ROCKY MOUNTAIN
CRISIS PARTNERS

Newsletter January 2026 - March 2026

FROM CRISIS TO CONNECTION

Welcome to the RMCP Connector!

We are so glad you're here. Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners Connector is our quarterly newsletter dedicated to sharing updates, insights, and stories from across RMCP. As we enter a new chapter focused on community-rooted, trauma-informed care, this space will highlight the programs, partnerships, and people that are shaping our work, like CaringConnect, RMCP Consulting and Workplace Peer Partners. Whether you're a longtime supporter or new to our mission, we're excited to keep you connected to the heart of what we do.

Over the past quarter, I've found myself reflecting on something we've seen again and again in our work:

People don't leave their struggles at the door when they go to work.

At Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners, we've spent years supporting individuals during some of their most difficult moments—on crisis lines, through follow-up care, and in peer support. Through that experience, one thing is clear: many challenges show up quietly, in everyday environments, long before they become a crisis.

That understanding is also shaped by my background, including more than 15 years in Employee Assistance Program (EAP) work, where I saw firsthand how closely workplace well-being and personal struggles are connected. Across both, the throughline is simple: connection matters.

That's what led us to **Workplace Peer Partners.**

This work is deeply personal to me. I've seen the difference it makes when someone feels seen, supported, and not alone and how often workplaces want to help but lack the structure to do so.

Workplace Peer Partners is about changing that.
It's not a new development—it's the evolution of our expertise. This model brings together our experience in crisis response, peer support, and follow-up care into a more intentional packaging of services, and a clear path toward engaging employers and industries as communities we can impact.

It's about helping organizations build cultures where people check in on one another—where support is part of the day-to-day, not just a response to crisis.

Through this program, we partner with organizations to build internal peer support networks—real people trained to show up for their coworkers. Not to fix everything, but to connect, listen, and guide others toward support when needed.

What's most encouraging is the response. Across industries, especially high-stress environments, there's growing recognition that supporting people isn't separate from work, it's essential to it. We believe this is where the future of workforce well-being is headed.

And we're grateful to partner with organizations ready to lead in a different way. If you're interested in learning more about Workplace Peer Partners, we'd welcome the conversation.

With gratitude,
Bev Marquez
CEO

Workplace Peer Partners

Building networks of care where people spend most of their time at work
At Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners, we know that challenges related to mental health, substance use, and life transitions don't stop at the workplace they often show up there first. That's why we're expanding our work beyond traditional crisis response and into prevention, connection, and ongoing support through our Workplace Peer Partners (WPP) initiative.

Workplace Peer Partners is designed to help organizations build internal systems of support by integrating trained peer professionals into their workplace culture. These peers are equipped to provide early intervention, connection, and guidance helping individuals navigate challenges before they escalate into crises.

What This Looks Like in Practice

Through Workplace Peer Partners, organizations can access a range of tailored supports, including:

- **Peer Support Lines**
  A dedicated, confidential line for employees to connect with trained peers for real-time support.
- **CaringConnect Outreach**
  Proactive follow-up support for employees navigating difficult transitions, stress, or recovery, reducing isolation and strengthening connection.
- **Peer Response Teams**
  Immediate, on-site or virtual support following critical incidents or disruptive workplace events.
- **Peer Training & Supervision**
  Comprehensive training programs and ongoing supervision to ensure peer teams are skilled, supported, and effective.
- **Program Development & Consulting**
  Customized support to help organizations build or enhance peer support programs that align with their unique needs.

Why This Matters

Industries across Colorado especially those with high-stress, safety-sensitive environments are recognizing the importance of addressing behavioral health as part of workforce well-being.
Workplace Peer Partners helps organizations:

- Strengthen employee support systems
- Improve retention and workplace culture
- Reduce the impact of crises and critical incidents
- Build long-term resilience across teams

What's next?

We are actively partnering with organizations across industries including construction, transportation, waste management, and mining to bring this model to life in meaningful, sustainable ways.

If your organization is interested in learning more about Workplace Peer Partners or exploring a potential partnership, we'd love to connect. Please contact Cheri Skelding at cskelding@rmcrisispartners.org for more information.

Solidarity Day at the St. Francis Center- Denver, CO

As part of RMCP's Solidarity Day(s), members of our team spent two mornings volunteering at the St. Francis Center in downtown Denver, supporting community members experiencing homelessness. Together, we distributed sleeping bags, sweatshirts, hats, gloves, hand warmers, hygiene kits, blankets, snacks, coffee, and breakfast burritos, serving more than 200 individuals over the two days.

We are deeply grateful to the staff and volunteers at St. Francis Center for the care, dignity, and consistency they bring to this work every day. We're equally thankful for the opportunity to meet so many people, share conversation and offer support. Experiences like this remind us that connection, presence, and compassion matter and that showing up for one another is at the heart of RMCP's mission.

RMCP Trainings

RMCP continues to build on our deep experience in crisis response, peer support, and workforce engagement by offering trainings designed to strengthen how individuals and organizations show up during difficult moments.

Over the years, we've identified a clear need: many professionals especially those in public-facing or high-stress roles are navigating complex, emotionally charged interactions without the tools or support to do so confidently. These trainings are an extension of the expertise we've developed on the front lines, and a way to bring practical, evidence-informed skills back into the community.

This quarter, RMCP hosted two dynamic trainings: ***Supporting Call Takers*** and ***Well, This is Awkward***, with more than 100 participants joining us from organizations across Colorado and beyond.

Supporting Call Takers equipped public-facing staff with practical tools to stay grounded and steady during emotionally charged calls. Participants explored voice tone, pacing, silence, and active listening strategies that help de-escalate conversations without overstepping or over-functioning.

Well, This is Awkward focused on building the courage and skills to have honest conversations about mental health and suicide. Attendees learned to recognize signs of distress, challenge common myths, and engage in supportive, life-saving dialogue rooted in both evidence and lived experience.

Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to these important conversations.

If your organization/workplace is interested in a customized training to support your team's unique needs, please reach out to Erik Jacobsen at erikj@rmcrisispartners.org for more information.

RMCP at the Winter Symposium on Addiction and Mental Health

Patricia Markwell, Erik Jacobsen and Brandon Wilcox represented RMCP at the Winter Symposium in Colorado Springs, a statewide gathering of behavioral health leaders, crisis responders, prevention professionals, and community partners focused on strengthening Colorado's mental health and substance use systems.

The conference highlighted emerging trends in crisis response, peer support integration, workforce sustainability, and cross-system collaboration. A powerful keynote from Attorney General Phil Weiser challenged attendees to think boldly about leadership, resilience, and the responsibility we carry in supporting individuals and communities during their most vulnerable moments.

The team returned energized and inspired, bringing back new ideas and strengthened partnerships that will continue to inform RMCP's work across Colorado.

CONSTRUCTION WORKING MINDS

Mental Health Promotion, Suicide Prevention and Addiction Recovery at Work

www.ConstructionWorkingMinds.org

RMCP Team Members Presented on Suicide Prevention at National Construction Summit

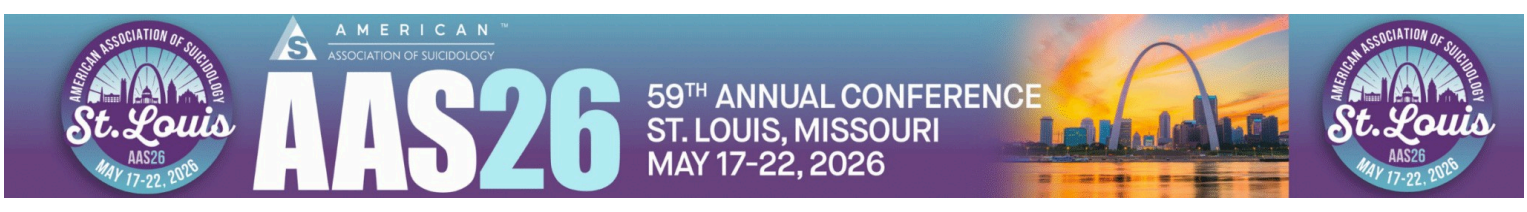
Brandon Wilcox and Cheri Skelding recently presented at the Construction Working Minds Summit in Portland, Oregon, sharing RMCP's "Well This is Awkward" an evidence-informed approach to suicide prevention in high-risk industries.

Drawing on more than 15 years of crisis line and 988 experience, they led an interactive session focused on "finding the words that save lives," equipping participants with practical tools to initiate supportive conversations when it matters most. The presentation debunked common myths about suicide, highlighted everyday "invitations for concern," and incorporated guided practice to build confidence and skill.

The session drew a full room of 60 construction leaders and safety professionals who were highly engaged and eager for practical, frontline strategies that workers can use to support one another on job sites. Many participants shared personal experiences and emphasized the importance of peer connection and internally driven support, reinforcing the industry's growing commitment to building cultures where workers look out for one another and conversations about mental health are normalizing.

By blending professional expertise with lived experience, Brandon and Cheri helped construction leaders strengthen peer connection and reinforce a culture of safety, resilience, and hope across worksites nationwide.

RMCP is thrilled to continue sharing our experience and expertise in settings where leaders are passionate about the health and wellness of their teams. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about how RMCP can support your group or organization in creating safe, supportive environments, please reach out to Cheri Skelding at cskelding@rmcrisispartners.org



RMCP has been selected to present at the American Association of Suicidology (AAS26) Conference in St. Louis in May 2026, one of the nation's leading gatherings of suicide prevention researchers, clinicians, and advocates. Our session, *Suicide-Safer Workplaces: Designing Prevention-Friendly Work Environments*, will highlight practical strategies organizations can use to embed prevention into workplace culture, policy, and leadership practices. We are honored to contribute to this national dialogue and share lessons learned from our work across Colorado.

Honoring Fermin Avila's Leadership and Service to RMCP

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Fermin Avila for his four years of dedicated service to Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners. During his time with RMCP, Fermin brought steady leadership, thoughtful collaboration, and a deep commitment to community impact. His work helped strengthen partnerships, expand access to services, and advance our mission in meaningful ways.
While we will miss his presence and insight, we are excited to see him step into his new role as Regional Vice President of Operations overseeing Operations and Resident Services at Mercy Housing Mountain Plains Region. This is a well-deserved next chapter, and we have no doubt he will continue to make a powerful difference in the lives of individuals and families across the nation.

Thank you, Fermin, for your leadership, partnership, and service. We wish you continued success and look forward to staying connected.

Learn More About Our Programs

Consulting Services | CaringConnect Program | Workplace Peer Partners

Support Our Work Today

We believe in the power of community to transform lives.
We invite you to be a vital part of our mission to provide compassionate intervention services to individuals experiencing a crisis.

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