

## September, 2009 Council Highlights

The highlight of the month was our 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Conference at the Doubletree Hotel in Princeton; 147 people attended this conference and heard presentations on gambling and the family, co-morbidity, gambling and crime and evidence based treatment for problem gambling. The reviews from attendees were very favorable; we are reviewing evaluations in hopes of continuing to improve our conference.

The Council continued its training efforts. In September we trained two (2) senior groups, three (3) high schools and one (1) college. As well, we gave a training in our Gambling Awareness Program to Mainland High School and met with school officials in two (2) towns. We also conducted training for Intensive Supervision Program staff and lectured to an inpatient facility, New Hope Foundation.

The Council continued its efforts to develop partnerships, relationships and linkages with other agencies. Donald Weinbaum, Executive Director of the Council met with The New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority, Passaic County Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, The American Correctional Association (New Jersey Chapter), The New Jersey Casino Control Commission, The Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey, The Intensive Supervision Program and the Bridge to Recovery Network in Newark. He also attended a meeting of the Governor's Commission on the Horse Racing Industry. These reflect an effort to get our message across and to link with other New Jersey agencies and institutions, in furtherance of our goals of disseminating information about gambling and advocating for the compulsive gambler.

The Council made several proposals at the Board meeting of the American Compulsive Gambler Counselor Certification Board, which await further discussion. These were designed to increase the workforce of gambling counselors in New Jersey through creation of an entry level certification and facilitating the process by which an individual can again become a CCGC once a certification has lapsed. Congratulations to Jeff Beck, Council Managerial Assistant, who was elected President of the Certification Board.

The Council handled 125 intake calls on the 1-800-GAMBLER® helpline in September. One call was from a Minister asking information about compulsive gambling to use in his sermon. He wanted to advise his congregation that help was available and to direct them to the Council. A second interesting call was from an individual in Atlantic City, who, after calling the helpline, was going to attend a GA meeting, seek professional therapy, go on the self exclusion list and speak to his minister. Religious leaders enjoy a trusting relationship with their parishioners and can be an important source in providing gambling help references to them.