

HELPING HEROES 3.0
Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC)

In partnership with the National Fallen Firefighter Foundation (NFFF), MUSC is working on a grant through FEMA to decrease stigma of seeking help for mental health concerns among firefighters and their families. The project is based upon a very successful project created by the Veterans Administration (VA) and will use video testimonials for peers to provide information to one another about common stressors that firefighters face, things that family and friends notice when a firefighter is stressed, how a person knew that they needed to seek help, what kind of help they sought out, whether that help was useful, and what they would tell other firefighters in a similar situation. Based on peer education and its effectiveness, these videos will hopefully provide firefighters with information about how to seek help and will reduce the stigma around help seeking.

Angela Moreland will be in Boise from April 20-24 and is very interested in gaining involvement from people involved in the IAWF conference, as well as local representation – to be a part of the videos and also share insight regarding our project.

The video interviews will take 10-15 minutes each and are very informal.

She would love to hear feedback either in the form of personal experiences (Firefighters questions) or experiences in helping/working with others (Experts questions).

Please contact her either in advance, or at the conference, if you would like more information or to participate in the interviews.

Thank you so much!!

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QUESTIONS FOR FILMING

FIREFIGHTERS:

- **WHO AM I? (VOLUNTEER/CAREER/RETIRED, NUMBER OF YEARS)**
- **WHAT UNIQUE STRESSORS DO FIREFIGHTERS FACE?**
 - What is the most stressful part of your job?
 - Are there any particular stressful experiences that stand out?
- **HOW I KNOW WHEN I AM STRESSED**
 - What do you usually do when you are stressed?
 - How can you tell you are stressed?
 - Where do you turn when you are down?
- **HOW MY STRESS AFFECTS MY FAMILY OR FRIENDS**
 - Is it obvious to your family/friends when you are stressed? How do you know?
 - How do you think that your stress impacts your family/friends? How can you tell?

- Have family/friends ever commented on the way you act when stressed?
- Make the question about family
- But if there isn't much there, transition to friends
- [we don't need to cover both family and friends – what we're shooting for is primary support network, so if they have close family members that will be it; but if they do not, friends will be it]
- **HOW I KNEW I NEEDED TO TALK TO SOMEONE**
 - How did you know you needed help?
 - (If he/she had been considering help for awhile) What made you realize it was time?
- **WHAT TYPE OF HELP WAS RIGHT FOR ME**
 - What types of help did you consider getting?
 - How did you decide what type of help to seek out?
 - What was help like for you?
- **HOW DID IT HELP**
 - Was it what you expected?
- **MY RECOMMENDATION TO OTHERS**
 - What would you tell others who are in a similar situation?

EXPERTS:

- **WHO AM I? (VOLUNTEER/CAREER/RETIRED, NUMBER OF YEARS)**
- **WHAT UNIQUE STRESSORS DO FIREFIGHTERS FACE?**
 - What are some common stressors firefighters face in their everyday work?
 - What is the most stressful part of their job?
 - Are there any particular (types of?) experiences that stand out?
- **HOW DO FIREFIGHTERS KNOW WHEN THEY ARE STRESSED**
 - What are some common things you see firefighters do when they are stressed?
 - How can you tell when they are stressed?
 - Where do they tend to turn when they are down?
- **HOW STRESS AFFECTS THEIR FAMILY OR FRIENDS**
 - Do you think that their family and friends are affected by their stress? In what ways?
 - Have family or friends ever reached out to you regarding their symptoms of stress?
- **HOW WOULD SOMEONE KNOW THAT THEY NEEDED TO TALK TO SOMEONE**
 - How would a firefighter know that he/she needed to make changes in their life?
- **WHAT TYPE OF HELP IS AVAILABLE**
 - How do you identify when a firefighter needs help?
 - What steps do you take to try to get firefighters the help they need?
 - How do firefighters tend to respond when you reach out to them to help?
 - Where can people on your crew go for help?
 - Do firefighters talk to each other about stress?

- **WHAT CHANGES HAVE YOU SEEN AFTER PEOPLE SEEK HELP?**
 - What are some changes that you have seen?
 - When a firefighter seeks help, how does it affect job security/raise/promotion?

- **MY RECOMMENDATION TO FIREFIGHTERS WHO ARE THINKING OF SEEKING HELP**
 - Can you give some examples of people who successfully sought help?