



2018 Fire Hero Family

Wellness Conference

April 8 – 10, 2018 ♥ Blue Ash, Ohio



The 2018 Fire Hero Family Wellness Conference is open to spouses, life partners, parents, adult children and siblings of fallen firefighters honored at the National Memorial in Emmitsburg, Maryland. This conference will include opportunities to reflect on your experiences, connect with other fire service families, and find new direction for your future. Focus will be on information and strategies you can incorporate into your daily life. There is space for 100 attendees, on a first-come, first-served basis.

Registration will be open until March 16, 2018 or until full.

Hotel Room Block

Sunday, April 8 - Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Guests are required to make their own reservations by calling (513) 733-8900 or (800) 362-2779 and identifying themselves with the NFFF. The room rate, \$136.00 per night plus tax, includes a daily cooked to order breakfast.

All reservations must be guaranteed with a major credit card. Reservations canceled 24 hours prior to the arrival date are fully refundable.

Destination



Blue Ash, Ohio

Please use Cincinnati/
Northern Kentucky
International Airport (CVG)

Hotel



Embassy Suites by Hilton
Cincinnati Northeast Blue Ash
4554 Lake Forest Drive
Blue Ash, Ohio 45242

Conference Schedule

Sunday, April 8, 2018

3:00 – 6:00 pm

Registration

Come say hello and get your materials for the conference. Please bring a photo of your firefighter to include in a display that will be posted during the conference. Local therapy dogs will be available for stress relief and general relaxation as you arrive after a day of travel.

6:00 - 9:00 pm

Opening Session/Welcome Dinner

Join us for a welcome dinner and a chance to meet and renew connections with other fire hero families.

Monday, April 9, 2018

7:30 am

Morning Exercise*

6:30 – 9:00 am

Breakfast

9:00 am

Keynote: Lessons from the Very Edge

Vicki Scalzitti

10:00 am

Break

10:15 am

What is My Grief Telling Me?

Vickie Taylor

Grief is as individual as each person's fingerprint, yet there are some proactive approaches that can be employed to navigate the grieving process. We will explore practical, research-based tools for finding hope and strength after loss.

Transportation

Transportation between the airport and hotel will be available during the following times. Transportation outside of the these times are the participant's responsibility.

Sunday, April 8, 2018

9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Wednesday, April 11, 2018

9:00 am – 9:00 pm

Departures

9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Fun Day Activities

Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens
The Banks, Over the Rhine Brewery District, and Findlay Market
Newport on the Levee

Thursday, April 12, 2018

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Departures

* Exercise sessions are optional and are designed to be accessible to all levels of fitness.

Self-Compassion as Self-Care for Grief

Heather Stang

Tending to our own suffering with kindness is often placed on the back burner. Some of us can't even imagine what it would be like to have the time, energy, and wherewithal to take care of ourselves, especially when we are faced with grief. During this workshop we will explore the three principles of self-compassion and discover how to apply them to daily life so you can become your own best friend.

Reflections on Lessons from the Very Edge

Vicki Scalzitti

This is an opportunity for participants to discuss and share the lessons and meaning of their individual grief experience in response to the keynote address. This may be particularly relevant to long-term grievers who would benefit from looking at their loss as life-changing, formative and transformational. Grief never leaves us where, or as, it found us.

12:15 pm

Lunch

1:30 – 3:30 pm

Afternoon Session: Connecting with Others

These breakout sessions, arranged by relationship to the fallen firefighter, will give participants a chance to get to know one another and to share experiences, memories, and concerns. These are peer-led groups where fire hero families can learn from and support one another.

3:30 pm

Selfie Scavenger Hunt*

Arlene Zang

Want to participate in a fun activity with a team of your peers? Each group will be assigned a list of photo-ops to complete while they are out walking, dining, and exploring tonight, or even right in the hotel. Photos must be uploaded by midnight. Photo display and prizes to be awarded at dinner on Tuesday. Meet Arlene in the lobby for instructions and team formation.

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Afternoon Walk*

Join fellow family members and a local fire service guide for a walk to nearby Summit Park. Get out for some fresh air, exercise, and conversation! Meet in the lobby.

Monday Dinner

Dinner on Monday evening is on your own. A list of local restaurants will be available.



* Exercise sessions are optional and are designed to be accessible to all levels of fitness.

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

7:30 am

Morning Exercise*

6:30 – 9:00 am

Breakfast

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Meditation for Grief

Heather Stang

Meditation can be one of your greatest allies when you are grieving, and learning how is easier than you think! During this workshop you will sample a variety of meditation techniques designed to relax your body, calm your mind, and cope with difficult emotions. You will also learn how to weave moments of mindfulness into your busy schedule and cultivate a daily practice that will have lifelong health and wellness benefits.

Healing with Myofascial Stretching

Denny Doyle

We will learn how the body holds grief and trauma and utilize guided stretching techniques to release and ease ourselves and learn tools for healing our bodies and minds. Myofascial stretching techniques empower anyone to eliminate their pain, restore flexibility and function, and increase well-being. As you are guided through these stretches, you'll learn methods for easing yourself and take home valuable lifelong tools for self-treatment. This session is designed for all fitness and mobility levels. Dress comfortably.

I Need You to Know: Coping & Communicating After the Death

Vicki Scalzitti

This is an interactive workshop focusing on communication issues within the family—immediate and extended. It can be challenging when the people we believed would provide understanding and support seem to present obstacles to our adjustment and healing process. We'll explore and discuss how to present ourselves clearly and respectfully to others, how to recognize grief reactions that may be very unlike our own, and how to establish paths in our grief that run alongside the grief of others—minus some of the ruts, run-ins and wrecks! Strategies for addressing the misperceptions, expectations, and mis-steps of others will be discussed. We will explore how to let others into our grief experience in a way that is profound and respectful and how to maintain relationships if we can't.



* Exercise sessions are optional and are designed to be accessible to all levels of fitness.

12:00 pm

Lunch

1:15 – 3:30 pm

Men's Service Project

Keith Maupin

Back by popular demand, this session is open to all men attending the conference. This year's project is with the Yellow Ribbon Support Center, a non-profit that supports troops serving in harm's way and works to identify resources for returning vets in finding jobs. This is an opportunity to thank our host community and active members of the military through direct action, while paying tribute to the service and memory of all fallen heroes. *This is an off-site activity; please meet in the lobby for 1:00 pm departure to the Yellow Ribbon Support Center.*

Kindness Rocks! Let Kindness Be Your Legacy

Megan Murphy

If kindness and creativity are your thing, this workshop is for you! By practicing intentional kindness, we can make a difference not only for others but for ourselves. Kindness defuses tension, it builds connections, and it helps give a sense of purpose to life. Come hear a presentation by the founder of the Kindness Rocks Project. Then create your own kindness rocks and begin participating in this worldwide project to spread kindness to others.

Climbing Wall and Open Gym at the Blue Ash Recreation Center

Need a break from classroom sessions? Want to get up and move around a bit while challenging yourself to try new things? Take a field trip to the nearby Blue Ash Recreation Center where you will have an opportunity to use their climbing wall and recreation facility for the afternoon. Please dress accordingly! *This is an off-site activity, and you must sign a waiver before participating. Please meet in the lobby for 1:15 pm departure to the Blue Ash Recreation Center.*



* Exercise sessions are optional and are designed to be accessible to all levels of fitness.

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Laughter Yoga

Judi Winall

Join us for a lighthearted closing session of laughter yoga. This is not the kind of yoga where you twist yourself into complicated positions. Laughter yoga is a mind-body exercise which counteracts the negative effects of stress and has a profound effect on health and well-being. It was developed by a medical doctor from India and is based on the scientific fact that your body cannot tell the difference between simulated and real laughter. In laughter yoga, you don't need jokes, comedy, or even a sense of humor to receive the benefits of genuine laughter. It is accomplished through laughter exercises, deep breathing, stretching, and playfulness.

6:00 pm

Dinner/Closing Ceremony

Conference Program Booklet

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation will create a printed booklet listing all conference attendees. If you would like us to include your information, please send a brief bio (100 words or less), a photo of yourself, and a photo of your firefighter when you register for the conference. Due to printing deadlines, we must receive this information no later than March 9, 2018.



**The National Fallen
Firefighters Foundation plants
the seed, and our connection...
helps that seed grow.**



– Arlene Zang, Mother of Robin Zang-Broxterman (OH)



Conference Facilitators

Denny Doyle is a State of Maryland licensed massage therapist since 2009. Her practice specializes in Myofascial Release, a unique technique for clients with chronic pain and mobility dysfunction. She is uniquely trained to work with children, adults, and animals by using a combination of techniques incorporating myofascial release, Cranial Sacral therapy, cupping, and therapeutic fascial stretching. Denny created and teaches a series of therapeutic fascial stretching classes to instruct clients in self-treatment to further their healing. She maintains offices in Annapolis and Chester, Maryland.

Megan Murphy is a women's empowerment coach, kindness activist, and lecturer. She is a business mentor for SCORE, freelance writer, and founder of The Kindness Rocks Project. Megan is a Certified Professional Coach and Score certified mentor through the Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching and a member of the International Coaching Federation. Megan has been featured on Fox News Boston, NBC Boston, WCVB Channel 5, The Boston Globe, The Detroit Free Press, The Washington Post, Cape Cod Life Magazine, The Cape Cod Times, Today.com, Huffington Post, and Southern Living. She has been published in 2017 *Chicken Soup for the Soul: My Kind America*, *Mind, Body, Green*, Tut.com, and *Grown & Flown*.

Vicki Scalzitti, a bereaved mother and educator, has worked with grieving children and families for 27 years as the coordinator of the Good Mourning Program for Children, Teens and Families, Rainbow Hospice and Palliative Care, Mt. Prospect, Illinois. She is a specialist in traumatic loss and grief within the school system. In addition, Vicki has presented on loss-related issues at the local, regional, and national level for The Compassionate Friends, Bereaved Parents USA, the International Death, Grief and Bereavement Conference (University of Wisconsin at LaCrosse), and previous NFFF conferences. She is the author of *The Road to Good Mourning* and co-author of *10 Steps for Parenting Your Grieving Children*.

Heather Stang is the bestselling author of *Mindfulness & Grief* and a certified yoga therapist. She facilitates meditation for grief courses and groups online, in her Maryland studio, and for organizations around the country. Her passion for helping others cope with life after loss is inspired by her own story of love, loss, and post-traumatic growth. Say hello and find helpful guided meditations and support at MindfulnessAndGrief.com.

Vickie Taylor, LCSW, has served the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation since its inception as a trainer, behavioral health consultant, and coordinator of the NFFF Memorial Weekend Family Day activities. She has provided behavioral health consultation to Prince William County, Virginia, public safety agencies since 1985. She is currently the director of the Prince William Public Safety Resilience Center, a full-service counseling center dedicated to public safety personnel who are employed in Prince William County.

Judi Winall, M.Div., CIH, CLYT, is a certified laughter yoga teacher, personally trained by Dr. Madan Kataria, the founder of Laughter Yoga International. She has been facilitating laughter yoga classes, presentations, and trainings in the Cincinnati area for 11 years and offers free monthly classes as a community service. In April 2012, PBS Nova filmed her laughter yoga class. Judi is the founder of The Center for Soul Empowerment, offers personal and spiritual empowerment counseling, and is a published nature photographer.

Extend Your Stay - Fun Day

Wednesday, April 11, 2018

Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens

The Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens is a National Historic Landmark and second-oldest zoo in the United States. This year-round family attraction features award-winning exhibits including more than 500 animals and 3,000 plant species.



The Banks, Over the Rhine Brewery District, and Findlay Market

Along Cincinnati's waterfront there are spectacular places to dine, shop, or experience Cincinnati's brewing heritage above and below ground. Visit historic pre-Prohibition breweries, including long abandoned lagering cellars and tunnels 30-40 feet below ground! Findlay Market is Ohio's oldest operated public market and one of Cincinnati's most cherished institutions. Located just blocks from downtown in Over-the-Rhine, a dense historic neighborhood rich in 19th century architecture, Findlay Market is home to more than 40 indoor merchants selling meat, fish, poultry, produce, flowers, cheese, deli, and ethnic foods.



Newport on the Levee

Newport on the Levee is a place to play, dine and shop. Walk across the country's longest (2,670-foot span) all-pedestrian bridge that links two states. The 131-year-old L&N Bridge, the "Purple People Bridge" includes park benches and flowering seasonal planters.



Cincinnati