

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE COUNCIL JULY 2009

The summertime is usually quiet at the Council. Schools are out and senior citizens are inside staying cool. The Council did do three presentations to high school age campers in Atlantic County, totaling 450 young people. One six (6) hour LCADC training was done at Bergen Regional Hospital for Drug Check Consulting. Two presentations were made to at-risk populations and an in-service training was done for Straight & Narrow counselors. The Council also participated in the Rutgers Summer School of Alcohol and Drug Studies and offered an elective course on Adolescent Gambling to attendees.

The Council continued to be involved in various community activities. We are partnering with the NJ Division of Addiction Services (DAS) and others on the Recovery Rally set for September 12, 2009. As well, we are deeply involved with the New Jersey Chapter of the American Correctional Association and the Association of Professionals Treating Problem Gambling. The Council also had dialogue in July with an Employee Assistance Program.

During July, planning for the 27th Statewide Conference on Compulsive Gambling moved into full gear. The conference is scheduled for September 25th and will offer four (4) plenary sessions on current issues in treatment and recovery. Conference brochures were mailed, and processing of attendee and exhibitor registrations began.

In July, our help messages began appearing in a number of new places around New Jersey. Many diners on routes to casinos now have (or soon will have) the 1-800-GAMBLER® Helpline number on their placemats. Certain NJ Transit buses and light rail cars in Essex, Passaic, Morris, Hudson, Camden, Monmouth, Ocean, Bergen, and Atlantic Counties have been displaying interior advertising cards, while selected rail and light rail stations have large posters on their platforms. During late June and early July, the Council's 1-800-GAMBLER® banner also could be seen in the sky over most Jersey Shore beaches.

The Council has brought on a new intern. Jamey L. Lister, MSW is a Doctoral Student in the Rutgers University Social Work Program. Jamey will be working on special projects, including enhancing our website and fact sheets.

Many of the tasks performed by the Council are not easily translated into achievements. We are a resource for press, individuals in need, and other state agencies. We often respond directly to requests for information, help, reactions to gambling developments in the state and nation, and requests for trainings.

Our contracted treatment providers are required to use the Gambler Addiction Index (GAI) as an assessment tool. This enables us to develop a composite of the individuals we are seeing for treatment. The GAI instrument provides a score of severity on six scales: gambling, drugs, alcohol, truthfulness, stress-coping and suicide. The most recent GAI report, covering the period from January, 2008 through May, 2009 examined 273 gamblers in treatment, whose characteristics were broken down as follows:

- 87.5% were males and 12.5% were females.
- With regard to race and ethnicity, 75.1% were Caucasian; the remaining 24.5 percent included clients of African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, or other heritage.
- The average age was 38, with 80% being between 20 and 49.
- 39% had a high school diploma or equivalency, 28% had post-secondary education and 24% had less than a high school education (numbers are rounded off for ease of reporting).
- Approximately 55% of the individuals were single, 23% were married, 20% were divorced or separated and 2% were widowed.
- More than 30% had not been employed the last 12 months.

This information is helpful to us in identifying the population we serve and the need to expand the services that are provided.