

William G. Farhat, MScTRM, CFO, MiFireE

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Education and Professional Training

University of Chicago | Chicago, Illinois

Master of Science in Threat and Response Management

Siena Heights University | Adrian, Michigan

Bachelor of Applied Science in Public Safety

Orange County Government | Orlando, Florida

Mayor's Executive Leadership Program

University of Notre Dame | Notre Dame, Indiana

Business Operations Leadership Institute

Arapahoe Community College | Denver, Colorado

Law Enforcement Certification

Davenport University | Grand Rapids, Michigan

Paramedic Certification

Professional Experience

6/2022 to Present

Acting Division Chief 9/2025 – Present,
Fire Marshal 7/2024 – 9/2025,
Acting Fire Marshal 2/2023 to 7/2024,
Assistant Fire Marshal 6/2022 to 2/2023

Planning and Technical Services Division, Orange County Fire Rescue Department | Winter Park, Florida

Oversees the Office of the Fire Marshal, Planning and Technical Services Office, and Community Risk Reduction Services. As Fire Marshal, administered the second largest fire prevention program in Florida, managing community fire prevention, existing occupancy inspection, construction plan review and inspection, and life safety education programs. Served as the Authority Having Jurisdiction enforcing the Florida Fire Prevention Code as well as applicable Florida Statutes, Florida Administrative Codes, and county ordinances. Also managed one of the largest special event permitting and management programs in the nation.

- Oversaw all aspects of the implementation of a fee-for-service based existing occupancy inspection program and related 71% expansion of staffing, which was the largest in the Office's history
- Oversaw the construction design review and site inspection program for the Universal Epic Universe theme park
- Created first code enforcement matrix for violation, citation and special magistrate case management
- Performed comprehensive update to inspection program documentation and increased training
- Developed risk assessment approach for special event inspection and staffing, including trade show venues and the Orange County Convention Center, the second largest of its type in the U.S.

2/2020 to 6/2022

Fire Marshal

Office of the Fire Marshal, Orange County Public Schools | Orlando, Florida

Served as the District's Authority Having Jurisdiction and administrator for the Office of the Fire Marshal, directing district-wide fire safety administration, fire code enforcement, compliance, prevention, design review and inspection programs for the 9th largest school district with the largest K-12 facility construction and remodeling program in the nation. Responsible for managing operations, educational programming, budgets, personnel, training, resources, project management and coordination with fire service partners throughout the county.

- Conducted districtwide study of the fire protection systems leading to task force to improve system functionality, improve staff education and create a system-wide ability to monitor system status
- Performed first comprehensive districtwide of compliance and operating procedures in over a decade
- Served as incident commander during the COVID-19 pandemic and was chair of the district's Health and Safety Subgroup, tasked with developing operations protocols

9/2011 to 1/2020

Fire Chief and District Chief Executive Officer

Big Sky Fire Department | Big Sky, Montana

Fire Chief and District CEO for a fire district serving a four-season mountain resort community with complex public safety delivery needs due to remote locale. Reported to an elected Board of Trustees and managed all district administrative functions and concurrently served as the District's Authority Having Jurisdiction as Fire Marshal for 8 years. Oversaw emergency operations, fire code enforcement and design review, budget and finance, emergency management, human resources and collective bargaining, ALS ambulance services, and intergovernmental relationships with two counties, Yellowstone National Park, two national forests and the local sales tax authority board, which was a major source of district funding.

- Led the first master and strategic planning processes in department's 45-year history and completed a master plan update process in 2019
- Created first emergency management structure for community due to the complexity of being within two different counties, two different national forests and a national park
- Led two successful mill levy increase campaigns and developed other revenue streams, improving income by 181% while expanding the department's workforce by 240% and growing fund reserves by over 320%
- Managed planning, design, and implementation of numerous remodeling projects, including 2 fire stations

- Directed capital acquisition and replacement projects, including RFP creation, proposal selection, product design and project financing
- Created a comprehensive code enforcement and life safety inspection program, utilizing a cloud-based reporting system for violations and mitigation tracking, improving enforcement and compliance

10/2006 to 9/2011

Fire Chief and Assistant Director of Risk Management and Safety

University of Notre Dame | South Bend, Indiana

Fire Chief and concurrently Assistant Director of Risk Management and Safety (2008-2010) for a major international university's career fire department, serving three colleges. Responsibilities serving concurrently as the Authority Having Jurisdiction as Fire Marshal. Duties included emergency response, incident command duties, emergency management, fire code enforcement and design review and being administrator and project manager for all fire protection systems in over 150 buildings.

- Served incident commander and incident action planner for numerous special events up to 110,000 people
- Led policy and procedure update for emergency management of large events, including incident response protocols, communication plans, evacuation plans, housing plans, and integration of subject matter experts into emergency operations center
- Managed all fire detection and fire protection installation and upgrade projects
- Created campus-wide fire code, OSHA, and ADA compliance enforcement program, leading to successful hazard and risk management identification, documentation and mitigation
- Led process to bring all campuswide fire alarm control panels under one interactive control system that also allowed for a first-in-the-nation mobile command and control of systems during emergency incidents
- Served as technical expert for safety design analysis for university equipment, systems, processes, and facilities

9/1997 to 10/2009

Battalion Chief and Police Officer/Paramedic

Chikaming Township Fire & Police Departments | Harbert, Michigan

Career Public Safety Officer (Police Officer/Paramedic) and Battalion Chief for township's paid on-call fire department

- Assisted in transition from 3 station department to a unified organization
- Supervised design process of new fire station
- Created and implemented new incident management system for department

4/2001 to 7/2007

Deputy Sheriff and Fire Investigator

Berrien County Sheriff's Department | St. Joseph, Michigan

Deputy Sheriff in the Enforcement Division, also served as the county's Fire Investigator, as Hazardous Materials Technician and Paramedic for the department's Hazardous Materials Response Team, and as member of the Michigan Fifth District Regional Response Team for Weapons of Mass Destruction.

- Experienced criminal, traffic, and death investigator and was the department's first fire/arson investigator
- Served in the county emergency operations center during activations, representing (either or both, depending on incident size) ESF 4 Firefighting and ESF 13 Public Safety and Security
- Developed the department's Field Training Manual and was a founding member of the Field Training Program
- Established Advanced Life Support treatment protocols for WMD & hazardous materials incidents
- Tasked as operational advisor during civil unrest event in Benton Harbor, Michigan in 2003

6/1996 to 8/1997

Police Officer

Avon Police Department | Avon, Colorado

Police officer for the town's police department

8/1995 to 8/1997

Firefighter and Police Officer

Minturn Fire & Police Departments | Minturn, Colorado

Firefighter for the town's volunteer fire department as well as a police officer (1995-1996)

6/1994 to 1/1995

Paramedic

City and County of Denver Paramedic Division | Denver, Colorado

Ambulance paramedic for the city's 911 emergency medical service

6/1993 to 6/1994

Paramedic

Medic 1 Community Emergency Services | Benton Harbor, Michigan

Ambulance paramedic for the community's 911 emergency medical service (and part-time 1997-2002)

2/1992 to 6/1993

Paramedic

Southwestern Michigan Community Ambulance Service | Niles, Michigan

Ambulance paramedic for the community's 911 emergency medical service

10/1989 to 6/1994

Firefighter

Bertrand Township Fire Department | Buchanan, Michigan

Firefighter for community paid on-call fire department

Certifications and Technical Training

- Chief Fire Officer Designation (CPSE)
- Fire Officer IV (IN)
- Fire Officer III (FL)
- Fire Officer Strategies and Tactics (IN)
- Firefighter II (MI, IN, & IFSAC)
- Firefighter I (FL)
- Florida Licensed Paramedic
- Fire Code Administrator Certification (FL)
- Firesafety Inspector III (FL)
- Fire Inspector II (IN & NBFSPQ)
- Plans Examiner I (NBFSPQ)
- Fire Investigator II (MI, IN, & NBFSPQ)
- Fire Instructor II/III (IN)
- Instructor I (FL)
- Police Officer (CO, MI, IN, & Pokagon Band of Potawatomi)
- NFPA Certified Fire Protection Specialist
- Hazardous Materials Technician – Advanced (MI & IN)
- Radiation/Nuclear Responder Operations
- Field Training Officer
- OSHA Inspector Certification
- NFPA 600 Fire Brigade Structural Firefighting
- NIMS IS 100-400, 700, & 800
- NIMS IS 703 Resource Management
- NIMS IS 775 EOC Management/Operations
- NWCG L-381 Incident Leadership
- NWCG L-180 Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service
- NWCG S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior
- NWCG S-130 Wildland Firefighter
- Unified Incident Command Systems
- Senior Official Workshop for All-Hazards Preparedness
- Blue Card Hazard Zone Incident Command
- National Fire Academy Advanced Life Support for Hazardous Materials Incidents
- Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist (MI, IN, & NBFSPQ)
- Vehicle Extrication
- Rope Rescue Operations
- PADI Open Water Diver
- Nonverbal Deception Indicators, Interview and Interrogation
- WMD Crime Scene Management
- Certified Emergency Medical Dispatcher

Professional Memberships and Affiliations

- Member, Institution of Fire Engineers (MIFireE)
- Member, Florida Fire Chiefs Association
- Member, International Association of Fire Chiefs
- Member, Florida Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association
- Past Director, Montana State Fire Chiefs Association
- Past President, Gallatin County Fire Council
- Past President, Michiana Fire Chiefs Association
- Past President, River Valley School District Board of Education
- Past Chair, Gallatin County 911 Advisory Board
- Past Member, Montana Department of Health & Human Services, EMS and Trauma Systems Emergency Care Council
- Past Member, Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Division 201 Technical Rescue Team Executive Committee
- Past Member, St. Joseph County Local Emergency Planning Committee
- Past Member, Berrien County Medical Control Quality Assurance Committee
- Guest lecturer, University of Chicago

Awards and Recognition

- Administrative Excellence Award; Orange County Fire Rescue Department
- Certificate of Recognition; Berrien County, Michigan Sheriff's Department
- Lifesaving Award; Berrien County, Michigan Sheriff's Department
- Certificate of Appreciation; Chikaming Township Police Department
- Certificate of Appreciation; Berrien County, Michigan Sheriff's Department
- Certificate of Appreciation; Indiana Emergency Response Conference
- Certificate of Special Appreciation; Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- Letters of Appreciation; University of Notre Dame
- Certificate of Appreciation; Arapahoe Community College