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The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is a private, non-profit health agency dedicated to reducing the social, financial and emotional costs of problem gambling. The Council provides information, education, advocacy and referral services for problem gamblers, their loved ones and the greater community.

*This publication is funded in part by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services.*

### Massachusetts Problem Gambling Treatment Centers

Boston ASAP, Boston: 617.482.5292

Henry Lee Willis Community Center, Worcester: 508.799.2934

Lowell House, Inc., Lowell: 978.459.8656

Mt. Auburn Hospital Prevention and Recovery Center, Cambridge: 617.499.5051

Stanley Street Treatment and Resources, Inc., Fall River: 508.679.5222

Steppingstone, Inc., Fall River: 508.674.2788 ext. 110

### Resources

Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling Helpline: 800.426.1234

Gamblers Anonymous: 213.386.8789 or Western MA: 800.266.1908

Bettors Anonymous: 978.988.1777 or 781.662.5199

Gam-Anon (Family/Friends): 888.644.8482

National Council on Problem Gambling Helpline: 800.522.4700

Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders at Harvard Medical School, Division on Addictions: 781.306.8600



## Successful Conference!

April 21-23, the 2006 GA / GAM-ANON International Conference was held at the Quincy Marriot. More than 400 participants enjoyed workshops, dining, dancing, entertainment, and the opportunity to network with people from all over the country and abroad who were interested in gambling problems. The conference theme, *Follow the Trail to Freedom*, was incorporated throughout the high-energy weekend. People in attendance enjoyed patriotic skits and decorations that captured the spirit of Massachusetts.

### YOUR OPINION MATTERS!

#### Council Seeks Feedback About Newsletter

The Council would love to hear your feedback about our newsletter. What type of information would you like to see more or less of? What do we need to improve? What are we doing well? Please contact Communications Specialist, Margot Cahoon with any thoughts at 617-426-4554 / margot@masscompulsivegambling.org.

We understand the problem. We can help.

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Video crew pictured at the TV commercial shoot



Together with the Massachusetts State Treasurer's Office, the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling has launched a new public service campaign designed to raise awareness of problem gambling in the Commonwealth, and to promote the availability of resources both for people with gambling problems and their families.

State Treasurer Tim Cahill pledged one million dollars from the Massachusetts Lottery's \$10 million dollar advertising budget toward building awareness around problem gambling. The announcement was made at the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling's 2006 *Massachusetts Conference on Gambling Problems: Community, Clinical and Personal Approaches*, which was held at the University of Massachusetts, Boston Campus on May 5, 2006.

This is a significant increase from monies committed to the effort in past years. In Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005, the Lottery

## State Lottery Commits One Million Dollars to Increase Awareness About Problem Gambling Campaign Will Highlight Council's Services

donated \$100,000 toward raising awareness of problem gambling programs and services. At that time Treasurer Cahill stated, "It is my hope that over time we may increase our level of financial support to help combat problem gambling here in Massachusetts."

This year, Treasurer Cahill took the steps necessary to make that happen. "We are impressed with the one million dollar commitment, and looking forward to seeing the results of the campaign," said Kathleen M. Scanlan, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling. "The Council values the support of the Treasurer and the Lottery in helping to address problem gambling. Treasurer Cahill understands the devastation caused by gambling problems, and the need for resources to help people."

Scanlan feels that while most state lotteries provide some support to problem gambling services in their respective communities, that a campaign of this magnitude is history in the making. "Very few other states have seen this level of financial commitment. The Massachusetts Lottery is a leader in taking this issue seriously, and being part of the solution," she said.

The Lottery's advertising agency, Hill, Holliday, Connors, Cosmopolous, Inc. is leading the creative efforts. The group has developed a radio ad, two television ads and three print ads, all of which focus on the costs and potential loss of both material possessions and family relationships due to problematic gambling.



State Lottery Director, Joseph Sullivan; Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling Executive Director, Kathy Scanlan; Massachusetts State Treasurer, Tim Cahill; and Vice President, Hill, Holliday, Connors, Cosmopolous, Inc., Jeff Greenler, presented the new advertising campaign at the Council's annual conference.

"For the vast majority of players, lottery games are fun, affordable forms of recreation and entertainment," said Treasurer Cahill. "But for some, any form of gambling can lead to problems. The Council provides top-notch services for problem gamblers, and I am pleased to partner with the Council at an increased level of financial support to help combat compulsive gambling in Massachusetts."

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## The 2006 Massachusetts Conference on Gambling Problems: Community, Clinical and Personal Approaches

On May 5, the Council held the 2006 Conference on Gambling Problems: Community, Clinical and Personal Approaches at the University of Massachusetts, Boston Campus.

More than 130 people attended the conference, which included workshop sessions, lectures and a multi-media presentation.

Council Board President, Rod Hoffman, opened the conference and welcomed participants by sharing appreciation and anecdotes about his experience working with the Council over the last 15 years.

Afterwards, Council Executive Director, Kathy Scanlan, spoke about a Public Opinion Survey that the Council conducted last summer, thus making a strong case for the need to increase awareness of problem gambling in the Commonwealth.

Massachusetts State Treasurer, Tim Cahill and State Lottery Director, Joseph Sullivan answered that call by announcing a new million dollar advertising campaign that will highlight the Council's services. Jeff Greenler from Hill, Holliday, Connors, Cosmopolis, Inc. presented the campaign by airing the new TV and radio PSAs and unveiling the three new print ads. And, Richard Earle, author of *The Art of Cause Marketing*, discussed the importance of social marketing campaigns and the creative strategy process.

Next, the morning plenary *Addiction & Exposure: Implications for Public Health and Treatment* was presented by Jennifer Wegener from Bensinger DuPont Association and Debi LaPlante, PhD, from Harvard Medical School / Division on Addictions. Ms. Wegener spoke about how problem gambling rates in Illinois were impacted by dockside casino gambling in the state, and the effect it had upon their Helpline. Debi LaPlante spoke about addiction as a syndrome, and then discussed the prevalence of gambling addiction rates as gambling opportunities are expanded. She explained the "exposure effect" that makes numbers spike initially when gambling is introduced to a community, and the leveling off effect (or adaptation) that has happened in cities such as Las Vegas, after the novelty has worn off.

The afternoon plenary was led by Terry Elman from the Council of Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey. *Students and Gambling: What is the Attraction?* addressed the growing popularity of gambling among teens and the associated risks. Mr. Elman discussed the maturity and decision making of adolescents related to gambling. He drew upon years of anecdotal and personal experience with gambling problems.

At the end of the day, participants were able to choose among three workshops: *Genders Impact on the Trajectory of Gambling Problems*, presented by Dr. Sarah Nelson from

Harvard Medical School / Division on Addictions; *Back on Track: Financial Planning in Recovery*, presented by Jennifer Lane from Compass Planning and; *Incorporating Gambling into Substance Abuse Treatment Agencies*, presented by Sarah Ruiz from the Mass. Department of Public Health / Bureau of Substance Abuse Service and Marlene Warner from the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling.

The conference was well received. Over 90% of participants surveyed felt that it was above average or excellent in increasing understanding and awareness about problem gambling.



(Photos, top to bottom)

Participants attend the "Gender's Impact on the Trajectory of Gambling Problems" workshop, presented by Sarah Nelson, PhD, from Harvard Medical School/Division on Addictions.

Alicen McGowan, PhD, from AdCare Outpatient Services; Council Board Member, Ed Talbot, also from AdCare; and Laurajane Fitzsimons, from the Counseling Center at UMass, Dartmouth pictured together at the conference.

Sarah Ruiz from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health / Bureau of Substance Abuse Services presented, "Incorporating Gambling into Substance Abuse Treatment Agencies."

### SEEKING LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT FOR PROBLEM GAMBLING SERVICES

The Council is seeking the support of the Legislature to increase funding for problem gambling services in the FY07 budget.

Governor Romney's FY07 budget recommends funding at \$655,000 and the House budget follows suit. However, the Senate has proposed \$1 million in their version of the budget.

The Council will ask the Conference Committee to support the \$345,000 increase as it prepares the final version, and has asked members to consider the following facts:

- In July 2002, the House and the Senate approved \$2 million for problem gambling services. It was vetoed by Governor Swift and reduced to \$1 million. It was further reduced in October 2002 to \$655,000 and has remained at that level ever since then.

- During the same time period, gambling has increased in popularity and availability, and Lottery sales have continued to grow and break sales records each year.

- A recent public opinion survey conducted by the Council found that 78% of Massachusetts residents agree that "as long as the State derives revenue from legal gambling, it should continue to fund problem gambling programs."

- As opportunities for gambling become more available and more popular, there are increasing demands for services that the Council is unable to meet. Reaching out to adolescents and to college-age students in an effort to prevent problems with gambling, are among them.

To follow the budget process, and become involved in advocacy efforts, please visit [www.masscompulsivegambling.org/services/advocacy.php](http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org/services/advocacy.php)



## Helpline Posters Available

The Council has updated and printed new posters to promote our Helpline. Partial funding was provided through a TVG AWARE Program Responsible Wagering Community Grant, administered by the Winners Federation, the association of credentialed addictions counselors and others committed to preventing addictions in the horseracing industry.

The posters feature a life preserver image and include the tagline, "Sometimes all problem gamblers need is a life line," and the Council's toll-free Helpline number. The poster design, which the Council first developed several years ago, has been updated and now incorporates the organization's new branding colors, logo and language.

The posters were distributed to the State's four racetracks and are available free of charge. To request copies, please contact Council Office Manager, Peggie Milisci at 617-426-4554 / [peggie@masscompulsivegambling.org](mailto:peggie@masscompulsivegambling.org).

## RFR: Outpatient Treatment For Gambling Disorders

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health / Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (DPH/BSAS) is seeking proposals from licensed and contracted outpatient substance abuse treatment vendors to provide ambulatory services for people experiencing problems with gambling.

The Bureau would like to expand the number of facilities in the State that offer education and treatment services addressing gambling problems. Currently, the number of treatment agencies where individuals can be referred is extremely limited.

Vendors selected through the Request for Referrals (RFR #702915) process will have access to reimbursement for case consultation, case management and individual, group, and family treatment sessions provided to indigent and uninsured problem gamblers from the gambling treatment blanket. Reimbursement will also be provided for gambling services provided to insured individuals in the cases when problem gambling treatment is not a covered service. Treatment for the uninsured and insured will be provided on a sliding-fee scale basis. In order to engage high-risk individuals who are not in treatment, and for those who want more information, the RFR will also provide reimbursement for psycho-educational groups.

Qualified bidders must have a clinician on staff who has received, or is in the process of receiving, a Problem Gambling Specialist (PGS) certificate from the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling. (Please see requirements in box at right).

Billing will only be processed from agencies that are verified to have an eligible clinician on staff. Due to the nature of fee-for-service operations, the Bureau and the Mass. Council are developing an incentive program that may be available for agencies that have staff participating in the certificate program and are working to establish a gambling treatment program.

The full RFR is available at [www.comm-pass.com](http://www.comm-pass.com). Please search for solicitation number 702915.

If you have any questions, please contact Council Program Director, Marlene Warner at 617-426-4554 / [marlene@masscompulsivegambling.org](mailto:marlene@masscompulsivegambling.org) or Sarah Ruiz at DPH/BSAS at 617-624-5136 / [Sarah.Ruiz@state.ma.us](mailto:Sarah.Ruiz@state.ma.us)

## Problem Gambling Specialist (PGS) Certificate Now Available!

Beginning July 1, the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling together with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health / Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, will be offering a Problem Gambling Specialist (PGS) Certificate. Following are the requirements:

### Education and Work Requirements:

Master's or doctoral degree with 3-years of additions-related clinically-supervised experience, or a Bachelor's degree with 4-years of additions-related clinically-supervised experience, or a high school diploma with an internship and 5-years of addiction-related clinically-supervised experience.

### Problem Gambling Specific Training Requirements:

30-hours total of training approved by the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling (most trainings are available at no cost to the participants).

### Clinical Supervision Requirements:

On-going documented clinical supervision regarding gambling-specific cases with a clinical supervisor.\*

### Continuing Education:

7.5 hours of problem gambling-specific CEUs and proof of continued clinical supervision regarding problem gambling treatment annually.

### Ethical Code of Conduct:

Every clinician with a Massachusetts PGS certificate must indicate that they will adhere to the ethical code of conduct set forth.

Interested clinicians are encouraged to visit the Council website at [www.masscompulsivegambling.org](http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org) to download an application or contact the Council at 617-426-4554 / [gambling@aol.com](mailto:gambling@aol.com).

Immediate approval for the state certificate will be given to individuals with current and active national gambling-specific certifications. Other individuals who have met the above requirements and qualify for a certificate will fill out a separate application that will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Clinicians with a Massachusetts certificate are encouraged to work toward the national certification.

\*Clinical Supervisors will be offered Mass. Council trainings for supervisors in order to gain greater expertise in gambling-specific supervision. The Council will have a list available of clinical supervisors with expertise in gambling.

## PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS WEEK 2006

This spring, Governor Mitt Romney joined the Council to proclaim March 6-12, 2006 *Problem Gambling Awareness Week*. The goal of the campaign was to increase public awareness about the disorder, and to promote the availability of problem gambling treatment services for people in the Commonwealth who are experiencing problems with their own or a loved one's gambling.



Council volunteer, Jerry S., pictured with A.J. Berthiaume, host of "Soundoff" at Spirit 970 / WESO-am radio in Southbridge.

Because problem gambling is an increasing issue for students with limited access to money, unlimited access to the Internet, and high tolerance for risk, this year the Council selected to target its Problem Gambling Awareness Week outreach efforts on Massachusetts high schools by offering free services, including:

- Guest speakers in health classes
- School assemblies on gambling problems
- Information tables in school cafeterias
- Information for school websites
- Information pamphlets for health/guidance office(s)
- A video entitled, *The Big Win*, which addresses teenage gambling problems



Council Program Director, Marlene Warner, teaches students at Lee High School about problem gambling.

Several high schools responded to the appeal, including Palmer High School, Lee High School, Braintree High School, and Arlington High School.

ABC-40-TV in Springfield interviewed Council Helpline and Volunteer Specialist, Kyle Marshall at Palmer High School, where he talked to three sophomore health classes about the risks associated with gambling.

In addition to the high school outreach, the Council also participated in several media interviews in March (see following list) to raise awareness about problem gambling.

### INTERVIEWS

- *WHMP-FM*, North Hampton
- *WESO-AM*, Southbridge
- *WNTN-AM*, Newton
- *WTBU-FM*, Boston
- *WEIB-FM*, Springfield
- *MPG Newspapers*, Plymouth
- *Ware River News*, Ware
- *Worcester Telegram*, Worcester
- *Metrowest Daily News*, Framingham
- *Randolph Weekly*, Randolph
- *Boston's Weekly Dig*, Boston
- *Sentinel Enterprise*, Fitchburg
- *Sun and Weekly Herald*, Taunton

Volunteers Jerry S. and John W. were instrumental in the media efforts. They served as spokespersons for the Council by sharing their personal stories and helping the public to understand how problem gambling can be harmful, not only financially but also socially and emotionally.



John W., spoke on behalf of the Council by sharing his personal experience with problem gambling on WNTN 1550-am radio in Newton.

John W. explained in an interview with WNTN-AM, "The lying, the cheating, the stealing...all went hand in hand with the gambling. When I lost, all of my frustrations were taken out on my ex-wife. She was an innocent person that was in my way. I started yelling and screaming. I wanted to throw the TV out the window, with her right behind it."

Jerry S. also shared his thoughts. During an interview with the *Ware River News* he stated, "Debt you can always pay off. It's the emotional affects (of problem gambling) that are worse. I hurt my family."



Jerry helped listeners to understand the harm caused by problem gambling.

According to Council Communications Specialist, Margot Cahoon, "Jerry and John really helped to humanize problem gambling. They were honest, open and humble. We are so grateful that they were willing to share their stories to help the public understand the devastation caused by the disorder."

## WE NEED YOU Please Help Carry the Message

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling needs your help in educating the community about problem gambling. Will you consider carrying the message by sharing your personal experience as a volunteer spokesperson for the Council?

The organization was founded 22-years ago by the late Tom Cummings, and a small group of other individuals, who identified a need for statewide problem-gambling services. Tom served as a great example of how one individual's willingness to share his story can be extremely helpful to those affected by gambling problems.

The Council is a small organization with eight staff members. We are proud of our accomplishments, yet we know that there is so much more we could do with your expertise and help.

Following are a few ways that you can volunteer to represent the Council and help others to understand problem gambling:

- Disseminate problem gambling information at health fairs and community events.
- Present information and share your personal experience with school groups and community organizations.
- Encourage Legislators to act responsibly in the development of public policy around gambling issues by sharing your story at the State House.
- Participate in media interviews.

### The Council needs YOU.

We understand the courage that sharing your experience takes. If you wish to share your story while remaining anonymous, we will go to great lengths to ensure your privacy.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Kyle Marshall, Helpline and Volunteer Specialist at 617-426-4554 / [kyle@masscompulsivegambling.org](mailto:kyle@masscompulsivegambling.org).



Attendees at the "Spirituality & Other Alternatives to Traditional Treatment for Gambling Disorders" training listen to Jon Grant, PhD.

## 2006 Spring Trainings

The Council is committed to teaching others about problem gambling. Each year, the organization leads several regional trainings. Following are trainings that occurred this spring. Each was attended by close to 40 individuals:

On March 6, the *Basic Clinical Work with Problem Gamblers: Ideology, Treatment & Recovery* training was held in Framingham. Marilyn Feinberg & Rob Whitman-Raymond were the presenters.

*The Next Steps in Treating Gambling Disorders: Identifying Comorbidity & Countertransference Issues & Understanding Family Therapy & Self-Help Resources* training, presented again by Marilyn Feinberg & Rob Whitman-Raymond, was held in Boston on March 24.

On April 11, Jon Grant, JD, MD, from the University of Minnesota Medical Center, taught clinicians and social workers about *Neurobiology & Psychopharmacology* at Northern Essex Community College, Lawrence Extension Campus. Dr. Grant engaged a captive audience with the most current research and treatment methods for gambling disorders.

*Spirituality & Other Alternatives to Traditional Treatment for Gambling Disorders* was held in Fall River on April 27. The training was very well-received. Attendees participated in Padraic O'Hare's *Contemplative Meditation*. Jim Wuefling's *Spirituality and/ 12-Step Meetings*, David Greenfield's *Energy Medicine*, and Joann Michaud's *Dance and Movement Exercises Toward Addiction Recovery*.

Trainings will begin again in the fall. For more information, please visit <http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org/contentmgr/showdetails.php/id/323>



## THE EXPRESSIONS OF ADDICTION: The Many Faces of a Syndrome A Public Awareness and Education Project

The Council is co-sponsoring, *Expressions of Addiction*. Led by Howard Shaffer, PhD, the project is an exhibit of original photographs that depict people in various stages and expressions of addiction.

The primary goal of Expressions of Addiction is to increase public awareness and understanding of addiction by reaching people through art gallery exhibitions, television programs, and Internet sites.

Dr. Howard Shaffer draws on his experience as an award-winning photographer and 33-years of experience as a clinician and scientist specializing in the field of addiction. By creating a "photographic formulation" for each subject who participates in this project, Dr. Shaffer stimulates understanding and compassion for those living with addiction. He wants viewers to recognize the need for everyone to care for people suffering with addiction.

As a clinical psychologist and a scientist, Dr. Shaffer observes addiction from a different perspective than most. As a photographer, he sees the inner struggle that characterizes the ambivalence typically associated with addiction. By integrating these unique perspectives, Dr. Shaffer creates images that evoke empathic responses from viewers.

Currently, galleries and museums are applying to host the exhibit. If you are interested in joining other friends of the Council who have generously shared their personal stories with addiction, please visit [www.expressionsofaddiction.com/participate.htm](http://www.expressionsofaddiction.com/participate.htm).

## GAMBLING ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

This spring, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health / Bureau of Substance Abuse Services awarded the Council a grant to hold two half-day workshops entitled, *Gambling on College Campuses* and to develop a follow-up technical assistance package for chosen campuses.

All Massachusetts colleges and universities were invited to attend the workshops, which focused on gambling problems on campus, and how to develop policies and prevention strategies as a response.

Presenters included Council trainers Jim Wuefling and Marlene Warner; William Phillips, Director of Counseling at Bryant College; Jerry Anderson from the Educational Development Center in Newton, and Alicen McGowan, PhD, from AdCare Outpatient Services in Dartmouth.



Council trainer, Jim Wuefling, helped college administrators to think about steps needed to develop gambling policies and prevention strategies.

Nearly 25 college administrators and staff from across the State attended the two trainings, both of which were held at Bentley College in Waltham.

The first training was held April 7. *Exploring the Issue and Responses* examined the emerging issue of gambling disorders on college campuses, and began to discuss possible multi-faceted responses.

The second training, held on April 28, was entitled, *Policy Development as a Strategic Response*. It explored the use of policy development and implementation as a major component of a multi-strategic plan to address gambling on college campuses.

Several attendees applied for technical help from the Council to assist in the integration of gambling prevention and policy development strategies. The Council selected four schools: Stonehill College, Springfield College, Worcester State College and Tufts University, and will conduct two half-day site visits, as well as offer the schools hands-on guidance.

A final report, to be issued in July, will summarize the completed work. For more information, please call the Council at 617-426-4554.

## NEW! Online Registration

The Mass. Council is now offering online registration for its trainings and conference. Anyone interested in attending the events can log on to <http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org/services/registration.php> and register by selecting the event(s) he or she wishes to attend. As an added convenience, credit card processing is also available online using this form.

# Sandy

"Sandy's" name has been changed to protect her privacy. She has also asked us not to include her photograph.

All her life Sandy wanted to stay under the radar. She lived a quiet life, diligently pursuing her goals, putting herself through college and law school. Eventually she earned her license to practice law.

Sandy worked hard and enjoyed life. Her favorite pastime was the casino. When she discovered blackjack, she was hooked. She was drawn to the action, and convinced that the game was about strategy and rules. She even took a class on it.

When Sandy played blackjack, she was, "a big deal." She felt infallible, and loved being able to pamper her friends with trips, limos, massages, tickets, and rooms at the casino. Sandy was in a "dream world." She was living the high-life, and would do anything to keep up the lifestyle. That was when she crossed the line and broke the law.

One fateful day, after settling a case for a substantial amount of money, a number of factors converged for her. "I had total control...nobody was looking...and I loved to gamble. It was a deadly combination for me," she said. The formerly law-abiding lawyer wrote herself a check. She rationalized it. She told herself, "Just this once. I'll pay it back. It's an investment. I'm a good person. I'll help so many people with the money that I win..."

Sandy just happened to win that time, and she put the money back. This just emboldened her to keep doing it, "See, no harm," she told herself." So, she took more and lost more...and the cycle continued. Soon, she was in so deep that she saw only one way out – a big win. "I felt like I was suffocating. I knew that if I came forward with the truth that I would be disbarred, so I kept gambling, hoping for that big win. I thought, then and only then, I could make everything alright again."

After four years, reality caught up with Sandy. Several of her clients started questioning why there was no paper trail for their monetary investments. "Investigators from the Attorney General's Office came to my house to question me. I continued to cover it up. I was partly crazy at that point. My world was collapsing all around me, and I wasn't facing it," she said.

When the story hit the newspapers, Sandy felt like a bomb went off in her life. "It was embarrassing – torturous really. My partner of 11-years had no idea. When she found out, she was scared, furious and confused. She wondered if I was a con artist or if I was nuts," Sandy said sadly.

Sandy's good friends were also shocked. She explains, "They were very concerned and very supportive. They felt guilty, like they should have seen it, and they wanted to help me."

Shortly after the criminal investigations started, Sandy went away to an inpatient gambling treatment center, which she feels helped her to clear her head. She said, "I had lost my values and sold my soul. It was extremely stressful waiting to be sentenced. I still wanted to fix it somehow. I wondered if I would ever be able to take a breath without feeling the weight or shame." Her therapist and her partner assured her that it would be possible with time and hard work.

Sandy was afraid of going to prison, and when she expressed this to a counselor at the treatment center, the counselor said, "If you ask me, prison seems preferable to the way you had been living your life."

Sandy thought about the counselor's statement and it was a turning point for her. "That realization helped me to not fear prison. I knew that some how I would get through it, and I was comforted in knowing that I wouldn't be betraying or hurting people anymore," she said.

After months and months of investigations and indictments, Sandy was sentenced to prison in April of 2002. She felt that the weekly GA meetings that she was allowed to attend in Natick, and frequent visits from both her partner and her therapist were saving graces. "My therapist came to see me every week - for free - she was incredibly, incredibly helpful," Sandy said.

Sandy was released from prison in 2004, and now has 10-years of probation as part of her sentence. Now in recovery for nearly five-years, Sandy says, "Life is hard right now. I have a record. Many companies perform criminal background checks, and of course, I don't pass. I am working in construction, and while I enjoy it, business is slow. I'm not making much money. If I didn't have a partner, I would be homeless."

While finding adequate employment has proven to be a struggle, at the same time, Sandy accepts responsibility for her hardships, and feels that she deserved her punishment, and all of the things that she's encountering now as the result of it. "Some days I have more serenity about it than others," she admits. "I feel terrible about what I did to my clients, friendly and family, and I work every day on my recovery. I am committed to learning from this experience, and to living a life of purpose. I am blessed in many ways. People love me; I have things to look forward to. Everyone has their ups and downs. Things are still so much better than when I was gambling," she said.

When asked about her future Sandy stated, "I try to take it one breath, one day at a time, but I do have goals. I think that maybe someday I would like to have my own construction business, and give other women jobs."

*Sandy shares her story in hopes of helping more people to understand the devastating social, financial and emotional affects of compulsive gambling.*

## Council Staff Members Present at National Conferences

The spring and early summer were busy travel seasons for Mass. Council staff members who were invited to speak at several national conferences.

Both Kathy Scanlan, Executive Director at the Mass. Council and Marlene Warner, Program Director at the Council, were selected to present at the Responsible Gambling Council of Ontario's *Discovery 2006 Conference*, which was held in Toronto, Ontario April 9-12. Kathy joined a panel discussion entitled, *Public Opinion Polling, Attitudes and the Media*, and Marlene presented, *Your First Step to Change: An Online Guidebook*.

Kathy was also asked to discuss problem gambling at the United South and Eastern Tribes *Gaming Association Conference and Expo*, which she attended April 18-20, in Hollywood, Florida.

Marlene and Kathy attended the National Council on Problem Gambling's *20th Annual Conference on Prevention, Research and Treatment of Problem Gambling*, held in St. Paul, Minnesota, June 22-24. Kathy participated in a panel discussion about, *What the Public Thinks and Why it Matters*, and Marlene used examples of the Council's work to present, *Meeting the Needs of the Under-served in Massachusetts: Targeting Latino, Corrections and Financial Services Populations Through Training Curriculum Modules*.

In July, Kathy and Marlene will once again be on the road, this time at the State Associations of Addiction Services (SAAS) Conference, July 9-12 in Chicago, Illinois. Together, they will present, *Gambling Disorder Services in an Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug System: An Integration Process*.

## GAMING and SOCIAL POLICY COURSE



During the spring semester, Council Executive Director, Kathy Scanlan, together with Karen Jacobus, Coordinator of Health Education at Mt. Holyoke College, taught Gaming and Social Policy at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst Campus.

The purpose of the 14-week course was to increase understanding of gambling in the U.S., examine social policy related to gambling, and recognize problem gambling. It was attended by students from the Isenberg School of Management, Hospitality and Tourism Department, many of whom wish to specialize in casino and event management.



Students from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst Campus, learn about problem gambling as it relates to the hospitality and tourism industry.

The course featured several guest lecturers including: Christine Reilly, Executive Director, Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Other Related Disorders at Harvard Medical School, Division on Addictions and the National Center for Responsible Gambling; Daniel Bosley, Representative, North Adams; Tackey Chan, Chief Legal Counsel and Legislative Director for Senator Michael Morrissey,

Quincy; and Pierre Gabriel, Vice President of Casino Marketing at Foxwoods. At the end of the semester, several of the students indicated that the guest speakers were a favorite part of the class.

According to one student, "My experiences (with gambling) were a huge part of why I chose to take the class. Thank you for allowing me the chance to share my experiences and research children and gambling and their relationship. I feel fortunate to have had a class with you and Karen and enjoyed all of the classes I was able to attend, and would love to give back something after all that I have received. Thank you for a great semester!"

The Council is pleased that UMass has equipped its students with the means to recognize and address social issues related to the gaming industry. The University is preparing future industry leaders to take an active role in promoting responsible gambling practices and policies.



Probation Officers participated in a training about problem gambling.

## PROBATION OFFICERS Training

On Tuesday, April 25, Council representatives visited the State probation training facility in Clinton to lead a training about problem gambling and its impact upon crime.

More than 35 probation officers participated in the full day training, where they learned about the disorder and examined case studies. They familiarized themselves with the clinical criteria for a pathological gambling problem and the common signs and symptoms to look for in their probationers. Many of the attendees shared stories of already knowing probationers who have gambling problems, but they did not know what to do about it.

Council Board Member, Ed Talbot, former Chief of Staff of the Bristol County Sheriff's Dept., spoke at the training, as did Council volunteer, John W., who shared his personal experience with gambling problems. "I was arrested for driving while under the influence. What nobody realized was that I was drinking because I hit my bottom with gambling. I was in despair, and trying to drown my sorrows," he said.

The training was met with great interest and spurred discussion of many more trainings in the near future. The Council hopes to use the momentum and concern from the attendees to make more of an impact in the corrections system.