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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

400+ Construction Industry Leaders Gathered in Kansas City to Advocate, Share and Collaborate for Construction Workers Well-Being
2nd Annual Construction Working Minds Summit was held March 27-29

Kansas City, April 5, 2023. Two week ago (March 27-29th), United Suicide Survivors International and the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention (CIASP) hosted the second annual “Construction Working Minds Summit” in Kansas City, Missouri. The 400 attendees represented three countries, 32 states and 146 organizations. There were also 65 organizations that sponsored the event.

The event began on Monday with four preconference workshops that provided training and certifications to participants including Vitalcog Train the Trainer, Psychological First Aid, Peer Allies in Construction and Resilience-to-Thriving: The Secret Power of Success. 95 attendees participated in these workshops.

The conference kicked off with an address from Co-Chair Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas who set the tone of the event by challenging attendees to create impact in the construction mental health and suicide prevention movement. Doug Parker, Assistant Secretary with the US Department of Labor was the keynote and echoed Dr. Sally’s sentiments. “Mental health at work should not be considered a cost but rather an investment,” Doug Parker stated, reiterating that mental health is a priority for the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA).

While the conference was in session, the FDA approved the first over-the-counter naloxone nasal spray, a huge victory in harm reduction in the nation’s ongoing opioid crisis. The construction industry was hit hard by the opioid crisis due to a high rate of musculoskeletal injuries resulting in prescription pain management and surgeries. Summit co-chair Cal Beyer, Vice President, Workforce Risk and Worker Wellbeing from Holmes Murphy, moderated a panel on Opioid First Dose Prevention Strategies with panelists from national occupational medical clinic WorkSTEPS, Goldfinch Health, and national nonprofit SAFE Project.

Additional speakers included Dr. Charlie Cartwright, Kansas City Market Leader from Pioneer IQ, who ignited the crowd with a keynote focused on achieving peak performance through closer connections and collaboration; Rich Jones, Chief Clinical Officer of Youturn Health who shattered myths of substance misuse; and Dr. Ann Marie Dale from the Washington University Medical School presented guidelines to help prevent opioid and substance misuse.

9 awards were presented to organizations and individuals in the industry for their “vocal, visible and visionary” leadership including:

- Mental Health Visionaries Award
 - Large Company (>1,500 employees): Gilbane
 - Mid-Size Company (<1,500 employees): Shawmut
 - National Association: Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC)
 - Regional/Chapter Organization: The Washington chapter of Associated General Contractors of America
 - Union Category: Southwest Mountain States Carpenters
- Shining Light through Media Award: Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA)
- Academic and/or Applied Research Award: Dr. Cora Roelofs, University of MA-Lowell
- Mental Health Champion: Doug Wilson, VP of Training and Logistics (ABC of Southern California)
- Mental Health Champion: Craig Holzem, Statewide Organizer (SMART18)

Stay tuned for dates and more information to come on the 3rd Annual Construction Working Minds Summit to be held in Kansas City in February 2024!

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About United Suicide Survivors International, Inc. (501c3)

United Suicide Survivors International (founded 2016) is an independent international membership organization that serves as a home for people who have experienced suicide loss, suicide attempts and suicidal thoughts and feelings, and their friends and families -- collectively known as people with lived experience with suicide -- to leverage their expertise for large scale change. We envision a world where lived expertise becomes the fulcrum that leverages all suicide prevention efforts. We put the lived expertise of suicide attempt and loss survivors into action through leadership, collaboration and advocacy. www.UniteSurvivors.org

About the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention

The Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention (CIASP) was born out of necessity in response to a statistics released in a CDC study ranking construction as the #1 industry for deaths by suicide. Established by the Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA) in 2016 to shatter the stigma surrounding mental health issues, CIASP became a stand alone 501(c)(3) organization in 2018 to raise awareness about suicide prevention and provide resources and tools to create a zero suicide industry by uniting and supporting the construction community. CIASP is dedicated to changing the statistics by educating and equipping organizations, industry service providers and construction professionals to "STAND Up" for suicide prevention and address it as a health and safety priority. <https://preventconstructionsuicide.com/>