



CIT Forging Partnerships through Community

CIT Canadian
Summit

October 19-20, 2026
Hamilton, Ontario

About Our Keynote Speaker



Joe Roberts

SKIDROW CEO | Keynote Speaker | Author | Humanitarian

From Skid Row to CEO; The Call that Changed My Life



Joe Roberts, the Skid Row CEO, is a possibility expert who delivers life-time lasting keynotes that reconnect people to purpose and passion. His message offers strategic insights from his transformative journey of addiction, mental health, and homelessness to becoming a celebrated entrepreneur and philanthropist in less than 12 years.

At the heart of Joe's message lies a remarkable encounter with Constable Scott MacLeod during a mental health crisis that served as a catalyst for profound change. Joe's story is a real life example of how lives are positively touched by the justice system and exemplifies the potential for impactful collaboration between law enforcement and communities.

His message is inspiring, energetic, humorous, honest, raw, and unforgettable. It serves as a morale booster, showcasing what happens when "things go right". Among other prestigious awards, Joe is honored to have received the Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor General of Canada and the highest civilian award by the Ontario Provincial Police.

Michael T. Compton, M.D., M.P.H.

Professor of Psychiatry, Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons | Research Psychiatrist, New York State Psychiatric Institute

Amy C Watson, PhD

Professor | The School of Social Work | Wayne State University

Findings From the First Randomized, Controlled Trial of Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training



There is growing evidence of the benefits of implementing CIT programs and CIT training. However, until now, there has not been a randomized, controlled trial (RCT) of CIT. In this session, we will report findings from the first RCT of CIT training. In a study funded by the United States National Institute of Mental Health, we recruited 242 officers from seven US sites and randomized them to receive CIT training at their local program or to the control condition (no CIT training during the six-month study period). Participants completed video-recorded standardized scenarios at baseline (prior to randomization) and three and six-month follow up. Trained video raters—blinded to site, treatment arm, and timepoint—evaluated the primary outcome: officers' actual skills and behaviors when interacting with standardized subjects. Survey-based data assessed officers' characteristics and hypothesized mediators (how CIT training works) and moderators (when CIT training works best). The two study Principal Investigators will present the study design and the key findings with program and policy relevance for law enforcement agencies with CIT programs at any stage of development.

Lance Valcour

Author | Inspector (Ret.) Lance Valcour O.O.M. | Ottawa Police Service

If They Only Knew: Addiction, Mental Health and the Hidden Realities of Crisis Response



After 33 years in policing—including six as a Critical Incident Commander—I learned that the most dangerous crises are often the ones the public never sees. They are the crises unfolding inside the people sworn to respond to everyone else's.

This keynote draws from my memoir, *If They Only Knew: A Cop's Journey with Addiction and Mental Health*, and my lived experience as an officer who spent years projecting strength while quietly falling apart.

On paper, I “had it all”—a successful career, a national reputation, and a strong family life. Yet behind the uniform was a struggle with addiction and mental illness I hid from colleagues, friends, and even myself. My public life thrived while my private world collapsed.

Addiction distorted my identity, damaged relationships, and nearly destroyed everything I valued, including my life. My wife's courage ultimately forced a reckoning. This is not a story of destruction—it is one of recovery, reconciliation, and hope, with a sprinkling of humour along the way.

Responders are expected to navigate escalating mental-health calls involving trauma and complex human suffering—while many carry their own unaddressed trauma. This mismatch creates unacceptable risks to the public, families, and officers themselves.

Participants will learn:

- Why addiction and mental-health struggles are so often hidden among first responders
- How trauma, identity, and operational culture shape officer behaviour
- What leaders must understand about stigma and psychological safety
- Concrete strategies to support members and their families

If They Only Knew is not just my story—it is the story of countless members who feel they cannot speak. My goal is to give them a voice, and inspire organizations to build cultures where people can ask for help before their private crisis becomes a public one.