

Illinois Fire Chiefs Association 53rd Annual Symposium Program

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

1530-1800 **Registration**

1600-1730 **Recruitment and Staffing Roundtable**

The IFCA wanted to take a short time to update our membership on the status to staffing their fire departments, a concern to nearly every fire department in Illinois. Executive Director John Buckley will lead the discussion updating the room on legislative actions and move to some recruiting ideas. Planned speakers include a military recruiter and fire chiefs to share their success stories with generating interest in the fire service. No additional registration is necessary for this "pre-symposium" event that will lead into the Attorney's reception.

1730-2100 **Open Forum /Reception with Attorneys, Karl Ottosen & Stephen DiNolfo**, Ottosen DiNolfo Hasenbalg & Castaldo, Ltd. • Karl & Steve will moderate our open forum with an open microphone format. Bring your hot topics for discussion. Attendees will be invited to submit questions anonymously before the symposium for discussion and answers. Hospitality bar & heavy hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

0600-0800 **Breakfast** (included in registration)

0700-0800 **Registration**

0800-0815 **Welcome**

0815-0930 **Keynote Address "Reigniting The Leader Inside You"**

David & Larry Conley Reigniting the Leader Inside You is an inspirational keynote address that encourages first responders to reinvigorate the passion for service within us all. Through the years, passion and commitment can erode due to a lack of personal leadership and maintenance. The fire that once burned bright inside us dims and fades as we settle into the routine of years of working for the fire department.

How can we find and that lost passion? How can we re-commit to ourselves, our team, our department and our community? How do we connect again to the inspired firefighter leader that gave purpose to our lives? The communities we serve, deserve the firefighter inside us, we may have lost.

Larry and David Conley present an informative, engaging, keynote address that encourages us to look within, and find that purpose, to find that leader and reignite the fire that once burned so bright inside. You do not want to miss this empowering speech that will help you redefine and reinvigorate your reason for loving the fire service

0930-0945 **Break**

0945-1000 **Illinois Office of the State Fire Marshal**

1000-1130 **"Art of Efficient and Effective Leadership"**

David Conley & Larry Conley Today's fire service requires excellence on all fronts. Your department expects efficiency regarding training, recordkeeping, agency compliance, and safety measures. The citizens expect effectiveness in delivering all-hazard services to mitigate emergencies. Both demands are equally important—hence, the TIGHTROPE. This class is an interactive experience that will teach practices to help master the balance between efficiency and effectiveness. Takeaways from this class will provide you with actionable resources to be the complete leader your agency and community need.

Wednesday, May 22, 2024 (continued)

1130-1300 **Lunch**

1300-1315 **Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts**

1315-1445 **"NFPA 1582 Health, Nutrition & Readiness:**

Dr. Peter Matos and Ken Asta will present evidence-based dietary and fitness recommendations designed to address the health and wellness concerns of the first responder community. Tactical fitness training is not about working out for the sake of being good at working out, it is about developing your strength, your fitness, and your ability to react and perform in the real world. Dr. Matos will discuss utilizing food as medicine and adherence to the Mediterranean diet for the US career firefighter population. This has been proven to lower a firefighter's risks for diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer. The evidence comes from a Harvard study "Feeding America Bravest" which focused on adherence to the Mediterranean diet for firefighters in Boston and Indianapolis. The simplest change we can make for prevention of disease and promotion of long term health is to pay attention to the food we put in our bodies.

1445-1500 **Break**

1500-1515 **Illinois Fire Service Institute**

1515-1645 **Trinity Model - Communications, Culture & Decision-Making** ♦ Brian Brauer & Ryan Snow, University of Illinois - Leadership can be one of the most challenging concepts for a newly promoted person or new leader to understand. As one advances up the career ladder in an organization, the ability to complete tasks individually becomes less important. The need to coach, mentor, and lead others to accomplish objectives is the new norm. The Trinity Model explores how to have a stronger and more effective leadership presence by focusing on strategic communication, organizational culture, and decision-making.

1700-2200 **4th Annual Bags, BBQ & Brotherhood Social**

An evening of fun, relaxation, and brotherhood. Food, drink and a bags tournament provided. The event is held onsite.



Thursday, May 23, 2024

0630-0800	Breakfast (included with registration)
0800-0815	Illinois Fire Chiefs Association
0815-0830	"IFCA Educational & Research Foundation: CFO Class Completion Certificates.
0830-1000	"A United Front for Illinois Fire Service" This roundtable discussion will be led by Executive Director John Buckley. The IFCA and AFFI are often looked at as adversaries, but we frequently have much in common. The discussion will explore these similarities and the differences. While the discussion is planned to be a free-flowing conversation, we expect to discuss many topics facing both groups - hiring, staffing, firefighter safety - hoping to find areas we can work together to serve our communities. Time was specifically left available for audience participation, so bring your questions.
1000-1015	Break
1015-1130	Roundtable Continues
11:45am	Raffle/Closing



Invited Speakers:



Karl R. Ottosen is a shareholder and managing partner with the law firm of Ottosen DiNolfo Hasenbalg & Castaldo, Ltd. at the firm's Naperville office. Mr. Ottosen has over thirty-five years of experience representing government entities. He is a frequent speaker at seminars and workshops on topics such as labor, employment, and local government law issues. [You may contact Mr. Ottosen at kottosen@ottosenlaw.com.](mailto:kottosen@ottosenlaw.com)



Stephen H. DiNolfo is a shareholder with the law firm of Ottosen DiNolfo Hasenbalg & Castaldo, Ltd. Mr. DiNolfo's practice is concentrated in the full range of litigation services. From the Naperville office, Mr. DiNolfo manages the firm's litigation practice and handles a variety of liability, employment, discipline, and labor matters for the fire service. His email address is sdinolfo@ottosenlaw.com.



David Martyn Conley -For over twenty years, David Conley has been committed to the professional improvement of government and corporate employees, nationwide. Conley has facilitated and/or developed programs for organizations such as General Mills, and Veterans Affairs. During that time, Conley has also designed and delivered programming for youth, that promote positive citizenship. A trained writer, actor and director, Conley develops "corporate theatre" programs that leave a lasting impression on participants. This impression makes it easier for participants to recall and apply the principles of any program.

Larry Conley is the Deputy Fire Chief of Training/Safety for the City of Collinsville, Illinois. He recently retired from the St. Louis Fire Department, where he served 30 years. He rose through the ranks and retired as a Fire Captain at one of the busiest firehouses in St. Louis. Larry received his bachelor's degree from Columbia Southern University. Conley is a national public speaker and, with his brother David, teaches a personal leadership workshop around the world. Larry and his brother have taught at the Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) for over a decade and were the keynote speakers in 2021. Conley is a Fire Service Instructor II and evaluator, a recipient of the Excellence in Instruction Award from the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI) in 2019. Larry was a nominee for the George D. Post Instructor of the Year Award in 2022. He hosts The Larry Conley Radio Show podcast on the Fire Engineering platform, serves on the FDIC education committee, and has authored articles for Fire Engineering magazine. For the past 22 years, Conley has volunteered at the Midwest Children's Burn Camp, serving burn-injured children, where he has been camp director for over 13 years. Larry is also a member of the Muddy River FOOLS and the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI). Conley is currently pursuing a masters degree in Public Service Administration at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale.

For more than ten years, Conley, and his brother, Captain Larry Conley, have presented the personal leadership program, GLUE (Growing Leaders Using E.M.P.O.W.E.R.ment) to fire service professionals across the United States.



Dr. Peter Matos is the Founder and Chief Medical Officer of Traekos Health, LLC.

Dr. Matos trained at John Hopkins, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and Bethesda Naval Hospital. He has led and participated in major projects involving institutions such as Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, the

Department of Defense, and Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Dr. Matos is an expert in Biologic surety and the management of select agent programs at federal facilities. He currently serves on the multiple company advisory groups as an SME in Chemical, Biological, Radiological, And Nuclear Defense, (CBRNE). Dr. Matos has experience working with the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center (AFHSC), DTRA (Defense Threat Reduction Agency), DOD Global Emerging Infections Surveillance and Response System, and CDC. He has served as a public health emergency officer for 14 DoD installations and has participated in multiple disease and epidemiologic investigations. Dr. Matos has received extensive training in risk communication in a public health emergency and in exposure investigation.

During his residency training in Occupational Medicine at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences (USUHS), he completed a rotation at the International Association of Fire Fighters' (IAFF) Division of Occupational Health, Safety and Medicine. During this rotation, he became familiar with the occupational health concerns that firefighters face through review of reports, studies and medical standards maintained in the IAFF Health and Safety office. He became familiar with the IAFF/IAFC Joint Labor Management Wellness Fitness Initiative, NFPA 1582 and the IAFF Candidate Physical Abilities Test (CPAT). He conducted extensive literature searches to assist IAFF affiliates with issues related to firefighter health and provided assistance to local departments on topics including thyroid cancer, radiation treatment and assistance to IAFF Local 375 after a hazardous exposure fire. This training gives him a unique perspective and an excellent understanding of the health and wellness needs of firefighters.



Ken Asta Kenneth Asta, CHC, CSCS, MBA - Rock Valley Health Director

Ken received his B.S. in Kinesiology from Northern Illinois University and Master's Degree in Business Administration from Western Illinois University. Ken is a Nationally Certified Health Coach with the American Council on Exercise and Certified

Strength and Conditioning Specialist with the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

Ken has 20 years of experience within the health, wellness and recreation industry. Ken's specialty is providing workplace wellness services to local companies in an effort to recognize health risks, educate employees on various health topics and measure health progress. Throughout his career, Ken has earned 2 national awards for his wellness program designs and implementation through the National Recreation and Parks Association.



Dr. Brian Brauer leads the emergency management function at a large public state university, where his responsibilities include reducing the campus community's vulnerability to extreme events, promoting campus safety and resiliency, mitigating emergencies, and ensuring continuity of operations and recovery efforts following a disaster.

He has over three decades of experience in public safety as a first responder and incident commander, including twenty years at a state fire academy. He works internationally, chairing a non-profit emergency responder accrediting body, and has led the strategic planning process for an international organization.

Brian's work has been featured internationally in presentations, interviews, and webinars. He has been published in journals, white papers, international training standards, and federal publications. He continues to research the impact of leadership and culture on organizational change.

Brauer holds degrees in nursing, education, and leadership. His doctoral dissertation was a case study of a fire department that changed because of a fireground death.



Ryan Snow serves full-time as a Police Officer with a large University Police Department, where he has served in several leadership roles, including field training officer and shift supervisor. During his career, Ryan has gained experience building positive working environments and making decisions

that empower teams to embrace their strengths and collaborate towards a common goal.

Ryan has spoken at numerous state and national conferences.

Ryan's work has been featured in webinars, newspapers, television, books, and educational articles. Organizations such as the Drug Enforcement Administration, The National Center for Campus Public Safety, and the Mid-America Prevention Technology Transfer Center have all requested and endorsed Ryan as a trainer and speaker. Before law enforcement, Ryan graduated with a Master's degree in Educational Administration and is currently enrolled in the Doctorate of Educational Policy and Organizational Leadership program at the University of Illinois. This experience provides the opportunity for him to understand the demands of organizations from different perspectives and develop a well-rounded picture of successful leaders.

**Watch for an email from Survey Monkey.
Submit your questions for the Attorney's Forum.**



Luke Howieson currently serves as the AFFI Vice President, having been elected to that position in 2018. Luke began his fire service career in 1995, and has served with the DeKalb Fire Department since 2001 where he is currently a Bat. Chief.

Luke is a proud member of DeKalb Fire Fighters Local 1236 in which he has served the local as a Shift Steward, Treasurer, and President. He is also proud of his involvement with the AFFI Warrior Program and the AFFI Labor History Committee. Luke has been a fire service instructor for multiple institutions across the State of Illinois.

"I am honored to serve the members of the AFFI and look forward to the further development of cutting edge educational programs that will strengthen our great state association."



Chris Coats was hired by the Pekin Fire Department in August of 1999, and was promoted to engineer in 2008 and Captain in 2012. Chris proudly served on the executive board of Local 524 as a Shift Steward, Secretary-Treasurer, and President and has served the AFFI as District 2 PEC Coordinator and a District Vice-President. Chris was first elected District 2 Vice

-President at the June 2010 Biennial Convention in Springfield. "It's an honor to be re-elected for 3 more terms and be able to continue to serve you as your District 2 VP. In my years as a member of the AFFI we've tackled every issue and obstacle head on and promise to continue to do the same. I look forward to many more years serving you as a member of your AFFI Executive Board, performing at the same level you've come to expect as we continue to move our great organization forward, and meet all of our challenges head on."



Demond Dade - Demond Dade served on Quincy Fire Department for over 21 years, with 11 years of experience as a Company Officer. Dade was promoted to Deputy Chief of Administration in January of 2020. In that role, he created Quincy Fire Department's COVID-19 policies and formed a Joint Task

Force to address Civil Unrest Response comprised of representatives from the Quincy Police Department, Adams County Ambulance Service, and the Adams County Emergency Management Agency, among others. He also took an aggressive approach to creating and implementing the department's annual training program; he created professional and career development plans, and in general helped to develop individual firefighters and increase their productivity.

In March of 2021, Dade was hired by The City of Urbana Fire Department as the inaugural Deputy Chief of the department. In May of 2022, Chief Dade was named the Fire Chief of the Urbana Fire Department.

He served as President of MABAS Division 44, and is currently a member of the Governor's Fire Fighting Medal of Honor Committee. Dade is also a Field Staff Instructor for the Illinois Fire Service Institute at the University of Illinois, where he has promoted through the Instructor ranks in a short period of time due to his outstanding teaching skills, leadership, and dedication to the fire service. He also serves on the State of Illinois 9-1-1 Advisory Board as the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association representative.

Even with all the time and effort Chief Dade committed to his department, he still found time to give back to his community through teaching, mentoring, and coaching. For a collective total of 23 years, he served as the Varsity Girls' Basketball Coach and as the Assistant Football Coach at Quincy Junior High and High Schools. Dade holds an Associate's degree in Applied Fire Science from John Woods College.



Joe Schrage began his fire service career in 1997 serving as a chaplain and a paid on call firefighter. He served the Illinois communities of O'Fallon, Mundelein, Swansea and West Frankfort before beginning his full-time fire service career in the City of Highland Park. Joe has been with the City of Highland Park for 20 years serving in multiple roles and rapidly rising through the

ranks to become Fire Chief. Highland Park Fire Department has 53 career firefighter/paramedics and two civilian employees with 3 stations serving the Cities of Highland Park and Highwood including a military installation. Joe currently serves on the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association Executive Board and as Vice President of MABAS Division 3.

Joe received his Associates in Fire Science from Southwestern Illinois College, Bachelor degree from Loyola University of Chicago and Masters of Divinity from University of Saint Mary of the Lake. Joe has attained numerous State Certifications throughout his career including the completion of the Chief Fire Officer program, multiple National Fire Academy certifications, and was awarded the Chief Fire Officer designation from the Center for Public Safety Excellence.

Joe and his wife, Barb, have two children, Benjamin and Jacob.



Shawn Sollberger - Born and raised in the City of Peoria, Chief Sollberger is a third-generation firefighter in the City of Peoria. Grandfather William was an interim Fire Chief in the 1980s before he passed away due to lung cancer, and his father, Robert "Bob" retired as a Battalion Chief serving Peoria for over 33 years. Chief Sollberger graduated

from Peoria High School in 1992 and attended Illinois Central College playing baseball and attaining a Fire Science Degree and EMT-Basic certification along the way. He has received his Bachelor's degree in Fire Investigation and Fire Management from Columbia Southern University.

Chief Sollberger was hired by the City of Peoria April 3rd, 1998. Rising through the ranks and ultimately transitioning into management in December of 2019. He served shorts stints during the COVID19 global pandemic, as the Division Chief of Operations and the Assistant Chief, before ultimately filling the role of Fire Chief. Initially as an interim role starting February of 2022 until through an exhausting nationwide, Chief Sollberger was ultimately appointed full time in August 2022 by the City of Peoria.

Chief Sollberger served on the Union executive board for over 16 years, as a trustee and shift steward, and as part of the negotiations team for three consecutive contracts. He is now in his 4th contract cycle, lastly serving in the management role. Chief Sollberger has served as the labor chair for several committees, including Safety, SOG, Specialty Teams and the Foreign Fire Tax Fund. Additionally, he has served in the roles of Hazardous Materials Technician, Underwater Rescue Diver, Technical Rescue Certified in High Angle, Confined Space, and Trench, and as the city representative on the IL ETSB-9-1-1 board.

Register On-Line
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