

FIRESCUE CONFERENCE

## CANCELLED

**AFTER TWO DAYS BECAUSE OF HEAVY SNOW** 

BOD TO BE INSTALLED MARCH 22 IN WILLIAMSBURG FOLLOWING THE VFCF 5K

**CHIEFS SUMMIT SCHEDULED MAY 15-16** 

#### WHAT'S NEW ND THE REGION



PLATINUM

DELIVERIES

SOLUTIONS 800-442-9700 www.atlanticemergenc



ALBEMARLE COUNT FIRE RESCUE PIERCE ENFORCER PUC PUMPER Sold by Kevin Sandridge



VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY
PIERCE ENFORCER PUMPER
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GOOCHLAND COUNTY
FIRE RESCUE
PIERCE FREIGHTLINER TANKER
PIERCE ENFORCER 107 ASCENDANT HD AERIAL LADDER



HOT SPRINGS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT PIERCE FREIGHTLINER TANKER Sold by Bobby St. Clair



LYNCHBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT MERCE ENFORCER PUMPER



NEWPORT NEWS FIRE DEPARTMENT PIERCE ENFORCER 107' ASCENDANT HD Sold by Michael Yancey





SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY FIRE RESCUE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

#### **NEW ORDERS**

ALEXANDRIA FIRE DEPARTMENT • PIERCE ENFORCER PUMPERS (2) • Sold by John Thompson

COVINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT • PIERCE SABER PUMPER • Sold by Bobby St. Clair

HAMPTON FIRE RESCUE • PIERCE ENFORCER PUMPERS (2) • Sold by Michael Yancey

HAMPTON FIRE RESCUE • FRONTLINE COMMUNICATIONS INTERNATIONAL REHAB UNIT • Sold by Michael Yancey

PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY FIRE & EMS - PIERCE FREIGHTLINER TANKER - Sold by Michael Yancey

PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY FIRE & EMS - PIERCE SABER PUMPERS (3)- Sold by Michael Yancey

WARRENTON VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY • PIERCE ENFORCER TANKER • Sold by John Thompson





**ALL DELIVERIES** 

**ALL STOCK UNITS** 











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#### VFCA & Its Professional Interest Sections

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Commonwealth Chief is published quarterly for the members of the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association (VFCA). Comments about the articles should be sent to the editor. Statements and opinions expressed by paid advertisements do not necessarily reflect those of the Commonwealth Chief or VFCA. Publication of advertisements does not imply endorsements by VFCA of the products or statements. The Association reserves the right to accept, reject or edit articles and to place advertising where layout space is available. Commonwealth Chief is published in January, April, July and October. Deadline for articles, ads, graphics and other information for publication is on the 1st day of the previous month. Submit high-resolution text and graphics to the VFCA by email to editor@vfca. us. For information call (888) 818-0983.

"Leadership, Education and Mentoring for Tomorrow's Leaders"

FIRGINIA FIRE CONFERENCE

#### **SAVE THE DATE**

February 16-21, 2026
Virginia Beach Convention Center
Pre-Conference Sessions begin Feb. 16th and 17th

Sponsored by the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association Visit www.vfca.us for info









#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Kevin Good 2025 VFCA President Ft. Belvoir Fire Department

As I assume the responsibility for serving as your President of the Virginia Fire Chief's Association, I am overwhelmed by one emotion: gratitude. First, I am grateful to my parents for allowing me to become a junior firefighter in Stafford County at age 16, which set me on this journey in the most amazing calling imaginable. Second, I am grateful to the Fort Belvoir team for extending me the honor of leading the premier fire and emergency services organization in the Department of Defense. Finally, I am deeply grateful to everyone, past and present, who have shown me "the way". Words will never express the depth of my gratitude, and so I hope you will see in my actions a reflection of my deep appreciation for your investment.

As we celebrate the 95th anniversary of the VFCA, let us pause for a moment and reflect on the work that has been done before us to lead, educate, and advocate for Virginia's Fire Service. We are all standing on the shoulders of giants.

There is a lot going on in our Nation, our Commonwealth, and on the local level. One thing we are charged with is upholding the firehouse as the heartbeat of every community. When our communities face crisis, they turn to us and above all else, we must never lose sight of our role as servants of the public. We exist to ensure that our neighbors, our community, our way of life, remains safe and vibrant. And when tragedy strikes, we place ourselves between harm and those who are imperiled.

My challenge to you is "Tell Your Story" to another member of your community. Invite them to become a member of the fire service by paying it forward. Not everyone has to don an SCBA and put on turn-out gear to fight a fire. Yet everyone has something to offer the fire service. In turn, I believe the fire service has something to offer everyone who is open to joining.





Do you remember that moment when you decided you wanted to be a firefighter? For most kids (like me) that experience began in elementary school. In Kindergarten, I wanted to be a firefighter and an NBA basketball player (if you look really close-that is a pair of "Air Jordan" high tops with the laces hanging over the shoulder). Obviously, I didn't make the NBA draft, but the fire service came calling and I am prouder of that than any NBA championship could have ever brought! Our presence matters. I remember every firefighter visit to my school which ignited a passion that still burns brightly today.

At 16 years old, my parents signed the paperwork for me to become a junior firefighter at the White Oak Volunteer Fire Department in Stafford County, VA. I have never forgotten where I started my public service career and the many formal and informal leaders who have led me to this moment. I am blessed to have parents who understand the value of the fire service as a trusted place for young people to explore their future.





The man in these pictures is Ronnie Martin. I met him when first joining the fire service and he has been a mentor and a trusted friend for 28 years. There is no other industry that brings together a group of highly skilled, respected, and trusted people in communities who choose a lifestyle committed to "never walking by a problem you can help solve." Chief Martin is but one example of an industry where leadership is cherished and valued!

As your President, my goals for this year are simple and direct: build on what has already been started, advocate for our calling, and be the trusted voice in Virginia's fire service. You deserve nothing less than our full measure of devotion and commitment and I offer to you my promise to stand beside you as we continue this journey together.

I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to thank Chief Vance Cooper for his service as your immediate past president. His energy and passion for Virginia's fire service has yielded some remarkable achievements and his actions reflect his deep personal commitment to leaving our fire service better. Well done, Chief.

The Virginia Fire Chiefs Association is a place where public servants of all ranks connect in the Commonwealth to lead, educate, and advocate. If you're not already a member or not already involved, please let me know. We need you to make the connection and I'm happy to help get you involved.



Enjoy this calling and continue to "Connect the Dots" in your volunteer or paid career as an active member in your VFCA.

Be Proud...Tell Your Story!



#### **VFCA CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

#### March

18	Executive Officers Meeting 1000 Hours	Virtual
22	6th Annual VFCF 5K Run/Walk 0730 Hours	Williamsburg

#### **April**

15	VFCA Full Board Meeting	Glen Allen - VDFP
	1000 Hours	

May		
3-4	NFFF Memorial Weekend	
5-11	National Arson Awareness Week	
15-16	11th Annual Chiefs Summit 0800 Hours	Glen Allen
19-25	National EMS Week	
20	Executive Officers Meeting 1000 Hours	Virtual
30	2nd Annual VFCF Sporting Clay Event Rockingham Co,	

#### June

7	VA Firefighter/EMS Memorial Service 1200 Hours	Richmond
13	15th VFCF Spotsylvania Golf Tournament 1100 Hours	
17	VFCA Full Board Meeting 1000 Hours	VDFP
22-27	VFOA/VCOA 1500 Hours	U of R

#### July

15	Executive Officers Meeting	Virtual
	1000 Hours	

#### June

.9	VFCA Full Board Meeting	VDFP
	1000 Hours	





SALES

PARTS SERVICE

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#### **IMMEDIATE DELIVERY**

E-ONE AFT1001 1500 GPM Rescue Pumper SO #146959



#### **AVAILABLE SUMMER 2025**

Freightliner M2-112 3000 Gallon Tanker SO #148028

#### PENDING DELIVERIES



#### **CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH**

**E-ONE Cyclone Pumpers** 



#### **CAPE CHARLES VFC**

**E-ONE AFT1001 Rescue Pumper** 

#### 2 SERVICE LOCATIONS IN VIRGINIA!

**Northern Virginia** 

**14716 Industry Court** Woodbridge, VA 22191 **Tidewater Region** 

4144 S. Military Highway Chesapeake, VA 23321



877-378-2781 www.mathenyfire.com

## VIRGINIA FIRE RESCUE CONFERENCE H.O.T. CLASSES: A STRONG START DESPITE UNEXPECTED CHALLENGES

The Virginia Fire Rescue Conference kicked off this year with an impressive lineup of Hands-On Training (H.O.T.) classes at the Virginia Beach Fire Training Center. Instructors from Virginia Beach, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue, Henrico, Chesterfield, Roanoke City, and Roanoke County departments spent many hours planning, building props, and preparing the most up-to-date and advanced material for this year's H.O.T. classes. On Monday and Tuesday, firefighters from across the region engaged in intensive, skill-building courses designed to enhance their operational effectiveness and safety.

Firefighters participated in the **Can Confidence Class**, which focused on improving firefighters' mobility and efficiency in confined spaces. This class was sponsored and taught by Real Fire Training LLC and was highly attended. The **Dynamic Fire Behavior** course, featuring the flashover simulator, provided firsthand experience in recognizing and reacting to rapidly changing fire conditions. Additionally, we launched our highly anticipated **Track Courses**, tailored to different levels of fire service leadership and operations. This year's tracks included the **Engine, Truck, Company Officer, and Chief Officer**, ensuring targeted training for firefighters and officers of all ranks.

Unfortunately, a significant snowstorm in Virginia Beach forced the early cancellation of the conference, cutting short a week that had even more valuable training on the schedule. Classes like **Rural Water Supply, RIT: It goes beyond the drills. Does water win?, Woman of Fire, and Mayday Command** were set to round out the experience, providing critical lessons in specialized areas of fire service.

Despite the weather setback, the success of the first two days reaffirmed the value of our H.O.T. classes. Looking ahead to next year, we are committed to bringing these courses back—stronger and more impactful than ever. Thank you to all the instructors, participants, and staff who contributed to making this year's training a success. We'll see you next year for an even bigger and better Virginia Fire Rescue Conference!

PHOTO'S: VBFD ChrisO











### **SAVE THE DATE**

**MAY 15 - 16, 2025** 

## 11TH ANNUAL FIRE CHIEF'S SUMMIT



Courtyard Marriott
Richmond North/Glen Allen
10077 Brook Rd.
Glen Allen, VA 23059

Plans are being finalized for the 11th Annual VFCA Chiefs Summit. The event is specifically designated for the Fire Chief and his second in command. Registration will be done online and additional information is available by early March on the VFCA website at www.vfca.us

#### **New Chiefs**

In 2024 we saw a number of changes to Fire Chief's across the Commonwealth. Below is a list of the one's we know of. If we missed you we apologize in advance. They were each invited to the "New Chiefs Gathering" that was to be sponsored by AES at the 2025 VFRC. Unfortunately the event had to be canceled because of the big snow event at the Beach at that time.

- 1. Rusty Hamm Marion Fire and EMS
- 2. Chris Anderson Hanover County
- 3. Wayne Hoover Petersburg
- 4. Pedro Caceres Prince George
- 5. Jason Ball Staunton
- 6. Sidney Carroll Norfolk
- 7. Ronald Brown King William
- 8. David Kissner III Dinwiddie
- 9. Michael Fowler Franklin County
- 10. Wesley Rogers Newport News
- 11. Felipe Hernandez Alexandria
- 12. Brandon Hamblin Pulaski County
- 13. Chris Slemp Wytheville

- 14. Marlon "Matt" Rickman Salem
- 15. Zac Beares Blackstone
- 16. Jack Mullins Wise
- 17. Jason Dougherty Navy Regional Mid-Atlantic
- 18. David "DJ" Johnson Powhatan
- 19. Chris Neal Pittsylvania County
- 20. Stacey Wills Town of Bedford
- 21. Justin Jarvis Rockbridge County
- 22. Austin Howery Montgomery County
- 23. David Bailey Colonial Heights

#### **Congratulations to all!**





ghting Essentials

#### GLOVES

#### **V-Force Structural Fire Gloves #LPGVFRCE**

- · Designed for comfort, flexibility and protection.
- · Advanced Kovenex lining for exceptional heat protection and enhanced donning and doffing.
- Premium Gore CROSSTECH moisture barrier delivers breathable protection, optimizing comfort in challenging conditions.





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- Heavy-weight protection with a modern, lowprofile design
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- QuickClean<sup>TM</sup> soft goods kit standard
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- Extreme durability that maintains its particulate blocking effectiveness.
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- · Available in black and tan.



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#### **Fire Boot** #804-6369-XX

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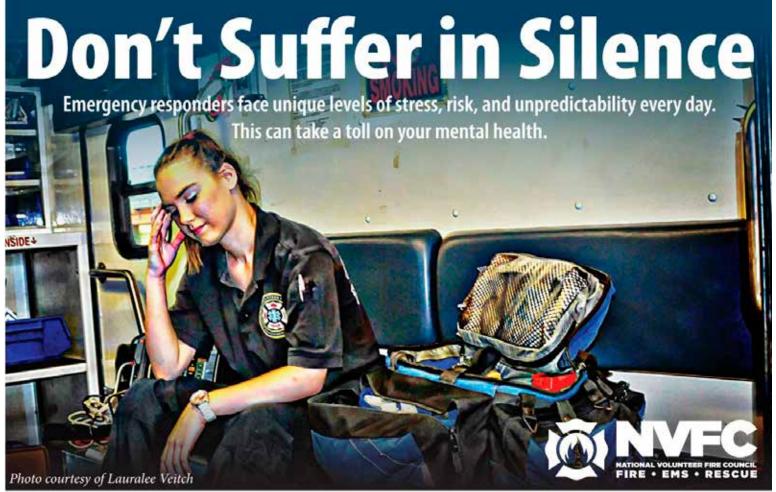
## THE WAY IT SHOULD BE DONE



Emergency Services Insurance Program (ESIP) is dedicated to emergency service organizations throughout Virginia. We stay ahead of the industry through continuous coverage enhancements and our in-house risk management services, built by members of the emergency service community.

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**Road Rescue** 













#### **CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS** | THANKS

#### A MOST SINCERE THANKS TO ALL OUR 2025 VIRGINIA FIRE RESCUE CONFERENCE SPONSORS!

We are pleased to be able to recognize these Companies that have gone above and beyond this year and that have continued to support the VFCA!

PLEASE HELP US EXTEND OUR DEEPEST
APPRECIATION TO THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE
SPONSORS. THEIR SUPPORT MAKES IT POSSIBLE
FOR THE VFCA TO DELIVER THE OUTSTANDING
AND AFFORDABLE CONFERENCE YOU
EXPERIENCED!



#### **THANK YOU!**

#### **CHIEF LEVEL SPONSOR**

**Atlantic Emergency Solutions** 

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Virginia Public Safety Innovation Center

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SPEC Rescue

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**VFCA BOD Lunch Sponsor** - Life Scan Wellness Centers

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The Port of Virginia

Redstorm Fire & Rescue

Light Leadership Group

Breg Environmental

Policy Builder

**IROL** 

Symbol Arts

#### STATE PARTNER

Virginia Department of Fire Programs



### 2025 Upcoming Events:

#### 2ND ANNUAL VFCF CHARITY SHOOT



Friday, May 30, 2025, 7:30AM

Flying Rabbit Sporting Clays, Mt.Crawford, VA

Contact: Mandy Waybright

mandy.waybright@harrisonburgva.gov

#### 15TH ANNUAL SPOTSYLVANIA GOLF TOURNAMENT



Friday, June 13, 2025, 10:00AM Lees Hill Golf Club Contact: Chris Eudailey ceudailey@vfca.us

#### 11TH ANNUAL JAMES CITY COUNTY GOLF TOURNAMENT



Friday, October 3, 2025, 8:00AM
Kiskiack Golf Club
Contact: Amanda Deal,
amanda.deal@jamescitycountyva.gov



www.vfca.us



### FB-94 Pumper

#### **MATHENY FIRE & EMER**

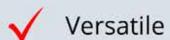
#### SPARTAN CHASSIS. ALL NEW BODY. A PUMPER THAT WON'T BREAK YOUR BUDGET.

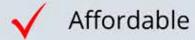
Introducing the redesigned FB-94 Pumper by Fouts Fire for 2024. Low hosebed, extended bumper, ample storage, upgraded lighting, and siren package. Built on the unbeatable Spartan FC-94 chassis. Experience innovation and reliability like never before with the FB-94 Pumper.

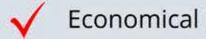


- Spartan FC-94 chassis
- Cummins L9 450 HP engine
- Allison 3000 EVS transmission
- Jake Brake
- Hale Qmax 1500 GPM pump
- Lowered crosslays
- Four 2-½" discharges (One DS, One OS, Two DS rear)
- One 1-½" front bumper discharge
- One 3" 5" OS LDH discharge
- Two 1-¾" preconnects
- One 3" deck gun plumbing
- Front suction
- 172" aluminum rescue body
- 1000 gallon L-shaped poly tank
- Three hosebed dividers
- Ladder package: 24', 14', & 10'
- Painted AMDOR roll-up doors
- Whelen LED NFPA lighting & siren package
- Federal O2B siren
- Optional features available upon request

#### STREAMLINED MANUFACTURING







\*Similar unit shown









#### **Congressional Fire Services Institute**

Educating Members of Congress about the Fire & Life Safety Issues since 1989

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we prepare for 2025 and the 119th Congress, CFSI wants to thank you for your support this past year. It was a successful year, and we have you and many other individuals and organizations to thank for the work we performed and the goals we achieved.

Without question, the passage of the legislation reauthorizing the AFG and SAFER grant programs and the United States Fire Administration was our most significant achievement in 2024. It was a collective achievement between our organizations and our legislative champions, including the leaders of the Congressional Fire Service Caucus. This was the fourth time Congress reauthorized the grant program, with the previous three measures approved without opposition. But for reasons that tested our patience and perseverance, the road to passage was anything but smooth this time. We eventually prevailed because we demonstrated an ability to work together as a united fire service and with congressional leaders from both sides of the political aisle who championed our cause.

The start of a new Congress and Administration always presents new challenges for the Congressional Fire Services Institute. With over 70 newly elected members in the House and Senate, our first task will be recruiting new members to join the Congressional Fire Service Institute. In recent years, Caucus membership has declined, but the same applies to caucuses in general. The problem is new members are less inclined to associate themselves with caucuses. Nonetheless, we will launch an aggressive caucus recruitment campaign because an active bipartisan Fire Caucus is essential to our work on Capitol Hill.

On the other end on Pennsylvania Avenue, we aim to establish working relationships with key members of the incoming Trump Administration. Fortunately, CFSI has always had solid working relationships with the United States Fire Administrator. However, the challenge is establishing relationships with other agency officials who oversee federal fire programs.

#### CONGRESSMAN MIKE BOST TO CHAIR THE CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES CAUCUS IN THE 119TH CONGRESS

The Congressional Fire Services Institute is pleased to announce that Congressman Mike Bost (IL-12) will serve as the chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus for the 119th Congress.

Bost has represented the 12th District of Illinois since 2015 and has worked tirelessly to support America's fire and emergency service.

The Congressman has a strong history with the fire service, serving as a firefighter for the Murphysboro (IL) Fire Department. He graduated from the University of Illinois' Certified Firefighter II Academy in 1993 and worked with the Murphysboro Fire Department even while serving as a state representative. The Congressman also served in the United States Marine Corps from 1979 to 1982.

"With his fire service background, Congressman Bost understands the importance of Congressional support for America's fire and emergency services. During his time in Congress, he has been a steadfast champion for the fire and emergency services, demonstrating a deep commitment to ensuring our first responders have the resources they need to keep their communities safe," said Jim Estepp, President of CFSI's Board of Directors.

"As a former firefighter, I know firsthand the dedication our first responders show to the communities they serve," said Bost. "I'm honored to stand shoulder to shoulder with my firefighter brothers and sisters who put their lives on the line for their communities. I'm humbled by this opportunity to be a leading voice for them in Congress through the Fire Services Caucus."

The Congressional Fire Services Caucus leadership is composed of eight members – four each from the Senate and House. Maintaining the bipartisan spirit of the Caucus, leadership is split evenly between party lines with four Democrats and four Republicans. The chairmanship rotates between a Democrat and a Republican every Congress. Congressman Bost takes over the chairmanship following the leadership of former Senator Jon Tester (MT), who chaired the caucus in the 118th Congress.

The Fire Caucus is among the largest caucuses in Congress. Members join to learn more about our nation's

role in addressing the needs of our nation's fire and emergency services. A list of current members is located on CFSI's website. If your member is not on the list, please ask them to join

## VFCA BOARD/COMMITTEE MEMBERS ATTEND CFSI SEMINAR'S AND DINNER

Kevin Good

On February 12-13, 2025, the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI) hosted the 35th Annual National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium and Dinner in Washington, DC



VFCA President Vance Cooper, 1st Vice-President Kevin Good, At-Large VP # 3 J.R. Hall, At-Large VP #4 Matt Fox alongside some of our members head to the Nation's Capital to join the Virginia Department of Fire Programs Leadership for the 35th Annual Congressional Fire Service Institute National Fire & Emergency Services Symposium and Dinner on February 12-13, 2025.

Virginia's Fire Services leaders met with numerous members of the US Senate and Congress or a member of their staff to advocate for the following:

- Protect the FIRE/SAFER Grant Programs
- Funding for the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and National Fire Academy (NFA)
- Preserve the FirstNet Authority
- Develop Federal Standards for Lithium-Ion Batteries and Micromobility Devices
- Eligibility in the Federal PSOB Programs for the Families of Fallen Public Safety Officers Due to Cancer
- Promote Nationwide Adoption of Next Generation 9-1-1 Technology
- Encourage the Installation of Automatic Fire Sprinklers in High-Rise Buildings
- Preserving AM Radio in New Vehicles as a Free, Standard Service
- Extending the Medicare Ambulance Add-On Payments

A special thank you to Will Dantini, a Virginia Management Fellow assigned to the Government Affairs section at VDFP, who organized the meetings and whose

hard work is greatly appreciated. The VMF program prepares recent graduates for leadership and management roles in all branches of state government. The CFSI Symposium ended Will's stint at VDFP, and we wish him well with his next fellowship at the Department of Taxation.

Once again, the annual tribute to the nation's fire service drew over 1,500 of your colleagues from the fire and emergency services. Educational seminars were available and meetings with members of Congress and their staff were held and opportunities to network with colleagues. At the conclusion of the two-day event, one could join together in the Marriott Marquis ballroom to hear national political leaders paying tribute to the dedication and commitment of our nation's firefighters and emergency services personnel.

The National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium and Dinner is an event like no other in the fire and emergency services. The opportunity was there to develop a better understanding of the federal government's role in addressing the challenges and concerns of our firefighters, emergency services personnel, and the fire service industry. Opportunities abounded to interact with members of Congress and federal agency officials to discuss both national issues and local concerns. The knowledge acquired will increase your understanding of federal programs and legislation, while emboldening you to take a stronger interest in advocating for fire and emergency services on Capitol Hill.

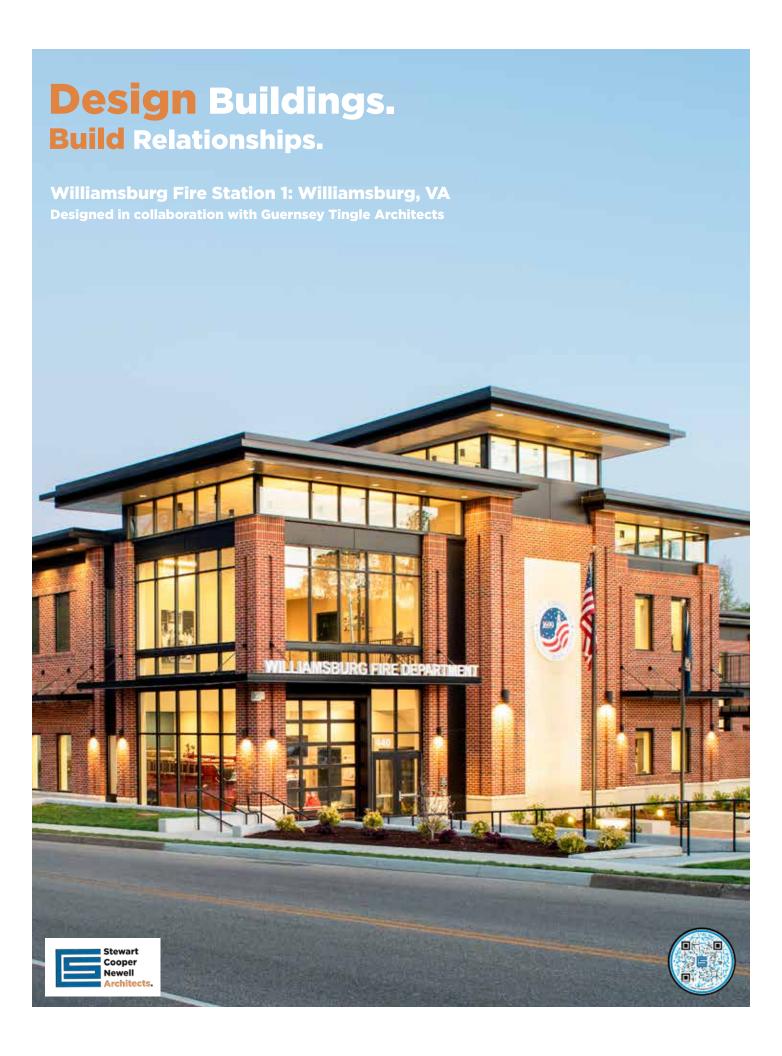
The seminars program was something you could only experience in our nation's capital. Featuring federal policymakers and national fire service leaders, the program covered a broad array of national issues – issues being considered by Congress and implemented by federal agencies, as well as issues being addressed collectively by national organizations and distinguished fire service officials.

Capping off the two-day event, the 35th Annual National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner will feature leaders of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus and the Administration who paid their personal tributes to the men and women of the fire and emergency services. The program also included four award presentations for individual and organizational leadership in advancing the readiness and response capabilities of our nation's fire and emergency services.



Many of the 70+ Virginia attendees took a minute to grab a quick photo following the Dinner

Photo: Vance Cooper





CPC Credentialing is a professional designation model that recognizes career excellence and offers strategies for continuous personal improvement.

The Commission on Professional Credentialing (CPC) offers five distinct designations covering the various levels and specialties of fire officers. They include: Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Chief EMS Officer (CEMSO), Chief Training Officer (CTO), Fire Marshal (FM) and Fire Officer (FO).

CPC provides an application process that officers use to develop their portfolio, training and support while developing their portfolio, and access to experienced peer reviewers. While it can be a bit of work to develop your portfolio; we promise it's worth it.

This year designations and renewals include:

#### CFO's

Allen Baldwin, York Co. Fire & Life Safety; James Reid, Petersburg Fire, Rescue & Emergency Services; Thomas LaBelle, Prince William Co. dept. of Fire & Rescue; Danny Clary, Ft. Barfoot JTC; Stephen Kopczynski, York Co. Fire & Life Safety; Michael Roth, Henrico Co, Div. of Fire; David Rose, JBLE - Langley Fire & Emergency Services; Keith Johnson, Loudoun Co. Fire & Rescue; Joseph Neiberger, City of Manassas Park Fire Rescue Dept.; Davis Winer, Fairfax Co, Fire and Rescue Dept.; Todd Lupton, Loudoun Co. Fire Rescue; Jason Garber, Metro Washington Airports Auth. FRD; Brian Frankel,, Stafford Co, Fire & Rescue Dept.; Timothy Duffer, Danville, Fire Dept.; Shawn Dunstan, City of Fairfax Fire Dept.; Abbey Johnston, Bedford Co. Fire Dept.; Kevin Spruill, City of Richmond Dept. of Fire & Emergency Serv.; Larry Snyder, Williamsburg Fire Dept.; Marlon Rickman, Salem Fire-EMS Dept.; Tracey Reed, Fairfax Co, Fire And Rescue Dept.; Harold Willaford, King & Queen Co, DES; Jason Dougherty, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Fire & Emergency Services Fire District; Mike Watkins, Goochland; Kevin Moran, Chesterfield Fire & EMS; Patrick Wilcox, Fort A. P. Hill Fire Emergency Services; Matthew Lopez, City of Annapolis FD.; Simone Gulisano, Chesapeake Fire Dept.; Nicholas Nanna, Dumfries Triangle VFD; Sean O'Hara; Christopher Payne, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Fire & Emergency Services; Trevor Shannon, Roanoke Fire & EMS; Russell, Metro Washington Airports Auth. F&R Departments; Eric Wilkerson, Virginia Beach Fire Dept.; David Short, Sterling Fire.

#### **CEMSO**

Anthony Young, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Fire & Emergency Services; Allen Baldwin, York Co. Fire & Life Safety; David Winter, Fairfax Co, Fire & Rescue Dept.; Todd Lupton, Loudoun Co. Fire Rescue; Tracey Reed, Fairfax Co. Fire & Rescue Dept.; Matthew Lopez, City of Annapolis FD; Josh Wilkinson, City of Bristol Fire Dept.

#### сто

Allen Baldwin, York Co. Fire & Life Safety; Matthew Lopez, City of Annapolis FD; Josh Wilkinson, City of Bristol Fire Dept.; Christopher Sampl, Fairfax Co. Fire & Rescue Dept.; Laura Arrington, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Fire & Emergency Services.

#### FM

James Reid, Petersburg Fire Rescue & Emerg. Serv.; Perry Weller, Staunton Fire & Rescue.

#### FO

Paul Houde, Hampton Div. Of Fire & Rescue; Brian Heinsman, James City Co. Fire Dept.; Shawn Carney, Fairfax Co. Fire & Rescue Dept.; Timothy Vaught, Winchester Fire & Rescue Dept.; Robert Wells, Fairfax Co. Fire Rescue; Meade Whitaker, Albemarle Co. Fire Rescue; Drew Abel, Roanoke Fire-EMS; Jeremey Hartman, Salem Fire-EMS; Michael Hauser, Prince William Co. Dept, of Fire & Rescue; Terence Owens, Arlington Co. Fire Dept.; Aaron Schutt, City of Manassas Park; Clay Pollock, Kirsten Martin; Maurice Carter, III. Michael Toothman; Rahshemeer Neal.

#### **FESA**

John Morrison, Vienna Vol. FD.

#### **ARSON AWARENESS WEEK**

Arson Awareness Week will take place May 5-11 with the theme of Protecting Houses of Worship Against Arson. Use the week to educate your community and your department about how to reduce risks and safeguard local places of worship. The U.S. Fire Administration has resources here. In addition, register for the Arson Awareness Week webinar taking place on May 6 at 2pm ET to learn more about this year's theme and what you can do

#### **CELEBRATE NATIONAL EMS WEEK**



May 19-25 marks the 50th anniversary of National EMS Week. It's a time to show our gratitude toward EMTs and paramedics who provide lifesaving care across the nation every day. EMS Week is also a time to educate the public about EMS, and the essential service we provide to communities.

This year's theme is "Honoring Our Past, Forging Our Future." NAEMT partners with the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) on EMS Week to encourage the nationwide recognition of EMS Week and contributions of EMS professionals.

EMS Week celebrates the paramedics, EMTs and other EMS professionals who work diligently to care for their patients and serve their communities in times of crisis," says NAEMT President Susan Bailey. "Honoring Our Past, Forging Our Future' reminds us of the proud history of our profession and contributions of EMS practitioners over the decades. We also must stay focused on the road ahead: evolving, innovating and ensuring that EMS has the support needed to continue to answer the public's call for help when it's most needed.



### 2024 FEDERAL MILITARY SUMMIT HELD

Deputy Chief Julien Crolet.

On December 6, 2024 Federal and Military public safety professionals of all ranks met in Williamsburg for the 3nd Annual VFCA Federal/Military Section Summit. Leaders from Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, Fort Belvoir, Warrenton Training Center, NASA, Camp Perry, Military District of Washington, FBI, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management were all in attendance. The summit included presentations on Equitable Service Delivery, a review of the Naval District Washington's Firefighter Line of Duty Death experience, as well as a presentation on Intergovernmental Support Agreements for Public Safety Communications.

FED/MIL Section President George Beodeker shared news about what's happening in the VFCA and conducted annual business of the section to include election of officers. Congratulations to George Beodeker who will serve as the 2025 FED/MIL Section President, Ty Burch who will serve as the Vice-President, and Troy Ellis who will serve as the section's secretary.

The presentation on Equitable Service Delivery was presented by Fire Chief Kevin Good. He discussed the difference in equal and equitable service delivery within Federal and DOD communities. He facilitated conversations on equipment, standards, policies, and reasonable accommodations.

Fire Chief Kevin Grinder provided a review of a Line of Duty Death involving a Naval District of Washington firefighter. He provided an overview of events leading to the LODD,

challenges, impacts, LODD funeral planning, investigating authorities, Jurisdictional and higher headquarter support and relationships, memorial planning, Changes made post LODD, Peer support teams, Training, policy changes and reviews, and lessons learned.

Jennifer Warshawsky presented on exploring 9-1-1 Federal and Local Partnerships. She discussed the transition of 911 for government installations to municipal services through intergovernmental support agreements. She spoke on shared benefits to both public and federal governments to include Computer Aided Dispatch and Continuity of Government. She discussed timelines and processes for success from her real-world experience. She also discussed transition and upgrades of phone systems, GIS Systems, and record management systems.

Special Thanks to all the presenters and to the planning team that coordinated all aspects of the day.

George Beodeker, Assistant Fire Chief- Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Robert Eagan, Fire Chief- Warrenton Training Center Julien Crolet, Fire Chief- Fort Belvoir Fire and Emergency Services Ty Burch, Battalion Chief- Fort Belvoir Fire and Emergency Services

Are you currently a member of Virginia's Federal Fire Service and wanting to get more involved? Opportunities exist within the VFCA Federal/Military Section for networking, summits, Virginia Fire and Rescue Conference Presentations, Commonwealth Chief Articles, VFCA Working Committees, scholarships and so much more.

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- Trident Air Primer
- Akron 8000 Series Valves
- AMDOR Rollup Compartments
- · Whelen Freedom IV-Q 72" Lightbar
- Seats Five (5)



### CHIEFS FOUNDATION AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS

This year, as a part of its Scholarship Program, the Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation presented twenty two, Robert E. White Memorial Scholarships to Virginia students who have been accepted into a post-high school educational institution or other program. The awards were presented during the Virginia Fire Rescue Conference held in Virginia Beach in February. This year's awards total \$30,550.00!!!

This year, there was one \$900 scholarship awarded to an individual. That scholarship went to: Samantha Green to attend Columbia Southern University.

Additionally, three individuals received \$1,000 scholarships to attend certificate programs. They included: Andy Backowski who attended Bucks County, PA Community College for his Fire Officer and Inspector programs, Justin Duck towards his Paramedic Critical Care Certificate and Yash Sinha who attended a Counseling Program at Liberty University.

There were four \$1,250.00 scholarships awarded to individuals. Included were: Julian Crolet who attended Columbia Southern University toward an EMS Associates degree; Carter Eagan, who attended Peninsula CC to earn a degree in Science; Matthew Price, who is working toward a degree in Fire & Emergency Service Science at LSU-Online and Taylor Spruill who attends J. Sargent Reynolds CC working on an Associates in Education.

There was one \$1,400.00 award to Cadence Lagow, presently attending UVA – Wise and working on her degree in Economics.

Additionally, there were ten \$1,500 awards that went to students including: Ty Mason Burch who is working on a degree in Aeronautics at Liberty University; Colton Chandler working on his BS in Paramedic Critical Care at Redford; Johnathan Leitz, a Bachelors in Clinical Neuroscience at VA Tech; Matthew Lockman, a Bachelors in Environmental Science at Patrick Henry College; Tayler Moran, a Biochemistry Pre-Med degree at VA Tech; Grayson Shaver a BS is in Sports Medicine & Analytics; Kathlyrn Stone, a Bachelors in Political Science at Longwood; Jordan Taylor, who attends CSU and is working toward a Emergency Management degree; Stacey Willis who attends Purdue University Global and Tyler Wyks. working on a degree at VA Tech in Philosophy, Poly Science & Economics.

Finally, there was three \$1,750 awards made to Sejal Ahluwalia, becoming a Physican Assistant at Piedmont CC; William Drewert getting a Master's in Homeland Security at VCU and Eston Garber working on a Master's in Veterinary Science at Auburn University.

In all, our recipients will be attending 16 different colleges and universities across the country.

Selection of the award recipients was based on being an active Virginia fire, EMS or emergency management provider, demonstrated need, desire, initiative and potential benefits of the educational opportunity.

The scholarship program was first established a number of years ago in memory of Mr. Robert E. White, a citizen of the Commonwealth of Virginia who donated his money towards the betterment of the Fire Service throughout the state.

The objective of the program is to assist individuals desiring to further their education through a variety of opportunities such as college classes, National

Fire Academy classes, Virginia Fire Chief Association events such as the Virginia Fire Rescue Conference, the Virginia Fire Officer Academy, certificate programs, and other fire & EMS programs or conferences. Individual scholarship awards are made up to \$2,500 and can be utilized for any direct expenses such as registration, tuition, books, meals, lodging and/or transportation.

The Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation began awarding scholarships in 2003. Since that time, 420 scholarships have been awarded totaling \$400,000!!!

**Application Information** 

- 1. Applications will be accepted between September 1 and December 1 annually.
- 2. Successful applicants will be notified by January 1 of awards.
- Scholarship awardees will be invited to the Annual Virginia Fire Rescue Conference to be recognized and presented their scholarship. Attendance is not mandatory.

Applications and eligibility information may be obtained by visiting the VFCA website at www.vfca.us, or by calling or writing the Association or Foundation. You may reach us by phone at (888) 818-0983.

#### **SAVE THE DATE**



2025
Virginia Fire Chiefs Association
Administrative Professionals
Retreat

September 18-19, 2025 location tbd

Details will be sent out no later than August 1, 2025

## SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 7, 2025



#### Virginia Fire & EMS Memorial Service

LOCATION: Richmond Raceway Complex Main Exhibition Hall, 12 noon

- Honor Guard is invited to participate
- Fire Departments are invited to attend
- · More information can be found at vafire.com
- Questions can be sent to pio@vdfp.virginia.gov





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## ON THE MOVE & ODDS AND ENDS

#### **Powhatan County Hires Fire & Rescue Chief**

Powhatan County is proud to announce the hire of David "DJ" C. Johnston as the new Fire & Rescue Chief, effective January 17, 2025. This appointment follows a thorough and competitive selection process, underscoring the County's dedication to outstanding public safety services and excellence in emergency response.

Chief Johnston succeeds retiring Fire & Rescue Chief Phil Warner, whose years of dedicated service have left an enduring legacy in Powhatan County. We also extend our heartfelt appreciation to Interim Chief Taylor Goodman for his exemplary leadership and unwavering commitment during the transition. Deputy Chief Goodman's contributions have been instrumental in setting the standards of service the County is known for.

Chief Johnston brings a wealth of experience and expertise to his new role. He joins Powhatan County after an impressive 17-year tenure with Hanover County Fire-EMS, where he served in various capacities, including most recently as Deputy Chief. In this role, he oversaw operations, capital projects, budget, training, and logistics.

In addition to his extensive professional experience, Chief Johnston holds a master's degree in public administration from Liberty University. His dedication to excellence has been recognized with numerous awards and leadership roles, including the Chief's Choice Award and Career Officer of the Year with Hanover Fire-EMS, as well as serving as President of the Forest View Volunteer Rescue Squad.

As Fire  $\theta$  Rescue Chief, Chief Johnston will lead Powhatan County's emergency services, which include fire, rescue and emergency management, building on our strong foundation to further enhance public safety, emergency response, and community engagement.

County Administrator Bret Schardein stated "Volunteerism is the foundation of emergency services in Powhatan County. We were impressed with DJ's dedication and focus on volunteers, as he will lead our hybrid system that includes both volunteer and career staff to serve our citizens and business communities. I want to thank Deputy Chief Taylor Goodman for his service, not just for stepping up during the transition, but for his contributions over the years that are in no small part why we enjoy such an excellent emergency services team today."

Chief Johnston stated, "I am excited to work alongside the men and women of Powhatan Fire and Rescue and ensuring that our team is prepared and ready to serve the community."

Powhatan County looks forward to welcoming Chief Johnston and supporting him in his mission to serve and protect our residents.

#### Governor's Office announces change in VDEM leadership

In late December, the Governor's Office announced changes in leadership

at VDEM. Effective December 19th, our State Coordinator, Shawn Talmadge, transitioned to a new role downtown working alongside the Governor's Chief Transformation Officer as an Advisor for the Office of Hurricane Helene Recovery and Rebuilding. As many of you know, we have been working closely with this office to shape the future of recovery programs and processes in the commonwealth. We know that Shawn will provide tremendous value in helping continue this effort by providing insight, perspective, and recommendations from the emergency management/public safety lens.

With that being said, we would like to announce that John Scrivani will be serving as our Acting State Coordinator, effective immediately, for the remainder of the administration. While many of you likely know John from his current role as the Director of Safety, Security & Emergency Management for the Virginia Department of Transportation, he has been working in the Emergency Response/Management community for nearly 30 years. From 2017 - 2019 he served alongside our previous State Coordinator, Dr. Jeffrey Stern, as the Deputy State Coordinator for Disaster Services here at VDEM. Prior to his state service in Virginia, he worked in various leadership roles for the New York City Office of Emergency Management, NYC Office of Chief Medical Examiner, and NYPD."

We look forward to working with Coordinator Scrivani and continuing our close partnership with VDEM on behalf of all emergency management professionals across the Commonwealth.

#### Portsmouth hires a new Deputy EM Coordinator to assist us with emergency preparedness and recovery.



We are excited to bring a familiar face to the Virginia Fire and Emergency Managment community back to the Commonwealth as we welcome Anna McRay as the Deputy Coordinator of Emergency Management for the City of Portsmouth. Prior to joining the team, she served as the Assistant Director of Emergency Management for New Hanover, NC from March 2019 – January 2025 and the Deputy Coordinator of Emergency

Management for Henrico County, VA from April 2007 – March 2019.

Anna has an extensive history with public safety in our community including holding her Virginia paramedic certification, completion of the Executive Fire Officer Program in 2019, maintaining the Certified Emergency Manager certification from the Interational Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), and is a Certified Sport Security Professional (CSSP) through the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security (NCS4). She holds a bachelor's degree in Emergency Services Management and a master's degree in Disasters Sciences from the University of Richmond.

Her husband, Bryan, runs the School of Rock in Midlothian, VA, and their daughter, Madyson, is a 2nd year student at James Madison University majoring in Education. During her time away from the Commonwealth, Anna continued her music ventures and began competitive ballroom dancing. We are excited to have her as a part of the Portsmouth team and look forward to moving the EM program forward to enhance preparedness, response, and recovery efforts for our internal and external partners.

#### VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ANNOUNCES DIRECTOR FOR THE OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

PNationwide Search Yields State Director with Extensive Experience in EMS and Fire Services to Lead Virginia's EMS System

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is pleased to announce that Maria Beermann-Foat, PhD, NRP, will be the new director of the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS). VDH conducted a nationwide search to fill this key leadership role yielding nearly 150 applicants over two application cycles. Interview panels included representatives from key stakeholder groups, including the Governor's State EMS Advisory Board, Virginia's Regional EMS Councils, the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, and VDH leadership.

"Emergency Medical Services plays a key role in the health of Virginians, and I am excited that Dr. Beermann-Foat will be joining us at such an important time while we work with stakeholders to improve Virginia's statewide EMS system," said **Virginia State Health Commissioner Karen Shelton, M.D.** "Over the last year VDH has taken proactive steps to address the issues faced within the Office of EMS, and part of that process has included the recruitment of a new director. We are happy that Dr. Beermann-Foat has accepted this new role and will lead Virginia's path forward to a well-supported EMS system."

"The past year has been challenging for Virginia's EMS system, including the staff in the Office of EMS, a team that has been incredibly resilient and steadfast in continuing the good work that they have always done. We are now at a turning point, where we will shift our focus forward to building an EMS system that is even more comprehensive of the needs of today's providers. Dr. Beermann-Foat brings the background and the skill set to unite EMS stakeholders around that common goal," said **R. Christopher Lindsay, Chief Operating Officer of VDH**. "As an EMS provider myself, I am excited to see where her leadership takes the EMS system in Virginia."

Dr. Beermann-Foat joins Virginia's Office of EMS with an extensive background in EMS and fire leadership, as well organizational management and significant educational experience. Dr. Beermann-Foat will formally begin her role at OEMS on January 25, 2025.

"I am honored to have been selected as the Director of Virginia's Office of EMS at such a pivotal time. My priority is to unite our dedicated team and stakeholders by fostering open communication and collaboration," said **Dr. Maria Beermann-Foat**. "The past two years have been a time of critical discovery and a great deal of work has already begun to address these challenges; but, they've also highlighted the resilience and commitment of our EMS community. I am dedicated to building trust, strengthening partnerships, and delivering innovative solutions that reflect the needs of those we serve. Together, we will advance our shared mission to provide exceptional emergency medical services and enhance public health outcomes across the State of Virginia."

Chief Vance Cooper, President of the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, participated in the first round of interviews alongside VDH senior leaders.

"I appreciate VDH inviting Virginia's fire service to participate in the hiring process for a new OEMS Director. Each phase brought further understanding of each candidate's ability and willingness to inspire, share, and model a better way forward. The Virginia Fire Chiefs Association is looking forward to building a strong relationship with OEMS' new director Dr. Maria Beermann-Foat and her team," said **Chief Vance Cooper, President, Virginia Fire Chiefs Association**.

During the second round of interviews with finalists, Kevin Dillard, Chairman of the Governor's State EMS Advisory Board, represented various EMS stakeholder groups across Virginia.

"I am excited to begin working with Dr. Beermann-Foat as we work to move Virginia's EMS system towards becoming the best EMS system in the country. Her strong background in EMS and Fire leadership coupled with her national reputation for excellence will set Virginia EMS on a clear path to greatness. I speak for the EMS Advisory Board when I say that Dr. Beermann-Foat's leadership will prove very pivotal as we continue to reimagine what EMS in Virginia looks like for years to come," said **Kevin Dillard, Chairman, Governor's State EMS Advisory Board.** 

Maria Beermann-Foat, Ph.D., NRP, has over 25 years of prehospital emergency care experience in privately-owned, hospital-based, county government-based and fire-based emergency services. Dr. Beermann-Foat most recently served as the EMS Training Coordinator for the Eugene Springfield Fire Department (Oregon) during the department's transition from a dual-role to a single-role EMS system. In this position, Dr. Beermann-Foat served as a primary change agent in the development of the newly formed EMS Division where she successfully structured an EMS-specific academy model and modified the existing EMS training program to achieve the strategic vision of becoming a regional training center. Prior to joining Eugene Springfield Fire in January 2022, Dr. Beermann-Foat served Johnson County (Kansas) MED-ACT- Emergency Medical Services, where she last held the position of Battalion Chief of Operations. Since first joining MED-ACT in 1999 as a paramedic, she moved up the ranks in the roles of community education officer/PIO, captain/field training officer, battalion chief of training, and division chief of quality management.

At the national level, Dr. Beermann-Foat has served to further the EMS profession and resolve issues pertaining to EMS retention and recruitment, workforce engagement, and EMS research through volunteer roles in many professional and industry associations. She recently served as Director, At-Large for the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) Board of Directors as well as editorial advisory board member for several nationally known EMS publications including EMS1.com and the International Journal of Paramedicine. Through her position as a course developer and instructor for the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland – a leading emergency services instructional campus operated by FEMA – her efforts have contributed toward preparing fire department and EMS department administrators in the areas of quality management and application of research methods for organizational improvement.

Dr. Beermann-Foat holds a Ph.D. in Organization Management from Capella University, a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from MidAmerica Nazarene University, and a City and County Management Graduate Certificate from the University of Kansas.





#### VFCA COMPANY OFFICER SUMMIT November 13th & 14th 2025

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## 2025 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION ADJOURNS

#### 2025 VFCA & VPFF Joint Lobby Day

The Virginia Fire Chief's Association in conjunction with the Virginia Professional Firefighters Association held our Second Annual Lobby Day in Richmond on January 22 and 23, 2025. The collaborative efforts included welcoming remarks the first morning by VPFF President Robert Bragg and VFCA President Vance Cooper, followed by educational sessions on the 2025 legislative priorities for the respective associations. In addition, attendees obtained additional training regarding the legislative process and a Lobbying 101 session prior to disbanding for meetings with legislators. Attendees spent the remainder of their time over the two days in the General Assembly building sitting in on key committee hearings and/or attending their scheduled meetings with legislators to advocate for high quality Fire & Emergency Services in the Commonwealth.

Team members from the Virginia Dept of Fire Programs (VDFP), VFCA, VPFF, and the Firefighter Cancer Support Network joined forces for an "Inaugural Fire Service Showcase" in the General Assembly Building on January 23, 2025 to highlight the fire service to General Assembly members and advocate for increased funding and efforts to mitigate and prevent cancer in firefighters. This event informed members of the General Assembly of the resources that VDFP provides to the Commonwealth and provided the opportunity to advocate for increased funding and efforts to mitigate and prevent cancer in firefighters.

Coordinating efforts between the two Associations presents the General Assembly with a united front across Virginia's fire service leaders. There was great regional diversity from the attendees which allowed legislators to hear the needs and perspectives of both their constituents and also those in areas where the needs may vary. Lobby Day is a unique opportunity for the VFCA to be visible, in uniform, and speak directly to those that have the power to make substantial policy changes to enhance Fire and EMS across Virginia. We hope you'll consider joining us for Lobby Day next year in January 2026!

The 2025 Virginia General Assembly session officially adjourned sine die on Saturday, February 22, after a short session of only 45 days. There was a lot of activity from the fire service this year, including the Second Annual Lobby Day. Long-term sustainable fire service funding remained the top priority of the VFCA again this year. After two years of studies and workgroups on the topic, Governor Youngkin included \$5M in his budget for fiscally distressed communities to acquire non-vehicular equipment (mostly turnout gear and breathing apparatus). With advocacy from the VFCA, leadership in both the House and Senate agreed to maintain the funding. However, several other bills related to fire service funding were unsuccessful, including an effort to raise ATL to 1.5%, a public safety communications infrastructure fund, and several grant funding ideas.

There were several successes under worker's compensation this year. A bill from Senator Saddam Salim clarifies the workers' compensation presumption for throat cancer to include cancer in the tissues of the pharynx, larynx, adenoid, tonsil, esophagus, trachea, nasopharynx, oropharynx, or hypopharynx. An effort by Senator Jeremy McPike and Delegate Paul Krizek to raise the PTSD benefit from 52 to 104 weeks was also successful. However, a bill from Delegate Delores McQuinn to extend eligibility for LODA benefits for those diagnosed with cancer for an extra five years past retirement (for a total of 10 years past retirement) was not successful this year.

Additionally, legislation to expand the commercial sale of fireworks in the Commonwealth was defeated again this year. Delegate Tom Garrett, the bill patron, worked with stakeholders to try to find a path forward, but ultimately the VFCA leadership could not support the expansion. There were six bills related to 911 dispatcher benefits. Of those six bills, five of them provided localities with the local option to provide enhanced retirement benefits to dispatchers; those were defeated again this year. Ultimately, Delegate David Bulova's bill was successful. It clarifies that emergency dispatchers who are not members of the hybrid retirement program still become participants in the disability program for hybrid retirement plan members.

Two collective bargaining bills were also advanced to the Governor this year. Both Delegate Kathy Tran and Senator Scott Surovell's bills would repeal the existing prohibition on collective bargaining by public employees. The bill creates the Public Employee Relations Board and applies to all state and local government employees. It is anticipated that the Governor will veto these bills.

#### **Legislative Session & Fire Service Priorities**

Governor Youngkin has 30 days to review and take action on the approximately 800 pieces of legislation that have passed both chambers. There is an expectation that he will issue many vetoes, particularly on issues such as firearms, paid sick leave, minimum wage, collective bargaining, and others. The General Assembly will return for a Reconvened Session on April 2 to review and address the Governor's vetoes.

**Budget Overview** 

Virginia is constitutionally required to have a balanced budget. The version of the budget sent to the Governor by the legislature, includes:

- \$1.1 billion in tax relief, mainly in the form of a tax rebate of \$200 for individual filers and \$400 for joint filers. This is to replace the Governor's proposed car tax break for certain income levels.
- A temporary increase in the standard deduction of \$8,750 for individuals and \$17,500 for joint filers through 2026.
- Raising the K12 school support cap and \$223M for additional per pupil funding.
- A one time \$1000 bonus to public school teachers and a 1.5% bonus for state employees.
- \$50 million for help in regions damaged by Hurricane Helene with another
   \$50 million earmarked for the Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund.

#### • Several items pertaining to the fire service:

- \$5.0 million from the general fund in FY25 for firefighter nonvehicular equipment. This money will have to be spent before July 1, 2025.
- \$200,000 from the general fund the second year for recent efforts in Virginia Beach to support the Good Friday crash responders.
- Increasing from 52 weeks to 104 weeks the workers' compensation benefit for anxiety disorder, depressive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder incurred by law enforcement and firefighters.
- Directs the Board of Health to consult with relevant stakeholders before modifying the number of regional emergency medical services councils.
- Authority to carryover funding for the Northern Virginia Firefighter
   Occupational Cancer Screening Pilot Program to fiscal year 2026.
- Language directing the Virginia Fire Services Board and the Board of Housing and Community Development to submit joint recommendations on fees for the State Fire Marshal's Office.

In response to the ongoing concerns over federal cuts in funding to the state

and impacts on the federal workforce in the Commonwealth, Speaker Don Scott created an Emergency Committee on Impacts of Federal Workforce and Funding Reductions, that will review the potential impact on Virginia's budget. We anticipate a Special Session later this year to address federal spending cuts.

With the legislative session now adjourned, all eyes are on the 2025 campaign season in Virginia, with the three statewide offices (Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Attorney General) as well as all 100 seats in the House of Delegates on the ballot this November. Voters will also decide three constitutional amendments on that same ballot, including reproductive freedom, restoration of voting rights, and marriage equality.

A full Session Report can be found on the VFCA website, along with a link to a bill tracking sheet. Please feel free to reach out to Devon Cabot (devon@2capconsulting.com) or Maddy Busse (maddy@2capconsulting.com) with any questions.

Overall, the fire service had some significant successes this year. The \$5M allocated in the first year for turnout gear and non-vehicular equipment is the first time General Fund Dollars have been allocated for the fire service since Two Capitols started working with us in 2018. We recognize we have a long way to go, but the significant work VFCA has done in recent years to build relationships with the administration and legislators is starting to show results. Thank you all for your advocacy, service on the studies/workgroups, and participation in Lobby Day. If you have any questions about the report, please let us know. Remember you can view the bill tracker on the VFCA website here .

Starting in March we will resume our monthly calls on the third Thursday of the month at 1:30pm.

We look forward to continuing the work in 2025 as we gear up for a new administration next January!

Click HERE to review the VFCA 2025 End of Session Report.

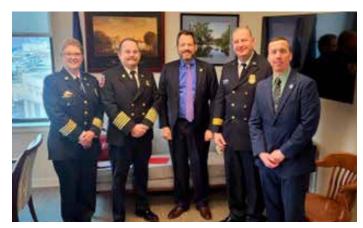




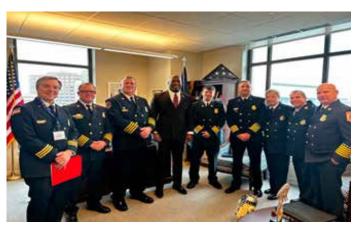
Delegate Delores Oates (R-Clark, Frederick, Warren )



Senator Tara Durant (R- Stafford, Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania)



Senator Scott Surovell (D- Fairfax)



Senator Aaron Rouse (D- Virginia Beach)

# VFCA JOINS WITH OTHER GROUPS & ASSOCIATIONS IN RICHMOND FOR LOBBY DAY JAN. 22-23

The VFCA joined with several other groups to hold a very successful 2025 Lobby Day this year. The events were very well attended with nearly 25 VFCA participants.

Thank you very much to the 2025 VFCA Lobby Day Participants!

- 1. Vance Cooper Virginia Beach FD
- 2. Gary Windley Isle o Wight
- 3. Kevin Good Fort Belvoir Fire & Emergency Services
- 4. Todd Lupton Loudoun County Combined Fire & EMS
- 5. Todd Lagow Norton Fire
- 6. Marci Stone Roanoke Fire & EMS
- 7. Julien Crolet-Fort Belvoir Fire & Emergency Services
- 8. Keith Johnson Loudoun County Combined Fire & EMS
- 9. Matt Fox Fredericksburg Fire Department
- 10. Gerry Maiatico Warren County
- 11. Mike Armstrong Harrisonburg Fire Department
- 12. Allen Baldwin York County Fire and LS
- 13. James Orndorff Winchester Fire
- 14. Jason Wood Henrico Division of Fire
- 15. Mike Barakey Suffolk Fire Department
- 16. Steve Sites Fairfax City
- 17. Jason Ferguson Botetourt County
- 18. Austin Curriardo Warren County
- 19. Chris Eudailey VFCA/Spotsylvania/Chesterfield
- 20. Charles Sterne Fredericksburg FD (Retired)
- 21. Ken Pravetz-Virginia Beach
- 22. Jackson Baynard Henrico County
- 23. Eric Wilkerson-Virginia Beach

This group had an opportunity to meet with Governor Glenn Youngkin to discuss current issues.











A SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO SUPPORTED THE VIRGINIA FIRE OFFICER ACADEMY AND THE VIRGINIA CHIEF OFFICER ACADEMY

ATLANTIC EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS
VIRGINIA FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION
VIRGINIA FIRE CHIEFS FOUNDATION
SAFER GRANT #5



## CONGRESS REAUTHORIZES NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER REGISTRY FOR CANCER

Funding will continue for the National Firefighter Registry for Cancer which collects data to help researchers understand cancer trends in the fire service. This will help lead to innovations in cancer prevention.

Legislation to reauthorize \$5.5 million in annual funding through 2028 for the National Firefighter Registry for Cancer has passed both houses of Congress. The bill now moves to President Joe Biden's desk for signature.

The IAFF has been a longtime supporter of the registry.

"Cancer is the greatest threat fire fighters face. But we need accurate data to help us take on this deadly disease," IAFF General President Edward Kelly said. "That is why keeping this registry moving forward is so important."

The National Firefighter Registry for Cancer Act was first passed in 2018. It directs the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to collect data related to cancer in fire fighters.

Researchers then analyze data to estimate an overall rate of cancer for fire fighters. This helps determine if certain groups are at a higher risk of cancer than others, based on level of exposure, geography, gender or other factors. This also will lead to studies on the efficacy of protective gear and cancer prevention polices.

The voluntary registry opened for enrollment in April 2023. All U.S. fire fighters are eligible to register, regardless of whether they have cancer. Those interested can do so here.

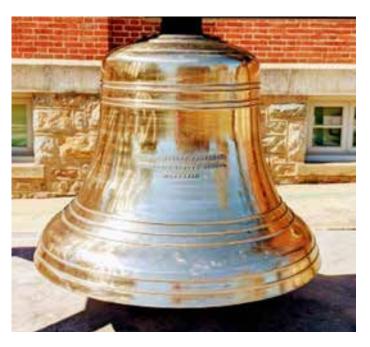
Earlier this year, Capt. Kenny Fent, Ph.D., CIH, NIOSH's manager of the Firefighter Health Program, spoke about five common misconceptions fire fighters have about the program – and what you should know about the registry.

#### NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL WEEKEND: MAY 3 – 4, 2025

Each year, the Foundation sponsors the official national tribute to all firefighters who died in the line of duty during the previous year. Thousands attend the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

We are honored to continue the tradition of gathering in front of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial this May to honor the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice. As part of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation invites you to join us in remembering those who died in the line of duty in 2024, and in previous years and honoring their families. Even if you can't join us in person, there are many ways to honor the fallen and their families and help us spread the word about National

#### RING IN TRIBUTE ON MAY 4, DURING THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL WEEKEND



Bells will ring from coast to coast as a grateful nation pauses on Sunday, May 4, 2025, to honor those firefighters who died in the line of duty in 2024 and previous years. Fire departments and their places of worship will join the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation for Bells Across America for Fallen Firefighters, part of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend.



# VFCA COMPANY OFFICER SUMMIT 2024

Willie West

That's a Wrap!

Wow, what an incredible couple of days we had at the Company Officer Summit 2024! Thank you to everyone who attended, spoke, sponsored, and helped make this year's Summit such a resounding success. The energy and enthusiasm were truly inspiring, and we hope you left feeling inspired, informed, and connected.

We covered a lot of ground, from **Dr. Jeff Kimble** "The Art of Effective Communication" and **Brian Smith** "Leading the Primary Search" to **Chris Jett** Leadership by Concert Attendance: Learning From the Music Industry

The sessions were packed with valuable insights, and the networking opportunities were invaluable. Here's a quick recap of what you might have missed over the 2 days of training:

<u>Brandyn Smith</u> "Engaging the 10 Fire Service "Tators"

<u>Adam Willemssen</u> "Practical Leadership for Emerging Leaders"

<u>Keith Besley</u> "Leadership on the Spectrum"

<u>Jarrod Sergi</u> "Fire Service Mortar: The Critical Role of the Company Officer"
<u>Triston Beverly</u> "Mental Health & Wellness for the First Responder"
<u>Chris Lonzo</u> "Mission Focused, Leading Where You Are Called"

Thanks to our generous sponsors: Atlantic Emergency Solutions, Fire Dex, MissionBBQ,

IAFF Local 4077, Firehouse Subs, Comfort Inn Monticello, Three Notch'd Craft Kitchen & Brewery.

#### What's Next?

We're already starting to plan for next year's conference! SAVE THE DATE November 13th and 14th 2025 East Rivanna Volunteer Fire Company Keswick, VA

Thank you again for being a part of the Company Officer Summit.

We look forward to seeing you next year!

Sincerely,

The VFCA Company Officer Summit Command Staff

# FIVE VIRGINIA EFO GRADUATES HONORED

Five Virginia Fire Officers were honored during the 2025 Virginia Fire Rescue Conference in Virginia Beach for completing their Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) during 2024.

Each graduate present was invited to the podium where they were presented with an American flag that had been flown over the U.S. Capitol in their honor. The new graduates include:

Kyle L. Bosilijevac, Battalion Chief, Virginia Beach Fire Department; Travis Lee, Chief EMS Officer, Harrisonburg, Fire Department; Jeffrey J. Meyer, Division Chief, Virginia Beach Fire Department; Christopher R, Shaver, Division Chief of Training; Christopher J. Tischler, Division Chief, Chesapeake Fire Department

#### Congratulations to all!

#### VFCA LAUNCHES ONLINE STORE TO PURCHASE GEAR DIRECTLY

VFCA Members - the VFCA BOD has partnered with Greenspring's Apparel to provide you the opportunity to purchase VFCA gear directly. Below is the link to the VFCA Company Store with some more common clothing options that can be personalized. The VFCA has several logo options available that include the traditional logo, 95th Logo and the block letters VFCA. In addition, Greenspring's Apparel is working to digitize the Section logos so they will also be available to the membership.

The link for the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association product page is as follows:

### $\frac{https://greensprings apparel.com/products/ols/categories/virginia-fire-chiefs-association}{}$

If there is something specific you want, and it is not listed on the VFCA link Greenspring's has a catalog available for your review. The link to the catalog is below for your use.

The link for Greenspring's website is www.greenspringsapparel.com

The VFCA BOD is pleased to offer this opportunity for the membership to purchase VFCA gear to its members and hope you will take advantage of this and wear your VFCA gear proudly!



SQUIRT REDEFINES SIZE WITH AN ULTRA-COMPACT DESIGN LEVERAGING ERGO-FOLD AND HIGH-FLOW JET, YET WEIGHS ONLY 38 POUNDS.

The Squirt comes through big in performance and run-time while being ultra-compact and lightweight.

- With High Flow Jet, the Squirt operates like a much larger fan, delivering a large jet-stream of air at high velocity.
- Its' Smart-Tec conrol system enables you to get dialed-into optimal performance with runtime performance data.

For pricing, scheduling demos and more, contact your Equipment Regional Account Manager at Atlantic.

#### **Specifications**

- Blade size: 17"
- Overall size: 17.75" x 18.1" x 10.5"
- Weight: 38 lbs.
- Max CFM: 11,200 AMCA equivalent
- Thrust: 7.2lbs
- . Control System: Smart-Tec by Blowhard
- Battery: Li-ion
- Runtime: 55+ min @ 11,200 CFM
   6+ hrs @ 6,000 CFM
- Noise: 82 dB @ 10ft, 88dB@ 40in
- Head Tilt: Ergo Fold 0-180°
- Charge time: 0-90% in 2 hrs

Complete charge in 3hrs



Smart-Tec by BlowHard control system



www.atlanticemergency.com

# VIRGINIA PUBLIC SAFETY FOUNDATION SEEKING NAMES



The Virginia Public Safety Foundation is charged with overseeing the annual addition of hero's names to the Commonwealth Public Safety Memorial. We know there are still heroes who are missing from the memorial wall and we would like to ensure that no hero is forgotten.

The Foundation is currently accepting applications for the memorial wall through May 15, 2025. This deadline will give the application committee time to review each potential candidate, make recommendations to the Foundation's Board of Directors, allow the Board to vote on the nomination and have the names engraved before the next memorial service on September 13, 2025.

Please find attached a document denoting the deadline for applications, as well as the link for the application form. I have also included information on the Virginia Public Safety Foundation's Brick Campaign.

Please share this email with the public safety organizations/agencies; we want to make sure everyone is aware of the upcoming deadline.

Thank you for your cooperation. Please email me if you have any questions.

Tracy Russillo,

President

Virginia Public Safety Foundation

# VCU CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY HAS RELEASED ITS FUNDING REPORT

Localities struggle to fully fund fire and rescue services across the state, especially in rural areas with declining populations, primarily in Southwest and Southside Virginia, and also in other regions throughout the state. The confluence of current restrictions on funding sources, declining volunteerism, national competition for a small pool of federal funds, and increasing EMS calls strain these services. Local fire chiefs and EMS directors need additional support to meet the needs of their communities. Limited funding results in a direct loss of services and can jeopardize the ability of fire and EMS teams to provide quality life-saving services in the time needed.

VCU Center for Public Policy has released its funding report which was approved by the Governor's office and submitted to the General Assembly the morning of 1/6/2025. The report contains a wealth of information, and we encourage all of you to review it as we continue the conversation about funding for Fire and EMS across the Commonwealth. To view the full contents of the assessment, please visit our website at www.vfca.us, click under the "Resources" tab and select the report. Or to access it from this email directly, please CLICK HERE.

## NEW FAA WAIVERS AND RULES BENEFIT PUBLIC SAFETY

Chief Charles Werner (Ret.) & VFCA Technology Advisor

There are several new regulatory changes that make it easier for public safety to utilize drones.

First, there is a new Public Safety Obstructed Shielding Waiver which provides guidance and bundles three key waivers into one. It combines waivers for Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS), Ops over people and Ops over moving vehicles. It allows for BVLOS ops for up to 1 mile while operating within 200' of the highest obstacle. It doesn't require a visual observer. It requires an ADS-B receiver, anticollision light and either prop guards or parachute depending on the size of the drone. IT DOESN'T REQUIRE A COA AND CAN BE DONE UNDER PART 107 RULES.

Here's the step by step guide to submit this waiver:

https://www.droneresponders.org/post/new-faa-public-safety-part-107-obstructed-shielding-waiver-guide-updated-11-14-2024

Second, Drone as a First Responder waivers are now possible through Part 107 rather than a COA and can be achieved in a fraction of the time. Fort Wayne PD achieved their DFR Part 107 Waiver in five weeks.

Third, in the last FAA Reauthorization Act, legislation clarified that tethered drones do not require a COA or Part 107 certified remote pilots. It also opened up opportunities for tethered drones to be purchased and used by volunteer fire, EMS, SAR and other volunteer entities where it had been previously limited to government entities.

As a reminder, membership and many free resources on public safety drones are available at DRONERESPONDERS.org

If you have additional questions, feel free to contact me by email - charles@ droneresponders.org

## PFAS DETECTED IN FIREFIGHTER GLOVES, HOODS, AND WILDLAND GEAR

National Institute of Standards and Technology



A firefighter's protective clothing is composed of three distinct layers made of different textiles. In response to concerns about the gear possibly exposing firefighters to PFAS chemicals—several of which have been linked to cancer—NIST researchers investigated the presence of the chemicals in textiles used to make the layers. This latest study analyzed hoods and gloves worn in structural fires as well as protective clothing worn to fight wildfires. Credit: B. Hayes/NIST

The protective clothing worn by wildland firefighters often contains PFAS, according to a new study from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). The study also found PFAS in hoods and gloves worn by firefighters who respond to building fires.

PFAS—which stands for "per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances"—are a category of chemicals used in a wide range of products. In high concentrations, PFAS may have harmful health effects on people.

Firefighters have more PFAS in their blood than the average person. It isn't clear why, but one theory is that it comes from the protective equipment they wear during a fire—called turnout gear.

"Our latest study showed that PFAS are present not only in the jacket and pants worn by firefighters, but also in many of the smaller protective garments," said NIST chemist and study co-author Rick Davis. "Measuring the presence of the chemicals is the first step in understanding their impact on firefighters."

The NIST studies do not assess the health risks that firefighters might face due to the presence of PFAS in turnout gear. However, they provide previously unavailable data that toxicologists, epidemiologists and other health experts can use to assess those risks.

NIST conducted these studies at the behest of Congress, which called on NIST to study PFAS in firefighter gear in the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act.

PFAS are everywhere. They don't react very easily with other chemicals, so they make very effective nonstick surfaces, lubricants and food packaging. But the fact that they're unreactive also means that they don't break down easily. These chemicals stay in the environment for a long time, which is why they are sometimes called "forever chemicals."

Fabrics containing PFAS are often used to make firefighting gear because these chemicals are very good at repelling water. Part of the standard for firefighter gear requires a minimum amount of water resistance to prevent steam burns and provide protection from chemicals.

Water resistance also tends to make gear safer because heat can travel much more efficiently through water than through air. For example, a dry potholder will let you safely pull a hot dish out of an oven. But that same dish can give you a third-degree burn in just one second if the potholder is wet.

NIST researchers have been running a series of experiments to understand how much PFAS are in that equipment.

The two prior NIST studies looked at the level of PFAS in firefighter coats and pants and how wear and tear can increase the amount of measurable PFAS in these garments. This latest study, published on Dec. 13, analyzed gloves and hoods worn by structural firefighters (those who fight fires in buildings), as well as gear worn by wildland firefighters. The researchers were particularly interested in hoods and gloves because they come in direct contact with skin, as opposed to coats and pants that are worn over a base layer.

Wildland gear includes the protective shirt and pants worn for fighting wildfires. It's designed for long treks over difficult terrain, so it trades off some heat protection for mobility. Unlike the thick, heavy coat and pants used to fight a structural fire, wildland gear is like something you might wear camping with extra heat protection.

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The NIST team tested four types of gloves, eight types of hoods, and nine types of wildland firefighter gear from several manufacturers of firefighter gear in 2021–23. All these garments are commercially available.

The researchers pulled the garments apart into 32 textile samples and extracted PFAS from the samples into a solvent. Then they tested each solvent to see if it contained any of 55

different PFAS chemicals.

After running these tests, Davis and his team found measurable amounts of PFAS in 25 of the 32 textile samples.

Across those samples, they found 19 different types of PFAS. "There was a range in the amount of PFAS we found in each sample," said Davis. "Most had only a little, but a few had large amounts."

The hoods contained low PFAS levels. In almost all cases, the amount of PFAS in hood layers was too small to be measured confidently. The inside layers of the gloves had amounts of PFAS similar to those found in the inside layers of coats and pants tested in prior studies.

Wildland gear is made of only one layer. The assumption among researchers was that this layer was unlikely to contain much PFAS. In general that was true, as most of the wildland gear tested had low levels of PFAS. But there were some cases that had notably high levels. Across all the textiles tested in this study, the largest total concentration of PFAS in a single sample was about 4,240 micrograms per kilogram from a piece of wildland gear.

"We still don't know what this means in terms of risk to a firefighter's health," said Davis, "but understanding where PFAS is will help us reduce potential impacts as we learn more about these chemicals."

The researchers plan to run a follow-up study on the same samples to see how wear and tear might increase the amount of detectable PFAS in hoods, gloves and wildland firefighter gear.

**More information:** Andre L Thompson, Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in Textiles Present in Firefighter Gloves, Hoods, and Wildland Gear, (2024). DOI: 10.6028/NIST.TN.2313



# Administrative Professionals Section is Looking for New Members



#### Why Belong?

- There is the opportunity for networking with your peers at your quarterly meetings and the annual conference
- There are training and educational opportunities at your meetings
- Quarterly magazine Commonwealth Chief... new and updated information
- Website
- VFC Foundation Scholarship Program, several APS members have benefited
- You have become more rounded, better educated and more valuable to your organization
- Find new ways to contribute

# CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN FIRE & EMS: ADVANCING THROUGH LEADERSHIP THROUGH EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Battalion Chief Laura Arrington, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Fire & EMS and President of Women's Fire & EMS Section of VCFA.

As Fire and EMS professionals advance in their careers, ongoing education and specialized training are crucial in developing effective leaders. Career development programs equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to meet the ever-changing demands of the service, improve management practices, and make sound decisions in both high-pressure situations and day-to-day operations. These programs also provide a deeper understanding of organizational dynamics, community needs, and resource management. By strengthening their leadership abilities, Fire and EMS personnel are better prepared to guide their teams, implement innovative strategies, and ensure the efficient delivery of services. Continuous learning ensures professionals remain adaptable to emerging challenges, technologies, and best practices, ultimately enhancing the safety and effectiveness of their departments.

There are several career advancement programs available for Fire and EMS professionals offering benefits not only to the individuals who participate, but also to the departments they serve. Several officers and members of the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association have taken advantage of these programs and the positive impact on both their professional growth and the overall effectiveness of their departments is clear. Let's take a closer look at some of these valuable programs and the advantages they offer.

#### **Virginia Fire Officer Academy**

The Virginia Fire Officer Academy (VFOA), offered by Virginia Fire Chief's Association, is a week-long residential program designed to develop current or aspiring company officers. The theme of VFOA is "Safety Through Leadership" and is based on the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation's 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. The program is focused on improving leadership techniques, personnel accountability, and fostering cultural change required to improve firefighter safety. This program is an excellent resource for those advancing into leadership roles within Virginia's Fire and EMS service community. Enrollment period for 2025 has closed as of March 31, 2025. For more information on upcoming application periods visit the VFCA website (vfca.us).

#### **Virginia Chief Academy**

The Virginia Chief Officer Academy (VCOA) is an intensive week-long program designed for individuals aspiring to become fire chiefs or take on senior leadership roles within fire service organizations. This program focuses on developing the leadership skills of both aspiring and newly appointed chief officers across the Commonwealth of Virginia, preparing them to tackle a wide range of leadership challenges. There are no pre-requisites for application, but applicants must be able to attend entire program and maintain 100% attendance. Virginia Fire Chief's Association member and secretary of the Women's Fire and EMS Section, Assistant Chief Riana Castilloveitia, successfully attended and graduated from the Virginia Chief Academy, further enhancing her leadership capabilities. Chief Castilloveitia is just one of several of our members that have graduated and benefited from being a part of this program. Enrollment period of 2025 for this program has also closed as of March 31, 2025. For more information on upcoming application periods visit VFCA website.

#### **National Fire Academy's Managing Fire Officer Program**

The National Fire Academy (NFA), located in Emmitsburg, Maryland, is known for its comprehensive training programs designed to enhance the skills of Fire and EMS personnel. One of its premier offerings, the Managing Fire Officer Program (MFO), is a multi-year initiative aimed at fire officers who are already in leadership roles and looking to further develop their management, leadership, and decision-making capabilities. Beyond the educational content, the MFO program offers valuable networking opportunities with peers from across the country, facilitating the exchange of best practices and fostering professional connections.

To be eligible for the MFO program, participants must first complete several prerequisites, including the Introduction to Emergency Response to Terrorism (Q0890) course, as well as ICS 100, 200, 700, and 800. Once accepted, participants will engage in a series of inperson classes, including four held at the NFA's teaching facilities in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Additionally, attendees are required to participate in three more in-person classes over the course of two years. To complete the program, participants must also submit a capstone project at the end of the two-year period. The program emphasizes key areas such as personnel management, strategic planning, and the management of department needs. Additionally, participants are expected to identify and address a specific challenge or need within their department or community.

There is a structured application process to enroll in the MFO program, which can be accessed through the NFA website. Several members of the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association (VFCA), including Vice President Kirsten Martin and myself, have successfully completed the program. Since its inception in 2016, the MFO program has been widely praised for its success, but it is currently undergoing a refresh. The NFA anticipates that new offerings will begin in 2026.

For more information or to stay updated on future application dates, visit the NFA website at www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/managing-officer/.

#### **National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program**

The National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program offers personnel the opportunity to collaborate with fellow Fire and EMS officers in exploring leadership strategies and crafting innovative public policy solutions that enhance community safety and resilience. With 4,810 graduates nationwide, as well as participants from Australia and Canada, the program has become a renowned platform for developing leadership in the fire service.

One of the key benefits of the program is its networking component, which helps build relationships with professionals from diverse backgrounds, providing valuable perspectives to navigate the everevolving field of emergency services. This network also fosters accountability, encouraging participants to remain dedicated to addressing community challenges through effective leadership.

The application process for the Executive Fire Officer Program involves a structured 6-item checklist, including an essay. Since the program has a cap of 500 applicants, individuals are encouraged to apply annually. The 2025 application period has already closed, but more information and upcoming application

dates can be found on the National Fire Academy's website at www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/executive-fire-officer/.

#### International Association of Fire Chiefs' Fire Service Executive Development Institute (FESDI)

The Fire Service Executive Development Institute (FSEDI), offered by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), funded by a grant from the Motorola Solutions Foundation, is a 12–18-month program designed for new and aspiring five-bugle fire chiefs. It focuses on enhancing leadership, organizational culture, community risk reduction, and innovation in fire service operations, providing a global perspective on leadership challenges and best practices.

Applicants must be new fire chiefs (one year or less in the position) or those in a department's succession plan with the potential to become a chief within two years. A background as a fire chief officer is required. Key Topics covered during this program include: Leadership and strategic planning, Emotional intelligence and ethical leadership, Diversity, equity, and inclusion, Budgeting, labor relations, and succession planning, and Crisis communication and resilience. FSEDI is limited to 20-24 participants per cohort, with travel and registration costs for additional events (such as Fire-Rescue International) the responsibility of the participant or their department. FSEDI 2025 application period has closed as of December 30, 2024 for the 2025 session. For more details and information on upcoming 2026 session, contact Mary Beth Michos at 571-926-4283 or visit https://www.iafc.org/learn-and-develop/fire-service-executive-development-institute

As we've explored, career development programs in the Fire and EMS services are invaluable tools for enhancing leadership abilities, refining management skills, and fostering innovation. These programs are not only beneficial to the individuals who participate, but they also have a profound impact on the departments and communities they serve. The knowledge and skills gained through these programs prepare professionals to navigate challenges, improve operations, and ensure the safety and effectiveness of their teams.

The programs discussed here, such as the Virginia Fire Officer Academy, Virginia Chief Academy, National Fire Academy's Managing Fire Officer and Executive Fire Officer programs, and the IAFC's Fire Service Executive Development Institute, represent just a small selection of the educational opportunities available to those in the fire service. Each offers unique advantages that contribute to the growth of individuals and the enhancement of fire and EMS operations.

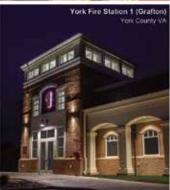
As Fire and EMS professionals continue to progress in their careers, investing in career development and leadership training will remain a key factor in creating strong, resilient leaders who can drive positive change. I encourage all members of the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, and the broader Fire and EMS community, to explore these and other opportunities to advance your leadership journey.

In our ever-evolving field, the pursuit of knowledge and the commitment to professional growth is crucial for ensuring our communities remain safe and resilient. By embracing continuous education and training, we are not only preparing for the challenges of today, but also shaping the future of the fire and EMS services. Let's continue to invest in our growth and leadership, both individually and collectively, as we work to create a safer, more effective emergency response environment for all.

# RRMM ARCHITECTS Architecture • Interiors • Planning

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Please Contact: Matt H. Astrin, Principal | Director of Municipal & Public Safety Studio | mastrin@rrmm.com | 757.717.2788 | www.RRMM.com



#### **ALL-TERRAIN POWER BIKES MADE MILITARY TOUGH**

## RESPONDER

#### **POWER BIKE ADVANTAGES**

**COVERAGE:** Expand response area and cover more ground

MOBILITY: Maneuver through tight areas, crowds and different terrain

**SPEED:** Faster response times with speeds up to 30 mph

**STRENGTH:** Boost from the motor allows responder to arrive on scene less fatigued

FUNCTIONALITY: Nearly any responder can ride a power bike. Get critical

emergency equipment on scene with our bike trailer.

**EASE:** Easy to use and minimal training

COST EFFECTIVENESS: All these advantages at a cost not much higher than

a standard response mountain bike

TRAINING: eBike certification training available

#### **SPECIFICATIONS**

FRAME	AL6061
MOTOR	1000 Watt Mid Drive
BATTERY	48V 14AH LG Lithium Ion
SHIFTER	Shimano
WHEEL	26"
TIRES	4" Kenda Puncture Resistant
CHARGER	AC 100-240 V
FRONT FORK	Front Suspension
BRAKES	Hydraulic Disc
LIGHTS	mPower Emergency Lights with Scene Lighting

MA	V H	EN	
	EST. 1922		
FIRE &	EME	RGET	ICY

LCD DISPLAY	Color, Smart LCD
COLOR OPTIONS	Flat Dark Earth, Black, White
SPEED	*Up to 30 mph
RANGE	*Up to 50 miles (PA 1-3)

\*Varies based on weight, terrain and use of pedal assist







"FBI Selects RECON

Power Bikes for 2019"

# Be prepared. Be informed. Be safe.



#### It's Not Luck, It's Having Working Smoke Alarms!

#### To make smoke alarms work for you and enhance safety:

- 1. **Install smoke alarms** in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area, and on each level of the home.
- 2. **Ensure smoke alarms meet the needs of all family members**, including those with sensory or physical disabilities.
- 3. **Test smoke alarms at least once a month** by pushing the test button.
- 4. Remember that working smoke alarms reduce the risk of dying in a home fire by more than half.

#### Help keep residents safe during a natural gas emergency

Every day, natural gas is safely and efficiently delivered to millions of businesses and homes in the United States through more than **2 million** miles of underground pipeline.

Virginia Natural Gas operates, secures and maintains the pipeline in our service territory. With safety being our highest priority, we adhere to federal, state and local pipeline safety regulations by performing extensive quality control checks, educate the public on natural gas pipeline, leak recognition and damage prevention and work closely with emergency and public officials to develop emergency response plans.

#### How to recognize a pipeline leak

- LOOK for blowing dirt, discolored vegetation or continued bubbling of standing water.
- **Z** LISTEN for a hissing or roaring noise near a natural gas appliance or line.
- **SMELL** for the distinctive, rottenegg odor associated with natural gas. Natural gas is colorless and odorless, so we add a chemical odorant called mercaptan for easy detection of a suspected natural gas leak. This odorant has a distinctive "rotten egg" type odor. You should act any time you detect even a small amount of this odor in the air. Be aware that "odorant fade," while uncommon, can occur. Odorant fade occurs when a physical or chemical process causes the level of odorant in the gas to be reduced. This can happen in both existing gas pipe and new installations.

Note: Be aware that "odorant fade," while uncommon, can occur. Odorant fade occurs when a physical or chemical process causes the level of odorant in the gas to be reduced. This can happen in both existing gas pipe and new installations. Be aware that some individuals may not be able to detect the smell of the natural gas odorant because they have a diminished sense of smell, because the scent is being masked by other odors in the area or because the odorant has diminished so that it is not detectable. Some gas lines, due to their unique function, may not have odor at all.

#### Learn more

For more information about natural gas and emergency response procedures and training, contact us at 800.552.7473.

To learn about our emergency response plan, which recognizes and mitigates threats and also sustains the integrity of the pipelines. Visit

virginianaturalgas.com/ integritymanagementplan.

#### Complete your training today!

Earn a one-hour training credit and certificate of course completion while learning about the importance of natural gas pipeline safety.

virginianaturalgas.com/ respondertraining (Use password: virginia)

#### Help keep everyone safe during a natural gas emergency

Even though natural gas pipeline incidents are uncommon, it is still important to be prepared by knowing the signs of a potential problem.

You should take the following action any time you detect any of the signs of a pipeline leak:

- **DO NOT** try to identify the source to stop the leak yourself.
- AVOID using any sources of ignition, such as cell phones, cigarettes, matches, flashlights, electronic devices, motorized vehicles, light switches or landlines, as natural gas can ignite from a spark or open flame, possibly causing a fire or explosion. Natural gas is non-toxic, lighter than air and displaces oxygen. In severe cases, if not used properly, natural gas can also lead to asphyxiation.
- CALL Virginia Natural Gas immediately at our 24-hour emergency response line 800.552.7473 with the location and type of emergency.
- SECURE the area by establishing a safety zone around the incident and control access. You may need to reroute traffic and evacuate area homes and businesses.

#### How we respond

Once we are notified of the emergency, we will immediately dispatch trained personnel to the site, keeping you informed of our progress. We will take all necessary actions to correct the problem. We will work together to ensure our community is safe.

#### Prevention – the best defense against leaks

Emergency officials and first responders do their part daily to prevent natural gas leaks by keeping the following safety tips in mind:

Understand that natural gas is lighter than air and displaces oxygen. Although natural gas is non-toxic, in extreme cases of oxygen displacement, it may lead to asphyxiation. Natural gas has a risk of ignition near a spark or open flame.

- Know where the pipelines are in your jurisdiction. If you notice any missing or damaged pipeline markers, contact Virginia Natural Gas at **1.877.572.3342** so they can be replaced.
- Virginia law requires all underground utilities be marked before any type of digging or excavation. Be on the lookout for any suspicious activity or unauthorized digging. If the excavator has not notified the state of their intent to dig, they must HIGH stop all activity immediately. The excavator is required P-PELINE GAS NARY-NE to present a valid dig ticket number when requested by first responders. Also, no one, including homeowners, should

be digging, ditching, drilling,

leveling or plowing without

underground utilities.

having first contacted our state's

One-Call number (811) to locate

- Remember, pipeline markers, like the sample pictured, indicate only the general area of the pipeline and not the exact location or depth. Pipeline markers may not be present in all areas.
- Information about transmission pipelines operating in your community is available through the National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS) and online at: npms.phmsa.dot.gov.





#### Online Survey

Please take a moment to complete a survey about natural gas safety and you by scanning the QR code or visiting surveymonkey.com/r/FV2MQPB to help us make sure we are keeping our communities safe.

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