

The Fire Inside

June 23-25

Presented by:
**Firefighter Air Coalition
& Affordable Drill Towers**

In association with:
Dallas County Fire Chiefs



aircoalition.org



**FIREFIGHTER
AIR COALITION**

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

JUNE 23RD : DAY 1

0800 – 0830 OPENING & PLEDGE

HOSTS Mike Gagliano
Steve Sanguedolce

0830 – 1000



Tactics For Life

»»» **Brian Brush** : *Midwest City (OK) Fire Department*

1000 – 1020 BREAK & VENDOR SHOWCASE

1020 – 1200



The Art of Go/No-Go

»»» **Mike Gagliano** : *Seattle Fire Department*

1200 – 1300 LUNCH

1300 – 1440



Coordinated Ventilation

»»» **Nicholas Papa** : *New Britain (CT) Fire Department*

1440 – 1500 BREAK & VENDOR SHOWCASE

1500 – 1645



The Art of Reading Smoke

»»» **Phillip Jose** : *Seattle Fire Department*

1645 – 1700 CLOSING REMARKS

JUNE 24TH : DAY 2

0800 – 0820 OPENING & PLEDGE

HOSTS Mike Gagliano
Steve Sanguedolce

0820 – 1000



The Service Within: Accountability, Courage, Trust & the Service We Own!

»»» **Daniel DeYear** : *Dallas Fire Department*

1000 – 1020 BREAK & VENDOR SHOWCASE

1030 – 1200



Truck Company Operations: A Back-To-Basics Review

»»» **Michael Dugan** : *New York City Fire Department*

1200 – 1300 LUNCH

1300 – 1440



Lost and Found: Revival of the Engine Company

»»» **Marc Aloan** : *West Columbia (SC) Fire Department*

1440 – 1500 BREAK & VENDOR SHOWCASE

1500 – 1645



Searchable vs. Survivable

»»» **Sean Duffy** : *Ann Arbor (MI) Fire Department*

1645 – 1700 CLOSING REMARKS

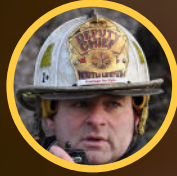
JUNE 25TH : DAY 3

0800 – 0820

OPENING & PLEDGE

HOSTS Mike Gagliano
Steve Sanguedolce

0820 – 1000



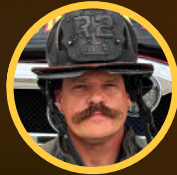
Fireground Strategies: Private Dwelling Ops

»»» **Anthony Avillo** : North Hudson (NJ) Regional Fire & Rescue

1000 – 1020

BREAK

1020 – 1200



Raising Ladder Appreciation and Knowledge

»»» **Sam Hittle** : Wichita Fire Department

1200 – 1300

LUNCH

1300 – 1440



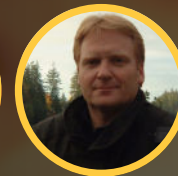
The Engine Boss: Directing Fire Attack

»»» **Anthony Rowett** : Mobile (AL) Fire Rescue Department

1440 – 1500

BREAK

1500 – 1645



Attack With Passion

»»» **Paul Combs** : Bryan (OH) Fire Department

»»» **Mike Gagliano** : Seattle Fire Department

1645 – 1700

CLOSING REMARKS

The Fire Inside



MEET THE INSTRUCTORS



Tactics For Life

SPEAKER: Brian Brush : *Midwest City (OK) Fire Department*

Once associated with recklessness, the term “aggressive” now more closely reflects proactive planning, assertive decisions, and proactive actions. The objectives of this class aim to inform the decisions of today’s fire officers using the information of today. We cannot rely solely on experience to meet the higher expectations of our profession, public trust, and public expectations of our positions as officers. A combination of experience and evidence will be provided in this class to support command competence and confidence in the explanation and execution of duties and decisions.

BIO His career spans several states, from rural volunteer fire departments to metro-sized departments. In addition to having a master’s degree in fire and emergency management, he is an executive fire officer and a Chief Training Officer. He is a member of the advisory boards for Fire Engineering and FirefighterRescueSurvey.com. He is co-author of the new textbook *Mastering Fireground Command—Calm the Chaos!* (Fire Engineering).



The Art of Go/No-Go

SPEAKER: Mike Gagliano : *Seattle Fire Department (ret.)*

The toughest and most critical decisions in your career often involve choosing between committing to an interior attack or taking an alternative approach. Seasoned officers recognize the difference between “We can get it” and “It’s lost”—and you should too. By building on your own experiences and those of others, you can develop an intuitive approach that evolves throughout your career. This training introduces three profiles—Rescue, Building, and Fire—to help you stay focused, draw from past experiences, and adapt to changing conditions. Making the Go/No-Go decision is one of the most crucial choices you will face, and this training is designed to help you make the best decisions possible.

BIO Mike Gagliano has over 33 years of fire, crash, and rescue experience with the Seattle Fire Department and the United States Air Force. He teaches nationwide on Fireground Tactics/Decision-Making, Air Management, Leadership, and Company Officer Development and currently serves as the president of the Firefighter Air Coalition (aircoalition.org). Captain Gagliano has authored numerous fire service articles and co-authored the bestselling books *Air Management for the Fire Service* and *Challenges of the Firefighter Marriage*. He is a member of the Fire Engineering/FDIC Advisory Board and the Emeritus Board of the Firefighter Safety Research Institute. Additionally, he co-hosts the popular Fire Engineering radio webcast *The Mikey G and Mikey D Show* and collaborates with his wife, Anne (Firelife.com), to teach strategies for building and maintaining a strong marriage and family. **(retired)**



Coordinated Ventilation: Supporting Extinguishment & Survivability

SPEAKER: Nicholas Papa : *New Britain (CT) Fire Department*

A fire’s outcome can be determined by its ventilation. To execute it successfully, you must understand how it works and take necessary precautions. In this class, ventilation is explained in relation to fire dynamics, firefighting operations, and, most importantly, victim survival. This framework is universal and can be applied to any environment—from the smallest rural town to the largest metropolitan city. By rapidly assessing conditions, prioritizing objectives, and intervening in the most impactful manner, ventilation can be leveraged to its full potential.

BIO Nicholas Papa is a captain with the New Britain (CT) Fire Department, where he has served for 17 years. A second-generation firefighter, he entered the fire service in 2003, volunteering for a neighboring suburb until his appointment to the Nbfd. He is a Fire Engineering best-selling author, an FDIC Educational Advisory Board member and instructor, and a past FSRI technical panelist for the Study on Coordinated Fire Attack. Nick is also the founder of the fire service training and consulting organization Fireside Training, LLC.



The Art of Reading Smoke

SPEAKER: Phillip Jose : *Seattle Fire Department*

It is essential for anyone looking to master the craft of firefighting to complete the Reading Smoke curriculum. Video, combined with dynamic teaching, helps you analyze the volume, velocity, density, and color of smoke, allowing you to answer three critical questions: Where is the fire? How big is it? What is the expected rate of change? Whether selecting a tactic at the command level or performing at the company level, learning to collect information quickly enhances decision-making, improves firefighter safety, and ensures better service to the community.

BIO Phillip Jose, Retired Deputy Chief, served 30 years with Seattle Fire. He chaired the SOG-PIA committees and was named Chief of the Year in 2013. An FDIC instructor for 20+ years, he received the Tom Brennan Award in 2008. A respected author, he contributed to *Instructor 1 for Fire and Emergency Services*, *Air Management for the Fire Service*, and *Fire Engineering Handbook FF I & II*, as well as Fire Engineering’s “Bread and Butter” video series and SCBA training.

MEET THE INSTRUCTORS



The Service Within: Accountability, Courage, Trust & the Service We Own!

SPEAKER: Daniel DeYear : Dallas Fire Department

When it comes to bread-and-butter operations and even challenging fires, are we fully prepared? Are we meeting the expectations and service demands the community has come to trust and expect from us? Are our strategies and tactics meeting the needs of the community? This fast-paced program looks at interior fire attack, saving lives, serving our communities, and how that aligns with our risks, rewards, and the expectations of those we serve. We will address training to see if we are fully prepared and how our attitudes and fire service culture impact our performance levels. This program addresses your true courage and the trust the citizens are placing in us. We all took an oath. The community needs us. Are you really ready?

BIO Daniel is originally from The Bronx in New York City and began his fire service career in the Northeast over 45 years ago. He previously worked for the Carrollton Fire Department for nearly 10 years, serving in several capacities, including Training Chief. He then served as an International Fire Marshal and Ambassador for the American Fire Service for the U.S. Department of State, Foreign Building Operations, where he traveled to more than 35 countries, providing fire and life safety to United States embassies and consulates around the world. (retired)



Truck Company Operations: A Back-To-Basics Review

SPEAKER: Michael Dugan : New York City Fire Department

Truck company operations is a "Back to Basics Review." This class covers the truck company's fundamental duties and operations on the fireground. Whether your department has a dedicated truck company or assigns truck company responsibilities at every fire, this class will help firefighters understand the essential duties and responsibilities of truck operations. Topics will include ventilation, entry, isolation, and search.

BIO Mike is a 45-year veteran of the fire service and a 27-year veteran of the New York City Fire Department (FDNY), retiring as Captain of Ladder 123. As a firefighter in Ladder Company 43, Dugan received the James Gordon Bennett Medal in 1992 and the Harry M. Archer Medal in 1993, the FDNY's highest award for bravery. He developed training programs that were taught to all FDNY members. Mike is a contributing editor at Fire Engineering Magazine, a teacher at the Fire Department Instructor Conference (FDIC), and a Fire Engineering and FDIC Executive Board member. He is a featured lecturer across the country, teaching Truck Company Operations, the impact of building construction on firefighter safety, leadership, and issues affecting today's fire service. He was awarded the "Tom Brennan Lifetime Achievement Award" in 2021. (retired)



Lost and Found: Revival of the Engine Company

SPEAKER: Marc Aloan : West Columbia (SC) Fire Department

An engine is a fire department's workhorse, but it's also one of the most overlooked and overestimated skill sets in the arsenal. There is so much emphasis now on leadership, administration, and special operations that a tried-and-true engine company is becoming obsolete. Lost and Found was created to re-establish the role of the engine company in our departments. Engine nerds and chief officers alike will enjoy Lost and Found's focus on ensuring the art of creating an effective engine company does not fade away in today's extremely hazardous world!

BIO Marc Aloan is a Battalion Chief with the West Columbia (SC) Fire Department and the creator of The Fire Inside blog. He is an active speaker, author, and instructor with 20 years of combined volunteer and career service. He also holds a B.S. in Fire Protection Administration and an M.A. in Organizational Leadership.



Searchable Vs. Survivable

SPEAKER: Sean Duffy : Ann Arbor (MI) Fire Department

In this lecture, we will explore ways to improve search methods and efficiency. We will cover (1) sizing up your search, searchable spaces, isolation and communication, search mechanics and methodology, and how bias and terminology affect our actions. This class focuses on how we search, why we search, and the best ways to enhance our search—improving our chances not only of locating a victim but also removing them in the most efficient manner. We will examine data from UL, USFA, and the Firefighter Rescue Survey.

BIO Sean Duffy is a firefighter with the City of Ann Arbor Fire Department. Over his 20-year career, he has worked in several response districts, including rural, suburban, and urban areas. Sean grew up around emergency services and knew from a young age that firefighting was what he wanted to do. Inspired by his father, who was an EMT for the City of Trenton, he began his journey into the fire service at 18 years old, joining his local volunteer fire department. Recognizing the importance of passing on knowledge to future generations, Sean became involved in training and now leads one of the most recognized and sought-after search programs in the country. He is a co-founder of Build Your Culture, a published author, a national speaker, and has instructed across the country and internationally. Sean's published work can be found in Fire Engineering and Firehouse magazines, as well as The Book of Search by Firehouse Vigilance. He also co-authored the position paper Removing Two In/Two Out: A Modern Data-Supported Defense of Our Core Mission. Recently, Sean was accepted to serve as a technical panel member for the Fire Service Research Institute's Multi-Story Residential Tactics Research Project. He strongly believes in providing quality fire training while maintaining a commitment to continuous growth, both professionally and personally.

MEET THE INSTRUCTORS



Fireground Strategies: Private Dwelling Ops

SPEAKER: Anthony Avillo : North Hudson (NJ) Regional Fire & Rescue

Private Dwellings: America's deadliest fire concern. Manage it. Conquer it. Survive it. Sharpen your knowledge, skills, and command portfolio with a cutting-edge approach to our most common structural fire incident. This course addresses private dwellings from both fire spread and structural concern viewpoints. Strategic considerations and interior fire control factors are discussed, with the point-of-entry rule of thumb explained in detail to assist fire and command officers in making proper fireground decisions. Engine and ladder company tactics are covered, along with tactical considerations specific to these occupancies. A must for every firefighter.

BIO Anthony Avillo, with 40 years in the fire service, retired as Deputy Chief of North Hudson (NJ) Regional Fire & Rescue after 30 years of service. As an urban fireground commander, Avillo led fire and emergency operations in some of the most congested cities in the United States. He is the author of *Fireground Strategies*, 4th ed. (2025) and coauthor of *Full Contact Leadership* (2017). Avillo is the Region 3 Director of the ISFSI and the retired Director of the Monmouth County (NJ) Fire Academy. He is a member of the Fire Engineering / FDIC Editorial Advisory Board and was the recipient of the 2012 ISFSI George D. Post Instructor of the Year Award. He holds a B.S. in Fire Science and an M.S. in National Security Studies. Avillo is a Level II NJ Certified Fire Instructor and speaks throughout the United States and Canada on topics including command and control, leadership, building construction, fireground strategies and tactics, and operations.



Raising Ladder Appreciation and Knowledge

SPEAKER: Sam Hittle : Wichita Fire Department

While ladders may not be seen as the most exciting or innovative tools, their benefits are undeniable. They are fundamental to the success of various fireground operations, including rescue (both for firefighters and civilians), ventilation, bridging gaps, and fire suppression. Understanding and maintaining proficiency in ladder operations is crucial for all firefighters, ensuring these essential tools continue to serve their vital purpose in protecting lives and property. This class will cover ladder storage and selection, positioning, deployment physics, working approaches, managing other firefighting equipment during ladder operations, the pros and cons of varying ideologies, and additional fireground techniques.

BIO Samuel Hittle is a Captain with the Wichita Fire Department, assigned to Rescue 2. He is an FDIC, Traditions Training, and Wichita HoT instructor, an FDIC lecturer, a contributing author for *Fire Engineering*, *Urban Firefighter*, and *Fire Rescue*, and a former contributor to *Fire Nuggets* and *FiRescue* interactive publications. He is also a Fire Engineering Google Hangout panel member, a two-time *Firehouse Magazine* Heroism Award recipient (2012 and 2015), a Kansas State Fire Marshal Tom McGaughey Award recipient, and Wichita Fire Department Firefighter of the Year. Additionally, he serves as the Wichita Fire Truck Company Coordinator, was a member of the Interior Attack Technical Panel for UL, and is a member of the Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) Executive Advisory Board.



The Engine Boss: Directing Fire Attack

SPEAKER: Anthony Rowett : Mobile (AL) Fire Rescue Department

Engine company success isn't optional—it's essential. This class explores the engine boss's role in making tactical decisions for effective hoseline operations. From single-family homes to multi-story buildings, you'll master the art of the stretch, ensuring your crew never falls short. Learn to size up the fire building, choose the right hoseline, estimate the stretch, and lead with confidence. Understand the roles of attack and backup lines while developing the discipline to lead effectively. Whether on the first line or backup, this class provides the skills, confidence, and tactics to ensure your engine company dominates the fireground.

BIO Anthony Rowett Jr. is a Captain with the Mobile (AL) Fire Rescue Department with 19 years in the fire service. He began as a firefighter with the Ogdensburg (NJ) Volunteer Fire Department before joining Mobile Fire Rescue, where he has served for 16 years. He holds multiple degrees in fire science and emergency services management and is a graduate of the Alabama Smoke Diver course. Rowett is the owner of Port City Fire Training, President of the Alabama Firefighters Training Foundation, and a contributing author for *Fire Engineering*, *Fire Rescue*, *Firehouse*, *Fire Department Training Network*, and *Firemanship Journal*. He has instructed at major fire service conferences, including FDIC, Firehouse Expo, Firehouse World, Water on the Fire, and the High-Rise Operations Conference, as well as for individual fire departments. An FDIC H.O.T. instructor, he also serves on the NFPA 14 Committee and co-hosts the Generation Engine podcast on Fire Engineering Blog Talk Radio.



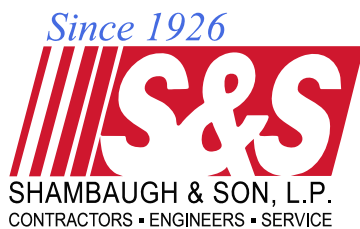
Attack With Passion

SPEAKER: Paul Combs : Bryan (OH) Fire Department

Like any fire truck, every firefighter possesses a unique set of tools that can be used to achieve a goal or make a positive difference. *Passion, Tools, and Cartoons* explores the ability to lead others using unique communication skills. In this interactive environment, students will be encouraged to seek out their own voice to influence and lead those around them. When vision is applied to voice and fueled by passion, anything is possible! Gagliano and Combs will present a visually engaging, open-mic class on what makes a quality leader and the unique ways a leader can communicate their vision while ultimately discovering their passion. During the class, Paul will create a custom cartoon specifically designed for the session, revealing his unique qualities and passion. We all have unique qualities—this class is about finding yours.

BIO Paul Combs joined the fire service in 1995 and has been a fire service instructor since 2000. He is a retired Lieutenant for the City of Bryan Fire Department in Ohio and an FDIC presenter, keynoter, and Hands-On Training instructor. He was the recipient of the 2018 George D. Post ISFSI Instructor of the Year Award. Paul is currently an instructor with On-Scene Training Associates and the City of Bryan Regional Training Academy and lectures internationally on leadership and success planning. He is the editorial cartoonist for *Fire Engineering Magazine*, the author of four books, and the illustrator of the best-selling *Sprinkles the Fire Dog* series. Additionally, he is a USO volunteer entertainer, traveling the globe to bring comfort to active, wounded, and retired U.S. warriors through his art in association with the National Cartoonists Society. (retired)

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