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## LifeNet

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International Critical  
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Inc.

*ICISF is a non-profit non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the economic and social council of the United Nations*

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## FIRE RESCUE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

By Michael Medeiros

In the public safety field, one of the least-addressed topics is the mental health and wellness of our responders. In all the news that you see on a day-to-day basis where tragedy and violence have occurred, the first people to intervene are first responders. They must care for people when they are at their worst and deal with the overall impact of the incident but still perform the duties they are assigned, no matter what.

This responsibility tends to impact first responders in many different ways. These individuals might be the first people to see the tragedy but they are the last to admit that it has had any emotional or mental effect on them. So when an outside group comes in to intervene or defuse the situation, there is resistance from the first responders.

First responders tend to rely on their comrades in the field. In public safety, if you are not on the job, you don't understand what is going on. When outside groups or people try to intervene, the responders tend

to be reluctant to accept their help: "You have no idea what we do," is the reasoning behind the reluctance.

That is why we created a peer-driven support group we call the Horry County Crisis Intervention Team (CIT.) The team is made up of eleven peer support members, four councilors, one training instructor and one chaplain. The CIT is continuing to grow and manage all of its internal staff as well as other departments in the local area. Its members are also recruiting police and 911 dispatchers to round off the group. This will make the CIT very versatile.

Horry County Fire Rescue covers over 1134 square miles and responds to more than 42,000 calls per year. The department is made up of 275 full-time, uniformed staff and 200 volunteers.

**Horry County Fire Rescue** provides *mutual aid* to areas within the municipalities of Horry County. These areas include

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## THE VALUE OF PEER SUPPORT

By Rich Elias

All too often in the law enforcement arena, emotional survival issues claim more victims than safety-related issues. The negative effects of unchecked cumulative stress and trauma are due in large part to the lack of self-awareness and knowledge on how to develop effective and healthy coping strategies. This lack of awareness, coupled with personal and family stress, can sometimes be a recipe for disaster. Although wellness programs, including Employee Assistance Programs (EAP's), are available within most law enforcement agencies, at the end of the day officers need to

be reminded that they can seek the help they need without being stigmatized or viewed as "unfit for duty." Only within the past couple of decades have law enforcement agencies begun to take proactive and preventative measures to combat the stress inherent in the profession. Because of the above issues, a critical incident stress management program (CISM), which includes a strong peer support component is needed.

In law enforcement, almost all of our officer safety-related training programs are designed to train officers how to think and act tactically, and how to fight using

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## Regional Conference Calendar

### April 12-15, 2012

-Atlanta, GA  
GA Critical Incident  
Stress Foundation

### June 28-July 1, 2012

-Columbia, MD  
ICISF

### October 12-15, 2012

-Regina, SK  
North Star CIS Response Team

### October 18-21, 2012

-Chicago, IL  
Northern Illinois CISM Team

### November 1-4, 2012

-Albuquerque, NM  
New Mexico Crisis  
Support Team

### December 6-9, 2012

-San Diego, CA  
San Diego CISM team

*Other locations pending date*

-San Francisco, CA  
San Mateo County CISM Team

-Nashville, TN  
Centerstone

-Toronto, ON  
Peel Regional Police

-Vancouver, BC  
Lower Mainland CISM Association

# FROM THE ICISF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On behalf of the entire ICISF Board of Directors, I hope you and your family had a wonderful holiday season. As we turn the page on 2011, I encourage us all to pause and celebrate the accomplishments that you and your teams had during the past year. There are countless individuals you all have touched by the work being done in countries all over the world and for that you should be very proud.

ICISF begins 2012 with an updated Strategic Plan which will be used to guide the organization for the next three years. This document focuses not only on identified areas for continued improvement but also addresses ways in

which we might enhance the products being offered. As we are ever aware of the increased use of technology in our lives, we hope you see over the next several months and years an expanded use of a variety of mediums to access the organization (Facebook, etc.) and access products (online courses, etc.).

I encourage you to take a moment and review the 2012-2014 ICISF Strategic Plan which can be accessed on our website. If you have any feedback or questions feel free to contact me ([becky.stoll@centerstone.org](mailto:becky.stoll@centerstone.org)). Thank you all for your continued support of ICISF!

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S TRIVIA QUIZ:

ICISF is pleased to announce the winner of the Executive Directors' Trivia Quiz published in the last two issues of the newsletter.

Raymond F. Hanbury, Ph.D., ABPP answered the question correctly.

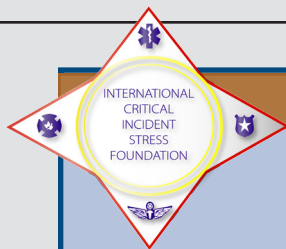
**Question:** Excluding the terrible events of 9-11, what is this nation's (US) second worst commercial aviation disaster to occur resulting in

fatalities?

**Answer:** American Airlines Flight 587 which crashed in Queens NY a few months after 9/11.

Dr Hanbury received a one year ICISF membership.

**Donald R. Howell**  
Executive Director, ICISF, Inc.  
[dhowell@icisf.org](mailto:dhowell@icisf.org)



## Bring ICISF training to your area

### The latest training and education on Comprehensive Crisis Intervention Systems

#### Speakers Bureau Program

- Dynamic speakers
- Avoid travel costs - train your staff at your site
- Highest quality professional programs
- Wide variety of stress, crisis intervention and disaster psychology courses
- Specialized topics to suit your needs

#### Host A Regional Conference

- Earn Scholarships to attend classes
- Choose classes to suit your training needs
- Earn a portion of the conference net profit
- Network with other CISM Practitioners from around the World
- Discuss issues facing you or your team with ICISF faculty & staff

# INTRODUCING ICISF TEAM MEMBERSHIP

For Several years we have received calls from CISM teams inquiring if ICISF offered a CISM team membership. The answer was: “unfortunately not at this point in time”. Well you asked for it and effective April 1, 2012 ICISF will have available to current updated teams within our database a Two year ICISF team membership for \$250.00.

## Team Membership Benefits

1. Membership in ICISF places the team in an international network of Critical Incident Stress Management teams, service providers, administrators, commercial and industrial services, researchers and educators who function in the field of activity associated with critical incident stress and post trauma syndromes.
2. Your team will be able to access the quarterly ICISF LifeNet Newsletter which provides important updates on Critical Incident Stress and Psychological trauma on our website.

3. The Team will receive a certificate of membership and team card.

4. All active team members will receive a 15% tuition discount on all ICISF regional conferences and the World Congress. When registering for a conference or the World Congress a letter from your team leadership stating that the individual is a current member in good standing along with a copy of the team membership card must accompany the registration form.
5. Routine critical incident stress consultation without charge.
6. Emergency critical incident stress consultation without charge.
7. Regular ICISF emails announcing ICISF activities
8. Quarterly team spotlight in the ICISF LifeNet newsletter.
9. Use of the ICISF Enterprise Rent-A-Car corporate code for business and/or personal travel.

For more information contact Michelle Parks at [mparks@icisf.org](mailto:mparks@icisf.org).

## Share Your Team's Milestone with *LifeNet* Readers

ICISF would like to acknowledge CISM Teams that have reached significant milestones in organizational longevity (i.e. five, ten, fifteen year anniversaries, etc.) in future issues of *LifeNet*. If your team reached such a significant anniversary date in 2010, please contact George Grimm, ICISF CISM Team Coordinator (via email at [hotline@icisf.org](mailto:hotline@icisf.org)) and provide the appropriate information so we may proudly list your Team in a future *LifeNet* and provide a Certificate of Appreciation.

“Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity.”

- Pema Chodron

## FROM THE EDITOR: NEW INSTRUCTORS

The Lifenet editorial staff would like to extend an apology to the instructors below for omitting their names from the last issue. We would like to congratulate the newest Approved Instructors to the ICISF Family. The following individuals recently completed the Group Crisis Intervention Approved Instructor Program held in Toronto, Ontario Canada on October 12-14, 2011

Roxanne Affholter  
Brian Bennett  
John Bredin  
Catherine Butler  
Kenneth Butler  
Kim Cosley  
Jacqueline Devolin  
Sergio Falzi  
Mark Geßner  
Marta Grygo  
Dianne Heath  
Thomas Hopkins

Dean Jackson  
Paul Januszewski  
Larsten Christop Lindenstromberg  
Joanne T. Luna  
Paul MacKenzie  
Don McCullough  
Kay Montgomery  
Lisa Pomerance-Hindi  
David Richer  
Barry Salmond  
Jutta Unruh



# SAVE THE DATE - 12<sup>TH</sup> WORLD CONGRESS ON STRESS, TRAUMA & COPING

By Shelley Cohen, World Congress Manager

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Preliminary planning is underway for the 12th World Congress on Stress, Trauma & Coping, which will be held February 19 - 24, 2013 in Baltimore, Maryland. The Planning Committee has selected "Navigating the Next Era of Crisis & Disaster Response" as the theme of the 12th World Congress. Presentations will be solicited and presented on topics that fit this theme, and will be organized within ten major content areas to meet the needs of the diverse professions and practice areas represented by attendees: Research/Innovations; Emergency Services, Public Safety; Military; Corporate/Industry/EAP; Disaster Response; Schools, Children; Healthcare Settings; Specialty Populations; Faith Based Applications; and Team Development & Care.

Updates and announcements about the World Congress will be provided via the ICISF website as well as via email updates. If you are interested in receiving email updates specifically about the ICISF World Congress on Stress, Trauma & Coping, be sure to update your preferences in your email profile by clicking on the "E-News Sign Up" button near the top right corner on every page of [www.icisf.org](http://www.icisf.org).

The Call for Presentations will open in March and you are encouraged to submit a presentation proposal for an opportunity to present your topic at this premier event. Those interested in submitting presentation proposals for consideration will find the Call for Presentations brochure, a list of frequently asked questions, the checklist of information to prepare prior to

submitting a proposal, and the link to the online presentation proposal submission site at [www.icisf.org](http://www.icisf.org). Additionally, Call for Presentations brochures will be mailed to ICISF members, CISM Teams listed in the ICISF Hotline database, past World Congress presenters, and others who have specifically requested the information. All proposals will be collected via our web-based submittal process.

Please note that the host hotel, the Hilton Baltimore Hotel, is not yet accepting reservations for the 12th World Congress. Look for details about the educational programming and registration information in the Fall of 2012. Please direct any questions about the 12th World Congress to Shelley Cohen, World Congress Manager, at [scohen@icisf.org](mailto:scohen@icisf.org).

## HOSTING AN ICISF CONFERENCE

By Jen Swab, EMT-Paramedic/CISM Peer

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The International Critical Stress Foundation descended upon Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania last month for another successful conference. Spending January in Pittsburgh may not sound like a splendid idea from a weather perspective, but the luck of the Irish bestowed upon us as not a single snowflake was in sight on the ground or in the air. Hosting the ICISF's conference is both challenging and rewarding. As with any event, planning takes time, organization, and the cooperation and assistance of many.

During the initial planning stages, ICISF will want to know if

there are any particular courses which your Team would like to include. They will try to accommodate your requests but there are many variables from their end that will affect class selection including Instructor availability.

Another very important factor to consider during the early phases of building the conference is location. ICISF will ask for suggestions and will work on selecting a location that meets many demands including proximity to the airport, restaurants, shops and attractions, banquet facilities, and cost. Make certain to generate a list of items that is important to your Team. ICISF is

ultimately the responsible party for selecting location but they are more than willing to work with your Team in selecting a venue.

Once courses and location are selected, it is recommended to call a meeting of your local Team to secure committees who will assist throughout the conference. Communication between ICISF and your Team, as well as amongst your Team members is crucial to the success of the conference. Your local Team will be responsible for procuring AV equipment, securing transportation of ICISF Instructors and staff to and from the airport, and assisting with registration daily.



# HOSTING AN ICISF CONFERENCE<sub>(cont'd)</sub>

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ICISF will advertise the conference on their website but from experience, the Pittsburgh CISM Team has found it to be very helpful and beneficial to advertise locally and we urge you to do the same. Suggestions to advertise include having representatives from your Team attend local meetings, make personal phone calls, and send emails to generate interest and search for potential scholarship awardees. Although this can be time consuming, it can increase conference attendance significantly as we have seen in the past two conferences we have hosted.

To maximize attendance, it is also extremely helpful to offer CEUs for all the professions. This will take time and coordination and we suggest that one or two people from your Team be responsible for collecting the necessary data such as Instructor biographies and course outlines from ICISF. Offering CEUs at a nominal cost for professions like Social Workers can enhance attendance. Keep in mind that for every five paying registrants, your local Team will be generously awarded one scholarship which equates to one day of the conference paid for by ICISF. The Pittsburgh CISM Team was able to secure nearly twenty scholarship days which is incredible and we thank ICISF for their support to our Team.

It is important to remember that ICISF has an agenda with conferences. Your local CISM Team must have one as well. You will find that many of the agenda items are similar. Like us, they too want the conference to be well

attended. Combining resources will enhance efficiency. Some of the items on our Team's agenda for the January conference were: offering a networking opportunity by hosting a social event with hors d'oeuvres and refreshments, sharing resources of our policies and procedures with attendees, and membership recruitment. To help us offset the cost of the social event, we held a 50/50 raffle which ICISF is very supportive of.

ICISF holds a Town Hall meeting during lunch. It is a wonderful opportunity to get caught up on the latest developments in CISM and with the ICISF. It affords a chance to spend some extra time with the Instructors and is where the Marlatt Scholarship awardees are recognized as well as local Team recognition. Another resource is the opportunity to purchase books through Chevron Publishing.

Reflecting back on the past two conferences the Pittsburgh CISM Team has hosted, a very important lesson learned is that if your Team has the resources, hosting a pre-conference event such as a local speaker who has experienced a traumatic event and used CISM. This is not something that the Pittsburgh Team has ever considered but will definitely be investigated for the future conferences. Our goal is to reach out to as many providers as we can and to educate about the benefits of CISM and to support ICISF.

As with any event, there are always occurrences behind the scenes that are funny. I would be remiss if I did not share some of these with you. One included having more than one person at

the airport to pick up Instructors. Another includes one of our Team members teaching a quick CPR/AED class to hotel staff upon discovering they had never had one. And still another example is that some of the Instructors were graced by the presence of a ten-year old at their breakfast table.

ICISF is the expert – having dozens upon dozens of conferences under their belt, they know what works and what doesn't. If you have a question, ask. If you have a suggestion, suggest. The ICISF staff is ready and willing to assist and offer support for your Team as both of you will host a remarkable and memorable conference.

The old adage, 'If you build it they will come' couldn't be more applicable than watching the conference transpire. The staff of the ICISF is friendly, organized, and always willing to help. One of the many riches for me personally was having the opportunity to mingle with course attendees during breaks and after courses. I met so many wonderful people from across the country; and some even from across the globe.

Jen Swab has thirty years in public safety as a firefighter/paramedic/rescue technician and is currently employed in the northern suburbs of Pittsburgh as a training officer. Jen became interested in CISM in the 1990's and has since become active on the Pittsburgh CISM Team where she holds a position on the Steering Committee. She has been the local coordinator of the ICISF conference in Pittsburgh for the past two conferences.

## Comments, Questions or Suggestions

Please direct any comments or questions regarding the contents of this issue to the attention of Victor Welzant,

PsyD, Editor, at lifenet@icisf.org. Letters to the Editor are also welcome. Have an idea for an article in a future issue of *LifeNet*? Send your suggestions to the attention of Michelle Parks, Content Editor, at lifenet@icisf.org. We welcome your input.

**Thank you!**

If your article is approved and used in an issue of the LifeNet you will receive a complimentary Level One-1 year ICISF membership (\$50.00 value)

### Make Sure We're Able to Stay in Touch!

To be sure ICISF emails get through to your inbox, be certain to add ICISF email addresses to your address book. If you have a spam filter, adding ICISF.org to your "white list" of acceptable senders will also help to ensure that our emails get through. Thanks!

## FROM THE CONFERENCE DEPARTMENT

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During the 4th quarter of 2011, a total of 23 scholarship training days were awarded at ICISF Regional Conferences.

Hosting a conference gives the opportunity for the local organization to distribute scholarships as an honor to those in the CISM community. Team Scholarships are offered by ICISF with recipients being selected by the local host. Typically, deserving individuals on their team or part of their organization receive scholarships and/or recognition

in exchange for their service.

Marlatt Scholarships are offered in remembrance of Erin and Colleen Marlatt to deserving individuals in Fire Services. Recipients are selected by the local host and are acknowledged and presented with awards at the conference Award Ceremony & Town Meeting.

ICISF also awards Certificates of Appreciation in recognition of outstanding contributions in the field of CISM.

### At ICISF's Toronto, ON Conference held October 12-15, 2011

Congratulations on being chosen for the Certificate of Appreciation Award:

Shawn McCowell

Hugh Anderson

### At ICISF's Victoria, BC Conference held October 27-30, 2011

Congratulations on being chosen for the Certificate of Appreciation Award:

Leigh S. Blaney

Kerry Zado

Geoff Spriggs

Congratulations on being chosen as Marlatt Scholarship recipient:

Robert Scruton

Kerry Zado

Greg Bowie

### At ICISF's San Diego, CA Conference held December 1-4, 2011

Congratulations on being chosen for the Certificate of Appreciation Award:

Arthur A.B. Brown

Michael R. Brown Jr.

Michael R. Brown

**Congratulations on being chosen as Marlatt Scholarship recipient:**

Thomas Small

Kristine Schaffer

Dan Collins

A special "**You Make A Difference**" Certificate was presented by cofounders Jeffrey T. Mitchell and George S. Everly, Jr. to Nancy A. T. Brown for her dedication and service as a Founding Board Member of the San Diego County CISM Team

### At ICISF's Pittsburgh, PA Conference held January 26-29, 2012

Congratulations on being chosen for the Certificate of Appreciation Award:

Judy Robertson

Knox Walk

Lynn Hawker

Congratulations on being chosen as Marlatt Scholarship recipient:

Tami Allias

Warren Lillie

# STEPS TO STAYING IN TOUCH WITH ICISF

By Shelley Cohen, World Congress Manager

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ICISF uses a secure web-based broadcast email service to send out periodic mass communication to members and others. As examples, we use this method of communication to send out announcements when the latest issue of *LifeNet* is available, member renewal notices, and important news for Approved Instructor. For this reason, it's important that we are able to reach members and Approved Instructors, in particular, using our broadcast email system. Are you receiving those emails?

This past December, we made the switch to a new broadcast email service (Constant Contact) and are using this switch-over as an opportunity to ensure that only those interested in receiving our emails remain on the list. We are also trying to ensure that those on the list only receive emails on the topics that interest them (training opportunities, World Congress information, and so forth).

Here's where you come in. If you're a member, an Approved Instructor or a contact person for one of the CISM Teams in ICISF's Hotline database, then we have most likely already pre-populated the new system with your email address. You should already have received a few messages from us using the new system (if you haven't, see below).

## **Already Receiving ICISF Broadcast Emails**

If you've received a broadcast email from us recently, but you have not yet updated your profile with your subject matter preferences, please take two minutes to do that today. It's really quite simple and

quick. Just go to [www.icisf.org](http://www.icisf.org), click on the "E-News Sign Up" button near the top right corner of the screen, enter your email address and follow the prompts. Note that you can update your profile and preferences at any time using this link on our website, or the "Update Profile/Email Address" link at the bottom of a recent broadcast message from us.

A word of caution: if you receive a broadcast message from ICISF that you think one or more colleagues would find interesting, please be sure to only forward it using the "Forward to a Friend" button in that message (if there is no "Forward to a Friend" button, the message should not be forwarded). Do not use the "Forward" button in your email program. Following these instructions will prevent someone other than you from accidentally unsubscribing your email address from the system.

## **Not Currently Receiving ICISF Broadcast Emails**

Haven't received any broadcast messages from ICISF recently? There are several possible scenarios. The first thing to do is to try updating your profile following the instructions in the previous paragraph. If your email address is already in the system, you'll be able to access the profile and update it. If this is the case, it's possible that your spam filter or junk mail settings are preventing ICISF's broadcast messages from reaching your inbox. Note, however, that you may not have any trouble receiving messages sent directly to you by an ICISF staff member. Try adding the [icisf.org](http://icisf.org) domain to your list of accepted or

"white-listed" senders.

If you enter your email address and it's not already in the system, please go ahead and follow the prompts to complete a profile so that we can begin to send you broadcast email messages on the topics you're interested in.

Once you've updated an existing profile or created a new one, please let us know if you don't receive any broadcast messages from ICISF after a month or so. We can work with you to investigate the cause and a solution. Ultimately, we want to ensure that you're receiving the information from ICISF that you want. However, please be aware that, in some cases, the solution will be out of our control and we may only be able to provide you with information about how to address the issue with your I.T. staff or Internet Service Provider (ISP).

## **ICISF Privacy Policy**

ICISF does not rent or sell its email or mailing list, and respects your right to privacy. If at any time you decide that you no longer wish to receive broadcast email messages from ICISF, please click the "Safe Unsubscribe" link at the bottom of a recent broadcast message you receive from us. Your email address will automatically be removed from the list and the only way that it can be added back to the list is if you do so yourself.

Have questions? Please send them to Shelley Cohen at

[scohen@icisf.org](mailto:scohen@icisf.org). Thanks for helping ICISF stay connected with you.

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(410) 750-9600 or  
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## FIRE RESCUE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

*(Continued from page 1)*

the cities of Myrtle Beach, Conway, Surfside, North Myrtle Beach and Loris, South Carolina. Members of the CIT for Horry County are no strangers to unique and very stressful calls. Some of the calls on which CIT has had to intervene have been as follows:

- A Horry County Fire Rescue engine roll-over which trapped three firefighters and a lieutenant.
- A Horry County Fire Rescue volunteer went into cardiac arrest during a medical call and required intervention from the same members who responded with him
- Horry County personnel responded to a fellow firefighter's home to find he had already committed suicide. The crew from the prior shift at his own station responded
- Multiple child abuse calls, some of which involved fatalities.
- Multiple drowning calls involving children at local, busy, motel pools

- Motor vehicle accident deaths involving children and infants
- Multi-casualty incidents involving large number of deaths

These are just some of the calls that have impacted Horry County Fire Rescue staff over the last couple of years. Most of these calls have allowed an opportunity for the crisis intervention team to help, with positive results.

The CIT has also put together a white paper describing statistics from the last three years. This paper will give other departments information in the field of crisis management so that they too can make their wellness program complete.

<http://www.horrycountyfirerescue.com/SpecialtyTeams/CrisisInterventionTeam.aspx>

Michael Medeiros, PFT, FTS  
[medeirom@horryCounty.org](mailto:medeirom@horryCounty.org)  
Wellness Coordinator  
Horry County Fire Rescue

## THE VALUE OF PEER SUPPORT

*(Continued from page 1)*

the tools of their trade within the guidelines of the law and their respective departmental policies. Officers are trained and oftentimes are called upon to make split-second decisions during the intense, ever-changing heat of battles—decisions that can, and probably will, impact them for the rest of their lives. With the growth of reality-based training and technological advances, law enforcement officers are prepared and conditioned for battle like never before. Despite this good news, the reality is that the stress of the job or the horror of a particular incident, such as an officer-involved shooting, can wear them down, no matter how trained, conditioned, and experienced they are.

I believe there is a momentous shift that is taking place nationwide in the culture of law enforcement—a culture that has historically held the belief of: “We are strong, never weak” and “We solve the problem; we’re not the problem.” With nowhere to go, many officers find unhealthy ways to mask their stress before their downward spiral eventually hits rock bottom. The goal of this article is to encourage law enforcement agencies to develop wellness programs designed to promote the well being of all staff. The first step to prevention is education and training. Officers need to know up front the stressful nature of the career they have chosen, and they need to be reminded of it throughout their careers. This awareness, coupled with



the guidance of wellness programs, will enable officers to take proactive steps to prepare for when stress builds or trauma comes knocking. Then ultimately, it is the responsibility of each individual officer to maintain their emotional well being by seeking healthy versus non-healthy coping strategies. As a bottom line, a healthy person is generally a more productive employee, spouse, parent and citizen.

Only since the 1980s has awareness developed regarding the effects of trauma on first responders. Many times, exposure to critical incidents leads to psychological trauma and post-traumatic stress. When law enforcement officers and first responders suffer from mental anguish, they are more likely to experience substance abuse, divorce, significant anger management issues, suicidal ideation, and other negative behaviors. Law enforcement agencies are realizing their officers are human and that it is all right to show emotion over certain situations. For too long, the law enforcement culture has embraced the motto of: "Get up, dust yourself off, and get back to work."

I believe that peer support is the backbone of a CISM program. Simply put, peer support is "stress management." Peer support is defined by the reality that people

who encounter similar experiences are in a better position to understand the psychological and emotional toll inherent in the profession. Peer support gives officers the opportunity to speak in confidence to someone who experiences the same job stressors, without fear of being stigmatized, losing their jobs, or stalling their career growth. Stressors can include, but are not limited to, dangerousness of the job, witnessing of human suffering, shift work, paperwork, organizational stress (politics), family or financial stress.

Although trained in individual and group crisis intervention techniques, peers are not mental health professionals, and thus, no official record is kept of individuals who use the Peer Support Program. Trained peers can also conduct group sessions for officers and others involved in a critical incident. Having a large pool of trained peer supporters throughout the various levels of the agency will maximize the program's ability to identify and mitigate problems when they arise and before they spiral out of control. Peer programs, as a result, are proactive in nature, and designed to mitigate the continual, unchecked stress, that leads to a critical incident.

Peer supporters are trained to assess an individual's ability to cope with stress through active listening and intervention strategies. If the level of stress goes

beyond any of these techniques, the peer supporter will recommend and/or facilitate advanced professional care. Furthermore, peer supporters can alleviate some of the stressors by taking care of basic and family needs in order to lessen the stressful effects of the incident.

In conclusion, in order for a Peer Support Program to be effective, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of having support from all levels of the organization and having the right people in place. Managers must communicate their support by either becoming team members or by consistently communicating to their staff the importance of reaching out for help when needed. The bottom line: in order to change a culture that historically has believed that asking for help is a sign of weakness, managers must make it safe for all staff to access programs. I strongly believe that when officers feel comfortable asking for help, they will take a more proactive approach in regards to their emotional well-being. In the end, the investment will be well worth it.

If you are committed to establishing a peer program, the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) is but one example of a credible training organization. For more information, visit them at [www.icisf.org](http://www.icisf.org).

### HAVE YOUR MANUSCRIPT PUBLISHED IN AN INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL

The International Journal of Emergency Mental Health, an international, peer-reviewed journal, is seeking articles dealing with psychological trauma, disaster psychology, traumatic stress, crisis intervention, emergency services, critical incident stress management, war, occupational stress and crisis, employee assistance programs, violence, terrorism, emergency medicine and surgery, emergency nursing, suicidology, burnout, or compassion fatigue. Instructions for contributing authors can be found online at [www.chevronpublishing.com/authorinfo.pdf](http://www.chevronpublishing.com/authorinfo.pdf)



**INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS FOUNDATION, INC.**  
**STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
*December 31, 2010 and 2009*

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<u>ASSETS</u>			
		<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u> <u>Restated</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents		\$ 346,396	\$ 347,213
Cash held by others		47,046	-
Accounts receivable, net allowance for doubtful accounts of \$ 1,200 and \$ 4,943, respectively		74,873	87,988
Inventory		38,512	29,479
Prepaid expenses		45,598	-
Deposits		4,792	4,792
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation of \$ 92,535 and \$ 108,829, respectively		16,592	12,726
Restricted cash - deferred compensation plan		<u>91,325</u>	<u>76,439</u>
 <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		 <u>\$ 665,134</u>	 <u>\$ 558,637</u>
<u>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</u>			
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses		\$ 120,672	\$ 74,365
Accrued salaries and wages		8,213	2,011
Accrued vacation and sick leave		22,290	17,318
Deferred revenue		161,484	133,058
Deferred compensation		<u>91,325</u>	<u>76,439</u>
 <b>Total Liabilities</b>		 <u>403, 984</u>	 <u>303,191</u>
 <b>NET ASSETS</b>		 <u>261,150</u>	 <u>255,446</u>
 <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		 <u>\$ 665,134</u>	 <u>\$ 558,637</u>



*A NEW BEGINNING..... for the.... **Canadian Critical Incident Stress Foundation***

President's message:

As of January 2012, the Canadian Critical Incident Stress Foundation is back up and running in prospective of meeting the needs of Canadian Critical Incident Stress Management teams and Practitioners across the country.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the new Executive Committee for the CCISF.

Renee Jarvis, President  
Anita Koczekan, Executive Director  
Gabrielle Myra, Assistant Director  
Craig Ellis, Financial Director

The mission of the Canadian Critical Incident Stress foundation is to maintain a leadership role, through research, education and training in the field of CISM. In fulfilling this mission, we will be able to provide the highest level of excellence in the practice and support of CISM peer teams and individuals Nationally.

I would like to take a moment to thank both Murray Firth and Bob van Goethem for being the visionaries for Canadian CISM service providers in this Country. We gratefully acknowledge their dedication and hard work that provided structure and support to CISM teams across Canada. Their accomplishments have set the foundation and have given us the motivation to move forward with this initiative. As we begin our first year, we reflect back on the achievements made by the previous Executive and will continue to build upon their successes.

At this time there are significant preparations that are underway that will enable a smooth transition of this organization. The Canadian Critical Incident Stress Foundation is working diligently with the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation in developing partnerships that will provide Canadian members the benefits of both organizations.

We encourage your input to help develop the CCISF, so that we may provide the best services to our Canadian members. It is our sincere honour to represent those service providers across this Country, who dedicate themselves to the prevention and mitigation of disabling stress.

Please feel free to contact us at...

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*Renee Jarvis*  
President, CCISF

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