



CITY OF JOLIET  
**ACTIVE THREAT &  
MENTAL WELLNESS**  
2025 CONFERENCE



Hosted by

Presenting Partners



**Will County**  
Regional Office of Education

# Welcome



Mayor Terry D'Arcy

Dear Conference Attendees,

Welcome to the Active Threat and Mental Wellness Conference in Joliet, Illinois!

We are delighted to have you join us for this important gathering, where we will explore critical topics dedicated to helping communities prepare responses for active threat incidents and their aftermath. This conference will also focus on safety, resilience, and mental health in our communities.

Over the next few days, you will have the opportunity to engage with experts, share insights, and develop strategies that empower individuals and organizations to respond effectively to potential threats while prioritizing mental wellness.

Our diverse lineup of speakers and workshops is designed to foster meaningful discussions and equip you with practical tools to take back to your respective fields. We encourage you to network, ask questions, and share your experiences with fellow attendees, as collaboration is key to building a safer and healthier future.

Please take a moment to review the conference schedule and familiarize yourself with the layout of the venue. Our team is here to assist you, so don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need support.

Thank you for being a part of this vital conversation. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Respectfully,

*Terry D'Arcy*

Mayor Terry D'Arcy  
City of Joliet



Fire Chief Jeff Carey

## **Welcome to the 2025 Active Threat and Mental Wellness Conference**

As Fire Chief, it is my honor to welcome you to this important event, where we come together to address some of the most critical challenges facing our communities today. This conference is dedicated to equipping us with the knowledge and tools necessary to respond to active threat situations, while also emphasizing the vital importance of mental

wellness for both first responders and the communities we serve.

The Joliet Fire Department has grown into more than just a response organization through our Community Risk Reduction (CRR) programs. We actively assess the threats and hazards facing our community, developing proactive plans and programs to address these issues before a response is even necessary. The success of our CRR programs is a direct result of the strong collaborations we've built with community partners and other first responders.

I deeply appreciate your commitment to working together to find solutions to these challenges. By continuing to collaborate, we can make a lasting impact on the safety and well-being of our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffery Carey". The signature is written in a cursive style. In the background, there is a large, faint watermark of a circular seal with the word "RECOVER" at the bottom and a star in the center.

JFD Fire Chief





# Conference Agenda

## WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5

- 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM Doors open for registration. Vendor Fair and Breakfast (breakfast is provided)
- 8:00 AM Opening Ceremonies
- 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM Saving Sycamore - The School Shooting That Never Happened  
Molly Bradley Hudgens
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM The Role of a School Safety Director  
Jeff Bean - Troy CCSD 30-C
- 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM Lunch with Vendors (lunch is provided)
- 12:30 PM - 4:00 PM The Oxford Response: Understanding the Importance of Preparation for Operational Efficiency & Officer Wellness  
Captain Todd Hill and K9 Deputy Cali -  
Oakland County Sheriff's Office (Michigan)
- 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM Hospitality Hours with Vendors at Renaissance Center
- 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Old Joliet Prison Tours

## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6

- 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM Doors open for registration. Vendor Fair and Breakfast (breakfast is provided)
- 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM Joliet Fire Department and Office of Emergency & Disaster Management
- 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Post Traumatic Stress and the Culture We Create  
Officer Matthew Harland - Oak Lawn PD (Illinois)
- 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Christy Lister - First H.E.L.P.
- 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Lunch with Vendors (lunch is provided)
- 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM Route 91 Survivors' Panel • Natalie Grumet, Jenni Lynn Zaretki, Dean McAuley, Connie Long, and Terri Keener and Laura Higgins of The Stable Arena
- 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Blooze Brothers Concert at the Forge

## FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7

- 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM Doors open for registration. Vendor Fair and Breakfast (breakfast is provided)
- 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Police Resiliency and Critical Incident Mindset  
Captain Joshua Bitsko - Las Vegas Metropolitan PD (retired)
- 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Lunch with Vendors (lunch is provided)
- 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM American Nazi: From Hate to Humanity  
Jeff Schoep - Simon Wiesenthal Center  
Rick Eaton - Simon Wiesenthal Center
- 3:45 PM - 4:00 PM Raffle Winners and Closing



## **Molly Bradley Hudgens**

**School Counselor**

### ***Saving Sycamore - The School Shooting That Never Happened***

On September 28, 2016, Molly Hudgens, a school counselor in Pleasant View, Tennessee, averted a school shooting when

a fourteen-year-old eighth grader, armed with a semi-automatic handgun and an additional magazine of ammunition, came to her in the counseling department at Sycamore Middle School with a plan to harm people on their campus. He told her, "I think you're the only person who can talk me out of this." After ninety minutes of talking and ultimately praying with the young man on her knees beside him, Hudgens was able to convince the student to relinquish the weapon to her with no shots fired and no lives lost. As a result of her intervention, Hudgens became a 2017 recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's Citizens Honor for a single act of heroism.

Hudgens has been the recipient of three state recognitions for heroic actions on September 28, 2016—a Proclamation from the Tennessee House of Representatives in October of 2016, House Resolution No. 66 from the Tennessee House of Representatives in March of 2017, and Senate Resolution No. 40 from the Tennessee State Senate in April of 2017. Mrs. Hudgens has also been a nominee for the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission as well as the American Hero Channel's Red Bandanna Hero Award in 2017.



## **Jeff Bean**

Director of Safety/Security

***The Role of a School***

***Safety Director***

Jeff Bean is the current Director of Safety/Security for the Troy 30c.

School District in Will County, Illinois. Prior to that, Jeff was a Police Officer for almost 24 years in Woodridge, Illinois. During his

career in law enforcement Jeff received multiple awards and commendations, and spent over 10 years working in the schools.

Jeff is a NASRO trained School Resource Officer, and a certified A.L.I.C.E. instructor. He also founded his own business in 2012 called SafeSchools4All which focuses on educating students and parents, and training educators and law enforcement on topics pertaining to school safety, social media, and how best to keep our kids safe.

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**"It is okay, not to be okay."**

Terry D'Arcy  
Mayor of Joliet

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# THE OXFORD RESPONSE: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPARATION FOR OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY & OFFICER WELLNESS



## **Todd Hill, Captain** **Commander - Homeland Security, Wellness** **and Professional Development Division**

Captain Todd Hill is a thirty-year veteran of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office, serving as the Commander of the Homeland Security, Wellness & Professional Development (HSWPD) Division. Captain Hill oversees the Training Unit, Force Analysis Unit, Crisis Response Unit, Recruiting

& Retention Unit, Accreditation, the Peer Support Team, the Comfort K9 Program and is K9 Cali's Handler. Captain Hill implemented the agency's CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) program in 2015 and the agency's Peer Support Team in 2017.

Captain Hill was the Incident Commander at the agency's Line of Duty Death in 2017 and the Incident Commander for the 2021 Oxford High School Mass Casualty Shooting.

Captain Hill has previously served as a Substation Commander for the contracted area of Independence Township (Patrol Services Division) and has worked in several other areas of the Sheriff's Office, including the Satellite/Court Services Division; Pontiac Division; Investigative and Forensic Services Division (as a Fugitive Unit and Auto Theft Detective); Uniformed Patrol in the Alcohol Enforcement, Crash Reconstruction and Motor Units; and the Corrective Services Division.

Captain Hill has received numerous awards, including Command Officer of the Year (2016), Meritorious Service Citations, Professional Excellence Citations and Distinguished Unit Citations.

Captain Hill has earned a Doctor of Education degree (Ed.D.) in Organizational Leadership, a Master's degree in Information Security and a Bachelor's degree in Criminology. He is also a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy (FBINA Class #285) and the Northwest Police Staff and Command School.

Captain Hill is a United States Marine Corps Veteran, deployed to Saudi Arabia and Mogadishu, Somalia, in the 1990s.





**K9 Cali, Deputy**  
***Comfort K9 - Homeland Security,  
Wellness and Professional  
Development Division***

Comfort K9 Cali is a three-year veteran of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office, assigned to Captain Todd Hill, helping to oversee the Homeland Security, Wellness & Professional Development (HSWPD) Division. K9 Cali is a member of the agency's Peer Support Team, responding to officer involved shootings, officer injuries, and other critical incidents. K9 Cali is on Instagram (@deputy.cali) and Facebook (Deputy Cali).

The Oakland County Sheriff's Office Comfort K9 Unit is comprised of 15 Cavalier King Charles Spaniel K9's. The Cavalier breed was chosen due to their personality traits (affectionate with families, good temperament with young children, and good temperament with other dogs). Trained in basic obedience and therapy canine training, the unit is designed for both the first responders and the community. Comfort K9's are deployed in different areas of the agency to reach as many people as possible; assigned to patrol, school resource officers, community liaison officers, dispatch, special units, and the Peer Support Team.

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**"It's not a matter of  
if it's going to happen to you,  
it's a matter of  
when it's going to happen to you."**

**Sheriff Michael Neal**  
**Monroe County Sheriff's Department**

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## **CRISIS FIRST AID, PEER SUPPORT, JOLIET COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM**

The Joliet, Illinois Fire Department (JFD) enacted its Community Mental Health Program in July 2022. The program began with the training of 200 firefighters/paramedics in a locally developed program, Crisis First Aid for Paramedics, and partnering with Silver Cross Hospital and Thriveworks® Counseling to provide rapid crisis intervention and cost-free definitive mental health services to every City of Joliet resident. This program effectively addresses the identified community concerns of access, transportation, and mental healthcare costs in mental health patients and citizens experiencing traumatic stress reactions.

Access, cost, and transportation are Joliet's top three barriers to definitive mental health care. Access to basic clinical care can take 4-6 weeks, and the wait for psychiatric services is 3-4 months. Our mental health program removes all three barriers by providing cost-free mental health care to our residents within 24-48 hours, often on the same day. The patient can see their therapist in person or through teletherapy, resolving the transportation issue.

Since its inception, the Joliet Fire Department has fostered strong partnerships with Joliet Township High School District 204, Joliet Grade School District 86, Troy District 30C Schools, the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) – Will/Grundy, Will County Senior Services, the Will County Health Department, Silver Cross Hospital, Ascension St. Joseph Medical Center, area homeless shelters, our Spanish-speaking community, and several others. This collective effort has resulted in a unique, effective, and equitable community-wide program. Together, this collaboration led to no teenage suicides in Joliet in 2023.

Since 2022, the JFD has delivered Crisis First Aid for Paramedics to over 2000 Joliet residents experiencing mental illness or who have experienced a traumatic event. The program has also enrolled over 1400 residents in clinical care with Thriveworks®, where they received over 10,000 cost-free clinical mental health care sessions.

In 2023, the JFD witnessed a significant positive shift. Our behavioral and mental health calls for service dropped 3% after a decade of annual increases. Even more encouraging, we saw a 31% drop in the suicide rate in Joliet. These results testify to the collaborative effort between the community and the City of Joliet. We are proud to have made a substantial difference in the lives of our community members, particularly our underserved (uninsured and Medicaid) residents, by providing in-person and telehealth services. Our program has catered to residents from ages four to eighty-five, demonstrating its inclusivity and reach.



## **John Lukancic,** ***Ed.S., AEM, CCISM***

John Lukancic is the Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Joliet. Originally from Joliet, he worked as a Joliet Firefighter/Paramedic for over 20 years, retiring as a Captain in 2019. He is a certified Associate Emergency Manager (AEM) through the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) and an Illinois Professional Emergency Manager (IPEM) through the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). He has received four associate degrees in different disciplines: a BS in Fire Science Management from Southern Illinois University, a BA in Social Sciences from Governors State University, an MA in Organizational Leadership from Waldorf University, an Ed.S. in Community Care and Counseling from Liberty University, and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Health Sciences at Liberty University. He has served on the City of Joliet Board of Fire and Police Commissioners and is a board member of the Upper Room Crisis Hotline and Joliet Fire Department CARES Foundation.

His interest and education in mental health led him to certification as a Critical Incident Stress Manager (CCISM), a member of the Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management Team, a crisis hotline operator for the Upper Room Crisis Hotline, founder of the Joliet Firefighters Peer Support Group, a developer of the City of Joliet Community Mental Health Program, and developer of the Crisis First Aid family of courses.



## HOW THE MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM LED TO THE CCP AND CPP PROGRAMS

As the JFD mental health program has evolved, our firefighters and paramedics have honed their skills in communication and root cause identification during routine assessments. We have been actively seeking feedback from our frontline responders, who have identified the lack of basic needs as a precursor to some mental health issues. In response, we have developed a community care program to address these needs. This program involves bi-monthly meetings with all our social service agencies to discuss individuals or families at risk. We identify the risks and barriers and then develop a team around those risks to offer wrap-around services to these individuals. This proactive approach is a testament to our commitment to the well-being of our community.

The community care program has directly led to our community paramedicine program. Our paramedicine program provides in-home visits and care to keep people out of the hospital and safe in their homes. The program fills the gaps in the healthcare system, especially in our underserved community. The community paramedic (CP) ensures the built environment is safe and healthy and provides general and mental health care.

While these programs are still young, they have already proven effective at providing rapid crisis intervention and definitive care to the members of the Joliet community. Providing definitive mental healthcare and basic needs to our community has resulted in a drastic reduction in our regular users of the 911 system. When people are connected to the proper resources in a timely cost-effective manner, they no longer call 911 for transportation to the emergency room.

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**“If you fail to plan,  
you are planning to fail.”**

**Ben Franklin**

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**Jeffery Carey, Fire Chief**  
**Joliet Fire Department**

**101 E Clinton St**

**Joliet, IL 60432**

**815-724-3510**

**[jcarey@joliet.gov](mailto:jcarey@joliet.gov)**

Jeffery Carey is the Chief of the Joliet Fire Department. His responsibility is to ensure our organization is equipped and prepared to meet our community's present and future public safety needs. Jeffery's vision for the Joliet Fire Department is to become a more community-orientated fire department through community risk reduction programs.

Jeffery started his fire department career as a volunteer firefighter with the East Joliet Fire Protection District before being hired as a full-time firefighter paramedic with the City of Joliet. He has 30 years in the fire service and has held every rank in the fire department. Jeffery is a member of the Joliet Rotary Club and a Silver Cross Hospital Community Trustee. He also serves on the Will County Board of Health and the Senior Services Board of Directors. Jeffery was born and raised in Joliet, where he received his associate degree in fire science at Joliet Junior College before attending Waldorf University, where he received his bachelor's degree in fire science administration. Jeffery holds numerous Fire, EMS, and EMA certificates and is currently attending the Chief Fire Officer Program at the Illinois Fire Service Institute.

# POST TRAUMATIC STRESS AND THE CULTURE WE CREATE



**Officer Matthew Harland,**  
***Adjunct Professor of Criminal Justice at***  
***Moraine Valley Community College***

Matthew Harland is an adjunct professor of Criminal Justice at Moraine Valley Community College and is an actively serving police officer with the Oak Lawn Police Department, where he serves as a Use of Force instructor, Field Training Officer, and Special Response Team Squad Leader. He is the President of Metropolitan Alliance of Police Chapter #309, and teaches active threat response to first responders and educators. He has incorporated mental health and mental wellness practices into the department's curriculum to shift the narrative and move the culture of first responders to one that is accepting of the realities of the profession's impact on its practitioners.

Following the 2024 Joliet Active Threat & Mental Wellness Conference I was inspired to take a risk and integrate mental health topics into our in-house trauma care curriculum, including a personal account of my struggle with post-traumatic stress. The reward was a shift in organizational culture and gaining valuable new perspectives about each other. Join me for this session to share our discoveries and learn how you can move your culture by moving yourself.

# FIRST H.E.L.P.



## **Christy Lister**

### ***NAMI Advisory Board Member***

Christy Lister brings a deeply personal perspective to the conversation about first responder wellness and mental health. After the tragic loss of her former husband, a 25-year veteran of the Downers Grove Police Department, to suicide, Christy committed herself to advocacy and education. As a mother of three, she has experienced firsthand the ripple effects that suicide and unspoken mental health struggles can have on families. Today, Christy serves on the NAMI Advisory Board and volunteers with First H.E.L.P., supporting families and agencies across the country. Through her work and speaking engagements, she shares her story with courage and compassion, encouraging others to start honest conversations about mental health. Christy's mission is clear: to change the culture of silence and stigma, one conversation at a time, and to bring hope and healing to first responders and their loved ones.

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**"If we don't train together,  
we will fail together."**

**"Small towns  
make big targets"**

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## ROUTE 91 SURVIVORS' PANEL



### Natalie Grumet

Natalie's life story is one of survival, resilience, and unwavering hope. At just 27, she was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer. After enduring six rounds of intensive chemotherapy and multiple surgeries, she defied the odds and entered remission. That experience shaped her passion for patient care and for helping

others rebuild their lives after hardship.

A decade later, Natalie's strength was tested again. On October 1, 2017, while attending the Route 91 Harvest Music Festival in Las Vegas, she was shot in the face during what became the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history. Her injuries were catastrophic—her jaw was shattered, her facial nerves were destroyed, and she spent 20 days in the ICU followed by nine major surgeries in her first year of recovery. Despite partial paralysis, she never gave up. Instead, she uncovered new depths of courage and determination.

From these two life-altering battles, Natalie developed practical coping mechanisms and a powerful message of perseverance that she now shares with audiences around the world. Her story of survival and renewal has inspired students, professionals, and communities alike. She has been featured by Dateline, ABC, FOX, Inside Edition, and CBS, and starred in the Emmy-nominated Paramount+ documentary 11 Minutes. Known for her warmth and humor, Natalie captivates listeners by blending her lived experience with uplifting lessons that empower others to discover their own inner warrior.

Today, Natalie enjoys life in Southern California with her husband of 22 years and their 2 year old goldendoodle Leo. She finds peace by the ocean watching her husband surf, in her garden, exploring jeep trails, a good book, or enjoying sweet treats—proudly embracing her title as a “dessert connoisseur.”





## Jenni Zaretki

Jenni Lynn Zaretki born and raised in Southern California and is a devoted mom to her one son. On the night of Oct 1, 2017 she was an off duty National Registered EMT and concert goer at the Route 91 Music Festival in Las Vegas NV. As shots rang out she stayed behind to help many fellow concert goers with injuries and guide them to safety. Following Route 91 she immediately returned back to patient care while working in the acute care setting. She knew her healing from that night started by continuing to care for others.

Since then she has continued to serve her community in ministry by helping those navigate trauma as well as continuing to come alongside Natalie Grumet as she tells her story of strength and perseverance after meeting each other that fateful night.



## Dean McAuley

Dean worked for the Boeing company until the devastating attacks of September 11, 2001. That is when the calling to serve began. As a child of an addicted mother, Dean witnessed the lifesaving efforts of fire fighters in his own home. Dean started his fire service career in 2003 as a volunteer firefighter for the City of Pacific Fire Department.

Dean quickly moved to a full-time position with Pacific Fire in 2004, and was instrumental in establishing the first Regional Fire Authority in Washington State when the

Cities of Algona, Pacific, and Auburn joined fire services. Dean advocated on behalf of organized labor to bring the fire fighters, elected officials, and communities together.

Throughout Dean's career he has enjoyed serving and growing. Professionally, Dean has excelled in both fire fighting and medical services. Dean promoted up through the ranks to Deputy Fire Marshal and is an accomplished fire investigator. Dean is a Pacific Northwest Fire Investigator Association Board Member and has run multiple charitable events, including the Fill the Boot program for nearly 20 years, for his union (IAFF Local 1352). He has enjoyed all parts of firefighting, EMS, public education, public information, driver operator and now Deputy Fire Marshal, and Fire Investigator where he serves as a board member for the Pacific Northwest Fire Investigators Association. Dean has also run Fill the Boot for the last 19 years for his local.

In 2017, Dean and his friends, as lovers of Country Music, attended the Route 91 concert in Las Vegas. The crowd was attacked by a gunman that injured nearly 500 concert goers. Dean leveraged his training to organize the panicked crowd around him, and orchestrate the treatment of injured people.

Dean has been recognized many times for his benevolence, including the Life Safety Accommodation award for his actions in the Las Vegas mass shooting in 2017. Dean holds the Most Inspirational award for the Washington State Fire Academy, voted union member of the year, and was awarded the Brother for Brother award from Frank Siller, Tunnel to Towers, and FDNY.

# ROUTE 91 SURVIVORS' PANEL



## Connie Schonert-Long

Connie is a Division Director with the Orange County Probation Department, bringing 28 years of experience in community corrections and public safety leadership. She holds a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, a master's degree in Emergency Management, and a certificate in trauma. As a Master Instructor and certified Standards and Training for Corrections (STC) Instructor,

she has trained countless professionals on critical topics impacting officer safety and wellness.

A survivor of the Route 91 mass shooting, Connie was awarded the Medal of Honor for her courage and service during the tragedy. She now openly shares her personal journey of resilience, recovery, and healing—bringing a unique and deeply personal perspective to the importance of wellness in law enforcement.

Connie also co-founded The County Strong Project, a nonprofit dedicated to creating healing spaces for survivors of trauma and violence. Through her speaking, teaching, and leadership, she equips first responders with tools to strengthen resilience, prioritize wellness, and find hope in the aftermath of crisis.

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**"There's no harm  
in hoping for the best  
as long as you're prepared  
for the worst"**

Steven King

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# THE STABLE ARENA



**Terri Keener**, LCSW, LSCSW, is a certified EMDR therapist with over 25 years of specialized experience in mass casualty response and trauma treatment. Following the Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting, she served as Behavioral Health Coordinator at the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center, where she developed and implemented comprehensive support programs for survivors and first responders affected by mass violence locally and nationwide. She now operates a private practice specializing in equine-assisted EMDR, leadership training, and team building.



**Laura Higgins** is a Certified Equine Specialist and owner of Tranquility Ranch Equine Assisted Therapy, LLC. With over 20 years of experience as a horse trainer and riding instructor, she became certified in Equine Assisted Psychotherapy in 2012 and now focuses exclusively on therapeutic work with first responders, active duty military, and veterans. At The Stable Arena, Terri and Laura have developed a specialized therapeutic program integrating evidence-based clinical trauma treatment with equine-assisted therapy,

specifically designed for mass violence survivors and those experiencing community trauma. Both practitioners are trained in EquiLateral\*, an innovative evidence-based approach combining EMDR therapy with the therapeutic presence of horses.

Their integrated treatment model leverages horses' innate ability to attune to human emotional states, providing a non-judgmental presence that creates a safe therapeutic space for processing difficult experiences and developing emotional regulation skills. This approach has demonstrated effectiveness with mass violence survivors, first responders, and community members affected by traumatic events, offering an alternative pathway to healing that addresses the full spectrum of trauma responses.

Their work with Dean McAuley, a Deputy Fire Marshal/Fire Investigator and Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting survivor, exemplifies the program's tremendous impact. Dean completed an Arena EMDR Intensive program at The Stable Arena in April 2023, and his transformative healing journey demonstrates the effectiveness of their integrated approach. Dean now speaks openly about his mental health journey and advocates for the therapeutic benefits of equine-assisted EMDR, serving as a powerful testament to the program's ability to facilitate meaningful recovery from mass violence trauma.

# POLICE RESILIENCY AND CRITICAL INCIDENT MINDSET



## **Captain Joshua Bitsko**

### ***Las Vegas Metropolitan PD (retired)***

Joshua Bitsko is a retired captain from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, 2017 NAPO Top Cop and two time Medal of Valor recipient. He has been a law enforcement professional for 24 years, and has held a variety of positions to include K9 handler, K9 training sergeant, detective sergeant, internal affairs Lieutenant, policy and procedure lieutenant, commander of the Las Vegas resort corridor, and commander over the health, wellness, and safety bureau. He has a BA in Public Administration and is an experienced instructor with over 15 years of teaching both law enforcement employees and community members. Josh responded to the largest mass shooting incident in US history, the 1 October Massacre, as a tactical element. Josh was one of three people to breach the suspect's door and led a team of officers to make entry and clear the suspect's room. Josh was also the incident commander over a mass stabbing incident on the Las Vegas Strip, as well as the recent mass shooting at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. This gives him unique insight on both the stressors of being on the front lines during an active shooter, and the pressures of leading a police response when lives are at stake.

He has spoken around the country about the 1 October massacre, to include to the Secret Service at the White House. Josh can provide personal insight into the struggles of post-traumatic stress, and strategies to assist in processing trauma. Through his first-hand experiences, Josh can not only provide guidance and training for law enforcement professionals facing the most extreme critical incidents, but also describe the mindset necessary for proper critical incident preparedness, response, and processing the aftermath.

Josh has worked with both public agencies and the private sector in creating successful wellness and resilience programs.

# SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER



**Rick Eaton**, *Director of Research*  
**Simon Wiesenthal Center**  
**Los Angeles, California, United States**

As Co-Director of the Center's Digital Terrorism and Hate Project, Rick has supervised the production of all 25 editions of the Digital Terrorism and Hate interactive report. Rick regularly meets with Facebook, Twitter, Google/YouTube and other social networking companies to give feedback and assist in shaping policy. Rick has worked extensively with California P.O.S.T. (Peace Officer Standards and Training) and been a subject-matter expert on 11 educational "Tele-Courses" produced by P.O.S.T. and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Rick has twice testified in Congressional hearings and participated in many briefings on Capitol Hill. In his 37 years with SWC he has conducted hundreds of training sessions with law-enforcement, educators, civic groups, and schools.

## **CERTIFICATIONS**

- Director of Research – Simon Wiesenthal Center (39 years)
- Co-Director of the Digital Terrorism and Hate Project
- California P.O.S.T. Certified Instructor
- Robert Presley Institute of Criminal Investigation

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Research of Terrorism and Domestic Extremism
- Monitoring of Terrorist/Extremist groups worldwide
- Supervise the Center's continuing investigation into the use of the Internet by Extremist groups and Terrorist organizations
- Produce Digital Terrorism and Hate interactive CD Rom and App (26 Volumes)

# AMERICAN NAZI, FROM HATE TO HUMANITY



## Jeff Schoep

Once the leader of America's largest neo-Nazi organization, Jeff Schoep has become a global advocate for peace, transformation, and human rights.

His riveting true-life story, *American Nazi: From Hate to Humanity*, chronicles his extraordinary journey from the frontlines of hate into the trenches of healing.

Jeff's work as a speaker and consultant has reached audiences from the Nobel Peace Center in Norway, including collaborations with the Simon Wiesenthal Center, RAND Corporation, and countless others.

Jeff has also been featured in the Emmy award-winning documentary *White Right: Meeting the Enemy*, Paramount Pictures' *Indivisible: Healing Hate*, and *Red Table Talk* with Jada Pinkett Smith — along with appearances across the History Channel, National Geographic, 60 Minutes, Hulu, Comedy Central, and numerous other acclaimed documentaries.

Through powerful storytelling and lived experience, he now weaponizes the lessons of his past in service of humanity — driving change, bridging divides, and reshaping futures.

Beyond keynote speaking, Jeff offers strategic consulting for corporations, government agencies, and leadership teams ready to tackle transformation head-on. By weaponizing the same psychological tools once used to radicalize and recruit, he now engineers reverse-osmosis processes that dismantle division, shift belief systems, and forge resilient, trust-centered leadership cultures.



# PRESENTING PARTNER



**Dr. Lisa Caparelli-Ruff,**  
Regional Superintendent  
Will County Regional  
Office of Education



The Regional Office of Education (ROE) in Will and other Illinois Counties serves as an intermediate agency between the Illinois State Board of Education and local school districts. Each office is administered by an education professional who has been elected to the office of Regional Superintendent.

As Will County Regional Superintendent, I am the only elected educator in the county. I act as an official advisor and assistant to school officials and teachers, carrying out the advice of the State Superintendent of Education.

In addition to coordinating state and local educational services, I take a leadership role in providing information to educators, school districts and the public. Our office staff answers numerous queries from parents, students, school staffers and citizens regarding a variety of educational matters.

Our office administers several special programs, including truancy prevention, GED testing, life safety inspections of school buildings, bus driver training and continuing education for teachers and administrators. During past year, we have taken on assisting school districts by fingerprinting new employees in compliance with a new state law.

Our Mission Statement, "Working with our communities to support student learning," focuses on three areas, Expertise, Safety and Opportunity.

[willroe.org](http://willroe.org)

# PREMIER PARTNERSHIP



[www.darcybuickgmc.com](http://www.darcybuickgmc.com)

## DEPUTY CHIEF LEVEL PARTNERSHIP



**INDUSTRIES, INC.**  
**MEP+ SOLUTIONS**

[amsindustries.com](http://amsindustries.com)

## DEPUTY CHIEF LEVEL PARTNERSHIP



[joliettownship.net](http://joliettownship.net)

## CAPTAIN LEVEL PARTNERSHIP



**AIR ONE  
EQUIPMENT, INC.**

[www.aoe.net](http://www.aoe.net)

## CAPTAIN LEVEL PARTNERSHIP

**Exxon  
Mobil**

[corporate.exxonmobil.com](http://corporate.exxonmobil.com)

## CAPTAIN LEVEL PARTNERSHIP



[www.silvercross.org](http://www.silvercross.org)

## CAPTAIN LEVEL PARTNERSHIP



**Emergency Care**

[www.styker.com/us/en/](http://www.styker.com/us/en/)

## LIEUTENANT LEVEL PARTNERSHIP



[baysinvestmentcorp.com](http://baysinvestmentcorp.com)

## LIEUTENANT LEVEL PARTNERSHIP



[jcmuniforms.com](http://jcmuniforms.com)

**UNIFORMS**

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[clear-armor.com](http://clear-armor.com)

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**First Responders Wellness Center**

[firstresponderswellnesscenter.com](http://firstresponderswellnesscenter.com)

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[madrigalconsultingandcounseling.com](http://madrigalconsultingandcounseling.com)

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[www.ikea.com/us/en/](http://www.ikea.com/us/en/)

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**We Never  
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[www.weneverfightalone.org](http://www.weneverfightalone.org)

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**MOTOROLA  
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[www.motorola.com/us](http://www.motorola.com/us)

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**RESTORE**  
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[restoreconstruction.com](http://restoreconstruction.com)

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[www.servpro.com](http://www.servpro.com)

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DEFENDERS OF TOMORROW™

[airmethods.com/air-medical/program/lifestar](http://airmethods.com/air-medical/program/lifestar)

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[safehavencounseling.org](http://safehavencounseling.org)

————— A Special Thanks to —————

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**THE CITY OF JOLIET ACTIVE THREAT AND MENTAL  
WELLNESS FUNRAISER 2025 IS PRESENTED BY THE  
JOLIET FIRE DEPARTMENT C.A.R.E.S. FOUNDATION.**



**NOV 6** THURSDAY  
DOORS 7:00PM

22 W CASS - JOLIET, IL | [THEFORGELIVE.COM](https://THEFORGELIVE.COM)

**FORGE**

**QROCK100.7**

**ticketweb**

# HOME for the HOLIDAYS at the RIALTO

Presented By



Rialto  
Christmas Tree  
Sponsored By



## TEDDY BEAR TEA

November 28 | 9:30 AM & 12:30 PM

## JINGLE MINGLE

December 4 | 6:00 PM

## MERRY LITTLE SOIRÉE FEATURING NOVA SOUL QUARTET

December 10 & 11 | 6:00 PM

## JOLIET AMERICAN LEGION BAND CONCERT

December 14 | 2:00 PM

## IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE A LIVE RADIO PLAY FAREWELL PERFORMANCE

December 18 | 7:00 PM

## HOLIDAY MOVIES

ALL SEATS \$5

### POLAR EXPRESS

November 29 | 7:00 PM

### CHRISTMAS VACATION

December 7 | 7:00 PM

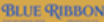
### HOME ALONE

December 21 | 2:00 PM

FOR TICKET INFORMATION,  
VISIT [RIALTOSQUARE.COM](http://RIALTOSQUARE.COM)



## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!





*IT MUST BE CHRISTMAS*  
AN ACOUSTIC EVENING  
WITH **CHRIS YOUNG**

November 21 | 7:30 PM



**CIRQUE MUSICA**  
*HOLIDAY  
WONDERLAND*

November 26 | 6:30 PM



*CHICAGO FESTIVAL  
BALLET'S PRODUCTION  
OF THE NUTCRACKER*

November 30 | 2:00 PM



**ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK**  
*"A WINTER WORLD OF LOVE"*  
A NIGHT OF HOLIDAY CLASSICS  
AND GREATEST HITS

December 5 | 7:30 PM



**OLD CROW MEDICINE  
SHOW'S HOLIDAY  
HOOTENANNY FEATURING  
BRONWYN KEITH-HYNES**

December 6 | 7:30 PM



**A CHARLIE BROWN  
CHRISTMAS LIVE ON  
STAGE**

December 8 | 6:30 PM



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