

WISCONSIN SOCIETY OF EMERGENCY SERVICES INSTRUCTORS (WSESI) 2025 ANNUAL INSTRUCTORS CONFERENCE

WSESI returned to Janesville, Wisconsin for this year's Annual Instructors Conference, hosted by **Blackhawk Technical College** (BTC). Their Public Safety & Transportation Complex, under construction at the time of last year's Conference, was completed and in full availability for this year.



The Conference week began with pre-Conference training – **Live Fire Instructor** (LFI), delivered over a full four days by **David Yakowenko**, who is an Adjunct Faculty instructor for BTC. This course was delivered as part of the statewide rollout of this course, which leads to the State LFI Certification level. Dave drew upon colleagues from around the state to assist and included several 'value-added' features to enhance the learning experience of the twenty-one registered students. The class culminated Friday morning in a proctored state exam, supervised by WTCS Fire Education Director **Ward Lyon**.

That evening, members, family, and friends gathered at **AmericInn** of Janesville for the Friday Dinner Buffet. Attendees were treated to an encore of last year's sumptuous pasta spread.

Afterwards, members of the Society convened the WSESI 64th **Annual Meeting**.



Officer elections saw the transition of Northwest Regional Director from **Red Van Ert**, who was stepping down, to the election of **Chad Peterson** of Altoona; incumbents Northeast Director **Tom Nelson** and Director At-Large **Lee Smith** were re-elected.



Immediately following the Annual Meeting was the open Trustees' Meeting of the **William E. Clark Memorial Education Endowment Fund Charitable Trust**. Due to other recent meetings settling Trustee business, the February proceedings were brief and simple.

Saturday's program featured an all-day workshop – "**Thermal Imaging: Before the Handoff**," presented by Chief **David Briggs** of Riverside Fire District and Firefighter Training, Development, and Coaching LLC. Participants were given an in-depth familiarity with thermal imaging and its use on the fireground – with a

morning classroom session, and afternoon hands-on applications on the BTC training grounds.

Our sincere appreciation goes out to BTC, particularly **Rob Balsamo** for making everything come together for us. BIG thanks go to **Korie Gospodarski** at **Jones & Bartlett**



Public Safety Group for their generous donations of drawing prizes at our Friday Dinner. Finally, our thanks to the **AmericInn** of Janesville for their assistance with our room block and Friday night venue, and **Knute's Bar & Grill** of Orfordville for their excellent cuisine and service.

Plans are already underway for the **65th Annual Conference** – going north to Nicolet Technical College in Rhinelander, **February 20-22, 2026**. Check in with our Conference webpage as plans begin to unfold:

www.wsesi.org/annual-conference

YOU can help us set the content and format of the 2026 Annual Conference – send us your input and preferences for the Conference program.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Thanks!

