



2021 Annual Conference Schedule

Please note the agenda is subject to change without notice. You can find the latest schedule on the website at www.ahfconference.org or on the mobile app, when available.

Monday, August 23, 2021

AHF Benchmarking Express Workshop – 2:00-4:30 PM – 2.5 CEU

Speakers: Julie Meddles and Tim Schoonmaker

A deep dive into AHF's Benchmarking Express program, how to understand industry comparisons, and how to collect, understand, and communicate your own data. A hands-on workshop run by AHF's benchmarking experts.

Culinary Innovations Session - 2:00-4:30 PM – 2.5 CEU

Speakers: TBD

Learn from AHF Business Partners as they share the newest products to add to your healthcare and senior dining menus. This pre-conference session will be a creative and interactive session covering unique ways to elevate your menus and offerings.
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Tuesday, August 24, 2021

KEYNOTE SESSION: Triumph Over Change, 2021 and Beyond! – 8:45-9:45 AM – 1 CEU

Speaker: Christopher Ridenhour

Few things encourage “shift” quite like a global pandemic, political pandemonium, civil unrest, and lest we forget, murder hornets. Despite the stress and exhaustion that always accompanies change, this is not the time to trade in your credentials for a one-way airline ticket and butterfly net! There’s not one chapter in the “leadership manual” that prepares us for enduring mayhem and change. Whether you thrive during chaos, or not, rest assured there is some other tribulation waiting to pounce and offer more.... uh, “growth”! Friends, hold tight, Triumph Over Change, 2021 and Beyond! is less keynote than it is a Revival!

Culinary Trends Session – 10:00-11:00 AM – 1 CEU

Speaker: Jim Doak

A walk through upcoming and current culinary trends and what to expect from changing consumer needs and trends.

Retention 911! Reviving, Inspiring, Engaging, Retaining! - 10:00-11:00 AM – 1 CEU

Speaker: Christopher Ridenhour

Dive deeper with our Keynote speaker Christopher Ridenhour. Organizations that fail to fully appreciate, coach, and inspire team members, lose the battle to retain them. GREAT NEWS AHEAD! This session promises to transform burnout energy into strategies to create inclusive,

positive, and cooperative work environments. Come prepared to receive countless ways to kick the workforce crisis in the tail!

Stay Ahead of Contractor Tactics: A Peek Behind the Curtain – 11:30-12:30 PM – 1 CEU

Speaker: Mark Toomey

Take a deep dive with Mark Toomey into the world of contractor takeovers and bids. Mark Toomey, a former Sodexo VP, gives us a peek behind the curtain to understand contractor tactics.

AHF Tradeshow & Marketplace – 12:30-4:00 PM – 3.5 CEU

Browse new products, materials, and services from our amazing business partners. Our sponsors have spent all year building new innovations to help attendees battling an ever-shifting environment. Grab lunch from our sponsor booths as you browse and try out their latest product offerings.

What Just Happened?! Navigating Conflict and Confusion in Communication in Healthcare Business Worlds – 4:15-5:15 PM – 1 CEU

Speakers: Mary Angela Miller MS RD LDN, Adjunct Professor, Ohio State University & Heather Dugan, Founder of Cabernet Coaches®

Moderator: Georgie Shockey, Principal, Ruck-Shockey Associates

We always talk about the importance of effective communication in leadership but rarely do we tell how to enhance this skill. In this session, attendees will be given practical insight on “the HOW.” The speakers will use real examples from real situations to discuss differentiating factors at play in healthcare hierarchies and business/client relationships.

Pandemic Proof Your Retail & Dining Operations - 4:15-5:15 PM – 1 CEU

Speakers: John Herzog, Steve Carlson, Carrie Sullens, Gary Goettl

A session led by industry experts and AHF business partners on how to make sure that your FOH and BOH retail and dining operations are working at top efficiency so that they can weather any storm to come whether it is a global pandemic, natural disaster, or a contractor threat.

Wednesday, August 25, 2021

KEYNOTE SESSION: Cultivating a Culture of Hospitality – 9:00-10:00 AM – 1 CEU

Speaker: Erin Moran

Drawing on her experiences as the first-ever Chief Culture Officer with Union Square Hospitality Group and Senior Vice-President with Great Place to Work, Erin shares her expertise in how to cultivate a company culture that delivers exceptional hospitality. In today’s landscape, employees expect more than a paycheck from their jobs: the best talent in any field is inspired by purpose-driven work. Erin discusses the steps any organization must make to articulate their mission and values, hire and retain the best talent and foster authentic engagement among their teams.

AHF FISH™ Talks: New Directions – 10:30-12:00 PM – 1.5 CEU

Speakers: Rafi Taherian, Jeff Sinelli, Dr. Sandra Sydnor, and Greg Gorgone

Moderator: Erin Moran

FISH Talks™ (Food, Innovation, Service, and Hospitality) are short 15-minute presentations on innovative and unique topics by subject matter experts. Each focuses on a different area of the

industry leaving views with a series of inspiring, forward-thinking, ideas.

Celebrate Excellence Awards Luncheon – 12:30-2:00 PM – 1.5 CEU

Join us as we announce, celebrate, and honor our 2021 Award Winners. This is a critical event where we highlight industry leaders who have gone above and beyond over the past year. During this ceremony you will learn more about each of our award winners, honor our 2020 Award Winners, and enjoy lunch provided by AHF and our sponsors.

It's Not the Players You Given, It's the Team You Build: Coaching Your GPO to MRU
– 2:15-3:15 PM – 1 CEU

Speakers: Maureen Leugers, MBA, RDN, Owner Maureen Leugers LLC & Sherry Fruge, Senior Director, Business Development, Health Resource Services LLC

A session led by industry experts on how to best understand, utilize, and thrive within a GPO contract in the hospitality setting. Attendees will walk away from this session with practical tools and solutions to understand GPOs and how to maximize their GPO contract as one way to control operational costs.

Customer Experience Panel Discussion on Senior Living and Acute Care - 2:15-3:15 PM – 1 CEU

Speakers: Simone Nicolas, MS, RDN, CDN, Corporate Director of Culinary Services, National Healthcare Associates & David Hendricks, Director of Nutrition, Palms of Pasadena Hospital

Moderator: Gerald White, VP/ Publisher of PLATE Magazine

A panel discussion from the acute care operator and senior living operator perspectives, moderated by Gerald White from Plate Magazine. During this panel discussion, Gerald and the operator panelists will discuss hospitality and how to improve patient and customer satisfaction scores in both acute care and senior living.

Culinary Apprenticeship – Building a Strong Culinary Future - 2:15-3:15 PM – 1 CEU

Speaker: Joseph Ninnemann, Regional Director, North and Central WI, System Food & Nutrition Services

Join Joe Ninnemann to learn how he built and implemented his apprentice program and how you can do the same at your facility. Culinary talent has been an ongoing challenge for Aurora Health for several years. Joe and his team took the pandemic as an opportunity to combine on-the-job training with formal classroom education in an effort to build the foundational skill of internal candidates, or external new hires and increase food quality across their entire footprint.

KEYNOTE SESSION Rubber Band Resilience: How to Stretch without Snapping – 3:45-5:00 PM – 1 CEU

Speaker: Kathy Parry, Owner Corporate Energy

With quotes like, “transform or die” and “disruption is king” it is pertinent that changes, especially those from technology, regulations, and staffing, be embraced by healthcare foodservice professionals. The ability to apply a disruption-friendly mindset to transitional shifts will be necessary to serve teams, retain personnel and meet budgets. Join Kathy as she leads us through her own journey to discovering the keys to thriving in the face of challenging circumstances. While sharing her 3-R method for resilient behaviors (React, Reframe, Re-energize), Kathy will inspire you to stretch, but not snap, when faced with disruption.