



ATLANTIC CITY NEW JERSEY - 2017 EDUCATIONAL B.C.O.C. SYMPOSIUM &amp; CONFERENCE

## 2017 Educational Symposium & Conference

The 2017 B.C.O.C. Educational Symposium and Conference will be held in Atlantic City, New Jersey from June 4 – June 11, 2017. The host hotel will be the Bally Park Place Hotel at 1900 Pacific Ave., Atlantic City, NJ 08401 phone: (609) 340-2000 Visit our website for more details [WWW.BCOC.US](http://WWW.BCOC.US)



### Why Attend the B.C.O.C. Educational Symposium?

For the last few years our annual symposium has made leaps and bounds in terms of format, organization, and content. In addition to presenters from around the country, the symposium has partnered with Valdosta State University for the last two years which has allowed those who attend the symposium to earn CEU's from an accredited institution. The symposium has also been able to offer official courses from the National Fire Academy. The B.C.O.C.

# BCOC News And Views



Educational Symposium is administered in a professional, participative, and relaxed atmosphere that is centered on the most current issues in the fire service today. Those who attend will meet peers from all over the country and have the opportunity to share and learn from one another.



### Formal Education Needs in the Fire Service

The fire and emergency service is a dynamic profession, and it's up to each member to continue to improve. The fire service has done a good job of providing training to its members; however, until recently, the fire service as a whole has not put a lot of emphasis on formal education. The fire chief and executive-level chief officers usually promote up through the ranks, learning the skills of firefighting and receiving the training that goes along with that. Once someone reaches the executive level of the fire department, the skills of being a firefighter aren't needed as much, yet the skills of a business executive are. Today's executive-level chief officers are focused less on firefighting skills and more on skills of finance, budgets and political and administrative issues. The necessary administration knowledge of a professional fire chief is gained through formal education. It imparts knowledge on how to become a critical thinker administratively, and it increases the knowledge base from a nontraditional area of the fire service. Formal education also teaches students to look at problems from different angles as well as how to use data and to address problems using logic to resolve them. Formal education also provides the needed education to prepare future leaders to accept the challenges the fire service will face in the future. A great example occurred a few weeks ago. A neighboring chief officer attended a department-head meeting representing the fire chief. This meeting included the city manager and all of the other department heads for that city. This is a weekly meeting to discuss and share issues happening within their city. All of the other department heads have earned master's degrees or doctorates, and in most cases a master's degree is



the minimum qualifications for the position. The chief officer later shared that he felt that some of the discussions regarding the budget and human-resource issues were a bit above his head. In past years, the fire chief didn't need an advanced degree and wasn't on the same formal education level as the other department heads. That's changing as more and more fire chiefs have advanced formal education. Fire chiefs have always been respected, but having an advanced degree adds a level of professionalism and respect in a department-head meeting and throughout a community as well. Currently, many programs available are to members of the fire service in education development and formal education. A few programs are the [National Fire Academy-Executive Fire Officer Program](#), [Naval Post Graduate School](#) and the [IAFC's Fire Service Executive Development Institute](#). There are also many traditional and online bachelors, masters and doctoral programs available. The fire service has always been respected for what firefighters do for their communities. However, one

way to improve our desire for professionalism is to increase our formal education to stay on par with other professional organizations. Fire chiefs are essentially running corporations and they need the education to be successful in today's business world.

By Greg Barton

*This article first appeared in the September 2016 edition of the International Association of Fire Chief's [On Scene](#) publication.*



## Taking Action Against Cancer in the Fire Service

Multiple studies have demonstrated statistically higher rates of various types of cancers in firefighters compared to the general American population. In an effort to help address the alarming rate of cancer in the fire service, the Firefighter Cancer

Support Network has published an industry white paper that provides useful information regarding the risks firefighters face during the course of their duties, and also offers practical tips for minimizing their exposure to cancer-causing substances.

In April 2013, the Firefighter Cancer Support Network invited a group of experts to Indianapolis to participate in a working session to develop the white paper Taking Action Against Cancer in the Fire Service. The participants came from a diverse group of legal, medical and social research communities as well as key members of the fire service. In particular, two of the firefighters who participated are cancer survivors, which gave valuable insight and validation to the development of this extremely relevant document. Interestingly, it turned out that every workshop participant knew firefighters who either currently have cancer or have died as a result of occupational cancer.

“Cancer is a looming potential health issue for each and every firefighter, and it is the most dangerous and unrecognized threat to the health and safety of our nation’s firefighters,” said FCSN President Dan Crow. “FCSN is honored to be able to partner with industry experts to provide this important information to the nation’s fire service.”

The white paper explains the approach to identifying risks

associated with cancer in the fire service, some effective ways of dealing with employees diagnosed with cancer, and, most important, standard methods of reducing the risk of cancer during the course of duty. These prevention tips include wearing the SCBA during all phases of the overhaul process, decontaminating PPE at the fire scene before returning it to service, undergoing wellness exams annually, and wearing sunscreen when in training or when prolonged outdoor sun exposure is anticipated, to name just a few. To view the full report, go to [www.FCSN.net](http://www.FCSN.net).

“This white paper will get the attention of every firefighter, career or volunteer, and it will help focus the efforts of national fire service organizations on firefighter cancer,” said Claire Miller, vice president of marketing, Honeywell First Responder Products. “Most important, this report includes some practical, easy-to-implement tips that each firefighter can take to reduce their risk.”

Mark A Carr was born in Gravesend,



Kent, United Kingdom. He began his formal education at the University of West London (Thames Valley) in Ealing, London where he completed his bachelor's degree in Management

and Master's degree in Business Administration. He became a graduate and member of the Institution of Fire Engineers. He was one of the few Fire Chiefs in the United States to obtain competence based qualifications from the International Fire Service College in the United Kingdom. He became a member of the National Fire Protection Association, and the International Association of Fire Chiefs Human Relations Committee. He was also 1 of 635 Fire Chiefs worldwide achieving the Chief Fire Officer Designation status from the Center of Public Safety Excellence. He was recognized for his work by the UK Government and international fire departments as far away as Hong Kong, China. He was a graduate of the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy. He was the first Fire Chief selected from Connecticut as one of the top eight Fire Chiefs within the United States and Canada to complete a Fellowship at Harvard University. He was a recent graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security where he obtained a Master of Arts degree in Security studies. Mark was voted on two occasions as one of the Top 100 most influential blacks in Connecticut by the NAACP. He received the Lola Choice Community Leadership Award in 2005 and received a General Assembly Official Citation from the State of Connecticut. He was a member of the Congressional Fire Chief Officers Committee, American Red Cross, International Association of Black Professional Fire Fighters, and the National Fire Protection Association.

