

Eastern Division



International Association of Fire Chiefs

2023 Annual Conference

“Preparing Tomorrow’s Leadership for Success”

April 21st – 22nd 2023

Ocean City Fontainebleau Resort

**10100 Coastal Highway
Ocean City, MD 21842**

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Sponsored by the Maryland Fire Chiefs Association





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International Association of Fire Chiefs
2023 Annual Conference



April 21-22, 2023

“Preparing Tomorrow’s Leadership for Success”

The Eastern Division of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (EDIAFC) Annual Conference is attended by many fire service leaders and professionals from throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. The EDIAFC 2023 Annual Conference will be held at the Ocean City Fontainebleau Resort, Ocean City, Maryland from April 21-22, 2023.

The theme for this year’s conference is *“Preparing Tomorrow’s Leadership for Success.”* The conference will afford some extracurricular activities for those attending. On Friday evening, there will be a dinner social at the American Legion for attendees and their family. On Saturday, there will be a Partners Program that will include a trip to the town of Berlin. The Partners Program trip will include shopping on Main Street and lunch at the Hotel Atlantic 1895.

Pricing for the EDIAFC 2023 Annual Conference will be as follows:

- Conference Registration: \$175/per person (includes dinner on Saturday night)
- Hotel Rates: \$130.00/night (Double Occupancy)
- Partners Program: \$45/per person (includes lunch and favor)
- Additional Saturday night dinner guests: \$75/per person

Online registration can be completed at [EDIAFC Annual Conference Registration - 2023](#)

Hotel Contact Information: Ocean City Fontainebleau Resort
10100 Coastal Highway
Ocean City, MD 21842
Phone: (410) 524-3535
Use Code: FC 0420

Presentations at a Glance



“Opening Keynote Speaker”, Chad Williams, Former US Navy Seal and Best Selling Author

Serving his country proudly through multiple deployments as a U.S. Navy SEAL, on SEAL Teams One and Seven, Williams honed the qualities and values that our nation’s best adhere to. In a final operation in Iraq, his SEAL team was set up on a premeditated ambush similar to the location and scenario that took the life of his mentor Scott Helvenston, but on that occasion he and his team were able to overcome the enemy and complete the mission. Today, Chad is a bestselling author of the book, SEAL of God, and an in-demand keynote speaker. He is also a frequent guest on Fox News Channel, CNN News Room, Anderson Cooper 360, and other national news programs. Drawing from his experiences, Chad captivates his audiences as he illustrates the SEAL mindset and ethos, including leadership, teamwork, integrity, safety, mental toughness, discipline, overcoming adversity and grit.



“Where are we Going and How Will We Get There?” Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell, DrPH, MPH, U.S. Fire Administrator, United States Fire Administration

Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell was appointed by President Joseph Biden as the U.S. Fire Administrator on October 25, 2021. Prior to her appointment, Lori served nearly 3 years as the President and CEO of the International Public Safety Data Institute (IPSDI), which she founded after retiring from a 26-year tenure as a senior executive in the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). She began her fire service career in 1987 as a fire department paramedic in the City of Memphis Fire Department, Memphis Tennessee. Today, as a Doctor of Public Health and data scientist, Lori is an award-winning international speaker, presenter, and author. She is considered an expert in executive leadership, community risk assessment, emergency response system evaluation, public safety resource deployment, firefighter health and safety, and generational differences in the workplace.



“I See in Color Again”, Scott Geiselhart, Firefighter, Frazee (MN) Fire Department

Scott escaped a near-death experience on his road to discovery and recovery from his PTSD. Scott shares his personal experiences, his journey recovering from PTSD, addiction, and a suicide attempt. He will talk about the years of isolating from friends and family, the darkness, hopelessness, nightmares, relationship issues, challenges with addiction, anger, along with the struggle to find help. Scott is speaking out with his life changing story in hopes of helping others recognize the symptoms of PTSD to help prevent them from going down the same path. His story is inspirational as he shares a message of post traumatic success and seeing in color again.

Scott Geiselhart is a national speaker who shares his message of healing and redemption with thousands of first responders, other professionals and students. He is also a co-author of the IAFC's Yellow Ribbon Report "Under the Helmet: Performing an Internal Size-up." As a mental health practitioner and certified peer support specialist, he has received crisis intervention training, suicide prevention training, and critical incident stress management training. He worked in crisis stabilization for four and half years helping individuals get back on their feet after mental health crisis situations.

He has spoken at many conferences and events around the country such as the Bridge Retreat in Columbus, Ohio, EMDRIA conference in Minneapolis, MN, high schools, mental health and suicide prevention walks, State Fire Chiefs and Firefighters Association conferences, International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Volunteer Fire Council conferences, etc. He has had many articles including articles by the Associated Press, FireRescue 1, Fire Engineering, NVFC Help Letter, etc.



Batteries, soon to be everyday life for the fire service, the Lithium Ion Tool Kit. Chief Michael O'Brian, Fire Chief, Brighton Area Fire Authority

This course will dive into the many aspects affecting the fire service as it relates to batteries and how they are changing our work environment. From the steps all departments must take to battle the mobility fires, to developing our response to EV incidents, or how to prepare our fire marshal's office for the needed code changes to be prepared for a changing world. This program will dive into the various roles our leadership plays in preparing, responding to and working to reduce the impact of battery related incidents.

Michael O'Brian is the Fire Chief of the Brighton Area Fire Authority and President of Code Savvy Consultants. He is the current chair of the IAFC work group, working to develop a lithium ion tool kit for the fire service.



“Understanding how to Properly Mitigate Incidents Involving Solar Panels”, Captain Richard Birt (Ret), Las Vegas Fire and Rescue

Basic firefighter strategies and tactics needed to mitigate a residential structure fire have changed with the installation of thousands of solar panel and battery storage systems in homes across the United States. As such, firefighters need updated training that addresses the presence of this technology. Captain Birt will provide attendees with a bread-and-butter approach to mitigating a residential structure fire involving solar panel and battery storage systems.

Captain Richard Birt retired at the end of 2020 as a Firefighter-Captain for Las Vegas Fire and Rescue. He now focuses on the educational platform he founded, Solar and Fire Education, (S.A.F.E.), which provides free training for firefighters on how to safely mitigate a fire incident involving solar and battery storage systems. After Hurricane Maria caused the failure of the electrical grid across Puerto Rico in 2017, Birt spearheaded a disaster relief effort that resulted in 15 solar and battery micro grids being installed on strategically placed fire stations across the island to keep the emergency services operational. Birt was awarded the Medal of Honor from his department in 2018 for his work in Puerto Rico, and continues his disaster relief work as a technical advisor for the nonprofits Solar Responders and Empowered by Light.



“How Modern Building Codes Support Firefighter Safety and Inform Fire Service Leadership and Decision-Making”, Karl Fippinger, CEM, PMP, Vice President, Fire and Disaster Mitigation International Code Council

This session will focus on the critical role that building codes play in supporting firefighter safety and fireground operations. Participants will learn how building codes inform fire service leadership and decision-making along with how they contribute to overall community risk reduction. This session will also present real-world examples of how a basic understanding of building codes and building safety systems can be the difference between a successful outcome or a “career event”.

Karl Fippinger, CEM, PMP is Vice President, Fire and Disaster Mitigation for the International Code Council. He is a 30-year veteran of the fire and emergency services having served as an Assistant Fire Chief with the Occoquan-Woodbridge-Lorton Volunteer Fire Department in Prince William County, VA as well as an adjunct instructor with the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department in Fairfax County, VA. Karl is also a Certified Emergency Manager and serves as a member of the FEMA Administrator’s National Advisory Council. He brings more than 25 years of public and private sector experience in federal, state, and local disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.



“Understanding the Benefits of Using Simulation Software in Training”, Chief Gary Warren, Incident Command Simulation Center Coordinator, Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute

In an ever-changing era of technology, virtual simulation technology has advanced greatly and established itself as a valuable tool in many domains: education, entertainment, clinical purposes, emergency response and more. This is because virtual training allows the training of large and complex scenarios that would otherwise be extremely resource and time demanding when carried out as a live exercise. It presents a good fit with the training conducted in the emergency response domains, most specifically firefighters as they often deal with high risk, low frequency incidents during deployment. Virtual training offers a solution that is realistic, safe, efficient and at a much lower cost than live fire training. In this presentation, Chief Warren will provide an overview of how the Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute incorporates incident command simulation training into its various training program. A demonstration will also be provided to the attendees.

Chief Gary Warren is currently the Incident Command Simulation Center Coordinator for the Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute (MFRI). Chief Warren became an EMT Instructor in 1975 and an ALS Instructor in 1977. He has also been a long time MFRI Instructor teaching in the areas of fire, rescue, hazmat and management. He is both an Instructor Evaluator and member of the MFRI Quality Assurance Team. He has worked in the Incident Command Simulation Center for the past several years both instructing and developing incident command simulations. Chief Warren has 54 years of fire service experience having started as a volunteer in Baltimore County in the late 1960’s. In early 1970, he joined the Baltimore County Fire Department. During his tenure he commanded the Advanced Technical Rescue Team, the EMS Division, Hazmat Division, Training Division and Operations. Chief Warren served as the first Director for the Baltimore County Office of Emergency Preparedness. In early 1990, Chief Warren retired from the Baltimore County Fire Department as the Deputy Chief of Operations and Special Operations. After retiring from the Baltimore County Fire Department, Chief Warren served as the Chief of Training for the BWI Airport Fire-Rescue Department until his retirement.