



2026

STATEWIDE

CRISIS INTERVENTION

TEAM CONFERENCE

APRIL 10, 2026
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

8:30 A.M. CHECK-IN & BREAKFAST

9:00 A.M. WELCOME & AWARDS

PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS & NATIONAL ANTHEM

Hartford Police Department Honor Guard
Officer Sandy Quinonez, Bridgeport Police Department

WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

Nancy Navarretta, MA, LPC, NCC
Commissioner, CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

Louise Pyers, M.S.
Executive Director & Founder, CT Alliance to Benefit Law Enforcement

Captain (Ret.) Kenneth Edwards
New London Police Department

RECOGNITION OF 25th ANNIVERSARY HONOREES

2026 STATEWIDE AWARDS PRESENTATION

Mobile Crisis/CIT Clinician of the Year Award
CIT Officer of the Year
Officer Paul Buchanan Peer Support Officer of the Year Award
CIT Moment of the Year Award
Rev. Dr. Paul Krampitz Legacy Award

10:00 A.M. OPENING KEYNOTE – THE POWER OF CONNECTION

Kevin Berthia, *Suicide Survivor & Advocate*
Kevin Briggs, *California Highway Patrol (Ret.), “Guardian of the Golden Gate Bridge”*

12:00 P.M. 988 LIFELINE SURVEY PRESENTATION

University of Connecticut School of Social Work
CT Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services Research Division

12:15 P.M. LUNCH

1:00 P.M. MENTAL HEALTH CRISES & THE DEAF COMMUNITY

American School for the Deaf
Jose Viera, *Director of Risk Management*
Kristin Feldman, *Assoc. Director of Student Life*
Nicholas Campbell, *Assoc. Director of Student Life*

2:00 P.M. CLOSING KEYNOTE – CRISIS RESPONSE AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Ernest Stevens, *Managing Director*, Council of State Governments Justice Center, Retired San Antonio Police Officer

3:45 P.M. WRAP UP AND CLOSING REMARKS

MASTER OF CEREMONIES



RENEE DININO

Director of Community Affairs, WFSB
Host of Hello Connecticut with Renee
DiNino, Amazing K9 Duo's, Lost &
Pound.

WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS



NANCY NAVARRETTA, MA, LPC, NCC

Commissioner

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)

Ms. Navarretta has extensive experience in public and private program development, strategic planning, leadership, and process improvement resulting in the delivery of effective, recovery-oriented, and integrated healthcare systems. In June 2021, she was appointed as Acting Commissioner of DMHAS, before being confirmed as Commissioner in 2022 and then being reappointed by Governor Lamont in 2023.

Ms. Navarretta prioritizes accessible, integrated behavioral health systems of care which are informed by multiple stakeholders including individuals with lived experience. She currently co-chairs Connecticut's Alcohol and Drug Policy Council, Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee and Fatherhood Initiative and represents Connecticut nationally as a member of the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) Public Policy Committee. Ms. Navarretta previously served as Deputy Commissioner of the department from 2015-2021 and was responsible for project management and strategic planning as part of executive leadership while managing several divisions/initiatives including evidenced-based practices, supporting the recovery of individuals living with mental illness and the state's opioid response efforts. Ms. Navarretta began public service with DMHAS in 2013 as the Department's Director of Behavioral Health Services. In that capacity, a number of divisions within the Office of the Commissioner reported to her, including Community Services, Managed Services, Evidenced Based Practices, Veteran's Services, Research, and Statewide Services which include Long Term Services and Supports, Problem Gambling Services, Housing and Homeless Services, Older Adult Services, Special Education and Women's Services.

Ms. Navarretta came to the Department with many years of experience as a direct service mental health and addictions provider and behavioral healthcare administrator. She maintains memberships with American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and the American Counseling Association (ACA). She received her BA in Psychology from Boston College and completed her graduate studies at Fordham University with a MA in Clinical Psychology. Ms. Navarretta is Nationally Certified and is a Licensed Counselor in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Prior to joining the Department, Ms. Navarretta's senior leadership roles included serving as Chief Operating Officer of Liberation Programs Inc., a private non-profit serving Fairfield County and Chief of Behavioral Health Services for Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center serving Greater New Haven.

RECOGNITION OF 25TH ANNIVERSARY HONOREES



CABLE recognizes those whose contributions have played a vital role in strengthening collaboration between law enforcement, behavioral health providers and the community, helping to ensure compassionate, effective responses to individuals experiencing mental health crises.

Their dedication, leadership, and commitment to advancing the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) model across the State of Connecticut has had a lasting impact on countless lives.

CAPT. KENNETH EDWARDS, JR. (RET.)

New London Police Department

LT. RAY HASSETT (RET.)

New Haven Police Department

RONALD CLARK (RET.)

Connecticut State Police

SUE BOWMAN (RET.)

Windsor Police Department

DR. MADELON BARANOSKI

Yale University

OFFICER THERESA VELEZ

Hartford Police Department

CHIEF JOHN RICH

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CHIEF SEAN GRANT

Central CT State University Police
Department

CHIEF JEFFREY NIXON (RET.)

Groton Long Point Police Department

**DEPUTY CHIEF SHAUN MCCOLGAN
(RET.)**

Danbury Police Department

MARK POISSON (RET.)

Wethersfield Police Department

MARSHALL SEGAR, ESQ (RET.)

New London Police Department

2026 AWARD RECIPIENTS

CIT/MOBILE CRISIS CLINICIAN OF THE YEAR

CIARA PEREZ

Community Mental Health Affiliates
New Britain Police Department

OFFICER PAUL BUCHANAN MEMORIAL PEER SUPPORT AWARD

SERGEANT WILLIAM ROY

SERGEANT MICHAEL GUERRA

OFFICER ROBERT STRICKLAND

POLICE SOCIAL WORKER MAYA KADEL

Madison Police Department

CIT MOMENT OF THE YEAR

OFFICER KYLE COSMOS

Waterbury Police Department

LIEUTENANT MICHAEL CRISCUOLO

OFFICER TONISHA BERRIOS

OFFICER ASHLEY KILEY

OFFICER NICHOLAS ZULLO

New Haven Police Department

KENNETH EDWARDS JR. CIT LEADERSHIP AWARD

DETECTIVE LIEUTENANT GEORGE CLEMENTS

Meriden Police Department

THE REVEREND DR. PAUL KRAMPITZ LEGACY AWARD



The Reverend Dr. Paul Krampitz Legacy Award is presented to an individual whose life and work reflect the same selfless service and compassionate leadership that Reverend Krampitz exemplified throughout his life. Reverend Krampitz served as a guiding light for many, as the pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church in Cromwell and in his role as a police chaplain. Those seeking counsel, comfort, or a moment of peace knew they could always find it in Paul.

Known for his dedication, humility, and calm strength, Reverend Krampitz's service touched countless lives. He was deeply committed to the well-being of first responders, offering a listening ear and a caring presence in the most difficult of times and his work as a police chaplain demonstrated his extraordinary ability to offer support to those on the front lines, showing empathy and understanding to both officers and the broader public they served.

This award honors someone who, like Reverend Krampitz, demonstrates a deep sense of compassion, empathy, and an unwavering commitment to the betterment of others. The recipient of this award embodies the values of integrity, kindness, and service, and is recognized for their efforts to make a meaningful difference in the lives of first responders and their community. Reverend Krampitz's legacy continues to inspire those who knew him and those who never had the chance to meet him. This Legacy Award is a tribute to those who carry forward his mission of kindness, support, and faithful service to all.

THE POWER OF CONNECTION

Kevin Berthia, *Suicide Survivor & Advocate*

Kevin Briggs, *California Highway Patrol (Ret.), "Guardian of the Golden Gate Bridge"*



KEVIN BRIGGS

As an internationally recognized, FBI-trained crisis negotiator and mental health advocate, Kevin Briggs has shared his compelling story and personal experience on some of the world's most respected platforms. His work has been featured in a TED Talk at the 2014 Technology, Entertainment, and Design (TED) Conference, as well as on NBC's Access Live, Yahoo News, The New Yorker, Men's Health, NPR's Bob Edwards Radio Show, People Magazine, USA Today, The Jennifer Hudson Show, and numerous other outlets worldwide. His first book, *Guardian of the Golden Gate*, was released in July 2015.

A retired California Highway Patrol sergeant, Briggs spent many years patrolling the Golden Gate Bridge, where he encountered individuals in profound emotional distress who were contemplating suicide. Through compassion, patience, and his philosophy of "Listen to Understand," he helped guide several hundred people away from taking their lives and toward the possibility of a new beginning. These extraordinary efforts earned him the enduring nickname, "Guardian of the Golden Gate."

Briggs served three years in the United States Army, three years with the California Department of Corrections, and 23 years with the California Highway Patrol. Since retiring from the CHP, he has dedicated his life to promoting mental health awareness, resilience, and hope worldwide. His personal journey includes surviving child abuse, battling cancer at age 20, undergoing heart surgery, and coping as a suicide loss survivor.

He openly shares how faith, resilience, and post-traumatic growth have played a vital role in navigating life's most difficult challenges.

KEVIN BERTHIA

Kevin Berthia's journey epitomizes the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity. As a suicide survivor, advocate, and speaker, he has transformed his personal pain into a beacon of hope for countless others. Growing up in silence, Kevin grappled with unbearable pain, masking it behind a facade of joviality throughout high school and into his early twenties. However, a very public suicide attempt at the Golden Gate Bridge became a pivotal moment, altering the course of his life forever.

Since 2013, Kevin has fearlessly shared his story, captivating audiences with his raw candor and unwavering honesty. His journey of healing and self-discovery serves as a testament to the power of resilience and the possibility of overcoming even the darkest of times. Kevin is driven by a passionate desire to inspire others to break their silence, to reach out for help, and to believe in the promise of a brighter tomorrow.

Kevin's message of hope has resonated far and wide, touching the lives of individuals across the globe. His story has been featured in numerous magazine outlets, local and national news stations, and prestigious platforms such as the Steve Harvey Show, Red Table Talk, and the Dr. Phil Show. A poignant image of Kevin standing on the bridge's chord graced the front page of the San Francisco Chronicle, solidifying his place among the 75 most iconic photos of the 21st century.

For Kevin, surviving a suicide attempt carries profound significance in the prevention of further tragedies. He understands the depths of despair and the importance of shedding light on the darkness that surrounds suicide. Through his advocacy and speaking engagements, Kevin strives to empower individuals to find their voice, to seek help, and to embrace the journey towards healing.

In Kevin's words, "No one knows more about the darkness that surrounds suicide than those who have walked in its shadow." With unwavering courage and compassion, Kevin Berthia continues to be a guiding light for those who seek hope, understanding, and a path forward from the depths of despair.

Kevin was mentioned in People Magazine in the article titled: "He Saved a Stranger's Life. Now They're Friends and Suicide Prevention Crusaders (Exclusive)" – August 25, 2025.

MENTAL HEALTH CRISES & THE DEAF COMMUNITY

American School for the Deaf

Jose Viera, *Director of Risk Management*

Kristin Feldman, *Associate Director of Student Life*

Nicholas Campbell, *Associate Director of Student Life*

CRISIS RESPONSE AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION



ERNEST STEVENS

Managing Director,

Council of State Governments Justice Center

Retired San Antonio Police Officer

Ernest (Ernie) Stevens is a published author with a #1 best-selling book on Amazon - *Mental Health and De-escalation: A Guide for Law Enforcement Professionals*. Ernie also authored *101 Questions to Ask Before Becoming a Law Enforcement Officer* in 2025. Ernie was a police officer for 28 years, serving 26 of those years with the San Antonio Police Department where he was a founding member of the Mental Health Unit.

Ernie has been featured on the Emmy Award Winning HBO Documentary, *Ernie and Joe: Crisis Cops*. He has also been featured in NBC's documentary, *A Different Kind of Force*. Ernie was interviewed by ABC's *Nightline*'s Byron Pitts and featured on officers trained to respond to mental illness calls. Ernie has been featured in over 48 publications and deemed an expert in Crisis Intervention Training.

Ernie is a graduate of Wayland Baptist University and holds a B.S. degree in Criminal Justice. Ernie was one of the founding members of the San Antonio Police Department's Mental Health Unit. Ernie continues to assist law enforcement agencies around the nation by providing technical assistance and best practice approaches to mental health crisis calls. He currently serves as the Deputy Director of Law Enforcement for the Council of State Governments Justice Center where he works closely with the Department of Justice to assist agencies across the nation with developing and strengthening their crisis response models.

CABLE MISSION

The Connecticut Alliance to Benefit Law Enforcement (CABLE) is a non-profit, 501 (C)(3) research and training collaborative whose mission is to serve as an interdisciplinary resource and catalyst for law enforcement and community collaboration, support and education.

CABLE brings community and law enforcement resources together to address common issues related to mental health. CABLE's strength is its ability to bring together people from diverse perspectives who are committed to working collaboratively for the common good.

CABLE's Board of Directors, staff and training faculty are comprised of a cross-section of stakeholders, including:

- municipal and state law enforcement personnel
- mental health professionals
- families and persons with mental illness
- educational institutions

CABLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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THANK YOU

The 2026 Statewide CIT Conference is generously supported by the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

THANK YOU SPONSORS

