



2023 ESPIOC Conference

ESPIOC is excited to host the 2023 Conference April 24-27, 2023 in Avon, Colorado. We've got two and a half days full of national and regional speakers with topics focused on PIO wellness, being a strategic PIO, telling your own story, navigating ADA and language barriers, hands-on workshops and more.

New this year, we are offering a pre-conference workshop for new PIOs on Monday, April 24, 2023 from 1pm to 3pm. This two-hour session presented by Christine Townsend is offered to conference attendees for free thanks to sponsor [PIO Toolkit](#).

Be sure to stick around for Thursday morning's media day. Learn from the experts on how to build relationships with your local reporters before a crisis and participate in an interactive media panel with journalists from across the state.

The conference is at the Westin Riverfront Resort and Spa in Avon, recently named [one of the top 50 resorts in the world](#). Enjoy this beautiful resort with the deeply discounted conference hotel rates. Interested in extending your stay? Contact AUsher@westinriverfront.com for weekend rates. Breakfast and a networking event are included in this year's conference. Lunch and dinner is on your own.

Early-bird registration has been extended to February 17, 2023!! [Click here to register](#). Stay tuned for more conference announcements.

Dr. Jeff Thompson: PIO Resilience



Jeff Thompson, Ph.D., is an adjunct associate research scientist in the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University Medical Center and the New York State Psychiatric Institute. Dr. Thompson retired recently after serving more than 20 years as a detective in the New York City Police Department (NYPD) where he was their first-ever mental health and wellness coordinator and previously a hostage negotiator.

Dr. Thompson conducts research on resilience, mental health, leadership, suicide pre/postvention, and crisis communication. His trainings have been provided across the world to people including first responders and other professionals.



2023 ESPIOC Conference

Dirk Clingman: Telling your Story. Using social media tools to reach your community and beyond.



In 2023 you can share your story without relying on traditional media. Through consistent, professional content shared on multiple social media platforms, you can educate your community, recruit nationally, and share accurate information. Learn how to create outreach on any budget. Modern technology has placed an entire production studio in the palm of your hand, this course will teach you how to maintain a continuing dialogue with your audience and create a public identity for your department.

Dirk Clingman is a Colorado native and attended the Colorado Institute of Art. He has a robust background in performing arts and graphic design. Dirk was a dispatcher for 8 years before joining the Grand Junction Fire Department as a Community Outreach Specialist in 2016. Dirk has used all the tools in his toolbox to promote safety concepts in his community, recruit new firefighters, and share the story of his department directly with community members.

Anastasiya Bolton & Crystal McCoy: Building Relationships with your Media Partners



Anastasiya Bolton is an award-winning journalist. I've spent 20 years telling stories on television, on-line and in newspapers. I've moved across the country, from Amarillo, to Tyler TX, to Birmingham AL. I spent 12 years at 9NEWS in Denver. Since 2018, based in Houston, I traveled across the country telling stories on a nation-wide level and working on a Texas-wide investigative team. My latest TV assignment was covering the Texas-Mexico border.

Throughout my career, I've covered the Olympics, I've reported on hurricanes, including Katrina. I followed Jessica Ridgeway's story, shared survivor and heroic police accounts from the Aurora Theater shooting, as well as stories from the Sutherland Springs, TX massacre and a school shooting at Santa Fe, TX high school. Late 2022, I paused my reporting career and started my own media consulting company – VIKSTORY Media LLC. I named it after my grandfather, Viktor, a life-long journalist in the former Soviet Union.



2023 ESPIOC Conference

I want to help people navigate the media. What do journalists want, when do they want it and WHYYYYYYYYY? I lived through and learned from many PIO triumphs and missteps. It's useless just sitting in my head. So, I am excited to talk about it! I want this information serve YOU.



Crystal McCoy is a seasoned public affairs specialist with seven years of experience in developing and executing effective communication strategies. She has extensive knowledge in government relations, media relations, and crisis management. Crystal is highly skilled in delivering compelling messages to various stakeholders, including government officials, media outlets, and the public. She has a proven track record of successfully navigating complex political and regulatory environments to achieve positive outcomes. With a strong background in both internal and external communications, Crystal brings a unique perspective and innovative approach to her work.

Crystal received her Bachelor of Science Criminal Justice degree magna cum laude from Central Christian College of Kansas. In her free time, when she is not binge-watching Yellowstone, Crystal enjoys genealogical research, dragging friends into cryotherapy tanks with her, and finding unique vacation spots to drag her husband, two children and family dog to.

Schedule Overview

April 24-27, 2023

Monday: Conference check-in and enjoy a free pre-conference workshop for new PIOs presented by PIO Toolkit from 1-3pm.

Tuesday and Wednesday: Full days of training from national and regional speakers including hands-on workshops, and networking opportunities. Breakfast is included.

Thursday: It's media day! Spend the morning learning from the experts on how to build relationships with your local reporters before a crisis and participate in an interactive media panel. Breakfast is included. Conference wraps up at noon.