



1<sup>st</sup> Responder Conferences and Blue H.E.L.P. Presents

## 1<sup>st</sup> Responder Mental Health and Wellness

Certificate available upon request for self-submittal of training hours. T-Cole credits pending.

Hosted by the Pearland Police Department

January 16-17, 2020 from 8am-4pm

January 16, Networking Social from 4-6pm

New Hope Church

3640 County Road 58

Manvel, TX 77578

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

**Early bird registration \$125/person NOW or \$175/person after December 25, 2019**

**\*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 & agencies. See attachments for sponsorship options, donations, marketing & networking tools.**

<https://1stresponderconferences.org/pearland%2C-tx-jan-16-17>

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

**This two-day multifaceted training and networking event is for all 1st Responders, Police, Fire, EMS, Dispatchers, Military/Veterans, Corrections, Coroners, Chaplains, Retired 1<sup>st</sup> Responders, Professional staff, Clinicians, all those who work in the Public Safety field, as well as Health Professionals. (Spouses are encouraged to attend).**

1st Responder Conferences is committed to the emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of the public safety work force and work with leaders in the public safety profession 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 good health and resiliency. We are dedicated to promoting awareness at our conferences surrounding the difficulties of the profession and inspiring conversations that minimize the stigma associated with the stresses our first responder's experience. We provide education, mental health tools and resources for agencies, individuals, and family members who find themselves faced with a personal crisis. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for all who dedicate themselves to protecting and serving others.

*1st Responder Conferences partners with [Blue H.E.L.P.](#) which is a nonprofit organization. We work together to make sure all first responders get the resources they need to live a happy and healthy life!*



## **Speakers and Topics:**

**Financially Fit- Marco Parzych (Lt Col, USAF Ret.), Founder & Executive Director of Mission Ready Finances** - a nationwide nonprofit 501(c)(3) with a vision of financial hope, peace and success for all who bravely serve our nation as military members or first responders. He is an accredited financial coach and published author of the book, *Mission Ready Finances*, of which all sale proceeds go back into the nonprofit to further their mission and reach. Marco is a retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, having had the distinct honor and privilege of leading forces into combat both in the air and on the ground. Marco's presentation is aimed at restoring financial hope and encouraging all why they should, and how they can, do better with their personal finances. His goal is to serve as a catalyst, inspiring audiences to take action by presenting information in a new way that gets them to start thinking differently, believing that wealth building is possible for all and then taking the steps to get on a brighter financial path forward.

**iSurvived: Now Survive & Thrive: Life After Surviving the Las Vegas Massacre- Bryce Wellman, Dispatcher, Cedar Park Police Department** - Mass shootings are happening more and more often in America. Surviving a mass shooting event is one thing, but surviving the days, weeks, months, and years to follow are important factors that can't be overlooked. Experiencing any form of trauma can shatter your sense of security and leave you struggling with upsetting emotions, memories, and anxiety that won't go away. Bryce shares his story of survival – from terror to thriving – and leaves participants inspired that no matter the situation, there are healthy coping techniques to help you find your new normal and get back to thriving in public safety. Bryce Wellman started his career in public safety in 2016 with the Cedar Park Police Department. Bryce became a survivor of the deadliest mass shooting in modern US history on October 1, 2017, when he escaped the Route91 concert in Las Vegas, NV. Using his personal insight on what goes on during an Active Shooting Event; he provides a unique perspective about what callers are going through.

**Treating PTSD: What Actually Works- Matt Quackenbush, LCSW, Deer Hollow Recovery-** There is a host of misinformation about the treatment of PTSD/I and what PTSD/I actually is. Understanding the truth about how to treat it is the first step to overcoming its effects. Learn what the research tells us actually works and walk away with tools of your own for how to manage anxiety, depression, and overcome trauma. Matt Quackenbush, LCSW, is Lead Therapist at Deer Hollow Recovery and Wellness, specializing in the treatment of trauma and addiction for First Responders. With well over a decade of experience, Matt has extensive training in EMDR, Mind Body Bridging, DBT, CPT, and ACT. Matt is also the host of the Finding Strength Podcast, a groundbreaking program that helps its listeners overcome their mental health struggles by sharing interviews and teaching tools that create strength through vulnerability and connection.

**First Responder Mental Health Issues and Wellness- Sgt. Mark DiBona (Ret) Public Information Officer and Board Member with Blue H.E.L.P** - Mark's presentation will include his personal story and issues he endured throughout his 33 year career as a first responder. You will learn about methods in which can help prevent these issues and the negative impacts they have. Mark will also discuss how to identify a First Responder who is struggling and how to get them help. Mark DiBona began his Law Enforcement career in Massachusetts, June 1985. In 1993 he moved to Florida to continue his Law Enforcement career, retiring as a Patrol Sergeant in March 2019. Presently, he is the Public Information Officer and Board Member with Blue H.E.L.P. His mission is assisting First Responders with mental health issues and suicide prevention.

**FORGE Resilience (First Responders Optimizing Resilience Grit & Excellence)-Lacy Wolf, MS, Health Promotion Administrator at Employees Retirement System of Texas & Chris Wolff, firefighter Pflugerville FD-** This interactive and entertaining workshop will bring science to life. The latest research on resilience building is interwoven through storytelling and real life experience of a first responder couple. Chris and Lacy Wolff have dedicated their adult lives to improving health and quality of life of those who serve. This course is a culmination of 30 years of combined experience, knowledge, struggle and growth. It is our mission to help first responder families thrive. The goal of the course is to establish strong first responder families through everyday wellness integration strategies. We will focus on four specific areas:

- The Stress Response System- lays the groundwork for the entire course. Through a live biofeedback demonstration participants will see the immediate physiological response to mental stress. Participants will leave with a very specific skill to counterbalance the effects of energy depleting emotions.
- Tribe- A tribe is a community of people who live together, share resources, and are willing to die to defend one another. First responders are one of the few remaining cultures that still live and work in a tribe. We will discuss the science behind tribes how to gain energy from the people you work with.
- Recharge- gives participants strategies to recharge the human battery including “finding the flow state,” “daily gratitude practice,” and “sleep optimization.”
- Family Tactics – Wrapping up the session we will give specific resources and skills to improve family communication.

**Lacy Wolff, MS**, currently serves as the Health Promotion Administrator at the Employees Retirement System of Texas. She is responsible for promoting wellness initiatives that are offered to over 500,000 state employees, retirees and family members. After completing her undergraduate degree in Kinesiology from Texas A&M University, Lacy spent more than 12 years supporting the health of US Army personnel overseas in both Italy and Germany. During her time overseas, she earned a Master of Science degree in Exercise Science with an emphasis in Health Promotion. In 2014 Lacy left her work for the Army to return home to work for the State of Texas and at the state trooper training academy. She also currently serves as an instructor and subject matter expert for the FBINAA’s Officer Safety.

**Chris Wolff** is an adventurer, firefighter, husband, and dad. He is enthusiastic, entertaining and has a distinct training methodology that holds the attention of participants. Having grown up in a third world country, Chris brings his unique perspective and humor to every aspect of life. Chris holds an undergraduate degree in Outdoor Education from Texas A&M University and a Master of Science Degree in Sport Management from the California University of Pennsylvania. Chris spent over 12 years in Europe helping US Military Service Members and their families find their flow state through high adventure activities.

**"Post Event Recovery, What does NOW look like"?**- **Amanda Groller, MS. Ed., LPC, Director of Innovative & Special Projects at the Gulf Coast Center, Shari Forward, Team Leader for Galveston County CISM and Assistant Chief Gary Forward, Santa Fe ISD Police Department**- Every Critical Incident is unique. As part of the public safety work force field, you cannot plan for everything and issues will arise that you have not planned for in advance. Developing and maintaining partnerships with local partners in your community will support addressing unforeseen challenges.

Recovery efforts include planning with key partners, understanding the phases of recovery, and developing short- and long-term plans. In this session an overview of critical plans and resources focusing on pre-incident planning considerations and strategies as well as lessons learned/after action improvements post-recovery will be discussed. Additionally, collaboration considerations regarding closing the gap between public safety agencies and your local mental health authorities will be shared. The presentation will help answer: Crisis Intervention Support Management – how do I get access to care? What is a Critical Incident Stress Management Team? How do I access Mental Health Care? Why is this important to those in the public safety field?

**Amanda Groller, MS.Ed., LPC**, is the Director of Innovative and Special Projects at Gulf Coast Center, the Local Mental Health Authority for Galveston and Brazoria Counties. Working for over 14 years in community and disaster mental health, she has responded to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and managed responses to Ike, Harvey, and the Santa Fe High School shooting. She currently oversees programs including Natural Disaster Response, Criminal Incident Response, Military Veteran Peer Network, Homeless and Housing Services at Gulf Coast Center. She serves as the Clinical Director for the Galveston County Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team. She was recently deployed with the Galveston County CISM Team to assist first responders and community in El Paso, Texas in response to their mass shooting incident. She is also the Public and Behavioral Health Chair for the Galveston County Long Term Recovery Group.

**Shari Forward** has been member of the Law Enforcement family for over 34 years. She retired as a Captain from the Friendswood Police Department in 2018, where she held this position in the Investigation, Patrol and Administrative Divisions of the Department. Shari was also the Commander and Team Leader for Friendswood's SWAT Crisis/Hostage Negotiation Team. The Santa Fe, Texas Police Department currently holds her reserve officer commission. She is employed full-time by the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX), specifically, the Preparedness Program within the Emergency Services Training Institute (ESTI), where she is the Project Manager for the Galveston County Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attacks Grant (CCTA). She is currently the team leader for the Galveston County Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM) which is a volunteer crisis intervention program developed for emergency responders. Her and her team is also involved in the South East Resource Veterans' Effort (SERVE) which brings the gulf coast area veterans groups and organizations together to combine resources to improve the lives of military personnel and their families. Shari is an Instructor at the local community college Police Academy as well as an instructor for the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) and the Crisis Response Care/KLOVE Organization. She holds a Masters Certification from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE), a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, is a graduate of the Law Enforcement Management Institute (LEMIT), as well as a graduate of The DEA Drug Unit Commanders Academy, and the 217th Session of the FBI National Academy.

**Gary Forward** is an Assistant Chief who has been with the Santa Fe ISD Police Department for 9 years. He is a 34-year veteran of law enforcement. A native of New York State, Assistant Chief Forward retired from the City of Saratoga Springs Police Department, New York, where he served as a Lieutenant and the Commander of the Criminal Investigation Division. Assistant Chief Forward earned an Associate's Degree in Security Administration from Hudson Valley Community College, New York. He is a graduate of the 217th Session of the FBI National Academy, in Quantico, Virginia.

**\*Networking Social (Included in Registration) on January 16th, from 4-6pm @ the New Hope Church, 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: Conference specials/discounted hotel rates available:**

SpringHill Suites Houston Pearland (\$89/night reserved by December 20, 2019):

If you are from out of town and will need a hotel, we have reserved a group block at the SpringHill Suites Houston Pearland, located at 1820 Country Place Parkway, Pearland, TX 77584-2085. Room rates are \$89 plus tax. Please make your reservations as soon as possible as the hotel is filling up quickly. If you would like to book directly with the SpringHill Suites Houston Pearland, please call 713-436-7377 and let the front desk know you are attending the 1st Responder Conferences Mental Health and Wellness training when making your reservation or click on the link. [Book your group rate for 1st Responders Conferences Pearland](#)

To get the group rate, reservations must be made by the cutoff date of December 20, 2019. For more information about the hotel visit <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/hotel-deals/houpl-springhill-suites-houston-pearland?invalidDealMsg=true>

To download a flyer please visit [www.1stresponderconferences.org](http://www.1stresponderconferences.org) or contact us for flyers, basic info letters, and sponsor/industry partner/vendor forms for your organizations or to share.

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