

Name	Rank	State	Department Name	Number of Stations	Short Bio	Email
Vera Wuerfel	Assistant Chief/Deputy Chief/Division Chief	Arizona	Tuscon	23	After more than three decades of progressive leadership across operations, training, fire prevention, and wellness, I believe deeply in the importance of developing the next generation of leaders who lead with integrity, courage, and compassion.	Vera.Wuerfel@tusconaz.gov
Vera Wuerfel	Assistant Chief/Deputy Chief/Division Chief	Arizona	Tuscon	23	It would be an honor to share my experience, lessons learned, and insights to help guide others as they prepare for advancement and the responsibilities of command. Please let me know if there are next steps or After more than three decades of progressive leadership across operations, training, fire prevention, and wellness, I believe deeply in the importance of developing the next generation of leaders who lead with integrity, courage, and compassion.	verabug@comcast.net
Charles Brown	Captain	California	Paso Robles Fire Department	3	It would be an honor to share my experience, lessons learned, and insights to help guide others as they I am a Fire Captain/Paramedic with the Paso Robles Fire Department, where I've worked for 21 years, including the last six as Captain. I also spent 18 years teaching in the Bakersfield College Paramedic Program and currently teach leadership courses at the National Fire Academy, including Leadership in Supervision, Difficult Conversations, Adaptive Leadership, and Community Risk Reduction.	cbrown@procity.com
Sam Digiovanna	Fire Chief	California	Verdugo Fire Academy	1	I am committed to supporting the professional growth of new Company Officers as they transition into formal Sam DiGiovanna is a 40-year fire service veteran. He started with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, served as Fire Chief at the Monrovia Fire Department, and currently serves as Chief at the Verdugo Fire Academy in Glendale Ca. He is Director at Large with the California State Firefighters Association, Associate Director for the California Training Officers Association and a consultant for www.Lexipol.com	samdigiovanna@outlook.com
Michael Ott	Fire Chief	California	City of Tulare Fire Department	3	I have been in the fire service for 40 years. I love coaching/mentoring/peer support to the new generation of firefighters, company and chief officers. I have been doing related work independently for many years. Giving back, is important as so many helped me in my journey.	mott@tulare.ca.gov
Dr Devin Flannery	Assistant Chief/Deputy	California	South San Francisco Fire Department	5	I currently have 25 years of experiences in both military and fire service. I have a passion for helping others find their leadership/mentorship capabilities and sharing my fire service experiences to aid in others being successful. I believe we can all learn from each other's to better shape the next generation of fire service and	professorflannery@gmail.com
Dave Carpenter	Captain	Colorado	Adams County Fire Protection District	4	David Carpenter began his journey in the Fire Service in 2008 as a volunteer for the Platte Valley Fire Protection District in Kersey, Colorado. At Platte Valley, he held the positions of Firefighter, Lieutenant, Captain, and Operations Chief. While volunteering at Platte Valley Fire, David was hired as a full-time firefighter at North Washington Fire in Denver. Through a merge, North Washington Fire has since become Adams County Fire. At Adams County Fire, David has previously held the positions of Firefighter, Engineer, and Lieutenant. David currently serves the citizens in the position of Fire Captain. David is a training coordinator for Adams County Fire, lead fire instructor at Galeton Fire Protection District, lead fire instructor for the Northwest Weld Rural Fire Academy, and teaches leadership classes for the North Area Officer Brad Cogburn has had a remarkable journey with the Brighton Fire Rescue District, where he currently serves as a Captain. His dedicated service began in 2002 as a volunteer firefighter and has since led to several promotions, including being promoted to Captain in 2022. In his role, Brad Cogburn is responsible for managing the fire district's hazardous materials and station 54 budgets and coordinating these two programs. His dedication, hard work, and loyalty have earned him respect and admiration from many staff members.	dcarpenter@acfdp.org
Brad Cogburn	Captain	Colorado	Brighton Fire Rescue District	5	Brad's educational background includes an A.A. in Applied Fire Science from Red Rocks Community College in 1999, and a B.S. in Fire Administration from Columbia Southern University in 2020. He holds numerous certifications, including CPSE Fire Officer Accreditation, Colorado Fire Officer II, Hazardous Materials Technician, Colorado EMT-B, and many others. In addition to his professional endeavors, Brad Cogburn is involved in volunteer work and affiliations, including his work with IAFF, Brighton Fire Local 4477, and his involvement with JDRF, and a lacrosse Name: Joseph M. Anderson II	bcogburn@brightonfire.org
Joe Anderson II	Captain	Colorado	Adams County Fire Rescue	4	Rank: Captain, Technical Team Director, USAR Team Lead Experience: N. Area Lead Rope Instructor, IFSI Instructor (5 years), State Chair Lead for the Ropes Certification, teaching academy since 2002. International Rescue Instructor since 2005, Elevated Safety Instructor, Safety One Instructor, business owner, and other. Experience: Retired Engineer from GFD, 23 years. Currently with ACFR for 23 years.	janderson@acfpd.org
Robert Weisbaum	Fire Chief	Colorado	Crested Butte Fire Protection District	4	What I have to offer is the development of people, not just FF's, through a consistent message and influence Chief Robert Weisbaum brings over 25 years of experience in fire and emergency services to his role as EMS & Fire Chief of the Crested Butte Fire Protection District, overseeing operations across four stations. A dedicated leader and advocate for public safety, he is committed to innovation, community engagement, and professional excellence. Chief Weisbaum holds a BS in Fire Administration, is a Managing Paramedic Officer (MPO), and a licensed Critical Care Paramedic. He also serves as Executive Director of the Crested Butte Youth Explorer Program 0911, mentoring first responders and promoting wellness, training, and leadership in the fire service.	Rweisbaum@cbfpd.org
Samuel C. Leightor	Lieutenant	Colorado	Loveland Fire Rescue Authority	10	I'm a 17-year fire and EMS professional in northern Colorado. I've been fortunate to serve with two fire departments and Banner Health Paramedics, and I teach fire science at Aims Community College. Those experiences shaped my approach to leadership: steady under pressure, clear about expectations, focused on growth and service, and genuinely invested in people. My interest in mentoring comes from gratitude for the leaders who invested in me and a desire to pay that forward. I've learned from multiple leadership programs, including the All American Leadership Academy and coursework at the National Fire Academy. I'm a newer company officer who recently completed the education, testing, and promotion process, so I understand the challenges and milestones from a fresh perspective. A simple truth guides me: leaders are built, not born. I work to stay teachable and share what I learn.	Samuel.Leighton@ifra.org
Eric Roth	Lieutenant	Colorado	Westminster Fire Department	6	If you're preparing for promotion or navigating your first year as a company officer, I can help with promotion Born and raised in Colorado, my path was forged in the spirit of service. Firefighting runs through my veins—my great-grandfather drove horse-drawn steamers for the Denver Fire Department, and both my uncle and cousin retired as firefighters. Though my early years were filled with sports, friends, and adventure, it wasn't until my father's sudden passing in 2005 that I realized how far I'd strayed from my purpose. Leaving behind a lucrative sales career, I re-earned my certifications and joined the Westminster Fire Department, where I've since served for nearly three decades. From firefighter to paramedic to Safety and Medical Officer, I discovered my true calling—not just in emergency response, but in education. My passion for teaching has taken me across the U.S. and beyond, speaking at conferences, training agencies, and even helping build an EMS system in Costa Rica. Recognition as a hometown hero and my role as a medic at Burning Man only deepened my conviction that service and preparation save lives in all environments—from city streets to desert dust storms.	eroth@westminsterco.gov
Austin Hoyer	Lieutenant	Colorado	Aurora Fire Rescue	18	That same drive led to a defining moment in 2009, after losing my dog Sampson to bloat in under an hour. Out of grief grew purpose: I created the first comprehensive K9 First Aid & CPR program taught by a paramedic. From that single class, the program has expanded nationwide, training over 5,400 people—from dog owners to police K9 handlers—to act decisively when seconds matter. With veterinarian collaboration, published books, and innovative K9 emergency apps reaching users worldwide, I've built more than a business—I've built a movement. Mentorship has been at the heart of that growth. I believe true leadership Aurora firefighter since 2015 after volunteer and part-time work at rural districts. Paramedic since 2013. Grew up in Northern Illinois, the son of a firefighter. Just started the 19th year in the military as a Flight Medic and the current Senior Enlisted Leader of over 40 Soldiers in the Colorado Army National Guard. Married with two children.	ahoyer@auroragov.org
Casey Kelch	Battalion Chief	Florida	North Port Fire Rescue	6	The majority of what drives me to mentorship is my experience in Army Aviation. The professional development and continuation training is an amazing machine. With constant succession planning, mentorship is a natural part of each day as one prepares another to take their place. It is an attribute that every crew member must embrace as the backbone of organization. There's little ego involved and shared understanding is the priority. The mission is the focus, but camaraderie is polished by maximal knowledge, skill and ability. The other important roots of my drive to mentor others is from my time as an Engine Company LT, I'm a District Chief with North Port Fire Rescue, in Southwest Florida, bringing over 20 years of experience in emergency operations, leadership, and training. I'm a credentialed Chief Fire Officer (CFO) through the Center for Public Safety Excellence and currently completing my Master of Public Administration at Florida Gulf Coast University, with a graduation date in 2025.	ckelch@northportfl.gov
Jesse Schilling	Battalion Chief	Florida	Sarasota County Fire Department	25	Throughout my career, I've had the privilege of serving in roles ranging from firefighter/paramedic to shift commander. I've always been passionate about leadership development, technical rescue, and building strong, capable crews. Beyond operations, I've worked to advance officer development programs, instructor training, and strategic initiatives that strengthen our organization and the fire service as a whole.	jschilli@scgov.net
Anthony Seguin	Captain	Florida	Citrus County Fire Rescue	10	What Drives Me to Mentorship: I believe the fire service is built on shared experience and the responsibility to leave it better than we found it. Mentorship gives me the opportunity to pass on lessons learned, help others grow into confident leaders, With nearly two decades of progressive fire service experience, Battalion Chief Jesse Schilling is committed to developing the next generation of firefighters through education, mentorship, and servant leadership. In his current role with Sarasota County Fire Department, he leads department-wide programs focused on firefighter health, wellness, safety, and recruitment. Jesse is passionate about building a culture of psychological safety and continuous growth, ensuring every firefighter has the resources, knowledge, and confidence to thrive. He champions mentorship, learning, and I am an experienced Fire Captain/Paramedic with Citrus County Fire Rescue (FL) with 17+ years of service and a record of building programs that strengthen community risk reduction, fitness, and interagency operations. A Florida Fire Instructor and Fire Officer II with multiple technical certifications, I led our department's personal training program and helped develop the annual physical agility test. I've implemented public-education initiatives—including the "Public Education through Characterization" Tactical Laughter Team for early-grade students—covering fire and life-safety fundamentals. Operationally, I helped integrate a private EMS service into our county system and supported the merger that created Citrus Sheriff Fire Rescue. I hold a B.S. from the University of North Florida. I served as the Chair of the Florida and Fire Life Safety Educators association for one term and served on the board for over 5 years where we successfully grew our annual conference by over 20%.	Anthony.seguin@citruscountyfire.com
Jay VandeBerg	Battalion Chief	Illinois	Greater Round Lake Fire Protection Dis	3	Beyond the fireground, I work with theFireDepartmentApp.com to deliver mobile communication tools for fire, law enforcement, and emergency management agencies, improving citizen outreach, internal I have 27 years in the fire service, with 25 in part time and volunteer and 23 years career (overlapping). I serve as a Battalion Chief in a fire district in the suburbs of Chicago. We have 3 firehouses and 5 companies of fire/EMS cross trained firefighter/paramedics. I am in the EFO program, expected to finish in the spring. I am wrapping up my Masters in Public Admin at Northern Illinois University. I have a Bachelor's in Fire Service Management from Southern IL University.	Jvandeberg@rllfire.org

Donald Messick	Captain	Maryland	City of Salisbury Fire Department	3	<p>Donald "DJ" Messick has served in the fire service since 1991 and has been a career firefighter with the Salisbury Fire Department in Maryland since 2008. Over the course of his career, he has advanced through the ranks from Firefighter/EMT and Paramedic to Fire Apparatus Driver Operator, Sergeant, Lieutenant, and now Captain in charge of the department's Training Division.</p> <p>Prior to his current role, Captain Messick served as both Sergeant and Lieutenant on Salisbury's only ladder company, where he emphasized mastering the fundamentals to ensure his crew was prepared for the most complex challenges. His leadership philosophy centers on the belief that a strong foundation in the basics allows firefighters to conserve energy and maintain the mental clarity needed to perform under pressure. In addition to his service with Salisbury, Captain Messick is an instructor with the Delaware State Fire School, where he specializes in firefighter and officer education. He is deeply committed to training as the I have over two decades in the fire service, my career has spanned operations, hazardous materials, special rescue, and leadership development. I currently serve as a Captain overseeing multiple shifts and personnel, as well as CEO and founding partner of Cervitas Training Solutions, where we provide HazMat, leadership, and safety programs across both public and private sectors.</p> <p>What drives me in mentorship is helping others learn the areas I had to navigate quickly, shortening their learning curve so they can, in turn, help others grow faster too. I've been fortunate to learn from exceptional mentors throughout my career, and I'm passionate about paying that forward. I have coached members of my department for multiple promotional processes.</p> <p>I've been lucky enough to present on leadership and hazmat both nationally and internationally to list a few; NFPA conference, IAFC Hazmat conference, JOIFF summit Cork, Ireland, NCEC Hazmat conference in the UK. This has both helped me grow in my own development as a leader and network with both nationally and international mentors and leaders.</p> <p>I also share that my career has been highlighted by both big successes and failures. I think that helps when it comes to growing as a person and a leader since I know what it's like to be "on the radar" with the admin. My name is James Wenzel, I currently serve as the Fire Chief for Rio Rancho Fire Rescue in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. I started in the fire service as a volunteer in 2007 before joining RRFR in 2009. During my time I have been fortunate to hold various ranks from engineer, captain, battalion chief, fire marshal, and deputy chief. I've also spent time in the training, logistics, emergency management and the fire marshal's offices. Throughout my career I've maintained a strong drive towards professional development and education. In that, I currently hold an MBA from Waldorf University, as well as being credentialed as a Chief Fire Officer (CFO) and current student in the Executive Fire Officer program at the National Fire Academy. I'm also a graduate of the Fire Service Chief Executive Officer program from TEEEX/ Texas A&M.</p> <p>I sincerely hope to help the fire service in any way I can; be in mentorship, coaching or any other method. I Jessica Duron-Martinez has served with Rio Rancho Fire Rescue for sixteen years and currently holds the position of North Battalion Chief in Operations. Previously, she spent two years as the department's Fire Marshal, where she strengthened our community's fire prevention and investigation efforts. She holds a Master of Public Administration in Organizational Leadership and a Bachelor of Science in Fire Administration with a concentration in Fire Investigations. Since 2017, she has been a dedicated member of the Paser Support Team, caring for the mental health and well-being of our firefighters, and she is currently What drives me to mentorship is knowing the right guidance can change a firefighter's career. I've had mentors who shaped how I lead, think, and carry myself, and I want to do the same for others coming up I would define myself as a student of leadership, and I have worked to create a supportive learning environment where individuals feel empowered to make decisions and learn from their mistakes. This philosophy cultivates a culture of trust, accountability, and continuous improvement. In my current role as an Assistant Chief, I utilize my skills and experience in firefighting, paramedicine, operational management, administration, and data analysis to help others reach their full potential. I introduced Monroe Fire's first global training program for fire & EMS, and I implemented the department's data-driven quality management program. These initiatives work together to identify trends and provide critical insights that support data-driven, strategic decision-making. I hope that my efforts are raising industry standards, building a culture of excellence, and ultimately making a meaningful difference in the lives of others.</p> <p>I want to collaborate and share this vision with other like-minded & forward-thinking individuals by helping Matt Aalto currently serves as a Battalion Chief – Training Officer and RRC for the Estacada (OR) Fire District from 2023. Just prior, Matt served as the Captain and Training officer – RRC for the Gaston Fire District from 2016 to 2023. Matt was employed by the Stayton Fire District as a Career Firefighter/EMT and oversaw the district's RRC responsibilities from 2011 to 2016. Prior to that, Matt volunteered with the Cornelius Fire Department. In addition to being a line officer, Matt co-founded the Oregon Fire Recruitment Network which has brought multiple fire agencies in Oregon together in a unified effort to recruit and retain firefighters across the state. The network went live in 2013 and since then has successfully recruited over 2000 firefighters who have made it through an academy and are now serving the fire lines in Oregon. Matt is a Subject Matter Expert (SME) for the International Association of Fire Chiefs and is an instructor for the Recruitment and Retention Certification Course and the Building a Collaborative Team course. He has also helped create national recruitment courses and acts as an SME for the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC). Matt holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration a BA in Fire Administration, an Associate Degree in Fire Science, and a certificate from Notre Dame University in Leadership. Matt holds multiple Oregon NFPA DPSST fire certifications including Fire Officer IV, PIO, FFII, Instructor III, Nick Serikstad is a Firefighter with York Area United Fire & Rescue, a five-station department serving York County, Pennsylvania. Over the past seven years, he has worked on an engine company, serving in the role of both engine operator and unit officer on a two-person crew. This experience has shaped his commitment to teamwork, adaptability, and operational excellence. Nick is a CPSE Credentialed Fire Officer and an IAAI Credentialed Fire Investigation Technician. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Fire Administration and is completing a Master's in Fire Executive Leadership. Before joining the fire service, Nick served as an Air Traffic Controller in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard from 2009 to 2015. He believes in the art of continuous learning and improvement—values he brings to every mentoring opportunity. Nick recognizes that mentoring in the fire service is essential to sustaining its traditions, strengthening professional competence, and ensuring that the next generation of firefighters I work for Rural Metro Fire of Knox County, TN. We have 17 stations, covering about 350 square miles and approximately 250,000 citizens. Brandon Douglas is a 22-year fire service professional currently serving as Division Chief of Training and Development at Rural Metro Fire in Knox County, Tennessee. In this role, he works alongside the dedicated men and women of RMF to support the department's operational readiness and help prepare future leaders through career development and succession planning initiatives.</p> <p>Brandon's career has progressed from Firefighter through Captain and Battalion Chief roles, where he gained valuable experience in emergency operations and team development. He holds certifications, including Tennessee Fire Officer IV and Paramedic, holds a master's in organizational leadership from the University of the Cumberlands, and is enrolled in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer program.</p> <p>Committed to supporting the growth of fellow firefighters, Brandon has contributed articles on leadership and Deputy Fire Chief Christopher Corbin entered the fire service as a volunteer in 1999 and began a career in the fire service with the South Burlington, Vermont fire department in 2004. In 2013, he was promoted to Lieutenant and then to Captain (shift commander) in 2017. In 2023, as part of a succession plan led by the city manager, he was promoted to Deputy Fire Chief to work under the direction of a newly appointed fire chief. The intention of this plan has been for him to become the fire chief upon the current chief's retirement. Deputy Chief Corbin is currently enrolled in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer program and is credentialed as a Chief Fire Officer through the Commission on Professional Credentialing. He has been an instructor with the Vermont Fire Academy since 2009, with his recent focus being the lead instructor for their Fire Officer programs. For five years, he was an adjunct professor in the Fire Science program at Vermont Technical College. Deputy Chief Corbin was a local labor union president for 10 years, successfully negotiating several collective bargaining agreements which included staffing increases through receipt of a SAFER grant as well as implementing paramedic-level service. At a state labor level, he, with the support of the Professional Firefighters of Vermont and the Vermont Career Fire Chiefs, led the effort to bring the IAFF / IAFC Candidate Physical Ability Test to Vermont. He represented labor on the Vermont Fire Service Training Council for nine years. Recently, DC Corbin was sworn in as the Vermont Director to the New England Association of Fire Chiefs Division of the IAFC. Deputy Chief Corbin has been fortunate to build and maintain strong respect among the firefighters, fire officers, and municipal management while serving in informal and formal leadership roles. He continues to demonstrate leadership that unites an organization and cultivates ownership to achieve the mission guided by common values. As a life-long learner and dedicated fire service professional, I am seeking continuous opportunities for growth, experience, and challenges within the fire service and my department. My resume and experience will demonstrate my ability to develop and lead teams, build and foster relationships, and a strong interpersonal skills set. 10 years of career firefighting experience with three years as a company officer. I have a total of 18 years in the fire service including time as a volunteer. I currently have a Bachelors Degree in Fire Administration and a Master's degree in Executive Leadership. I have experience in both private and public emergency response including time as a dispatcher. I have been or am currently part of multiple committees including apparatus replacement, Thermal Imager Replacement, and training. I have leadership experience with the IAFF as a secretary and served in multiple committees including contract negotiations and training. Mentorship is important to me because often times I find myself needing to find experience and information about certain topics that I would not normally be able to get through the normal channels in my own organization. Benjamin Goodreau is a dedicated public safety leader committed to building stronger, safer communities through compassionate and professional service. As Fire Chief for the City of Wisconsin Rapids, he leads a career department of 40 firefighter/paramedics serving a central Wisconsin community with a rising call volume that surpassed 5,000 incidents in 2024. Under his leadership, the department delivers excellence in fire suppression, emergency medical services, and community risk reduction through innovation, accountability, and teamwork.</p> <p>With more than two decades of service, Ben has advanced through every rank of the fire department—from firefighter and critical care paramedic to battalion chief and now chief—earning a reputation for visionary leadership, collaboration, and integrity. His work emphasizes employee wellness, organizational culture, and evidence-based planning to strengthen operational readiness and community trust.</p> <p>Ben holds a Master of Public Administration with honors from Villanova University, a Bachelor of Science in Fire and Emergency Services Management from Colorado State University, and multiple national and state certifications. He is also a credentialed Chief Fire Officer (CFO) through the Center for Public Safety Excellence and is completing his Executive Fire Officer (EFO) designation at the National Fire Academy.</p> <p>Outside of his departmental role, Ben remains deeply engaged in his community, serving on the City's Ethics Board, Planning Commission, and Wood County's Criminal Justice initiatives, as well as instructing future</p>	dmessick@salisbury.md
Ralph A. Suppa	Captain	Maryland	Anne Arundel County Fire Department	47		Suppa@Cervitas.com
James Wenzel	Fire Chief	New Mexico	Rio Rancho Fire Department	6		jawenzel@rmm.gov
Jessica Martinez	Battalion Chief	New Mexico	Rio Rancho Fire Rescue	6		jamartinez@rmm.gov
Sean Eagen	Captain	New York	Buffalo Fire Department	19		seaneagenbfd@gmail.com
Joe Locke	Assistant Chief/Deputy Chief/Division Chief	Ohio	Monroe Fire Department	2		lockej@monroeohio.gov
Matt Aalto	Battalion Chief	Oregon	Estacada Fire District	2		maalto@estacadafire.org
Nick Serikstad	Fire Fighter/Paramedic/Engineer	Pennsylvania	York Area United Fire & Rescue	5		serikstad2018@outlook.com
Brandon Douglas	Assistant Chief/Deputy Chief/Division Chief	Tennessee	Rural Metro Fire	17		Brandon.Douglas@ruralmetrofire.net
Chris Corbin	Assistant Chief/Deputy Chief/Division Chief	Vermont	South Burlington	2		ccorbin@southburlingtonvt.gov
Bobby Drake	Battalion Chief	Virginia	Hanover County Fire	15		rddrake@hanovercounty.gov
Ryan White	Lieutenant	Virginia	New Kent Fire-Rescue	6		rowhite@newkent-va.us
Benjamin Goodreat	Fire Chief	Wisconsin	Wisconsin Rapids Fire Department	2		BGoodreau@wirapids.gov

Joseph Flick	Captain	Wisconsin	Milwaukee Fire Department	29	I've served with the Milwaukee Fire Department since 2003, promoting to Fire Lieutenant in 2020 and Fire Captain in 2025. Over the years, I've worked on some of the city's busiest engine and truck companies and served on both the Heavy Urban Rescue and Dive Rescue Teams. I hold degrees in Fire Science and Fire & Emergency Response Management and am currently pursuing my master's in Public Administration. I'm passionate about mentorship; I believe that being both a mentee and a mentor have shaped who I am as an
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