

# One Voice United

OFFICER WELLNESS  
& PTSD



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## **One Voice United Launches International Working Group to Combat Correctional PTSD and Stress**

Andy Potter Founder of One Voice United announced the formation of an International Working Group to bring correctional officer and staff stress into the forefront of the debate on corrections reform.

“Research conducted by both the academic and therapeutic communities shows conclusively that stress among correctional staff is beyond epidemic. One out of every three Correctional Officers and one out of every four staff members are symptomatic for Post Traumatic Stress. It is impacting hundreds of thousands of correctional staff and their families and as a result those in our custody. In the United States, Post Traumatic Stress injuries among correctional officers are over 34%, ten times the rate for the general population and for non-custody personnel the rate is 27%. One Voice United is committed to this project and I have asked OVU National Director Brian Dawe and Policy Director Jeremy Tripp to head up this International effort.”

“Post Traumatic Stress Injuries are not confined to the United States. We are confronting a worldwide problem in our profession that’s impacting our mental and physical health, and often affects our families as well. As National Director, I look forward to this opportunity to work on such a critical issue” said Dawe. “Several nations have already agreed to be active participants in this International Working Group. They will join over twenty organizations from the United States who have also committed to this effort. We anticipate that this group will continue to expand both here in the US and abroad as more organizations join in.”

According to One Voice United Policy Director, Jeremy Tripp, “The mission of the Working Group is to seek and share best practices that will help to establish baseline standards to address correctional stress, to find the areas of need that are underserved and fill those gaps, to be a resource for program implementation, to develop strategies and tactics that will net results and to turn those plans into action.”

“OVU also believes that many of the safety and reform challenges we face in corrections can be impacted by addressing the sources of staff stress. This is an ambitious endeavor but we’re not just another advocacy group; these are our brothers and sisters. Every day we see the anguish and the trauma. We learn of the heart attacks, the suicides, the divorces, the substance abuse, and it hurts us deeply. Addressing the silent killer in corrections with a united front and a multi-pronged approach is long overdue.” said Potter.