



2019 Fire Hero Family

Wellness Conference

May 5 – 7, 2019 ♥ Portland, Maine



The 2019 Fire Hero Family Wellness Conference is open to spouses, life partners, parents, adult children and siblings of fallen firefighters honored at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The conference will include opportunities to reflect on your experiences, blend them with your present and gain wisdom and strength for your future. You won't want to miss the keynote by *New York Times* bestselling author, Kate Braestrup, closing remarks by United States Army Staff Sergeant Travis Mills (Retired), insightful workshops, and the activities planned.

***There is space for 100 attendees,
on a first-come, first-served basis or until April 1, 2019.***

Destination



Portland, Maine

**Use Portland International
Jetport Airport (PWM)**

Hotel



Portland Regency Hotel & Spa

**20 Milk Street
Portland, Maine 04101**

Conference Schedule



Monday, May 6, 2019

7:30 – 8:30 am

Introduction to Yoga Flow*

Lisa King

We will slowly flow through some yoga movements with awareness of body, mind, and breath. By connecting your breath to movement, you will invite a feeling of ease in your body and mind. No previous yoga experience is necessary. Choices will be offered to include any level of physical ability by building on the strengths you already possess! Participants will leave with a few simple tools they can easily use at home.

7:00 – 9:00 am

Breakfast

Monday Dinner

Dinner on Monday evening is on your own. Please refer to the [list of restaurants and local amenities in this conference guide](#).

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

Conference Schedule



9:00 – 10:30 am (choose one session)

How to Support Children Experiencing Grief and Strong Emotions

Stephanie Heitkemper

Parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and supportive friends, ever wish you had a magic wand to help a child who is struggling? Gain insight and confidence by attending this workshop as we explore brain development, regulation states, and activities that foster positive attachment. Learn and explore techniques to first regulate your nervous system, so you can best support a child who is grieving or struggling with other strong emotions. Walk away with simple activities that may just feel like a magic wand! **This session will focus on children ages 3-10.**

Integration: Blending Past, Present, and Future (Part 1)

Michele Neff Hernandez / Dr. Carrie West

Creating a healthy balance between holding onto our memories, living in the present moment, and having the ability to plan for a meaningful and happy future is a challenge for everyone who has experienced the death of a person they love. The ongoing connection with our person exists in each of these time orientations. Viewing grief and healing through each of these three lenses is a powerful experience that will help you find balance through integration. Join us for access to research-based tools that are designed to help you build resilience as we honor the people we love by finding ways to truly live. **This two-part workshop will run from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm.**

An Attitude of Gratitude

Vickie Taylor

This session will explore how to cultivate gratitude and counteract negativity by noticing and reflecting on what is good. Cultivating an attitude of gratitude is a skill that can be learned and when practiced daily, helps to improve sleep, lower depression and raise productivity.

10:30 – 10:45 am

Break

Conference Schedule

10:15 am – 12:15 pm (choose one session)

How to Support Children Experiencing Grief and Strong Emotions

Stephanie Heitkemper

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Integration: Blending Past, Present, and Future (Part 2)

Michele Neff Hernandez / Dr. Carrie West

Creating a healthy balance between holding onto our memories, living in the present moment, and having the ability to plan for a meaningful and happy future is a challenge for everyone who has experienced the death of a person they love. The ongoing connection with our person exists in each of these time orientations. Viewing grief and healing through each of these three lenses is a powerful experience that will help you find balance through integration. Join us for access to research-based tools that are designed to help you build resilience as we honor the people we love by finding ways to truly live. **This two-part workshop will run from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm.**

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12:15 – 1:30 pm

Lunch



Conference Schedule

1:30 – 3:30 pm

Afternoon Session: Connecting with Others

These peer-led 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. Families can learn from and support one another.

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Afternoon Walk to the Portland Fire Museum*

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

7:00 – 9:00 pm

Cardmaking

Gail Fowler

Want to relax, visit with friends, have fun and be creative? Join us as we make greeting cards. Come stamp, cut and color cards to take home. Supplies will be provided. No cost and no experience needed.

Tuesday, May 7, 2019

7:30 – 8:30 am

Restorative & Gentle Yoga*

Chris Byrne

This is a gentle yoga class combining elements of mindfulness meditation, gentle movements, restorative postures, and breath work. This class is designed to be accessible for all bodies, backgrounds, abilities, and experience levels. By moving slowly and with mindful intention, students are invited to explore the space that exists between breath and movement with kindness and compassion, offering yourself space to take what you need and to honor yourself just as you are: a miracle of love and light.

6:30 – 9:00 am

Breakfast

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

Conference Schedule

9:00 – 11:30 am (choose one session)

Building Resilience Through Relationships and Support

Michele Neff Hernandez / Dr. Carrie West

There are many common misconceptions about the length of time a grieving person will need the support of their community. When the relationships in our lives cause strain or hardship, our ability to manage the ups and downs of missing our person are compromised. Even if you are surrounded by supportive people, they may not be offering the type of support that would be most valuable to you. Join us to explore your personal universe. Together, we will use research-based tools to identify major sources of community support, discover ways to maintain healthy boundaries in challenging relationships, and recognize gaps in our support system so that we can surround ourselves with the relationships we need for healing.

Providing Effective Outreach and Support to Others

Dr. Angela Moreland

Given the difficulty that family members have in dealing with the loss of a loved one, it can be difficult to provide outreach and support in a way that seems helpful. This workshop will cover skills and techniques that are most effective when providing support to individuals following the experience of traumatic events or grief surrounding loss of a loved one. Participants will leave this session with specific strategies and techniques that can be used in the real world when working with others.

Home Maintenance and Safety

Chief Will Tierney

Join Chief Will Tierney, a volunteer fire chief on an island that is only accessible by boat and a self-employed contractor who does home repair and construction. Chief Tierney will teach you a variety of routine home maintenance, safety, and warning signs of issues, as well as preventative measures you can take to keep your home safe and in good repair.

Men's Outing

Participants will travel to Maine Fabricators, Inc. located in Gorham, eight miles from the conference hotel. Maine Fabricators is a family-owned welding and machine shop started by the Kirkpatrick family in 1980. Following a tour of the facility, participants will be assembling a two-dimensional firefighter Maltese Cross to take back home as a souvenir of the conference and your time in Maine.

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

Conference Schedule

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

Lunch

1:00 – 4:00 pm

Men's Service Project

Back by popular demand, this year's men's service project will benefit the Maine Veterans Home in Scarborough, Maine. Join other men who are attending the conference to help with some outdoor spring maintenance, as well as an opportunity to visit with residents. Continue this proud tradition of giving back to the community that hosts our annual conference.

Sea Glass Art Project

Maria Robertson

Create a stunning Seascape Window using your beach treasures or ours! Seascape Creations instructor Maria Robertson will help you design your one-of-a-kind 8x10" Seascape Window using an array of materials, including sea glass, starfish, sand dollars, and other beach finds. Feel free to bring your own sea glass and shells for a personalized piece! Take home a unique souvenir of your time in Maine.

Moving it Through: Healing through Yoga and Self-Care*

Skye Adams and Kate Whitemore

Sea Change Yoga teachers Skye and Kate are honored to offer an afternoon of connection and support through gentle movement, relaxation, discussion, and tools for self-care. We will gather together in community to discuss how trauma specifically affects the body and ways to create resilience and body awareness through yin yoga, a slow and moderate style of yoga that targets the deeper layers of tissue in the body and offers space for processing and healing. Participants will also be encouraged to share their stories and offer support to each other through active listening, journaling, and partner yoga. Skye and Kate will also offer some skills and ways to create a simple daily routine for self-care and nourishment. We will end with relaxing restorative yoga. We look forward to being part of your journey! This workshop is appropriate for all levels of yoga, even brand-new beginners!

5:30 – 8:00 pm

Dinner/Closing Ceremony Travis Mills

Travis is a retired United States Army staff sergeant, recalibrated warrior, author, and veterans advocate.

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

Conference Schedule



Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Program Booklet

We hope that many of you will **extend your stay** to participate in the Wednesday excursions so you can see a bit more of the beautiful Portland area. This optional day is supported through the generous help of Maine fire service and family support and is not officially sponsored by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. You are responsible for arranging and paying for your lodging and meals for the post-conference stay. Airport transportation will be available on Thursday, May 9, with shuttles running every two-hours from 6:30 – 10:30 am.

We 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 22, 2019.**

Featured Speaker



Kate Braestrup

The daughter of a foreign correspondent, Kate Braestrup spent her childhood in Algiers, New York City, Paris, Bangkok, Washington, DC and Sabillasville, Maryland. She married James Andrew “Drew” Griffith in 1985. Shortly after the birth of their first child in 1986, Griffith joined the Maine State Police, and the family moved to midcoast Maine.

Educated at the Parsons School of Design/The New School and Georgetown University, Braestrup originally thought of herself primarily as a writer. She had published a novel, *Onion*, in 1990, after all, and occasional essays in national publications. More children arrived, but she expected to be able to continue combining motherhood and the writing of fiction and non-fiction for the foreseeable future.

Trooper Griffith was killed in a car accident while on duty in 1996. Kate Braestrup was left a widowed mother of four children between the ages of 3 and 9. Life would not and could not ever be the same as it had been.

As it happened, Drew Griffith had spent the last year of his life thinking about, researching and finally committing himself to becoming a Unitarian Universalist minister, a plan that was naturally discussed extensively with his wife. In this way, unwittingly, he had prepared the way for Kate Braestrup to recognize and develop her own vocation. She entered the Bangor Theological Seminary in 1997, and was ordained in 2004. Since 2001, she has served as chaplain to the Maine Warden Service, joining the wardens as they search the wild lands and fresh waters of Maine for those who have lost their way, and offering comfort to those who wait for the ones they love to be rescued, or for their bodies to be recovered.

In 2006, Braestrup married the artist, Simon van der Ven. Between them, van der Ven and Braestrup have a total of six children, all whom are now sauntering, tiptoeing or being pushed up to and across the threshold of adulthood.

These days, Kate divides her time between her service as chaplain to the Maine Warden Service and writing. In addition, she is a popular public speaker around the country and abroad, entertaining and educating interested audiences with her characteristic honesty, good humor and poignancy.

Featured Speaker

Travis Mills

Retired United States Army Staff Sergeant Travis Mills of the 82nd Airborne is a recalibrated warrior, motivational speaker, actor, author and an advocate for veterans and amputees. Travis's New York Times bestselling memoir, *Tough as They Come*, is currently available on sale in bookstores everywhere. Despite losing portions of both arms and legs from an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) while on active duty in Afghanistan, Travis continues to overcome life's challenges, breaking physical barriers and defying odds. Travis lives by his motto:

“Never give up. Never quit.”

Travis's story has been featured on local and national news including *Fox News' Happening Now* with Jenna Lee and *The O'Reilly Factor* with Bill O'Reilly.

On April 10, 2012, United States Army Staff Sergeant Travis Mills of the 82nd Airborne was critically injured on his third tour of duty in Afghanistan by an IED while on patrol, losing portions of both legs and both arms. He is one of only five quadruple amputees from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to survive his injuries.

Thanks to his amazing strength, courage, an incredible will to live, the heroic actions his unit, the prayers of thousands, and all the healthcare providers at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, near Washington D.C., Travis remains on the road to recovery. Every day is a battle, but Travis continues to astound friends and family alike with his progress and with his amazing spirit. Staff Sergeant Mills is a genuine American hero, and for his incredible sacrifice, we are forever in his debt.

In September 2013, Travis founded the Travis Mills Foundation, a nonprofit organization, formed to benefit and assist combat-injured veterans.

Travis also founded the Travis Mills Group, LLC where he consults with and speaks to companies and organizations nationwide inspiring all to overcome life's challenges and adversity.



Conference Facilitators

Skye Adams, E-RYT, YACEP, is a lifelong yoga student and teacher, follower of Ayurveda, gardener, mother, and traveler. After her initial 200-hour RYT training at Yoga Yoga in Austin, Texas, where she taught for six years, Skye continued her education in yoga and healing through Waking Yoga with Jenn Wooten and Angie Knight, Josh Summers, and various other teachers and modalities. Entering her second decade of teaching yoga, she offers Hatha, flow, Prenatal, Yin, trauma-sensitive, and meditation classes in the Greater Portland area. She also offers workshops on self-care, anatomy, yin yoga, and the divine feminine, regionally and nationally. Skye's teaching blends open-hearted movement, breath and body synthesis, self-discovery, and compassion.

Chris Byrne came to the practice of yoga in 2012 after rehabbing from surgery on both legs that sidelined him from running, biking, and hiking for most of the year. In addition to the physical benefits that helped him recover, Chris found that yoga offered a safe space to nurture his mind and spirit. Chris believes that the practice of yoga enables a journey of self-discovery, creating space to explore and align the mind, body, and spirit. In this space, we begin to practice radical acceptance of ourselves and each other. Chris's approach to teaching brings thoughtful, safe sequencing that is designed to be accessible for all bodies and abilities. Accompanied by good humor and a spirited play list, he encourages you to find the shape or posture that feels right for you in the moment.

Stephanie Heitkemper, MA MFT-C, is a play therapist who specializes in working with children and families around change. Since 2009, Stephanie has actively worked throughout the nation supporting grieving children and their families. Stephanie is trained as a Marriage Family Therapist (MFT) from Regis University and is licensed as a Marriage Family Therapy Candidate (MFT-C) in the State of Colorado. She utilizes play therapy and expressive therapy to help children express themselves in their natural language. Stephanie is certified as a Trauma and Loss Specialist and Trauma Informed Assessment Specialist through the National Institute of Trauma and Loss in Children.

Michele Neff Hernandez is the founder and Executive Director of Soaring Spirits International, an international widowed peer-support network which has served three million widowed people over the past ten years. Since the death of her husband, Phillip, Michele has dedicated herself to providing resources, support, and community to widowed men and women around the world. Michele is the founder of the Soaring Spirits Resilience Center at Schreiner University, an awarded speaker, and a featured trainer for hospices and bereavement teams with a focus on resilience in grief. Michele loves serving grieving communities and is honored to have been a part of thousands of peoples' evolution from surviving to thriving.

Lisa King has degrees in both physical therapy and psychology and has found that teaching yoga truly integrates her lifelong learning of the body and mind. She is passionate about helping people uncover their innate joy, and she has facilitated this through the use of multiple modalities including bodywork, dance, and yoga for over 30 years. Lisa is also a wife, mother of two beautiful adult daughters, and grandmother of three amazing grandchildren. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, kayaking, snowshoeing, foraging, and nature.

Conference Facilitators

Angela Moreland, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center at the Medical University of South Carolina. Dr. Moreland's research interests focus on primary and secondary prevention of child abuse and risk factors for maltreatment among high risk parents of young children, as well as dissemination and implementation of evidence-based practice for victims of interpersonal violence and their families. Dr. Moreland serves as the Director of the Mass Violence and Victimization Resource Center and as the Director of the Center for Firefighter Behavioral Health, which provides resources and support to address behavioral health needs of firefighters.

Vickie Taylor, LCSW, has served the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) since its inception as a trainer, behavioral health consultant, and coordinator of the National Fallen Firefighters 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.

Chief Will Tierney is a volunteer fire chief on Long Island, an Island in Casco Bay that is only accessible by boat. He is also a self-employed contractor who does home repair and construction.

Dr. Carrie West is an Assistant Professor of Communication Studies at Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas. Carrie was widowed when she was 29. She had two sons who were 6 and 1 at the time. She earned her Ph.D. in interpersonal and family communication from University of Denver and serves as the Director of Research for both Soaring Spirits International and the Soaring Spirits Resilience Center at Schreiner University. She has worked with Soaring Spirits for over five years to help gather and provide resources for widowed people. Her goal is to discover which resources and behaviors can help people be more resilient, create and maintain personal relationships, find meaningful support, and use communication to improve their lives and health.

Kate Whittemore first encountered yoga through modern dance in 2004 and has been deeply in love with yoga practice since 2008. In 2015, she completed a 200-hour teacher training with Todd Norian. Kate is honored to share her love for this practice and the sweetness it awakens both on and off the mat and is especially excited to teach a weekly trauma-informed class for Sea Change at Grace Street Recovery Services. She believes in the potency of yoga to awaken our sense of creativity and connection to the world and to ourselves.

Local Restaurants & Amenities

<i>Name</i>	<i>Type of Food</i>	<i>Distance from Hotel</i>	<i>Address</i>
Petite Jacqueline	French	200 feet	46 Market Street
Fuji	Japanese	250 feet	29 Exchange Street
N To Tail	Barbeque	350 feet	29 Exchange Street
Crooked Mile	Brunch	350 feet	8 Milk Street
The North Point	American	400 feet	35 Silver Street
B.Good	Juice Bar	400 feet	15 Exchange Street
The Holy Donut	Coffee&Tea	450 feet	7 Exchange Street
Beal's Ice Cream	Ice cream	600 feet	12 Moulton Street
Gritty McDuff's	American	600 feet	396 Fore Street
Old Port Tavern	American	700 feet	11 Moulton Street
Rosie's Resturant	Pub	700 feet	330 Fore Street
Bull Feeney's	Pub	800 feet	375 Fore Street
Pat's Pizza	Pizza	800 feet	30 Market Street
Amigos Mexican Resturant	Mexican	800 feet	9 Dana Street
Five Guys	Burgers	800 feet	425 Fore Street
Thirsty Pig	American	800 feet	37 Exchange Street
Blue Rooster Food Co.	Sandwiches	900 feet	5 Dana Street
Starbucks	Coffee&Tea	900 feet	145 Commercial Street
Maine Squeeze Juice	Juice Bar	0.2 miles	5 1/2 Moulton Street
The Olive Café	Mediterranean	0.2 miles	127 Commercial Street
Bill's Pizza	Pizza	0.2 miles	177 Commercial Street
Peace Food Market	Food Market	0.4 miles	21 Chestnut Street
Rite Aid	Pharmacy	0.5 miles	290 Congress Street
CVS	Pharmacy	0.5 miles	510 Congress Street

Local Restaurants & Amenities

Hours

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>
10:00 am – 2:30 pm	11:00 am – 10:00 pm	11:00 am – 10:00 pm	11:00 am – 10:00 pm
12:00 – 10:00 pm	11:30 am – 9:00 pm	11:30 am – 9:00 pm	11:30 am – 9:00 pm
5:00 – 9:00 pm			
Closed	7:30 am – 5:00 pm	7:30 am – 5:00 pm	7:30 am – 5:00 pm
4:00 – 11:00 pm			
8:00 am – 8:00 pm			
7:00 am – 5:00 pm	7:00 am – 4:00 pm	7:00 am – 4:00 pm	7:00 am – 4:00 pm
11:30 am – 10:00 pm	11:30 am – 9:00 pm	11:30 am – 9:00 pm	11:30 am – 9:00 pm
11:00 – 1:00 am			
11:00 – 1:00 am			
12:00 pm – 12:00 am	11:00 – 1:00 am	11:00 – 1:00 am	11:00 – 1:00 am
10:00 – 1:00 am	11:30 – 1:00 am	11:30 – 1:00 am	11:30 – 1:00 am
11:00 – 12:30 am			
1:00 pm – 1:00 am	3:00 pm – 1:00 am	3:00 pm – 1:00 am	3:00 pm – 1:00 am
11:00 am – 10:00 pm			
12:00 – 8:00 pm	11:00 am – 10:00 pm	11:00 am – 10:00 pm	11:00 am – 10:00 pm
11:00 am – 6:00 pm			
5:00 am – 7:30 pm	4:30 am – 7:30 pm	4:30 am – 7:30 pm	4:30 am – 7:30 pm
8:00 am – 5:00 pm	7:00 am – 6:00 pm	7:00 am – 6:00 pm	7:00 am – 6:00 pm
Closed	11:30 am – 2:30 pm	11:30 am – 2:30 pm	5:30 pm – 8:30 pm
11:00 am – 8:00 pm	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	11:00 am – 8:00 pm	11:00 – 2:00 am
9:00 am – 9:00 pm			
8:00 am – 9:00 pm			
8:00 am – 6:00 pm	7:00 am – 9:00 pm	7:00 am – 9:00 pm	7:00 am – 9:00 pm

Extend Your Stay

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Maine Wildlife Park

Are you interested in Maine wildlife? This is a guaranteed opportunity to see a moose, along with deer, bears, wild cats, porcupines, coyotes, owls, bald eagles, turtles, trophy trout, and more - over 30 species of native wildlife! The park-like setting, wildlife exhibits, nature store, trails, snack bar, and flower gardens make this an inviting stop for families, students, seniors, and groups interested in Maine wildlife.



Freeport/LL Bean (Shopping)

Want to do some souvenir shopping before you head home? Experience world-class shopping in Freeport, a unique coastal Maine village where you can find hundreds of delightful shops just a short distance from world famous L.L.Bean.



Ft. Williams/Portland Head Light

Cape Elizabeth is the home of Portland Head Light, situated along the spectacular shores of Fort Williams Park. The award-winning Museum at Portland Head Light is contained within the former Keepers' Quarters. Fort Williams Park offers picnic facilities, hiking opportunities, sports and recreation areas, historic fort structures, and unlimited ocean views.



Casco Bay Mail Run Cruise

Join us aboard the Casablanca, an 85-foot double decker charter boat, for a tour of scenic Casco Bay. Boarding begins at 12:30 pm for a 3-hour narrated cruise from 1-4 pm. With many islands, forts, and lighthouses, Casco Bay and Portland Harbor are rich in history and beautiful to explore and witness by boat. You can order lunch ahead of time to bring on the boat, and beverages will be available on board for purchase.

