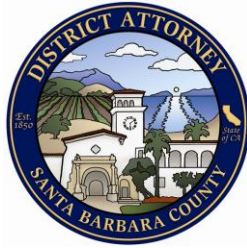


OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

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DA 05-528

RELEASE NUMBER

May 14, 2019

RELEASE DATE

APPROVED BY JOYCE E. DUDLEY, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

FIRST RESPONDER RESILIENCY

District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today the successful conclusion of a two-day First Responder Resiliency Conference. The conference was held in Santa Barbara on April 29 and April 30, 2019. Although 30-50 people in countywide leadership were expected, over 80 people filled the venue. The idea for the conference stemmed from DA Dudley's continuing concern for Santa Barbara's First Responders. Shortly after the debris flow, Dudley stated at the public service, "Our First Responders are not walking wounded. They are our heroes with broken hearts."

DA Dudley believes the First Responders in Santa Barbara County include our Law Enforcement personnel, Firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians, and Emergency Room staff. In an effort to increase public safety and build resiliency for our First Responders, DA Dudley and Chief DA Investigator Pat Clouse studied several programs across the country. Once they felt they had found experts administering superior programs, they contacted former Santa Barbara Police Department Sergeant Mike McGrew. Mike McGrew, along with retired Sergeant Greg Hons, administers the Santa Barbara Police Foundation's "At Ease" program. Mike was ultimately instrumental in gaining support and in securing funding to bring this conference to Santa Barbara.

Collectively, the "At Ease" program, the Armand Hammer Foundation, and Hospice of Santa Barbara provided funding, thereby making the conference possible.

The presenters, all nationwide experts in the field of First Responder Resiliency, gave presentations that included: Behavioral Health in the Fire Service, A Multidisciplinary Approach to First Responder Resiliency, Innovative Practices, Education, Media Relations, and Treatment Options. The agendas for the two-day conference are attached.

The attendees included leaders from Cottage Health, Hospice of Santa Barbara, Police Officers Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.), Fire Departments, Sheriff's Office, Police Departments, the County Office of Emergency Management, American Medical Response (A.M.R.), the Santa Barbara County Executive Office, and a representative from the office of Congressman Salud Carbajal. Of note is that Congressman Carbajal was also one of the early supporters for the need for such a program in Santa Barbara County.

The conference was a critical first step in changing the culture in recognizing and responding to public safety work-related trauma, providing immediate help for some local First Responders and setting the stage for next steps. Additional training is now being planned to increase First Responder Resiliency in Santa Barbara County. As stated by DA Dudley, "We owe it to our First Responders to give them whatever education and support we can to help them prepare for what they will experience next because if our First Responders aren't fully educated and supported, our County cannot possibly be as safe as it could be."
