



Pathways to Resiliency, Strength and Recovery

Date: Friday, May 6, 2016

Location: Regis University Lowell Campus, Denver, CO

Time: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Track: Recovery

Breakout Session Title:

Suicide Postvention for Communities

Presenter: **Ginna Jones** and **Heidi Lightenburger**, Carson J Spencer Foundation

Abstract:

This session will focus on how to safely and effectively address suicide losses in our communities, workplaces, and schools. Often times, even the most skilled preventionists have a difficult time navigating and identifying the correct protocols in the event that a suicide loss does occur. The research shows us that those exposed to suicide loss are at a greater risk to die by suicide. Workplaces, organizations and schools can struggle to identify what steps to take following a suicide death. All too often, communities want to move right into suicide prevention training and programming directly following a suicide death. What the research shows us is that moving too quickly into prevention can actually cause adverse effects such negative mental health consequences for people involved, and mistrust, guilt, and fear within affected communities. As community leaders, it's important to use evidence based strategies when communicating about these tragedies so that our affected communities can grieve in healthy ways, while also moving from a place of despair to hope and healing. Every life lost has a ripple effect that shakes the community. Shame and stigma have denied communities the opportunity to grieve in the wake of suicide loss. Taking time to grieve and honor those lost to injustice is an integral part of healing the community in the aftermath of suicide. This session will explore different ways that workplaces, communities and schools can safely address suicide losses by learning about what healthy grief looks like, creating

community responses and safe memorialization, and how to support one another throughout the journey to healing. Effectively managing postvention allows us the space and time to heal while generating support for comprehensive and sustained suicide prevention.