

Schedule & Presenters

Keynote speaker

Sally Spencer-Thomas, Psy.D., MNM- Workplace
Suicide Prevention: We've Got Your Back

Breakout presenters

Marie Adams, PhD- Cultivating Hope and Connection: Building a
Suicide Prevention Coalition at the University of Iowa

Cara Cerullo, LCSW- Game- Changer: VitalCog Peer Navigator
Suicide Prevention Pilot Program for Student- Athletes

Amber Clark, LCSW- Suicide Risk among current and former
National Guard and Reserve members.

Amanda Harvey, PhD, Emma Noble, MA, & Aimee Janssen-
Robinson, Ph.D., CHES- A Culture of Care

Emily Coffey, BS & Anntoinnette Laryea, BA- "Who Helps the
Helper?" Supporting the Mental Health of Helping Professionals

Schedule & Presenters

8-8:30 Check in and Breakfast

Keynote speaker

8:30-10AM introduction and keynote

Sally Spencer- Thomas, Psy.D., MNM- Workplace Suicide Prevention: We've Got Your Back

A clinical psychologist and impact entrepreneur, Dr. Spencer Thomas entered suicide prevention after losing her brother Carson to suicide. She is nationally and internationally recognized for her leadership in closing gaps in mental health promotion and suicide prevention, especially in high-risk industries like construction.

She is the lead author of the National Guidelines for Workplace Suicide Prevention, co-founder of the Construction Working Minds initiative, and a founding partner in the innovative Man Therapy campaign.

Dr. Spencer-Thomas has keynoted internationally, including at Australia's MATES in Construction Conference, and was invited to speak at the White House on men's mental health. In 2016, she accepted IRMI's Horizon Award on behalf of the National Action Alliance's Workplace Task Force, and in 2021, she was named one of ENR's Top 25 Newsmakers in Construction.

Today, she serves as speaker, trainer, and consultant for workplace organizations and national conventions, and as President of the nonprofit she co-founded, United Suicide Survivors International, where she continues to champion bold, culture-changing strategies. Her clients include JE Dunn, Sundt, Hensel Phelps, Holder, ABC, Gilbane, Clayco, Quanta Services, and many labor unions. Her TEDx Talk and national speaking tours amplify voices of lived experience, helping organizations build resilient, recovery oriented cultures where everyone has a chance at a life worth living.

Sally's keynote, "Workplace Suicide Prevention: We've Got Your Back" blends psychological safety, mental health awareness, and practical strategies for reducing risk at work.

Schedule & Presenters

Breakout presenters

10:10-11:10AM

Marie Adams, PhD- Cultivating Hope and Connection: Building a Suicide Prevention Coalition at the University of Iowa

In response to rising mental health needs and increased acuity and risk seen within collegiate mental health centers, the University of Iowa launched the Suicide Prevention Coalition (SPC) as a collaborative, cross-campus initiative designed to strengthen suicide prevention efforts. Through community partnerships, shared education, and the intentional cultivation of hope in the work, the SPC has led the university in strengthening the foundations of prevention, intervention, and postvention on campus in innovative ways. This presentation will highlight the development, implementation, and impact of the SPC and particularly of its signature program, the Hope Box Initiative, a creative outreach effort designed to foster connection, emotional regulation, and resilience among students, staff, and faculty. The presentation will share lessons learned from coalition-building, strategies for sustaining engagement across diverse campus units and practical guidance for implementing hope-centered interventions in higher education and community settings. Participants will leave with a deeper understanding of how collective hope-building and collaborative prevention frameworks can revitalize suicide prevention work and strengthen community well-being.

11:20-12:20AM

Cara Cerullo, LCSW- Game- Changer: VitalCog Peer Navigator Suicide Prevention Pilot Program for Student- Athletes

As part of the National College Athletic Association (NCAA) Innovations in Research and Practice grant, Western Illinois University and the University of Colorado partnered to offer a peer-to-peer suicide prevention training program to student-athletes. This presentation will provide an overview of the need for suicide prevention programming for student-athletes and NCAA best practice guidelines for student-athlete mental health. Further, the session will provide information on implementation and outcomes of VitalCog Suicide Prevention Program at a Division 1 athletic institution.

12:20-1:30 LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

Schedule & Presenters

Breakout presenters

1:30-2:30PM

Amber Clark, LCSW- Suicide Risk among current and former National Guard and Reserve members.

The goal of this presentation is to develop a better understanding of suicide risk during service, be able to identify risk factors for suicide after discharge, and become more familiar with VA resources and current efforts to address Veteran and Service Member suicides.

2:40-3:40PM (Choose one Break out)

Emily Coffey, BS & Anntoinette Laryea, BA- “Who Helps the Helper?” Supporting the Mental Health of Helping Professionals

Attendees will gain an understanding of the mental health challenges experienced by helping professionals, increase awareness of signs of distress within themselves and others in helping roles, explore factors that impact helper well-being, including self-care and systemic support, as well as identify ways to support their mental health while continuing to help others.

Amanda Harvey, PhD, Emma Noble, MA, & Aimee Janssen- Robinson, Ph.D., CHES- A Culture of Care

This presentation will focus on self-care techniques, specifically practicing and modeling healthy self-care in the workplace. Participants will learn why self-care is important in the helping professions, the different dimensions of self-care, how to effectively role-model, and how to maintain a culture of peer support around self-care. Participants will develop their personal self-care and role-modelling plan to practice in the workplace

3:50-4:30

Honoring Ceremony

The Honoring Ceremony offers a sacred space to recognize the lived experience of those whose lives have been touched by suicide — those who have lost loved ones, those who have survived attempts, those who have cared for others in crisis, and those who dedicate their work to prevention and healing