



Peer to Peer Team Members



**Steven Carter – Day Shift
Battalion Chief /Paramedic
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It is an honor to be selected by my peers for the Sunrise Fire-Rescue Peer support program.

Mental Health and Wellness in First Responders and Healthcare Workers is an issue near and dear to my family and me. I have family members in Law Enforcement, Social Work, and Medicine. Like some of you, I have also experienced pain, loss, stress, anger, and sadness, to name a few. There is light at the end of the tunnel, and most importantly, you don't have to do this alone. Let's pivot the Fire Service and address mental health issues together, focusing on making you feel safe and supported.

I am here for you 24/7 to listen, be empathetic, non-judgmental, and comforting in whatever issue or your time of need. I will preserve your privacy and confidentiality in any conversations and only speak when I can offer resources and evidence-based advice within my scope.

We are stronger together. In union, there is strength.



Augie Fernandez – B-Shift
Rescue Lieutenant / Paramedic
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If you have ever been at work, feeling anxious, tense, and frustrated from the feeling that everyone around you is having an amazing care-free time at work, I understand you. I have dealt with anxiety and depression, and through therapy and talking to my mentors at work I have seen an improvement with my overall mental health and satisfaction with this job. No one is perfect, and if you ask around you will find you are not alone, and you don't have to go through your career feeling this way. Ask just about anyone I work with regularly, I'm an open book and I'm always willing to lend you an ear, go have lunch, or help you get in contact with resources that will help you cope and handle the stresses from life as well as this career.



**Gus Fernandez – A-Shift
Captain/Paramedic**

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Every single member of our department in some way, shape or form has had to deal with issues in their life. I'm certainly no exception, as I too have had high and low moments in my own life. I thank every one of you that confided in me to hold this very important role in our department. I believe family is the most important thing both outside of work and here at work as well. I've been blessed with the two best families in the world. One family away from work and the other family here at work. I can assure all my brothers and sisters that I will always be here to listen and assist you, should you ever need someone to talk with. By confiding in me, I promise to do everything in my power to get you the help that you need in trying times. I promise to be here for every one of you, all you have to do is ask.



Courtney Kelley – A-Shift
Driver Operator/Paramedic
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Balancing everything this crazy/beautiful life has to offer can be challenging. Sometimes it can feel overwhelming and like the walls are closing in. It's paramount to keep our mental health in check so we can continue to live our best lives. Talking about some of our challenges to work through them can be one of the best things we can do for our mental health. Please if you ever feel the need to reach out, do not hesitate. I'm a mom, a daughter, a sister, and best of all, a friend.



Tim McCandless – B-Shift
Captain/Paramedic

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Hello all. I've been on the job for 14 years now and I know mental health is big issue within our type of work. Our "normal" is far from normal, and I know you can't just talk to your family of significant other about some of it. We need more outlets for US, our mental health is important, and that's why I am here. I am here for my brothers and sisters whenever you need me, to vent, yell, cry or just B.S. I want to be an outlet you all can use at any time to de-stress a little or a lot. I've had a variety of calls that were far from "normal", and I know how it affected me and how I dealt with certain things, and I want to be that outlet to help you deal with what every you are. It's hard, especially with a family at home, I know, I have a wife and 4 year old daughter so I can relate. Please use this, call me whenever you need me. Stay safe!



Christopher Russo – A-Shift
Captain/Paramedic
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I am honored and humbled to be asked to be a part of the Sunrise Fire Rescue peer support team. At times I am not sure where I have learned more life lessons; 37 years on earth or 13 years with the Fire Department. Either way I am positive that the adversity I have had to face in my personal life and the challenges that close friends and family have asked for help with have given me a truly personal perspective on how serious mental health is. I will listen to you when you need to be heard, help you if you ever feel helpless, and offer my support in every way that I can.



Temeka G. Thomas – A-Shift
Rescue Lieutenant / Paramedic
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During the past 15 years of service, I've seen a lot, I've been through a lot, I've learned a lot but by God's grace I've made it through it all.

I have been so blessed with a good family, friends and a great crew. All who have been there either individually or collectively to provide support and good advice at various times. So for me, I count it both a blessing and a honor to be there for someone else in need.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."