

The Book of Mentors

Fire Service Names You Should Know



A collection of fire service leaders that have directly and indirectly shaped my career. Each of these names are profoundly influential and I would encourage you to immerse yourself in their work. Under each of their photographs I have listed a few notes regarding who they are and where they came from. This is by no means a list of all their accomplishments or attributes; that would be impossible to quantify. Rather a guiding list into understanding who they are in the fire service.

All ranks are represented in this book; from Firefighter to Fire Chief. You can also find any fire service topic that interest you. From Truck and Engine to Leadership and Mental Health, everything is covered with these mentors. Most of them have written numerous books and articles and featured on popular fire service podcasts. Many have taught at every fire conference in the country and abroad. Some are heavily engaged on social media and training videos. While others tend to remain silent giants. However, their commonality is that all have given so much to the fire service.

Use this book as a guide. Know who these mentors are. Learn all you can. Have an open mind. Do research. Don't let anyone discourage you. Be into it. Have fun. Train. Learn. Work. Work real hard. Immerse yourself into the job- the job of firefighting.

These are my words and my thoughts of how I view these mentors.

-Eric Wheaton

Firefighter Aaron Fields



Location: Seattle (WA) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

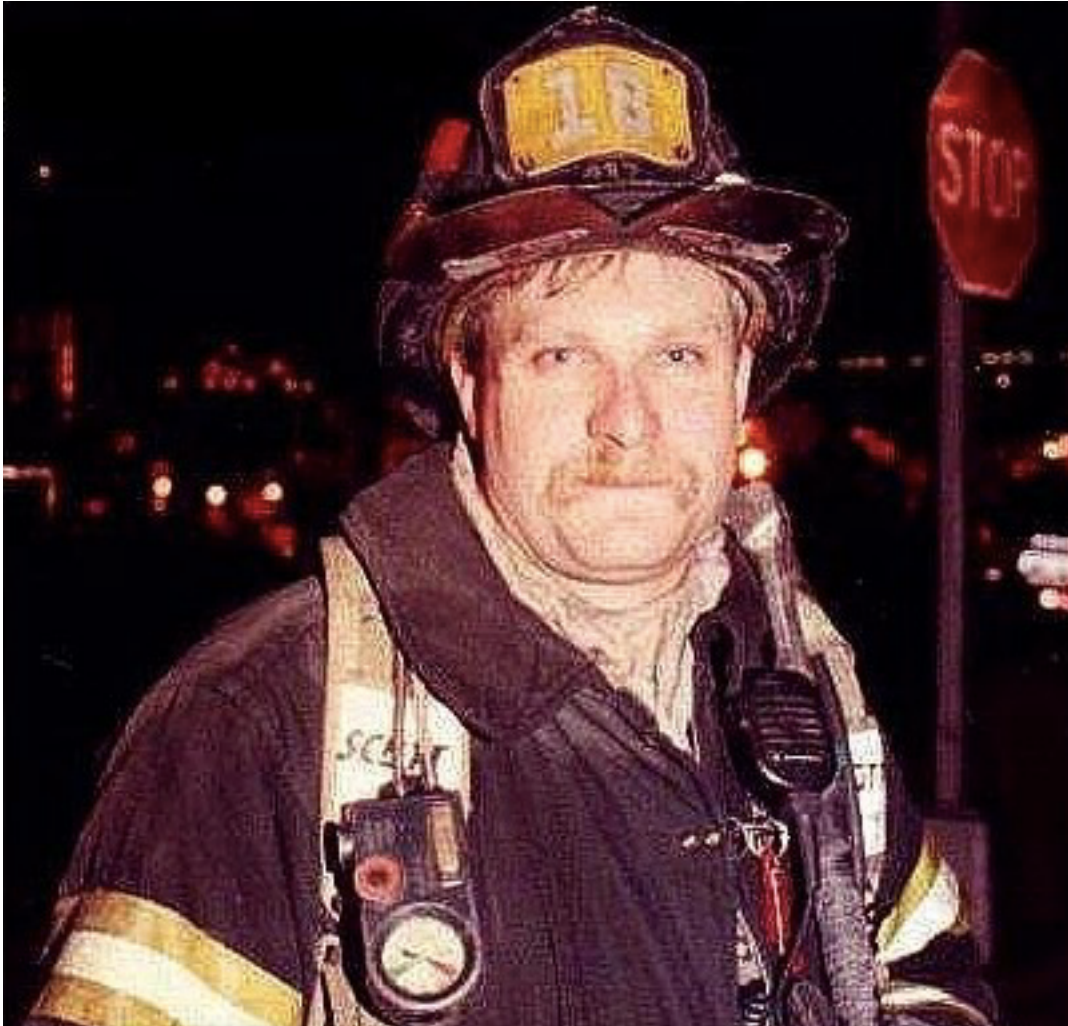
Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Well-known class titled *Nozzle Forward*, which changed how the fire service views hose deployment and advancement. Fire service speaker with a passion in linguistics.

Firefighter Andrew Brassard



Location: Milton (Ontario Canada) Fire Department.
Genre: Truck Company Operations. Special Operations.
Attributes: Instructor. Teaches at Fire Department Training Network (FDTN). Passion in forcible entry.
Urban city fire buff.

Lieutenant Andy Fredericks



Location: FDNY, Squad 18. Killed on Sept. 11th, 2001.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Several articles/videos. Well known FDIC Keynote (2001)- *Don't Worry About That Nozzle Kid* (Video online). Online document of his articles- *The Book of Andy*.

Lieutenant Bassel Ibrahim



Location: Orlando (FL) Fire Department.

Genre: R.I.T. Operations. Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Owns the training company *Proactive Rescue Operations*. Well-Known classes titled *One Bad Day* and a 24hr class *One Bad Tour*.
Passion in training and physical fitness.

Lieutenant Ben Shultz



Location: West Palm Beach (FL) Fire Department.
Worked for West Metro (CO) prior.

Genre: Engine Company Operations. Search
Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Fire By Trade
Instructor. Well known program- *Every Second Counts*.

Lieutenant Bill Carey



Location: Hyattsville PG County (MD) Fire Department.

Genre: Line of duty death analysis.

Attributes: Wrote several articles on LODD. Well known program- *Data Not Drama*. Helping the fire service disseminate LODD data.

Captain Bill Gustin



Location: Miami Dade (FL) Fire Rescue.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Author. Several articles/podcast.

Over 40 years in the fire service. Been with Fire Engineering magazine for many decades. Career student and class act.

Assistant Chief Bob Morris



Location: Stamford (CT) Fire Department. Retired Captain of FDNY Rescue 1.

Genre: Truck Company Operations. Special Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Several articles/videos. Over 40 years in the fire service. Wrote FDNY's forcible entry manual (available online). Creator of the "Rex" through the lock tool. Passion in forcible entry.

Assistant Chief of Training Bob Pressler



Location: Christiana (DE) Fire Department. Retired Firefighter of FDNY Rescue 3.

Genre: Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Several articles/videos. Over 40 years in the fire service. Teaches at Fire Department Training Network (FDTN).

Training Chief Brian Brush



Location: Midwest City (OK) Fire Department. Worked for many departments in California, Colorado, and Oklahoma prior.

Genre: Engine Company Operations. Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. 2023 FDIC keynote speaker (video online). Plays a pivotal role in search and research/data collections. Massive contributor to understanding attack packages for Engine Companies. Knowledgeable in ground ladder operations. Member of firefighter rescue survey. Original Fire Service Warrior member. Great character and well-rounded in everything fire service.

Firefighter Brian Olsen



Location: Eagle (ID) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations. Search Operations
Functional Fitness.

Attributes: Instructor. Shares Fitness workouts and training programs. *Brothers in Battle, LLC* instructor. Passion in Faith, Family, Fire. Teaches on search and forcible entry.

Lieutenant Bryan Lynch



Location: Colorado Springs (CO) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Co-owner of the training company- *Irons & Ladders*. Well known for forcible entry & ladder skills.

Captain Clark Lamping



Location: Clark County (NV) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Teaches at many Engine Company conferences. Works on the Las Vegas strip. Highrise tactics.

Battalion Chief Clyde Gordon



Location: Houston (TX) Fire Department.

Genre: Leadership.

Attributes: Instructor. Teaches at many fire conferences on the topics of Chief Officers and leadership.

Firefighter Cody Trestrail



Location: Retired Portland (OR) Fire Department.
Worked at FDNY prior.

Genre: Truck Company Operations. Engine Company
Operations

Attributes: Instructor. Creator of the *Portland Firemanship Conference* and *Firemanship Conference*. Owner of *Brothers and Battle, LLC*- a popular training company. Passion in Faith, Family and Fire. Popularized the terms “Life-Fire-Layout” and “VES-Beyond the Door”, these are now staple tactics/terms in the fire service. Teaches on search, forcible entry, and Engine Company operations. Passionate man.

Battalion Chief Corley Moore

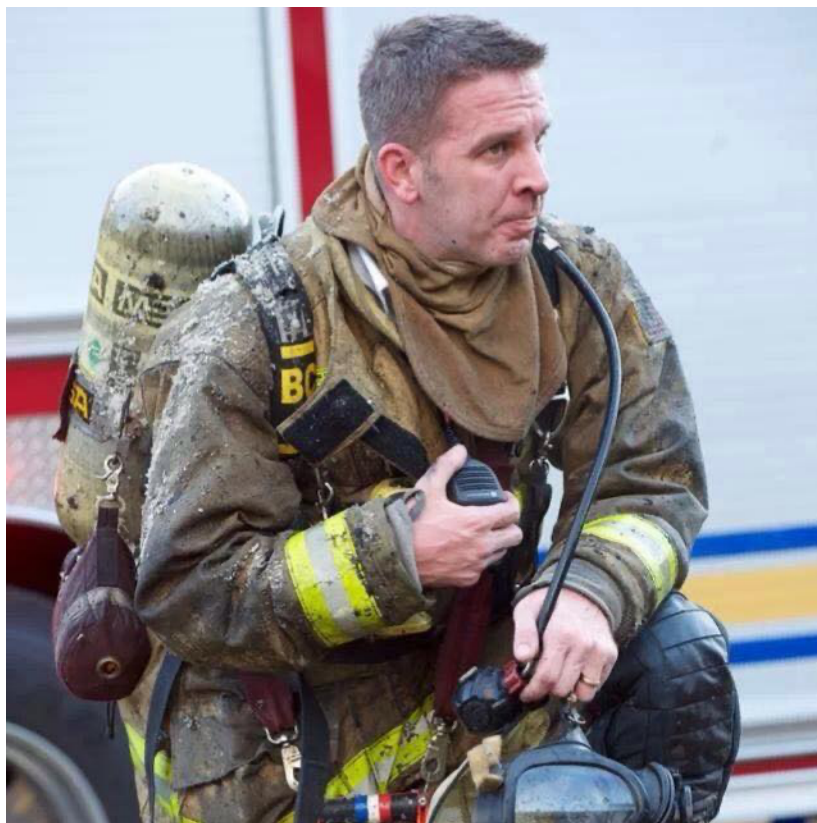


Location: Moore (OK) Fire Department.

Genre: Leadership. Firehouse Culture.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Owns and runs a well-known podcast titled *Firehouse Vigilance, The Weekly Scrap* (varying fire service topics). Teaches on leadership and culture. Author of the book titled *9 Ls of leadership*.

Battalion Chief Curt Isakson



Location: Escambia County (FL) Fire Department.
Genre: Engine Company Operations. Leadership.
Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Owns and runs *County Fire Tactics*, a training company and conference series. Most well-known conference he runs is the *Highrise Operations Conference (H.R.O.C.)*. Author of several articles and can be found on many podcast episodes. Extremely passionate in all things fire service. Very motivating personality. Is a member of Elkhart Bass's "*Brass Tacks, Hard Facts*", a video series on Engine Company Operations. Extremely passionate speaker.

Lieutenant Danny Doyle



Location: Pittsburgh (PA) Bureau of Fire.

Genre: Truck Company Operations. Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Instructor with *Traditions Training*, a well-known and respected training company.

Captain Daryl Liggins



Location: Retired Oakland (CA) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Teaches at many fire conferences on Engine Company Operations. Was a key player in the development of Oakland's Engine Company Operations-specificity their attack package. Is a member of Elkhart Bass's *"Brass Tacks, Hard Facts"*, a video series on Engine Company Operations.

Assistant Chief Dave McGrail



Location: Denver (CO) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations. Highrise Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Author the book titled *Firefighting Operations in highrise & standpipe equipped buildings*. Author several articles. Is a member of Elkhart Bass's "Brass Tacks, Hard Facts", a video series on Engine Company Operations. Regarded by many as the most knowledgeable highrise firefighter.

Battalion Chief David Rhodes



Location: Retired Atlanta (GA) Fire Department.

Genre: Smoke Diver. Leadership. Search Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Editor and Chief of Fire Engineering Magazine. Education Director for the Fire Department Instructor Conference (FDIC) – the largest Fire Department conference in the world. Runs the Georgia Smoke Diver program.

Battalion Chief Dena Ali



Location: Raleigh (NC) Fire Department.

Genre: Mental health. Firefighter wellness.

Attributes: Speaker. Firefighter mental health advocate.

Author with published articles. Speaks at many fire conferences.

Captain Dennis LeGear



Location: Retired Oakland (CA) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Known as a "water wizard". Helped develop Tru-ID hose. Was a key player in the development of Oakland's Engine Company Operations, specifically their attack package and water supply. Is a member of Elkhart Bass's "*Brass Tacks, Hard Facts*", a video series on Engine Company Operations.

Captain Eric Tollund



Location: Denver (CO) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations. Highrise Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at fire conferences on the topics of Engine Company Operations and Highrise Operations. Is a member of Elkhart Bass's "*Brass Tacks, Hard Facts*", a video series on Engine Company Operations.

Battalion Chief Erich Roden



Location: Retired Milwaukee (WI) Fire Department.

Genre: General Fire Service.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Co-Creator of Urban Firefighter Magazine- a magazine showcasing tips, tricks, and stories from urban fire departments. Editor and Chief of Fire Rescue Magazine.

Deputy Assistant Chief Frank Leeb

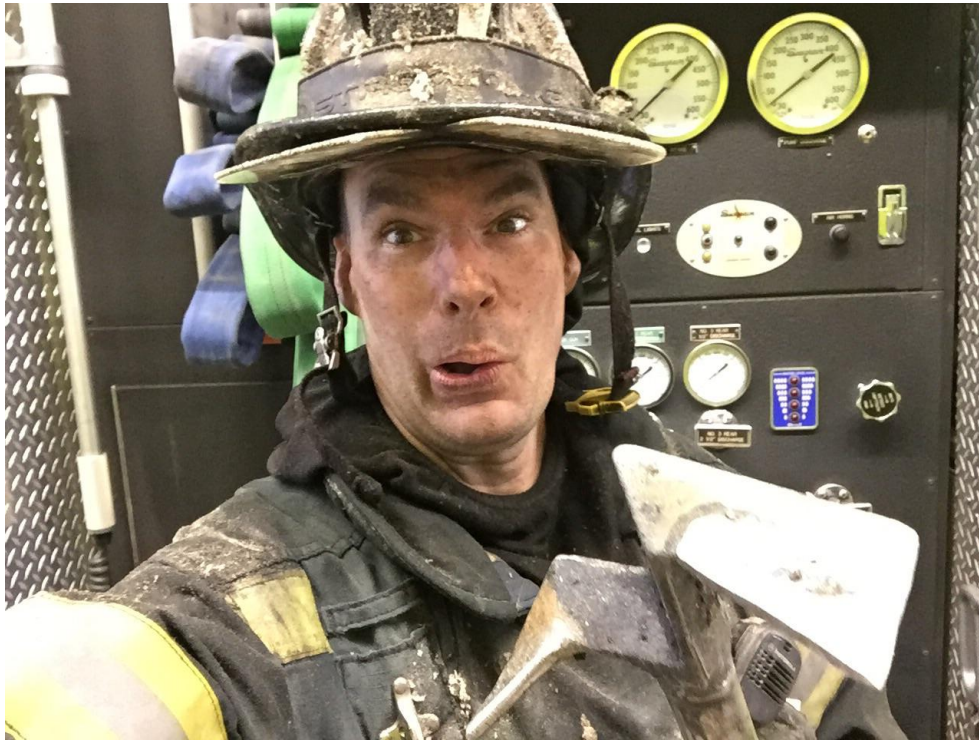


Location: FDNY.

Genre: Leadership.

Attributes: Speaker. Teaches at many fire conferences on the topics of leadership. Author of several articles and a book titled *Cornerstones of Leadership: On and Off the Fireground: Training - Teamwork – Mentorship*.

Firefighter Gary Lane



Location: Kent (OH) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations. Truck Company Operations. Functional Fitness.

Attributes: Instructor. Teaches at many fire conferences.

Compiled a PDF of the late Andy Fredricks articles (available online). Well-rounded firefighter with a great knowledge of tools. Instructor for Brothers and Battle, LLC. OG Fire Service Warrior member.

Training Chief Grant Schwalbe



Location: Estero (FL) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations. Search.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at many fire conferences. Well known for promoting a strong search culture. FDIC H.O.T. lead instructor for the class titled- *Residential Primary Search-Making the Grab*. Runs two popular podcast- *Grabs podcast and the Journeyman's podcast*. Author of several articles.

Firefighter James Johnson



Location: Vancouver (Canada) Fire Department.

Genre: Building Construction.

Attributes: Speaker. Worked as a carpenter prior to the fire service. Considered the next generation fire service building construction expert. Has been a guest on many podcasts. Author of several articles.

Training Captain Jeff Mrwik



Location: St. Johns County (FL) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Owns *Malta Fire Training, LLC*. Operates *Ancient City Fire Expo*- a training conference in St. Augustine, FL. Instructor for *VentEnterSearch, LLC*. Well-rounded firefighter with a Passion in forcible entry.

Firefighter Jeff Rothmeier



Location: Milwaukee (WI) Fire Department.

Genre: General Fire Service.

Attributes: Author of the book titled- *Mastering the Craft: Cultivating a Philosophy for Fire Attack*. Has been a guest on many podcasts.

Lieutenant Jeff Shupe



Location: Retired Cincinnati (OH) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Well known for his work in the Engine Company space. Author of several articles. Is a member of Elkhart Bass's "*Brass Tacks, Hard Facts*", a video series on Engine Company Operations.

Lieutenant Jim McCormack



Location: Retired Indianapolis (IN) Fire Department.

Genre: General Fire Service.

Attributes: Instructor. Creator and owner of *Fire Department Training Network (FDTN)*- the BEST and most realistic fire training academy in the world, known as the Disney World of the fire service. Has a cadre of very respected fire service instructors teaching at FDTN.

Division of Training Chief Jimm Walsh



Location: Retired Winter Park (FL) Fire Department.
Genre: Truck Company Operations. Special Operations.
Leadership.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Creator of *VentEnterSearch.com*, a website (and now) training company. *VentEnterSearch.com* is credited as the original firefighter blog and has been around since 2005. Well known around the country for his Truck Company Operations and Leadership classes. Is given credit as the one who started the positive training culture for which Winter Park Fire Department is known for. Taught at several conferences around the country, including FDIC. Is a fire instructor at Valencia College in Orlando, FL. Original member of FL-TF4. A mentor to many.

Lieutenant Jimmy Berry



Location: Orange County (FL) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Lieutenant of Orange County Fire Rescue's Truck 30, one of the busiest Truck Companies in Central Florida. Instructor for *VentEnterSearch, LLC*. Runs *VentEnterSearch, LLC's* H.O.T. programs at Valencia College in Orlando, FL. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Passion in all things Truck Company Operations.

Lieutenant JJ Cassetta



Location: Orlando (FL) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Teaches with Truck Essentials at FDIC H.O.T. Executive board member for the Orlando Fire Conference. Fire buff and photographer. Instructor for *VentEnterSearch, LLC*. Teaches at two Orlando area fire colleges and at many conferences across the country.

Firefighter John Spera



Location: South Metro (CO) Fire Department.

Genre: Functional Fitness. Firefighter Mindset.

Attributes: Motivator. Creator and owner of *Fit to Fight Fire*, a page dedicated to promoting firefighter health and fitness. Runs a popular podcast titled *Fit to Fight Fire*. Very active on social media. Passion in Faith, Family and Fire.

Engineer Jon Lockwood



Location: Iona McGregor (FL) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations. Search Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Creator of the *Lockwood Hook*, a very popular fire service tool. Teaches at many conferences across the country. Has a passion in Search and Truck Company Operations. Considered one of the most skilled searchers in the fire service. A humble gentleman.

Battalion Chief Jonah Smith



Location: Charlotte (NC) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several conferences across the country. Passion in Engine Company Operations.

Firefighter Jonathan Brumley



Location: Denver (CO) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several conferences across the country. Passion in Engine Company Operations and large diameter hand lines.

Captain Justin McWilliams



Location: Clackamas (OR) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations. Search Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Runs the *Search Culture* Facebook/Instagram page. ULFSRI advisory board member for the search and rescue study. Instructor for *Brothers in Battle, LLC*. One of the founders of the *Firefighter Rescue Survey*, a website that collects data on rescues firefighters make around the country. Has had an impact on how the American fire service searches for victims trapped by fire.

Battalion Chief/Research Engineer Keith Stakes

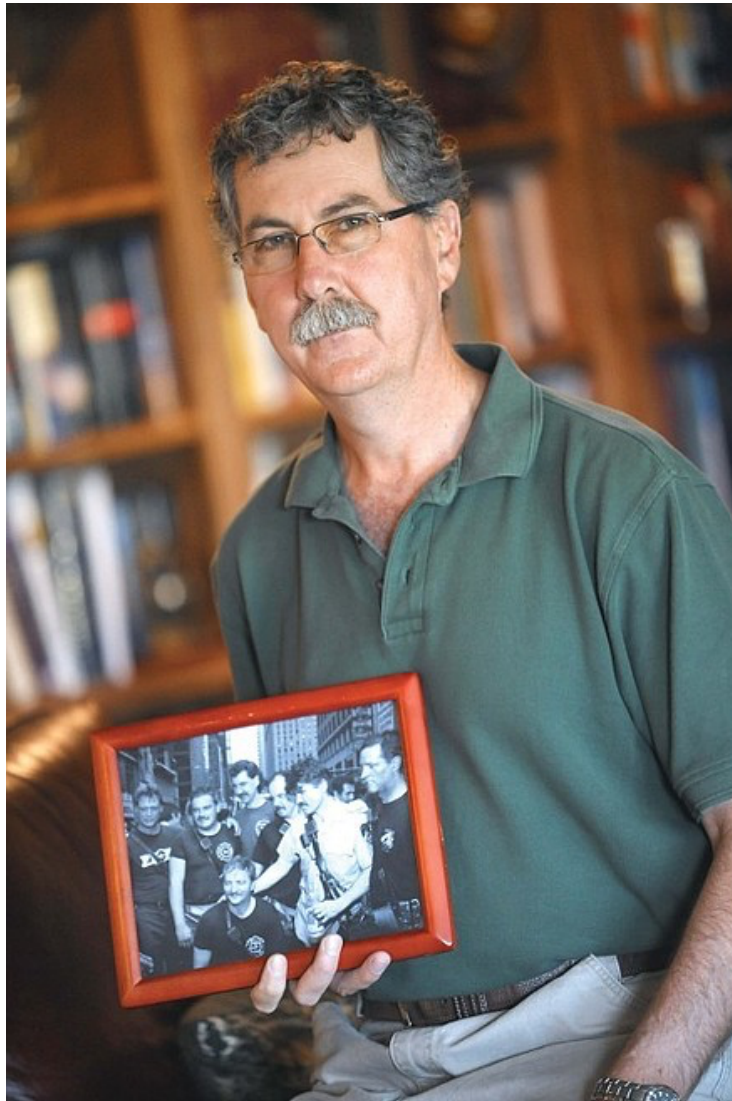


Location: Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad (MD) & UL-FSRI.

Genre: General Fire Service. Fire Service Research.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Research Engineer for UL-FSRI and named “The guy on the nozzle” for being the nozzleman on most of the research experiments UL-FSRI has conducted. Keith holds a Bachelor of Science Degree and a Masters of Engineering Degree in fire protection engineering from the University of Maryland.

Firefighter Kevin Shea

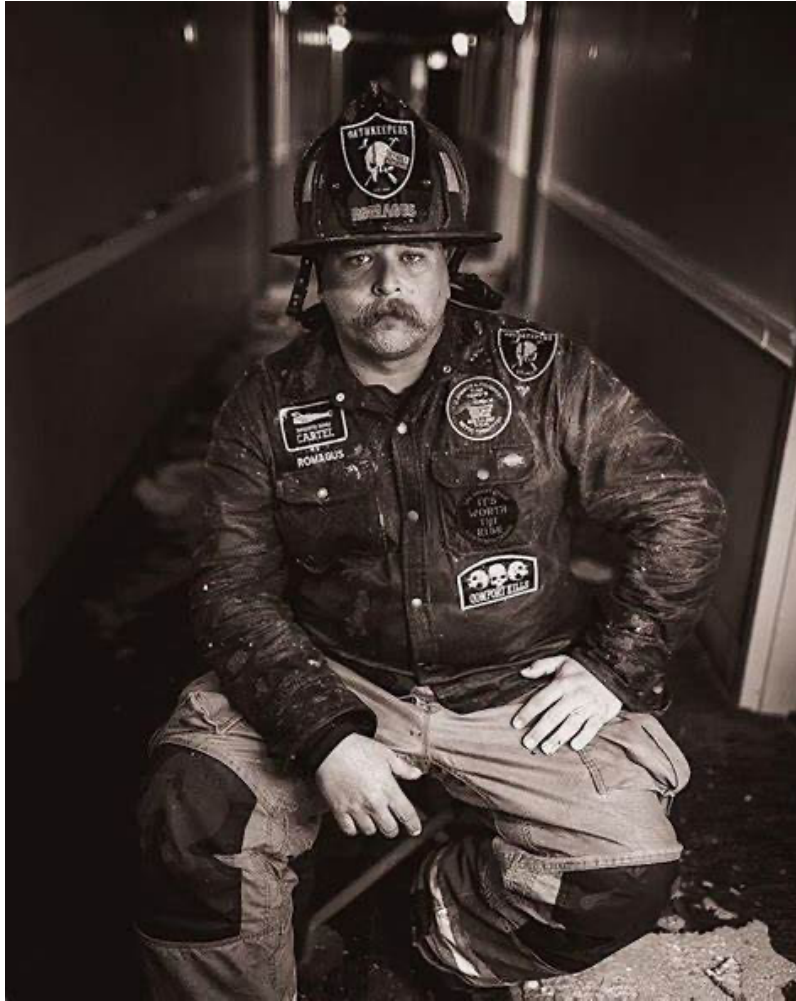


Location: Retired FDNY.

Genre: General Fire Service.

Attributes: Speaker. Made the most famous roof rescue in FDNY history (1993), video can be found on YouTube. A gentleman and an American hero.

Battalion Chief Kyle Romagus



Location: East Montgomery County (TX) Fire Department

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Well-known for his passion in Engine Company Operations. A talented nozzleman. Student of the fire service. Is an incredible note taker.

Firefighter Larry McCormack



Location: Chicago (IL) Fire Department, Squad 5.

Genre: Truck Company Operations. Search.

Attributes: Instructor. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Well-known for his passion in vertical ventilation, saws, and search. Teaches with Truck Essentials at FDIC H.O.T. Humble gentleman.

Captain Mark VonAppen



Location: Palo Alto (CA) Fire Department.

Genre: Leadership. Fire Service Culture.

Attributes: Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Owns *Fully Involved Leadership*. Speaks on leadership, motivation, and culture. OG Fire Service Warrior member.

Lieutenant Mike Ciampo



Location: FDNY, 45 Truck.

Genre: Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Simply known as “Champ”. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Has a passion for forcible entry, ladders, and aerial operations. Author of the book *Tower Ladder Tactics Tips and Tales*. Writes the back page for Fire Engineering Magazine. Has appeared on many seasons of Fire Engineering Training Minutes (found on YouTube). Extremely friendly and approachable. True gentleman and a mentor to many.

Chief Mike Lombardo



Location: Retired Buffalo (NY) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Over 40 years in the fire service. Has a passion for Truck Company Operations and search. Instructor for *Fire Department Training Network (FDTN)*. Author of many articles. Highly respected in the fire service.

Deputy Chief Mike Terpak



Location: Retired Jersey City (NJ) Fire Department.

Genre: General Fire Service.

Attributes: Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Over 40 years in the fire service. Author of six best-selling books- *Fire Ground Size-Up, 1st and 2nd. editions, Assessment Center Strategy and Tactics, Fire Ground Operational Guides, Assessment Center Management and Supervision, and Fire Officer Oral Assessment Study Guides.*

Battalion Chief Mo Davis



Location: Houston (TX) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Passion in vertical ventilation, search, and command. Speaks on Chief Officer roles.

Lieutenant Ray McCormack



Location: Retired FDNY, Harlem Hilton
69 Engine/Ladder 28.

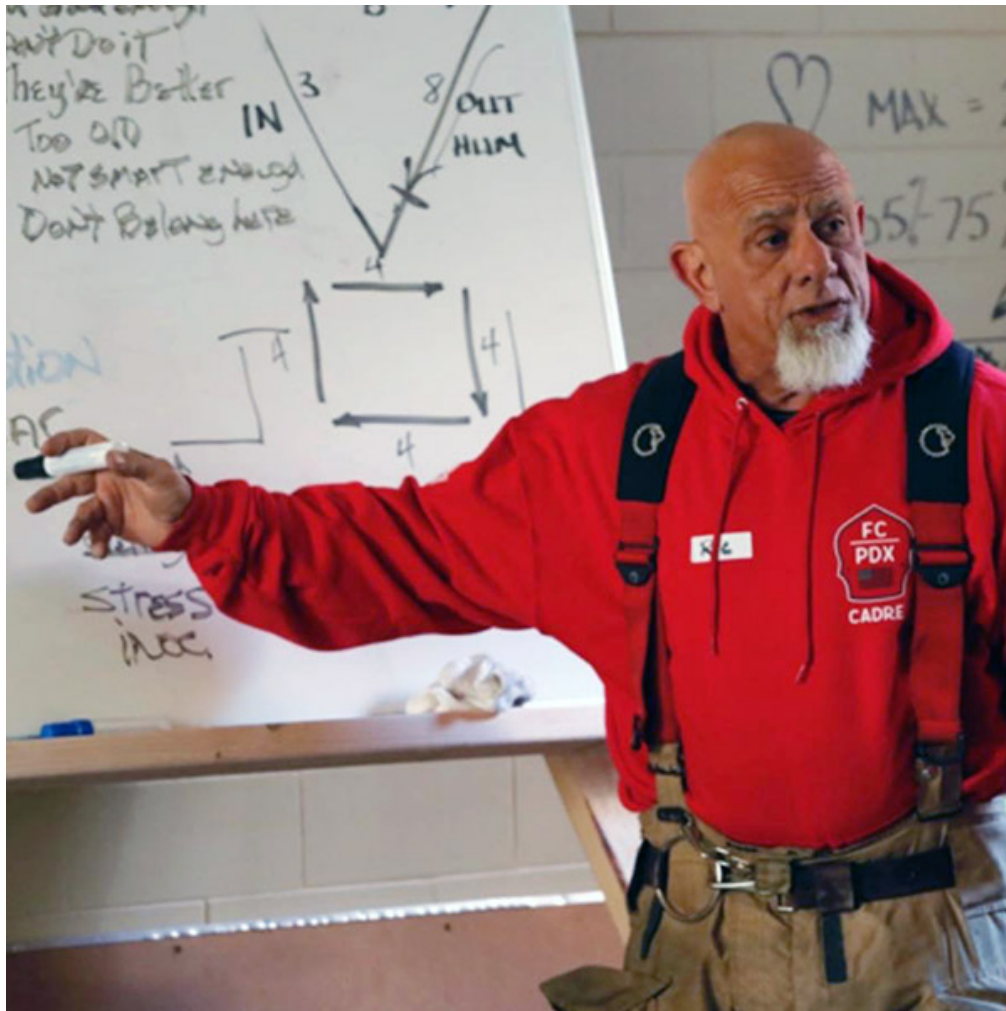
Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Delivered the most famous FDIC Keynote speech in 2009 (found on YouTube).

Author of Several articles. Wrote the FDNY's Engine Company Manual. Has appeared on many seasons of Fire Engineering Training Minutes (found on YouTube).

Heavily Involved with UL-FSRI.

Firefighter Ric Jorge



Location: Retired Palm Beach County (FL) Fire Department.

Genre: Mental Health. Stress Inoculation.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Author of the book *Developing Firefighter Resiliency*. Teaches on stress inoculation. Has appeared on many seasons of Fire Engineering Training Minutes (found on YouTube).

Battalion Chief Rob Fisher



Location: Snohomish (WA) Fire Department.
Genre: Truck Company Operations. Leadership. Building Construction.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. An instructor with County Fire Tactics. Has a popular program on quint operations. Passionate and knowledgeable in building construction.

Captain Sam Hittle



Location: Wichita (KS) Fire Department.

Genre: Truck Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Has a master's degree in mathematics. Passion in forcible entry and is extremely knowledgeable. Lead instructor for the popular FDIC H.O.T. class titled *Truck Essentials*.

Battalion Chief Scott Ketcham



Location: Winter Park (FL) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations. General Fire Service.

Attributes: Instructor. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Instructor for *VentEnterSearch, LLC*.

Passion in Engine Company Operations and Truck Company Operations. Heavily involved with Winter Park's Training division.

Fire Chief Scott Thompson



Location: The Colony (TX) Fire Department.

Genre: Leadership. General Fire Service.

Attributes: Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Known as the “Fireman's Chief” and the “Fire Chief of the American Fire Service”. Has a great reputation as being an aggressive Fire Chief. Promotes positive culture. Developed and teaches on training programs and leadership. Author of the book *The Functional Fire Company*.

Lieutenant Steve Robertson



Location: Columbus (OH) Fire Department.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Has a well-known H.O.T. and lecture class titled- *Stretching for Success*. Has appeared on many seasons of Fire Engineering Training Minutes (found on YouTube). Is a member of Elkhart Bass's "*Brass Tacks, Hard Facts*", a video series on Engine Company Operations.

Lieutenant Tim Klett



Location: Retired FDNY, 88 Engine.

Genre: Engine Company Operations.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Has a well-known H.O.T. and lecture class on fighting fires in hoarding conditions. Instructor for *Fire Department Training Network (FDTN)*.

Battalion Chief Todd Edwards



Location: Retired Atlanta (GA) Fire Department.
Genre: Engine Company Operations. General Fire Service.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Owner of *Fire Life Training*. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country on topics of leadership and Engine Company Operations. Instructor for *County Fire Tactics*.

Assistant Chief Walt Lewis



Location: Orlando (FL) Fire Department.

Genre: Leadership. General Fire Service.

Attributes: Instructor/Speaker. Teaches at several fire conferences across the country. Heavily involved with local USAR teams. Founding member of the international FOOLS. Mentor to many and a true gentleman.

This does not have to be the end. Add to or edit this Book of Mentors as you move through your career.