

APCO

MEMBER CHAPTER SERVICES Committee

Teammates in Action

We all know a headset hero that goes above and beyond the call of duty in their everyday actions. Bring their dedication to light by nominating them as a Teammate in Action. They will be featured in this newsletter and APCO social media platforms. Don't wait, submit a nomination today!

<https://www.apcointl.org/membership/awards-recognition/teammates-in-action/>

*he Irish be with
YOU*

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Membership Information

Member Type	02/1/2024	02/1/2025
Associate Members	1,590	1,486
Full Members	3,105	3,039
Full Group Members	8,746	9,043
Online Group Members	20,914	22,136
Commercial Members	356	336
Commercial Group Members	100	127
Student/Educator Members	7	19
Total Number of Members	34,818	36,186
Total Number of Group Agencies	1,483	1,524
Commercial Groups	34	27

Awards Committee

Someone is Always Watching

Throughout my life, I’ve always heard the phrase, “someone is always watching.” It’s true, especially within the communications center. Someone is always listening too. We know of the great things that are happening in the centers, so why aren’t we making nominations?

The APCO International Public Safety Communications Awards Program presents us with an opportunity to praise and celebrate the great work completed and lives saved by our colleagues, co-workers and other peers. We have this opportunity to showcase the impact each role in 9-1-1 may have on a life. As a communications center manager, I have had the opportunity to see how this career field can transform a person into a hero on the phone, radio or within the center.



Awards Committee (continued)

Award categories include:

- Telecommunicator of the Year
- Line Supervisor of the Year
- Radio Frequency Technologist of the Year
- Communications Center Director of the Year
- Information Technologist of the Year
- Trainer of the Year
- Team of the Year

I joined the APCO Awards Committee a few years ago because I love to see other people recognized because they made an impact on someone else's life and/or they help showcase how important the 9-1-1 and public safety industry is for everyone. I saw the power a single nomination could have on a center, state and the nation. These nominations help show why we are life savers, how we trained someone to save a life, supervised a center and maintained safety for responders during a devastating event, smoothly implemented a phone, radio or computer system without interruption to make sure no call for help was missed. These are big accomplishments that deserve recognition, and we may not realize it, but we have so much power in this profession when we complete these nominations.

Over the last several years, telecommunicators and other 9-1-1 professionals have worked hard to become better recognized as first responders, including the push for reclassification as a protective service occupation. We are still pushing and working to show how important telecommunicators have become in maintaining property and lives, but one of the best ways to show this is to complete a nomination for something outstanding you have seen or heard within a center. We want to be recognized as professionals, so let's start by recognizing ourselves!

Anyone may complete a nomination for any category. It only takes a few minutes and the best advice I can give as a person writing a nomination is to keep the person(s) you are nominating in mind. Think of how proud they would be hearing the nomination read to them if they were to hear it for the first time. Detailed and complete sentences help set the stage for the situation and allow the reader to visualize how the person(s) handled a situation that deserves recognition. It never hurts to have someone read over the information to make sure it flows well and is understood.

Members of the APCO Awards Committee enjoy reading the nominations made and want to see more. The nominations are inspiring and even encourage pride within us as we see the great things completed across the nation. Every year, there are nominations that help propel professionalism within the communications centers. We cannot and should not wait for others to make a move and recognize the professionalism, dedication, lives saved and other accomplishments within the centers. We have this great opportunity to recognize one another, and we should take full advantage of it and show we are proud of who we are and what we do every single day.

Submitted By: Chrissy Oldham Brown, 9-1-1 Manager, Shawnee Police Department

Cybersecurity Committee

Our ECCs must all be prepared for the when, not if, a Cybersecurity related incident will have an effect on their organizations. It may be a bit worrisome to think about but depending of course on the size of your agency and the resources available to you there are many ways to prepare for such an eventuality.

This is why our committee has begun the preparation for a webinar on this important topic, scheduled to take place on April 29th, 2025, at 1pm EST. This article's purpose is to highlight and introduce some of the important points to be discussed in more detail on that webinar, and to help prepare your agencies the best way available to respond when a cyber incident occurs.

Every ECC will face some sort of cyber incident with this current landscape, but how will you respond? It could range from anything like unusual behavior or spikes in your network activity all the way up to a major cyber incident requiring full restoration of services which can have major implications for your ability to deliver the critical services you provide.

Consider talking with your local community or regional IT group no matter your agency's size and see what steps they take to prevent cyber incidents in their respective fields. Public Safety systems as everyone reading this article know are critical, involve public and responder safety, and must be restored as soon as humanely possible if an incident occurs.

ECCs can significantly enhance their resilience against cyber incidents, by integrating just a few of the following measures, which will help ensure that the ECC can continue to provide critical services without interruption. As our committee points out frequently, cybersecurity is an ongoing process rather than just a one-time setup or checklist item never to look at again.

ECCs must be vigilant through training on a regular basis on safe internet practices and recognizing phishing attempts via email. Managers can also ensure that by implementing strict access controls, only employees who have the training and privilege to access critical systems do so. ECCs are reminded to evaluate obtaining Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) systems to monitor network activities in real-time, allowing for quick detection of anomalies. Of course, staying informed about the latest cyber threats and adapting accordingly with appropriate security measures will help greatly, that's a no cost thing everyone can do!

To find out more resources on how to respond to a cyber incident, check out the [911 Cybersecurity Resource Hub](#) and [Cybersecurity Incident Response](#) by the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency.

Please again be reminded that the [upcoming webinar](#) on this topic presented by members of the APCO Cybersecurity Committee is scheduled for April 29th, 2025 at 1pm EST. These webinars are run by peers in the industry, who are not vendors or technical experts, but represent a broad field of knowledge of this concept from real life experience in their ECCs and agencies. As always, members are encouraged to check out the [APCO webinars](#) for some great education.

Submitted by: Kevin Lessard, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex RECC, Tewksbury, MA

Health & Wellness Committee

Havening: A Simple Technique for Stress Relief

Have you ever noticed yourself rubbing your hands together when you're feeling anxious? Or maybe you've instinctively run your hands up and down your arms, even when you're not cold? If so, you're already practicing a powerful technique called Havening. Havening is designed to help calm the mind and body.

*The word Havening comes from haven, meaning a safe, peaceful place. When we feel stressed, anxious, or overwhelmed, we naturally seek ways to self-soothe and regain a sense of security. Havening works by using touch to stimulate the production of **serotonin**, a neurotransmitter known for its mood-boosting and calming effects. By increasing serotonin levels, Havening can help you relax and detach from distressing thoughts or experiences.*

You can work with a trained Havening practitioner or use self-Havening techniques anytime, anywhere—even behind the dispatch console. Try one or more of the following exercises:

Havening Arm Rub

- Cross your arms over your chest as if hugging yourself.
- Gently rub your arms in a downward motion from shoulders to elbows.

Breathing with Havening

- While doing the arm rub, take slow, deep breaths and say aloud, "*Calm and relax.*"
- Alternatively, hum softly for 1–2 minutes as you breathe deeply.

Box Breathing with Havening

- While doing the arm rub use the box breathing technique.
- Inhale deeply for a count of four.
- Hold your breath for four seconds.
- Exhale slowly for four seconds.
- Hold again for four seconds before repeating the cycle three or more times.

Hand Rubbing

- Gently stroke the palm of one hand with the other in a back-and-forth motion, as if warming your hands.

Havening is a simple yet effective tool for reducing stress, promoting relaxation, and improving overall well-being. Since energy cannot be destroyed—only transformed—Havening helps redirect and release tension, allowing the mind to quiet and the body to relax.

Give it a try the next time you need a moment of calm. Your body already knows how to self-soothe—now you just have a name for it!

Submitted by: Shannon M. White, Chief of Personnel Development, Chesterfield Emergency Communications

Health & Wellness Committee (continued)

Recharge and Reset: The Power of Napping for 911 Dispatchers

In honor of National Napping Day, March 10, 2025, APCO's Health and Wellness Committee wants to remind you that a well-timed nap can be a game-changer—especially for 911 dispatchers managing long shifts, stress, and unpredictable schedules. Research shows that short naps improve alertness, cognitive performance, and overall well-being. These are all key benefits for those in high-stakes emergency response roles.

The Science Behind Napping


Studies from the National Sleep Foundation and Harvard Medical School highlight the following:

- Improve memory and learning
- Enhance alertness and reaction time
- Reduce stress and support heart health

Napping Tips for Dispatchers

To make the most of a nap:

- **Keep it short** – A 10-20 minute nap prevents grogginess while boosting energy.
- **Time it right** – Early afternoon (or equivalent for your shift) is ideal for a quick recharge.
- **Create a restful environment** – A dark, quiet space with minimal interruptions is best.
- **Use strategic caffeine** – A "coffee nap" (drinking coffee before a 20-minute nap) can enhance wakefulness.



Why nap?

- Boosts alertness & reaction time
- Enhances memory & learning
- Lowers stress & supports heart health

Napping Tips

- 10-20 minutes is ideal—prevents grogginess
- Best time: Early afternoon (1-3 PM)
- Find a quiet, dark space for better rest
- Try a "coffee nap"—drink coffee before a short nap for extra wakefulness

If your schedule allows, incorporating naps can help combat fatigue and improve focus on the job. Take a moment to rest this National Napping Day, or any day—your mind and body will thank you!

Submitted by Alicia Williams, MA, Phoenix Fire Department Regional Dispatch Center

References:

Mednick, S. C., Nakayama, K., & Stickgold, R. (2003). Sleep-dependent learning: A nap is as good as a night. *Nature Neuroscience*, 6(7), 697–698. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nn1078>

NASA. (1995). *Fatigue countermeasures in aviation*. NASA Technical Report.

Faraut, B., Nakib, S., Drogou, C., Elbaz, M., Sauvet, F., De Bandt, J. P., & Léger, D. (2011). Napping reverses the impact of sleep restriction on cortisol levels. *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, 96(11), E1657–E1662. <https://doi.org/10.1210/jc.2011-0356>

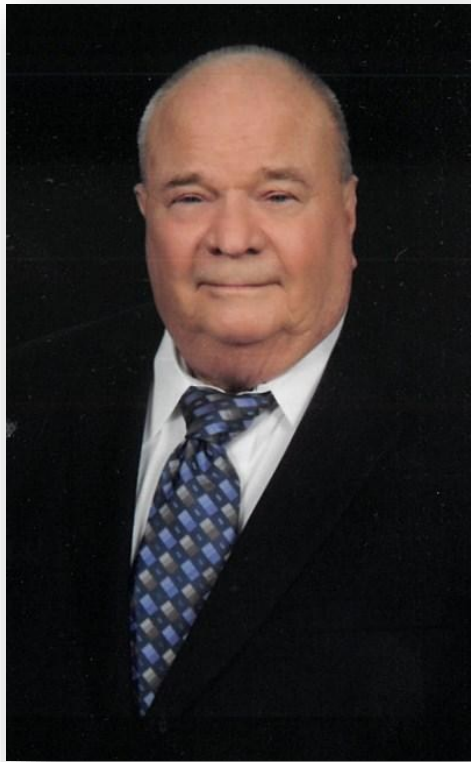
Historical Committee

Remembering Our Past: Life and Senior Member Weldon Josiah "Joe" Blair Jr.

Life and Senior Member Weldon Joe Blair passed away on January 4, 2025 at the age of 88 years.

Joe was a veteran in the Army. He spent most of his career in public safety communications. First working for Collins Radio where he worked on Classified projects. And then DFW (Dallas Fort Worth) airport until his retirement. He was a lifetime member of APCO International (Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials) and was honored with an award named after him, The Weldon Joe Blair Award of Distinction. He was a member of the Historical Committee for two years (2010-2012) and the Spectrum Management Committee for two years (2010-2012).

A lifetime member of the ARRL, as a Ham Radio operator Joe enjoyed meeting and talking to people worldwide. Joe was a Master Mason. He and Mildred were also involved in Eastern Star and loved serving in various capacities.



Mr. Weldon Josiah Blair Jr.

Submitted by Charles Venske, RPL

Commercial Advisory Committee

The Value of Being Part of the CCAM Mentorship Program

The CCAM (Commercial Chapter Advisory Member) Mentorship Program has proven to be an invaluable resource for CCAMs across various chapters of APCO. The mentorship group recognizes the importance of time management, meeting just 3-4 times a year to accommodate everyone's busy schedules. Despite the limited formal meetings, the group's true strength lies in the ongoing support it offers. Even between meetings, members are readily available for guidance and assistance. This program fosters collaboration, support, and the exchange of ideas that enable CCAMs to thrive in their roles while strengthening commercial membership engagement at the chapter level. Each group is composed of both seasoned and new CCAMs, fostering an environment of learning and growth. Serving as a CCAM is a volunteer role, and balancing this responsibility with a full-time job can be challenging.

Why the CCAM Mentorship Program Matters

Elected or nominated CCAMs often face challenges due to the lack of formal training or a handoff process from their predecessors. This uncertainty can create stress and confusion about the position's responsibilities. The mentorship program addresses this gap by offering guidance, resources, and a support network that helps CCAMs succeed and grow their chapters' commercial memberships. Hearing success stories from other chapters inspires new ideas. Equally valuable have been the insights into ideas that didn't work—saving time and effort by avoiding potential pitfalls

Key Skills Developed Through the Program

The CCAM Mentorship Program emphasizes developing essential skills to enhance a CCAM's effectiveness, including:

- Leadership:** Building confidence in leading initiatives and guiding chapter activities.
- Policy and By-laws Changes:** Navigating the intricacies of chapter governance.
- Commercial Membership Engagement:** Strengthening relationships with commercial members and fostering participation.
- Knowledge Sharing:** Exchanging ideas and solutions that benefit all chapters.
- Brainstorming Solutions:** Collaborating to address common challenges and develop innovative strategies.

Commercial Advisory Committee *(continued)*

The Role of a CCAM

Being a CCAM means serving as a direct representative to the APCO Chapter for its commercial membership. This role provides commercial members with a voice in chapter business. The connections built in this role extend beyond professional networks, fostering relationships with both commercial businesses and public safety professionals across the chapter and beyond.

One of the unique aspects of the CCAM role is its flexibility—there are no strict guidelines from APCO International dictating how the position should function. This allows chapters the freedom to tailor the role to best serve their needs and create meaningful partnerships.

Conclusion

Participating in the CCAM Mentorship Program will only help you become a better CCAM. It will not only enhance your effectiveness as a CCAM but will also strengthen your chapter through shared knowledge and reduced trial and error. The program exemplifies the power of collaboration and the immense value of having a network of dedicated professionals who share a passion for advancing commercial membership and supporting APCO chapters.

“Having been part of the CCAM Mentorship Group for a year, I can confidently say that its purpose of support and idea-sharing has been immensely beneficial. Knowing that I have a network of experienced professionals to consult with is both reassuring and empowering.” -Jenny Mason

The mentorship program’s support, resources, and connections continue to prove to be invaluable. It empowers CCAMs to lead with confidence, drive growth, and foster meaningful relationships within the public safety community.

Submitted by:

Jenny Mason, CEO of Communication Center Specialists

Alex Spencer, President of Quality Recording Solutions

Curtis Johnson, Senior Consultant at CTA Consultants, LLC

Amy Jenkins, Account Manager at Motorola Solutions



APCO Committee Sign-ups

If you are interested in serving on an APCO Committee be sure to tune in to this very informative upcoming webinar, Tuesday March 4th at 10:00 EST. Reminder if you are currently on a committee and want to be on it again, you must sign up!

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/453190550351696733>

APCO Scholarships

APCO scholarships are now open for applications! Funds can be used for APCO's leadership programs or professional development courses. Submit your applications by the deadlines below:

[CPE Scholarship](#): Deadline - February 15

[RPL Scholarship](#): Deadline - March 1

[General scholarship](#): Deadline - April 1

[Learn more](#)

MCSC Monthly Poll Results

In the latest Member & Chapter Services Committee survey, we focused on National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week. We received a record of 119 responses!

Question 1: What funding sources do you utilize to pay for NPSTW? (119 responses)

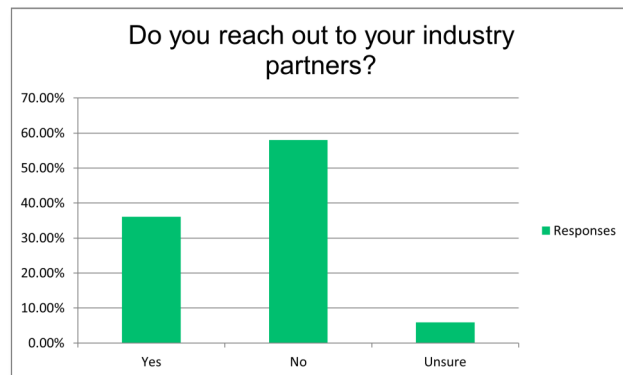
- Bake sale (4 responses)
- **Budgeted line item (44 responses)**
- Collect funds from member agencies (7 responses)
- Collect local donations (27 responses)
- Comm Center snack sales (11 responses)
- **Donations from other departments, associations, and auxiliaries (39 responses)**
- Grants (0 responses)
- **Personal funds (77 responses)**
- Raffles (5 responses)
- Seek sponsorships (4 responses)
- State Chapter (1 response)
- T-shirt sales (3 responses)
- N/A (7 responses)
- Other (3 responses)
 - “Dress Down” donations
 - County ordinance
 - Fundraising throughout the year (Valentines, Holiday Candy Grams, Lucky Charms, etc.)

Question 2: Do you reach out to your industry partners? (119 responses)

- Yes (43 responses)
- No (69 responses)
- Unsure (7 responses)

Here are some of the additional comments we received from our respondents on this question:

- “It isn’t allowed by the agency.”*
- “Previously, but not currently.”*
- “Yes, they provide a meal or gift.”*
- “Yes, we offer the opportunity to provide swag for TCs.”*



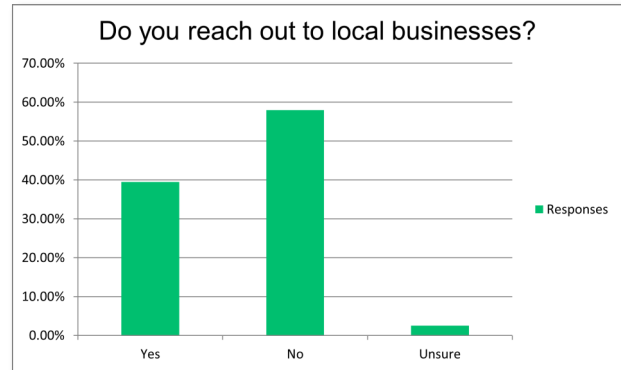
MCSC Monthly Poll Results *(continued)*

Question 3: Do you reach out to local businesses? (119 responses)

- Yes (47 responses)
- No (69 responses)
- Unsure (3 responses)

Here are some of the additional comments we received from our respondents on this question:

It isn't allowed by the agency.
Planning to, but not previously.
Previously, but not currently.
Yes, they provide a meal or gift.
Yes, via the employee association



Question 4: Do you celebrate theme days? If so, what have been some of the staff's favorite days

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beach (21 responses) • Camo (8 responses) • Carnival (8 responses) • Collegiate (23 responses) • Concert T-shirt (18 responses) • Crazy hats, crazy socks (29 responses) • Decades-themed (43 responses) • Disney (23 responses) • Dress down (29 responses) • Farmer (3 responses) • Formal/prom/red carpet/royalty (13 responses) • Friends (4 responses) • Harry Potter (3 responses) • Law Enforcement/Public Safety (16 responses) • Mardi Gras (5 responses) • Monopoly (2 responses) • Movie characters (16 responses) • Murder mystery (2 response) • Pajamas (45 responses) • Pirates (3 responses) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports-themed (38 responses) • Superheroes (27 responses) • Tacky (10 responses) • Tie-dye (9 responses) • Tourist (6 responses) • Tropical/Hawaiian (25 responses) • Twin/Matching (13 responses) • Western (11 responses) • Wizard of Oz (0 responses) • N/A (32 responses) • Other (16 responses) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around-the-World • Candy Land • Favorite Color • Monsters • Rockstars • Star Wars • Thin Gold Line Attire • Zen Day • Zombies |
|---|--|



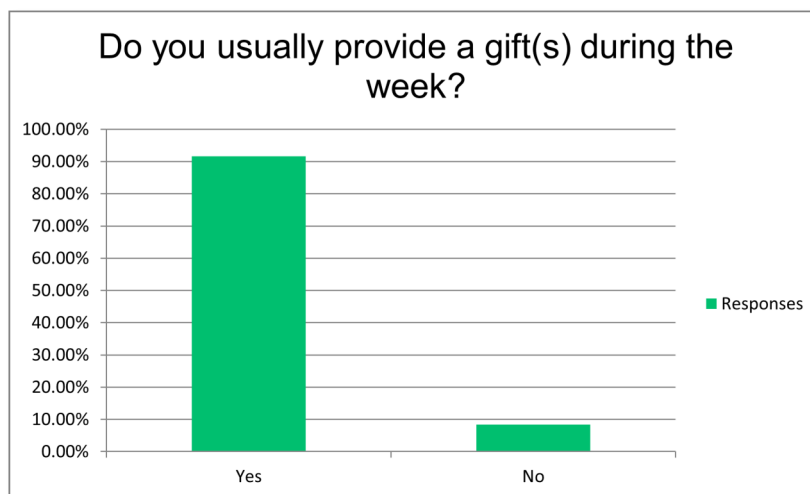
MCSC Monthly Poll Results (continued)

Question 5: How do you encourage recognition by your member agencies? (112 responses)

- Advocate, advocate, advocate! (50 responses)
- Call on friends, relatives, and significant others in the agencies for their support (14 responses)
- Communication is key – send emails, discuss in staff meetings, and post to social media or internal channels well before the event (53 responses)
- Coordinate for donations and include local public safety agencies and associations (21 responses)
- Host open house events to draw public interest (3 responses)
- Include the departments with invitations to awards banquets (12 responses)
- Involve your chaplain, volunteer programs, teen programs, etc. (5 responses)
- Reach out to local elected officials and the media for recognition throughout the week (19 responses)
- Record “thank you” videos (8 responses)
- Send blank cards for staff at public safety agencies to sign (10 responses)
- Utilize focus committees or awards committees to spread the word (5 responses)
- N/A (21 responses)
- Other (2 responses)
 - Pay it forward – deliver baskets to surrounding agencies
 - Visits from sworn personnel

Question 6: Do you usually provide a gift(s) during the week? (119 responses)

- Yes (109 responses)
- No (10 responses)



MCSC Monthly Poll Results *(continued)*

Question 7: Which gifts have been a big hit with staff? (114 responses)

- **Agency-branded items (45 responses)**
- Allowing them to pick a gift from a catalog (7 responses)
- Backpacks (26 responses)
- Beach towels (2 response)
- Beanies (5 responses)
- Blankets (22 responses)
- Catered meals (43 responses)
- Challenge coins (17 responses)
- Electronics chargers (6 responses)
- Fidget toys (11 responses)
- **Food (any kind!) (60 responses)**
- **Gift cards (48 responses)**
- Gym Bags (9 responses)
- Headset bags (18 responses)
- Hoodies (35 responses)
- Jackets (23 responses)
- Laptop bags (5 responses)
- Lottery tickets (8 responses)
- Lunch boxes (23 responses)
- Mugs (24 responses)
- Personalized items (31 responses)
- Shadow boxes (0 responses)
- Spillproof cups (24 responses)
- Sweatshirts (22 responses)
- Themed packages (8 responses)
- Totes (22 responses)
- **T-shirts (45 responses)**
- Tumblers (41 responses)
- Umbrellas (6 responses)
- N/A (4 responses)
- Other (8 responses)
 - Auction items
 - Coolers
 - Luggage tags
 - Scalp massagers
 - Tactical bags
 - Team jerseys
 - Travel bags
 - Work console items

Question 8: How else do you celebrate NPSTW? (115 responses)

- Adopting a department from another state by sending gift baskets with items from your agency or state (9 responses)
- Adopt a dispatcher (9 responses)
- Allowing the telecommunicators to participate in the planning, if possible (46 responses)
- **Catered meals (57 responses)**
- Creating a game for prizes by posting baby pictures or pet pictures on a bulletin board for correct guesses (25 responses)
- **Creating a theme for the week with events, food, games, etc. built around it (52 responses)**

MCSC Monthly Poll Results *(continued)*

- Creating a video montage of people from the community, other departments, supervisors, etc. saying “thank you” (5 responses)
- Dessert deliveries (25 responses)
- Food deliveries (48 responses)
- Games for prizes: bingo, punch boards, raffles (55 responses)**
- Hand out booklets with notes of appreciation from coworkers or “coworker kudos cards” (10 responses)
- Have officers and/or firefighters decorate dispatch (1 response)
- Have the city or county display a large banner in a high-traffic area of town (1 response)
- Hold a banquet or award ceremony (13 responses)
- Hold an open house for the public to come and tour the facility (1 response)
- Invite telecommunicators and their families to shift appreciation meals (4 responses)
- Knowing that no matter the size of the agency or budget, finding a way to say thank you goes a long way (36 responses)
- Paying it forward to agencies that don’t celebrate (3 responses)
- Personalized gift bags (20 responses)
- Proclamations from City Councils, County Commissioners Courts, or Governor’s Offices shared with other departments and the media (39 responses)
- Recognizing up the chain, not just down the chain (10 responses)
- Set up a food bar each shift: taco, baked potato, nacho, hotdog, sundae, popcorn, and candy (26 responses)
- Social media posts from the department or city pages (48 responses)
- Write articles for the local media to run a personal interest story or series (5 responses)
- N/A (12 responses)

THANK YOU to those who responded to this survey. We appreciate your time and the detail you provided, as this will help the Member & Chapter Services Committee to better assist you and your Chapters.

Upcoming Summit



Join us for the second [9-1-1 Wellness Summit](#) taking place **March 2-3** in Portland, Oregon. This year's Wellness Summit is one day longer to provide you with even more tools and insights to support your personal and professional mental, physical, and emotional health. Our 2025 program features sessions such as:

- Getting Unstuck From Trauma When Stuck at the Consoles
- FIT for the Call
- Sleep Wellness
- Mindfulness & Meditation
- Build, Empower & Inspire Your Peer Support Team

Those are just examples of some of our sessions! Check out our [full program](#) to learn about all of our sessions, speakers and activities. Register now at <https://911wellness.org/registration/>. This year we are co-located with APCO Western Regional. Western Regional attendees can get \$25 off Wellness Summit registration using code WRC25.

Upcoming Conferences



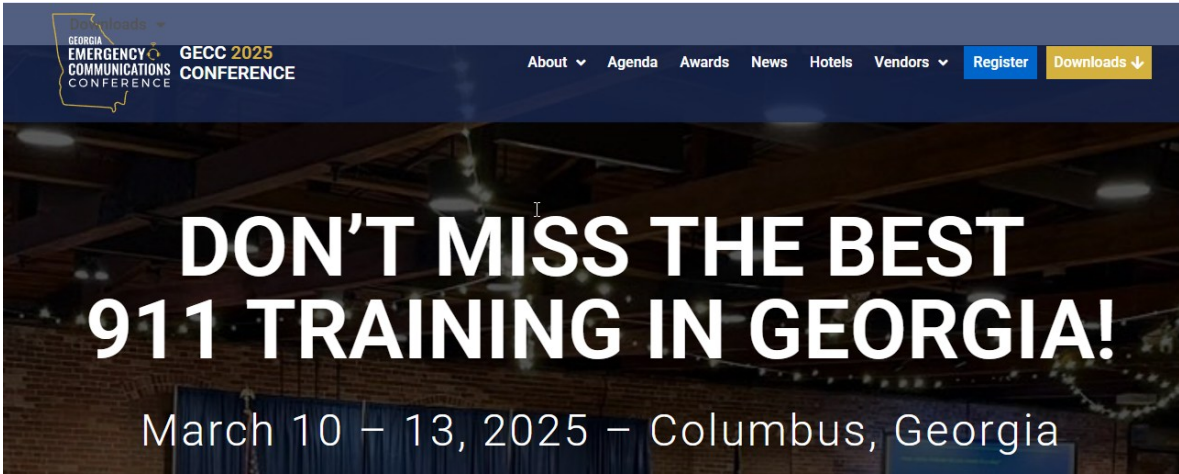
MARK YOUR CALENDARS
FOR
2025 APCO WESTERN REGIONAL
PORTLAND CONVENTION CENTER
■ MARCH 3-6, 2025 ■



SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER
CONFERENCE ROOM RATES

HYATT REGENCY PORTLAND AT THE OREGON CONVENTION CENTER

Upcoming Conferences (continued)



GEORGIA EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE

GECC 2025 CONFERENCE

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DON'T MISS THE BEST 911 TRAINING IN GEORGIA!

March 10 – 13, 2025 – Columbus, Georgia

For more information visit...

[Georgia Emergency Communications Conference \(GECC\) – March 10 – 13, 2025 – Columbus, Georgia](#)



REGISTRATION IS OPEN!!

TXPSC2025 MCALLEN, TX APRIL 2 - 5, 2025

*HOTEL BOOKING INFORMATION INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION CONFIRMATION EMAIL

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION ENDS FEBRUARY 14, 2025

txpublicsafetyconference.com

TEXAS PUBLIC SAFETY CONFERENCE

Serving Texas and the International Border Regions
hosted by TX APCO and TX NENA

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Chapter Member Services Committee Members (continued)

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