

**Q23 We would like testimonials to share with others regarding how and why this training is so beneficial for people to attend. Please provide 1-3 sentences that we can share with others. If you would like to share your first name and or occupation please include that information.**

Answered: 21 Skipped: 58

| # | RESPONSES   | DATE               |
|---|---|--------------------|
| 1 | People suffer and deal with trauma in so many different ways. Often they are "taboo" and are not spoken of, however, listening to the speakers during the conference made me realize we need to make a change. Our first responders need our help, understanding and support in overall wellness and health.  | 9/15/2021 4:44 PM  |
| 2 | Such a great conference to boost your mental health awareness. Techniques to benefit you as an individual as well as staff. I highly recommend for fire, police, ems, and spouses. Look forward to the next conference in our area.   | 9/15/2021 4:22 PM  |
| 3 | Peer Support and Wellness is not difficult. It just takes a willingness to help and to most of all, listen.   | 9/15/2021 8:03 AM  |
| 4 | This training helped me to understand that its not just about being physically fit for your job but that you have to be mentally and financially fit as well. Your performance but more importantly your life depends on it!  | 9/14/2021 7:07 AM  |
| 5 | This event can save your life, being able to understand and recognize you need help and where to properly obtain it, is a life saving feature in our professions.   | 9/13/2021 1:03 PM  |
| 6 | This conference was geared towards First Responders as people although they are not typically viewed this way! It was very informative and received well in the aspect of looking for help and having the support to get through it.  | 9/13/2021 11:05 AM |
| 7 | timely, relevant and thought provoking  | 9/13/2021 10:28 AM |
| 8 | This Conference was truly meaningful to me as I felt like my journey has become full circle. 22 years ago exactly (to the start of the OC Conference) I responded as a volunteer EMT/Firefighter to an unknown medical emergency at a construction site. On arrival we found the Maryland State Police awaiting our arrival and attempting to revive 2 small children (boy aged 2 and girl aged 3) who were locked inside of a Jeep Wrangler. I was just 18 years old, cleared as an EMT for a month by my department, but 2 years by the state did CPR for the first time on a child. When we responded to this call, we had no idea what kind of call it would be, or that we'd have 2 pediatric patients. We did everything we could for both children, sadly it just wasn't enough. Richie, the 2 year old boy was already gone before they were found, and Destiny would be on life support another 24 hours. I will never forget the screams of their mother, or the looks on the troopers faces, or Destiny's eyes, or the look of her intestines when they were in my hand, you see these precious children were shot and killed by their father, who tried to cover it up and make it look like a carjacking, you see he beat his ex-wife and she had a protective order and wasn't supposed to have a weapon, but he did. He had asked her to come with them on a trip to Ocean City and she declined but had to allow him his visitation with the kids. For so long I wondered what I could've done differently. I relived it and had nightmares, I was angry and let in consume me. I participated in CISM that was not helpful, I spoke to a Psychiatrist and later a Psychologist, who both diagnosed me with PTSD. I learned to cope with it but not before I became clausterphobic, anxiety ridden, standoffish and so much more. I no longer can get in the back of the ambulance, I changed my college path and career goals after that day. This is the story of Richie (9/9/1999) and Destiny Spicknall (9/10/1999) | 9/13/2021 9:09 AM  |
| 9 | Nicole, retired LEO. This conference was very beneficial to me in regards to I was injured on the job and forced to medically retire. This killed me and I see that it is okay now. I'm going to start grief counseling and would love to be able to share my story and help others in the process.   | 9/13/2021 7:30 AM  |

## Ocean City, MD First Responder Mental Health and Wellness (2021)

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| 10 | 1st Responder Conference is great to attend as you learn about resources and gain insight on what 1st responders experience as they serve their communities.  | 9/13/2021 6:31 AM  |
| 11 | Education is the foundation in reducing stigma in mental health. To be aware is to be strong in the fight against mental illness and suicide. 1st Responder Conferences is the connection needed to the education that is so desperately needed.  | 9/13/2021 5:58 AM  |
| 12 | Listening to our peers open up about their personal mental health issues was very powerful. I could hear their stories and relate them to my own experiences or to things I was seeing in co-workers. It is very important for people to understand their struggles with PTSD and mental health and to see that with help they are all working through their personal issues and learning to cope and move forward.                   | 9/13/2021 5:41 AM  |
| 13 | The 1st Responder Conference was excellent. The information and resources presented were exactly what agencies need to help their staff with peer support and mental health.  | 9/13/2021 5:20 AM  |
| 14 | Overall an amazing conference!!!  | 9/13/2021 4:33 AM  |
| 15 | Phenomenal training opportunity. It was eye opening to have speakers with real raw mental health experiences from different perspectives share their stories. I took something away from each speaker and plan to implement in not only my personal life, but in my department for my peers. We are the most important asset, not the demands of an organization.   | 9/12/2021 10:21 AM |
| 16 | First Responders live with a stigma that we have to be robots who process trauma quickly and move on. This conference allowed me to hear from peers and professionals regarding a variety of topics that deal with First Responder mental health and wellness. The topics presented allow the student to learn information that can assist with peer support, self-reflection, and coping skills for both pre and post trauma events. | 9/12/2021 3:57 AM  |
| 17 | This conference should be mandatory for all agencies. Personal life experiences from excellent speakers. Valuable information that will benefit all first responders now, and for the years to come.  | 9/12/2021 3:31 AM  |
| 18 | Wow! 1st Responder Conferences was full of informational and inspirational presentations on such a tough topic; our own mental health and wellness. I am so glad that I made myself a priority attended this conference!  | 9/11/2021 2:05 PM  |
| 19 | This conference helps eliminate the stigma of mental wellness among first responders. The brutally honest stories you'll hear will help you understand that mental health should be one of the most important aspects of staying healthy.   | 9/11/2021 8:15 AM  |
| 20 | The information provided in the conference is timely and insightful as agencies look towards bringing more mental health wellness to their officers. This conference would be excellent for leaders, supervisors, and especially officers to find ways to help everyone in an agency. Mark-Patrol Lieutenant  | 9/10/2021 5:56 PM  |
| 21 | Overall the content was important. I can see the hope behind the class but believe it can be strengthened by utilizing different guest speakers.  | 9/10/2021 4:39 PM  |