2009 Nebraska Disaster Behavioral Health Conference

The 2009 Nebraska Disaster Behavioral Health Conference is an annual conference that covers a wide range of topics related to the field of disaster behavioral health. This conference brings in renowned speakers from across the country to engage topics of concern for behavioral health professionals, including. Speaker for the 2009 conference include Dr. Fran Norris (evaluation of the Crisis Counseling Program), Dr. Robin Gurwitch (military families and coping with deployment) and Steve Crimando (Disaster response). This year’s conference features a speaker of particular interest to threat assessment practitioners.

The organizers have been able to bring in one of the foremost experts in forensic psychology and risk assessment in the entire world, Dr. J. Reid Meloy. Dr. Meloy will be presenting on a long term study of mass murder perpetrated by adults and adolescents. His presentation will include highlights of the results of this study and current trends of mass homicide.

Dr, Meloy will also participate in a session over the conference lunch break. This gathering is aimed sat threat assessment professionals in Nebraska and will include remarks by Dr. Meloy and other Predominant threat assessment professionals from Nebraska. UNLPD Chief Owen Yardley will also be in attendance to present information about the formation of the Nebraska chapter of the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP).

This lunch is provided free of charge for threat assessment professionals attending the conference.

Association of Threat Assessment Professionals

Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP) is a worldwide organization dedicated to furthering the study and implementation of threat assessment techniques across all domains. From their website:

“The Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP) was founded in 1992 as a non-profit organization comprised of law enforcement, prosecutors, mental health professionals, corporate security experts, probation and parole personnel and others involved in the area of threat and violence risk assessment. The purpose of ATAP is to afford its members a professional and educational environment to exchange ideas and strategies to address such issues as stalking, threats, and homeland security. The primary focus of this organization is to provide the necessary knowledge, tools, and support to better prepare our membership to handle these types of situations. Our commitment is to expertly address these issues through seminars and training and networking with other professionals working in this field.”

This organization has been instrumental in disseminating threat assessment techniques throughout the government and private sectors. As stated above the meeting and conferences provide a unique opportunity for interaction across these domains and allow for information sharing on a personal level.

Recently, UNLPD Chief Owen Yardley, UNL professor Dr. Mario Scalora and Public Policy Center Research Director Denise Bulling have been exploring the formation of a Nebraska chapter of ATAP. This local chapter will provide opportunities for those responsible for threat assessment in Nebraska and surrounding states to interact and build relationships to support their activities. The goal is to create a
network of threat assessment professionals statewide and to make sure that they are up-to-date on the latest in threat assessment techniques and knowledge.

If you are interested in joining ATAP and participating in the Nebraska chapter, please contact: Larry Golba (lgolba@nebraska.edu) for more information.

CTAP Website
As part of the Nebraska Campus Threat Assessment Program, a website has been set-up to facilitate education and information sharing among campus threat assessment team members. This website has some basic information in its public pages.

However, for those involved in the Nebraska Campus Threat Assessment Program, there are secure areas which contain much more in-depth information. One area contains a collection of the presentations used in the Nebraska Campus Threat Assessment Program. Also, there is a compilation of important threat assessment and related articles. These materials were gathered to help give campus threat assessment teams the requisite background on the current state of threat assessment in general and how these principles are enacted in a post-secondary environment. These presentations and articles are available for download from these areas.

If you are interested accessing the Campus Threat Assessment website’s secure areas, please contact: Larry Golba (lgolba@nebraska.edu) for the login information.