

2026 Chamber Banquet Guest Speaker

Connor Wentling

Connor Wentling is a professional speaker focused on helping people respond to uncertainty with resilience, clarity, and laughter. He has been speaking professionally since 2024.

Connor joined the Marine Corps in 2004, where he spent fourteen years as a helicopter pilot and leadership officer. He served in operations and recruiting roles, and quickly learned that even high-stakes situations could be made lighter—and more effective—with the right mindset and a well-placed laugh. It was in the cockpit and in front of Marines that he first started pairing discipline with humor as a leadership strategy.



After transitioning out of the military in 2017, **Connor** did what many veterans do—he tried to figure out what “normal” life looked like. He has worn a number of hats since then: youth director, house flipper, project manager for a custom home builder. From the outside, it might look like a scattered path, but each step sharpened his understanding of people, performance, and what it means to stay grounded when life goes sideways.

He had always wanted to try stand-up, and a few years of doing it taught him a lot about timing, connection, and reading the room. It was fun—but improv comedy is what really hooked him. The unscripted, real-time nature of it felt like a mirror of everyday life. He started revisiting philosophy too; he had majored in it years earlier, and he found that Stoic thinking, paired with a sense of humor, offered a powerful combination: perspective when things get heavy, and permission to lighten up when they don't have to be.

He now speaks to teams and organizations about how to apply these tools—humor, philosophy, and presence—when the stakes are high and the future feels unclear. His audience includes educators, first responders, federal agencies, hospitality leaders, and financial professionals. He is especially passionate about bringing this work into the corporate space, where uncertainty is constant and culture matters.



Offstage, **Connor** is married to Rachel and they have four kids—Jack, Hank, Ellie, and Amelia—plus a small dog named Graham, who was supposed to be Ellie's responsibility (but, as these things go, now belongs to Rachel). He coaches a lot of youth sports and once led his U13 girls team to three straight championships—not to brag, but banners hang forever. He also follows the English Premier League and roots for whichever club has the best shot at taking down Manchester City.