

COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO

---



FIRST RESPONDER

# Mental Health & Wellness Conference



**FEBRUARY 2-3, 2026 • 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM**

**THE COEUR D'ALENE RESORT**  
115 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

# ABOUT THE EVENT

This two-day event brings first responders and their support networks together to focus on wellness, resilience, and performance. Through expert-led sessions and real conversations, attendees will gain tools, perspective, and connection to thrive on and off the job.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND



This event is designed for all members of the first responder and public safety community, including:

- Law Enforcement, Fire, EMS, Dispatch, and Corrections Personnel
- Peer Support Team Members
- Mental Health and Wellness Professionals
- Chaplains and Spiritual Support Staff
- Leaders, Supervisors, and Agency Trainers
- Spouses, Partners, and Family Members of First Responders

## KEY THEMES & TOPICS

This conference tackles the real challenges facing first responders today—on the job, at home, and within their teams. Sessions are grounded in practical tools, lived experience, and the latest research to support lasting resilience, strong peer support, and whole-person wellness. Topics include:

- The impact of chronic stress on mind and body
- Burnout prevention and resilience strategies
- Peer support and leadership tools for healthier cultures
- Family, communication, and support systems
- Cumulative trauma and post-traumatic growth
- Practical tools for mental health and recovery
- Real stories, expert insights, and actionable takeaways

# ABOUT THE VENUE

## REGISTRATION

Secure your spot today and join us for this impactful conference. Don't wait—spaces fill quickly, and early registration ensures the best rates.

**REGISTER NOW**

## LOCATION

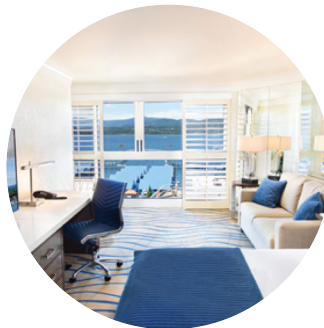


### THE COEUR D'ALENE RESORT

115 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Nestled on the shores of Lake Coeur d'Alene, The Coeur d'Alene Resort offers a stunning backdrop for our conference. With state-of-the-art meeting facilities, breathtaking lake views, and first-class hospitality, it's the ideal environment for learning, networking, and relaxation.

## DISCOUNTED RATE



### SPECIAL GROUP RATES *(All rates are in USD)*

North Wing or Park Tower    \$120 USD per night

Lake Tower    \$195 USD per night

**BOOK NOW**

Last Day to Book: **January 9, 2026**  
Problems booking? Contact [shawne@strc.org](mailto:shawne@strc.org)

# PRESENTATIONS



## **FROM TRAUMA TO TRIUMPH: A FIRST RESPONDER'S JOURNEY THROUGH ADDICTION, INJURY, AND HEALING**

*Kristopher Honaker - Spokane Police Department*

Kris Honaker shares a candid account of his first responder journey—the highs, the struggles of addiction and divorce, and the turning point of seeking help. A pivotal moment comes with his story of being shot in the line of duty, offering raw insight into critical incident trauma. He goes on to discuss living with Post-Traumatic Stress Injury (PTSI), healing through EMDR therapy, and practical strategies for recovery. This powerful session leaves attendees with hope, tools, and encouragement to prioritize their own wellness.



## **OPERATIONAL SLEEP SCIENCE: REST AND RECOVERY FOR FIRST RESPONDERS**

*Jess Carter, LPC, ERPSCC - Army Veteran*

Sleep is the foundation of health, performance, and decision-making – yet it's often compromised in high-stress, shift-driven professions. This presentation translates the latest sleep research into practical strategies tailored for first responders. Attendees will gain actionable insights to improve recovery, boost alertness, and protect long-term wellness, even in the face of demanding schedules.



## **BUILDING FINANCIAL STRENGTH IN FIRST RESPONDER FAMILIES**

*(Ret. Sgt.) Nicholas Daugherty - FinancialCop*

Designed by and for first responders, this session covers key strategies for budgeting, debt reduction, estate planning, and long-term financial wellness. Learn how to build a solid financial plan from instructors who've taught thousands across 4,000+ agencies nationwide.

# PRESENTATIONS



## **THE UNSPOKEN TRAUMA OF FIRST RESPONDERS AND THE LESSONS TEXBOOKS CAN'T TEACH**

*Ana Gonzalez, MS, LMHC, MHP & Kyle Talley*

This session examines the psychological and relational toll of cumulative trauma on first responders and their families. Through the firsthand account of a police officer involved in a critical shooting and his fiancée, attendees will see how trauma impacts both responders and loved ones. The presentation explores barriers to seeking help—such as stigma, limited peer support, and systemic gaps—while highlighting the challenges of navigating treatment and workers' compensation. Participants will gain practical strategies to strengthen communication, integrate families into recovery, and build supportive, culturally competent systems of care.



## **EMOTIONAL FIRST-AID FOR THE FIRST RESPONDER**

*Ed Owens - Vice President, The Grief Recovery Institute*

This session takes an honest look at how stress, grief, and trauma impact first responders and their families. Participants will explore the lifelong effects of service, common myths around mental health, and why traditional stress-management tools often fall short. With a focus on emotional awareness and “emotional first aid,” attendees will gain practical skills to improve communication, strengthen peer support, and foster resilience—reducing risks like suicide and substance abuse while building a culture of care.

# PRESENTATIONS



## **HEALING THE HEALERS: A DIFFERENT LENS ON PTSD, DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, TRAUMA, AND WHAT COMES AFTER**

*Sherry Rais - CEO and Co-Founder, Enthea*

Nurses, physicians, first responders, and caregivers are facing soaring rates of PTSD, anxiety, and depression—and traditional mental health solutions aren't enough. This talk explores the hidden cost of caregiving, innovative treatments like Ketamine-Assisted Therapy, and the HR opportunity to better support a struggling workforce. Drawing from lived experience, I'll share why this mission matters and invite us to reimagine what healing can look like for those who never thought they were allowed to break.



## **FROM ROCK BOTTOM TO RESILIENCE: A JOURNEY OF REDEMPTION IN LAW ENFORCEMENT**

*Darrell Quarles - Spokane Police Department*

This personal presentation follows one officer's journey from a traumatic childhood to a meaningful career in law enforcement. Through stories of divorce, career struggles, and hitting rock bottom, the speaker reveals the cost of unresolved trauma and the power of seeking help. Now a respected Sergeant and Peer Support Leader, he shares hard-won lessons of resilience and redemption—showing it's never too late to take ownership of your story and rise stronger. Attendees will leave inspired to prioritize their own well-being and support their peers.

# PRESENTATIONS



## **CHAPLAINCY & PEER SUPPORT: BUILDING STRENGTH THROUGH CONNECTION**

*John McSwain - Kootenai County Sheriff's Office*

This presentation will share how the Kootenai County Sheriff's Office built its Chaplaincy and Peer Support programs into core parts of responder wellness. Guided by the five principles of chaplaincy and strengthened through regional partnerships, these programs provide critical support during both daily challenges and major incidents. Using the Canfield Incident as a case example, attendees will see how chaplains, peer supporters, and therapy dog Rocket made a visible impact, as well as learn about next steps to expand chaplaincy roles, grow peer support, and embed wellness into organizational culture.



## **CHANGING THE STORY: FROM PTSD TO PTG**

*Josh Goldberg, Boulder Crest, Foundation, Chief Executive Officer*

This presentation explores the powerful concept of Posttraumatic Growth (PTG)—the positive psychological transformation that can occur in the aftermath of trauma. Grounded in science and lived experience, PTG demonstrates that when individuals are challenged to reflect, rebuild, and find meaning after adversity, their struggles can become a catalyst for profound change. Participants will gain an understanding of the History of PTG, its Phases—Trust & Connection, Education, Regulation, Disclosure, Service & Story—and the Five Core Domains of growth: New Possibilities, Deeper Relationships, Personal Strength, Spiritual & Existential Change, and Appreciation for Life. Trauma does not have to signify the end of the road; it can be the beginning of a new, more meaningful journey.

# SCHEDULE – DAY 1

DAY 1

7am–6pm

**7:00 AM – 8:00AM**

**Registration & Continental Breakfast**

*Check in, grab your materials, and enjoy a light breakfast before the day begins.*

**8:00 AM – 8:45 AM**

**Opening Ceremonies & Welcome Address**

*Honor Guard, Pipes & Drums, Pledge of Allegiance, Opening Prayer, and National Anthem. Welcome remarks from event hosts.*

**8:55 AM – 9:55 AM**

**Session #1**

*Engaging presentation focused on mental health, wellness, or personal development for first responders.*

**10:10 AM – 11:15 AM**

**Session #2**

*Continued insight and tools from experienced professionals or peers in the field.*

**11:15 AM – 12:15 PM**

**Catered Lunch**

*Relax, connect, and recharge with a full catered lunch provided on-site.*

**12:20 PM – 2:00 PM**

**Session #3**

*Deeper dive into challenges and strategies related to resilience, relationships, or leadership.*

**2:15 PM – 3:15 PM**

**Session #4**

*Interactive or expert-led session offering practical takeaways.*

**3:30 PM – 4:30 PM**

**Session #5**

*Final session of the day, focused on real-life stories, innovative tools, or emerging topics.*

**4:30 PM – 6:00 PM**

**Networking Social**

*Unwind and connect with fellow attendees in a relaxed, informal setting. Light appetizers and refreshments will be provided.*

# SCHEDULE – DAY 2

DAY 2

7am-4pm

**7:00 AM – 8:00AM**

**Check In & Continental Breakfast**

*Grab coffee, and ease into the day with a light breakfast.*

**8:05 AM – 8:50 AM**

**Session #6**

*Kick off the day with a powerful session focused on personal stories, lessons learned, and tools for growth.*

**9:00 AM – 9:45 AM**

**Session #7**

*Explore the impact of the first responder lifestyle on well-being, relationships, and identity—on and off the job.*

**10:05 AM – 11:05 AM**

**Session #8**

*Conversations around overcoming adversity and strengthening mental, emotional, or relational resilience.*

**11:05 AM – 12:05 PM**

**Catered Lunch**

*Enjoy lunch onsite and connect with fellow attendees.*

**12:10 PM – 12:55 PM**

**Session #9**

*Learn practical strategies or hear personal perspectives to support wellness, leadership, and peer connection.*

**1:05 PM – 1:50 PM**

**Session #10**

*Insightful takeaways and real-world tools to support personal well-being and professional performance.*

**2:10 PM – 2:55 PM**

**Session #11**

*An honest and practical conversation focused on wellness, support systems, and showing up strong—both at work and at home.*

**3:05 PM – 3:45 PM**

**Session #12**

*Final session of the day featuring tools, takeaways, or reflections to carry forward.*

**3:45 PM – 4:00 PM**

**Closing & Raffles**

*We'll wrap up with closing remarks and raffle giveaways to end the day.*

# SPEAKERS



## **KRISTOPHER HONAKER**

*Spokane Police Department*

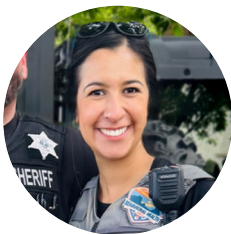
With 32 years in law enforcement, Kris Honaker began his career with Airway Heights Police Department before serving the past 30 years with Spokane Police Department. Early in his career, he worked in tactical operations with the Tac Team, CART, and as a patrol K9 handler. After sustaining injuries, he transitioned into roles as a Field Training Officer and later as President of the department's labor union, where he continued to serve and support his fellow officers



## **JESS CARTER, LPC, ERPSCC**

*Army Veteran*

Jess Carter, LPC, ERPSCC, is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Army veteran specializing in the care of first responders, veterans, and their families. With over a decade of experience in Behavioral Health, Jess is credentialed through multiple national responder wellness programs. She incorporates resilience training, Mindfulness Based Stress Management, and trauma-informed therapies to provide counseling, crisis intervention, and wellness services through private practice and in partnership with local, state, and federal agencies.



## **ANA GONZALEZ**

*Behavioral Health Unit at Chelan County Sheriff's Office*

Ana Gonzalez is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and National Board-Certified Counselor with more than a decade in social services, including seven years in law enforcement co-response. As Program Manager of the Behavioral Health Unit at the Chelan County Sheriff's Office, she launched the Wenatchee Valley's first embedded co-response team. Ana also leads the East Cascade Crisis Negotiation Team, advises local criminal justice education, and serves on the NCW Regional Critical Incident Stress Management Team. As the wife of a first responder, Ana brings both clinical expertise and personal insight into supporting wellness on and off duty.

# SPEAKERS



## **KYLE TALLEY**

*Chelan County Sheriff's Office*

Kyle Talley is a dedicated law enforcement officer with nearly a decade of experience in both corrections and patrol. He began his career at the Chelan County Regional Justice Center, served with the Quincy Police Department, and is currently with the Chelan County Sheriff's Office. Certified in specialties including Gracie Survival Tactics, Defensive Tactics, Field Training, and Peer Support/CISM, Kyle uses his story to encourage openness, connection, and mental health awareness across the law enforcement community.



## **ED OWENS**

After losing his 3-year-old son in 2010, Ed Owens found healing through the Grief Recovery Method® and became a Certified Specialist. Now Vice President of the Grief Recovery Institute®, he trains and supports specialists worldwide. A retired U.S. Air Force First Sergeant with over 20 years as an instructor and trainer, Ed is a passionate advocate for children's safety and helps military, law enforcement, and first responder families navigate loss and recovery.



## **NICHOLAS DAUGHERTY, RET. SGT.**

*FinancialCop*

A retired Sergeant with Grand Prairie PD, Nick is the founder of FinancialCop, the nation's leading financial wellness training provider for first responders. He now leads one of the largest first responder-owned fiduciary financial planning firms and partners with national nonprofits to support financial wellness for those facing PTSD, suicide risk, and loss in the line of duty.

# SPEAKERS



## SHERRY RAIS

*Enthea*

**Sherry Rais** is the CEO and Co-Founder of Enthea, the first and only licensed third-party administrator offering psychedelic-assisted therapy as a workplace benefit. A recognized leader in mental health innovation, Sherry is focused on expanding access to trauma-informed care for employees - especially for first responders, healthcare workers, unions, and veterans. She previously spent over a decade advising the UN and World Bank on poverty and trauma reduction across 35+ countries. Sherry holds a master's from the London School of Economics, a psychology degree from McGill, and a certificate in psychedelic therapies from CIIS. Her work has been featured in Forbes, WSJ, and Business Insider.



## DARRELL QUARLES

*Spokane Police Department*

Darrell Quarles was born into a military family in San Diego, California, and spent his early childhood on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. After enduring an abusive household and the arrest of his father at age five, he was raised by a resilient single mother serving in the U.S. Navy. He graduated from high school in Hawaii and earned a football scholarship to Whitworth College in Spokane, Washington. After graduating, he chose to remain in Spokane and began his law enforcement career with Cheney Police Department in 2005. In 2008, Darrell later transferred to the Spokane Police Department, where he continues to serve his community with dedication and purpose.

# SPEAKERS



## **JOHN MCSWAIN (RET. MAJOR)**

*Department Chaplain, Kootenai County Sheriff's Office*

John McSwain is a retired Major from the King County Sheriff's Office and now serves as Department Chaplain and Program Manager for the Kootenai County Sheriff's Office. With strong support from his agency, he oversees Chaplaincy, Peer Support, and wellness initiatives, helping to build these programs from the ground up with a focus on regional collaboration and clinician partnerships. John is passionate about walking alongside first responders and their families through both crisis and everyday life, often accompanied by Rocket, his certified therapy dog, who plays a vital role in connecting with responders and lowering barriers to care.



## **JOSH GOLDBERG**

*Boulder Crest, Foundation, Chief Executive Officer*

In January 2023, Josh became the first Chief Executive Officer of the Boulder Crest Foundation, a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring first responders, combat veterans, and their family members live great lives in the midst of struggle, stress, and trauma. In this role, Josh oversees all aspects of Boulder Crest's operations, programs, and activities. Prior to his appointment as CEO, Josh co-founded and led the Boulder Crest Institute for Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) from 2018-2022, and served as the Director of Strategy from 2014-2017, where he led the development of the first-ever programs based on the science of PTG: Warrior PATHH and Struggle Well. Since Boulder Crest's founding in 2013, the organization has trained more than 170,000 combat veterans, first responders, and their family members to transform struggle into strength and growth.

# SPONSORS

A special thank you to our sponsors! Their partnership and generous support makes it possible to keep these events accessible, impactful, and focused on ensuring vital resources reach first responders, veterans, and their families.

## CO-HOSTS

If your organization would like to become a Co-Host, please contact [shawne@lstrc.org](mailto:shawne@lstrc.org) for more information.



### SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Spokane Police Department is committed to building a safer, stronger community through dedicated service, accountability, and trust. With a focus on community policing, crime prevention, and innovative training, SPD works to enhance public safety while fostering positive relationships with the people of Spokane. We're proud to have them co-hosting this conference.



### SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAINCY

The Spokane Police Department Chaplaincy provides compassionate care and spiritual support to law enforcement personnel, their families, and the community. Through counseling, crisis response, and ongoing presence, their chaplains serve as a vital resource for wellness and resilience. We are honored to partner with them as co-hosts of this conference.

## INTERESTED IN BECOMING A SPONSOR?

Partner with us to support the wellness of first responders, veterans, and their families.

[LEARN MORE](#)



# ENDORISING AGENCIES

---

We are honored to have the support of endorsing agencies whose stamp of approval reflects a shared commitment to first responder wellness.



## COEUR D'ALENE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Coeur d'Alene Police Department is dedicated to protecting and serving the community with professionalism, integrity, and respect. Through proactive policing and strong community partnerships, they work to ensure safety and enhance quality of life for all who live in and visit Coeur d'Alene.



## KOOTENAI COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Kootenai County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement services with a focus on integrity, professionalism, and community partnerships. From patrol and investigations to detention and marine operations, the agency is dedicated to protecting residents and supporting public safety across the region.