



Election **2026** IAAI Candidates for Board of Directors



K. David Cheers IAAI Candidate for Second Vice President

In Ballot Order

What would you say your greatest assets are if you become a Director or Officer of the IAAI?

The continuously responsible experience in the industry as well as in our great organization that makes the leadership of our organization a success.

What type of leader are you, and how would you apply those leadership traits as a director or officer of the IAAI?

I am a leader who believes in surrounding himself with great people who are passionate about the tasks to be completed in a way that will most benefit all of our members.

What steps do you believe the IAAI should take to reduce or eliminate membership shrinkage?

As an organization I believe we need to continually refine and adjust member benefits to give as much as possible for the dues that are paid, which will in-turn give incentive to join and remain as a member.

What steps do you believe the IAAI should take to grow membership?

Our organization needs to do a better job of showing the value that being an IAAI member brings. Member benefits are not often conveyed very well, and we do not do enough to spotlight the value of being a part of the IAAI's standing in the eyes of the courts, the eyes of the public, the eyes of potential clients, and the eyes of our peers or potential employers. If we can show other professions such as law enforcement, public safety, product manufacturers and the legal community that our organization and our CFI designation carry weight, our membership can grow.

How would you propose to improve relationships and communications between the International and Chapters?

I believe that Chapters feel they have no voice in decisions made on their behalf. Although some decisions must be made by a board in the best way possible given current information, I feel that our board has some areas where Chapters and members could be better utilized for input before decisions are made. I would propose that when hot-button topics must be addressed, that task groups be comprised of Chapter leaders who can provide insight on behalf of their members to help solve problems.

What is your vision for the future for the IAAI?

We are an ever-changing industry that must change with the times and follow the science of our craft. I believe we are the premiere organization in the field of fire investigation with a CFI program that is recognized across the globe. I think the IAAI should address new innovations and developments such as AI and changing science to be on the forefront of these changes as they occur. I think we have talented members across the globe who can add insight and should be involved in these changes as they are made.

Other than training fire investigators, what two or three other elements do you consider critical to the mission of the IAAI?

I think that training other related professions in the ins and outs of what we do and how we do it, being involved in the evolution of the science related to fire investigation, and being present in the formulation of grants and initiatives at the National level to enhance fire prevention and arson initiatives are three areas that our organization could participate in that would benefit the fire investigation community and beyond.

What do you perceive is the biggest challenge facing the IAAI in the coming years and how would you address that challenge?

In the times of budget cuts and belt-tightening, I think our biggest challenge is going to be member retention and attendance at training events. I believe we must find a way to make some of our training more affordable and make some of our training more valuable for the fees that must be charged to put on the class.