



# 2026 QUAD CITIES REGIONAL DISASTER CONFERENCE



 REGISTER NOW

# 2026 QUAD CITIES REGIONAL DISASTER CONFERENCE AGENDA

**APRIL 1, 2026**

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

**WATERFRONT CONVENTION CENTER**

2021 State St, Bettendorf, IA 52722

**Time:**

**Session:**

**7:30 AM - 8:30 AM**

**Registration and Light Refreshments**

**8:30 AM - 8:45 AM**

**Opening Remarks**

Darin Keith, Scott County Emergency Management Agency

**8:45 AM - 9:45 AM**

**Legionnaire's Disease Investigation**

Dr. Matthew Donahue, State Epidemiologist & Deputy Medical Director at the Division of Public Health at the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services

**9:45 AM - 10:45 AM**

**Young Lives, Big Plans: Integrating Pediatrics into Disaster Drills**

Kristel Wetjen, RN and Carlyn Christensen-Szalanski, MD, FAAP, University of Iowa Healthcare Pediatric Disaster Task Force

**10:45 AM - 11:00 AM**

**Vendor and Network Break**

**11:00AM - 12:00PM**

**Active Shooter Response**

Matt DeSmyter, Rock Island County Sheriff's Office

**12:00PM - 1:00PM**

**Lunch**

Taco bar

**1:00PM - 2:30PM**

**Cybersecurity: CISA 101, Threats and Artificial Intelligence**

Advisors for Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency

**2:30 PM - 2:45 PM**

**Vendor and Network Break**

**2:45 PM - 3:45 PM**

**Finding Hope in the Worst Night Ever**

Jim Hawkes, Eastern Iowa Community Colleges

**3:45 PM-4:00 PM**

**Conference Closing**

# Meet the Speakers

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## **Matthew Donahue, MD**

**Iowa State Epidemiologist, Iowa Department of Health and Human Services**

Dr. Matthew Donahue is an Iowan, an Internal Medicine Physician, and the Iowa State Epidemiologist. Domestically he has developed surveillance systems for novel health emergencies and led responses to numerous outbreaks and public health emergencies; internationally he has worked with patients with HIV and opportunistic infections in South Africa, helped grow a global health program in rural Peru, and led response teams during a polio response in Ghana. He trained through CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service and holds a Certificate of Knowledge in Clinical Tropical Medicine and Travelers' Health. He continues practicing medicine one day per week at a local health department and his authored or coauthored scientific publications have been cited more than 3,000 times. In addition to his work in epidemiology and medicine, he greatly enjoys adventures with his wife and two daughters.



## **Carlyn Christensen-Szalanski, MD, FAAP**

**Co-Chair of the UIHC Pediatric Disaster Task Force CO-Chair, University of Iowa Health Care**

Carlyn Christensen-Szalanski, MD, FAAP, is trained as a pediatrician who worked in the Department of Emergency Medicine at the University of Iowa from 2003-2024. She continues to serve as Co-Chair of the UIHC Pediatric Disaster Task Force with Kristel since discontinuing her clinical work in the ED. She enjoys developing disaster exercise scenarios to promote preparedness of individuals and teams.



## **Kristel Wetjen, RN, MSN**

**Trauma Program Manager, University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital**

Kristel Wetjen serves as the Trauma Program Manager at University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital, an American College of Surgeons-verified Level I Pediatric Trauma Center, a role she has held since 2008. She earned both her Bachelor and Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Iowa. Kristel serves as Co-Chair of the Pediatric Disaster Taskforce, established in 2010, and is committed to advancing the integration of pediatric considerations across all facets of disaster preparedness—within the hospital setting as well as at the community, regional, and national levels. The Taskforce has prioritized innovative strategies to incorporate pediatric populations into emergency exercises and drills, resulting in sustained growth in engagement and participation over time.

# Meet the Speakers



## **Matt DeSmyter**

**Deputy Sherriff, Rock Island County Sheriff's Office**

Matt has been serving the citizens of Rock Island County for the last 28 years, with the last 20 years being a Deputy Sheriff. He has been in a supervisory role within the office for over 13 of those 20 years. Matt has been a member of the Rock Island County Emergency Services Team (SWAT), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Federal Gang Task Force, and the Regional ILEAS Weapons of Mass Destruction Special Response Team (WMDSRT). In 2018, Matt was selected as part of the first statewide group to be trained and certified as an Illinois Active Threat Master Instructor. He provides best practice active shooter response and rescue task force training to Quad City metro agencies and fire departments. Matt also has experience serving as the Rock Island County Emergency Management Agency coordinator.



## **Advisors from the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)**

CISA works with partners to defend against today's threats and collaborate to build a more secure and resilient infrastructure for the future. As the National Coordinator for Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience, CISA works with partners at every level to identify and manage risk to the cyber and physical infrastructure that Americans rely on every hour of every day. CISA works with partners to defend against today's threats and collaborate to build a more secure and resilient infrastructure for the future.



## **Jim Hawkes, MA, NRP, CCP, CEM**

**Eastern Iowa Community Colleges**

Jim has been in EMS for over 27 years, holds a Master of Divinity with an emphasis in Pastoral Care, a master's degree in counseling, and is an IAEM certified emergency manager. He is trained in Critical Incident Stress Management through ICISF and has served on both CISM and peer support teams. Yet none of this education or experience prepared him for the night that changed his life forever. When Jim's 22-year-old son unexpectedly died, he was forced to navigate grief not as a responder, instructor, or counselor – but as a father. Through his journey, Jim discovered firsthand the importance of vulnerability, resilience, and the courage to ask for help. Jim shares his story in hopes of helping others break the stigma surrounding mental health, advocate for personal resilience and self-care, and better support one another during their “worst night ever.”

# Getting There + Where to Stay

## Conference Venue

Quad-Cities Waterfront Convention Center  
2021 State Street  
Bettendorf, IA 52722

**The Quad-Cities  
Waterfront  
Convention Center  
is connected via  
skywalk to the Isle  
Casino Hotel.**

## Where to Stay

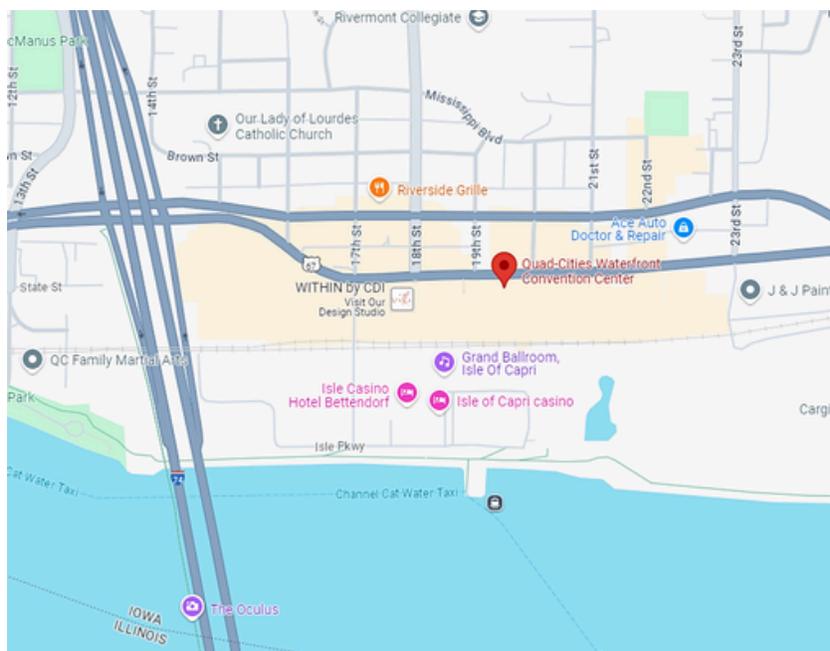
The Isle Casino Hotel  
1777 Isle Parkway  
Bettendorf, IA 52722

<https://www.caesars.com/isle-bettendorf>

## Nearby Attractions

The Quad Cities is a bi-state community located on the bend of the Mississippi River. Explore restaurants, museums, special events, shopping districts, and other attractions that have become favorites among our visitors.

<https://visitquadcities.com/>



2026

QUAD CITIES REGIONAL  
DISASTER CONFERENCE

# PLANNING COMMITTEE



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Rock Island County  
Health Department



Service Area 5  
Healthcare Coalition



**MERCYONE GENESIS**



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**THANK YOU**  
FOR YOUR SUPPORT