

SHIFT: First Responder Mental Wellness Conference



Tuesday, April 16, 2024

7:00 am – 8:00 am	Conference Check-in and Continental breakfast	
8:00 am – 8:30 am	Welcome	
8:30 am – 10:00 am	<p>Concurrent Session A: Support for the Peer Supporter, Daniel Sundahl We don't often think of the extra stressors that peer support members have. In addition to the regular stress of the job, they also experience vicarious trauma by taking on the stress of others. In this workshop, peer support members learn the extra tools and techniques it takes to be resilient while performing the rewarding work of a peer support team member. Participants will also build an individualized, preventive mental health plan.</p>	<p>Concurrent Session B: Zero to Sixty – Career Survival, 2 The Rescue (Mike Wierenga/Terry Bykerk) Through boots on the ground experiences, Mike and Terry provide first responders a clear understanding of why their profession can lead to destructive habits and unhealthy lifestyles. We will demonstrate how the inability to manage the cumulative stress from daily exposures to adrenaline and trauma can negatively affect the responder's safety, decision-making and ability to remain ethically solid. First responders will be given tools to manage their everyday stressors, and to recognize the warning signs for chronic and post-traumatic stress and suicidal behavior. All will leave with realistic, simple, and successful methods to help themselves and support their colleagues.</p>
10:00 am – 10:15 am	Break	
10:15 am – 11:45 am	Concurrent Session A, continued	Concurrent Session B, continued
11:45 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch and Networking	
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm	<p>The Fatal 10, Olivia Johnson, Blue Wall Institute The Fatal 10 will help predict and manage suicide risk factors, suicidal ideations, and attempts among first responder groups. The idea is to identify and address red flags and questionable behavior before negative outcomes occur. The information provided in this outstanding session will save lives, families, and careers.</p>	
2:30 pm – 2:45 pm	Break	
2:45 pm – 4:30 pm	The Fatal 10, continued	
5:15 pm – 6:30 pm	<p>Relationship Survival, Mike & Anna Wierenga In this session, we will discuss the challenges that can arise from first responder job stress while considering the unique perspectives of both you and your significant other. Together, we will explore ways to promote mental and emotional well-being in your relationship and family life. Don't miss this invaluable opportunity to strengthen your relationship, foster understanding, and create a solid foundation for a more fulfilling and balanced family life. This session is designed for the first responder AND their significant other, but first responders are welcome to attend solo to understand how their interactions might impact the family.</p> <p>Note: This session is intended for first responders AND their significant others, however registered conference guests attending solo will also come away with information to help their relationships thrive. Spouses or significant others may attend this session free of charge. Any additional sessions require paid conference registration.</p>	

See opposite side for the agenda for Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

7:00 am – 8:00 am	Conference Check-in and Continental breakfast
8:00 am – 8:30 am	Welcome
8:30 am – 9:30 am	<p>Sometimes What Hurts the Most Can't Be Seen: And Sometimes What Helps the Most is Easy to Do, David Woods Bartley</p> <p>The truth is despair, depression, and hopelessness don't always look a certain way. We are often surprised to learn of the deep suffering of those we know but would never suspect. This is especially true for the heroic women and men we call First Responders. I was one of those sufferers, kept silent by shame and a commitment to keeping my pain to myself. But, thanks to the help of ordinary yet incredible people I am here, alive and well. Hear the story of my journey from a suicide attempt and a decade's long fight with mental "hellness" to genuine mental health. I will share how a mental illness feels, what caused my condition, lessons learned, how I care for myself today, and the simple actions we can take to create connection, and in doing so, activate the life-saving power of <i>Hope</i> for self and others.</p>
9:30 am – 9:45 am	Break
9:45 am – 10:45 am	<p>Surviving the Darkness: Finding the Light Within, Ashley Iverson, Iverson Foundation for Active Awareness</p> <p>On December 14th, 2017, Cory Iverson, a Fire Apparatus Engineer for CAL FIRE paid the ultimate sacrifice while battling the Thomas Fire in Ventura County, California, one of the largest wildfires in California history. First responders face unique challenges related to their roles, and face stigma from others and their own colleagues due to the perception by others that they are "super human". The goal of IFAA is to help reduce mental and behavioral health concerns in first responders through a variety of supportive, sponsored modalities that can be incorporated into agencies. This presentation is a call to action to raise awareness, shifting the current culture, and encouraging a proactive approach to first responder mental health.</p>
10:45 am – 11:45 am	<p>Coming Home from Tragedy, Justin Templeton, Oxford Fire Department</p> <p>In today's Emergency medical services we must embrace the idea of post traumatic growth as both an outcome and a process. This enables the provider to embrace their own survival and improvement as they work through surviving and back to thriving.</p>
11:45 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch and Networking
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	<p>Getting Off the Emotional X, Olivia Johnson, Blue Wall Institute</p> <p>This session is specifically designed for anyone impacted by critical or traumatic events – on or off duty. No one is fully immune from the impacts of such events, but the sooner you get off the emotional X the better. <i>Getting Off the Emotional X (coined by Dr. Olivia Johnson)</i> is the concept that remaining in a place of pain, conflict, or emotional turmoil can increase one's risk for negative consequences such as sleep disturbances, insomnia, alcohol abuse and addiction, communication issues, relationship issues, and suicide.</p>
3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	Break
3:15 pm – 4:15 pm	<p>Controllable vs. Non-Controllable Stressors, Daniel Sundahl</p> <p>The assumption is that most stressors we face as emergency workers are from the calls we attend, which may be true for some. But for many of us, most stress comes from controllable factors. In this session, I will define the controllable and non-controllable stressors in our profession and ways to recognize, minimize, or even eliminate the stressors we can control.</p>
4:15 pm – 4:30 pm	Conference Wrap-Up and Evaluations

See opposite side for the agenda for Tuesday, April 16, 2024