

1ST RESPONDER MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS CONFERENCE

Presented by 1st Responder Conferences

March 25-26, 2024

8 AM - 4 PM

Co-hosted by

Behind the Line Inc

Worcester County Sheriff's Office

Endorsed by

Ocean City Fire Department, Ocean City Police Department,
Ocean City FOP Lodge 10, Fruitland Police Department, Salisbury
Fire Department, Ocean City Emergency Services, Ocean Pines
Police Department, Maryland Institute for EMS Systems,
Berlin Police Department



**Early Bird Registration
is \$360**

After 3/4/24 \$400

*(plus clearevent fees)
Registration is required*

Our two-day multifaceted training and networking events are for all 1st Responders, Police, Fire, EMS, Dispatchers, Military/Veterans, Corrections, Coroners, Chaplains, Retired First Responders, Spouses, Professional staff, Clinicians, and all those who work in or around the Public Safety field.

- ⇒ Certificate of attendance will be available for self-submittal
- ⇒ Includes: Breakfast, Lunch, Networking Social, SWAG bag and raffles
- ⇒ Location: Ashore Resort & Beach Club - 10100 Coastal Hwy

Partners and Sponsors:



Visit our website for more information and to register: www.1stRC.org



1st Responder Conferences Presents

1st Responder Mental Health and Wellness

Co-hosted by Behind the Line, Inc and Worcester County Sheriff's Office

Endorsed by Ocean City Fire Department, Ocean City Police Department, Ocean City FOP Lodge 10,

Fruitland Police Department, Salisbury Fire Department, Ocean City Emergency Services,

Ocean Pines Police Department, Maryland Institute for EMS Systems, Berlin Police Department

March 25-26, 2024, from 8am-4pm

March 25th, Networking Social from 4-6pm

Ashore Resort & Beach Club

10100 Coastal Highway - Ocean City

***You must register to attend. Seats are limited at this conference.**

Early Bird Registration is \$360/person (plus fees)

After March 4, 2024, Registration is \$400 (plus fees)

***Continental breakfast, lunch, appetizers, and networking social included**

***SWAG/Raffle/Door Prizes**

***Please consider attending, sponsoring and or passing this information on to other organizations and agencies. See attachments for sponsorship options, donations, marketing, and networking tools.**

<https://app.clearevent.com/eventPortal#event/39855908-d747-4c79-acbd-3a42509e8dbe/home>

Or visit <http://www.1stRC.org/>

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1st Responder Conferences is committed to the emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of public safety professionals and we work with leaders in the public safety professions to make this possible. We recognize that first responders are our greatest asset, and we feel it is our responsibility to create a climate that supports wellness and resiliency. We are dedicated to promoting awareness surrounding the difficulties of the profession and inspiring conversations that minimize the stigma associated with the stress our first responders' experience. We provide education, mental health tools and resources for agencies, individuals, and family members. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for all who dedicate themselves to protecting and serving others.

1st Responder Conferences partners with nonprofit organizations like First H.E.L.P. and ICISF. We work together to make sure all first responders get the resources they need to live a happy and healthy life!



Speakers and Topics:

“Sometimes Heroes Need Help” Sgt. John Kelly, (Retired) Law Enforcement Life Coach LLC- This program addresses the personal, professional, financial, physical, and mental health of our first responders. While using a series of life events I look to normalize difficult conversations. The difficulties in dealing with relationships, PTSD, and thoughts of harming oneself are discussed at length. The importance of you making yourself a priority is stressed throughout the program. I also incorporate the importance of caring and acknowledging the moral responsibility we have to be there for each other. John is a thirty-year veteran of Broward County Sheriff's Office. Throughout his career he struggled with alcoholism, addiction, adultery, PTSD, and thoughts of suicide. John has taken his life experiences, both the good and the bad, to develop a wellness / leadership program for those still fighting the good fight. His program is a three-hour motivational seminar that addresses the whole of the person. Personal, professional, financial, physical, and mental health are the focus. This is a proactive initiative that looks to start the conversation and remove the stigmas associated with asking for help. Difficult topics are examined at a level that becomes relatable and actionable. Relationships, PTSD, and suicide are addressed, and resources are explored. If not me then who? If not you then who? In an environment that has abandoned the law enforcement profession at every level, now more than ever we need to be there for each other. There exists a moral responsibility for us to care for our brothers and sisters.

“ACE(s) in the Hole: When childhood trauma and occupational stressors collide”- Cinnamon Reiheld, Founder, Clinician and Trainer of Whole House Counseling and Consultation- There are many first responders who have higher ACES scores which can add nuances to their healing process from occupational exposure of traumatic events. This training will focus on attachment issues, early childhood trauma, and how it complicates PTS in first responders. Whole House Counseling & Consultation was founded when Cinnamon Reiheld spent eight months serving a local fire department following a line of duty death. While providing counseling and emotional support, she quickly realized that the need for culturally competent mental health care for first responders extended beyond this one tragic event. In addition to individual counseling and trauma recovery, Cinnamon saw the need to train departments and help team members support one another by understanding the inevitable effects of stress on the mind and body. One of our top priorities is eliminating the stigma around seeking mental health treatment, while giving departments the tools to function well both internally and for our communities.

“Unhealthy Coping and How it Impacts Anxiety”- George Forsythe (Retired MD State Trooper) Driftwood Psychotherapy- The stress we experience working as first responders is non-debatable. The days are often long. The work entails doing and seeing things we wish we hadn't at times. Our families certainly love us, but they could never really understand what a normal day on the job looks like. When the day is over, we come home and need to turn down the volume a bit in our head. What works for many is having a drink or two or more. Alcohol is a solution to a problem that, when abused, becomes the problem. Drinking, especially binge drinking, to reduce stress becomes the stressor. I will explain how this happens. I will include a detailed definition of an alcohol use disorder using DSM-5 criteria so demonstrate what we think is a problem with alcohol may not fit the medical definition of a problem. I will demonstrate more effective methods to reduce and maintain reduced stress overall using subconscious mind interventions I have found effective in my private practice and personal life. George Forsythe was a Maryland State Trooper for 25 years working mostly covert investigations. He has been hired as a hitman numerous times, was incarcerated with a murder suspect, purchased drugs and sought fugitives among other things while working undercover. Events in George's life led him to retire from the police department and pursue a career first as a substance abuse counselor and now a mental health therapist working with police officers and other first responders. George published a brief biography

entitled *I Am That Centurion: My Journey from Cop to Counselor* (Amazon.com) and has his own practice, Driftwood Psychotherapy, in Eldersburg, MD.

“Death, Rebirth and Whole New Attitude”- Battalion Chief Randy Feltner, Naval District Washington Fire and Emergency Services- As a first responder I know as well as anyone that we have an issue with our physical fitness and the focus placed on it at all levels in our departments. As big of an advocate for physical fitness as I am, I have also been on the worst-case scenario playing out. I am a survivor of a heart attack and sudden cardiac arrest while on duty in 2018. The physical recovery was tough but not nearly as rough as the mental recovery. My class talks about prevention for serious and traumatic illness in our line of work but also a different perspective on how to deal with the mental and emotional hurdles for yourself and your colleagues after a traumatic event or illness occurs. Randy Feltner has served 23 years in the Fire Service with 20 of those years working for Naval District Washington Fire and Emergency Services where he is currently serving as a Battalion Chief. He is a Life Member of the Colonial Beach Vol. Fire Department where he has served in many capacities including Fire Chief. He holds a B.S. in Fire Service Administration and a M.S. in Emergency Services Management from Columbia Southern University. He is also a survivor of a Cardiac Arrest / Heart Attack on duty and has turned near tragedy into a tool to help firefighters change their attitude towards their personal health. He is most importantly a loving father and husband to his two daughters Nora and Kynlee, and his wife Katie.

“Healthy-ish Eating for First Responders”- Megan Lautz, Registered Dietitian and Strength Coach, RescueRD LLC- Healthy-ish Eating for First Responders” will dispel the illusion that there is a “perfect diet” for all first responders. First responders face a variety of challenges when it comes to eating well. Many dietitians will talk at an ideal level that, unfortunately, does not resonate with this population. This public safety-specific approach will zone in on challenges and common gaps in nutrition discovered after seven years of experience and hundreds of station visits. Understand the tangible and realistic nutrition interventions for shift workers. Discover tips and tricks for eating well on a 12 or 24-hour shift. Learn how to make healthier choices when packaged food or fast food are the only options available. The key to eating well in this career is understanding that there is a range of healthy eating, and consistently making the best effort is what counts.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

- Understand the physical and mental job demands of first responders.
- Review an ideal nutrition foundation but in the language and mindset of a first responder.
- Provide realistic interventions designed to improve first responder-specific health risks.

Megan Lautz is a Registered Dietitian and strength coach with a Master's in Sports Nutrition. Megan specializes in First Responder Nutrition, tailoring nutrition to fit the lifestyle. She works full-time for Fairfax Fire and Police (just outside of DC). While a civilian, Megan has strived to understand the challenges public safety personnel face when trying to stay healthy. Megan is also the owner of RescueRD LLC, which provides nutrition seminars and coaching for first responders across the country.

"Living Forward for First Responders: Grief & Loss"- Edward Curtis, LSW and Lisa Zoll LCSW and Owner of Grief Relief - This presentation will address the impact of grief and loss on first responders and how it can have a cumulative effect on them both personally and professionally. After this course, participants will be able to:

1. Identify grief responses that impact first responders.
2. Apply the concept of cumulative grief to first responders.
3. Identify short- and long-term effects of grief

4. Define the types of grief that can be experienced
5. Identify the personal and professional risks that can affect grief responses

Ed: Graduated with a master's in social work from Shippensburg University in May 2022. My experience in counseling comes from working with individuals who have experienced repeated trauma throughout their lives. I've also worked with individuals who've struggled with drug and alcohol addictions and helped them develop patterns towards successful living. Additionally, he is a Corporal with the Lower Allen Township Police Department and has been serving my community for about 19 years. Since 2019, he has been part of a critical incident/peer support team. As part of his work in law enforcement, he has received training and certifications in suicide intervention, trauma informed principles, crisis intervention, and psychological first aid. He is EMDR trained.

Lisa: Lisa S. Zoll, LCSW, is the founder and owner of Grief Relief, LLC, and specializes in helping individuals impacted by grief and trauma. She has published several articles and has spoken on local, state, and national levels about the impact of grief, loss, and trauma. Lisa holds a master's degree in social work with a clinical concentration from Temple University. She completed EMDR training in January 2022. Her experience as a volunteer firefighter and EMT at Camp Hill Fire Department, Company 14 led her to become a trainer and volunteer for the Keystone Crisis Intervention Team (KCIT) and to join On the Job and Off's First Responder Assistance Program to provide mental health services to first responders.

"When the Demons Control the Darkness"- Deputy Fire Chief Chris O'Barsky, Salisbury Fire Department- Life is unpredictable, hard and quite notorious at times. Things can grow out of hand and beyond our control very quickly. For me, the exposure to numerous traumatic events over a 30 plus year career finally began to take their toll in late 2018. The normal "coping" mechanisms that had been my norm, were no longer working. War was raging, and my mind became the battlefield for my soul. This is my personal journey into the darkness of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicide. In addition, I will discuss my continued journey of recovery and the ripple effect that my family has experienced. Chris has lived in Salisbury, Maryland since he was in the third grade. Joined his local volunteer fire department his senior year of high school back in 1991. His first career position was with the Ocean City Fire Department in 1992 as a seasonal Firefighter/EMT. Became a Nationally Registered Paramedic in 1998. Hired with the Salisbury Fire Department in 2000 to Present. Throughout his career with Salisbury, he has risen through the ranks from Firefighter/Paramedic, to currently the Deputy Chief of Administrative Services. Chris has been married to his wife Tara for almost 26 years. They live in Salisbury with their three dogs and one cat. Together they raised two children, Noah, who is a Deputy with the Wicomico County Sheriff's Office, and daughter Riley, who is a Sophomore at Salisbury University and wishes to become a Physician Assistant.

"Emotional Intelligence made practical and Simple"- Bill Stierle, Subtext Solutions CEO- Emotional Intelligence is the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's own emotions, as well as handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically. What does it take for you and your organization to respond in an emotionally intelligent way when challenges arise? Imagine the impact of having Emotional Intelligence transform your team when emotional upsets and misunderstandings are handled in a productive and empathetic way. Bill uses his expertise of interpersonal skills to help Leaders, CEO'S teachers, students and parents to develop strategies in the areas of communication, emotional offloading and conflict resolution. An accomplished consultant and presenter, Bill has been working within the educational system for over 30 years. Bill has expertise in conflict reduction and training people to learn the skills of applied emotional intelligence.

"Trauma is Everywhere: How to Prepare for it, How to Respond to it, and How it Affects Us On Duty"- Michelle Warshauer, ICISF and Lt. Steven Thomas, Anne Arundel County Police Department- Trauma

affects all of us. However, as first responders it not only affects us personally it affects how we help others. The presentation will briefly discuss prevention ideas for wellness and developing psychological body armor, as well as resilience due to traumatic exposure. Finally, there will be discussion on how our fight/flight/freeze/appease response affects us as first responders and our ability to help someone in need or crisis.

Michelle Warshauer, MS, NCC, is the Director of Programming at the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF), based in Ellicott City, MD. She attended Johns Hopkins University and is currently pursuing a PhD in Mind-Body Medicine. Michelle is an ICISF Approved Instructor and a member of the Anne Arundel County Police Department Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team. She has worked with the juvenile justice system and in the public school system. Michelle instructs as an adjunct faculty member at Howard Community College, teaching Psychology and Lifespan Development. Michelle also conducts suicide awareness outreach programs with the military community and veterans groups.

Lt. Steven Thomas has been in law enforcement since 1992, when he began his career with the Baltimore City Sheriff's Office, and he has spent the last 21 years with the Anne Arundel County Police Department. He received a bachelor's degree in political science and Sociology from U.M.B.C and a Master's Degree in Legal & Ethical Studies from the University of Baltimore. He spent his entire police career in patrol, where he was an avid practitioner of community policing. With his "hands on experience" in community policing he was tasked in January 2014 with starting police CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) and Peer Support Teams, which he is currently the coordinator of both. Lt. Thomas is the Anne Arundel County CIT Law Enforcement Coordinator and the I.C.I.S.F. (International Critical Incident Stress Foundation) CISM (Critical Incident Stress Management) Team Coordinator. He is an approved I.C.I.S.F. Instructor and a Youth & Adult Mental Health First Aid Instructor. The Anne Arundel County CIT Team incorporates numerous mental health components into its community policing model. The goals of the unit are to redirect individuals with mental illness or facing a mental health crisis from the Criminal Justice System into the Behavioral Health System, longer term treatment and recovery, as well as increased officer and consumer safety. The unit does this by implementing traditional CIT practices and including the principles CISM. CISM is a process to assist those who have been involved with events that leave them emotionally and/or physically affected by those incidents. The process helps people prepare to continue to live their lives or in some cases return to a normal lifestyle after traumatic events.

"Physical Activity, Sleep, and Stress"- Lisa Marquette, Ph.D., CSCS, CF-L1, USAW, Pn1, AFPA Sports Nutritionist- This session will discuss the amount of physical activity needed for health benefits, the importance of daily movement for stress management, the impact sleep has on stress and mental health, and barriers and solutions for balancing work while getting the proper amounts of sleep and physical activity. Since 2010, Lisa's been a full time faculty member in the Exercise Science Program at Salisbury University in the School of Health Sciences. She teaches the following courses: Obesity Prevention & Treatment, Strength and Conditioning, Sport Nutrition, and Exercise Physiology. Lisa currently holds three nutrition certifications and numerous exercise/fitness certifications. She has a true passion to spread her passion and knowledge for health, fitness, and healthy eating to the community.

***Promo video:** <https://vimeo.com/884568662?share=copy>

***Networking Social directly after training (Included in Registration) on March 25th from 4-6pm**

Directly after the training. This is a great opportunity to get to know others, ask questions and share your ideas and thoughts with other like-minded professionals. Appetizers and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided.

***Accommodations:**

Group block/discounted hotel rates available:

Ashore Resort & Beach Club

10100 Coastal Highway

Ocean City, MD 21842

<https://AshoreResortOceanCity.com/>

We have a group block at the Ashore Resort & Beach Club for March 24th, 25th and 26th. Reservations will be made by individuals calling Hotel Reservations at 1-410-524-3535. Individuals must identify themselves as being with the group, 1st Responder Mental Health and Wellness Conference, at the time the reservation is made in order to receive the special group rate of \$125.00 per night. You may also book online by using the group link.

Booking Link:

<https://res.windsurfercrs.com/ibe/details.aspx?propertyid=17056&nights=1&checkin=3/23/2024&group=FRMHAWC808&lang=en-us>

Please note our 30-Day Refund Policy:

There are a lot of costs involved in organizing a conference. The reason we list our 30-day nonrefundable statement on the registration website when an attendee registers, is due to having to purchase everything in advance. We will allow registrations to be transferable, so food and other items don't go to waste. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

***CEU's available:**

All attendees will receive a certificate of attendance upon completion of the conference evaluation.

Disclaimers

Photograph/Video Disclaimer Statement

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Waiver of Liability

Some of the material presented at this event may cause emotional triggers. We will have onsite assistance if needed. There will also be additional resources available if needed. This conference is not intended to provide counseling services, whether medical, psychological or of any other kind, nor to diagnose, prevent, cure, or treat any disease, disorder or injury. This conference is certainly not intended to replace the advice of a physician. If you need expert advice, please consult a competent professional. This conference is only intended for "educational" use, and it should only be used as a guide.

RECORDING OF CONFERENCE OR SPEAKERS IS PROHIBITED

Written consent may be given by speakers, but 1st RC staff will need to be informed prior.

At registration we will have a waiver of liability and a photo release form that must be signed. If you have any questions regarding the waiver please contact us, so we can be of assistance.

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