

National Junior Firefighter Academy Instructor Bios

Mike Barnett

Mike Barnett is a volunteer firefighter in Elkridge, MD, where he has been the Coordinator of the Elkridge Junior Firefighter Program since 2006. Mike leads the instruction of fire and EMS skills to 50 community youth and is a member of the National Junior Firefighter Program Advisory Group.

Michelle Carilli

Michelle Carilli is the Junior Firefighter Captain at the Coventry (CT) Volunteer Fire Association. She was instrumental in implementing a CPR training program at her high school, organizing several fundraisers, and developing a recruitment plan for her junior firefighter program. She is a student at the University of Connecticut.

Stephen Stuart Carter

Steve Carter is a consultant and educator with more than 40 year's experience in fire and emergency services, emergency management, and leadership training. Currently, he is the Academic Director for the University of Maryland University College, School of Undergraduate Studies in Emergency Management, Fire Science, and Homeland Security.

Jeff Cash

Jeff Cash has been in the fire service for 30 years and is currently the Fire Chief of the Cherryville (NC) Fire Department. Approximately 60 percent of the Cherryville firefighters started as junior firefighters. Chief Cash has received numerous local and national awards for his service.

Dave Finger

Dave Finger is the NVFC's Director of Government Relations. He is the NVFC's liaison with the federal government and advises the NVFC Board and membership on governmental matters. Dave received his B.A. in Political Economy from Michigan State University and worked on Capitol Hill before joining the NVFC in 2005.

Rachel Higginbotham

Rachel Higginbotham is the NVFC's Director of the National Junior Firefighter Program. She manages the Program's daily operations, budget, and events and also assists in the NVFC's communications outreach. Rachel graduated from Texas A&M University and worked in events and fundraising before joining the NVFC in 2007.

Heather Schafer

Heather Schafer joined the NVFC in 1993 and has served as the Executive Director since 1994. She manages all internal and external operations and is the organization's chief fundraiser. Heather graduated from Ohio State University and is pursuing a Masters in Nonprofit and Association Management at the University of Maryland.

Jay Stanton

Jay Stanton is a Captain with the Elkridge (MD) Volunteer Fire Department junior firefighter program. He has been a junior firefighter for two and a half years. Jay enjoys search & rescue and EMS training.

Bob Timko

Bob Timko first joined the service as a junior firefighter at age 14. He has been a volunteer firefighter for over 33 years and is the NVFC Alternate Director for Pennsylvania. He is also the Regional Director for Provident Agency, Inc., an insurance provider with specialized volunteer firefighter coverage.