

VALOR VOICE

A large part of Valor's pursuit of excellence this year surrounds the incredible people that we get to work with day in and day out. This edition of the newsletter will take some time to highlight the wide world of victim services, chaplaincies, and other victim support groups that make such a difference in our communities.

Serving Their Communities at The Most Difficult Times

Families experiencing the unexpected loss of a loved one or who have been subject to some other traumatic event typically find themselves shocked, confused, and at a loss for what to do next or how to deal with their circumstances. In most of these cases those involved have never experienced anything like their current situation and find themselves overwhelmed by grief and a sense of loss, wondering how they will ever be able to find their way through to some sense of normalcy again.

Amid all of this there are often law enforcement, fire, EMS, and coroner/medical examiner personnel investigating the circumstances surrounding the event. These people are usually asking questions, taking pictures, searching for evidence, and causing more confusion as they perform the duties associated with their presence at the scene. First responders and death investigators, although interested and empathetic, are often busy and focused on the job at hand, they don't have the time or generally even the skills to address the needs of loved ones who are attempting to cope.

The good news is that there are wonderful people who make it their purpose to come along side those who are suffering and to help them find their way through the maze of their difficult circumstances. In most cases these people are volunteers, choosing to serve others out of their love for their fellow person rather than for a paycheck. These caregivers typically come from one of three basic types of organizations, Chaplains, Trauma Intervention Programs, and Victim Advocacies or similar organizations. These groups are similar but different, but in the end they all come along side those who are hurting and help them find their way through their difficult situation.

Chaplaincies are generally staffed by volunteers, are faith based, and are 501 C3 non-profit organizations. In smaller communities the chaplain may be a local pastor who has made themselves available to the first responder community to be called out as needed for difficult events. Some larger communities have organized chaplaincies in which multiple individual chaplains are assigned to the various police and fire agencies around a county. They are organized under the central county chaplaincy and work together for fundraising, training, to develop organized responses to events, and to support each other in many ways. Chaplains tend to split their efforts between serving the mental health needs of the first responders in their area to whom they are assigned, especially those who have responded to difficult events, and serving the families who are experiencing these events themselves. Many states have organized chaplains' training academies and have training requirements for those who wish to serve.

Trauma Intervention Program is a nation-wide organization, often known as TIP, committed to serving those who are experiencing traumatic events in their homes or communities. There are TIP chapters in many communities around the country. TIP is also a 501 C3 non-profit, non-faith-based organization, generally staffed by volunteers who respond to the difficult events which happen to people within their communities. TIP has a very organized, developed training program for new volunteers. TIP also serves their local first responder community, but their individual members are not assigned to a specific agency like chaplains generally would be, they are available as needed for support through their local organization.

Victim Advocacies and similar organizations typically work through local government such as prosecuting or district attorneys' offices. In this case the workers are government employees tasked with helping families who have experienced criminal events to navigate the legal and court process. In other cases, the advocates may not be focused on only legal proceedings but on the overall process associated with dealing with the details that accompany the death of a loved one. The training these advocates receive is generally conducted in-house or through their government systems.

Each of these organizations is committed to helping others navigate their "next steps", what do we do now and what do we do next. They help people make and carry out a plan, they are familiar with resources in their communities which can help families recover. In many cases they can connect them with grief counsellors, mental health, financial, housing, funeral, and other services that will address their needs as they arise. Without the support provided by those who take on this role of caring for their community, those who find themselves in traumatic situations would be facing a much more difficult and long-term path to recovery. All of us at Valor Technical Cleaning want to express our appreciation and gratitude to every Chaplain, TIP Volunteer, and Victim Advocate who chooses to take on this incredibly difficult but so valuable role of helping their fellow person at their time of greatest need. Thank You for your service!

Valor in the Wild



Luke Warnke, our WI/MN market leader, spent some time at the Amery Sportsman's Club with the Polk County ME Office.



The Placer County Law Enforcement Chaplaincy was nice enough to have Aaron Borg, our CA market leader, come out to speak to their team.



Aaron Borg, smiling for the camera with Mike Boon, Head Chaplain.



Ryan Gausman (far left), our PNW leader, showed off his muscles at the TIP Fire Engine Pull this past month. What a great group of people!

Upcoming Valor Events

AUGUST 5, 2024

Texas Narcotic Officers Association (TNOA) Training Conference in Galveston, TX

AUGUST 6, 2024

Washington State Deathcare Convention in Suquamish, WA

AUGUST 11, 2024

International Homicide Investigators Association (IHIA) Annual Symposium in Washington, DC

AUGUST 20, 2024

California Homicide Investigators Association in Las Vegas, NV