.

This is a course designed and developed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

Students will be provided with a digital copy of a workbook that is a roadmap for decision making about the need to transition.

About the Instructor:

John M. Buckman III served 55 years in the fire service from firefighter, Chief, state academy training director, author, photographer, International Association President and instructor. He has authored six books. He has produced 5 photography books. He is a highly sought after speaker for local, regional and national events. He has been at the Bryant Stiles Officers School each year since the beginning.

11. The Fireground Blueprint: Legacy and Modern Residential Fires

Instructor: Christopher Naum

A straightforward look at the evolving residential fireground and operations on the first-due. A focus on tactical risks and key considerations for the First-Due Company, Company Officer and Commander affecting and influencing operational risk management, command and tactical safety and tactical protocols based upon occupancy risks, reading the building and adaptive management principles for legacy residential and the modern single family resident structure. Key insights on building performance and behavior under fire, construction influences and factors affecting OPS and Tactics and a look at the differences of tactics, tactical windows, risks, fireground considerations and process will be presented for both old and new construction and residential layouts and designs. This program addresses fires in era driven residential occupancies that have vastly different tactics, risks and operational management templates. This is a must program for all company and command officers; new or veteran and will also examines the various residential building construction common throughout the state and region and its impact on building fires on today's fireground.

About the Instructor:

Christopher Naum is a 50-year fire service veteran and a highly regarded national and international instructor, author, lecturer and fire officer, a distinguished authority on building construction sciences affecting fireground operations, command and tactics, he has traveled extensively throughout the USA and globally delivering training programs on building construction & architecture sciences and firefighting, fireground leadership, command management and operational safety for over thirty-seven years. He is a sought-after national keynote speaker, instructor and presenter and has served as an FDIC General Session Keynote speaker and National Fire Academy Adjunct Instructor.

12. Adaptive Leadership: Are You a Roadmap or a Roadblock?

Instructor: Frank Montes de Oca

Dealing with the "old heads" and newbies, reduced funding, ever-changing regulations and responder apathy can sometimes drive a leader to question his or her sanity. But, is the leader the problem? Has he or she drawn a clear, understandable, and easily followed roadmap? Or is the leader the roadblock?

This interactive **4-hour** lecture will cover:

- Are Your Goals Out Of Focus Or Absent?
- Drawing the Road Map With A Little Help From My Friends.
- Gen Alpha – Gen Z…Can You Hang?
- Are You Dancing On Landmines?
- Guilty Of The "Big D" – Delegation.
- Better Work Balance Doesn't Always Equal A Better Life.

About the Instructor:

Frank Montes de Oca is a former firefighter/paramedic who served in Florida, Ohio and North Carolina. During his 38-year career he was appointed or promoted to battalion chief, division chief and chief of departments. A graduate of the NFA's EFO program, Chief Montes de Oca continues to serve the fire and emergency services community as an adjunct instructor for the National Fire Academy; delivering programs for OSHA, the EPA and lecturing throughout the country.

13. Reading People to Leading People

Instructor: Zach Mathews

You can read smoke and EKGs—but can you read people?

Strong leadership begins with human connection. Reading People to Leading People© is an interactive course designed to help fire service leaders build meaningful rapport, recognize communication cues, and communicate with greater confidence and empathy—even in challenging situations.

Developed from more than two decades of investigative and interrogation experience, this course brings practical human-connection skills to the fire service. Participants explore how words, body language, and vocal delivery work together to shape understanding, credibility, and influence.

In high-stakes environments, words alone may not convey the full message. This course examines nonverbal communication, including facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, and posture, alongside paraverbal communication—the tone and delivery of the voice—to help leaders better understand others and communicate their own intentions.

About the Instructor:

Zach Mathews is an experienced speaker, international trainer and executive coach who inspires audiences with his fast paced and entertaining programs focused on leadership, communication, and personal growth. With over twenty-eight years in public safety, Zach brings a wealth of experience to the table. His journey has taken him from conservation officer and wildland firefighter to leadership roles such as Investigation Section commander, Training Section commander, Logistics Manager, and Office of Professional Standards commander. In 2019, the Indiana Department Homeland Security recognized Zach's leadership abilities, tapping him to teach essential skills like body language and executive leadership courses across the state.

Zach now serves as the Planning Section Chief for the Indiana Fire & Public Safety Academy where he and his staff are responsible for firefighter certifications and instructor standards. Zach also coordinates statewide executive leadership training programs to include the biannual Indiana Fire Chief's Academy, and a company officer executive leadership course taught throughout the state. Zach is a John Maxwell certified executive coach and DISC behavioral analysist who works one-on-one with fire chiefs to achieve both professional and personal goals. Zach has trained thousands throughout his career and is motivated to provide training that will positively impact the fire service. But what truly sets Zach apart is his passion for effective communication.

14. Building a Top Shelf Culture

Instructor: Keith Niemann

This program takes a bottom-up approach to building a Top Shelf culture within your department. Starting with the 5 keys necessary to produce competency within the crews, that will lead to consistent and reliable actions by members on the fireground. To gain the desired aggressiveness without sacrificing safety, the members must be able to operate at a high level of proficiency. When this level of proficiency and operational consistency is achieved, the incident commander can better weigh his risks, accurately judge the time needed, and better predict the outcome of their assignments.

About the Instructor:
Keith Niemann is a 27-year member of the Wichita Fire Department and is currently assigned as an Acting Battalion Chief over the Special Operations Companies. ACH Niemann spent his career assigned to Kansas' busiest engine companies before overseeing WFD's recruit academy for five years. ACH Niemann is President of the Wichita FOOLS of Oz and Chairman of the Wichita HOT fire conference.

15. First Priority: First Responder Wellness

Facilitator: Teresa Roberts

Join us for a "NON Death by Power point" interactive class that is designed by First Responders for First Responders. Community collaborators will guide a "whole person" approach to help participants ask meaningful questions and strategically plan for good days and bad days.

About the Instructors:

Teresa Roberts, Hancock County Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy Community Liaison will facilitate a fast-moving afternoon of discussion and activities. While she serves in many roles she will help connect resources and encourage participation.

River Valley Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic is the first choice in the Green River Region for whole person care. RVBH's **Ursula Mabrey** has over 20 years of experience in behavioral health and social work. She currently provides "trauma-informed" services to Veterans and military connected clients. She will help us identify those calls that break us and fuel us at the same time.

The Regional Prevention Center is housed within River Valley and focuses on healthy communities by preventing substance use disorder and the chain reaction that it causes. **Brooke Arnold** and **Heidi Wilson** will help us create a specific plan for our worst days while assisting us to use the dinner table for stronger communication with our families and peers about our struggles during and after the shift. Thus, strengthening our firehouses and our communities

Hollimere Health offers "personalized psychiatric care for ages 6y+ & adults through two care model options: Concierge Psychiatry or Insurance-Based Care." **Holy Pate**, CEO of Hollimere Health, will help us practice calming activities and sleep strategies to help our overall physical health.

KY Federation of Fire Chaplains are dedicated to being a constant source of spiritual and emotional support for fire and rescue personnel. Regional Director, **Nathan Miller**, Chaplain and Critical Incident Stress Management instructor from Hopkinsville Fire will help us to lean into our peers and personal beliefs for support and peace.

16. How To Learn from an Extrication

Instructors: Lance Wayne

When the extrication scene becomes more than an average 'Bread & Butter' run, it is important to be prepared. Critical steps to consider when preparing include: What is the incident, What needs to be done, What resources might be necessary or useful, appropriate rigging, effective and efficient extrication, and the cleanup phase. Your department should prepare with extensive training, not only in the cutting of cars and trucks but also with stabilization tools and your relationship with your local wrecker service. This class will be led by Lance Wayne and Mitch Powell. The class will present a scene of an actual wreck, the issues encountered, and how the local fire department, along with the wrecker service, worked to free the entrapped victim and mitigate the scene. The instructors will present the lessons learned from the scenes presented.

About the Instructors:

Lance Wayne is an Assistant Chief with the Robards Fire Department in Henderson County where he has 26 years' experience. He works with Tri-State Towing where operates a heavy-duty wrecker serving Kentucky, southern Indiana and southern Illinois. He is a Haz-Mat Technician and frequently is called to mitigate a hazmat spill on roadways as well as cleanup of hazmat scenes. He is a Certified Wreck Master and has been awarded the Wreck Master of the year award.

17. From Need to Narrative: AFG Grant Writing for the Fire Service

Instructor: Beth Bishop

A strong AFG application does more than identify what your department needs. It must clearly communicate why the need exists, how it affects firefighters and community safety, and why federal funding is necessary.

This practical, fire-service-focused class guides participants through developing an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) application, from documenting departmental needs and gathering supporting data to writing a compelling narrative. Participants will explore how to demonstrate financial hardship and operational impact and explain how the requested project will improve firefighters and community safety. They will also examine common application mistakes and learn to assess an application from a peer reviewer's perspective.

Participants will also learn what data to gather to support their AFG applications and how to begin organizing it before the application period opens. Topics will include department and community demographics, call volume and response information, equipment inventories and condition, training needs, financial records, and project cost estimates. By identifying data sources and gaps early, firefighters can begin documenting their needs and preparing supporting information rather than waiting until the application period begins.

The class will conclude with an interactive question-and-answer session, giving participants an opportunity to ask questions about the AFG process, discuss challenges their departments may be facing, and gain additional insight into developing stronger applications.

Whether you're preparing your first AFG application or looking for ways to strengthen an application you've submitted before, this class is designed to provide practical tips and strategies you can take back to your department and apply to your next AFG application.

About the Instructors:

Beth Bishop is a Grants Manager and former firefighter who has been developing public safety grant applications since 2012. During that time, she has helped secure more than $15 million in grant awards for fire departments throughout Kentucky and Indiana.

With 18 years of experience as a firefighter, Beth brings firsthand knowledge of the challenges fire departments face when trying to fund the apparatus, equipment, training, technology, and facilities needed to protect their personnel and communities. Her grant-writing experience includes the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG), Port Security Grant Program (PSGP), Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S), local community grants, and nonprofit funding opportunities, with a primary focus on fire departments and public safety agencies. Beth has developed grant applications supporting a wide variety of projects, including fire apparatus, PPE, equipment, training, communications equipment, drones, firefighting vessels, and facility improvements. In 2026 alone, AFG awards for applications she worked on exceeded $3.2 million.

Adding another valuable perspective to her experience, Beth served for three years on AFG Peer Review Panels, giving her insight into both sides of the grant process. She brings that perspective into the classroom with a practical, straightforward approach focused on helping fire departments better understand what reviewers are looking for, avoid common mistakes, identify and gather the data needed to support their applications, clearly communicate their needs, and develop stronger, more competitive grant applications.

18. Fire Alarm Systems for Inspectors

Instructor: Eric Grimes

This class is developed and presented for the industry professionals that are required to attend and receive recertification credit for licensure. This class will help the students have a deeper understanding of Fire Alarm systems. Discussion as to where they are required, installed and maintained, proper inspection of the systems, how they function, how they can help save a life, and how they may be a benefit to the fire service. This class qualifies for the six (6) hours continuing education required for State Certified Fire Alarm Inspectors, and CEUs for Building Inspectors.

About the Instructor:

Eric Grimes has been in the commercial fire alarm industry for over 36 years. He has worked for Simplex Time Recorders, Tyco Fire and Safety, Johnson Controls, Kaiser Aluminum Warrick and is currently employed by Alpha Energy Solutions. Eric holds an Associates of Applied Science in Electronics and in Fire/Rescue Science Technology. He has been a KY State Certified Fire Alarm Inspector since 1990 and is NICET IV certified in Fire Protection Technology – Fire Alarm Systems.

19. Fire Inspector II

Instructor: Tim Juett

This class is the second step in the Fire Marshal's revised Fire Inspector program. This class is designed for the fire inspectors and building code officials that deal with life safety issues daily basis. The students will get detailed instruction on specific occupancy requirements, occupant load calculations and seating arrangements. This class will consist of instruction followed by an exam. Certificates are issued upon passing the test. Course Objectives: Attendees will be instructed in the performance of, and requirements for complex fire inspections and code recognition; and will gain knowledge in occupant load calculation and seating arrangement in places of assembly, fair and exposition centers, and special events.

Prerequisite for this class is Fire Inspector I, verified by a copy of your Fire Inspector I certificate, and 6 months in the performance of inspections verified by your chief or supervisor.

About the Instructor:

Tim Juett served in the US NAVY for 4 years and served during Desert Storm. He retired from Georgetown Fire Department serving 13 years as a firefighter and the last 7 years as an inspector. He has worked for the State Fire Marshal's office as an inspector and Supervisor for the last 13 years. Tim likes the outdoors and spending time with friends and family. He is a familiar face around the Commonwealth to fire inspectors as he travels teaching the Fire Inspector I and Fire Inspector II classes at fire departments and fire schools.

20. The 25th Hour: Priority Management for Chief Officers

Instructor: Zach Matthews

Move beyond managing a calendar and focus on the priorities, decisions, resources, and leadership attention that shape organizational performance. The 25th Hour helps Fire and EMS executives shift from constant activity to strategic impact, aligning their efforts with department mission, community outcomes, and personnel well-being.

Chief officers face competing organizational demands, stakeholder expectations, budget constraints, and operational pressures. This course develops priority management as a strategic leadership tool, helping leaders clarify what matters most, allocate resources intentionally, and sustain focus across a complex organization.

Participants explore the Eisenhower Matrix to distinguish urgency from importance and the Pareto Principle to identify the actions and initiatives with the greatest organizational impact. The emphasis is not on fitting more activity into the day, but on creating the clarity, capacity, and accountability needed to advance mission-critical priorities.

About the Instructor:

Zach Mathews is an experienced speaker, international trainer and executive coach who inspires audiences with his fast paced and entertaining programs focused on leadership, communication, and personal growth. With over twenty-eight years in public safety, Zach brings a wealth of experience to the table. His journey has taken him from conservation officer and wildland firefighter to leadership roles such as Investigation Section commander, Training Section commander, Logistics Manager, and Office of Professional Standards commander. In 2019, the Indiana Department Homeland Security recognized Zach's leadership abilities, tapping him to teach essential skills like body language and executive leadership courses across the state.

Zach now serves as the Planning Section Chief for the Indiana Fire & Public Safety Academy where he and his staff are responsible for firefighter certifications and instructor standards. Zach also coordinates statewide executive leadership training programs to include the biannual Indiana Fire Chief's Academy, and a company officer executive leadership course taught throughout the state. Zach is a John Maxwell certified executive coach and DISC behavioral analysist who works one-on-one with fire chiefs to achieve both professional and personal goals. Zach has trained thousands throughout his career and is motivated to provide training that will positively impact the fire service. But what truly sets Zach apart is his passion for effective communication.

21. Fireground Operations with Limited Staffing

Instructor: Tim Whitham

This presentation will identify how modern fire ground tactical decisions and best practices don't always align with today's fire service. Almost 90 percent of the fire departments in the United States are in small communities with a population of 10,000 people or less and are all, or predominantly volunteer agencies. Fire ground tactics and acceptable standards indicate that a minimum of 16 firefighters should be the minimum number of firefighters on the fireground however, how does the agency with only three or four members on scene start fire suppression activities? Then to try and add Rapid Intervention Teams (RIT), Incident Command System (ICS), and the OSHA two-in, two-out rule all influence the fireground commander's decisions as it pertains to fire suppression. In this class, students will learn how to provide superior fire suppression while waiting for additional personnel to arrive on scene and be proactive in their approach to dealing with emergency situations prior to the actual dispatch.

Ventilation, fire attack, search and rescue, water supply, hose-line advancement, forcible entry, rapid intervention, command, operations, and safety are all considerations and tactical objectives that a fire ground commander must address and utilize to stop the spread of fire.

This class takes a different approach in addressing and identifying the whole incident through scene size-up, applying a risk model to examine risk vs benefit for fire ground actions, then prioritizing the situational tasks until additional fire suppression personnel are on scene. Minimum GPM flows, unconventional approaches to water delivery, controlling ventilation points to place a fire in a ventilation limited state are discussed as students formulate evidence-based tactical decisions. The best organizational accomplishments often occur due to the efforts of everyone being on the same page and the ability to develop others who will lead to successful results.

About the Instructor:

Tim Whitham has served as the Fire Chief for the City of Edwardsville, Kansas since 2015. He has over three decades of fire service experience and has served in all capacities from firefighter, company officer to fire chief. Tim is a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program and has designations as a Chief Fire Officer and Fire Marshal from the Commission on Professional Credentialing. He holds a bachelor's degree in Fire and Emergency Response Management from the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh and a master's degree in leadership from Grand Canyon University.

Chief Whitham is a regular presenter at fire departments as well as at fire and emergency services events and conferences across the country including presenting at Fire Rescue International on multiple occasions, he has authored articles for fire service and EMS publications. Chief Whitham has addressed state legislative bodies and committees on concerns facing the fire and emergency services agencies. Tim serves in various capacities on numerous boards and committees, including having served as the Volunteer and Combination Officers Section representative to the Program Planning Committee for IAFC Fire-Rescue International.

Chief Whitham is the Fire Science Program Director for Johnson County Community College, prior to this appointment he served many years as an instructor. He is also an instructor for the National Fire Academy, and is an instructor, evaluator and site coordinator for the Kansas University Fire Service Training Program. Chief Whitham has numerous IFSAC certifications including Fire Officer III and Instructor III. Tim also holds numerous NWCG qualifications and has deployed with the Johnson County Wildland Task Force. He is an Army veteran having served in airborne infantry regiments with the US Army and then transitioned to the National Guard.

22. STUPID IS AS STUPID DOES
Fire Officer Leadership, Decision-Making, and Accountability

Instructor: John Buckman

Every fire officer makes decisions. Some decisions save lives, protect firefighters, and strengthen the organization. Others create unnecessary risks, damage morale, destroy reputations, and expose firefighters and fire departments to preventable consequences.

The difference between a good decision and a stupid decision is not always intelligence, experience, or rank. Frequently, it is judgment, preparation, attitude, ego, or failure to recognize predictable consequences.

"Stupid Is as Stupid Does" is a provocative, practical fire officer leadership course examining the behaviors, decisions, and leadership failures that create problems in fire departments.

The program challenges officers to examine their own actions and recognize how poor decisions can affect firefighter safety, operational effectiveness, organizational culture, personnel relationships, public confidence, and personal credibility.

Participants will examine realistic situations involving fireground command, accountability, discipline, ethics, interpersonal conflict, training, risk management, and organizational leadership.

The course is built around one fundamental principle: You do not have to be a stupid person to make a stupid decision. But as a fire officer, you are responsible for recognizing mistakes, correcting them, and learning from them.

About the Instructor:

John M. Buckman III served 55 years in the fire service from firefighter, Chief, state academy training director, author, photographer, International Association President and instructor. He has authored six books. He has produced 5 photography books. He is a highly sought after speaker for local, regional and national events. He has been at the Bryant Stiles Officers School each year since the beginning.

23. Fire Service "Specific" Leadership Essentials

Instructor: John Turner

What separates a company officer who holds rank from one who truly leads? This course is grounded in real fire service experience, research, and observation of high-performing crews. Participants will examine five core leadership traits specific to the fire service and more importantly, how to apply them in day-to-day crew interactions. This is not a generic leadership class. We intentionally move past recycled "rah-rah" lessons from sports and the military and focus on the realities company officers face: building trust, addressing poor performance, making sound decisions under pressure, and leading peers. Attendees will leave with practical tools and a clear framework to strengthen credibility, improve crew performance, and lead with consistency in their organization.

About the Instructor:

John Turner holds the rank of Fire Chief in Derby, KS, a position he has held for the past six years. His career spans four decades, having risen through the operational ranks in some of the busiest companies within the Wichita Fire Department in Wichita, KS. A chief officer since 2009, he has managed numerous major emergencies. He is a contract instructor at the National Fire Academy and holds a master's degree in education. Chief Turner has conducted training sessions in over 30 states.

24. View from the Street: Reading Buildings and Size-up on Main Street Owensboro 2027 - Lecture and Walking Street Tour

Instructor: Christopher Naum

Returning again in 2027 and presenting the national signature Reading the Buildings program, taking the classroom to the streets with insights on building construction for today's fire service, this program was a highlight and much sought-out class last year; *A View from the Street: Reading Buildings and Size-up on Main Street – Owensboro 2027* is a hybrid program geared to promote new skill sets in the fundamentals of building size-up and assessment and building construction that directly impact firefighting and command operations at structure fires.

Today's buildings, occupancies and fireground present increasing challenges and demands that directly influence command decision-making and operational tactics. Presenting insights on Main Street Construction, Hazards and Risks for today's fire service, this highly acclaimed seminar focus is to increase awareness and promote new skill sets in the fundamentals of building construction, integrating improved size-up and building reads and operational assessment and engagement.

With a focus on Main Street and standalone Type III Buildings, Taxpayers and mixed occupancies, the program will look at the Predictability of Building Performance, overview of construction systems, materials and methods, inherent building characteristics and compromise and collapse risks, adaptive renovations and reutilization. Incorporating the Buildingsonfire FACTS concept for First-Arriving Construction, Tactics and Safety, the seminar provides an integrated process to increase operational effectiveness and ensure critical Type III and IV building and occupancy factors are identified, assessment and monitored throughout an incident with a focus on the size-up and building reads.

The class highlight consisting of taking the classroom to the streets of Owensboro for a facilitated walking tour of buildings in the downtown Main Streets and surrounding select areas of in the vicinity of the Convention Center learning first-hand about construction features, how to read a building, size-up and discussing tactical considerations in the street environment. Although focusing on Type IIIs, the program will also address other building types along the tour route including commercials, retail, business, govt., and residentials. This highly interactive and thought-provoking program identifies integral functions impacting First-Due tactical decision-making and firefighting. This class is geared towards Company and Command Officers; however, all ranks and experience levels will benefit from this program.

About the Instructor:

Christopher Naum is a 50-year fire service veteran and a highly regarded national and international instructor, author, lecturer and fire officer, a distinguished authority on building construction sciences affecting fireground operations, command and tactics, he has traveled extensively throughout the USA and globally delivering training programs on building construction & architecture sciences and firefighting, fireground leadership, command management and operational safety for over thirty-seven years. He is a sought-after national keynote speaker, instructor and presenter and has served as an FDIC General Session Keynote speaker and National Fire Academy Adjunct Instructor.

25. The Efficient Engine

Instructor: Keith Niemann

The job of an engine officer is not as simple as running inside and spraying water. The origins of a successful engine company operation often start way before the engine was rung out for the alarm. The purpose of the "Efficient Engine" class is to start from scratch and look at the systems, from machine to personnel, which contribute to the effective deployment of the Engine Company. We will start with specifications that can help the students navigate through all the different options available, concentrating on the items that will increase the usefulness of the engine itself. Then we move on to layout of equipment and hose that can maximize the efficiency of the crew. The next item covered is the efficient use of the equipment, including intricacies and quirks of the new electronic aids often in use on newer engines. The class will wrap up with personnel deployment and training techniques to maximize the different staffing levels found throughout the country, both volunteer and career.

About the Instructor:

Keith Niemann is a 27-year member of the Wichita Fire Department and is currently assigned as an Acting Battalion Chief over the Special Operations Companies. ACH Niemann spent his career assigned to Kansas' busiest engine companies before overseeing WFD's recruit academy for five years. ACH Niemann is President of the Wichita FOOLS of Oz and Chairman of the Wichita HOT fire conference.

26. Fire Inspector I

Instructor: Tim Juett

This class is the first step in the Fire Marshal's revised Fire Inspector program. Fire and building code officials will benefit from this course. This class will provide instruction based on NFPA 1, 2018 Fire Code, NFPA 101, 2018 Life Safety Code, the Kentucky Standards of Safety (815 KAR 10:060) and the Kentucky Building Code (KBC). Officials will learn basic principles of fire inspections, and how they relate to the KBC and International Building Code (IBC). This class will consist of one fast-paced day of instruction followed by an exam. Certificates are issued upon passing the test.

Course Objectives:

- Prepare the attendees to conduct fire inspections of buildings for fire hazards and code compliance per 815 KAR 10:060 (The Kentucky Standards of Safety).
- Determine if fire protection equipment is operational, maintained and in compliance.
- Determine the adequacy of exits.
- Determine an occupant load for a facility.
- Where required, ensure emergency fire evacuation drills are held.
- Advise property owners of the inspector's findings.
- Gain an understanding of projects that must be approved by the Division of Building Code Enforcement and other Divisions within the Department of Housing, Building, and Construction.

About the Instructor:

Tim Juett served in the US NAVY for 4 years and served during Desert Storm. He retired from Georgetown Fire Department serving 13 years as a firefighter and the last 7 years as an inspector. He has worked for the State Fire Marshal's office as an inspector and Supervisor for the last 13 years. Tim likes the outdoors and spending time with friends and family. He is a familiar face around the Commonwealth to fire inspectors as he travels teaching the Fire Inspector I and Fire Inspector II classes at fire departments and fire schools.

27. The Art of Reading Smoke

Instructor: Rob Backer

Today's structure fires are more dangerous than ever before. Lightweight construction, low-mass synthetics, and open space floorplans have created a perfect storm for rapid, prolific fire growth and extreme behavior. It is imperative for firefighters of all ranks and experience levels to be prepared for this new battle. The Art of Reading Smoke provides the knowledge necessary for first-arriving firefighters, officers, and chief officers to determine the fire's location, progression, and future "from the seat" before seeing any flame. This knowledge ensures that the correct tactics are implemented for the best possible outcome. Through the extensive use of actual fireground videos, first-time students will develop, and return students will refine their knowledge and skills to become INTELLECTUALLY aggressive firefighters, rather than ARBITRARILY aggressive. The next generation of Reading Smoke brings new research, a new library of videos, and discussion on cancer prevention, tactics and strategies to develop the next generation of aggressive interior firefighting!

About the Instructor:

Rob Backer is a 23-year student of the fire service and currently serves as Battalion Chief for Thornton Fire Department in Thornton, Colorado, having previously served as a firefighter, Lieutenant, and Captain. He has written for Fire Engineering and multiple fire service blogs. He is an instructor for The Art of Reading Smoke and available to teach nationally. He can be reached at robbacker.fdi@gmail.com

28. Big Box Fires: Chaos to Command

Instructor: Frank Montes de Oca

Responding to and *safely* transitioning large-scale chaos to a manageable operation can be overwhelming; sometimes resulting in lives lost and lives changed. This **7-hour** presentation, based on case studies, research and the presenter's firsthand experience is targeted to company officers, safety officers, chief incident commanders and those aspiring to improve their skills to manage potentially catastrophic incidents.

Topics covered will be:

- Proactive Identification and Pre-Planning.
- Construction: Salvageable versus Throw-away.
- Are Big Lines Always The Answer?
- Managing the Mayday.
- Fire Loading Is Your Enemy.
- Is Your Safety Officer Safe?

About the Instructor:

Frank Montes de Oca is a former firefighter/paramedic who served in Florida, Ohio and North Carolina. During his 38-year career he was appointed or promoted to battalion chief, division chief and chief of departments. A graduate of the NFA's EFO program, Chief Montes de Oca continues to serve the fire and emergency services community as an adjunct instructor for the National Fire Academy; delivering programs for OSHA, the EPA and lecturing throughout the country.

29. Managing Disaster in the Bluegrass State

Lead Instructor: Jody Meiman

You never know when disaster will strike without warning…. It's not a matter of if, but when. This course will review lessons learned from major disasters in the Commonwealth including but not limited to:

- Two major bridge incidents - Northern KY
- An Officer involved shooting and standoff - Boone County
- A large fire involving solar panels on a warehouse - Louisville
- The UPS plane crash - Louisville.

Attendees will learn the dynamics of these incidents from those who responded, and the challenges they faced. Also discussed will be working within the Incident Management System and the importance of integrating all stakeholders equally during large incidents.

Panel of Instructors:

Jody Meiman - Louisville Emergency Management

Todd Schulkers - Kenton County Emergency Management

Kevin Vogelpohl - Boone County Emergency Management

Jeff Carlson - Okolona Fire Department

30. Fire Ground Strategy: Commanding the Fire Ground

Lead Instructor: John Turner

This dynamic, interactive course is designed for all levels: from small volunteer departments to metro departments. It goes beyond the mechanics of using the command system, diving deep into the decision-making process at the command post and the critical role of the incident commander. Learn how to formulate effective strategies, know when to adapt, and how respond to a Mayday. Finally, prepare for what happens after the fire with guidance on handling media interviews. This course is full of nuggets to sharpen your command skills and build confidence in making life-saving decisions on the fireground.

About the Instructor:

John Turner holds the rank of Fire Chief in Derby, KS, a position he has held for the past six years. His career spans four decades, having risen through the operational ranks in some of the busiest companies within the Wichita Fire Department in Wichita, KS. A chief officer since 2009, he has managed numerous major emergencies. He is a contract instructor at the National Fire Academy and holds a master's degree in education. Chief Turner has conducted training sessions in over 30 states.

31. Building The 'WE' In Your Fire Department

Lead Instructor: Tim Holman

In today's rapidly changing environment, the fire service must be adaptable, innovative, and resilient to survive. One key factor in achieving these qualities is fostering high-performing teams from the top of your department down. Research emphasizes the vital role that cohesive, well-developed teams play in driving a department's success, both on and off the fire scene. When fire departments invest in team development at all levels, they create high-performing teams that achieve results that take the department to a whole new level in performance. It builds relationships and enhances recruitment and retention. This class will provide you with the knowledge and skill to transform your department like never before.

What you will learn:

- Master the core elements of team dynamics.
- Examine the Human Factor role in team process.
- Discover methods that enhance open, active and transparent sharing of ideas and feedback.
- How to integrate team process throughout your department.
- Understand the key elements of the team building process and
- how to implement them.
- Using hands on exercises you will learn unique problem-solving skills.
- Develop key coaching concepts that will keep your teams moving in the right direction.
- How to analyze the success of your teams.
- What teams look like both on and off the emergency scene.
- Understand how teams develop uniformity and a cohesive environment.
- How Critical thinking and group thinking solves difficult problems.

About the Instructor:

Tim Holman is a 49-year veteran of Fire & EMS. He currently serves as chief of the German Township Fire & EMS in West Central Ohio. He has conducted training programs on leadership, fire and EMS management and safety issues in 42 states. Tim graduated with honors from Ottawa University in Kansas. He has an extensive background in health care management, the fire service and organizational development. He is a member of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (EMS Section And VCOS Section), the Ohio Fire Chiefs and the National Association of EMTs.

Fire Chief magazine named him Fire Chief of the Year in 2002. He is a past commissioner of the Center for Public Safety Excellence. He also serves as an advisory board member for Clark State Community College. Tim has over 500 hours of training in active shooter hot zone response. He has written numerous articles, and he has published two books on leadership and one on team building. He co-authored The Chief Fire Officer Desk Reference (Jones & Bartlett) and The Leadership Guide For Volunteers (Jones & Bartlett).

32. Leadership Challenges: Be Ready to Lead

Lead Instructor: Tim Whitham

One of the most misunderstood applications of promotions is what will be required of the individual. Moving from one position to another within the fire service is a daunting task. It is not easily accomplished and will require sacrifice. Leadership is a constant hard-fought battle that will require all of the individual's abilities, a lot of time and effort, forward thinking, dedication, sleepless nights, stress, mistakes, gains, sacrifice, pride, intestinal fortitude and taking responsibility. Whether the fire officer wants to admit it or not, they are now the "BOSS", and with it comes a new mindset, abilities and the ability to avoid making critical mistakes that will affect their ability to motivate, lead and change their organization and the fire service.

Leadership to simplify many definitions; is the process of influence, in which a person enlists assistance and support of others for the accomplishment of a common task or goal. Leadership does not necessarily have to originate from the hierarchical top position, although most assume that is how change within an organization occurs. Company officers, senior firefighters and even the younger firefighters all have an opportunity to practice leadership.

There are common leadership traits practiced by those who have successfully charted change, influence and cohesion within their organizations. The fire service can learn from these common traits and establish our own traits engrained with the rich culture of the fire service. These traits can help us as leaders establish our best practices, identify what will establish credibility with our subordinates and prevent leadership failures due to bad practices. Successful leadership traits have been shared from the military to the private sector from many former military commanders and philosophy of organizational leadership.

About the Instructor:

Tim Whitham has served as the Fire Chief for the City of Edwardsville, Kansas since 2015. He has over three decades of fire service experience and has served in all capacities from firefighter, company officer to fire chief. Tim is a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program and has designations as a Chief Fire Officer and Fire Marshal from the Commission on Professional Credentialing. He holds a bachelor's degree in Fire and Emergency Response Management from the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh and a master's degree in leadership from Grand Canyon University.

Chief Whitham is a regular presenter at fire departments as well as at fire and emergency services events and conferences across the country including presenting at Fire Rescue International on multiple occasions, he has authored articles for fire service and EMS publications. Chief Whitham has addressed state legislative bodies and committees on concerns facing the fire and emergency services agencies. Tim serves in various capacities on numerous boards and committees, including having served as the Volunteer and Combination Officers Section representative to the Program Planning Committee for IAFC Fire-Rescue International.

Chief Whitham is the Fire Science Program Director for Johnson County Community College, prior to this appointment he served many years as an instructor. He is also an instructor for the National Fire Academy, and is an instructor, evaluator and site coordinator for the Kansas University Fire Service Training Program. Chief Whitham has numerous IFSAC certifications including Fire Officer III and Instructor III. Tim also holds numerous NWCG qualifications and has deployed with the Johnson County Wildland Task Force. He is an Army veteran having served in airborne infantry regiments with the US Army and then transitioned to the National Guard.

33. Developing a Successful Mentoring Program: You Recruited Them, Now Keep Them

Lead Instructor: Frank Montes de Oca

Maintaining a workforce committed to providing vital services to their communities is a continuing struggle for departments. This **7-hour** program is for all whose goal is keeping and improving the most critical resource – personnel. Lecture, discussion and role-playing activities will help attendees develop their road mapping skills to improve existing programs and those just starting program development. Based on the presenter's experience in developing successful programs and research topics will cover:

- Generations Are Not Created Equally…Nor Are Mentors.
- Is Your Road Map Complete…And Accurate?
- Is Including Stakeholders Really Necessary?
- Strengthening the Culture of Your Workforce.
- What To Do When A Mentor Steps On A Legal Landmine.

About the Instructor:

Frank Montes de Oca is a former firefighter/paramedic who served in Florida, Ohio and North Carolina. During his 38-year career he was appointed or promoted to battalion chief, division chief and chief of departments. A graduate of the NFA's EFO program, Chief Montes de Oca continues to serve the fire and emergency services community as an adjunct instructor for the National Fire Academy; delivering programs for OSHA, the EPA and lecturing throughout the country.

34. Officers' Role in Leading Volunteers

Lead Instructor: John Buckman

Leading volunteers is one of the most challenging responsibilities in the fire service. Unlike career firefighters, volunteers often balance their fire department responsibilities with employment, family obligations, personal commitments, and competing demands on their time.

Fire officers must understand that volunteers cannot always be managed using the same approaches as full-time employees. Effective leadership requires communication, motivation, accountability, relationship building, conflict resolution, and an understanding of why people volunteer.

This six-hour interactive course is designed to help fire chiefs, assistant chiefs, battalion chiefs, captains, lieutenants, and aspiring officers develop the leadership skills necessary to build and maintain a successful volunteer or combination fire department.

The course emphasizes the difference between managing volunteers and leading volunteers, with practical strategies officers can immediately apply within their departments.

About the Instructor:

John M. Buckman III served 55 years in the fire service from firefighter, Chief, state academy training director, author, photographer, International Association President and instructor. He has authored six books. He has produced 5 photography books. He is a highly sought after speaker for local, regional and national events. He has been at the Bryant Stiles Officers School each year since the beginning.

35. The Fireground Blueprint: Lessons, Learnings and Leadership from the Fireground

Lead Instructor: Christopher Naum

Lessons and Learnings from the fireground resonate with recommendations and actions that all fire officers and commanders must recognize and implement in future fireground operations in order to reduce operational risks and improve incident operations, management and tactical integration. Through a facilitated discussion, prominent NIOSH LODD Reports and case studies will be examined, key report insights discussed with integrated perspectives and learnings of past historical incidents presented that are as relevant today as they were in the past decades. Lessons from the fireground resonate with recommendations and actions that all fire departments and personnel must recognize and implement in future fireground operations in order to reduce operational risks and improve incident mitigation and structure fires. This program is for all ranks and experience levels. All case studies and reports new for 2027

About the Instructor:

Christopher Naum is a 50-year fire service veteran and a highly regarded national and international instructor, author, lecturer and fire officer, a distinguished authority on building construction sciences affecting fireground operations, command and tactics, he has traveled extensively throughout the USA and globally delivering training programs on building construction & architecture sciences and firefighting, fireground leadership, command management and operational safety for over thirty-seven years. He is a sought-after national keynote speaker, instructor and presenter and has served as an FDIC General Session Keynote speaker and National Fire Academy Adjunct Instructor.

36. The Art of Reading Smoke

Instructor: Rob Backer

Today's structure fires are more dangerous than ever before. Lightweight construction, low-mass synthetics, and open space floorplans have created a perfect storm for rapid, prolific fire growth and extreme behavior. It is imperative for firefighters of all ranks and experience levels to be prepared for this new battle. The Art of Reading Smoke provides the knowledge necessary for first-arriving firefighters, officers, and chief officers to determine the fire's location, progression, and future "from the seat" before seeing any flame. This knowledge ensures that the correct tactics are implemented for the best possible outcome. Through the extensive use of actual fireground videos, first-time students will develop, and return students will refine their knowledge and skills to become INTELLECTUALLY aggressive firefighters, rather than ARBITRARILY aggressive. The next generation of Reading Smoke brings new research, a new library of videos, and discussion on cancer prevention, tactics and strategies to develop the next generation of aggressive interior firefighting!

About the Instructor:

Rob Backer is a 23-year student of the fire service and currently serves as Battalion Chief for Thornton Fire Department in Thornton, Colorado, having previously served as a firefighter, Lieutenant, and Captain. He has written for Fire Engineering and multiple fire service blogs. He is an instructor for The Art of Reading Smoke and available to teach nationally. He can be reached at robbacker.fdi@gmail.com

37. The Art of Predicting the Future… And Why Tunnel Vision is the Modern-Day Devil

Instructor: Jody Meiman

Firefighters are often praised for their ability to make rapid decisions in dynamic, high-risk environments. Yet many line-of-duty deaths, near-misses, strategic failures, and organizational crises can be traced to a common enemy: tunnel vision. This course explores how firefighters can "predict the future" by identifying weak signals, recognizing emerging threats, anticipating changing conditions, and avoiding the cognitive traps that lead to poor decisions. Participants will learn practical methods for improving situational awareness, expanding their decision space, and seeing around corners before disaster strikes.

About the Instructor:

Edward Jody Meiman has over 30 years of experience in local emergency preparedness and response. He currently serves as Executive Director for Louisville Metro Emergency Services which involves Emergency Management, EMS, MetroSafe (911 Call Center), 311, Office of Special Events, and 911 Mental Health Deflection. He holds an associate degree in Fire and Safety Technology and retired as Battalion Chief with the Louisville Division of Fire and Rescue after 20 years of service. He also retired from Lake Dreamland Volunteer Fire Department in southwest Jefferson County as an Assistant Chief. Jody is a Certified Emergency Medical Technician. He has participated and served as an “on scene” Incident Commander” during several complex hazardous material incidents and specialized rescue responses across Kentucky and is the Emergency Operations Center Manager during many of the large special events that take place in Louisville including Thunder Over Louisville, and all other events that involve the Kentucky Derby Festival. He worked and was a lead instructor for over 15 years with Industrial Safety and Training Services (ISTS) conducting environmental, health and safety training across the United States. Through his travel he performed course development at all levels of competency for Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) hazardous materials and Homeland Security training initiatives including Emergency Response to Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), and Response to Terrorism.

He is a National Fire Academy – certified instructor for a host of academy course work and he routinely serves as an exercise evaluator for the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program initiative during drills, functional and full-scale exercises. He routinely consults and trains with other state, local and private sector clients on National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance, National Response Framework components, and Emergency Management Protocols to ensure coordinated relationships among response organizations and industries to promote sound preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation practices.

38. DISC Personality Profiling for Chief Officers

Behavioral Insight for Stronger Communication and Leadership

Instructor: Zach Matthews

Effective leadership requires more than understanding your own style. This practical course helps Fire and EMS leaders recognize behavioral differences and adapt their communication, coaching, and decision-making to the people they lead. Participants connect DISC insights directly to command relationships, team dynamics, and everyday organizational challenges. Explore the four DISC behavioral styles—Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness—and identify the strengths, motivations, preferences, and possible limitations reflected in your own profile.
The goal is not to abandon your natural strengths, but to expand your leadership approach to meet the needs of different people and situations.
In this course, you will:

- Identify your DISC behavioral style and explore how your natural preferences influence communication and leadership.
- Recognize and appreciate behavioral differences among staff, colleagues, partners, and stakeholders.
- Adapt communication, coaching, and conflict-management approaches while maintaining authenticity.
- Apply DISC insights to mentoring, feedback, teamwork, decision-making, and leadership under pressure.

About the Instructor:

Zach Mathews is an experienced speaker, international trainer and executive coach who inspires audiences with his fast paced and entertaining programs focused on leadership, communication, and personal growth. With over twenty-eight years in public safety, Zach brings a wealth of experience to the table. His journey has taken him from conservation officer and wildland firefighter to leadership roles such as Investigation Section commander, Training Section commander, Logistics Manager, and Office of Professional Standards commander. In 2019, the Indiana Department Homeland Security recognized Zach's leadership abilities, tapping him to teach essential skills like body language and executive leadership courses across the state.

Zach now serves as the Planning Section Chief for the Indiana Fire & Public Safety Academy where he and his staff are responsible for firefighter certifications and instructor standards. Zach also coordinates statewide executive leadership training programs to include the biannual Indiana Fire Chief's Academy, and a company officer executive leadership course taught throughout the state. Zach is a John Maxwell certified executive coach and DISC behavioral analysist who works one-on-one with fire chiefs to achieve both professional and personal goals. Zach has trained thousands throughout his career and is motivated to provide training that will positively impact the fire service. But what truly sets Zach apart is his passion for effective communication.

39. Leadership From the Bottum Up

Instructor: Candace Ashby

This fun and engaging personal and professional development class will lay out a one-size-fits-all approach to becoming a better leader. The audience will be taken on a journey to learn how having the right mindset will help you overcome obstacles and make you better. This class also serves as a swift kick in the pants reminder to show up better today than yesterday. No matter what your time or rank, you will walk away from this class fired up to be the rock star you were meant to be and help drive positive change in yourself, your crew, and your organization. This no-nonsense candid conversation discusses real issues plaguing organizations along with tactics on how to improve leadership and communications, build morale, increase productivity, enhance innovation, and provide better customer service. This is not your typical leadership class or for the faint of heart.

About the Instructor:

Dr. Candace Ashby has more than 33 years of fire service experience and is a battalion chief with the Indianapolis (IN) Fire Department. Her educational background includes a Doctor of Management in organizational leadership. She is president of Key Fire Investigations and ELITE Public Safety Consulting.

40. NFA – New Fire Chief: Administrative Issues (F0761)

Instructor: David Lewis

The goal of this 2-day course is to provide students with the managerial, administrative and leadership skills and awareness necessary for new or recently appointed or elected chiefs to effectively meet their obligations of the position.

The primary audience for this course is newly appointed fire chiefs in volunteer, combination or career departments, as well as emergency medical services (EMS) chiefs.

The secondary audience is department leaders and current officers who may become fire chiefs, as well as local government administrators and elected officials who are involved in the administration of a fire department or EMS.

Students should have completed ICS 100 and ICS 200 prior to this class.

Students should have their FEMA Student ID Number (SID) PRIOR to arrival to the school.

About the Instructor:

David Lewis is an active member of the Odenton Volunteer Fire Company (Maryland), having served in numerous roles within the department, including Chief Officer and Company President. He is active at state, regional, and national levels with the Maryland State Firefighters Association, the Maryland Fire Chiefs Association, the Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association, and the National Volunteer Fire Council. David is an instructor for the National Fire Academy, the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute, the National Volunteer Fire Council, and the Emergency Responder Safety Institute. He is a recognized expert in firefighter safety and wellness and has delivered training programs and conference presentations across the U.S. As an emergency services educator, Mr. Lewis is able to apply his own life experiences in an environment that shares with others and builds future leadership across the emergency services communities.

41. NFA – Leadership in Supervision: Creating Environments for Professional Growth (F0646)

Instructor: Dr. Randall W. Hanifen

This 2-day course presents the supervisor with the basic leadership skills and tools needed to perform effectively in the fire and emergency medical services (EMS) environment. The course includes concepts related to a successful transition to a supervisory and leadership roles, including concepts of adaptive leadership; change management; active followership; effective communication, including difficult conversations and advocacy-inquiry-based dialogue; ethics; authority; power; decision-making; and active engagement through development of a personal plan.
The primary target audience for this course are those individuals who are at the first-line level of supervision.
The secondary target audiences are fire and EMS personnel at the first-line management level (Chief Officer or above).

Students should have completed ICS 100 and ICS 200 prior to this class.
Students should have their FEMA Student ID Number (SID) PRIOR to arrival to the school.

About the Instructor:
Dr. Randall W. Hanifen is the Assistant Fire Chief of Operations for West Chester Fire, an Associate Professor at the American Public University's Emergency Management Program, and a Fire Service Consultant. He has a B.S. in Fire Administration, an M.S. in Fire Service Executive Leadership and a Ph.D. in Executive Management of Homeland Security. He is the associate author of Disaster Planning and Control. Randall serves as the Executive Chairperson of a County Technical Rescue Team, is the Past President of the Institution of Fire Engineers-USA Branch, and is the Chair of IAFC Company Officers Section. Randall was the Primary Author/Editor of the IAFC's Succession Management for the Fire-Rescue Service document. Randall serves as a member of NFPA 1021 Fire Officer and NFPA 1026 Incident Management committees. Randall is credentialed as a Chief Fire Officer by the Center for Public Safety Excellence and has been accepted as a Fellow to the Institute of Fire Engineers. Randall has provided presentations for the Ohio Fire Chief's Association, Fire Rescue International, Emergency Management Institute, and the IAFC Board of Directors.

42. NFA – Applications of Operational Safety (F2500) (Formerly known as Incident Safety Officer)

Instructor: David Zinther

This 2-day course examines the Safety Officer's role at emergency responses.

This course focuses on operations within an Incident Command System (ICS) as a Safety Officer and emphasizes response to all-hazard types of situations.

Students should have completed ICS 100 and ICS 200 prior to this class.

Students should have their FEMA Student ID Number (SID) PRIOR to arrival to the school.

About the Instructor:

David Zinther retired in 2016, after a total of 36 years in the fire service. His career began in 1978 outside of the city of Chicago with a small volunteer department. In 1993, he was hired full time with the Lisle-Woodridge Fire District in the western suburbs of Chicago, where he served over 20 years, retiring as a shift commander. He then took the position of Fire Chief with a small combination department in south central Massachusetts. He retired in 2016 and moved to west central Florida.

Throughout his career, he has been instructing firefighters through a variety of organizations, including the Illinois State Fire Marshall Office of certification, the Illinois Society of Fire Service of Instructors, and the Illinois Fire Chief's Association, and the College of DuPage (IL) Fire Science program. He has been actively instructing with the National Fire Academy for the past 20 years. His primary focus with the NFA has been within the Incident Safety and the Incident Command curriculums.

He holds a bachelor's degree in fire service management, as well as numerous state level fire service certifications. This will be his fourth year instructing at the Green River Fire School.

43. NFA – Decision-Making for Initial Company Operations (F0457)

Instructor: James L. Annas Jr., JD

This 2-day course is designed to develop the decision-making skills needed by Company Officers (COs) to accomplish assigned tactics at structure fires. All activities and scenarios used in this course are based on structure fires. With the real possibility of being the first to arrive at an incident, the CO's initial decisions will have an impact throughout the entire incident. It is vital that COs be able to make good management decisions that have a favorable impact on the eventual outcome.

In addition to a possible role as the initial Incident Commander, the CO may well be assigned a subordinate position within the Incident Command System (ICS) organization. COs need to have a clear understanding of the system, the position that they are assigned to, and their role in the organization if they are to function effectively and help make the system work.

This course is an excellent review for experienced COs.

Students should have completed ICS 100 and ICS 200 prior to this class.

Students should have their FEMA Student ID Number (SID) PRIOR to arrival to the school.

About the Instructor:

James L. Annas Jr. graduated from Villanova University in 1991 with a BA in Economics and earned his Juris Doctorate from Widener University School of Law in 1995. He joined the law firm of Mears, Smith, Houser and Boyle in Greensburg Pennsylvania in the fall of 1995 and practiced law there until 2011. In June of 2011 he was hired by the City of Broken Arrow Fire Department as its Assistant Chief. As a trial lawyer in Pennsylvania, he handled numerous Insurance and Workers Compensation Defense cases. His corporate practice also included representing Fire Departments, Construction firms and private clients. He is currently licensed as an attorney in both Pennsylvania and Oklahoma.

In January of 1996 he joined Greensburg Fire Department Hose Company One. By 2002 he was the Captain at Station 1 and held that position for 6 years until being promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief in 2009. He was credentialed by the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy (PSFA) as a non-suppression instructor in 2001 and a suppression instructor in 2004. He used those credentials to teach numerous Firefighter I classes as part of the Greensburg Fire Academy

In 2009 he began teaching on campus at the National Fire Academy (NFA), as a Contract Instructor in the Fire Arson program. That same year he also began teaching the PICO, STICO and DMICO classes for National Fire Academy both on Campus and around the country. He continues to teach in both programs. In 2016, he completed the NFA Executive Fire Officer Program and was awarded his EFO designation. That same year he was hired by the City of Skiatook as Fire Chief and currently serves both in that role and as Emergency Manager. He is currently an Oklahoma State University Fire Service Training instructor, and a facilitator for the Oklahoma Executive Fire Officer Leadership Program.

44. NFA – Fire Investigation: Fire as a Weapon (F0756)

Instructor: Derrick Young

This course was developed to aid first responders in understanding and recognizing how fire can be used as a weapon against people and/or property. This course should also help first responders and investigators understand why a person would choose to use fire as a weapon, as well as creating awareness of the types of information fire investigators may need from fire and emergency services personnel.

Students should have completed ICS 100 and ICS 200 prior to this class.
Students should have their FEMA Student ID Number (SID) PRIOR to arrival to the school.

About the Instructor:
Derrick Young has served the citizens of Columbus, Ohio, in various roles within the Columbus Division of Fire since 1999. Throughout his career, he has served as a firefighter, paramedic, fire safety inspector, and reserve police officer. Since 2015, he has been assigned as a full-time fire and explosives investigator.

In 2018, Derrick began his journey into fire service instruction by obtaining his State of Ohio Fire Instructor certification. With a focus on fire science and fire investigations, Derrick has presented locally, regionally, and nationally to diverse audiences, including high school and college students, firefighters, police officers, detectives, and fellow fire investigators. In 2023, he became an instructor with the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Academy, teaching within its Fire Investigation curriculum. Derrick was subsequently selected as a presenter at the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) 2025 International Training Conference (ITC), where he presented on the intersection of domestic violence and fire investigation.

Derrick holds the IAAI-CFI(v) and IAAI-ETC credentials and is a proud member of the Ohio Chapter of the IAAI, where he served as a board member from 2022 to 2025. In addition to his investigative and instructional experience, Derrick earned a Bachelor's degree in Applied and Public Sector Management from Franklin University, followed by graduate studies in City and Regional Planning at The Ohio State University.

This diverse professional and educational background has given Derrick a unique perspective on the roles and responsibilities of responding law enforcement and fire service personnel tasked with conducting fire and explosives investigations. As an instructor, Derrick strives to provide students with the knowledge and tools necessary to conduct comprehensive, systematic fire investigations in accordance with the best practices outlined in NFPA 921.

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