

Sessions & Speaker Bios

Opening Keynote: Fueling America's Bravest

Megan Lautz, MS, RD, CSCS, TSAC-F

First responders face a variety of challenges when it comes to eating well, which leads to specific health risks like cancer and heart disease. This public safety-specific approach will zone in on challenges and common gaps in nutrition discovered after seven years of experience and hundreds of station visits. Understand the tangible and realistic nutrition interventions for shift workers. Discover tips and tricks for eating well on a 12 or 24-hour shift. Learn how to recommend healthier choices when packaged food or fast food are the only options available. Many health professionals will talk at an ideal level that, unfortunately, does not resonate with this population. This presentation will prepare civilians for emerging jobs in the tactical space or when working with tactical personnel in hospital, sport, or private practice settings.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the physical and mental job demands of first responders.
- Review an evidence-based nutrition foundation but in the language and mindset of a first responder.
- Discuss realistic interventions designed to improve first responder-specific health risks.



Megan Lautz is an award-winning Registered Dietitian specializing in first responders. Megan creates realistic nutrition strategies that lead to improved energy levels, better body composition, and reduced stress for first responders. Megan has worked full-time for departments of 1,600+ firefighters since 2017. Megan was the recipient of the ASPDA Trailblazer award, recognizing her work advancing dietetics in public safety. Megan owns RescueRD LLC, which provides custom nutrition programs for departments nationwide.

(Under) Fed, Fit, and Falling Apart: A Cultural Autopsy of Eating Disorders in Boys and Young Adults

Dezi Abeyta, RD

This session examines eating disorders in boys and young adults through a cultural and clinical lens, exploring how fitness culture, sport, masculinity, and technology have reshaped how disordered eating presents and how often it is missed. Drawing on clinical experience, health journalism, and evidence-based research, the talk traces a timeline from childhood through young adulthood to show how behaviors often praised as discipline, commitment, or performance can mask significant risk. Rather than focusing on pathology alone, the session invites participants to consider what society rewards, what healthcare systems normalize, and how providers can better identify, engage, and support patients who may not fit traditional eating disorder stereotypes.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe how cultural norms related to masculinity, athletic performance, and fitness culture have shaped eating disorder presentations in boys and young adults.
- Differentiate common clinical red flags for disordered eating across childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood, particularly in male and gender-diverse populations.
- Analyze how social media, technology, and performance-driven environments have influenced help-seeking behaviors and delayed diagnosis.
- Identify screening opportunities and behavioral patterns that may signal eating disorders in school-based and fitness-focused settings.
- Apply inclusive, trauma-informed language strategies to reduce stigma and support earlier referral and intervention.
- Evaluate how systemic bias and social expectations may contribute to under recognition of eating disorders in boys and young adults from diverse backgrounds.



Dezi Abeyta, RD is a performance dietitian, writer, and speaker working at the intersection of health, culture, and identity. He specializes in nutrition for athletes, creatives, and high-performing individuals, with clinical and community experience spanning pediatrics, young adults, and professional performance settings. As a journalist at Men's Health Magazine, Dezi approaches nutrition through a journalistic lens, blending evidence-based science with cultural storytelling. His work explores how sport, masculinity, fitness culture, and social pressure shape health behaviors, recovery, and long-term well-being. Dezi is known for translating complex topics into conversations that resonate, challenge assumptions, and move people to think differently.

Leveraging Nutritional Epidemiology and Innovative Dietary Assessment to Drive Effective Health Interventions

Meghan Skiba, PhD, MS, MPH, RDN

This presentation explores how nutritional epidemiology and modern dietary assessment tools can be leveraged to inform effective, patient-centered health interventions. The session will compare commonly used dietary assessment methods, highlighting their respective strengths, limitations, and optimal applications across clinical, research, and public health settings. From the lens of cancer prevention and control, attendees will learn how to interpret core findings from nutritional epidemiology studies, with an emphasis on communicating evidence-based dietary risks and benefits clearly and accurately. Practical strategies will be shared for converting complex nutritional findings into clear, actionable dietary recommendations for adults. By the end of the session, participants will be better equipped to apply nutritional evidence in ways that support effective counseling and meaningful behavior change.

Learning Objectives

- Differentiate between the various dietary assessment methods available and determine the most appropriate method for diverse populations.
- Interpret core findings from nutrition epidemiology studies to effectively communicate evidence-based dietary risks and benefits.
- Translate complex nutritional data into clear, actionable dietary recommendations that align with individual health needs.



Dr. Meghan Skiba is an Assistant Professor at the University of Arizona. Her research intersects health behavior and cancer prevention and control, translating data into impact. Dr. Skiba holds a PhD in Health Behavior Health Promotion, along with a Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences and a Master of Public Health in Epidemiology. As a registered dietitian nutritionist, her work focuses on leveraging digital health technologies to scale diet and physical activity interventions to improve the health and well-being for cancer survivors.

Beyond Diet Recall: Addressing Taste, Smell, and Texture Barriers: Screening Tools and Culinary-Medicine Options for Improving Diet Quality

Michele A. Redmond, MS, RDN, FAND, Chef

This session examines how flavor perception—the interplay of taste, smell, and texture—impacts health outcomes and patients' ability to enjoy nutritious food. You'll participate in hands-on sensory tasting exercises and learn to identify indicators in diet recalls that suggest flavor perception challenges. We'll cover practical screening tools for clinical use and explore simple food preparation strategies and culinary-medicine interventions that help patients navigate sensory barriers and increase their intake of nutritious foods.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe three common flavor perception (taste, olfaction, texture) barriers that contribute to overnutrition or reduced intake of nutrient-rich foods.
- Identify potential flavor perception barriers through questionnaires or screening tools to explore connections to poor or declining diet quality.
- Recommend culinary-nutrition or culinary-medicine interventions that teach basic food prep skills to increase patient intake and enjoyment of nutrient-rich foods.



Michele Redmond, MS, RDN, FAND, Dietitian Chef specializes in behavior change as a culinary-medicine expert and medical nutrition therapy dietitian. As a French-trained chef and "Food Enjoyment Activist," she also helps people connect nutritious food and flavors to health and well-being.

Her background spans research chef, culinary and nutrition college faculty, health care center culinary-medicine teacher and leading operations for chronic disease programs, medical facilities and physician networks. She provides nutrition education programs for health professionals and the public via Eat Well Academy.

In her free time, she performs improv comedy.

Addressing Pediatric Nutritional Needs Through a Sensory-Motor Lens

Sarah Friedman, MOT, OTR/L

This presentation will focus on the pediatric population and how sensory processing differences and oral motor deficits can impact their relationship with food. We will begin by reviewing what a Pediatric Feeding Disorder is and the members of the medical team that work with patients with Pediatric Feeding Disorders. We will dive deeper into what sensory processing disorders and oral motor deficits look like in pediatric patients of different ages, and how these deficits impact a child's ability to consume an age-appropriate diet. The presentation will end by reviewing case studies of pediatric patients and developing nutritional recommendations with their sensory-motor needs in mind.

Learning Objectives:

- Define what a pediatric feeding disorder is
- Identify professional members of the pediatric feeding team
- Identify four factors that impact what foods a child can consume
- Identify five appropriate foods to recommend for a child taking in to consideration medical, nutritional, oral motor, sensory, cultural, and socio-economic needs



Sarah is a pediatric occupational therapist with a Bachelor of Occupational Science and a Master of Occupational Therapy from Saint Louis University. She has worked in a variety of settings, including an intensive feeding program, private practice, and pediatric home health with a focus on feeding, infant development, and sensory integration. Sarah has completed the Certificate Program in Sensory Integration from the University of Southern California with coursework specified to address Autism Spectrum Disorder and Sensory Based Feeding and Eating Challenges. She is proud to have completed over 100 hours of continuing education focused on infant and child feeding.

Stories That Move: The Emotional Intelligence Behind Powerful Storytelling

Bobi Seredich

This training session focuses on helping participants communicate ideas with clarity, confidence, and emotional impact. The session explores what distinguishes a good presentation from a truly compelling one by blending storytelling techniques with emotional intelligence and brain science. Participants will learn to define and share a personal leadership story, build trust and collaboration, and better understand the impact of their communication on others. The training also covers how the amygdala and neocortex influence behavior, decision-making, and communication in professional settings. Attendees will practice empathy-driven communication, adapt messages for diverse and multigenerational audiences, and create content that is concise, credible, and clear. Practical tools such as visualization, memorization strategies, emotional regulation, mindfulness, and power stances are incorporated to strengthen presence and enhance message delivery.

Learning Objectives:

- Define a personal leadership story and describe strategies that apply effective presentation techniques to build trust and collaboration with clients, teams, and interdisciplinary partners.
- Recognize and evaluate the impact an individual has on the people around them in professional health and wellness environments.
- Demonstrate decision-making that focuses on desired outcomes and distinguishes between intention and impact in leadership interactions.
- Discuss the science of the human brain—specifically the roles of the amygdala and neocortex—and analyze how these structures influence behavior and communication.
- Apply empathy and communication skills that are critical to developing strong emotional connections with teams and customers, and interpret generational differences within the workplace.
- Utilize content that is concise, credible, and clearly understood by diverse audiences to support effective health communication.
- Visualize presentations in advance and prepare using best practices that incorporate memorization techniques, self-care strategies, self-awareness, and emotional regulation with the SBA® tool.
- Practice power stances and mindfulness techniques to enhance presence and strengthen the impact of message delivery.



Bobi Seredich is a recognized speaker, author, and successful entrepreneur specializing in leadership development. She has spent over 25 years of her career dedicated to creating and presenting leadership programs for top companies. Bobi is the founder of the Southwest Institute for Emotional Intelligence and EQ Inspire Agency. She is a certified trainer and coach in Emotional Intelligence. Bobi is also the author of *Courage Does Not Always Roar: Ordinary Women with Extraordinary Courage*. She lives in Phoenix, Arizona, with her husband and twins, and she is actively involved in the community.