



**Homeland Security
and Emergency Services**

**Fire Prevention
and Control**



2018 Technical Rescue Conference

September 29 - 30

**State Preparedness Training Center
5900 Airport Road
Oriskany, NY 13424**

2018 Technical Rescue Conference

Open to all First Responders

The Technical Rescue Conference will include workshops on the following Technical Rescue Topics:

- Swiftwater-Flood Rescue / Water Rescue
- Rope Rescue / Confined Space
- Structural Collapse Rescue / Trench Rescue
- Vehicle / Machinery Rescue
- General Rescue / Incident Management

Conference Costs:

There is NO FEE for this course. Lunch will be provided. Travel and all other meals are the responsibility of the course participant.

Pre-Conference Hands-on Training courses

- Advanced Vehicle Rescue
- Machinery Rescue In-Service Training
- Advanced Metal Cutting
- Rope Rescue
- Advanced Shoring and Rescue Rigging Skills In-Service Training
- Advanced Swiftwater/Flood Rescue
- Trench Rescue Technician

Please see the following pages for information about the pre-conference hands-on training courses.

Pre-Conference Costs:

There is NO FEE for this course. Lunch will be provided. Travel and all other meals are the responsibility of the course participant

Location:

State Preparedness Training Center
5900 Airport Road, Oriskany, NY 13424

Registration Process:

All student registrations will be reviewed by the SPTC with approvals sent to students NO LATER THAN 2 weeks prior to the start of the class. Registration does not guarantee a seat in the class. If you are accepted into this course, you will receive a confirmation email from the Center. Attached to the email will be a Training Authorization Letter (EOSB-1654) which you must complete, sign, and return.

DO NOT REGISTER WITH THE NYS ACADEMY OF FIRE SCIENCE

Please use the following link to register online:

http://www.dhSES.ny.gov/training/snap/sptc_tc_registration.htm

Lodging:

Lodging will be provided the night prior to the first day of class for all offerings that start at 8:00am and continue through the night prior to the last day of class. You are eligible for lodging if your residence and official work station are more than 50 miles from the SPTC and you are public sector personnel. Lodging is not available for federal employees or private industry participants. You must be enrolled in the course and have received lodging confirmation from the SPTC before arriving at the Center, or your lodging will not be covered and you will not be allowed in the class. If you have any questions, please contact the SPTC at 315-768-5689 or SPTC.INFO@dhSES.ny.gov

Preconference Hands-on Training Programs:

Advanced Vehicle Rescue In-Service

The Advanced Vehicle Rescue course is 16 hours in length and consists of hands on skill stations and training scenarios involving rescue from vehicles. Scenarios will include recreations of some high profile vehicle accidents that have received media attention.

Pre-requisite: Accident Victim Extrication Training or equivalent

Course Schedule: 9/27-28/2018 • 8am- 12pm, 1pm - 5pm

Machinery Rescue In-Service Training

The Machinery Rescue course is designed for students interested in expanding or refreshing their skills in disentangling victims from different types of machinery. This class will be focused on rural/agricultural machinery and Urban/Suburban industrial machinery.

Pre-requisite: Accident Victim Extrication Training or equivalent

Course Schedule: 9/27-28/2018 • 8am - 12pm, 1pm - 5pm

Advanced Metal Cutting In-Service

The Advanced Metal Cutting course is an intensive 16-hour course for rescue personnel. The course will include metal cutting techniques using the Petrogen torch (multi-fuel/oxygen) and Oxy/Acetylene torch. These techniques are designed for rescue/recovery operations. The instructors for this course are technicians from Petrogen Inc; the lead instructor will be CEO Brian Heft.

Pre-requisite: Rescue Technician: Basic, and Medium Structural Collapse Operations: Tools or equivalent

Course Schedule: 9/27-28/2018 • 8am - 12pm, 1pm - 5pm

Rope Rescue In-Service Training

The Rope Rescue course is an intensive 16-hour course for rope rescue personnel. The course will include refreshing the skills learned in Rope Rescue Operations/Technician level training and introduce new advanced level skills. This course involves extensive time on rope.

Pre-requisite: Rope Rescue: Technician Level 1 or equivalent

Course Schedule: 9/27-28/2018 • 8am - 12pm, 1pm - 5pm

Advanced Shoring and Rescue Rigging Skills In-Service Training

This 16-hour in-service training will focus on all the skills the students learned in both NYS OFPC shoring and Rescue Rigging classes as well as some Concrete Breaching skills. This will be an intense hands-on class designed to challenge the students and use all the skills they have been taught. This class will help the students refresh their skills from state classes as well as learn some new advanced skills. The instructors will lead the students through scenario based problems and give them new techniques as needed.

Pre-requisite: Structural Collapse Series, Concrete Breaching and Breaking, and Heavy Rigging, or equivalent

Course Schedule: 9/27-28/2018 • 8am - 12pm, 1pm - 5pm

Advanced Swiftwater/Flood In-Service Training

The Advanced Swiftwater/Flood course will feature advanced level swiftwater/flood rescue skill training and rescue practice scenarios. This course will take place in the newly built Swift Water Training Facility on site at the State Preparedness Training Center.

Pre-requisite: Swiftwater/Flood Rescue Technician or equivalent

Course Schedule: 9/26, 8am - 5pm • 9/27, 1pm - 10pm • 9/28, 8am-5pm

Trench Rescue Technician Training

The 16-hour Trench Rescue Technician training will be a full presentation of the NYS Trench Rescue Technician course. The students will be taught several ways to shore trenches, the different types of extrication techniques, proper rescue site management, as well as the proper safety concepts needed to complete a safe and successful rescue. There will be live exercises in which the students will actually extricate a trapped victim from an open trench scenario.

Pre-requisite: Rescue Technician: Basic, Medium Structural Collapse Operations: Tools, Trench Rescue: Awareness Level, and Trench Rescue: Operations Level or equivalent

Course Schedule: 9/27-28/2018 • 8am- 12pm, 1pm - 5pm

2018 Workshop Descriptions

Water Rescue Workshops

Professional Rescuers and Recreational Paddlers in Swiftwater and Flood Rescue

Darron Laughland

Historically, with only a handful of exceptions, recreational whitewater paddlers and river guides, and organized volunteer and professional rescuers have approached each other with distrust and misunderstanding in times of crisis. An exploration of the roots of these biases and perceptions, a discussion of exemplar case studies, and a dialogue about strategies for building relationships in individual communities; works towards understanding each other and may create the foundation for the development of cooperation during search and rescue operations.

The presenter will discuss legislation in New Hampshire that allows for and protects volunteer SAR groups, and how this statutory environment has led to the creation of a Search and Rescue Working Group that includes local, state, and federal agencies, and volunteer SAR teams. Using the WMSRT as a case study, Darron will talk about what it takes to build rapport with different stakeholders and agencies, and how that can be leveraged to increase the effectiveness and safety of responders, with positive outcomes for their shared community individuals requiring assistance.

Beyond the Throw Bag – Tips and Tricks for Effective Rope Rescues

Darron Laughland

“Beyond the Throw Bag” presentation will take place in an outdoor venue/space conducive to throwing throw bags and setting up scenarios.

“Beyond the Throw Bag” will provide an overview of throw bag and rope construction, industry recommended knots and anchors, a variety of techniques to effectively deploy ropes in and over water, and applications of ropes in accessing and assisting swimmers, stabilizing entrapped swimmers, and recovering ropes once deployed. Stabilization and cinch lines, capturing lines, single shoreline cinches, placement of rescuer, and other special topics will also be discussed. Presenter will also share tips, tricks, and “ninja moves” accumulated fishing swimmers and gear out of rivers.

Participants will be expected to take an active role in the presentation, and will have an opportunity to use several different variations of throw bags and ropes.

Hazardous Materials Problems in the Flood Environment

Joseph Gribbins

Hazardous materials are a consistent part of flood response but often overlooked by rescuers who must work in contaminated water. Managers too often fall back on the adage of “the solution to pollution is dilution” to get them through. This session will cover common hazmat problems and their sources during floods. It will also review flood hydrology so route of possible sources can be anticipated. The type of PPE used in flood response and simple on-scene practices are also discussed. Any responder, manager or hazmat technician will benefit from this session.

Night Time Flood Operations

Aaron Peeler

Key Tips to Minimizing Risk in a Night Swiftwater Rescue

Over the past 8 years I have been teaching a Night Ops Swiftwater Rescue Course where we have tested a variety of gear and rescue concepts to implement during night operations. During this presentation we will look at the concepts of scene safety and setup that will help your team make night rescues more effective. We will also discuss a variety of gear you should think about bringing to a night

operation, some of which you already use in firefighting.

Key Points we will cover:

- Additional team duties when setting up a night rescue
- Approach to downstream safety at night
- Downstream scout at night
- Using illumination devices as markers and what the colors will mean in a rescue
- Keeping your patient lit with flashlights
- Gear - What is working and what is not at night

Swiftwater/Flood Hydrology and Hazards

Aaron Peeler

During this presentation we will be diving into the true dynamics of water hydrology. We will assess the risk of the different hydraulics giving you a better understanding. We will also review other river features and urban hazards to avoid.

The Design of the SWFT Facility

Andrew Laird

This program will focus on the design process for the NYS SWFT facility at the SPTC. The discussion will include insights into the inspiration, design features, capabilities, construction process, commissioning, and hand-over of this world first facility. There will be a guided tour of the facility, followed by an in-depth discussion of the design features and process.

Integrating Kayakers into Swiftwater Rescue

Brad Vrooman

Integrating Kayakers into Swiftwater Rescues presents the capabilities of proficient whitewater kayakers, and how they can be effectively integrated into the swiftwater rescue incident. Proficient whitewater kayakers have a high degree of mobility on the water, and can quickly, effectively reach locations and victims that take other craft time and multiple personnel to utilize. A presentation of the various types of kayaks and levels of outfitting will be shown and discussed, pointing out the complexity of outfitting for a “true” whitewater kayak, in comparison to low-cost “recreational” kayaks. A discussion of entrapments and pins regarding recreational kayaks vs whitewater kayaks will also be discussed and shown, offering a look at the dangers of today’s low-cost kayaks when used for whitewater purposes.

Confined Space and Rope Rescue Workshops

NFPA 1983, Safety Factors and Unicorns; Only one of these matter

Clifford Freer

NFPA 1983 was created to ensure that equipment was manufactured to a set standard in response to a double LODD when a rope broke during a rope rescue during a fire. These numbers intended for manufacturers have been improperly taught to determine unattainable safety factors based on individual pieces of equipment instead of the entire system. This discussion will set clear parameters on how to use MBS and SWL forces supplied by manufacturers as well as de-rating equipment, hardware and software, for real world situations. Discussion of differences between the G rating and T rating and how that effects Safety Factors will be ongoing during the forum.

Artificial High Directionals

Clifford Freer and Adam Zebrak

This program will feature lecture/ demonstration/ discussion in the different types of AHD’s, the forces in play to safely use these versatile frames and the rigging and guying that needs to be used. Short presentation followed by demonstrations of the different types of frames and then an in-depth discussion of the Pros and Cons of each type of frame; tripod, Easel A, SA Frame, Monopod.

Effects of Cyclic Loading and Bending Fatigue on Rescue Rope and Fire-Resistant Escape Line

John McKently

The use of edge protection is a best practice for any rescue scenario where rope transitions over an edge. Experience in both training and operations tell us that the rescue lines can be damaged despite the use of edge protection and one way that can happen is through repeated loading and unloading. We tested several scenarios and methods of edge protection for rescue rope and then carried our research further to include escape lines, that while designed for “one-time emergency use” were in fact often used much more frequently in training evolutions. While the rope might pass a basic visual or functional inspection, we wanted to research the residual strength of the material after a number of use cycles.

Lesson Learned from a Confined Space Recovery

Edward Tracey and Gregory Borden

On January 25, 2017, in Livingston County, the Rochester (NY) Fire Department’s (RFD’s) Technical Rescue Team (TRT) responded to assist with the removal of a confirmed fatality from a railcar material offloading accident at what became a multiagency response. The presentation will cover the preparation, operations, and lessons learned from this incident. Although the incident was unfortunately a recovery, the safe and efficient confined space entry and removal was the result of heavy investment in training, equipment and teamwork.

Minimal Equipment Rope Rescue

Brad Vrooman

Minimal Equipment Rope Rescue harkens back to a time when rope rescues were performed using only a length of goldline rope and steel non-locking carabiners. A variety of techniques originating from military rope rescue operations will be presented, including field expedient litter evacuations, victim piggyback carries, swiss seats, carabiner brakes and rappels, super-munter hitches, releasable rappel lines, self-equalizing Portuguese bowlines, directional figure eights, and bowline on a coil.

Cell Tower Rescue

Brad Vrooman

Cell Tower Rescue is a hands-on workshop designed to highlight the techniques utilized in “ground-up” cell tower rescues, offering various methods of establishing a high point to effect a rescue by climbing up past the victim from the ground, with no aerial assistance. Methods presented include lead climbing, double lanyard, and buck hook methods of protecting the climbing/advancing rescuer. Also addressed will be various skate block techniques designed to lower the victim diagonally away from the structure, including mid-air application of spinal immobilization devices and Arizona Tri-Bridle litter rigging techniques.

Vehicle and Machinery type rescues

Man vs. Machinery- Are You Prepared?

Mark Gregory

Man vs. Machine incidents occur all across the country. They may involve a person stuck in a piece of machinery or be as routine as a ring stuck on a victim’s finger. One must ask themselves, “are we as a department, prepared to handle these incidents”? This program will introduce students to tools and methods that have been proven to be effective in rescuing victims. Case studies will be reviewed as well as the pros and cons of various tactics. Medical issues will be addressed and the importance of a strong command structure and inter-agency operations will be stressed.

Hybrid & Electrical Vehicle Challenges 2018

Ron Moore

This multi-media presentation by Ron Moore will address challenges that responders face when encountering hybrid or electric plug-in vehicle crash, extrication, or vehicle fire incidents. This unique update features several video case study reviews of crash and vehicle fire incidents involving lithium ion high voltage batteries found in late-model hybrids and EVs.

Vehicle Rescue Skills Update 2018

Ron Moore

Ron offers a special look at skills that rescuers use at extrication scenes; everything from simple stabilization to complex rescue tasks. We train on old junkers yet cut people out of late-model cars. So, what's the difference? Ron's presentation shows how our essential tasks need to be revised and updated so we are ready for new technologies such as run-flat tires, hidden airbags, and Boron steel.

Knowledge to Proficiency – Tips for Mastering the Extrication Puzzle

Brian Beechner

Successful extrications depend on the team's proficiency in tool skills and problem-solving abilities in order to quickly and safely remove the entrapped patient from the vehicle. This presentation is designed to enhance extrication skills by providing a better understanding of the extrication process and suggesting tips for the overall improvement of your training program. We will discuss challenges of actual extractions and the problem solving that went into the successful outcome, as well as discuss how to shift training programs from the stereotypical junkyard setting to more empirical based training scenarios.

Rescue Tools: Best Practices

Thomas Kenney

This classroom presentation will focus on the tools that fire and rescue companies use every day. In addition, students learn about other tool systems available on the market and how to plan for expanding their tool cache in the future. Tool groups are broken down into packages such as manual, mechanical, electric, pneumatic, and hydraulic. Among the topics discussed are: tools that always work, must-have tools on the rig, and buying into packaged tool systems. Rescue tool operational efficiency and safety are emphasized throughout the presentation.

Medical Considerations for Rescue

What's on the line? Fall and Suspension Injuries on Rope

Douglas Hexel

What happens when you fall while on rope and your safety device functions properly? This course focuses on injuries that may occur from falls while still attached to rope. By assessing the kinematics of trauma; including the fall distance, harness type, attachment point, and hardware factors; determine likely injuries and extraction strategies. Also, consider and manage additional injuries that may result from being suspended for extended periods of time while awaiting rescue. Attendees will be awarded 1.5 hours of NYS core CME credit (ALS or BLS).

USAR/Structural Collapse/Trench Rescue Workshops

Torch Operations and Maintenance

Brian Heft, Dan Luna, and Dennis Gagnon

This presentation will discuss and demonstrate the use and care of the Petrogen Gasoline Cutting Torch technology and its role as a USAR Tool. Hands on demonstrations will be conducted to offer students a feel for the tool and its proper use.

Fire & Rescue Cutting Torch Operations

Thomas Kenney

The program is a power point delivery and lecture on the operating practices of 3 types of cutting torches. The class is geared to Fire and USAR rescue operations with an emphasis on safety and past USAR experiences. This class covers cylinder gases, components of cutting systems, assembly, and operations of oxygen-acetylene, oxygen-gasoline, and exothermic cutting torches.

Anatomy of a Collapse: Washington, PA Structural Collapse review

Brian Kokkila

On July 12th, 2017 Pennsylvania Strike Team 1 US&R responded to a structural collapse in the City of Washington, PA. Working with local responders and private contractors, an extended (9+ hour) operation was undertaken involving intensive and dynamic technical rescue efforts to extract a partially entombed victim. The presentation will review all the aspects of the rescue operation and give attendees an in-depth picture of a complex and challenging operation in an unstable and dynamic structural collapse environment. A component of the course includes an opportunity to participate in a question and answer session to explore the operation.

Incident Management/General Rescue Workshops

Revamping an Existing Rescue Team

Joseph Gribbins

“We aren’t what we used to be” is a more common thought than you may imagine. Rescue calls are low frequency events and keeping dedication in a team is difficult work. This seminar will identify the common causes of rescue program decline. It will then offer possible solutions for planning the revamping of stagnant programs. This is an interactive seminar that uses powerpoint, instructor experiences, student observations and worksheets to develop solid plans. These plans can then be put into motion upon return home.

UAS/Drone Use in the Technical Rescue Environment

Steven Disick

Unmanned Aerial Systems are quickly being adopted by public safety agencies for a variety of applications. Some of the applications are very straightforward while others are much more technical. This presentation will quickly touch on what departments need to know to start a UAS program, discuss various UAS platforms, their capabilities, and how they can be applied to a variety of technical rescue applications. We will share some lessons learned and best practices when it comes to utilizing UAS in areas such as payload deployment and autonomous search and rescue. Looking to the very near future we will discuss emergency technology in the field of UAS and how they can assist us in safety, accountability, and situational awareness in a technical rescue environment. Weather permitting, we will also highlight several of the topics with an outside demonstration of these capabilities.

Public Response to the Private Sector

Kevin Hogan and Mark Marmo

This program is designed to educate Public Sector responders with the complexities and differences of mutual and automatic aid responses into the Private Sector facilities. The Instructors themselves have combined on numerous projects to help identify lessons learned regarding the topic. Site specific operations of the Private Sector Employee meshed with a response from a career or volunteer agency focus from the pre-planning phase to incident termination in a fast but accurate learning pace of the process leading to success.

Large Animal Rescue: Tactics to Consider

Willis Sheldon

Dealing with animals during accidents and disasters can be a daunting task for agencies that are not prepared for them. This session will cover tactics and considerations for rescuers when faced with incidents involving large animals. The behavioral patterns of animals and how to deal with the animal on their level along with safety concerns for the rescuer will be discussed. Tactics for dealing with animals involved in transportation accidents, mud entrapments, floods/water incidents, non-ambulatory illnesses and animal confinement will be discussed.

NYTF2 / Special Operations Update

Thomas Howard and George Bassler

The NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control oversees operations of the New York Task Force 2, a Type III USAR team based out of Guilderland Center, NY. The team is available to respond to all types of technical rescue incidents, including collapse, swiftwater, rope, trench, and search operations. NYTF-2 deployed last year to the State of Florida and operated in the Key Largo and Marathon Key areas following Hurricane Irma. Team Manager Thomas Howard will provide an overview of NYTF-2, including K-9 and Drone operations, and a broader view of the OFPC Special Operations Branch and their response capabilities. The program will include information for those interested in becoming a part of NYTF-2 in one of their many specialties, including Rescue, Logistics, Hazmat, and Planning Specialists. The second half of the presentation will be done by Deputy Chief George Bassler, and will focus on the new SWFT facility at SPTC and the latest information on Special Operations Branch training courses.

2018 Workshop Matrix

All workshops subject to change

Workshop Sessions						
	Session 1 8:30am-10:00am Saturday	Session 2 10:30am-12:00am Saturday	Session 3 1:00pm-2:30pm Saturday	Session 4 3:00pm-4:30pm Saturday	Session 5 8:30am-10:00am Sunday	Session 6 10:30am-12:00am Sunday
EAB 104	NYTF2 / Special Operations Update T. Howard & G. Bassler	Lesson Learned from a Confined Space Recovery E. Tracey & G. Borden	NYTF2 / Special Operations Update T. Howard & G. Bassler	Lesson Learned from a Confined Space Recovery E. Tracey & G. Borden	Hybrid & Electrical Vehicle Challenges 2018 Ron Moore	Large Animal Rescue: Tactics to Consider Willis Sheldon
EAB 105	Hazardous Materials Problems in the Flood Environment Joseph Gribbins	Revamping an Existing Rescue Team Joseph Gribbins	Large Animal Rescue: Tactics to Consider Willis Sheldon	Hazardous Materials Problems in the Flood Environment Joseph Gribbins	Revamping an Existing Rescue Team Joseph Gribbins	Hazardous Materials Problems in the Flood Environment Joseph Gribbins
EAB 107	NFPA 1983, Safety Factors and Unicorns; Only one of these matter Clifford Freer	Effects of wear on Technora/Fire Resistant Rope Rich Armstrong	Rescue Tools: Best Practices Thomas Kenney	Effects of wear on Technora/Fire Resistant Rope Rich Armstrong	Fire & Rescue Cutting Torch Operations Thomas Kenney	Rescue Tools: Best Practices Thomas Kenney
EAB 108	Professional Rescuers and Recreational Paddlers in Swiftwater and Flood Rescue Darron Laughland	Knowledge to Proficiency - Tips for Mastering the Extraction Puzzle Brian Beechner	Beyond the Throw Bag: Tips and Tricks for Effective Rope Rescues Darron Laughland	Knowledge to Proficiency - Tips for Mastering the Extraction Puzzle Brian Beechner	Professional Rescuers and Recreational Paddlers in Swiftwater and Flood Rescue Darron Laughland	Beyond the Throw Bag: Tips and Tricks for Effective Rope Rescues Darron Laughland
EAB 109	Man vs. Machinery - Are You Prepared? Mark Gregory	Public Response to the Private Sector K. Hogan & M. Marmo	Man vs. Machinery - Are You Prepared? Mark Gregory	Public Response to the Private Sector K. Hogan & M. Marmo	Man vs. Machinery - Are You Prepared? Mark Gregory	Anatomy of a Collapse Brian Kokkila
EAB 110	Hybrid & Electrical Vehicle Challenges 2018 Ron Moore	Anatomy of a Collapse Brian Kokkila	Artificial High Directionals Clifford Freer & Adam Zembrak		Artificial High Directionals Clifford Freer & Adam Zembrak	
FOB 605	Torch Operations and Maintenance Brian Heft	What's on the Line? Fall and Suspension Injuries on Rope Douglas Hexel	Torch Operations and Maintenance Brian Heft	What's on the Line? Fall and Suspension Injuries on Rope Douglas Hexel	Torch Operations and Maintenance Brian Heft	
FOB 606	UAS/Drone Use in the Technical Rescue Environment Steven Disk					
FOB 607	The Design of the SWFT Facility Andy Laird	Nighttime Flood Operations Aaron Peeler	The Design of the SWFT Facility Andy Laird	Swiftwater/Flood Hydrology & Hazards Aaron Peeler	Nighttime Flood Operations Aaron Peeler	Swiftwater/Flood Hydrology & Hazards Aaron Peeler
Orion Building	Minimal Equipment Rope Rescue Brad Vrooman	Minimal Equipment Rope Rescue Brad Vrooman	Cell Tower Rescue Brad Vrooman	Integrating Kayakers into Swiftwater Rescues Brad Vrooman		

2018 TRC Presenter Bios

Darron Laughland

Darron Laughland is a Swiftwater Rescue Instructor with the New Hampshire Fire Academy, a Rescue 3 Instructor, and a founding member of the White Mountain Swiftwater Rescue Team, a volunteer paddler and river guide swiftwater and flood rescue team based in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. A licensed New York and Maine whitewater raft guide, whitewater kayak and canoe instructor, and whitewater enthusiast; Darron has logged many miles in different craft on rivers throughout the Northeast.

Joseph Gribbins

Joe Gribbins, with nearly 40 years in the fire service, has been instructing Flood and Swiftwater Rescue since 1994. He is a career Lieutenant in West Windsor, NJ and is a member of NJ-TF1, Urban Search & Rescue. Joe is a specialist in the Hazmat Component and also one of the Flood Rescue Managers on the team.

Aaron Peeler

Aaron Peeler, Owner of H2O Rescue Gear & Outdoor School Manager at the US National Whitewater Center, started his river career before even being born. Growing up with a dad that was a river guide and taking his first rafting trip while still in his mother's womb, he had paddling in his blood. Aaron started his professional career as a guide in the late 90's and over the past 18 years he has had the opportunity to guide on many different rivers including the Gauley River, the southeast, multiple sections of the Colorado river, including Grand Canyon and Arkansas river. During this time Aaron trained and supervised over 1,000 guides and guide instructors. Aaron has overseen the development of training programs for different outfitters, written river protocols, and managed day to day business. In 2006, after seeing many incidents on the river that could have been avoided, Aaron became a SWR instructor and received his ACA Advanced Swiftwater Rescue Instructor Certification. Since then Aaron has dedicated his time to helping whitewater enthusiasts and rescue professionals become more proactive in their river rescue skills. In 2011 Aaron completed his ACA Instructor Trainer certification for Swiftwater Rescue. In 2007 Aaron developed the USNWC Swiftwater Rescue Program for Rescue Professionals and Military Personnel which offers a wide selection of courses focused to departments' needs. Since the USNWC SWR Program's inception, Aaron has trained over 600+ rescue professionals including elite military special operations members stationed throughout the world

Andrew Laird

Andrew Laird is a professional engineer, and the designer of the one-of-a-kind SWFT facility at the State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany, NY

Clifford Freer

Clifford Freer is a New York State Instructor for the OFPC Special Operations Branch, as well as a level 2 instructor certified by the Society for Professional Rope Access Technicians (SPRAT). He is a career firefighter with FDNY.

Adam Zebrak

Adam Zebrak is a New York State Instructor for the OFPC Special Operations Branch, as well as a level 1 instructor certified by the Society for Professional Rope Access Technicians (SPRAT). He is a career firefighter for the Rochester Fire Department.

Brad Vrooman

Brad Vrooman works for the New York State Division of Homeland Security, Office of Fire Prevention and Control, in the Special Operations Branch as a Technical Rescue Instructor, specializing in Swiftwater, cell tower, and high angle rope rescue. He is a certified New York State Paramedic and has attended the Critical Care Transport Program at UMBC, Baltimore, MD. Brad also works as a Paramedic Supervisor at Mohawk Valley Ambulance Corps in Mohawk, NY, and serves on the Mid-state EMS Paramedic Advisory Council, as well as serving as a Paramedic Mentor and Instructor for the Herkimer College Paramedic Program. He is a certified Law Enforcement Tactical Emergency Casualty Care Instructor, and a co-developer of the MOVAC Medical Response Team (MRT), a team of tactical medics trained jointly with Law Enforcement Special Response Teams (SRT) in the Mohawk Valley in preparation for Active Shooter and other High Threat Mass Casualty Incidents (MCI). He is a former US Army Infantry Officer and Airborne Ranger, graduating from Norwich University in 1979, and having served on military tactical search and rescue teams in the Northeastern USA and Alaska. He recently commanded a company-sized search and rescue team for the New York National Guard. He has completed degree programs in Para-medicine, Emergency Management, and Linguistics, as well as an advanced degree in Homeland Security.

Edward A. Tracey, EdD,

Edward Tracey is a 24-year member of the fire service serving the last 14 years with the Rochester, NY, Fire Department. He serves as a Truck Company captain with additional responsibilities including collaborative management of the RFD's technical rescue training, response, and typing programs. Additionally, he is a Fire Service and Technical Rescue Instructor for the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services' Office of Fire Prevention and Control and is the lead instructor for the New York State Association of Fire Chief's H.O.T. Truck Company Operations program. He has a doctoral degree in education from the University of Rochester, a master's degree in public administration from SUNY-Brockport and a bachelor's degree in fire service administration from the University of New Haven.

Gregory W. Borden

Gregory Borden is a 27-year veteran of the fire service and is a Lieutenant assigned to the Heavy Rescue Company of the Rochester, NY, Fire Department. He is a Technical Rescue Instructor for the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services' Office of Fire Prevention and Control Special Operations Bureau. He holds Technician Certifications in Confined Space Rescue, Rope Rescue, Structural Collapse Rescue, Trench Rescue, Water/Ice Rescue, Vehicle/Machinery Rescue, and Hazardous Materials. Greg is a Technical Rescue Instructor and Subject Matter Expert for Tech Rescue Corporation and is a member of the Western New York Incident Management Team. He is an Alumni of the National Fire Academy and has an associate's Degree in Architectural Technology from Alfred State College with additional studies in Civil Engineering at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Mark Gregory

Mark Gregory has over 30 years of firefighting experience. He currently serves as a Captain in the FDNY's 15th Division (Brooklyn). Previously, he served as a Captain in Ladder142 & Division 13, a Lieutenant in Tower Ladder 111 (The Nuthouse Truck) and as a Firefighter in Brooklyn's Rescue 2 and Ladder 132(The Eye of The Storm). Mark instructs for the FDNY Academy as an Annual Education Day, Flashover, and Extrication Instructor. He also instructs at the Suffolk County Fire Academy and is the Lead Instructor for FDIC's HOT Program "Man vs. Machinery" which is taught by P.L. Vulcan Fire Training Concepts LLC.

Ron Moore

Ron, a Firehouse® contributing editor, recently retired as a division chief with the McKinney, TX, Fire Department and now serves with Prosper, TX, Fire Rescue. Ron previously served 20 years with NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control, working heavily with the Accident Victim Extrication Training (AVET) Program. He self-published the Vehicle Rescue 1-2-3 training manual, authors a new monthly online article in the Firehouse.com "Members Zone" and serves as the Forum Moderator for the extrication section of the Firehouse.com website.

Brian Beechner

Brian J Beechner has been a firefighter for over 26 years and currently a Battalion Chief with Orange County (FL) Fire Rescue Department (OCFRD). He has been a member of their Special Operations Team for the past 11 and served as the training LT. Brian holds an AS in Fire Protection from SUNY OCC, a BS in Education from SUNY Oswego State and a MPA from American Public University. He is also a Technical Search Specialist with FL Task Force 4 and an Instructor for various Firefighting and Special Operations programs at Valencia Community College. Brian has presented at the NYS Technical Rescue Conference and has been a HOT instructor for the Metro Atlanta Technical Rescue Conference and others.

Thomas Kenney

Thomas Kenney is a 36-year member of the Hyannis Fire Department where he currently serves as a Captain in the Training Division. He is a Rescue Team Manager for Massachusetts Task Force 1, a DHS FEMA USAR Team. He has written numerous articles on Technical Rescue and has been published in Fire Engineering Magazine and FDTN. Captain Kenney has delivered programs nationally including classroom sessions at FDIC as well as HOT sessions.

Douglas Hexel

NYS Paramedic Certified Instructor Coordinator (CIC), Firefighter for City of Schenectady, Rescue Specialist NY-TF2, Paramedic for Albany County Sheriff's Office, Instructor at SUNY Cobleskill Paramedic Program, Rope Technician 2

Brian Heft

A California native, Brian is the CEO/general manager of Petrogen Inc. Brian served on the US Army Pathfinder Search and Rescue Team and as a Sniper Platoon leader.

Joseph Gribbins

Joe Gribbins, with nearly 40 years in the fire service, has been instructing Flood and Swiftwater Rescue since 1994. He is a career Lieutenant in West Windsor, NJ and is a member of NJ-TF1, Urban Search & Rescue. Joe is a specialist in the Hazmat Component and also one of the Flood Rescue Managers on the team.

Kevin Hogan and Mark Marmo

Kevin Hogan is the founder of River City Training and Consulting LLC in the Pittsburgh PA area. He is a full-time crew chief and instructor contracted to protect one of the nation's leading steel industries. He is also a certified and Accredited OSHA and NFPA 472 & 1006 Instructor. Mark Marmo is a past Chief of the City of Lower Burrell and accredited OSHA and NFPA 472 & 1006 Instructor assigned to educational programs with local industries as well as career and volunteer response agencies.

Willis Sheldon

Willis Sheldon is a New York State Instructor with the Special Operations Branch of OFPC. He is recently retired as the Training Chief for the Ithaca Fire Dept. He is a trained Large Animal Rescue Technician from TLAER, and has a background in equine management. He has owned and operated an equine breeding farm for over twenty years.

Thomas Howard

Thomas C Howard is the current Program Manager for New York States Urban Search and Technical Rescue Team (NY-TF2) He has served in this capacity since coming to The Office of Fire Prevention and Control in 2004. Tom also served as the acting Branch Chief of Special Operations in 2013 overseeing Hazardous materials and Technical Rescue training and response programs. Tom was also one of the administrators involved with the startup and maintenance of the DHSES Technical Rescue Grant Program. Tom is also a charter member / former Chairman of the board State Urban Search and Rescue Alliance (SUSAR) this is an alliance of State level Technical Rescue teams nationwide. He also is a current Member of NFPA covering standards of 1855,1858,1951,1952,1953,1975 and 1983. Tom joined the Volunteer fire service in 1984 as a Firefighter obtained his Paramedic certification in 1988 and is a past Chief with the Slingerlands Fire District in Albany County.

Steven Disick

Steven Disick is a Lieutenant with the City of Albany, NY Fire Department currently assigned to Engine 5, as a firefighter he was assigned to the Rescue Squad, the cities heavy rescue company. In 1994 he started his career in emergency services, which quickly turned into a passion for technical rescue. He has served as an instructor and curriculum development member for private and municipal departments as well as state level organizations and has taught technical rescue internationally. In 2006 he formed and became a partner in Capital Technical Rescue and Safety Consultants, LLC and went on to build an indoor training center specializing in rope access, industrial rescue and confined space rescue. A former flight paramedic, Disick was passionate about aviation and became an early drone adopter. He is a FAA certified UAS pilot, and a COA Mission Commander for the Albany County Sherriff's Office Drone Unit. In 2018, he partnered with In Sky Aerial, LLC to provide training for public and private entities, as well as offer specialized services such as thermal imaging inspections, 3D photogrammetry, mapping and more.

John McKently

John McKently is the Director of the CMC Rescue School, a position he has held for 23 years. He specializes in Rope, Confined Space and other unique rescue disciplines. He has been active on a wilderness search and rescue team in Los Angeles County for 45 years. He teaches SAR Management for the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, served on the Rope Rescue Technician and Confined Space Rescue Technician curriculum development committees for California State Fire Training and is a MSHA carded Mine Rescue Instructor. John is a member of two NFPA standards committees and has been a member and past chair of ASTM Committee F-32 on Search and Rescue.

Brian Kokkila

Brian is the Deputy Chief of the Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue PA Strike Team 1. Brian was the Operations Section Chief for the successful rescue of a heavily entombed patient in Washington Pennsylvania. He is a current student of the National Fire Academy - Executive Fire Officer Program. Brian graduated Summa Cum Laude from Waldorf University with a Bachelors in Fire Science as well as certificates in both Emergency Management and Occupational Safety and Health.