

PRIMA SPEAKERS BUREAU

Exclusively for PRIMA chapters, the PRIMA Speakers Bureau gives chapters the opportunity to bring dynamic risk management speakers to their meetings and conferences at no cost.

PRIMA is pleased to offer PRIMA chapters an opportunity to select a speaker from PRIMA's Speakers Bureau for their next chapter meeting. PRIMA speakers cover a variety of subjects impacting public risk management professionals.

NEW TOPICS FOR 2026:

- **8 Habits of a Highly Effective Safety Culture**
- **Detoxifying Safety Culture: Antidotes to Common OSH Pitfalls**
- **Find Hidden Money and Become the HERO**
- **From Compliance to Strategy: The Safety Professional's Role in Enterprise Risk Management**
- **Infrastructure & Deferred Maintenance Risk: A Strategic Risk Management Challenge for Public Entities**
- **Safety & the Supervisor: A Key Ally to Workplace Safety**
- **Success through Communication and Presentation Skills**

Select a speaker for your next meeting, visit: **primacentral.org/community/chapters**

Sandy Avina, MBA

JPA Claims Services Manager, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools



Who says insurance has to be boring? Not Sandy Avina. Sandy proves that sometimes all you need is a movie reference, a dash of humor, and a willingness to explain Lloyd's of London using memes and Ironman references.

Sandy loves making risk management and insurance knowledge accessible to everyone - whether that means breaking down complex topics through creative videos (shoutout to everyone who learned about property coverage and exclusions through her "Insurance Lessons from Scary Movies" video series), diving deep into mental health advocacy for claims professionals, or building an incredible community of 4,500+ insurance nerds who prove daily that learning can be fun.

Sandy has over 20 years of experience in Risk Management, Claims and Insurance. She currently works for the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools and serves as the JPA Claims Services Manager for California Schools JPA. She received her MA in Business Administration from Redlands University and her BA in Political Science from the University of California, Riverside. Sandy is a Certified Mental Health First Aid instructor who is passionate about building resiliency and supporting Mental Health initiatives for employees. She serves on the Legislative Committees for the California Association of Joint Powers Authorities (CAJPA) and Public Risk Innovation, Solutions and Management (PRISM) as well as the Government Relations Committee for the California Coalition of Workers' Compensation (CCWC).

You can find Sandy on LinkedIn, making videos that entertain as well as educate.

SESSIONS

"Who's in charge of potato salad safety?" and other questions you never thought you'd have to answer as a Risk Manager

When you first accepted your role as a Risk Manager, I bet you imagined your days would be filled with insurance procurement, OSHA compliance and litigation management. Yet, you often receive questions, complaints and requests for assistance on matters that leave you wondering, "why on earth did they think this was a risk management issue?"

In this interactive session, we will discuss how risk management roles are susceptible to "scope creep", how to identify whether risk solutions should be managed in house or by a vendor, how to determine whether something is, or isn't in scope and most importantly, how to convince employees in your organization that Risk Management is a team sport.
Duration: One hour

Negativity Bias, Compassion Fatigue and Burnout

The concept of burnout has been in the news quite a bit lately. We blame it for turnover, low morale and poor performance. What we have not discussed is how employees in human resources and risk management are particularly susceptible. From the media portrayals of the jaded claims adjuster to the social media posts declaring that "HR is not your friend," it can be challenging to maintain a positive outlook when external messaging makes you feel like you're not making a positive impact.

Join us as we discuss how negativity bias shows up in HR and Risk Management, what causes compassion fatigue, and how both can create a recipe for burnout. We will address early intervention using the principals of Mental Health First Aid, and discuss what self care looks like for HR and Risk Management professionals (Hint: it's not yoga and massages).
Duration: One hour

How to Respond to Employee Suicide Risks

According to the CDC over 13 million people reported suicidal ideation in 2022. Do your managers, HR and risk management employees know what to do if someone expresses suicidal ideation? Do they know how to identify when an employee is struggling with a mental health challenge? Many managers avoid having such conversations with their employees because it feels awkward and uncomfortable, but these feelings often come from a lack of confidence in *how* to have such a conversation and fear of "saying the wrong thing." Join us as we review suicide risk factors, show you how navigate the conversation when an employee expresses suicidal ideation, how to determine urgency and how to connect someone to resources. You can **#BeTheDifference** for someone who is struggling.
Duration: One hour

Dean Coughenour

Risk Manager/City of Flagstaff retired, National PRIMA Past President



Dean Coughenour is the newly retired Risk Manager for the City of Flagstaff and directed their Risk Management Department, managing a comprehensive risk and safety program that includes reducing risk factors, grass root integration of the risk management decision matrix, safety, insurance, litigation management, Workers' Compensation, training, and facility inspection programs. Coughenour has over 30 years' experience in proactive Risk Management and has served on various boards and associations including Arizona Municipal Risk Retention board, City of Scottsdale Loss Trust Fund board is a past national board member of PERI (Public Entity Risk and Insurance), past loss trust fund board chair for the City of Scottsdale, past president of PRIMA National and has held various other community leadership positions. He is a frequent speaker on Risk Management topics both at national and local conferences. Serves on the national speaker bureau and is a champion for Risk Management and the employment of the Risk Management decision matrix in day to day operations of public sector entities.

SESSIONS

NEW Nuts and Bolts? What Do I Do First?

"Now that I am the risk manager, what should I be doing first?" "What questions do I prioritize first to gain credibility and visibility inside of the organization in order to build a culture of risk management?" This session will walk you through the step-by-step process starting with how to assess where we are today as well as what questions to ask and of whom. Hear personal stories of pitfalls, as well as how to avoid them, and learn what the secret sauce is to a successful program.

Learning Objectives: Learn the early steps in building your risk program. Understand the reasons behind why we might struggle with selling our message and how to overcome it. Learn how to stand out early and make headway in your program earlier and with less resistance by choosing to be more strategic.
Duration: One hour

Adversity or Opportunity "A Story of Hope and the Power of Attitude"

Failure is a part of every life's journey. How we react, what we learn and when we move forward are all up to us. This inspirational session will speak to failures and successes and the slight difference between the two that makes a major difference in the outcomes. Leave inspired and better prepared for Life's twists and turns. Gain insights through life's stories that deal with failure, hope and the power of attitude.

Learning Objectives: Learn to appreciate failure and its value. Feel confident that, although different, change can be great. Be inspired that you are not alone and that success is directly connected to your attitude toward failure.
Duration: One hour

Building a Culture of Risk Management

This entertaining and educational session will motivate and rejuvenate you to build an environment where employees feel empowered to protect not only themselves but each other. Videos will drive specific points in building a sustainable culture with audience participation. Personal stories will help the audience engage in how we impact each other through a decision of attitude, positive or negative. The story of the Duck verses the Eagle. Leave this presentation inspired recharged and ready to make an impact!

Learning Objectives: Attendees will learn how to build effective working relationships with other departments and establish effective and self-sustaining Risk Management results from a strong risk and safety culture which empowers each employee to be the Risk Manager.
Duration: One hour and ten minutes

NEW Success through Communication and Presentation Skills

Our success is directly related to how well we communicate and our ability to present our ideas. Join on this unexpected journey and be prepared to laugh while you learn. Through video and entertaining interaction, you will understand why you feel anxious when you speak before others and be provided tools and thoughts to make powerful, clear and concise presentations without a panic attack! Whether we are speaking to employees, to the governing body on insurance renewals or underwriters for better pricing considerations we all need to be able to communicate with confidence. What if you could do this with "seeming" ease? Imagine if you could motivate your fellow team members to be their own Risk Manager and how much easier would your job become?

Learning Objectives: Learn how to effectively engage others. Learn the physical reasons we fear speaking. Avoid the "I am falling asleep presentation". Engage your audience earlier, in a way that helps you to communicate your ideas and gain their support.
Duration: One hour 15 minutes

NEW Find Hidden Money and Become the HERO

This session promises to be entertaining and teach you how a new found money stream will make you look GREAT, while costing you nothing. Too good to be true? Take this 55 minute journey and learn the in's and outs of "how to". The session will have music, video to help drive key points.

Learning Objectives: Attendees will engage in a fun and interactive presentation to learn how to look good while finding a new sustainable money stream. Explore all the elements that can be recovered when there is a property or auto loss. Discover how to be a proactive partner for Police, Public Works, Parks and rec, and others when you find money for them outside of existing budgets.
Duration: 55 minutes

Penetrating the Cone of Silence/Communicating with Police and Fire

Designed to improve your communications and relationships with Police and Fire. Have you ever wondered why it seems more difficult to communicate with Police and Fire? This session will explore why each is unique and provide insights and suggested approaches to improve your Risk Management program effectiveness in communicating with both. Expect the presentation to be entertaining, high energy and utilize video clips.

Learning Objectives: Attendees will understand why police and fire communicate the way they do. Attendees will be given suggested methods into selling Risk Management and ideas in general to these tight knit groups.
Duration: One hour 15 minutes

Rockets and Exploding Bombs/A Career in Risk Management

The audience will receive the perspective of a newly retired Risk Manager on what worked, what was a disaster on the launch pad, and the key insights into what elements are the most critical for a successful career in Risk Management.

Learning Objectives: Learn the key elements that are mission critical in analysis of data to prepare you for quality discussions with key personnel to change loss results in the shortest time possible. Understand who we establish relationships with and how to fuel the process. Learn which "Small Steps for Risk", you NEVER want to take to ensure Stellar Career Success.
Duration: One hour

Leadership and Motivation

What motivates you to lead? How do you inspire others to perform their best? What is the essence of leadership? Take this unique journey of discovery. The presentation will utilize extensive video clips to provoke thought and the discussion will leave you with inspirational ideas of how to lead.

Learning Objectives: Attendees will engage in interactive discussion on the keys of effective leadership and gain insight into how to engage and motivate ourselves and others.
Duration: one hour

Mystical Magic in Managing Claims

Learn how to maximize your claims outcomes through early intervention techniques.

The session will be fast paced and entertaining. Resolve claims quicker with less legal fees and better results. What we think we know can change as we move through the investigation process as well as opportunities for resolution. But, a little Mystical Magic at the right moment can make all the difference in the outcome. This session will look at claims management approaches in the areas of general and auto liability, Workers' Compensation, and personnel claims. Help employees be happier through improved communication.

Learning Objectives: Learn what the plaintiffs' bar really thinks and why. Understand the difference of perspectives and how they affect your results. Overcome misunderstandings early in the process. Explore proven techniques to improve your claims results.
Duration: One hour 15 minutes

Sarah Curtis

Loss Control Training Consultant, Public Entity Partners



Sarah began her career in risk management in 2022 when she joined Public Entity Partners as a Loss Control Training Consultant. Previously she served as a Training Consultant for the University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service. Working in the public sector for over 12 years, Sarah has served as an instructor, consultant, trainer and instructional designer. Since 2018, she has worked with municipalities and other public entities to design and deliver training programs that improve organizational outcomes by focusing on individual development.

Sarah earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology in 2007 and a Master of Arts in Sociology in 2011 from Middle Tennessee State University. She also completed a Master of Business Administration from the University of North Alabama in 2016.

SESSIONS

Civility Starts with You

As risk managers in our organizations, we have a responsibility to prevent harassment in the workplace. Studies show us that creating a culture of civility is an effective way to reduce harassment and other forms of discrimination. In this session, we will focus on self-awareness, the importance of embracing inclusion, and the power of empathy. These topics will challenge us to consider our role in creating a work environment in which everyone feels safe, included, and able to be productive at work.

Duration: One hour

Burnout – Not Worth the Risk

An estimated 70% of employees experience workplace burnout every year. While burnout can take a toll on individuals, it also leads to negative outcomes for your organization. In this session we will examine how burnout can lead to increased errors, decreased productivity, and potentially dangerous behaviors at work. Participants will be able to identify potential warning signs of burnout and leave with actionable steps to enhance their personal and professional resilience.

Duration: One hour

NEW The Risk of Standing Still

Change is not just inevitable—it's vital for innovation, resilience, and long-term success. In this session, we'll explore why resisting change can be riskier than the change itself. We'll also introduce a practical change management framework to help guide your organization through transitions smoothly and effectively. Whether you're leading a team or navigating shifts in your role, this presentation will equip you with the mindset and tools needed to thrive in a world of constant transformation.

Duration: One hour



Michael G. Fann, ARM-P, MBA

President and CEO, Public Entity Partners (Tennessee Pool)



Michael has more than 30 years' experience in providing risk management consulting and training for local governments, school systems, universities, state governments and associations. He is a graduate of Middle Tennessee State University (Finance & Political Science) and Ole Miss (MBA — Management). He has participated in international public risk management exchanges with colleagues from the United Kingdom, China and Australia. Michael is a former 2-time member of the board of directors of the international Public Risk Management Association (PRIMA), and formerly served (2013-2016) on the board of directors of the Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI), based in Alexandria, Virginia. In 2020, Michael was the inaugural recipient of the PRIMA's Pioneer Excellence Award. Further, in 2019, he was conferred with the honor of "Fellow in Professional Practice" by the University of Tennessee's Master of Public Policy & Administration (MPPA) Program "to recognize accomplished & experienced professionals whose careers exhibit the highest standards of performance excellence…" by a vote of the MPPA faculty. In 2014, he was presented with the Public Risk Management Association's highest honor as only the 11th recipient of its Distinguished Service Award. He has also received TnPRIMA's Abbie Hudgens Distinguished Service Award (2012), the Southeast Loss Control (SELC) Group's Distinguished Service Award (2016), Public Risk Magazine's Author of the Year Award (2011) and the University of Tennessee Institute for Public Service's Project of the Year Award (2004).

SESSIONS

Creating a Culture of Civility

One of the purest predictors of future claims experience is the morale of your organization today. While workplace harassment gets the headlines, many other claims have "improper behavior" as their foundational cause. This session highlights the relationship between the organization's work environment and its future claims. This session examines the roles that poor communication skills, personal insecurity and "the rumor mill" play in creating a toxic culture within your organization. Finally, this session will identify evaluation points and action steps designed to enhance the work environment toward a more productive, positive and safer culture.
Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Mission-Driven Leadership

The most often overlooked step in establishing organizational leadership is the first one: establishing a clearly defined mission toward which the group may strive. The late author Stephen Covey outlined two essential principles of effectiveness: Getting First Things First, and Beginning with the End in Mind. The failure to get your thinking "right" and clearly defining what you're trying to accomplish continues to be a foundational "failure disease" for organizations. Further, are you attempting to lead your team as a positional leader or an influential leader? This session highlights the relationship between the organization's mission and the passion its staff will have toward group accomplishment. This relationship impacts communication (or that lack thereof), motivation/[de-motivation], productivity, morale, incentive/[disincentive], and many other elements which impacts the organization's long-term success. Finally, this session will examine critical elements such as hiring and retention, identifying mentors and counsellors, and investing in your people.
Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Sharon Harris

Senior Consultant HR & Organizational Development



Sharon Harris joined CIS (City/County Insurance Services) as a Senior Human Resource Consultant in 2014 and has had the opportunity to do what she loves the best - focusing on employment trainings and general human resources consulting for CIS Pool members and other public sector organizations. Before joining CIS, Sharon was with the City of Redmond, Oregon holding positions of human resources/ risk management director, assistant city manager and interim city manager. Sharon was very active, serving for 12 years on the Board of OR-PRIMA, but it has been her involvement with National PRIMA both as a conference attendee (20 times!) and by finding ways to get involved by serving three years on the National PRIMA Leadership Development Committee and as a speaker on various topics both at the National PRIMA conference and PRIMA Podcast that have enriched her risk management career. In addition to Sharon's formal college education, Sharon holds Senior Certified Professional designations through both the International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA-SCP) and the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM-SCP). In her spare time Sharon volunteers as a small claims court appointed Mediator with Deschutes County, Oregon.

SESSIONS

Your Role in Creating a Workplace Culture of Civility and Respect

Every one of us in our public sector work—whether it is a citizen, a co-worker, or an elected official—comes from a different background and has a different set of life experiences. Those differences influence what we believe, how we perceive the world, and how we act, and therefore, our differences have an immense impact on the way we interact with each other. When our differences are acknowledged, understood, and respected, it can improve the health of our workplace. It also allows us to increase our ability to identify and achieve our shared goals and do a better job of providing the kinds of services our citizens want (and a workplace that our employees need). If differences are ignored, silenced, or worse, vilified, it can lead to communication breakdown, conflict, discrimination, or harassment.

Duration: 90 minutes

Employee Performance — How to Have Effective Conversations

Employees are the foundations of our organizations yet often times so much attention is spent on the negative interaction or better yet avoiding the negative interactions between staff. Let's talk about how to have that difficult conversation when coaching the underperforming employees or when the conflict is between employees and turn them into effective conversations.

Duration: 50 minutes

Do's and Don'ts of Cultural Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) — What does it all mean? Are these words represented in your organizational culture? Has your Leadership Team asked you any of these questions? — Are you one of many who are wondering what steps to take to get started, or you are just curious what others are doing? Many organizations do not know where to begin when it comes to launching a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion program or just wonder what initial steps are needed to get started. If you are curious about DEI, spend a few minutes with your colleagues as Sharon Harris takes us through a few dos and don'ts to help you get started in identifying your own organization's readiness for culture inclusion.

Duration: 50 minutes

Hiring Right to Avoid Managing Tough

Recruitment is the foundation upon which your employment relationships are built. If your organization devotes time to developing an effective recruitment process before the position is even posted, you improve your chances of finding the ideal candidate who will meet your business needs and make positive, long-term contributions to your organization. And in many instances, a well-thought-out recruitment has the added benefit of reducing performance problems and legal risk once your chosen applicant comes on board. In other words, if you invest the time at the outset, your investment will pay dividends.

Duration: 90 minutes

Amy Larson, JD, ARM

Risk and Litigation Manager, City of Bloomington, MN



Amy has more than 20 years' experience as the risk manager for the City of Bloomington, MN, including the past 11 years as the risk and litigation manager. She is responsible for the overall planning, management, administration, organization and coordination of the city's risk management program; review and negotiation of city contracts; and litigation management. Amy is a licensed attorney in the state of Minnesota and a frequent presenter for many national PRIMA events, including PRIMA Institute, the national conference and speaker's bureau. Amy is the current co-chair of the PRIMA Institute and has been actively involved with PRIMA Institute since 2013. She also served on the PRIMA Board of Directors from 2012-2019, including serving as the PRIMA president from 2017-2018, and serving as a member of the Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI) Board of Directors from 2012-2017. Amy is also very active in the Minnesota Chapter of PRIMA, and currently serves as its past president.

SESSIONS

Contractual Risk Transfer

All day, every day, we transfer risk, even if we don't recognize it. In this presentation, we will use real life situations to discuss traditional risk transfer methods including the use of insurance, contracts, bond and indemnification and hold harmless agreements. We will also review what to look for in certificates of insurance, and how the use of waivers to transfer risk.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Special Events

Special events can present special and unusual types of risks for your entities. They enrich the lives of a community, attract interest in local businesses, increase sales tax revenue and sometimes tax the patience of government as it serves and protects. In this interactive presentation, the speaker and attendees will provide examples of their special events and as a group will discuss risk transfer options, including the use of permits, risk transfer, insurance requirements and the use of waivers, and lessons learned in association with these special events.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes



Risk Management, It's More than Just Buying Insurance

In the past, risk management was seen as the department that purchased insurance, processed claims and basically reacted to situations as they arose. Over the years, the role of the risk manager has evolved to one of being more proactive and bringing your skills to table early on in the process to help identify risks and loss control options. In this presentation, the speaker will discuss how to improve your communication skills so that you can be seen as the King or Queen of "Know," not the King or Queen of "No."

Duration: 1 hour (usually in conjunction with one of the other presentations)

Matt Phillips, M.S., M.B.A.

Safety and Risk Manager, Hanover County (VA) Government and Hanover County Public Schools



Matt Phillips is the Safety and Risk Manager for Hanover County (VA) Government and Hanover County Public Schools, where he leads the Safety & Risk Management Division supporting County operations and 24 public schools. He has more than 20 years of experience in enterprise safety and risk management, spanning public sector, utilities, and industrial environments, including nearly a decade and a half at Dominion Energy as a Senior Safety Specialist and BU Safety Consultant supporting power generation and construction operations. He holds an M.S. in Safety Management from West Virginia University, an M.B.A. from Virginia Commonwealth University, a B.S. in Chemistry from Shepherd University, and a Chief Risk Officer Certificate from George Mason University. He is a Past President of the American Society of Safety Professionals, a member of the VA PRIMA Executive Board, and active with ASSP's Colonial Virginia Chapter and its Risk Management Practice Specialty. His writing on safety leadership and culture has been featured in Professional Safety Journal and Public Risk Magazine, including "The Supervisor: A Key Ally to Workplace Safety" (2022), "Navigating the Poisons of Occupational Safety" (2024), and "Detoxifying Safety Culture" (2026). Most recently, Matt was named the 2026 PRIMA Public Risk Manager of the Year.

SESSIONS

NEW 8 Habits of a Highly Effective Safety Culture

Safety professionals often treat safety as a shifting priority rather than a fixed value — and that mindset gap is where breakdowns happen. This session walks through eight practical habits that separate reactive, compliance-driven programs from truly effective safety cultures: reframing safety as a core value, opening real channels for raising concerns, embedding safety into operations rather than treating it as a bolt-on function, focusing "left of zero" on leading indicators, shifting from managing people to managing systems, fixing the work instead of blaming the worker, and finding the S.T.C.K.Y. risks that drive Serious Injuries and Fatalities. Participants leave with concrete, leadership-level strategies for building a culture in which safe behavior occurs even when no one is watching.

Duration: 3 Hours

NEW Detoxifying Safety Culture: Antidotes to Common OSH Pitfalls

Certain phrases quietly undermine safety culture — "We're OSHA compliant," "We've always done it this way," "That's not my job," "Incidents are inevitable." This interactive workshop identifies four of the most common "safety culture poisons" and pairs each with a practical antidote: continuous improvement, embracing change, shared responsibility, and a prevention mindset. Through group activities and action planning, participants leave with a concrete commitment for addressing one poison in their own organization.

Duration: 90 Minutes

NEW From Compliance to Strategy: The Safety Professional's Role in Enterprise Risk Management

Safety professionals manage risk every day, but rarely frame it as enterprise risk. This session reframes safety leadership through the lens of Enterprise Risk Management (ERM), moving beyond compliance-focused, departmental, lagging-metric approaches toward a strategic, organization-wide, predictive risk framework. Attendees will learn to identify enterprise-level risks, apply risk prioritization tools such as the likelihood-impact matrix, and expand their influence in strategic, executive-level conversations.

Duration: 60 Minutes

NEW Infrastructure & Deferred Maintenance Risk: A Strategic Risk Management Challenge for Public Entities

With much of the nation's public infrastructure between 40 and 70 years old, deferred maintenance has become a growing risk exposure for public entities. This session examines why deferred maintenance develops, how it creates a self-reinforcing cycle of deteriorating assets, rising failure rates, and costly emergency repairs, and which infrastructure categories — transportation, public buildings and schools, water/wastewater, stormwater, and energy systems — carry the greatest risk. Attendees will leave with practical, risk-based strategies to reduce exposure and make the case for proactive maintenance investment.

Duration: 60 Minutes

NEW Safety & the Supervisor: A Key Ally to Workplace Safety

The supervisor is the critical link between an organization's stated safety values and what actually happens in the field — and misalignment between safety and production expectations can quietly erode employee trust in the safety process. This session explores seven foundational principles safety professionals can model and reinforce with supervisors to build them into effective safety advocates: doing what you say you will do, listening (not just hearing), getting out into the field, empathizing with employees who raise concerns, communicating clearly and consistently, giving timely and constructive feedback, and leading with humility. Participants leave with practical, relationship-based tools for turning supervisors into engaged partners in safety success rather than a weak link in the chain.

Duration: 1 Hour

Marilyn Rivers, CPCU, ARM, AIC

Principal, Rivers Risk Consulting LLC



Marilyn Rivers is a nationally recognized public-private entity strategic risk management professional and educator who has extensive experience in delivering program development, fiscal oversight, compliance, and education tailored to meet the dynamic needs of business. She recently retired from public service with a combined thirty-five years of experience managing risk in both the public-private sectors. Marilyn is the Principal of Rivers Risk Consulting. She holds a BS in Chemistry from Clarkson and a MEd from Tufts University. Her professional designations include the CPCU, ARM and AIC. Marilyn was the recipient of the PRIMA Risk Manager of the Year in 2007. She was instrumental in designing the resurgence of PRIMA Institute and actively facilitated and designed its programming for many years. She actively provides risk mitigation services to the local non-profit community. She's an active volunteer for multiple organizations and currently serves as the President of her Lions Club. She's won national and international awards including the Lions International Robert J Uplinger Award (2014), Knight of the Blind (2016), and Melvin Jones Fellowship Distinguished Service Award (2018).

SESSIONS

Ensuring Community Events Meet Your Community Needs

Private community events define a public entity's socioeconomic culture bringing with them the potential for tourists, trade, visitors and business. More often than not, the events bring additional costs to governance and often cause strife as municipalities attempt to recoup costs of overtime to manage the health and safety of events for not only the taxpayers, but everyone else attending the event. Public safety has become the number one issue if reviewing and approving events for our communities. Achieving consensus is difficult at times, when events are marketed as benefitting a cause or financial assistance for a well-known loss. This begs the question and thoughtful conversation as to how municipalities can work toward achieving community safety while giving a platform to private-community events.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Cultivating a Safety Committee Dialogue within Your Municipality

Risk professionals are often called the "tip of the spear" within their organization with regard to developing and marrying the relationships between risk and safety. It's a difficult role that requires ongoing education, training and an understanding of the dynamics of our global safety culture in the context of our local environments. The presentation is designed to provide discussion points in ensuring your employees and team members recognize the value of the health and safety of their personal and professional human habits. Life is as cyclical as our risk management wheel. Let's talk about how to engage your folks and instill upon them the importance of their participation and support of creating a safety culture within your organization and community.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Tools to Successfully Establish Public-Private Risk Partnerships

Taxpayers and elected officials today post-pandemic are faced with unprecedented debt and shrinking tax dollars. Politics often get in the way of needed infrastructure upgrades and advancements. Risk management professionals are faced with a demand to understand and explain the risks associated with private funding for public projects including streetscapes, parking, solar, telecommunications, farming and recycling just to name a few. Municipal ingenuity is the precursor of future success in our post-COVID reality. This presentation focuses on thinking outside the box on cost of risk retained versus risk allotted to a private partnership.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes



Risk and Safety in Transition: Surviving Changes in Team Dynamics

The dynamics of life and its cycles of behavior, age and reality materially affect the continuity of risk and safety programming for our organizations. As we age toward retirement or experience life changing events, we strive for a positive legacy to leave our communities with the possibility of continuing our success while allowing for the freedom to change with the dynamics of our team. Our programs, however, are materially dependent upon the success of our communication, engagement, and the knowledge we carry in our heads from the years of experience we've shared with the community. Let's talk legacy, positive steps for dealing with the retirement/loss of our team members and their successors, and our ability to share our passion constructively while leaving wiggle room for imaginative new ideas.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Risk in Adversity

Governance undergoes change with every election and change in leadership. Change brings new ideas, a questioning of the norm, and turmoil in relationships. Survival of the fittest may mean taking a hard look at who we are as risk professionals to determine what is important to defend and when to concede defeat for the greater good. This session focuses on our individual risk programming, our capacity to trust our instincts to learn to capitulate, and to live with the consequences dealt us as we all strive for grace in governance.

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Maria Robinson

City of Flagstaff



Maria Robinson is the Risk Fund Administrator for the City of Tucson. She has almost 20 years in the industry, more than 25 years in the public sector. She previously served as the Risk Management Director for the City of Flagstaff, the Loss Prevention and Control Manager for the City of Tucson and the Occupational Medical Manager for Pima County.

Maria draws upon her experience to build relationships, offer mission-oriented solutions, and help others get to "yes" whenever possible. She has been described by organizations as "invaluable to the team" and "someone I never have to worry about."

Maria earned her undergraduate degree in Business Administration from the University of Arizona's Eller College of Management, a Master of Legal Studies in Compliance and Legal Risk Management from the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law, holds a Professional Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health from UCSD and has completed both the ARM 400 and 401 courses. Public speaking engagements include National PRIMA, Arizona PRIMA, Oregon PRIMA, Arizona SWANA, ADEQ, Southern AZ NSC, and ADOSH. Maria is a Certified OSHA Outreach Instructor, holds a Green Belt Certification in Lean Sigma and has obtained her Fire Inspector I Certification.

SESSION

You're a New Risk Manager, Now What?

This presentation provides 10 tips to help make you (the new risk manager, or any new manager for that matter) successful in your new role! Think of this overview as pitfalls to avoid and things no one told you along the way. These tips aren't your run of the mill tips, rather, real world, practical pieces of advice that helped me as a new risk manager be successful, which includes earning respect and gaining trust from those in the organization bottom to top.

Duration: 1 hour

Melissa Steger, MPA, CRM

Owner, Melissa Steger Enterprises



Melissa Steger is the owner of Melissa Steger Enterprises where she offers consulting services based on her 30 years of workers' compensation, people, and program management experience. Melissa's services combine her career experience and horse ownership lessons to highlight the importance of patience, compassion, and communication in relation to management skills and customer service delivery.

Melissa retired after 30 years of workers' compensation experience gained from the public, private, and regulatory sectors. Her career consisted of building and leading innovatively expansive programs, managing large teams, and presenting before audiences across the country and internationally. She ended her career as the Associate Director of Workers' Compensation for The University of Texas System, where she administered the self-insured workers' compensation and unemployment programs, providing coverage for over 140K employees of academic and health institutions across the state.

Melissa served on the Texas and national boards for PRIMA and held the national presidency in 2021-2022. She received the Texas PRIMA Risk Professional of the Year award, a Servant Heart Award, and the PRIMA Chapter Service Award. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies, Master of Public Administration degree and is a certified risk manager.

She presently serves as a director for the Kids' Chance of Texas and is the Executive Vice President of Business Development for WorkCompCollege.com. Melissa is a strong believer in claim advocacy, enjoys mentoring, and is thankful to support an industry she loves. .

SESSIONS

Having Fun with Culture Development

This session will describe the steps a WCI program took to turn unexpected change into a positive outcome. The program had to not only develop, but also sustain a new culture focused on mission, advocacy, compliance, and results. Come learn how the program kept their focus on doing what's right.
Duration: 1 hour

Establishing a Worker Recovery Mindset in Workers' Compensation

Through the grey tsunami and great resignation, the workers' compensation industry is faced with an existential threat — people. Not just "butts in seats" but people that understand the interconnectedness of all stakeholders and how important a claims advocacy model is to the overall effectiveness of the system. There are many current work comp professionals who have not been trained on a worker recovery model and know only enough about the industry to do their job. More importantly, the perception of work comp - and insurance in general - as humorless, homogenous and solely focused on cost containment creates a real issue for recruiting and retaining the rising generations who are purpose driven and want to make a difference. The best way to recruit, educate and retain is to change the paradigm towards a worker's recovery system focused on the whole person, dedicated to helping people injured at work restore their job, capabilities and life. Interestingly, a mindset of recovery is also the best way to achieve optimal financial and clinical outcomes for the two primary stakeholders in work comp — the employer and the injured employee. This session will discuss how best to instill that enlightened approach amongst all stakeholders to reduce antagonism and improve results.
Duration: 1 hour

Management through the Eyes of Horses

This session will teach management skills, tips, and tricks through experience gained from horses. Through pictures and videos, this presentation will touch on training, creating a safe environment, and generating compassion in our jobs. Let's grab our boots and spurs and saddle up for a ride through the trail of management.

Learning Objectives: This session covers the importance of good leadership and healthy communication, the absence of which has a negative impact to risk management and claims handling.

1. To gain knowledge of the components of a psychologically safe environment.
2. To develop insight into the importance of motivational interviewing.
3. To understand the importance of good communication and consequences if communication fails.

Duration: 75 minutes



For more information, contact Shaunda Ragland, PRIMA's Director, Education & Training, at **sragland@primacentral.org.**

Details and additional information:

- PRIMA will provide one speaker per year to PRIMA chapters via the Speakers Bureau.
- Speakers are provided on a first-come, first-served basis, as well as the individual's availability.
- Chapters are asked to indicate a first, second and third choice speaker.
- Chapters are to provide complimentary conference/meeting registration to the speaker.
- Chapters are asked to provide overnight hotel accommodations for the speaker.
- PRIMA's speakers bureau is an information/resource service by the Public Risk Management Association.
- PRIMA does not endorse these speakers or the contents of their presentations.

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