

# WELCOME TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY SUMMIT 2025

## Keynote

8:00-9:30 AM

Plugging into Gen Z: Recruiting, Educating and Leading the Next Generation of First Responders

## Breakout Sessions:

### SESSIONS 1 OPTIONS

9:45 - 10:45 AM

1. Plugging into People: Cultivating Connection through Vulnerability, Trust and Feedback
2. Child Death Review to Inform Prevention Efforts
3. Overview of Drug Use and Effects in the Surrounding Counties

### SESSIONS 2 OPTIONS

11:00 - 12:00 PM

1. Overview of Drug Use and Effects in the Surrounding Counties (repeat class)
2. Can I Legally Do That?
3. What's your Welcome? Recruiting and attracting the Next Generation of First Responders

### SESSIONS 3 OPTIONS

1:00 – 2:00 PM

1. Affirming Diversity – Recruiting a Reflective Workforce without Compromising Talent
2. Resilience for Professionals Exposed to Vicarious Trauma
3. Recognizing Autism Spectrum Disorders in Healthcare-A snapshot of information to assist healthcare professionals with communication and de-escalation techniques when working with individuals who may be on the autism spectrum (part 1)

### SESSIONS 4 OPTIONS

2:15 – 3:15 PM

1. Recognizing Autism Spectrum Disorders in Healthcare-A snapshot of information to assist healthcare professionals with communication and de-escalation techniques when working with individuals who may be on the autism spectrum (part 1 continuation)
2. Can I Legally Do That?
3. Staffing the Fire Science – Understanding the Nuances of a Part-Time/Volunteer Workforce – but what is Plan B?

## **CLASS DESCRIPTIONS & BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Session Title:**

Plugging into Gen Z: Recruiting, Educating and Leading the Next Generation of First Responders

**Abstract:** The creation of an inclusive environment is one of the most important factors for recruitment and retention. This presentation will help fire service instructors, trainers and leaders to adjust learning activities and recruitment strategies to attract and retain our next generation of Fire/EMS responders. Learn from instructors, students and program administrators who have successfully implemented a Dual Enrollment Academy providing Fire and EMS education to high school students across Southeast Wisconsin. The Waukesha County Technical College Fire/EMS DEA program is in its 7th year and has included over 160 high school students. If you are an instructor, preceptor, officer or leader in your service, this presentation is sure to leave you with tangible strategies that can be implemented to attract and retain your next generation responders.

### **Presented By:**

*Courtney Hull* serves as the Associate Dean of Fire/EMS Training at WCTC. With prior experience as a career Firefighter/AEMT along with a master's in training/development, Courtney is passionate about providing high quality education in inclusive environments. Courtney's strengths include strategies to build relationships with students and adapting lessons to increase engagement and student success.

*Jeremy Blair* has led high school students to achieve state certifications and gain employment since 2006 as a Fire/EMS Instructor at WCTC. With 28 years of experience in Fire/EMS, currently a Career Battalion Chief for the City of Wauwatosa Fire Department, Jeremy imparts his passion for leadership, continuous improvement and community service among students of all ages.

---

### **Session Title:**

Recognizing Autism Spectrum Disorders in Healthcare-A snapshot of information to assist healthcare professionals with communication and de-escalation techniques when working with individuals who may be on the autism spectrum.

### **Abstract:**

With a 317% surge since 2000, the diagnosis rate for autism spectrum disorders has reached 1 in 36 individuals. Typically, 1 in 3 people will interact daily with someone on the autism spectrum. Understanding effective communication and incorporating this knowledge into meaningful interactions can be beneficial when supporting individuals with ASD. This presentation is designed to shed light on various invisible disabilities that lead to challenges in communication and social interactions, aiding health, and public safety professionals in identifying and assisting those in need. If you work with the public and are keen on enhancing communication and de-escalation skills, feel free to enroll for valuable insights, strategies, and dispelling misconceptions about autism.

**Presented By:**

*Kristy Crocker* is the simulation educator/simlab coordinator for health and public safety programs at BTC. In her role, she designs and implements various scenarios, while also educating faculty and staff on simulation-based education theory. With a master's degree in public health education, she holds dual certifications as a CHSE & CHSOS and is a registered respiratory therapist. Interestingly, she crafts body parts and organs in her garage for specific scenarios while entertaining her kids. Apart from her professional duties, Kristy is a dedicated mother to her four boys. Given that three of her sons have autism, she has developed scenarios for autism awareness and offers presentations and tools to healthcare professionals to enhance their understanding of autism spectrum disorders for better patient care and improved interactions with individuals and their families.

---

**Session Title:**

Can I Legally Do That?

**Abstract:**

This presentation addresses critical legal questions that healthcare professionals, particularly those in emergency services, often face. We will explore scenarios such as:

- **Am I Assaulting My Patient?**
- **Am I Kidnapping My Patient?**
- **Can I Answer the Cop's Questions About My Patient?**
- **How Fast Can I Drive?**
- **Will I End Up in Court Having to Testify?**
- **Can I Respond Off Duty?**
- **Can I Restrain a Patient?**

Through this session, we'll provide clear, legally sound answers to these pressing concerns. You'll learn where to find your state's protocols and Wisconsin laws, which may differ from what you learned in training. Bring your questions and ensure you're operating within legal boundaries while providing the best care for your patients.

**Presented By:**

*Rich LeFeber* is Retired Beloit Lieutenant with 28 years in Law Enforcement. He brings many years of experience to the session as an Educator since 2001 and has multiple specialty areas. He has served as a Law Enforcement Academy Instructor, Evidence Technician, Courtroom Testimony Instructor, and De-Escalation Instructor.

---

**Session Title:**

Overview of Drug Use and Effects in the Surrounding Counties

**Abstract:**

This session will provide an overview of the current drug trends in Green County and the surrounding counties. Attendees will learn the effects different drugs have on the body, discuss drug overdose investigation, and talk about how to handle drug cases where children are involved.

**Presented by:**

*Detective Curtis Erdmann, SGT. Zack Degner, and K9 Ali*

Since July 2014, Curtis Erdmann has been employed by the Green County Sheriff's Department and is currently assigned to the Detective Bureau. Before his promotion to Detective, he was part of the Narcotics Taskforce (SLANT) from July 2017 until March 2021. Curtis graduated from Mid-State Technical College in Wisconsin Rapids in 2014 with an associate's degree in criminal justice.

Since September 2017, Zack Degner has been employed by the Green County Sheriff's Office. During his time at GRSO, he has been promoted to Patrol Sergeant, serves as the Department's current K9 Handler, and is a member of the multi-jurisdictional Tactical Response Team in which his department participates. Zack graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater in 2014 with a degree in Sociology, emphasizing Criminal Justice.

---

**Session Title:**

Child Death Review to Inform Prevention Efforts

**Abstract:**

This session will cover how to use Child Death Review (CDR) to inform injury and fatality prevention efforts in the community. Attendees will learn the process of CDR, learn about prevention efforts and activities coming out of CDR meetings, understand how you can enhance your community's infant safe sleep efforts in your role, and learn language to use when having conversations with families about infant safe sleep.

**Presented by:**

*Joanna O'Donnell* is a part of Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin. As a project manager for the Injury Prevention and Death Review initiative, her focus is working with local child death review teams to review infant and child death for the purpose of identifying risk factors and preventing future child deaths.

Joanna worked closely with grieving families at a Milwaukee area cemetery prior to working for the Alliance. She received her bachelor's degree in English from UW-Milwaukee and is a certified grief counselor. She is currently pursuing her master's in counseling from Concordia University.

---

**Session Title:**

Resilience for Professionals Exposed to Vicarious Trauma

**Abstract:**

This session will help attendees define vicarious trauma, understand how their role subjects them to vicarious trauma, learn the signs and symptoms of exposure, and learn how to transform vicarious trauma into post-traumatic growth.

**Presented by:**

*Joanna O'Donnell* is a part of Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin. As a project manager for the Injury Prevention and Death Review initiative, her focus is working with local child death review teams to review infant and child death for the purpose of identifying risk factors and preventing future child deaths.

Joanna worked closely with grieving families at a Milwaukee area cemetery prior to working for the Alliance. She received her bachelor's degree in English from UW-Milwaukee and is a certified grief counselor. She is currently pursuing her master's in counseling from Concordia University.

---

**Session Title:**

Plugging into People: Cultivating Connection through Vulnerability, Trust and Feedback

**Abstract:**

If you strive to be a part of a high-performing organization, you must learn how to build connection with others. The basis of high-performing teams comes down to an environment of psychological safety. Vulnerability-based trust helps to speed the process of trusting others and creating an environment safe to provide constructive feedback for growth.

Learning objectives:

- 1) Identify the characteristics of high performing teams.
- 2) Discuss the importance of psychological safety within an organization to promote growth.
- 3) Recognize how feedback plays a role between growth-mindset and fixed-mindset.
- 4) Compare the difference between vulnerability-based trust and predictive-based trust.
- 5) Recognize how creating a culture of trust and growth will contribute to retention of high performers.

**Presented by:**

*Courtney Hull* serves as the Associate Dean of Fire/EMS Training at WCTC. With prior experience as a career Firefighter/AEMT along with a master's in training/development, Courtney is passionate about providing high quality education in inclusive environments. Courtney's strengths include strategies to build relationships with students and adapting lessons to increase engagement and student success.

*Jeremy Blair* has led high school students to achieve state certifications and gain employment since 2006 as a Fire/EMS Instructor at WCTC. With 28 years of experience in Fire/EMS, currently a Career Battalion Chief for the City of Wauwatosa Fire Department, Jeremy imparts his passion for leadership, continuous improvement and community service among students of all ages.

---

**Session Title:**

What's your Welcome? Recruiting and attracting the Next Generation of First Responders

**Abstract:**

The creation of an inclusive environment is one of the most important factors for recruitment and retention. This presentation will cause fire and EMS services to pause and reflect on their recruitment activities to attract the next generation of first responders and how to stand out as an employer of choice. Tangible strategies and activities will be shared that can be immediately applied to attract and retain your next generation responders. Hear directly from those currently seeking job opportunities on what they are looking for in their career search.

Learning objectives:

- 1) Compare motivation factors of Gen Z to previous generations.
- 2) Discuss recruitment and retention activities that appeal to the next generation and help eliminate anxieties of the unknown.
- 3) Identify effective methods for communication and engagement of new recruits.
- 4) Collaborate with others to develop strategies for creating an inclusive environment.

**Presented by:**

*Courtney Hull* serves as the Associate Dean of Fire/EMS Training at WCTC. With prior experience as a career Firefighter/AEMT along with a master's in training/development, Courtney is passionate about providing high quality education in inclusive environments. Courtney's strengths include strategies to build relationships with students and adapting lessons to increase engagement and student engagement and student success.

*Jeremy Blair* has led high school students to achieve state certifications and gain employment since 2006 as a Fire/EMS Instructor at WCTC. With 28 years of experience in Fire/EMS, currently a Career Battalion Chief for the City of Wauwatosa Fire Department, Jeremy imparts his passion for leadership, continuous improvement and community service among students of all ages.

---

**Session Title:**

Staffing the Fire Science – Understanding the Nuances of a Part-Time/Volunteer Workforce – but what is our Plan B?

**Abstract:**

The fire service has largely been built on the skills and abilities of a volunteer and part-time workforce. Previous generations were able to staff emergency response needs and serve their communities. The downward trend of volunteer organizations (not just the fire service) has impacted fire service recruitment, retention, and readiness.

Community growth/density, call volume, training/standards, health/safety, mission shift, and minimum staffing requirements have all impacted firefighter availability and commitment. What are we doing to recognize the value of a firefighter? How are we supporting the demands of our workforce? What needs to be done now to positively impact our future operational strength? How do we get governing bodies to understand the concern of a looming staffing crisis?

This is everyone's issue. Reductions in part-time/volunteer staffing levels WILL impact career fire departments (it already has). We MUST value the importance of our volunteer/part-time

firefighters; however, data-driven initiatives must be implemented to help us better understand the future needs of an evolving workforce.

**Presented by:**

*Joe Pulvermacher* is the Fire Chief for the Village of Menomonee Falls (WI). He is a 2014 graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Program and is designated as a Chief Fire Officer (CFO) through Center of Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). He holds a Bachelor of Science in Fire Service Management from Southern Illinois University and is a graduate of the Naval Post-Graduate Master's Program (Center of Homeland Defense and Security).

Chief Pulvermacher is the sitting Vice Chair for the EFO Section - he is personally and professionally involved in the evaluation of training requirements in a constantly changing profession (affected generationally by a regularly changing workforce). Joe is motivated through positive impacts in work force development, succession planning, and organizational ownership. Chief Pulvermacher continues to participate in outreach throughout the fire service – to strengthen executive, administrative, and operational partnerships within our industry.

---

**Session Title:**

Affirming Diversity – Recruiting a Reflective Workforce without Compromising Talent

**Abstract:**

Is today's fire service as diverse and inclusive as it should be? Have we experienced success in recruiting motivated, diverse firefighter candidates? What can be done to identify current barriers that discourage or hamper reflective recruitment and what can be done to overcome recruitment obstacles?

Historical perspectives provide discussion points about operational and systematic bias - and consider solutions through reflective recruitment and targeted community outreach. This presentation will provide community recommendations that incorporate short-, medium-, and long-term recruitment outreach and recruitment goals.

How do we identify and involve schools, racially centric groups, and current fire department membership - those that can positively recognize and influence prospective firefighter candidates? Professional standards need not be compromised in the pursuit of a more representative workforce. Intentional acts of inclusion can stimulate occupational and organizational interest. Inclusivity largely depends on targeted neighborhood outreach, a form of affirmative action.

**Presented by:**

*Joe Pulvermacher* is the Fire Chief for the Village of Menomonee Falls (WI). He is a 2014 graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Program and is designated as a Chief Fire Officer (CFO) through Center of Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). He holds a Bachelor of Science in Fire Service Management from Southern Illinois University and is a graduate of the Naval Post-Graduate Master's Program (Center of Homeland Defense and Security).

Chief Pulvermacher is the sitting Vice Chair for the EFO Section - he is personally and professionally involved in the evaluation of training requirements in a constantly changing profession (affected generationally by a regularly changing workforce). Joe is motivated through positive impacts in work force development, succession planning, and organizational ownership. Chief Pulvermacher continues to participate in outreach throughout the fire service – to strengthen executive, administrative, and operational partnerships within our industry.