



**BRIDGING THE DIVIDE**  
SUICIDE AWARENESS & PREVENTION SUMMIT

# **BRIDGING THE DIVIDE SUICIDE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS SUMMIT**



*ENHANCING OUR SOCIAL  
ENVIRONMENTS AS A SUICIDE  
PREVENTION STRATEGY*

**MAY 18-19, 2023**

**COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE, SPRING VALLEY CAMPUS  
GLENWOOD SPRINGS, CO**



# Thanks to our Sponsors

## Keynote



**COLORADO**  
Prevention Services Division  
Department of Public Health & Environment



## Peak

## Exhibitor



## Community



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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Thank you for joining us for the 2023 Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado’s Bridging the Divide Summit. It’s so exciting to be in Glenwood Springs! We are glad you are here at this conference for those of you joining us for the first time. For those returning to Bridging the Divide, welcome back! You can expect the same valuable learning experience you’ve had in the past. We hope that you find this conference relevant and meaningful to your work.

I would like to thank the entire volunteer Education Committee, under the leadership of Dr. Shannon Harrison, who has been working for months to assemble the line-up of spectacular speakers you will see throughout this conference. And special thanks to Nikki Lucas from The Place Setting Company, who has managed to keep us on track!

I also want to thank our generous sponsors who make this day possible. Participants will have the chance to meet our sponsors and learn about their commitment to preventing suicide. Please stop by their tables and say hello.

Thank you to our keynote speakers and presenters. We look forward to hearing from you, who have worked so hard and dedicated their careers to the science of Suicidology. Learning from these industry leaders is what makes this conference so unique.

We are particularly excited to present in this conference in this beautiful setting. We hope that you have the opportunity to meet new people, exchange views and share experiences. congratulate you on your commitment and wish you all great success. Enjoy the fresh air, and the Bridging the Divide Summit!

Brenda Gierczak, MA.CG-C  
SPCC Board Chair

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# SPCC information

The Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado (SPCC) was formed in 1999, when concerned citizens set out to create a statewide agency with the purpose of preventing suicide and creating a resource network for those who were working to prevent suicide around the state. Today, SPCC’s membership of concerned agencies, organizations and individuals who are working in the areas of suicide prevention, intervention and postvention has statewide reach.

SPCC works with its network of organizations and individuals to ensure everyone in Colorado has access to the best resources, and educational opportunities to provide information about advocating effectively.

- [Link to the SPCC directory of the state’s mental health and suicide prevention resources.](#)

The mission of the SPCC is to reduce suicide and its impact for all Coloradans through advocacy, collaboration and education.

## SPCC Board Members

Dan Adams	Board Member
Kim Baca	Secretary, Collaboration Chair
Jennifer Daniels	Board Member
Dale Emme	Board Member
Brenda Gierczak, MA, CG-C	Chair
Shannon Harrison, PhD, LCSW	Board Member, Education Chair
Erin Ivie	Treasurer
Helen Littrell	Board Member
Susan Marine, PhD	Board Member, Advocacy Consult
Maranda Miller	Board Member, Advocacy Chair
Paul Henrion	Board Member
Bill Porter, PhD	Honorary Board Member

Sarah Kuntz - Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado  
Email: [info@suicidepreventioncolorado.org](mailto:info@suicidepreventioncolorado.org)

## Become an SPCC Member

***Each Hand Makes Us Stronger***

Individual Membership starts at only \$25 per year.

All members receive:

- Free or reduced fees to education sessions, Annual Coalition Member meeting, and Bridging the Divide Summit.
- Advocacy Action Alerts and support at the state level for suicide prevention and mental health.
- Promote your events and resources to SPCC audiences.
- And more!



# venue information

## Summit Venue:

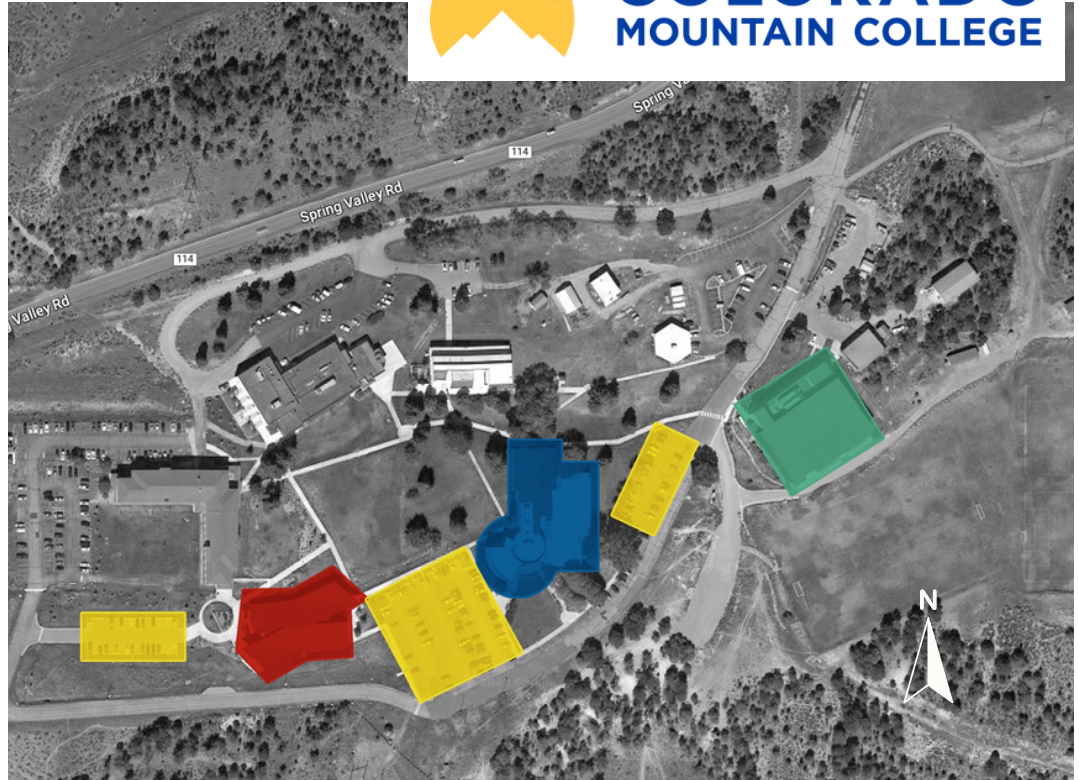
Colorado Mountain College Spring Valley Campus  
3000 County Road 114  
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601



**COLORADO**  
MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

## Directions:

From HWY 82, head north on Spring Valley Road (County Road #114) for approximately 3 miles and turn right into campus.



## Legend

Yellow - Parking

Red - Ascent Center

Blue - Calaway/Theater

Green - Field House

\*NOTE - SESSION LOCATIONS ON THE SCHEDULE MATCH THE BUILDING COLORS ON THIS MAP

**Registration/Check-in, Keynote Sessions, Vendor Booths and Meals**

**Clinical/Peer Support Track - Ascent Center Room 110**

**Research Track - Ascent Center Room 120**

**Lived Experience Track - Ascent Center Room 130**

**Programs that Work Track - Calaway Academic Center Theater**



# participation

Bridging the Divide is Colorado's annual suicide prevention and awareness summit hosted by the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado (SPCC). This year's theme is Enhancing Our Social Environments as a Suicide Prevention Strategy

## WHEN YOU ARRIVE / PARKING

Park in one of the designated parking lots marked yellow on the campus map provided on the [venue information page](#). Registration/check-in, keynotes, exhibitor booths, and meals will be in the Fieldhouse Gymnasium. When you first arrive at the conference this is where you want to go to check in. Breakout sessions will be held in two different buildings, which are colored blue and red on the map, the Calaway Academic Center Theater and the Ascent Center Rooms. You can easily walk to these buildings or move your car if parking allows. Parking is free. The campus will be out of session.

## ATTIRE

The requested attire for attendees of Bridging the Divide Summit is Business Casual. Keep in mind that sessions are in different buildings. Make sure to bring comfortable shoes and a jacket. (Don't forget to check the forecast!)

## TAKE NOTES WITH PAPER AND PEN

Writing down important notes from the sessions will help with the retention of the information. And will reduce the chance you end up checking email, social media or other things outside of the event.

## MEALS

Light Breakfast and Lunch will be provided on conference days. For dinner options check out the [Glenwood Springs](#) and [Carbondale](#) places to eat websites

## WATER

Please bring a reusable water bottle to ensure you are properly hydrated. There are water fountains on campus.

## CONNECT WITH RESOURCES

Attendees have the opportunity to meet with sponsor organizations hosting resource booths. Visit each booth and get a sticker/stamp for each space on the card and return to the info desk to be eligible to win a complimentary registration to Bridging the Divide 2024!

## EXHIBITOR BOOTHS

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention - Colorado Chapter
- Garfield County Suicide Prevention Coalition
- Jefferson Center
- Johnstown Heights
- LivingWorks
- Mind Springs
- Pikes Peak Suicide Prevention Partnership
- Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners
- Rocky Mountain MIRECC for Suicide Prevention
- Second Wind Fund
- SpeakUp ReachOut
- Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado (SPCC)



## THURSDAY, MAY 18, 2023

Location

8:00 am - 4:00 pm	Summit Registration Open	Fieldhouse Gymnasium
8:30 am - 9:00 am	Visit Sponsor Tables	
9:00 - 9:15 am	Welcome	
9:15 am - 10:30 am	Opening Keynote - "Suicide: the silent killer" • Michael Cotayo - Comedian   Actor   Writer   Speaker	Fieldhouse Gymnasium
10:30 am - 11:00 am	Break - Visit Sponsor Tables	
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Breakout Sessions 1	
	• Track 1 - Clinical/Peer Support	Ascent Center Room 110
	◦ <i>Suicide Prevention in Digital Social Environment</i>	
	• Track 2 - Programs that Work	Calaway Academic Center Theater
	◦ <i>H.O.P.E Certification</i>	
	• Track 3 - Research	Ascent Center Room 120
	◦ <i>Meaning Making</i>	
	• Track 4- Lived Experience	Ascent Center Room 130
	◦ <i>Empowering Mental Fitness Through Our Lived Experiences</i>	
12:00 pm - 12:15 pm	Transition to Lunch and Lunch Pick Up	
12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	SPCC Member Meeting	
1:15 pm - 1:30 pm	Transition to Breakout Sessions	Fieldhouse Gymnasium
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Breakout Sessions 2	
	• Track 1 - Clinical/Peer Support	Ascent Center Room 110
	◦ <i>New Clinician Training in Suicide Prevention</i>	
	• Track 2 - Programs that work	Calaway Academic Center Theater
	◦ <i>Toolboxes: Connection in Rural Communities</i>	
	• Track 3 - Research	Ascent Center Room 120
	◦ <i>The Importance of Providing Culturally Relevant and Identity Affirming Care to Members of the LGBTQ+ Community</i>	
	• Track 4- Lived Experience	Ascent Center Room 130
	◦ <i>The Why Question &amp; the Healing Power of Narrative</i>	
2:30 pm - 2:45 pm	Break - Visit Sponsor Tables	
2:45 pm - 4:00 pm	Keynote Session - "A Critical Component to Reducing Maternal Mortality" • Sarah Nagle-Yang, MD - University of Colorado School of Medicine	Fieldhouse Gymnasium
4:00 pm - 4:15 pm	Thank you and closing for the day	



## FRIDAY, MAY 19, 2023

8:00 am - 3:30 pm	Summit Registration/Check-in Desk Open	Fieldhouse Gymnasium
8:00 am - 8:30 am	Visit Sponsor Tables	
8:30 am - 9:00 am	Welcome, and Awards Ceremony	
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Keynote Session - "The Shelter of Each Other" <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Michael J. Mann, PhD, FASHA - Boise State University</li></ul>	Fieldhouse Gymnasium
10:15 am - 10:30 am	Break - Visit Sponsor Tables	
10:30 am - 11:30 am	Breakout Sessions 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Track 1 - Clinical/Peer Support<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Collaboration: Support Choice and Community</li></ul></li><li>• Track 2 - Programs that Work<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ 911/Crisis Line Call Diversion and Co-Response</li></ul></li><li>• Track 3 - Research<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ TMS: The Future of Depression Treatment</li></ul></li><li>• Track 4- Lived Experience<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Our Three Lives: Real-life Accounts of Overcoming Suicide &amp; Grief</li></ul></li></ul>	Ascent Center Room 110 Calaway Academic Center Theater Ascent Center Room 120 Ascent Center Room 130
11:30 am - 11:45 am	Transition to Lunch	Fieldhouse Gymnasium
11:45 am - 12:45 pm	Lunch and Presentation from the Office of Suicide Prevention	
12:45 pm - 1:00 pm	Transition - Visit Sponsor Tables	
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Breakout Sessions 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Track 1 - Clinical/Peer Support<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Effective Safety Planning</li></ul></li><li>• Track 2 - Programs that Work<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Addressing Library Worker's Trauma</li></ul></li><li>• Track 3 - Research<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Rocky Mountain Crisis Partner's Follow-Up Program</li></ul></li><li>• Track 4- Lived Experience<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Remembrance Ceremony</li></ul></li></ul>	Ascent Center Room 110 Calaway Academic Center Theater Ascent Center Room 120 Ascent Center Room 130
2:00 pm - 2:15 pm	Break - Visit Sponsor Tables	Fieldhouse Gymnasium
2:15 pm - 3:30 pm	Closing Keynote - "Machismo (big M) vs. machismo (little m): The Duality Between Risk and Protection in Latino Masculine Identity" <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. J Rocky Romero, LMSW - JR Romero &amp; Associates</li></ul>	
3:30 pm - 3:45 pm	Thank You and Goodbye	



# thank you sponsors/exhibitors

The Colorado Office of Suicide Prevention coordinates suicide prevention, intervention supports, and postvention efforts in our state.

A comprehensive public health approach that supports communities to foster connection and meet their community's needs is essential for work to be effective. Many community-level factors contribute to suicide among those with and without mental health conditions. Relationship problems, financial hardship, chronic pain, and feeling isolated can all contribute to someone feeling suicidal.

Alongside our partners, we continue to strengthen economic supports, strengthen access and delivery of culturally appropriate and affirming care, create protective environments, promote connectedness, and support people and communities after experiences of suicidal despair, an attempt, or death by suicide.

**We appreciate all the work our Colorado community partners do to help prevent suicide. Thank you!**

Please feel welcome to: join our monthly newsletter mailing list; to access data, resources, and trainings; to learn more about the Suicide Prevention Commission and our many workgroups, and to read about our commitment to equity — all available on our website at [www.COOSP.org](http://www.COOSP.org).

Other questions? Email us directly at [cdphe\\_SuicidePrevention@state.co.us](mailto:cdphe_SuicidePrevention@state.co.us)



**MTECH IS PROUD TO SUPPORT THE SUICIDE PREVENTION COALITION OF COLORADO**



[www.mtechg.com/mentalhealth](http://www.mtechg.com/mentalhealth)

# thank you sponsors/exhibitors

## IT'S REAL: TEENS AND MENTAL HEALTH

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention developed *It's Real* to raise awareness about mental health issues, how to start a conversation about mental health, the importance of self-care, and how to reach out for help.

*It's Real: Teens and Mental Health* is a 45-minute program meant for high school classes or community settings with groups of teens, aged from 14 to 18 that provides young people with relevant mental health education and resources.

Reach out to Colorado Area Director Michael Barber at [mbarber@afsp.org](mailto:mbarber@afsp.org) for more information.

MIND SPRINGS health  WEST SPRINGS hospital  
Prevention. Care. Recovery. Psychiatric Care & Recovery

## YOU MATTER

We are ready to help you or a loved one who is suffering from addiction, depression, anxiety, or other mental illnesses.

Mind Springs offers a variety of outpatient counseling and therapy services - both in-person or telehealth - for all ages.

**MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY.**

**1.877.603.7045**

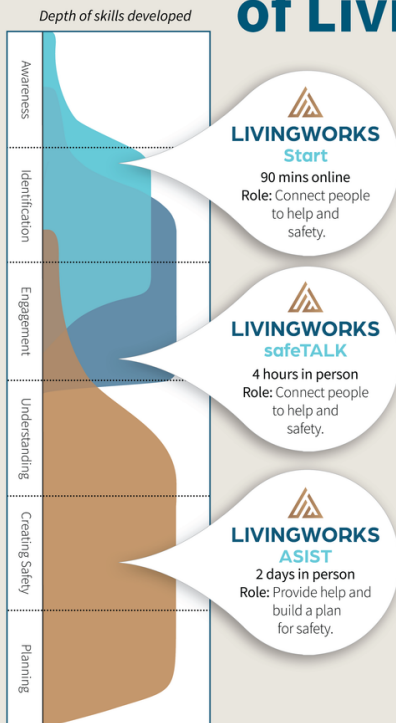
Experiencing a mental health crisis?  
Call the Colorado Crisis Line  
1.844.493.8255 or text TALK to 38255

[afsp.org/ItsReal](http://afsp.org/ItsReal)



American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention  
Colorado

## Celebrating 40 years of LivingWorks



Integrated programs helping people keep safe from suicide

 **LIVINGWORKS**  
40 Years of Building Hope

  
**ROCKY MOUNTAIN  
MIRECC**  
FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

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**AllHealth**  
NETWORK

COUNSELING. COMPASSION. CONNECTION.

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

*Let's Talk About Suicide*

If you or someone you know is in crisis, call **988** or Colorado Crisis Services at **844-493-8255** or text **TALK** to **38255**.

**SpeakUpREACHOUT**

We reduce instances of suicide in Eagle County & help those affected by it address their pain. Through education programs, events, peer groups & partnerships, we bring community members together to learn & share their unique experiences.



**Get Involved. Save a Life.**



**SOURCES**  
OF STRENGTH



Empowering a Well World  
through spreading  
Hope, Help, and Strength

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

*Second Wind Fund.*  
20 YEARS STRONG

Connecting Youth At Risk  
For Suicide With Life-Saving  
Mental Health Treatment



Learn more at [thesecondwindfund.org](http://thesecondwindfund.org)



**THIRST**  
LIVING WATERS FUND

Trust Him In Relief of Suicidal Thoughts

**LIVE CHAT**

**24/7**

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**Johnstown Heights**  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



**SUICIDE PREVENTION COALITION**  
of Garfield County

**THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE!**

We're revitalizing our coalition, if you want to be a part come find our booth!

[spcgarco@gmail.com](mailto:spcgarco@gmail.com)



# thank you sponsors/exhibitors



**YOU ARE NOT ALONE**



**pikes peak  
Suicide Prevention**

FREE SUPPORT SERVICES

- Individual Counseling
- Support Groups
- Peer Support
- Suicide Loss Bereavement Services

WWW.PIKESPEAKSUICIDEPREVENTION.ORG  
(719) 573-7447

**You are the right person.**

We can all be the right one to prevent suicide. Jefferson Center is here for our community to provide support for those in our community through:

- Crisis Services
- Confidential Counseling
- Group Support
- Substance Use Services

**Jefferson Center**  Telehealth and in-person appointments available  
**303-425-0300 | jcmh.org**  
*— With you in mind —*



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN CRISIS PARTNERS**

Answering the Call for Colorado

*Providing skilled, hope-filled support to individuals and communities in Colorado since 2010*

We are an independent, non-profit organization that provides 24/7/365 confidential crisis support at no charge to the people of Colorado through call, text or chat. We are the front door to Colorado's comprehensive crisis system. Crisis is self-defined and we are available to anyone who needs support for suicidal thoughts, mental health concerns, substance use or other emotional distress.

Providers of Colorado Crisis Services and 9-8-8 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline



**988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE**

*If you're in Colorado, but have an out-of state area code  
Call or Text:*

**1-844-493-8255 or text TALK to 38255**



**COLORADO  
CRISIS SERVICES**



## Thursday Opening Keynote Session - "Suicide: the silent killer"

*Mike Cotayo, LCSW - Comedian | Actor | Writer | Speaker*

Suicide rates have increased by 33% between 1999 and 2019 and is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States.

Your attendees will learn how to:

- Recognize the prevalence of death by suicide and the importance of prevention practices within the workplace
- Learn the epidemiology, etiology, and risk factors of suicidal behavior
- Discover strategies for screening, assessing, and reducing the risk of suicide
- Understand special concerns, risk factors, and interventions related to depression and suicide.
- Identify self-injurious behaviors and what objects, substances, and actions are common in suicide attempts
- Highlight the management and treatment modalities for workers at risk for suicide, including best practices for connecting the worker to referral
- Learn the correlation between trauma and suicide

Now, more than ever, mental health matters. More and more people are struggling with feelings of low self-worth, anxiety, depression, and a general sense of loss all due to the isolating effects of a global pandemic.



### **Mike Cotayo, LCSW**

**Comedian | Actor | Writer | Speaker**

Mike Cotayo knows how to handle difficult people because he was one! Surviving a traumatic brain injury, he overcame his own addiction to drugs. He then went on to devote 20 years of his professional life as a clinical social worker servicing the needs of the mentally ill and chemically addicted. As an expert in treating patients with borderline personalities, he has delivered keynotes internationally, including speaking at the European Association of Gestalt Therapy.

Mike has cultivated and developed the power of humor as a healing force. He has headlined at The Laugh Factory in New York City, as well as Binghamton University; Columbia University, and Kansas State University, showing how to find humor in any situation. Mike lectures on workplace tolerance and delivers engaging presentations on dealing with problematic people and overcoming adversity.



## Thursday Afternoon Keynote Session - "A Critical Component to Reducing Maternal Mortality"

*Sarah Nagle-Yang, MD - University of Colorado School of Medicine*

### Abstract

The United States is the only high-income nation in the world with an increasing maternal mortality rate, with significant inequities among Black, Hispanic and indigenous people. Increasingly suicide and unintentional overdose are recognized as leading causes of maternal mortality, and yet perinatal mental health disorders remain underdiagnosed, and barriers to mental health treatment endure. This presentation will summarize the importance of the detection and treatment of perinatal mental health disorders and highlight innovative models of care to increase access to treatment during this critical time.

### Learning objectives

1. Recognize the prevalence of mental health disorders across the perinatal period.
2. Explain risk factors for suicide among perinatal persons.
3. Discuss the importance of screening for perinatal mental health disorders and suicidal thoughts within healthcare and community settings.
4. Describe person-centered approaches to perinatal mental health treatment across levels of acuity and complexity.



### **Sarah Nagle-Yang, MD**

University of Colorado School of Medicine

Dr. Sarah Nagle-Yang has been a specialist in reproductive psychiatry for over a decade & is the Deputy Executive Director of the Colorado Center for Women's Behavioral Health at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. She is passionate about providing high-quality psychiatric care to women across the reproductive lifespan, building innovative models of care to expand access to treatment, & developing interdisciplinary education on topics within reproductive

psychiatry. She is a co-editor of the first comprehensive textbook on Women's Reproductive Mental Health, the president of the North American Society for Psychosocial Obstetrics and Gynecology, and a founding contributor to the National Curriculum in Reproductive Psychiatry. Here in Colorado, she co-chairs the Colorado Maternal Mental Health Collaborative and Framework Leadership Team and is a member of the Colorado Maternal Mortality Review Board. Dr. Nagle-Yang graduated from the University of Cincinnati School of Medicine and completed residency in psychiatry at Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City. She completed fellowships in Consult Liaison Psychiatry and Public and Community Psychiatry at University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center. She learned about the critical role of mothers in families and communities much earlier, however, through her relationship with her own mother- who not only parented six children but also supported countless other parents and guardians through her work as a special education preschool teacher. While Dr. Nagle-Yang chose to pursue a different path, she is grateful every day for the opportunity to support women and other perinatal persons during a time that often can be disorienting, painful, and challenging, but also transformational. Dr. Nagle-Yang is a mother to three boys, ranging from tween to teen. To their chagrin, in her spare time, she tries to understand how to use and post to various social media platforms. She also loves hiking, historical fiction, and cooking.



## **Friday Morning Keynote Session - "The Shelter of Each Other, 2023: Using Primary Prevention to Create Communities Where Children and Adolescents Grow & Thrive"**

*Michael J. Mann, PhD, FASHA - School of Public & Population Health, Boise State University*

### **Abstract**

Children and adolescent outcomes are most often a reflection of the social environments in which they grow and develop. Individually, most adults have limited power to change these environments and make them more conducive to healthy growth and development. Individual young people themselves are under even greater constraints. Often, creating healthy environments for children and adolescents requires adults in the community to find common ground, effectively communicate across differences, and co-create environments that are safe, promote growth, and ensure that every child thrives. In this presentation, we will discuss successful approaches to reducing risk and enhancing protection using grassroots, community-based, primary prevention strategies including the Icelandic Prevention Model.

Learning Objectives (3-5): At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to...

1. Describe how the total social environment contributes to child and adolescent mental health outcomes.
2. Identify benefits associated with collaborating to create healthy environments that ensure child and adolescent mental, social, and emotional health and well-being.
3. Apply successful strategies for enhancing the social environment in the communities they serve, including reducing common risk factors and enhancing common protective factors at the community level.



### **Michael J. Mann, PhD, FASHA**

Director of the School of Public and Population Health, College of Health Sciences, Boise State University, and Professor

Michael J. Mann spent 30 years working as a K-12 teacher, alternative school principal, district operations leader, founder of two adventure programs for vulnerable young people, and a university faculty member. Currently, he is a professor at Boise State University, where he directs the School of Public and Population Health. His teaching is

focused on the determinants of health and child/adolescent health promotion. His research is focused on integrating student health promotion into the fabric of the public school experience, the role of education as a social determinant of health, and effective school-family-community partnerships. He supports and advises the Icelandic Centre for Social Research and Analysis on the Icelandic Prevention Model and the Planet Youth organization regarding effective scientific translation, evaluation, and school-family-community partnerships. Michael is also a past member of the American School Health Association's national Board of Directors, Editor of the Journal of School Health, and a member of the National Committee on Future of School Health Education. He earned his PhD in Health and Human Behavior from the University of Florida in 2007.



# keynote sessions

## Closing Keynote Session - "Machismo (big M) vs. machismo (little m): The Duality Between Risk and Protection in Latino Masculine Identity"

*Dr. J Rocky Romero, LMSW - JR Romero & Associates*

### Course Objectives

1. Participants will be able to describe M/machismo as they relate to cultural elements.
2. Participants will be able to clearly define the protection versus the risk of M/machismo in Latino cultures.
3. Participants will be able to critically examine and formulate a plan based on the cultural formulation interview (CFI) considering the dualities of M/machismo in their family.

*Key terms: Machismo (big M), machismo (little m), toxic masculinity, nobility, masculine nobility, criminal, stereotype, identity politics, caberismo*

### Abstract

The duality between the Big M (Masculinity) and little m (masculinity) truly calls for us to examine toxic masculinity compared to appropriate masculine nobility in the Latino culture. If we solely categorize Latinx males as Machismo we fail to examine those Latinx males who choose, work towards, and embrace noble characteristics and prefer to be leaders/family men/men of a more refined approach. In addition, if as advocates and practitioners in the behavioral health setting we fail to examine these two concepts we run the risk of stereotyping and continuing to criminalize the brown Latinx male body as solely Machismo (big M). The likeness of phenotypical traits between Latinx males, by the nature of how the brain categorizes/separates/sorts people by race, because of our social and political conditioning, we may fail to treat Latinx males who seek nobility with respect and fairness. This will then allow for them to be mistreated, mislabeled, and to be classified like a criminal in their own countries.

*How does trauma and feelings of inadequacy lead to embracing traits related to Machismo, rather than to machismo?*



### CEO and Owner of JR Romero & Associates

Dr. J Rocky Romero, LMSW is the CEO and owner of JR Romero & Associates, a company he started 21 years ago that focuses on behavioral health program development, program evaluation, consultation, and specialized training. Dr. Romero completed his doctoral studies at the University of New Mexico in Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies (LLSS) with a focus on analyzing legal discourse related so Spanish while applying a critical race theory lens. He is focused on teaching culturally

appropriate treatment approaches while reducing health disparities for people of color. Dr. Romero continues to research and present nationally on the intersections of racism, discrimination, the impact of racialized legal discourse, and the impact of the social determinants of health on people of color. Dr. Romero was a doctoral fellow for El Centro de la Raza at the University of New Mexico during his doctoral studies where he also served as the President of the College of Education's Student Graduate Association in LLSS.





# breakout sessions

## Clinical/Peer Support Track - Ascent Center Room 110

**THURSDAY, MAY 18**

### **Suicide Prevention in a Digital Social Environment**

**11:00 am - 12:00 pm**

*Speaker:* Skylar Finewax, Online Emotional Support Supervisor, RMCP

*The breakout session aims to educate about the text-based suicide prevention strategy employed by RMCP, which answers for Colorado Crisis Line and 988, and how to do the same. The presentation highlights the advantages of the service, such as the ability for a single specialist to respond to several texts at once, using written language to convey an empathic response, and providing a safe space for those afraid of being overheard. The service is available 24/7 and helps prevent suicide overnight when the risk is highest. The presentation also allows attendees to witness how a therapeutic suicide assessment can be done naturally by texting various mock scenarios in real-time, all while reflecting the digital social environment needed.*

### **New Clinician Training in Suicide Prevention**

**1:30 pm - 2:30 pm**

*Panel Organizer:* Beth M Johnson, LPC, RMCP

*Panel Presenters:* Beth M Johnson, Program Manager, MAC, LPC, RMCP | Melissa Schacht, Intern Supervisor, MSW, RMCP | Olivia Michael, PsyD Intern, Denver University, RMCP | Chrystina Ashanti Jimenez, MS

*This presentation will address the impact of training and experience in suicide assessment and intervention on new clinicians' readiness entering the field. The panel will discuss the importance of increasing access of training and direct experience opportunities to new clinicians on the clinical environment for suicide prevention. The panel will present on how the training and experience with Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners (RMCP) impacted confidence, readiness, and professional development from each panelists' perspective.*

**FRIDAY, MAY 19**

### **Collaboration: Support Choice and Community**

**10:30 am - 11:30 am**

*Panel Presenters:* Katrina M Carnes, MA, Crisis Services Program Manager, RMCP | Brandon Wilcox, Director of Peer Services, RMCP | Lacy Monday, Director of Crisis Services, Diversus Health

*In this presentation, the presenters will discuss the RMCP goals, limits, and collaborative strategies of each program and how they address challenges as they arise. They will focus on the options provided to callers from the moment they call in, including interventions that encourage choice and agency, help people stay in their communities, and navigate further external supports. The presentation will cover the benefits and challenges of utilizing multiple formats of intervention and the need for collaboration when supporting people experiencing heightened states of crisis.*

### **Effective Safety Planning: Collaboration is Key**

**1:00 pm - 2:00 pm**

*Speaker:* Dr. Jessa Navidé, PsyD, Clinical Psychologist in NYC

*This presentation aims to address the issue of clinicians perceiving safety plans as a waste of time or ineffective. It emphasizes the importance of a collaborative safety plan and equipping individuals with the tools needed to survive a crisis. Participants will gain increased awareness of personal biases to safety planning and how to respond to clients' resistance to safety planning. The presentation will cover the difference between a safety plan and a collaborative safety plan, with the goal of helping participants complete a collaborative safety plan more successfully and train others in their community to utilize it.*



# breakout sessions

## Programs that Work Track - Calaway Academic Center Theater

**THURSDAY, MAY 18**

**11:00 am - 12:00 pm**

### **H.O.P.E. Certification: Implementing the National Guidelines for Workplace Suicide Prevention**

*Speaker:* Erin Ivie, United Survivors International Board Member and SpeakUp ReachOut

*In this presentation, participants will learn about the H.O.P.E. Certification (Helping Our People Elevate through tough times) and the nine best practices within an “upstream, midstream and downstream” approach. These practices are recommendations made by the National Guidelines for Workplace Suicide Prevention, a set of tools and guiding principles developed by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and United Suicide Survivors International. Presenters will place particular emphasis on the practice of developing “peer allies” at work.*

### **Our Toolboxes: Social Connection in Rural Communities**

**1:30 pm - 2:30 pm**

*Panel Organizer:* Maret C Felzien, MA, High Plains Research Network

*Panel Presenters:*

JC Carrica III, Ed.D, VP & Chief of Healthcare Innovation & Strategy, Valley-Wide Health Systems

Clinton Wilson, MA, Program Director of AgWell, Rocky Mountain Farmer's Union

*The presentation will highlight unique efforts and partnerships to address suicide prevention through upstream approaches and engage the audience through discussions about the value of social connection and mental wellness conversations in regular community life. The panelists of this presentation are all trained in COMET and specialize in engaging rural and agricultural audiences who are difficult to reach with traditional mental health information and care. They will discuss the COMET Program and how it has influenced other programs which focus on mental health for rural audiences in Colorado and neighboring states.*

**FRIDAY, MAY 19**

### **911/Crisis Line Call Diversion**

**10:30 am - 11:30 am**

*Speakers:* Madyson Ganeles, Law Enforcement, & Public Safety Liaison, Mental Health

Professional, RMCP | Amin Shariff, Law Enforcement & Public Safety Liaison, Mental Health

Professional, RMCP | Michelle Muething, Aspen Hope Center

*The presentation aims to address the challenges faced by law enforcement and public safety agencies when dealing with individuals in crisis situations. Many individuals in crisis are hesitant to seek help due to the fear of law enforcement involvement, medical bills, and other barriers to treatment. The presentation proposes a “least restrictive crisis intervention” model of care that aims to remove these barriers to treatment and improve access to care for those in need.*

**1:00 pm - 2:00 pm**

### **Addressing Library Worker’s Trauma & the Public Library Offers Upstream Mental Health Supports**

*Speaker:* Michelle Boisvenue-Fox, Library Director, MLIS, Mesa County Libraries

*This presentation discusses how public libraries can address mental health issues before they become suicide issues through participation in the community's Suicide Prevention Coalition. The presentation aims to help participants identify ways their local library can support the community's mental health, list ways to support their staff's mental health and wellness, and understand the importance of offering upstream solutions for mental health supports.*



# breakout sessions

Research Track - Ascent Center Room 120

THURSDAY, MAY 18

## Meaning Making

11:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Speaker:** Janet Schnell, MSW LCSW, Social Worker and Consultant, Retrospective Fatality Analysis and Survivors of Suicide of Dubois County

*In this session, Retrospective Fatality Analysts and loss survivors will describe the beneficial impact of meaning-making on their well-being that comes from talking about a loved one's life and death and clarifying life events, relationships, and the sociocultural context of suicide. Loss survivors will share how taking part in this process helped them not only reframe the meaning and their loss narratives but also better understand the experiences of other survivors and engage people and communities in conversations about suicide and suicide prevention.*

## The Importance of Providing Culturally Relevant and Identity

1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

### Affirming Care to Members of the LGBTQ+ Community

**Speaker:** Steven Haden (he/him), MSW, MBA, CEO and Co-Founder, Envision:You

*LGBTQ+ affirming care training is necessary for staff working in behavioral health settings, hospitals, and social service organizations. LGBTQ+ individuals experience higher rates of mental health challenges and often experience troubling encounters with mental health providers who do not fully understand or appreciate the concerns that stem from being a part of a marginalized community (or more than one marginalized identity). This presentation is designed to help registered and licensed mental health clinicians, addiction counselors, and certified peer specialists develop new skills and gain critical knowledge to enhance the delivery of quality, culturally relevant and affirming behavioral health interventions for members of the LGBTQ+ community.*

FRIDAY, MAY 19

## TMS: The Future of Depression Treatment

10:30 am - 11:30 am

**Speakers:** Kartiki Churi, M.D. - Clinic Director, Golden - Family Care Center

Dr. Charles Weber, D.O. FASAM LTC(R), - Founder and Chief Medical Director - Family Care Center

*Treatment-resistant depression, commonly referred to as TRD, is a subset of Major Depressive Disorder which does not respond to traditional and first-line therapeutic options. Research shows that Depression that does not respond to typical treatment interventions, carries a high burden of decreased quality of life, functional impairment, higher risk of relapse, increased self-harming behaviors and suicidality. In this presentation, Drs. Weber and Churi discuss Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS), an innovative, non-invasive, FDA approved, treatment for TRD, its history, current and future applications in psychiatry.*

## Rocky Mountain Crisis Partner's Follow-Up Program

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

**Panel Organizer:** Melody B Keown, B.A., Follow-Up Program Manager, RMCP

**Panel Presenters:** Erik Jacobsen, B.A., Program Community Liaison, RMCP |

*This presentation aims to educate participants on the higher suicide risks associated with individuals who visit an Emergency Department for a mental health-related concern. It also discusses the Follow-Up Program, which supports individuals post-discharge from an Emergency Department, and how it reduces the risk of suicide in individuals experiencing suicidal ideation. By the end of the presentation, participants should be able to summarize the risks, define the Follow-Up Program, and identify how it reduces risk.*



# breakout sessions

## Lived Experience Track - Ascent Center Room 130

**THURSDAY, MAY 18**

### **Empowering Mental Fitness Through Our Lived Experiences**

**11:00 am - 12:00 pm**

*Speaker:* Angilina Taylor, Aspen Strong Executive Director

*Panelists:*

Caitlyn Johnson, Student | Christina King, Founder, Aspen Strong | Lindsey Lupow, Program Director, Aspen Strong | Paddy O'Connell, Writer and Aspen Strong Board Member

*This panel will use personal stories to explore suicidal ideation and the journey to mental wellness. Led by a high school student with personal experience of depression and anxiety, the panelists will share their stories of mental defeat and discuss the small acts that brought them to a place where they could share and advocate for mental fitness. The aim is to destigmatize mental health issues and highlight research showing that coping skills are crucial to resilience. By educating young people about mental fitness and encouraging people, place, and purpose as a form of medicine, the panel hopes to shift towards a mental health model that emphasizes prevention and empowerment.*

### **The Why Question & the Healing Power of Narrative**

**1:30 pm - 2:30 pm**

*Speaker:* Jay E. Valusek, MS, MEd, Suicide Bereavement Specialist, BPS Health Strategies

*This session is intended to help suicide loss survivors "regain their equilibrium" by demonstrating a practical (albeit challenging) approach to answering the question that haunts those bereaved by suicide: Why did this happen?*

**FRIDAY, MAY 19**

### **Our Three Lives: Real-life Accounts of Overcoming Suicide and Grief**

**10:30 am - 11:30 am**

*Speakers:*

Sienna, S, Adams, Educational Speaker | Gail L Sanchez, Educational Speaker | JB Sanchez, Mental Health advocate, and survivor

*The state of Colorado is facing a serious issue with suicide being the leading cause of death for young people between 15-24 years old. The current generation is exposed to constant negativity through world events and social media, which is affecting how they process life. To combat this issue, the presenters aim to educate the audience on the stigma surrounding mental health and promote more awareness about mental illnesses. By sharing their personal experiences with suicidal ideation, survival, grief, and mental health challenges, the presenters hope to change the outlook on mental health disorders and challenges and encourage a more supportive culture.*

### **Remembrance Ceremony**

**1:00 pm - 2:00 pm**

*Speaker:* Erin Ivie, SpeakUp ReachOut

*This session will be a Sharing Hope Ceremony. This ceremony is a time to remember those that we have lost to suicide. Each participant will be provided with a butterfly cutout to decorate and inscribe as they choose to remember their loved one. We will then share our butterflies with the group through a hope ceremony originally penned by LaRita Archibald the founder of HEARTBEAT (with permission).*



**Sienna Adams YMHFA and TMHFA Instructor,**

**Aces Certified, QPR certified.**

*(see · eh · nuh) (ah · dumz)*

**Educational Speaker, Education For a Lifetime**

Sienna Adams comes from Colorado Springs working for a non-profit. She is an experienced educational speaker with 2 years of public speaking experience and 7 years of suicide prevention experience. Sienna's passion for mental health was created after surviving through a suicide diffusion in her community during her

high school years. With personally speaking to over 8,000 young people, her goal is to share her personal experience with proven strategies to empower and encourage people to reach out for help and to recognize signs in friends and loved ones.



**Michelle Boisvenue-Fox, MLIS**

*Mishell Bwa-venew fox (rhymes with socks)*

**Library Director, Mesa County Libraries**

As Mesa County Libraries' Library Director, Michelle Boisvenue-Fox enjoys working with people and being part of the community. With more than 20 years of public and academic library experience, Michelle believes libraries change lives in big and small ways. Her staff of 100 are the most valuable public asset at the library as they create great library experiences and focus on library users. Her staff's wellness is of the highest importance.



**Katrina Carnes, MA**

*Kuh-tree-nuh Car-nz*

**Crisis Services Program Manager, RMCP**

Katrina is currently a Crisis Services Program Manager at Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners (RMCP). She started at RMCP in June of 2018 as a Triage Specialist, and over the past 4+ years was on the crisis lines before moving into a Crisis Supervisor role & then in Nov of 2020 the Crisis Services Program Manager role. She began her journey in the mental health field due to personal experiences with mental health, starting with volunteering for the Alliance for Suicide Prevention in

Larimer County in high school. Katrina obtained her bachelor's degree in Sociology in 2013, her first Master's in International Human Rights in 2015, and her second Master's in Child and Adolescent Psychology in June 2019. Prior to working at RMCP Katrina interned at a Domestic Violence shelter and outpatient center, worked at a residential facility for at-risk youth, and worked in the education field.



## **Joseph (JC) Carrica III, Ed. D., MA, CAS**

JC

Vice President & Chief of Healthcare Innovation and Strategy,  
Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc.

Dr. JC Carrica III is a fourth-generation southeast Colorado native and has been passionate about bringing outstanding behavioral healthcare to the area since the beginning of his career. He started a for-profit substance use disorder treatment center, SinglePoint Services LLC, which was purchased by Southeast

Health Group and became the existing SUD treatment arm of the organization. Carrica has worked for Southeast Health Group since 2002, taking over as CEO in 2018. Additionally, Carrica has served as President of the Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council (2020-2021) as well as Region VIII Representative for the National Council for Mental Wellbeing. In 2023, Carrica assisted in overseeing a merger between Southeast Health Group and Valley-Wide Health Systems, which bridged the gap in physical and behavioral health services to provide the best-integrated healthcare possible to rural Colorado. Growing up surrounded in agriculture, The Coffee Break Project has quickly become a movement Carrica is proud to hang his hat on.



## **Dr. Kartiki Churi**

*Car - tee -kee Chu - ree*

Psychiatrist , Family Care Center

Dr. Churi is an experienced psychiatrist who has practiced in a variety of clinical settings over her 10+ year career. She completed her psychiatry residency through Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. She treats a wide array of diagnoses including depression, anxiety, panic disorder, OCD, PTSD, bipolar disorder, and psychosis, amongst others. She is most passionate about helping patients

overcome depression that has not responded to one or more treatment attempts. This passion inspired her to complete a fellowship in Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) Therapy at Duke University. Applying her extensive training and experience, Dr. Churi now leads the Family Care Center's clinical TMS teams throughout Denver.



## **Maret Felzien, MA**

*merit ( as in "badge") fell-zeen*

High Plains Research Network

Maret is a native of northeastern Colorado and recently retired from a long career working to support underserved and underprepared students at the local 2-year college. Currently, she assists with the daily operations of the family dry-land farm and cattle ranch. She became involved with community engagement and Community-based Practice Research nearly 20 years ago working with High Plains Research Network (HPRN) and the Community Advisory Council. This group

informs, advises, and co-creates health research to strengthen primary care across rural eastern Colorado. The research conducted in these rural communities has been fun, meaningful, and successful, and most importantly, has shown a positive impact on the health of the communities. Her community engagement work and advocacy has grown from this experience to include work at the state and national level; additionally, she continually collaborates on research teams and with projects as a patient/community voice or leader, an advocate, and even sometimes as a co-investigator in research & primary care advocacy.



# speaker bios



**Mrs. Skylar E. Finewax, MA, LPC, NBCC**

*SKY-ler FINE-wax*

**Online Emotional Support Supervisor, Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners**

Skylar is an Online Emotional Support Supervisor with Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners. She has a master's degree in Mental Health Counseling from CCU, and is a Licensed Professional Counselor in Colorado. In addition to her suicide and crisis prevention experience, she has experience in adolescent therapy, addictions and neurofeedback. She has been with RMCP since 2018 and held many different positions on the phone crisis lines and on the crisis text/chat line. She is passionate about educating specialists and the public on best practices for effective suicide assessment and prevention.



**Madyson Ganeles**

*"Madison" "Guh-nell-iss"*

**Law Enforcement and Public Safety Liaison, RMCP**

Madyson spent 6 years as a Law Enforcement Officer, gaining experience as a jail deputy, a patrol officer, and a parole officer. While working for CDOC, Madyson had the opportunity to become CIT Certified and has since become a CIT Training Coach. In 2021, Madyson was recruited by Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners, where she continues to spend her time providing support to individuals calling Colorado Crisis Services and 988. Currently, Madyson is a part of a two-person team at RMCP, determined to bridge the gap between law enforcement and crisis services.



**Steven Haden (he/him), MSW, MBA**

*STEE-VEN HAY-DEN*

**CEO and Co-Founder, Envision:You**

Steven Haden (he/him) is the chief executive officer and co-founder of Envision:You, a Colorado-based nonprofit behavioral health initiative that addresses the disproportionate burden, disparity in care, and poor outcomes that LGBTQ+ individuals encounter every day. Additionally, he is the interim chief executive officer and chief strategy officer for You:Flourish, a first-of-its-kind wellness app for the LGBTQ+ community launching in the US in spring 2023. He is

also a mental health clinician with Queer Asterisk, a nonprofit providing comprehensive behavioral health services in communities throughout Colorado's urban corridor. Steven is responsible for providing diagnostic assessments, therapy, and counseling to a diverse caseload. He works with clients—individually and in group sessions—to assist in overcoming dependencies, adjusting to life, solving and coping with problems in their everyday lives, and helping individuals make changes to improve their well-being. Previously, Steven worked with the Mental Health Center of Denver on an Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team providing intensive, integrated community mental health care services to criminal justice-involved individuals along with clients living in secured institutions. Before working in the behavioral health field, Steven was a senior vice president with the WPP Group, a global consultancy headquartered in London. Based in New York City, Steven oversaw a variety of clientele in the professional services, hospitality, and retail sectors; managed multi-disciplinary teams in various offices in the United States and Europe; ensured client needs were met and budgets were consistent with projections; and facilitated cross-marketing of services across practices; accustomed to handling sensitive and confidential records. Steven received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Colorado at Boulder, a Master of Business Administration degree from New York University, and a Master of Social Work degree summa cum laude from Simmons University. Steven is a Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioner and a Mental Health First Aid instructor. He lives in Denver with his rambunctious labs Rigby & Henry and is an outdoor enthusiast.



## **Erin Ivie, CPS II**

*Air in*

**United Survivors International Board Member  
Executive Director, Speak Up ReachOut**

Erin Ivie is the Executive Director for SpeakUp ReachOut and serves as the Co-Chair for the Office of Suicide Prevention Commission. She lost her best friend, Luke, to suicide in 2007 and many other acquaintances in the surrounding years. She will never forget that phone call & the panic attack that came upon hearing the news that my lifelong friend had died by suicide. She questioned herself for days

'What could I have done? How did I not know he was hurting so bad? Why didn't he call me?' She joined SpeakUp ReachOut in 2012 to make meaning and purpose out of her loss. In 2015, Erin joined the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado and has served as a treasurer, chair and Bridging the Divide Committee chair. In 2019 she participated in the AFSP Out of the Darkness Overnight Walk in Boston. She became a Certified Prevention Specialist last year and focuses her efforts on workplace suicide prevention, storytelling and loss support which lead her to join United Survivors International in 2023.



## **Erik Jacobsen B.A.**

**Community Program Liaison, Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners**

Erik Jacobsen serves as the Community Program Liaison at Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners. Erik got started in Crisis Work as a Crisis Line Volunteer at Samaritans in Boston, Massachusetts in 2017. Upon moving to Colorado in 2019, Erik brought his passion for mental health to Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners and worked as a Crisis Specialist answering the Colorado Crisis Line and 988 Lifeline for 1.5 years. He then expanded into other areas of the organization, helping to support and build

community partnerships, specifically emphasizing The Colorado Follow-Up Project. Erik serves as the primary point of contact for the 70+ hospitals participating in the project and regularly shares his passion for building a collaborative, community-based model of mental healthcare. In his spare time, Erik loves to hike and spend time outdoors and is working towards completing all 58 fourteen-thousand-foot peaks in Colorado.



## **Chrystina Ashanti Jimenez, MS, PsyD**

*Chris-tee-nuh Uh-shawn-tee He-men-ez*

**Intern, University of Denver, Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners**

Chrystina Jimenez (she/her) is a clinical psychology doctoral student in the PsyD program at the University of Denver. She received her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at the University of Tennessee in December 2021, with a specialized certification in Grief, Loss and Trauma. She has received training in several suicide and crisis intervention modalities, such as ASIST, Psychological First

Aid, & Trauma-Focused CBT, among others. She has had previous clinical experience in a variety of settings that include college counseling, in-jail group therapy, inpatient substance use facilities, recovery and treatment programs, as well as a veterans substance use treatment program. At present, Chrystina is a PsyD intern at Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners, providing in-the-moment telephonic crisis intervention & services to the greater Colorado community.





## **Beth Johnson, LPC**

**Program Manager, Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners**

Beth Johnson, LPC, graduated from Colorado Christian University with her master’s degree in counseling in 2018. She began working at Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners (RMCP) in April 2019. Beth has been providing supervision since 2020. In 2021, she obtained her LPC, established follow-up care standards, and contributed to the design of RMCPs electronic health record system. Last year she established the crisis line's minimum standards of care for follow-up, in addition to designing, developing, and

launching RMCPs internship program. She continues to see clients in private practice. Beth is trained in supervision, motivational interviewing, the collaborative assessment and management of suicidality, the chronological assessment of suicide events, ASIST, EMDR, and neurofeedback. Her family has a history of multigenerational suicide loss and she experiences suicidal intensity herself. She enjoys international travel, hiking, and visiting national parks.



## **Caitlyn Ellis Johnson**

**Aspen High School Student**

Caitlyn Johnson has had her own struggles with depression and anxiety. She fully believes in educating youth and empowering them to practice mental fitness to shift away from a prescriptive and reactive mental health model.



## **Melody Keown**

**Follow Up Program Manager, Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners**

My name is Melody Keown. I am the Follow-Up Program Manager at Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners. My path to working in suicide prevention was a bit non-traditional. After a long career in sales, I was inspired to make a career change during the lockdown in 2020 to something more fulfilling. My personal experience with having to navigate a woefully overwhelmed

mental health system during that time drove my decision to go back to school and pursue a career in the field. Shortly after completing my undergraduate program, I started working as a crisis specialist at Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners and knew I had found my place, if you will. I take the work very seriously, and I am passionate about being a source of support within my community. I am currently pursuing a master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health and Counseling, and I plan to continue to work specifically in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.



# speaker bios



## **Christina M King LPC** Founder, Aspen Strong

Christina is a licensed professional counselor specializing in cognitive behavioral therapy. She is also a leadership coach for individuals and businesses. A Philadelphia native, she graduated from Penn State University and West Chester University with her master's in Clinical Psychology. Christina began her therapeutic career in community mental health direction acute and partial programs and hospital programs. She is the founder of Aspen Strong and

co-founder of Changing Brains, Changing Lives Symposium. She is a member of the Denver Speaker Bureau and has been recognized for her leadership and advocacy in mental health on various panels and magazines including Aspen Peak Magazine's 2015 Woman of Influence. Christina loves to hike, ski, and spend time with her Australian Shepherd, Adie.



## **Lindsey Lupow** Program Director, Aspen Strong

Lindsey joins Aspen Strong with a passion for helping others and excitement to change the way we view mental fitness. Lindsey sat on the Aspen Strong board for several years before joining the team as Program Director. She was in the finance industry for eighteen years before realizing her passion for mental health. She strives to bring focus to mental fitness in our valley. Lindsey states, "Oftentimes, we are so focused on our jobs, our children, and our friends that we forget to take

care of ourselves. Living in the mountains, we are extremely conscious of living a healthy lifestyle, yet most people do not focus on their mental fitness." The United States is fundamentally rooted in a crisis care system. We must change that."



## **Miss Olivia Michael, BA** Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners

My Name is Olivia Michael and I'm a first-year clinical psychology doctoral student at the University of Denver. I received my Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of North Texas before starting my PsyD at DU. I chose to do my first-year internship with Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners to grow my crisis intervention skills and become a better, more well-rounded clinician.



## **Lacy Monday, LCSW** Director Crisis Services, Diversus Health

Lacy Monday is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) and serves as the Director of Crisis Services for Diversus Health. Lacy has worked for crisis services in some capacity for over a decade. Her experience includes serving as Director of Crisis Care and Crisis Management Services at Centerstone Tennessee, Clinical Director for the Nashville Fire Department's CISM team, and Program Manager for the Davidson County Sheriff's Office Behavioral Care Center which offers post-arrest

diversion services for individuals with mental illness or substance use issues in the judicial system. In her current role, she oversees the crisis continuum including the crisis walk-in center, mobile crisis, and co-response teams



## **Michelle Muething, LPC**

### **Executive Director, Aspen Hope Center**

In 1999 Michelle graduated with a Master’s Degree in Clinical Psychology. She accepted her first position as the Juvenile Coordinator for The Rape Crisis Center in South Carolina and worked in the emergency department assisting sexual assault victims. In 2001 Michelle moved to Indianapolis and took an Adjunct Faculty position with Indiana University at IUPUI. Simultaneously, she began work in the emergency department at Wishard Memorial Hospital, an inner-city hospital,

Michelle was able to conduct psychiatric evaluations within the justice system, thus opening a door for additional experience. With so much learned from so many people and places, Michelle moved to Colorado in December of 2009 and said good-bye to the both hospitals and the university. For the past 11 years, Michelle has served the Roaring Fork Valley, as one of the original staff members of the Aspen Hope Center and is now the Executive Director. Underneath the administrative title of Executive Director, Michelle is, and always be will be, a crisis clinician at heart.



## **Jessa Navidé, Psy.D.**

### **Clinical Psychologist, Clarity Therapy**

Dr. Jessa Navidé is a clinical psychologist licensed in New York who graduated from University of Denver’s Psy.D. program. As a clinician with lived experience as a suicide attempt survivor she has a passion for working with individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts. Throughout graduate school she sought out specialized training in crisis intervention and suicide prevention and wrote her doctoral paper on best practices for working with Latinx individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts. Dr. Navidé is a bilingual (English/Spanish) clinician and is

passionate about improving services offered to the Latinx community. She has worked extensively with Latina adolescents who have elevated rates of suicidal thoughts and attempts. Dr. Navidé returned to NYC this Spring after taking several months to travel in India and Nepal where she studied yoga and meditation practices. She is a certified trauma-sensitive yoga teacher and integrates somatic and mindfulness-based interventions into her clinical work. se backgrounds and create a culture of inclusion and connectedness.



## **Paddy O'Connell**

### **Writer and Aspen Strong Board Member**

Paddy O’Connell (but you can call him PaddyO) works in the outdoor industry as a word nerd and a professional chit-chatter—which essentially means he is a freelance writer, creator, storyteller, voice-over talent, and multimedia producer. PaddyO believes in the power of storytelling as a vehicle for connection and positive change. Much of his work & his every day reflect the theory that laughter is the soundtrack to a happy life. He loves to use humor to arrive at poignancy in his

work, while also focusing on cause-based storytelling and reporting, most notably and personal to him are suicide prevention and mental health, addiction, alcoholism, and recovery, equity, and inclusion, and stories of a dark past being transformed into a hopeful future. PaddyO draws inspiration from his own path toward positive mental health and recovery. When he’s not practicing Footloose-inspired dance moves, Patrick Swayze-esque hair flips, and grooming his mustache to resemble Tom Selleck’s lip caterpillar, PaddyO can be found in the mountains—mostly likely being a bit loud and doing something a lot weird. He is based out of Carbondale, Colorado.



## **Gail Sanchez, Youth Mental Health First Aid Instructor, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Health & Wellness Coach**

**Educational Speaker, Education For a Lifetime**

Gail currently works for a nonprofit in Colorado Springs as a public speaker who focuses on mental health awareness. She holds a BS in Family and Consumer Sciences and has recently become certified as a Health and Wellness Coach. Mental health is very important to Gail and she loves having the opportunity to

educate the next generation on this topic. Gail experienced extreme loss at the age of 17 with the unexpected death of her older sister. Her husband JB lived with suicidal thoughts and behaviors all throughout his high school years and is now currently active in many organizations as a mental health advocate. Her middle daughter currently struggles with anxiety and depression which has only surfaced in the last couple of years. Gail wants to share her personal experience of handling grief and what it has looked like for her to support loved ones in their mental health journeys.



## **J.B. Sanchez**

**Education For Life**

Born and raised in Colorado, J.B. loves the outdoors, particularly trail running. His background is in graphic design and web design and development. He sits on the Board of Directors for the Inherent Foundation, which focuses on men’s mental health, and volunteers for the Colorado chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. After five years, he stepped down from the Board of the Pikes Peak Road Runners. He has lived experiences with depression and suicide and

spreading his message of hope and redemption. He recently enrolled in a master’s program for Clinical Mental Health, intending to practice Expressive Arts Therapy.



## **Melissa Schacht, MSW**

**MSW Intern Supervisor, Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners**

Melissa Schacht graduated from New York University in 1993 with her Masters in Social Work. After years of concentration in geriatric day treatment and assisted living, Melissa took a 27-year pause to raise her family and explore other healing and wellness paths. These included a 15-year commitment to teaching multiple styles of yoga, guiding thousands of yoga classes, training hundreds of new teachers in the Denver area, and even taught a yoga class at Red Rocks

Amphitheater to 2,500 people. Melissa was also fortunate to build a successful massage practice for 20 years. Melissa returned to the field of social work in 2020 and currently supervises MSW Interns at Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners in Denver. Melissa’s approach to mental health is holistic to include all aspects of a person’s experience. Melissa is passionate about lifelong learning. In her role supervising interns, she can effectively support the learning of others, while she is challenged to learn and grow alongside her students. Melissa continues to practice yoga for mental, physical, and spiritual self-care. Melissa also has an adventurous side and loves to paddle board on rivers in Colorado & Utah.



## **Janet Schnell, MSW LCSW**

**Social Worker and Consultant, Retrospective Fatality Analysis and Survivors of Suicide of Dubois County**

Janet Schnell, MSW, LCSW completed her master’s degree in Social Work in 2010 at the University of Southern Indiana. She is currently in practice with CareATC serving the needs of employees in a commercial furnishings company. She specializes in suicide prevention intervention, and after suicide occurs; depression; anxiety; and

substance abuse. She has experience in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Brief-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (B-CBT), Motivational Interviewing, and Narrative Therapies. Janet is a suicide prevention instructor for Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR), She is a suicide prevention trainer for Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). Janet is a founding member of the Retrospective Fatality Analysis - Consultants (RFA-C). The protocol is an investigative and research instrument with the goal of informing suicide prevention by using the stories of those who died by suicide. She is a certified Psychological Autopsy Investigator by the American Association of Suicidology. Janet is a public speaker sharing her experience as a suicide loss survivor and becoming a social worker after her brother’s death.



## **Amin Shariff**

**Law Enforcement and Public Safety Liaison, Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners**

Amin's law enforcement career spanned twenty-six years, all with the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office. During his time there, Amin had the opportunity to become trained in CIT (Crisis Intervention Team). He has continued to maintain his connection to law enforcement as a CIT coach and continues to help bring

this valuable training to members of the public safety community across the state. In his current role as a Law Enforcement and Public Safety Liaison at Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners, Amin, and his colleague strive to foster partnerships and build trust between the public safety and crisis systems. The goal of these efforts is to provide a safe and patient-centered response to a person in crisis.



## **Angilina Taylor**

**Executive Director, Aspen Strong**

Angilina brings a passion for mental health to the Executive Director position at Aspen Strong based on lived experiences. She is devoted to being a part of the movement to change the conversation around mental health & well-being. Before making the switch to the nonprofit sector Angilina had 17 years of business strategy and development experience leading and inspiring teams in the product creation market both as a corporate leader and an entrepreneur.



## **Jay E. Valusek, MS, MEd**

**Suicide Bereavement Specialist, BPS Health Strategies LLC**

Jay E. Valusek, MS, MEd, is a scientist, poet, award-winning writer, meditation teacher, pain self-management specialist, suicide loss survivor, and mental health professional in private practice. He is the author of *Girl of Light & Shadow: A Memoir of My Daughter, Who Killed Herself* (2022).



## **Brandon Wilcox**

**Director of Peer Services, Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners**

Brandon Wilcox has been a peer specialist since 2011. They started their Peer Recovery journey in Idaho while working for a small community mental health program. Shortly after becoming a Peer Specialist in Idaho, Brandon pursued a management position in Colorado and became the Program Manager of Peer Services at Community Reach Center. During the ten years Brandon was with Community Reach Center they helped develop peer programming throughout the

entire system of care at CRC, developed a Peer Support Training that met state certification requirements, and participated in statewide committees and initiatives including setting the training standards for Peer in the state of Colorado, and was the 2017 recipient of the George Delgrosso Advocacy Award for his work in advocating for Peer Supervision best practices and Peer Supervisor career tracks. Brandon currently is the director of Peer Services at Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners with the goal of developing a robust and dynamic Peer Support approach to supporting behavioral health crisis.



## **Clinton Wilson MA**

**AgWell Program Director, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union**

Clinton is the Program Director for AgWell; a program of Rocky Mountain Farmers Union. After spending most of his career working for social service non-profits in Seattle, he and his family relocated to Fort Collins, Colorado in 2017. Prior to taking this position, he was the Executive Director of Poudre Valley Community Farms: a farmland cooperative, in Northern Colorado. Clinton holds master's degrees in Counseling Psychology and Theology and Culture. He is passionate about

agriculture and is a huge fan of all the unseen and often unappreciated hard-working farmers, ranchers, and agriculture workers that provide the food and fiber that we all depend on. "At AgWell we are hoping to build a more connected, community-focused, collaborative, and robust support system for Farmers, Ranchers, & agricultural workers here in the Rocky Mountain Region."



## **Dr. Chuck Weber**

**Chief Medical Officer, Family Care Center**

Dr. Charles Weber is currently the founder and chief medical director of the Family Care Center, a comprehensive outpatient mental health/addiction treatment in Colorado Springs, now with 6 locations and growing significantly. He is a prior-enlisted infantryman in the US Army, and was the Chief of the Department of Behavioral Health at Ft. Carson, CO, retiring in 2016 after 27 years in uniform. He has deployed twice overseas and notable was the 1st Cavalry

Division psychiatrist in Iraq. He graduated from the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point and attended Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine and received a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine in 2002. His transitional internship was at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and psychiatry residency at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii. He is a board-certified Psychiatrist and in Addiction Medicine. Dr. Chuck is extremely passionate about improving the mental health system of care and fostering a world-class environment for providers of mental health.