



Robert Gray (Bob)

Bob spent 30 years with Arlington County Fire Department (ACFD), serving as a firefighter, paramedic, Captain and Battalion Chief. While serving as captain Bob was a team leader of the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team and ACFD technical rescue team (TRT) and Collapse team programs. Seven years prior to retirement Bob was promoted to the level of Battalion Chief and served in the positions including Field Battalion Chief, Department Training Division Chief, and Personnel Services Chief.

During his career, Bob was involved in a number of significant incidents including the LaPlata, Maryland Tornado (Arlington/Alexandria TRT Task Force), Hurricane Katrina (NOVA Task Force), and the response to the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon. After 2000, Bob led the CISM program to plan, address and support ACFD personnel dealing with stress with work on enhancing behavioral health programs with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The CISM was particularly critical in assisting ACFD members during and after the response to the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon. Shortly after 2001, the CISM program transitioned into a highly specialized Traumatic Experience Recovery Program (TERP). Bob and Dodie Gill, (President/CEO New Millennium and former ACFD EAP Director) led the transition.

Shortly after Bob's retirement from ACFD he was working on his house when a ladder failed resulting in a sixteen-foot fall causing a traumatic brain injury. The damage to his skull and brain were significant. After major brain surgery Bob spent several weeks in a coma and about 2 months recovering at Parkland Hospital in Dallas, Texas. As a result of his injuries, Bob faced a number of challenges including memory loss, partial paralysis and the loss of his ability to communicate. The combination of a quick response by first responders and doctors and rehabilitation services combined with his overall fitness at the time of his injury has enabled him to make a significant recovery.

Bob's involvement with Project Rebirth began prior to retiring from Arlington County Fire Department and he currently serves as a Project Rebirth Senior Advisor leading the First Responders Resiliency Network (FRRN). Through his current role with Project Rebirth Bob is fortunate to continue working with first responders across the country. Through Project Rebirth he is partnering with organizations such as Ride 2 Recovery and the September 11 Memorial and Museum to reach first responders and military members. The FRRN Team is working to expand the understanding and acceptance of preparing first responders to deal with the traumatic exposures they experience on their job.