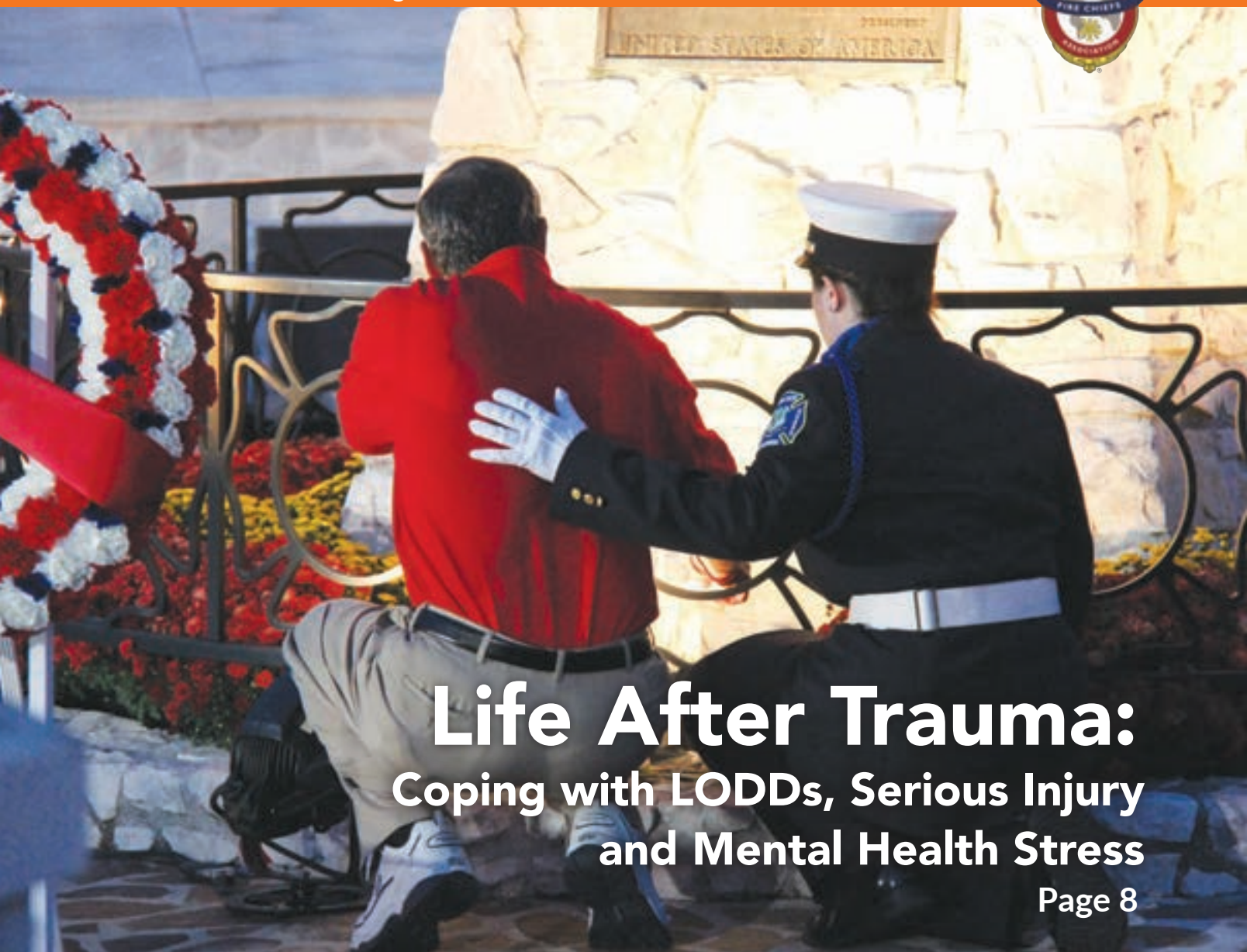




Spring 2020

ICFEES

The Official Magazine of the International Association of Fire Chiefs



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Steve Hagman
Marco Island Fire Rescue
Kidney Cancer Survivor



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Kidney Cancer Survivor

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Rare Stage 2 Testicular Cancer

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Cover photo by Claudia Garner for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. Every October, the Foundation sponsors the official national tribute to all firefighters who died in the line of duty during the previous year.

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Calendar of Events

2020

Join the International Association of Fire Chiefs at one of these events to stay up to date with the industry. For more information and to register for these events, visit www.iafc.org/events/calendar.

Wildland-Urban Interface

March 21-26, 2020
Reno, Nevada

Learn how to minimize and manage threats in the WUI, and get the latest on operations and suppression, fire-adapted communities and wildland fire policy and tools.

Improving Cardiac Arrest Survival

March 30, 2020
Online

This webinar will teach participants how to assess key processes that directly impact your community's capability to deliver an optimized chain of survival.

New England Division Conference

April 8-9, 2020
Mystic, Connecticut

Join us for the Annual Meeting and Educational Seminars.

Surviving the Job Webinar Series: Decon Procedures

April 14, 2020
Online

Join the VCOS and NVFC for the second session of a six-part webinar series about firefighter cancer risk reduction.

VCOS Symposium in the Spring

April 30-May 2, 2020
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Volunteer and combination fire and emergency service leaders will experience everything they need to be the change — new ideas, connections and practical skills.

Southeastern Division Conference

May 12-14, 2020
Atlanta, Georgia

Don't miss our Annual Leadership Conference.

Eastern Division Conference

May 15-16, 2020
Latham, New York

The theme of this year's Southeastern Division Conference is "Taking Care of Our Own."

conneXions: Dallas

May 18-20, 2020
Dallas, Texas

This 48-hour focus group event brings together purchasing decision makers and influencers from fire and EMS departments with businesses through one-on-one appointments.

International Hazardous Materials Response Teams Conference

June 4-7, 2020
Baltimore, Maryland

Held each spring, the IAFC's Hazmat Conference provides the latest classroom, hands-on and field trip-based training on what's new in hazmat.

Surviving the Job Webinar Series: Annual Physicals

June 9, 2020
Online

The third session of this six-part webinar series covers Annual Physicals, where we will discuss their importance and options available to you and your department.

Fire Adapted Communities for the Fire Service

June 18-19
Online

This self-paced course is designed for members of fire and emergency response organizations operating in an area with wildland urban interface (WUI).

Missouri Valley Division Conference

July 15-18, 2020

Fargo, North Dakota

This year's conference theme is "Leadership and Technology for Today and Tomorrow."

Surviving the Job Webinar Series: Lavender Ribbon Report Updates

August 11, 2020
Online

Join the VCOS and NVFC as we reveal the latest changes and updates to the Lavender Ribbon Report in the fourth session of this six-part webinar series.

Fire-Rescue Med

August 17-18, 2020
Phoenix, Arizona

Fire-Rescue Med is the conference for fire-based EMS leaders addressing the issues impacting today's leaders.

Fire-Rescue International

August 19-21, 2020
Phoenix, Arizona

Each summer, thousands of the most prominent fire and emergency service leaders from across North America and around the globe come to Fire-Rescue International to learn, network and collaborate.

If You Don't Feel Well, Don't Make It Your Farewell



I AM EXCITED to announce that one of my International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) presidential initiatives has now kicked off. It took months of planning by a hard-working committee made of up IAFC staff, IAFC members and representatives from American Medical Response (AMR) and Pulsepoint. Our hard work could not be possible without the financial support of AMR and Pulsepoint. I am grateful to all who made this happen.

My whole initiative is to change the culture in the fire and emergency services through awareness and education to prevent firefighters from dying of a cardiac event after some training or operational event. About half of all firefighter deaths each year are cardiac-related. Many of these firefighters are 50 years of age or younger.

Many of them complain of not feeling right or that something is wrong prior to cardiac arrest. It is a feeling they never experienced before, according to survivors. We're not talking about having the sniffles or some other minor ailment. Survivors talk about having zero energy and maybe some other telltale sign, including indigestion or arm tingling.



So, how do we change this culture? The only way we will do this is through education and awareness that

if you do not feel well, you need to act. If a firefighter tells you something is wrong or says, "I don't feel right," or any other statement along those lines, do not tell them to go home or lie down in the bunk hall. Their body is signaling to them something is wrong. If a citizen walked into your fire station after doing something strenuous and they told you that they did not feel right, you would not tell them to go home or lie down somewhere. So, why do we treat our firefighters any differently?

To help educate firefighters and make them aware of how important it is to react when they don't feel well, we have launched a video and a website with a toolbox of information that can be used.

This is not a program about eating right, exercising or controlling your blood pressure. It is too late for that. This program is about understanding that we need to interrupt the process of what is happening to a firefighter's heart during a cardiac event and get the proper treatment.

Sometimes a simple stent can save a firefighter's life. I know of one firefighter whose annual physical caught a 90% heart blockage of the left coronary descending artery, which is also known as the widow maker because the condition is usually fatal. Though he was probably one fire away from dying, one simple stent and he was back on the job weeks later.

Through this awareness and education campaign, we can change culture in the fire and emergency service and save lives. To learn more about this initiative, go to www.IAFC.org/dontfeelwell.

FIRE CHIEF GARY LUDWIG

IAFC President and Chairman of the Board



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The National Fallen Firefighters Memorial is in Emmitsburg, Maryland, at the campus of the National Emergency Training Center. Photo by Claudia Garner for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.

Life After Trauma

Fighting fire is an inherently dangerous endeavor, and there will always be the opportunity for tragedy to strike. Sixty-four firefighters in the United States died while on duty in 2018, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

When a firefighter falls in the line of duty, the impact of that death can test the resiliency of those left behind. But firefighters do not have to carry the burden of dealing with a line-of-duty death (LODD) on their own — a number of resources and organizations are available to help with the internal turmoil that may manifest, sometimes well after the tragic event itself.

In March 2017, the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), in partnership with Advanced Recovery Systems, officially opened the doors to its IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery located in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. To date, more than 1,100 firefighters have come to the Center seeking treatment for alcohol and substance abuse and the myriad of mental health conditions that can affect firefighters and their ability to perform, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression and impacts of suicide.

"Many firefighters will come to us with a substance abuse issue, but

oftentimes that is a symptom of an underlying mental health condition, rather than the only thing that they are dealing with," says Kelly Savage, senior community outreach coordinator for the IAFF Center of Excellence. "For most of our clients, reaching out to us is the first time they have ever asked for help or gone through any kind of mental health treatment."

The treatment experience at the IAFF Center of Excellence has been designed by firefighters for firefighters and, as such, was built with the fire station in mind. Stretched over 15 acres, the Center has areas specifically designated for therapy, meals and living, and its clients stay in one of four station houses, each fitted with comfortable furnishings designed to mirror familiar fire station spaces. In order to strengthen a sense of camaraderie and to build a network of support, clients are housed together based on their shared treatment needs.

"Many of the clients we survey post-treatment tell us they only considered treatment because they knew that we were here just for firefighters," says Patrick Morrison, assistant general president for health, safety and medicine of the IAFF. "Being set up the way we are helps firefighters who arrive to not

be afraid of the process, because everybody here knows where they are coming from and what they are going through."

Measuring success at the Center of Excellence is best accomplished by seeing how firefighters cope with the world outside the Center once they return home. Because of this, the Center checks in with clients periodically for 18 months to see where they are at and then determines what kinds of supports they still need, if any. The information the Center gathers is then used to tailor its treatment experience going forward for future clients.

"We know that you can take anyone to a treatment facility but what really matters are the outcomes," says Morrison. "When our clients leave the Center of Excellence, we find that there is a very low rate of recidivism, and our firefighters have maintained what they needed to maintain in order to work outside of treatment. That's the main goal at the Center — we want you to recover but we also want you to be able to get back to work at the career that you once loved and were passionate about."

In November 2019, all of the 64 beds at the facility were occupied, and the facility was at maximum capacity, a testament to the tremendous need for the kind of treatment experience

it provides. The overall success of the Center of Excellence has encouraged the IAFF to move ahead and secure additional property in California to open up a second Center.

"When we got to the fall and we were actually turning firefighters away, we realized that now was the time to start working towards another facility," says Morrison. "So, we began to talk about building a new Center out on the West Coast to help accommodate the many firefighters that have to travel long distances in order to get to our facility here in Maryland."

RECORDING LINE OF DUTY DEATHS

Chief Billy Goldfeder is the deputy fire chief of the Loveland-Symmes Fire Department in Ohio and a member of the Board of Directors of both IAFC and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. He first began to document the news of firefighter LODDs and close call incidents he came across in an independent newsletter as a way to bring forward the important issues involving firefighter injury and death.

When he got his first computer, Goldfeder then began to distribute the information among close friends online through an email group called the Secret List.

"Early in my career, a firefighter was killed near where I was working, and, even though everyone felt it was sad and horrible, there seemed to be an attitude back then that LODDs were just part of the job, and that has always stuck with me," says Goldfeder. "I strongly believe that while some firefighter deaths are unavoidable because of the dangerous work we do, others can be prevented, so long as there is information out there to learn from."

Along with his website co-founder and former police commander Gordon Graham, Goldfeder has grown the Secret List into www.FirefighterCloseCalls.com, the single most-visited firefighting health and safety website in the world. The site gets millions of clicks per month and hundreds of thousands subscribers from across the globe.



More than 1,100 firefighters have come to the IAFF Center of Excellence seeking treatment for the myriad of mental health conditions that can affect firefighters and their ability to perform. Photo courtesy of the IAFF.

Staffed by a small but dedicated cadre of volunteers, FirefighterCloseCalls.com is 100% non-profit, and everything is paid for in-house. By choosing to not accept outside money by way of advertising revenue, the website remains subservient to nobody but itself, its visitors and its subscribers.

"The only purpose for our website is to get important information concerning firefighter injuries and deaths out there, so that it can stick into peoples' minds and they can learn something from it," says Goldfeder. "So far, we have been very successful in reaching people, and we routinely receive emails where someone thanks us for a piece we posted or some information we forwarded to them. We are all very proud of what we've accomplished."

With more than 45 years working in the fire service and 21 years building FirefighterCloseCalls.com, Goldfeder has come to understand that in tragedy no two firefighters will deal with the same event in the same way and that you must not judge others based on your own experience.

"This is a message that everyone needs to understand but most importantly the organizational leadership of a fire department," says Goldfeder. "They must continue opening the doors to additional resources and training, so that those who might be struggling — or observe someone else struggling — will know precisely what to do and be able to direct themselves or others to the help they require."

HONORING FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS

Established in 1992, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation was formed by Congress and tasked with a two-part mandate: to honor fallen firefighters across the United States and to assist their families and co-workers in the aftermath of any tragedy that may occur.

In honoring fallen firefighters — the first mandate — the Foundation is responsible for maintaining the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial located in Emmitsburg, Maryland, at the campus of the

Any firefighter currently living with a mental health illness is encouraged to seek out the following resources:

- IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery Center 24-hour toll free number: 855-900-8437
- www.IAFFRecoveryCenter.com
- National Fallen Firefighter Foundation
- *VCOS Yellow Ribbon Report - Under the Helmet: Performing an Internal Size-Up* (<https://www.iafc.org/topics-and-tools/resources/resource/vcos-yellow-ribbon-report-under-the-helmet-performing-an-internal-size-up>)
- *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Coping Among Career Professional Firefighters* (<http://www.fstaresearch.org/resource/?FstarId=11461>)
- www.FireHero.org

National Emergency Training Center. In October 2019, the Foundation added 119 names to the memorial: 92 fatalities from 2018 and 27 from previous years.

The second mandate is divided into two sections: Fire Programs, which has a focus on the firefighters, and Family Programs, which takes care of the needs of families. On the firefighter side of things, there are a number of different programs, such as the Foundation's Everyone Goes Home Program, a major initiative to prevent preventable firefighter line-of-duty deaths and injuries, and Taking Care of Our Own, which outlines how fire departments can be better prepared if they experience an LODD.

"Taking Care of Our Own has us go out and talk directly to firefighters and fire departments before they experience an LODD as well as discuss steps they can take to reduce the likelihood of a preventable LODD," says Chief John Tippet, director of fire service programs at the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. "Ideally, we want firefighters to be aware of their risk, calculate their risk, take action in accordance with that risk, do their job, then get home safely as often as they can. But we also recognize that, even despite your best efforts, any time that you might think everything is going right, something can go wrong."

There are a number of ways for firefighters to access the Foundation's

services, such as through the Fire Hero Learning Network (www.fhln.net). This resource offers more than a variety of different online programs on topics such as critical safety, operations and community relations fire service training, all packaged so that firefighters, command and leadership can learn at their own pace.

"We also provide expanded programs. Almost all of the online modules have a corresponding four-hour instructor-led program," says Tippet. "The Foundation will send an instructor out to the fire department or region to deliver these programs in workshop formats to further reinforce our messaging."

ASSISTANCE FOR ALL

Just as a line-of-duty-death can have a significant impact on the rank-and-file members of a fire department, the fire chief can also be tremendously affected. But there is a question as to who a chief can turn to for mental wellness support.

"The issue that faces a fire chief is that when a tragedy has happened, it has happened on their watch," says Tippet. "The buck stops at the fire chief, and they are ultimately responsible for the safety and welfare for everybody under them, whether that is career or volunteer, and this places a unique set of stresses on their shoulders."

Because of this, the Foundation has developed its Chief-to-Chief Network to meet the specific needs of fire chiefs as a way to address the emotions and isolation felt by many chiefs after the tragic loss of one of their team. This Network is comprised of senior fire officials who have all experienced the loss of a firefighter in the line of duty and, as such, can provide unrivalled peer support to other chiefs.

Any chief seeking support can do so by contacting the Foundation, which will then reach out within 24 hours to gather additional information to find a suitable peer-to-peer match, looking at things such as department size, career and the nature of the incident.

The success of the Chief-to-Chief Network has led to the Foundation developing similar peer-to-peer networks, such as a co-worker program and a recently implemented IC-to-IC Network for incident commanders who, as mid-level managers, have their own exclusive concerns after an LODD event. The feedback received in the creation of this newer IC-to-IC Network has also allowed the Foundation the opportunity to freshen up the decade-old Chief-to-Chief program as well as the co-worker program. Future plans call for creating a similar program for company officers who lose a firefighter. 🔥

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Fear Factor:

10 Tips for the New Volunteer Fire Chief



By Fire Rescue Chief Corinne Piccardi, Cabin John Park (Maryland) Volunteer Fire Department

There is no single road to chief in the volunteer fire service. You progress through the ranks, or you step in because nobody else wanted the job. You might have one or 20 years of fire service experience. No matter how you got there, what do you do now?

You're the Fire Chief; Now What? Guidance for New and Interim Fire Chiefs, published by the Volunteer and Combination Officers Section in partnership with the Executive Fire Officers Section of the IAFC, provides direction and support for a new chief's first 100 days. I have been a fire chief for almost two years and found this resource to be full of practical guidance on the immediate daily tasks — and fears — a new chief faces.

FEARS? ME?

Self-doubt is a form of fear. I had numerous firefighters and chief officers

mentor me as I moved up the ranks of our volunteer department, yet once it became evident I would be the next chief, I wasn't sure I was ready.

Could I lead and inspire a team from all walks of life, ranging in ages 16 to 90 years old? Would my decisions be good ones? Could I handle criticism when it inevitably came? What if I failed? Besides being new, I would also be the first female volunteer fire chief in our combination system. What impact would that have on our department and me personally?

I wish the new chiefs guide had been around in January 2018 when I stepped in as fire chief. As I developed my own roadmap, I found these to be the Ten Commandments to help face and defeat my doubts as a new volunteer fire chief.

- 1. Be kind.** A fire department takes cues from its leadership. We would all die to save one of our own, but we often exhibit behaviors behind closed doors that contradict the idea of "brotherhood" or "sisterhood." Every time you walk into the firehouse, be pleasant, show concern for others and be ethical. Kindness does not make you a "soft" or "weak" leader. It makes you a better one.
- 2. Work and play well with others.** Twenty-one years ago, Chief James P. Seavey Sr. stepped into a room of new volunteer recruits, of which I was one, and eased into his "fireside chat." The message of his chat was that we were a family. Like with families, there would be conflict, but just because you might have an issue with someone does not mean others do too. Every individual brings something different, and potentially useful, to your organization.
- 3. Attend to details.** Taking care of the small stuff, such as station cleaning, shows pride in your work and concern about the end result. Showing you care about the small things has a snowball effect, and you'll see the same passion from your members about the big things.
- 4. Remember who you are.** Like it or not, you are now the face of your volunteer organization. You represent not only yourself but also your department's name and all who have worn the same department patch. A huge responsibility comes with that. If you are going to be a viral media sensation, make sure it is for an act that promotes trust and is something your parents would be proud of.
- 5. Get rid of the box.** You know the box that we're supposed to think outside of when we look for a different way to solve a problem? My outside-the-box thought is why have a box at all. Throw it out! The volunteer fire service is changing and facing challenges in recruitment and retention, funding and, in some parts of the nation, relevance. Create a vision for your department, and set out to make it a reality without thinking you need to be

restrained by the traditions of the fire service.

6. **Practice life balance.** It is very easy to be consumed by the fire service, especially as a new chief swamped by the initial operational and administrative demands. Chances are you will also feel the pull of family life, friends, one or more jobs, school and other commitments. Find balance. Give your life outside the firehouse the time it deserves. It will make you a better leader.

7. **Look for help wherever it may be.** Why reinvent the wheel when another department may have devised a solution to your problem? Take that information and adapt it to your unique needs. Tap into online resources, such as the IAFC's KnowledgeNet or the National Volunteer Fire Council. Develop strong relationships with other neighboring departments, as well as mentors outside your area. Take advantage of resources unrelated to the fire service,

and massage them to meet your needs.

8. **Be visible.** Administrative responsibilities can chew up your hours. Don't let it happen. Take time to be with the troops. Be front and center for trainings or special events, have dinner at the station with crews, drop in on shifts to invite conversation from all levels of your department. Volunteer personnel want to see their leaders. There is nothing more demoralizing for a volunteer company than leadership that exists mostly on paper.
9. **Don't beat yourself up.** One of my mentors made a comment that has stayed with me regarding the leadership of his organization. Successful leaders do not dwell on missteps but rather keep moving to meet the next challenge. I have adopted and simplified this approach: own your mistakes, learn from them, and move forward.
10. **Plan for your successor.** One of the first pieces of advice I received the day I was sworn in as chief was I should start planning my exit. I initially thought this was a judgment on my leadership. Instead, it was the reminder that I need to leave the department better than it was when I took over. That means I need to promote leaders within the department, delegate responsibilities to potential leaders to give them experience and find ways to document institutional knowledge.

In all that we do within the volunteer fire service, remember that volunteering means pride and is not an excuse. We should never consider ourselves "just volunteers," and our leadership should reflect that. Allow that pride to take over your fear. 🔥

Corinne Piccardi was sworn in as the first woman volunteer fire chief in Montgomery County, Maryland, in 2018. A 20-year member of the Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department with stations in Bethesda and Potomac, she is a member of the IAFC Volunteer and Combination Officers Section and the IAFC Women Chiefs Council.



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Fit as a Firefighter



Firefighters have access to fitness equipment and a wellness team at the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Wellness-Fitness Center.

On April 10, 2016, firefighter Laura Pollard went through routine physical training with her shift. Except it ended up being not-so-routine — she severely injured herself while sprinting.

She ruptured both hamstrings, requiring reattachment of the right, plus tore her gluteus maximus and minimus muscles. Pollard, who was an active, independent self-described hard charger, found herself confined to a wheelchair for five months, relying on others to help in her day-to-day life.

At the time of her injury, Pollard was 47 years old and had worked for the Fairfax County in Virginia for 21 years and as a firefighter for 13 years. Right after the incident, doctors questioned whether she would ever go back to firefighting. What they did know was that Pollard would have a long, intense recovery — it was not common to rupture both hamstrings at once.

While in the hospital, hundreds visited Pollard. People from all shifts brought her meals, and one captain arranged to get a ramp for her front

porch at home. And though she felt and saw the support from those around her, she was worried about the possibility of not getting back to her job, a profession that meant the world to her.

"The thought of not coming back was staring at me," says Pollard. "Admittedly, while I was at home, feeling depressed, I wondered myself."

But she told herself quitting wasn't an option. She had to — and she would — make it back to full duty. After some recovery at home, plus attending physical therapy three days a week, Pollard could walk using a cane. On November 13, 2016, she started light duty at the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Wellness-Fitness (Well-Fit) Center, completing office tasks.

The Well-Fit Center opened in 2007 in Chantilly, Virginia, thanks to Pat Morrison, Mike Mohler and Kevin Kincaid, now-retired firefighters. Thirteen years before, Morrison pioneered a wellness program for the department. By providing equipment, a facility and a wellness team, the Center's goal is to monitor and maintain the health of the Fairfax County Fire

and Rescue Department's 1,500 firefighters.

The Center also helps with rehabilitation, like in Pollard's case. When she started light-duty work, she began training with the Center's wellness team. By this point, she had lost nearly all muscle tone and had no aerobic capacity. But after five months at the Center, she noticed big gains in strength — she no longer worried about having to find an alternate placement in the department or being pushed into retirement. And in April 2017, she passed her work performance test, clearing her for full-duty work.

"The Well-Fit Center team saw me in pain. They saw me struggle, they saw me sweat blood, and they saw tears," she says. "But every single day, they lifted me up."

Her recovery team included Lieutenant Josh Allison, Wellness and Fitness Program Manager Captain Dennis Kotecki and Conditioning Coordinator Jake Patten. They, along with the rest of the Well-Fit Center team, focus on a whole-body approach, though for someone recovering from injury, that body part isn't worked on until his or her primary physician gives the green light.

GAINING AND MAINTAINING WELLNESS

The Well-Fit Center staff run morning group workouts for retirees, firefighters coming off shift and crews on-call at the time. They research the most effective fitness equipment, something Chief John Butler has been a strong advocate for. Workouts are posted to Instagram (@wellfitstrength) for those outside of the Center, and the wellness team is looking into developing an app to make workouts even more user-friendly. The Center's team also makes fire station visits to run workouts and discuss nutrition.

"This helps them understand movements and exercises better and allows for us to get hands-on with our people to make sure we are providing them with the most knowledge and motivation that we can," says Patten. "It also helps us stay fresh with our ideas and adapt to any changes that happen on the job or out in the field."

Patten and Kotecki say the fire service generally falls short in terms of health — cardiovascular-related issues are a leading cause of line-of-duty death for firefighters. They also highlight some staggering statistics from the US Fire Department Profile 2017-2018: 49% of those in the fire service are over the age of 40; 32-40% are obese; and 77-90% are overweight or obese.

The Center's work is data-driven, and, after collecting statistics, the wellness team can create programs to address the needs of the department. The team has found that common injuries in the Fairfax County department are sprains and strains, especially in the shoulder, knee and back.

In addition to an annual medical physical examination, to track health, Fairfax firefighters participate in a yearly fitness assessment that includes curl-ups, push-ups, pull-ups, and the Queen's College step test. The Well-Fit Center is also rolling out a new fitness assessment management program — after firefighters go through the yearly fitness test, the wellness team can gather data to figure out where people are falling short and can put together plans to target this.

Kotecki says that preventing sprain and strain injuries, by screening firefighters with movement assessments, has saved the department millions of dollars; for every firefighter out due to injury, someone on overtime is needed to fill the spot. This is a key point to note for those looking for funding to start a new program or to improve an existing wellness-fitness program.

"I don't think that most localities are going to pour out tons of money just to have a fitness center," says Kotecki. "What will your fitness center

provide that will also help the county in some way? Reducing risk of injury and illness."

Another tip for departments building wellness programs is to start simple by implementing daily workouts as a crew or shift — this can be as basic as active stretching and push-ups. From there, you can add more exercises, while focusing on technique to work in line with the goal of reducing risk of injury. Patten also recommends that departments hire a coordinator who has fitness

certifications. Patten has been involved in sports all his life, playing and coaching at high levels. He says his background taught him the value of strength and conditioning and eventually led him to his strength coaching career.

"All walks of life, first responders especially, need some sort of strength and conditioning incorporated in their everyday lives," Patten says. "It helps them mentally and physically whenever life — or the job — throws a bunch of curveballs at them." 🔥



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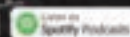


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2019 Fire Chief of the Year

Recipients Reflect on High Honor

By Jim Philipps, IAFC
Assistant Director of Strategic
Communications

James Clack, chief of the Ankeny (Iowa) Fire Department, and John Morrison, chief of the Vienna (Virginia) Volunteer Fire Department, were honored last August during Fire-Rescue International in Atlanta as the 2019 Career and Volunteer Fire Chiefs of the Year, respectively. Here's what they told *iCHIEFS* about the path to this high honor.

IAFC: What does it mean to you to be honored as 2019 Fire Chief of the Year?

Clack: It is an unbelievable honor to be recognized by the IAFC and Pierce Manufacturing, but more importantly, it's really a recognition directed at all the men and women who have worked so hard over the years to help me learn this job. I don't know where I would be without their support and encouragement.

Morrison: I'm honored and humbled to receive this amazing recognition from the IAFC and Pierce Manufacturing. Being recognized by one's peers is truly a remarkable achievement. Many of my successes are due to Vienna Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) members and leaders, past and present, and this recognition is as much about their hard work as it is mine. Our combination system is unique in that we are fully staffed with career staff from Fairfax County 24-7, and our volunteers, who are trained to the same level as the career staff, serve in a supplemental role, providing additional engines, medics and ambulances, and upstaffing career units. It is much akin to the U.S. military reserves and is a great way to utilize volunteers in a metropolitan area.



Chief Dan Eggleston (left) and
Chief John Morrison



Chief James Clack

IAFC: What is the one accomplishment you are most proud of?

Clack: I am most proud of what we were able to accomplish during my time in Baltimore. We restarted the Baltimore Fire Foundation with a new focus to assist the families of firefighters who were hurt or killed, on or off the job. The foundation now has significant assets and continues to provide financial help to firefighter families when they are most in need.

Morrison: I'm most proud of uniting the 12 volunteer fire departments of Fairfax County into one online staffing and data management system. Prior to 2007, each volunteer department had its own way of tracking hours and certifications, and there was little unification of efforts. The departments

faced the same sorts of challenges related to the recruitment and retention of volunteers, and this data management system allowed us to create synergies that have enabled us to thrive. Staffing units with members from multiple departments increased remarkably, and the consistent reporting to the county government showcased the significant value that we bring to our system.

IAFC: What has the reaction been from your department and community about being named Fire Chief of the Year?

Clack: Everyone I have talked to here in Ankeny has been at first surprised and then very excited that an award like this would come to our

fire department and our city. All the fire chiefs around the state of Iowa are also very happy for us.

Morrison: The reaction from my department and the Vienna community has been incredible. I have received my fair share of good-natured ribbing from my membership, including a cake with a photo of me with my head inflated to be a few sizes too large. If they didn't harass me about it, I would think something was wrong. Receiving this award has brought a tremendous amount of positive attention to the exceptional work being performed at the Vienna VFD each day.

IAFC: *Who has been the most influential person inside or outside the fire service on your success? Why?*

Clack: Chief Alan Brunacini, the retired fire chief from Phoenix. He was a great friend and mentor to me from the time I met him in the late 1990s. I read his books and was greatly honored to know him. He challenged me to always think about the impact I was having on the people who worked

with me as well as the community we serve. Literally hundreds of other people in the fire service have helped me over the years. I have been blessed to get to know many great people who have a servant's heart.

Morrison: Many people, including formal and informal leaders, have influenced my success, too numerous to name here. My wife, who is also a volunteer EMT at a neighboring department, has been more supportive than I could have possibly imagined. I could not have done any of this without her by my side. I'd also like to thank Chief John Butler of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department for nominating me, as well as Bill Webb, executive director of the Congressional Fire Services Institute, for his mentorship, along with opening my eyes to the fire service outside just my jurisdiction.

IAFC: *When was your most difficult time or challenge in the fire service, and how did you overcome it?*

Clack: The most difficult moment of my career was losing a 44-year-old

firefighter in Minneapolis to pneumonia. I worked with Barry at Fire Station 8 and will never forget him. He left behind his wife, Linda, and two young sons. More recently, we lost a firefighter/paramedic in Ankeny to suicide last year. Adam was only 38 years old, was an Afghan War veteran and had a great sense of humor. I overcame these tragic losses by relying on my Catholic faith as well as all the people who love and support me.

Morrison: I think one of my greatest administrative challenges was bringing the 12 volunteer fire departments of Fairfax County together into one online data system over a decade ago. It took a good bit of convincing a disparate group of leaders that there would be a great synergy if we voluntarily centralized our records. The result was a great deal of multi-department staffed units, with one result being an increase in staffed units. It's not uncommon now to see an engine going down the street with firefighters from four different volunteer departments



FIRE CHIEF of the YEAR





Fire Chief John C. Morrison
Vienna Volunteer Fire Department
Vienna, Virginia

Fire Chief James S. Clack
Ankeny Fire Department
Ankeny, Iowa

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IAFC: What advice would you offer new or emerging leaders in the fire service?

Clack: Develop a set of written values that are important to you, and review them often. Find mentors to help you learn and grow. Most importantly, love the job, love the people you work with, and love the people you serve.

Morrison: Work to build coalitions of members with different viewpoints, and be comfortable with your leadership team challenging your way of thinking. When dealing with day-to-day administration, ensure your leadership team feels comfortable questioning the "why," which then allows you to build consensus and present a united front. Seek out members who are smarter than you, and ask for their feedback. Talk to them about your end goal, and give them leeway on executing. Finally, make decisions around the end goal of what's best for your community.

SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATION FOR 2020 FIRE CHIEF OF THE YEAR

Program sponsor Pierce Manufacturing, Inc., media partner FireChief.com and the IAFC thank those who submitted Fire Chief of the Year nominations in 2019. If you

know a great fire chief deserving of this high honor, nominate them by May 17 for 2020 Fire Chief of the Year at www.IAFC.org/chiefoftheyear.

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Legislative Update



By Ken LaSala, IAFC Director of Government Relations and Policy

Welcome to 2020, a presidential election year! More than ever, the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) needs your help to encourage our federal representatives to address important legislation for the fire and emergency service, such as ensuring funding for programs like the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) and SAFER programs and the U.S. Fire Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS

A major task for Congress to address is the passage of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 appropriations bills. President Donald Trump passed the FY 2020 appropriations bills (P.L. 116-93 and P.L. 116-94) in December, and they included increases in many fire service programs, including the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program and SAFER grant programs, the U.S. Fire Administration and the Volunteer Fire Assistance program.

In P.L. 116-93, Congress allowed the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to waive requirements for the SAFER grant programs to retain firefighters and reinstated funding for the State Fire Training grants. The Urban Search and Rescue system received a cut because it had received a large increase last year to re-capitalize after the heavy deployments in 2017 and 2018.

Congress also reauthorized the ALERT grants at the U.S. Department of

Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration to help rural fire departments train to respond to incidents involving the transportation of hazardous materials by rail.

HEALTH CARE/EMS ISSUES

P.L. 116-94 also included important funding for both firefighter health and EMS issues. Most importantly, the bill included \$5 million for the SIREN grant program at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This program is designed to help rural fire-based and third-service EMS.

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has announced an effort to collect cost, revenue and utilization data from ground ambulance suppliers and providers. All agencies (fire-based, third-service, for-profit) that bill Medicare for service will have to provide this data over the next four years.

Check the CMS website (<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/AmbulanceFeeSchedule/Ground-Ambulance-Services-Data-Collection-System>) to see if your agency has to provide cost reporting information. The IAFC supports this data collection project because it will provide information to allow us to petition for the revision of the Ambulance Fee Schedule to ensure a fairer Medicare reimbursement for fire departments.

The IAFC continues to ask Congress to pass the HERO Act (H.R. 1646). This legislation would provide funding for non-profit organizations to develop a

firefighter peer mental health counseling program and direct the USFA to develop educational materials for mental health care providers on stressors unique to firefighters and EMS personnel.

The bill also would create a first responder suicide registry to help researchers identify the causes of suicide and ways to reduce them. H.R. 1646 has 71 cosponsors, and we are aiming to recruit 100 cosponsors this winter.

The IAFC advocates for Congress to pass legislation that would address some of the challenges with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The IAFC supports Senator Gary Peters' (D-MI) bill, the Protecting Firefighters from Adverse Substances Act (S. 2353), which would direct FEMA to develop guidance for the fire and emergency service to reduce exposure to PFAS, limit their release into the environment and learn about safer alternate foams.

In addition, we are asking for Congress to pass the Guaranteeing Equipment Safety for Firefighters Act (S. 2525) by Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). This bill would require the director of the National Institutes of Standards and Technology to conduct research and report to Congress about the concentration of PFAS in personal protective equipment (PPE) and how to reduce firefighters' "unnecessary occupational exposure."

COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES

Following recommendations by public safety organizations including the IAFC, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will require mobile phone carriers to provide vertical location information ("z-axis") to public safety answering points for 80% of wireless 911 calls.

Program	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
AFG (FIRE)	350	350	355
SAFER	350	350	355
USFA	44.397	45.679	46.844
UASI	630	640	665
SGSGP	507	525	560
Urban Search & Rescue	35.18	45.33	37.83
USDA Volunteer Fire Assistance Program	16	17	18
<i>All amounts are in millions (\$).</i>			

The IAFC continues to ask Congress to repeal the requirement for the FCC to auction the public safety spectrum in the T-Band (470-512 MHz). This requirement would affect voice communications systems in 11 major metropolitan areas, including New York and Boston, and other areas, such as eastern Pennsylvania.

The IAFC's effort received a boost, when FCC Chairman Ajit Pai called on Congress in December to allow public safety to retain the T-Band. Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY) introduced the Don't Break Up the T-Band Act (H.R. 451), which has picked up 20 cosponsors. Senate Ed Markey (D-MA) had introduced a Senate companion bill (S. 2748), which has six cosponsors. The FCC currently is required to auction the T-Band by 2021, so it is important we pass this legislation this year!

TAXES

P.L. 116-94 includes a one-year reauthorization of the Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act

(VRIPA). This legislation will allow volunteer firefighters to deduct any property tax benefits and up to \$600 in other state and local benefits from federal taxation for 2020. Fire departments should make sure their volunteers are aware of this new benefit. The IAFC is advocating for legislation (H.R. 1241/S. 1210) that would permanently enact the VRIPA.

The IAFC also is working to pass two major bills to support the retrofitting of buildings with fire sprinklers. The Restoring Investment in Improvements Act (H.R. 1869/S. 803) would resolve a mistake in the recently passed tax reform bill. The new legislation would clarify that commercial building owners who retrofit their buildings with fire sprinklers should qualify for a 15-year depreciation period as well as bonus depreciation for the first 10 years following the bill's passage.

In addition, Representatives Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) and Peter King (R-NY) introduced the High Rise Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act (H.R.

4685). This bill would accelerate the depreciation schedule for the retrofit installation of fire sprinklers in commercial and residential high-rises to 15 years from 39 years and 27.5 years, respectively. If passed, it would be the first time a federal tax incentive existed for having fire sprinklers in residential buildings.

To keep updated on developments, visit www.iafc.org/gr. In addition, it is important to contact your federal senators and representatives. One great way to meet them is to visit Capitol Hill with other fire service leaders and then attend the National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium and Dinner on April 29 and 30. 🔥

Ken LaSala, IAFC Director of Government Relations and Policy, manages IAFC's department that represents the voice of America's fire service leadership with Congress, the White House and federal agencies. He served as a Congressional staffer from 1997 to 2005.



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IAFC Mission at Work



I HOPE YOU are enjoying the second edition of *iCHIEFS*, the official magazine of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). We received tremendous feedback from the first issue and hope to continue to build the publication through the continued support of our members and advertisers.

I would be remiss not to note the August 2019 retirement of

former IAFC CEO/Executive Director Mark Light. Mark led the IAFC with vision and excellence for 12 years. Dan Eggleston, 2018-2019 IAFC president, says, "Under Mark's leadership, the IAFC expanded learning opportunities and executive fire officer training for leaders, promoted diversity and inclusion and increased our operating budget from \$10.5 million to \$22.5 million," among many other accomplishments.

I believe Mark's greatest accomplishment was consistently increasing the value of an IAFC membership. He led the charge to diversify the association's revenues, hired exceptional staff and helped to keep dues extraordinarily affordable for an organization of our size and influence. Best wishes to Mark.

The IAFC's Mission at Work continues to lead, educate and serve.

- On December 5, 2019, the IAFC, in partnership with the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department, graduated the 17th Saudi Aramco Fire Protection Department (SAFrPD) Cohort of the IAFC's International Fellowship Program (IFP). Since the inception of the IFP with Saudi Aramco, 132 firefighters from the SAFrPD have graduated. The program's success has led Saudi Aramco to renew the contract to continue the IFP and add a pilot program that provides another embedded experiential learning program for fire officers, fire instructors and fire inspectors.
- In December, the House and Senate passed the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations bills with increased funding for priority fire service programs. See Ken LaSala's Legislative Update on page 23 for details.
- IAFC membership continues to grow. In 2019, we saw a 3% increase and currently have 12,000-plus members across 30 countries. We've upgraded our technology system, providing members a single login across all IAFC platforms (IAFC website, KnowledgeNet, IAFC Academy, conference registration) as well as a new member portal for managing your membership and renewing online.
- The IAFC expanded its partnership with TC Energy (formally TransCanada) into Mexico. The IAFC will conduct natural gas pipeline emergency preparedness and response training/awareness sessions.
- Fire-Rescue International (FRI) 2019 in Atlanta was a huge success. The conference saw 8,651 attendees for training, education and networking. Change is in the air for FRI 2020



IAFC's Emmy and the Telly Awards were for the volunteer firefighter recruitment PSA produced by IAFC Volunteer Workforce Solutions staff and the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association.

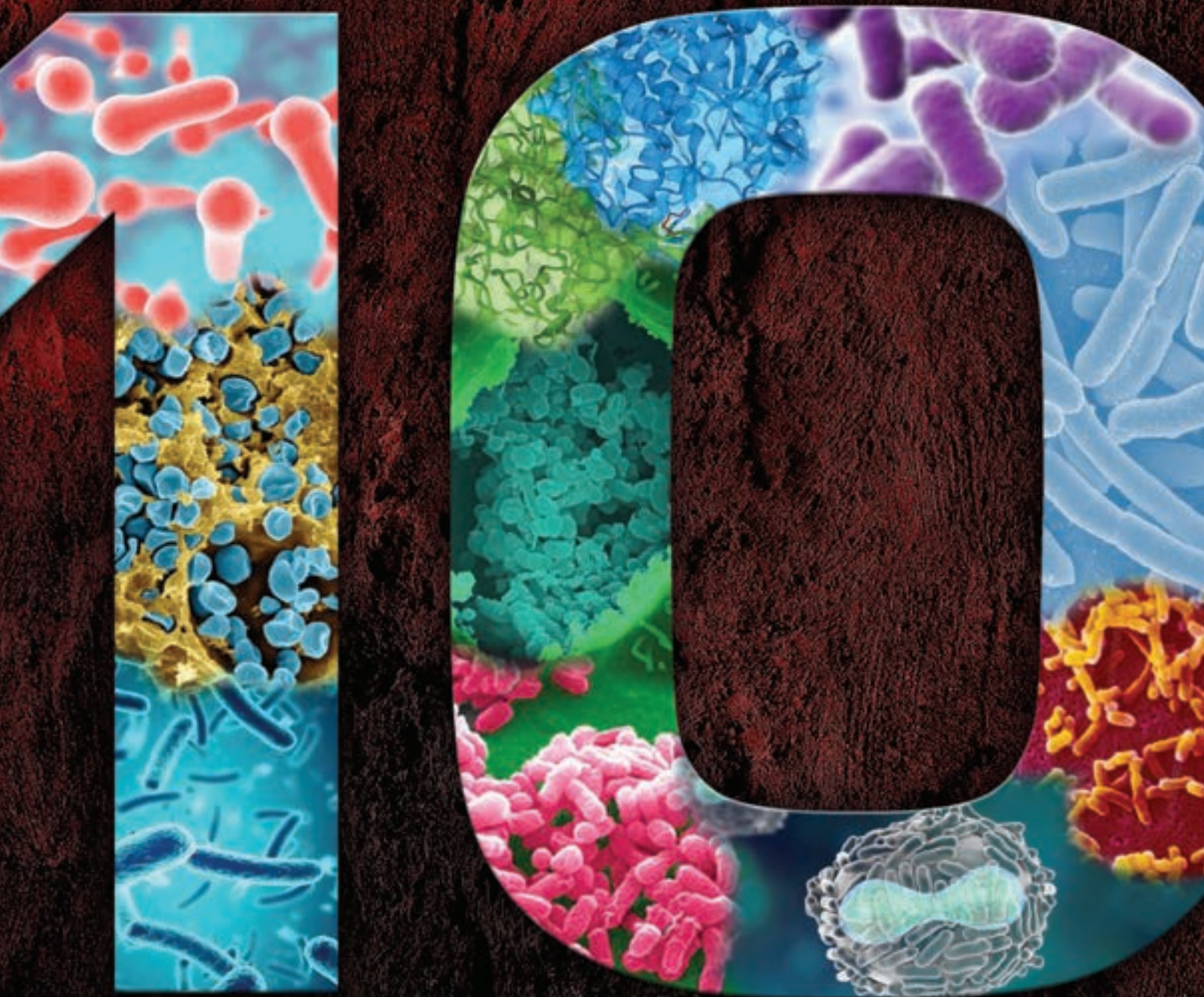
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- The IAFC received the America Burning contract from the U.S. Fire Administration. We are working closely with other fire service organizations in conducting a nation-wide study based on the previous America Burning report findings.
- IAFC's Emmy and the Telly Awards are now on display at IAFC headquarters! These awards were for the volunteer firefighter recruitment PSA produced by IAFC Volunteer Workforce Solutions staff and the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association.
- The Tennessee Volunteer Workforce Solutions SAFER grant program, managed by the IAFC, concluded in October with great success. About 2,000 volunteer firefighter interest forms were received, 741 new volunteers joined the 19 participating departments, and more than 60,000 promotional materials were distributed over three years.
- The IAFC was awarded a Fire Prevention and Safety grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This two-year grant will enhance IAFC's Wildland Fire Programs to assist fire departments and communities in high-risk wildfire areas.
- The IAFC's Volunteer Workforce Solutions team received a FEMA SAFER recruitment and retention grant over a three-year performance period.
- IAFC has again received a grant from Motorola Solutions Foundation to fund the Fire Service Executive Development Institute (FSEDI).
- At FRI 2019, the IAFC Diversity Executive Leadership Program (iDELP) graduated its first cohort and kicked off its second cohort.

The IAFC remains well-positioned to deliver for our members and the fire and emergency service. Our brand is respected, our leadership is strong, and our members are engaged. Here's to our continued success in 2020 and beyond — thanks to you!

ROB BROWN

IAFC Interim CEO and Executive Director



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