

Day One: Friday, February 14th



AGENDA

8:00 am

Registration & Exhibit Set Up

9:00 am - 9:30 am

Welcome Remarks

Tieast Leverett, Keira Sorrells, & Pam Frasca

9:30 - 10:15 am

Leading With Intention - Exploring the Current State of DEI and Social Impact

Kevin Clayton - KEYNOTE SPEAKER

10:15 am - 11:15 am

Experience of Dads & Non-Birthing Partners in the NICU

Linda Mesritt, Adam Wood, Tommy Wachhaus, & Anthony Giannetti

11:15 am - 11:25 am

Break

11:25 am - 12:00 pm

Meet Your Peers

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Lunch

1:05 pm - 1:15 pm

Message from the NPN Board

Tieast Leverett & Keira Sorrells

1:15 pm - 2:15 pm

Stress Disorders in Pediatrics

Stephanie Vaughan, Heather Tanner, & Brittney Gray

Studies suggest that 80% of ill or injured children and their families experience some traumatic stress reactions following a medical trauma. Many children who have spent time in the NICU are at an elevated risk for exposure to Acute Stress Disorder, Pediatric Medical Traumatic Stress Disorder (PMTS), and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Stress disorders not only impact the patient, but also the family. 87% of patients and 69% of caregivers have experienced PMTS but most do not know what PMTS is. Additionally, PMTS directly impacts those served by the NPN's member organizations especially ones that provide peer support.

2:15 pm - 2:25 pm

Break

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Leadership Lounge LIVE! - Breakout Sessions

🎯 **Funding & Fundraising 101** with *Martha Sharkey*

🎯 **All the Ways We Advocate** with *Morgan Kowalski, Keira Sorrells, & Leil Sheehan*

3:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Closing Reflection

4:30 pm - 6:00 pm

Headshots and Exhibits

6:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Networking Reception & Awards Dinner

Day Two: Saturday, February 15th



AGENDA

8:00 am

Registration

9:00 am - 9:25 am

Welcome Remarks

Jennifer Degl

9:30 am - 10:30 am

The Queen Bee Effect: Thriving as a NICU Leader Through Profound & Practical Self-Care

Kasey Mathews - KEYNOTE SPEAKER

In this transformative workshop, discover how to lead with resilience, compassion, and clarity. As a NICU parent leader, your role is vital, yet comes with the weight of trauma and immense responsibility. This session will equip you with profound insights to redefine your identity beyond the NICU experience and practical tools to prioritize your well-being daily.

10:35 am - 11:05 am

Meet Your Peers

11:10 am - 12:20 pm

Navigating the Path to Parenthood for LGBTQ+ Families

Nicole Olicker, Elie Ragsdale, Ben Zimmer, and Ashley & Jenna Tomara

In this session, we'll shine a light on the raw, real experiences of LGBTQ+ families; breaking down stereotypes, gender roles and social norms as they navigate the path to parenthood and challenges faced in their unique NICU journeys. This discussion will flow from clinical practice to real life experiences proving that how a family is made is not nearly as important as the love, strength, and tenacity these families display when faced with caring for a critically ill infant.

12:20 pm - 1:20 pm

Lunch

1:35 pm - 2:05 pm

Meet Your Peers

2:10 pm - 3:25 pm

Embracing the 4 A's of Healing: Authenticity-Based Advocacy

Kara Wahlin

Attendees will learn about the 4 A's of healing, as outlined by Dr. Gabor Mate in his seminal work, "The Myth of Normal". Learn how to incorporate authenticity, agency, anger and acceptance into your support program, both as methodologies to support your clients in their healing process, as well as guidance for your own path to healing.

3:25 pm - 3:35 pm

Break

3:35 pm - 4:45 pm

Building the Hive of Authentic Leadership

Jennifer Degl & Teast Leverett

Turn conference inspiration into real-world impact in this interactive session designed to help you synthesize everything you've learned and channel it into meaningful action. Through engaging small-group discussions and collaborative brainstorming, you'll explore strategies to bridge the gap between thoughtful reflection and bold implementation. Whether you're tackling organizational challenges, refining personal goals, or building on new insights, this session will equip you with practical tools to move forward with clarity and confidence. Don't miss this opportunity to connect, collaborate, and transform your conference takeaways into actionable steps for success!

4:45 pm - 4:50 pm

Closing Reflection

Keira Sorrells & Jennifer Degl

6:30 pm

Optional Group Dinner



8:00 am - 8:45 am

Yoga

9:00 am - 11:00 am

Members' Breakfast

Do not go where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

- *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

SPEAKERS



Keynote Speaker

Kevin Clayton (he/him)

EVP, Chief Impact and Equity Officer - Cleveland Cavaliers

Kevin Clayton is the Chief Impact and Equity Officer for Rock Entertainment Group (REG), the parent-company encompassing the Cleveland Cavaliers, Cleveland Charge, Cleveland Monsters, and Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse. In this role, Clayton oversees the Community Impact and DEI teams, Cavaliers Legends, Cavaliers Community Foundation, and handles government affairs for REG. By focusing the advancement of REG's social impact and responsibility, Clayton has significantly impacted team member representation, workplace culture, fan engagement, and community relations.

Leading With Intention - Exploring the Current State of DEI and Social Impact



Keynote Speaker

Kasey Mathews (she/her)

Author, Speaker, Coach - The Usual Magic

Kasey Mathews is a holistic life coach, an inspirational speaker, and the award-winning author of *Preemie: Lessons in Love, Life and Motherhood* and *A Mom's Guide to Creating a Magical Life*. Both books received the Mom's Choice Gold Award, and *Preemie* earned the New Hampshire Non-Fiction Reader's Choice Award. Kasey is on a mission to uplift and empower women ready to lead a life overflowing with harmony, abundance, purpose and joy.

The Queen Bee Effect: Thriving as a NICU Leader Through Profound and Practical Self-Care

Skills to Share: Support program development | Leadership development

Interested in Learning These Skills: Leadership development | Organizational development | Professional/Organizational Coaching/Consulting | Book writing