Resiliency Training Occurring Next Week for Local First Responders

(Evansville, IN – May 9, 2013) Mulberry Center (Mulberry) in conjunction with the Evansville Police Department, the Evansville Fire Department, the Vanderburgh County Sheriff’s Office and local Volunteer Fire Departments are excited to announce that a First Responder Resiliency and Peer Support Training will be taking place in Evansville during the week of May 13 -17, 2013.

The training is a 40-hour course that will occur at the Welborn Conference Center at 410 Mulberry Street, and is free to all local first responders. The training is being funded in part from a grant from the Welborn Baptist Foundation that was awarded to Mulberry Center to provide mental health services and trainings to local first responders.

About the Presenter

The presenter, Allan O’Keefe, spent ten years with the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office. During his tenure he was assigned to patrol, street level narcotics and crime prevention until being promoted to the rank of Detective. He was then assigned to the Internal Affairs Bureau, where he served as the lead investigator for all criminal and administrative investigations.

Allan has educated law enforcement officer, first responders, military personnel and mental health professionals throughout the United States and abroad in the specialty areas of Hostage Negotiations, Police Suicide, Crisis Intervention, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Law Enforcement Peer Support and Critical Incident Peer Support. Additionally, he co-authored a Law Enforcement Peer Support training manual currently being instructed to first responders.

Prior to entering the Law Enforcement community, Allan served four years in the United States Marine Corps. He was assigned to the White House traveling throughout the United States and abroad with President Bill Clinton while he served as the President of the United States.

About the Training

The First Responders Resiliency and Peer Support Training course is a practical course of instruction designed to provide first responder peer support workers with the ability to conduct individual psychological debriefings, provide peer counseling, make appropriate professional intervention referrals for peers and their

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family members as needed, and connect these approaches to the enhancement of human resiliency in the fields of law enforcement, fire service, and emergency medical service.

This unique course provides the newly assigned peer support worker with an understanding of first responder stress, psychological aspects of stress, an overview of mental health issues, factors in first responder suicide, effective communication, and drug and alcohol use and abuse. Attendees will learn how to conduct individual psychological debriefings and initiate and manage peer support programs.

“First responders are professionals whose mission is to tend to the needs of everyone but themselves and often times are neglectful of their own mental health. Our hope is that this program will go a long way in helping public safety professionals recognize and address their own mental health needs so they are better able to tend to the public safety needs of the community,” said Vanderburgh County Sheriff Eric Williams.

Mental health professionals and anyone else who is interested in learning more about resiliency are invited to attend this training. Continuing Education Credits (CEU) are available. There is a minimal cost of $30 per day or $150 for those who are professionals or first responders from other counties to attend. Otherwise, all local first responders in Vanderburgh County will attend for free. To sign up to attend, please call 436.4948 or email dbaird@evansvillepolice.com.

Mr. O’Keefe is currently in Evansville working with local law enforcement officials. It is our hope that media outlets will conduct an interview with Mr. O’Keefe via phone or in person. To set up an interview or for more information about this training, please contact Becky Glines at 430.1903 or glinesb@southwestern.org.

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