

## Managing Stress for First Responders and Building Your Personal Resiliency Pack

A good mental health plan is imperative to a successful career and in our presentation, we will go over the signs of stress and ways to cope. We will also show the audience how to build a personal resiliency pack. The concept is also being built out for citizens as part of their preparedness for a disaster. If you suffer from anxiety, trauma, or PTS before a disaster, what do you think will happen during a disaster? As we saw with Hurricane Ian in Florida, disaster survivors cope in different ways. Unfortunately, there were documented cases of people dying by suicide after the storm. The goal of our program is to help address those issues.

### Speakers Biography



Patrick Beckley  
Commissioner

Suffolk County Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services (FRES)

Patrick Beckley serves as the Commissioner of Suffolk County Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services (FRES). FRES encompasses several divisions including emergency management, 9-1-1 communications, the Fire Marshal's office, and the Fire Service Academy. In his role as Commissioner, Pat serves in a leadership capacity overseeing daily operations and emergency response. Prior to FRES, Pat served as Regional Director of New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services since 2012. During his tenure, Pat has worked to coordinate disaster services to aid in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, as well as leading the region in preparedness and response to numerous historic storms and events, including winter Storm Nemo, the annual Bethpage Air Show at Jones Beach, and the Belmont Stakes. In 2017, Pat received an Excellence in Success First Responder Award, for which he was keynote speaker. Pat is a former Chief Petty Officer in the United States Naval Reserves, where he was recognized with several unit and personal awards, including two Navy and Marine Corps Commendation medals and five Naval and Marine Corps Achievement medals. Pat is a 2018 class member of the Energeia Partnership and serves on the board of advisors. He is a former volunteer firefighter with the Massapequa Fire Department and currently resides in Suffolk County with his daughter Kailey and their Boston Terrier Jasper.



Colleen Merlo

Association for Mental Health and Wellness

An experienced, dynamic, and committed non-profit leader, Colleen Merlo, a licensed social worker and a Rocky Point resident, has worked for more than twenty years in the not-for-profit sector, focusing on issues of violence, mental health, gender equity, and poverty.

Ms. Merlo is the CEO of the Association for Mental Health and Wellness (MHAW), where she provides strategic leadership to the organization. MHAW Based in Ronkonkoma, the Association for Mental Health and Wellness is a not-for-profit organization that provides programs, services, and advocacy for people in Suffolk County who face mental health challenges, with an enhanced focus on service to veterans.

Prior to assuming the leadership of MHAW, Colleen Merlo had spent more than six years as executive director of L.I. Against Domestic Violence, which provides an array of support services to both male and female victims of domestic violence. During her tenure, she expanded the organization's scope of services and introduced several programmatic innovations.

Before that, she was executive director of the Mental Health Association in Suffolk County (MHA Suffolk) where she provided direction to drive the mission and vision. Ms. Merlo's strength in building effective collaborations, her advocacy, and tirelessly efforts to bring public attention to the issues facing Long Island's most vulnerable, greatly enhanced the effectiveness of local programming.

Colleen Merlo earned a master's degree in social work at SUNY Stony Brook's School of Social Welfare. She received a bachelor's degree in forensic psychology from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City.