

Deputy Chief Michael Beard, Indianapolis Fire Department

Professional Background

Michael Beard has dedicated 24 years of service to the citizens of Indianapolis, having been hired in 2001. He currently serves as the Deputy Chief of Community Risk Reduction (CRR) for the Indianapolis Fire Department, a role in which he oversees the Planning Division, Fire Investigation Unit, and Fire & Life Safety Division. In this capacity, Michael manages the bureau's budget, training, and operational functions, while also serving as the Fire Marshal for the city of Indianapolis.

Additionally, Michael represents the department in large-scale event coordination, working alongside various agencies to ensure effective planning, management, and interagency collaboration. He is also an active member of several boards and previously served on the Fire Prevention and Building Safety Commission at the Governor's request. He serves as an adjunct professor at the National Fire Academy and lectures throughout the Midwest on Community Risk Reduction efforts.

Throughout his career, Michael has remained unwavering in his commitment to the Indianapolis Fire Department and its continuous improvement. Before he was appointed Deputy Chief, he held the position of Division Chief of Fire & Life Safety and has served as both a firefighter and company officer at multiple stations within the department.

Education and Personal Background

Michael Beard is a seasoned professional with a diverse career that spans architecture, community service, and fire safety. He graduated from Ball State University in 2002, earning both a Bachelor of Architecture and a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Design.

In 2023, Michael was selected for the prestigious Tobias Fellow Program, offered through the Randall L. Tobias Center for Leadership Development. This year-long program brings together a diverse group of individuals to participate in retreats focused on various aspects of leadership. Upon completing the program, Michael joined the Tobias Leadership Network as a distinguished Tobias Fellow alum.

Born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Michael and his siblings were active in sports while their mother ensured they were exposed to the arts, which ultimately fostered his passion for architecture. He focused on drafting and crafts during high school, setting the foundation for his future career. Following his time at Ball State University's College of Architecture and Planning, Michael moved to Indianapolis with his wife and daughter.

Community engagement has always been a core aspect of Michael's life. He actively participated in various outreach programs and Habitat for Humanity during his education. His commitment to serving the community led him to the Indianapolis Fire Department, where he applied when he learned of a hiring opportunity. As a firefighter, he was able to continue practicing architecture during his off days, which eventually led him to establish his own architecture firm and construction company specializing in single-family home design-build and renovation projects.

In recognition of his dedication, Michael was appointed Fire Marshal for the City of Indianapolis, then serving as the Division Chief of Fire & Life Safety. This role allowed him to combine his

expertise in design and codes with his commitment to public service—effectively merging two of his passions. His hard work was rewarded in 2024 when he was promoted to the Deputy Chief of Community Risk Reduction while retaining the role of Fire Marshal.

Michael resides on the northeast side of Indianapolis with his wife of 25 years. Their oldest daughter is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree at Indiana University in Bloomington, while their son (20) is exploring a career as a social media influencer. Their youngest daughter (18) is a freshman at the University of Cincinnati, studying business. In his free time, Michael enjoys fitness, outdoor activities, reading, and collaborating on design concepts with his wife, an interior designer.