

Suicide Prevention Experts Convene in Washington, D.C. to Discuss Large-Scale Public Health Solutions

*American Association of Suicidology
Hosts 51st Annual Conference*

WASHINGTON, D.C., UNITED STATES,
April 11, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Last
year, over 45 thousand people died by
suicide in the U.S., one person every

11.7 minutes, while over a million people attempted suicide. With suicide rates in the U.S. steadily climbing, suicide remains the 10th leading cause of death in the US, the American Association of Suicidology (AAS) recognizes that the only way to impact this serious public health issue is to draw from scientific research and initiate implementation of effective strategies. We anticipate over 1,500 attendees to this year's conference in the heart of political advocacy, Washington, D.C, April 18 - 21, 2018 at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill.



“Some of the most common misconceptions about suicide (that it’s caused by bullying or that it’s inevitable for those with mental health issues) are being addressed by leading, multidisciplinary experts from across the country and the world, right here Washington, D.C.” said Anthony Wood, COO of Arlington, VA based mental health startup Qntfy and AAS Board Chair.

“We have an unprecedented number of learning opportunities available to everyone involved with the spectrum of suicide - from prevention and intervention to postvention and research,” said AAS Executive Director, Colleen Creighton. “Hosting this year’s conference in Washington, D.C. also provides us with access to legislators and to amplify the voice of awareness and lived experience.”

Speakers and sessions will focus on the theme of integrating science, experience and political will and will encourage tangible action with regard to preventing suicide. Academics, researchers, crisis center professionals, and survivors of suicide loss and attempts, will convene to discuss the future of suicide prevention, including the use of predictive technology, social media, and artificial intelligence to identify those at risk. Other topics addressed will include video games used as protective factors, firearms and suicide, grassroots advocacy, and many others. [The press kit](#) outlines some significant opportunities at this year’s conference.

“There is a unique opportunity to bring together national and international leaders of suicide prevention in Washington D.C. to network and share their knowledge. Suicide prevention and supporting those who have lost a loved one to suicide is a goal of individual providers, researchers, advocates, and policy makers as well as professional entities invested in public health,” said Ray Tucker, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology at Louisiana State University and AAS Student Division Board Chair. “This year’s conference will equip those in all these areas with leading-edge ideas, programs, and interventions to make meaningful impact on suicide prevention initiatives in their communities and at the national level.”

"My personal journey was changed inalterably when my husband died by suicide. But, my career in Clinical Suicidology and new life were nurtured and allowed to flourish because of the relationships, opportunities, and yearly infusion given to me by AAS and the annual conference. My loss was transformed into a gift I can now give others, but that was only made possible through this very special 'family.' I am so grateful and would never think of missing it!" said Melinda Moore, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Licensed Psychologist with the Department of Psychology at Eastern Kentucky University and AAS Clinical Division Chair.

"The AAS conference is not just about fresh and innovative content, of which there is plenty, but the relationships and community we are building to create a better world. This is the one place where those dedicated to suicide research, prevention and lived experience all come together to help create lives worth living for everyone" Bart Andrews, AAS Executive Committee Member and Suicide Attempt Survivor.

Julie Cerel, President of AAS said, "The 51st Annual Conference is highly anticipated as it connects so many different groups of people who work tirelessly to understand and prevent suicide, as well as provide support for those left behind and those with lived experience of suicide attempts. It is a time when we are all in the same place making connections and working together."

[The full schedule can be found here.](#)

For the media: We urge members of the media to share suicide prevention resources in all of their reports. Responsible reporting on suicide and the inclusion of stories of hope and resilience can prevent more suicides. You can find more information on [safe messaging around suicide here](#).

About AAS: Founded in 1968 by Edwin S. Shneidman, PhD, AAS promotes suicide as a research discipline, public awareness programs, public education and training for professionals and volunteers. The membership of AAS includes mental health and public health professionals, researchers, suicide prevention and crisis intervention centers, school districts, crisis center volunteers, survivors of suicide loss, attempt survivors, and a variety of lay persons who have an interest in suicide prevention. You can learn more about AAS at www.suicidology.org.

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