



## **Chief Brian Asmus**

*Liberty Lake Police Department*

### **Opening Remarks:**

On April 24, 2014, Officer Clint Gibson of the Liberty Lake Police Department completed suicide. He left behind his wife and four children. Officer Gibson's father-in-law is a retired police officer. His brother-in-law works as an officer with a Federal agency. The Gibson family was the stereotypical definition of 'a law enforcement family.'

Chief Brian Asmus opens our conference with the impact of a completed suicide within the agency he leads - the trauma of leading a department grieving the loss of one of their own, supporting the devastated family, all the while coming to terms with his own personal grief.

### **Biography:**

Chief Asmus began his law enforcement career in 1990 as a reserve police officer with the City of Yelm, Washington Police Department. In 1992 he was hired as a full time patrol officer with the same agency. He served the City of Yelm as a patrol officer, DARE Instructor, GREAT Instructor, patrol Sergeant, administrative Sergeant, Commander, and Police Chief.

In 2001, he was selected to be the police chief for the City of Liberty Lake, Washington which was a newly incorporated city. Chief Asmus was able to establish a full service police department from the ground up. Today the department consists of 12 officers, three reserve police officers, a volunteer police chaplain, and a records clerk. He continues to serve as the police chief.

Chief Asmus has a bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in human resource management and marketing from Pacific Lutheran University. He has a second bachelor's degree in leadership with a concentration in criminal justice and law enforcement from Patten University.

He is a graduate of the Northwest Executive Command College and the FBI National Academy. He has obtained his executive level career certification from the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission.

During his 25+ years in law enforcement, Chief Asmus has received numerous awards, commendations, and recognition for his contributions to the communities that he has served.

He serves on numerous boards, commissions, and service organizations and is a volunteer and incoming state director for the Law Enforcement Torch Run benefiting Special Olympics Washington.



**Dr. Robert E. Douglas, Jr.** (Keynote)

*National Police Suicide Foundation*

**Course Title: “Law Enforcement Suicide”**

Law enforcement is one of the most stressful professions in the country. Officers deal with the worst of humanity and see the results of horrific accidents and crimes. Police officers have an understandably high rate of post-traumatic stress. These officers place their lives on the line for others many times and because of the daily stress of their profession and the effect it has on their personal life, they can reach a point where they feel like they can’t go on. Dr. Douglas discusses the important topic of emergency service suicide with forthrightness. He brings insight as to how we can not only recognize signs of a potential suicide, but how we can

all know how to best take proactive care in the prevention of a suicide. In the tragic aftermath of a completed suicide, Dr. Douglas will cover how to best provide emotional care to the family and impacted agency.

**Biography:**

Dr. Robert E. Douglas, Jr. is the Founder and Executive Director of the National Police Suicide Foundation, Inc. and is a retired police agent from the Baltimore City Police Department. Dr. Douglas is considered a leading expert in the area of police suicide.

Bob is a member of the American Association of Suicidologists, Senior Chaplain for ICPC, and a recipient of the Jack Price Award. He is the author of three books, *Death with No Valor*, *Hope Beyond the Badge*, and *Healing for a Hero’s Heart*.

In July 1994, Bob retired as an Agent after serving 20 years with the Baltimore City Police Department, and 5 years as a patrol officer with the Temple Terrace Police Department in Temple Terrace Florida. He holds a B.S. degree from the University of South Florida in criminal justice and a Masters Degree in Police Administration from the University of Baltimore. Bob also has a Masters degree in theology from St. Mary’s Seminary and recently completed his Doctorate degree in Pastoral Counseling. Bob also served as police Chaplain for FOP Lodge #3 in Baltimore City, from 1988 to 2002, served as Chaplain for Alcohol, Tobacco, & Firearms (ATF) in Washington, D.C. and lectured at the FBI National Academy.



## **Officer Danny Veith**

*Of the Cops/For the Cops*

### **Course Title: “Resilience and Officer Suicide”**

Happy, healthy law enforcement officers do not suicide. Immersed in a world of human suffering and interpersonal violence, however, over a career that can potentially span three decades, can anyone remain happy and healthy? Are we doomed to a lifestyle, suggested by Karl Menninger, of suicide by inches? From the perspective of a street officer, Danny Veith will share his thoughts on the responsibilities both an agency and individual officer share in the realm of wellness and resiliency.

### **Biography:**

Danny Veith has been continuously employed by a law enforcement agency since graduating high school in 1980 (the initial 5 years as a dispatcher, and the past 32 years as a police officer). His experience as a police officer includes nearly 10 years with a small agency in a metropolitan area, followed by 23 years with a major city agency. Danny has primarily worked uniform assignments and currently works in the Patrol Division with a major city agency in Colorado.

His interest in emergency services stress is best expressed by 25 years as an active Peer Support Provider (via a local CISM/Crisis Support Team from 1992 to 2008, and 2015 to present; as a Certified Trauma Responder; and a major city police agency Peer Support Program, 2000 to present).

From 2008 through 2012, Danny had the unique opportunity to create and implement a comprehensive Wellness Unit within his agency. In this position, Danny created curriculum and co-instructed a one day class, “Officer Down,” addressing the prevention and intervention of police officer suicide. Danny also assisted officers and employees with identifying options, strategies, and resources to address issues and concerns impacting their ability to live and work in a healthy manner.

In 2014 Danny was appointed to a Task Force for the Colorado State Legislature concerning PTSD within the law enforcement profession. In 2016 he became a member of the Leadership Team for the newly formed Colorado Fallen Hero Foundation. In January 2017, Behind the Badge Foundation travelled to Colorado to facilitate training based on its Line of Duty Death Response Team. This training provided a bridge for ongoing collaboration and friendship between the states that will benefit law enforcement agencies and families throughout the west.



## **Cynthia Tobias**

*Apple St. (Applied Learning Styles)*

### **Course Title: “Speaking With Those You Love During Traumatic Times”**

Another law enforcement officer’s death hits the news. Line of duty death. Suicide. How do we navigate the inevitable questions from children and extended family members in a healthy manner? How do we give truth to what has happened and help those we love face life’s realities in an honoring manner, giving them integral tools to equip them in their own life journeys? Cynthia will discuss how to have conversations with children at different developmental stages. She will also discuss how to handle difficult conversations with family and friends when traumatic events occur.

### **Biography:**

Cynthia Tobias has a successful background that includes over 30 years of private practice, 8 years of teaching high school, and 6 years in law enforcement. She has authored 13 books and is a featured guest on radio and television, a popular presenter for business, government agencies, churches and schools throughout the U.S. and the world. She is the mother of twin sons, now young adults, and she and her husband Jack live in the Seattle area.

Cynthia’s educational clients have included a large number of public and private schools across the country and around the world. She has taken her educational expertise to many international schools and organizations, including those in South Africa, Bolivia, Trinidad, South Korea, Australia, and more. Her skills and experience have allowed her unique teaching opportunities for Loma Linda Medical School, Washington State Criminal Justice Training Center, the Marine Corp Civilian Law Enforcement Command School, Eastside Fire and Rescue, and other similar organizations.

Cynthia’s corporate clients have included Seattle Police Department, Los Angeles Police Department, International Association of Women Police (IAWP), General Motors, Walt Disney, Merrill Lynch, and BNSF Railroads, as well as numerous government agencies, law enforcement and fire & rescue services.

Cynthia received her B.A. at Northwest Nazarene University, her Master’s Degree at Seattle Pacific University, and an Honorary Doctorate from Northwest Nazarene University in 2015. She is currently serving on the Advisory Board of the Washington State Chaplains Foundation Advisory Board (primarily serving the Washington State Patrol & Fish and Wildlife Chaplains).



## **Leslie Montgomery**

*Lead Chaplain, Tacoma Police Department*

### **Course Title: “We’re All Super Heroes”**

No matter what your family looks like, juggling daily life during ‘normal’ times is hard enough. Juggling life when the hits keep coming due to the career of law enforcement might have us questioning our sanity, much less our superhero-ness. Are you a LEO? Family member of a LEO? Whether you are 2 years or 90 – Leslie will help you discover your unique talent as a Super Hero!

### **Biography:**

In 2016, Leslie was selected as the Lead Chaplain for the Tacoma Police Department after serving as a volunteer for six years. As Chaplain, Leslie works with the Department’s Critical Incident and Peer Support Cadre and is on the Crisis Intervention Team. Leslie was named as Chaplain of the Year in 2016 and received a Commendation of Merit in 2017. She is passionate about working with kids and families facing trauma and crisis and is involved with numerous at-risk youth outreach programs and partners with pediatric grief support services throughout the community.

Before working for Tacoma Police, Leslie spent 7 years on staff with Young Life. Leslie studied Religion and Sociology at the University of Washington and currently is pursuing a post graduate work in Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Leslie is a professional writer, an amateur softball player and a lousy guitarist. She typically dies from Cholera when playing Oregon Trail. She enjoys kayaking in Puget Sound and loitering in coffee shops, and her favorite thing is doing anything with her nieces and nephews.