



2024 Utah First Responder Wellness Conference
August 8-9, 2024
Utah Valley University
Register Now!!!

REGISTER AT [PEERSUPPORTFOUNDATION.ORG](https://peersupportfoundation.org)

Utah First Responder Wellness Conference

August 8th - 9th, 2024

Utah Valley University
Orem, Utah

2023 Conference Sponsors



Contact us if you would like to be a sponsor for the
2024 First Responder Wellness Conference.

Registration Fee:

Entire Conference (2 Days) - \$299.00

Retired First Responder - \$99.00

Scholarships are available for free attendance to the
conference. Email contact@peersupportfoundation.org for more
information.

Location

Utah Valley University Grand Ballroom
800 W University Pkwy, Orem, UT 84058

First Responder Wellness Conference

Join us at the 2024 Utah First Responder Wellness Conference featuring retired Deputy John Kelly from the Broward County Sheriff's Office as our keynote speaker. In collaboration with Utah Fire and Rescue Academy, Chateau Recovery, and other national speakers, this event is not to be missed! Please join us for national and local presenters who will share their expertise to enhance your knowledge about first responder wellness and peer support.

Goal

The Peer Support Foundation is committed to proactively addressing the stressors that can occur throughout the lives of first responders and their families.

Who Should Attend?

The First Responder Wellness Conference attracts a large number of guests. The conference is recommended for:

- Administrators
- Chaplains
- Civilian Personnel
- Correction Officers
- EMS
- Fire Chiefs
- Fire Fighters
- First Responder Families
- First Responder Supporters
- Human Resources
- Law Enforcement Officers
- Mental Health Clinicians
- Peer Support Personnel
- Police Chiefs
- Sheriffs
- Training Specialists

Keynote Speaker

Sgt. John Kelly (ret.)



Retired Sgt. John Kelly faced several attempts on his life from suspects over his 30-year career in law enforcement. None of these suspects came as close to killing him as he did. Author of "Surviving Self-Inflicted Wounds, A Deputy's Life of Redemption" chronicles his life journey. An alcoholic, addict, and adulterer, confronting PTS, and suicidal ideation, John tears open his life, to provide a roadmap to personal accountability and growth. His Sometimes Heroes Need Help, Life Leadership and Wellness program addresses the personal, professional, financial, physical, and mental health of the first responder. By having real, raw, and unfiltered, conversations about the things we never talk about, the individual is empowered to be their own change agent. John's vulnerability in discussing his failures gives the audience permission to forgive themselves and more importantly, the courage and strength to keep getting up, striving to be better today than yesterday. Join John Kelly as he takes you on a journey of discovery into how you survive "Self Inflicted Wounds".

2024 Utah First Responder Wellness Conference Schedule of Events

Thursday, August 8, 2024

0700-0800 Registration/Vendor Setup
0800-0815 Welcome/introductions/Opening Ceremony
0815-1200 Keynote - Sgt. John Kelly (ret. Broward Co. Florida Sheriff's Office)
1200-1300 Lunch - Provided by the Peer Support Foundation
1300-1500 Sheila Russell LMHC, Frontline Therapy
1500-1700 Emotional Awareness Guidance for Law Enforcement (E.A.G.L.E.)
with Sgt. Sean O'Neill

Friday, August 9, 2024

0800-0815 Morning announcements
0815-1200 Chateau Recovery
1200-1300 Lunch - Provided by the Peer Support Foundation
1300-1500 Pending
1500-1700 When the Smoke Clears: Thriving with Post-Traumatic Stress Injury
with Lt. Jeremy Sprague(DMPD & Peer Support Foundation President)

End of Conference

Conference Topics

Emotional Awareness Guidance for Law Enforcement (E.A.G.L.E.)

Sgt. Sean O'Neill



Course Description

Join Sean O'Neill in the exploration of Emotional Awareness Guidance for Law Enforcement (E.A.G.L.E.). This session provides techniques for generating voluntary compliance in peer support roles or encounters on the street. Emphasis is placed on stress reduction through EAGLE techniques, fostering positive contacts with individuals encountered during duty, at home, and among peers.

Biography

Sergeant Sean O'Neill serves as a police sergeant in the Des Moines Police Department, bringing with him valuable experience from his tenure as an officer with the Myrtle Beach Police Department. A seasoned Law Enforcement Professional and adept Public Speaker, Sean has undergone advanced training in various critical areas, including Hostage/Crisis Negotiation, Verbal De-Escalation, Communications, Interview and Interrogation, Crisis Response, Training, and Wellness. As an instructor affiliated with both the Verbal Judo Institute and Peer Support Foundation, Sean plays a pivotal role in imparting his knowledge to fellow law enforcement professionals. Notably, he is the visionary behind the creation of the EAGLE training program, designed to support first responders in mitigating stress and enhancing their overall well-being.

BRAIN HEALTH: Supporting First Responder Wellness Throughout and After Your Career

Sheila Russell, LISW CADC

Course Description

Working in Public Safety poses unprecedented unique risks and challenges. Physical and Mental Health techniques rooted in neuroscience will support proactive responses to promote and sustain a healthful career.



Biography

Sheila Russell, LISW, CADC, EMDR Certified Mental Health Therapist, is an experienced therapist and speaker who has dedicated her entire practice to working with first responders, military, veterans, and their loved ones. Sheila has worked in residential treatment for children's mental health, child welfare services, supervision in residential substance abuse for women and their children, as well as an Adjunct Instructor at Grand View University. Sheila provides individual therapy, couples counseling, departmental trainings, department consultation, Peer Support and CISM/CISD collaboration. Sheila is a member of the Peer Support and/or CISM/CISD teams for West Des Moines PD, West Des Moines EMS, Jasper County Sheriff's Office, Newton Fire Department, Des Moines PD's Peer Support Resources Committee, and the First Responders Peer Support Foundation Board.

Stress Tolerance in Helping First Responders

Captain Brad Shepherd (Ret.) & Ben Pearson,
LCSW



Course Description

Stress Tolerance in helping First Responders -
"Why do our heroes go from "I'm all in" to "I'm out" and what can we do about it?"

- Identify myths and stigmas around stress and stress response systems.
- Discuss the nervous systems and its role in personal health and stress management.
- Introduce the window of tolerance model.
- Introduction and Discussion of The Window of Tolerance and its usefulness in stress regulation, communication, and prevention mental health challenges.

This interactive based presentation focuses on the mental health challenges that an attendee faces on the daily basis. The culture and environment of a first responder is

a noble and worthy endeavor that is wrought with opportunities to overinvest and expose themselves to the negative stress effects of a career. The presenters will offer the opportunity for attendee to learn the role the nervous system plays in their personal stress & health. Presenters will use the “Window of Tolerance” paradigm to help the attendee recognize current patterns that may or may not be advantageous to the attendee’s mental health. The Window of Tolerance paradigm will be used to show how we move from the “All In” attitude to “I’m Out” in conjunction with the interaction of our nervous system. This presentation will culminate in solution-based discussion that will include tools & skills that can be practiced on a personal level daily.

Biography

Captain Brad Shepherd (Ret.) is the Director of Public Safety for Chateau Health & Wellness, a national First Responder residential treatment facility that treats Trauma, Suicide, PTSD, Substance Abuse, Depression & Anxiety. Brad retired after 25 years from the Oklahoma Highway Patrol as a Commander and served in a variety of assignments including SWAT, Emergency Services Unit & Peer Support Unit. Brad is the founder and former CEO / Executive Director of 2 separate nonprofit organizations that served in the first responder wellness community. Brad is an experienced national presenter and instructor in a variety of disciplines including ICISF Critical Incident Stress Management. Brad has faced his own challenges of stress, trauma, mental health, and alcoholism which gives him the passion to help others find the peace and joy they desire in their personal lives, their relationships, and their careers.

Biography

Ben Pearson, LCSW; is the Clinical Director for Chateau Recovery / Chateau Health & Wellness. Chateau Recovery is a residential treatment facility that offers trauma-informed and highly individualized inpatient care for first responders struggling with mental health and substance abuse challenges. Chateau Health & Wellness is the outward expression of The Chateau Experience offering training & prevention strategies for first responders. Ben provides clinical supervision, direction / training for all departments, develops the one-of-a-kind clinical client curriculum, facilitates individual and groups session, facilitates the weekly in-house first responder support groups. Ben has been the clinical director for other treatment programs assisting in clinical interventions, group work, case management, sober housing placement, and helping clients build back their lives from nothing. Ben has presented at several regional and national professional conferences dedicated to addressing mental health issues, trauma, and addiction.

When the Smoke Clears: Thriving with Post-Traumatic Stress Injury

Jeremy Sprague, PSF President & DMPD Lieutenant

Course Description

Drawing from more than 20 years of firsthand experience in facing officer-involved shootings, Line of Duty Deaths (LODDs), police suicides, school shootings, and various traumas, the presenter shares deeply personal life experiences and PTSD. This course delves into the challenges inherent in a lifelong career as a first responder, offering participants valuable insights on surviving the unique stressors that impact both professional and personal aspects of their lives.

Explore topics such as hypervigilance, critical incident survival, and overall wellness, with a focus on the three R's: resistance, resiliency, and recovery. The course provides a comprehensive discussion on stress, delving into common psychological reactions, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Participants will gain a profound understanding of the essential building blocks for becoming a resilient and effective law enforcement officer, equipped to navigate the complexities of their career with resilience and strength.



Biography

Jeremy is a police lieutenant for the Des Moines Iowa Police Department. He has served as a patrol officer, detective, hostage/crisis negotiator, communications supervisor, and a sergeant leading patrol officers, traffic crash fatality investigations, sex abuse detectives, and a patrol commander. He also retired after 20 years in the fire service as a part-time fire lieutenant supervising an engine company, medic-squad, and directing the fire training academy.

Jeremy designed, created, and managed the first-in-the-state public safety Peer Support Program which is used as a model for other agencies around the country. He specializes in providing training and critical incident response around the state. In 2015 he drafted a peer support privilege communication bill that was signed into law. In 2016, Jeremy managed a comprehensive strategic plan for the loss of three Des Moines Police Officers in 2016 including crisis management, logistics, and department wellness.

Jeremy expanded his innovative peer support model and created the Peer Support Foundation which trains first responders throughout the Midwest. He currently serves as the executive director and president of the foundation.

Jeremy has presented nationally to numerous organizations and conferences about peer support, employee wellness, PTSD, suicide awareness, and other topics. Some of these presentations include at the National Fraternal Order of Police Wellness Summit, National COPS Conference, International Brotherhood of Teamsters Law Enforcement League, Iowa Association of Chiefs of Police, Iowa Teamsters Law Enforcement, Iowa State Sheriffs and Deputies Association, Impact Iowa, Iowa Association of Women Police, Iowa Corrections Association, Iowa Law Enforcement

Academy, Des Moines Area Community College, and numerous public safety agencies throughout the midwest.

Jeremy holds a Master of Public Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Emergency Management Administration. He is a graduate of Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command. Jeremy is a certified FBI Law Enforcement Instructor and serves as an adjunct instructor in Criminal Justice at the Des Moines Area Community College. He is also an instructor for the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation and holds a certificate in Critical Incident Stress Management from the University of Maryland-Baltimore County.