

ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE

News for policy and program decision-makers.

Weekly

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CRC Health quietly becoming force in addiction treatment field

Recent acquisition makes company largest in field

A company that has only been around since 1995 has all of a sudden become the largest private addiction treatment provider in the country. With its announced acquisition of Comprehensive Addiction Programs Inc. (CAPS) last week, San Jose, Calif.-based CRC Health Corporation now owns 71 facilities across 16 states and employs more than 1700 people.

While privately held CRC has certainly been an established provider for several years, its most notable development until last week's announcement had been the creation of its online treatment component, eGetGoing and its protégé

teenGetGoing, representing the first forays into online treatment by an addiction treatment provider (see *ADAW*, Nov. 18, 2002).

The acquisition of CAPS allows CRC to expand into nine more states — Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Virginia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Massachusetts, Maryland and Delaware. The acquisition gives the company a stronger presence on the East Coast.

“We are really excited about this acquisition because it substantially increases our geographic coverage into regions we don't currently have coverage,” CRC Founder and chief executive Barry Karlin told *ADAW*.

CRC's three divisions — Residential Outpatient Facilities, Opiate Treatment Programs, and eGetGoing now, in the words of Karlin, “reach throughout the country and permit a full continuum of care.”

The creation and expansion of CRC is the dream of Karlin, who left the high tech field to get involved with what he calls the more satisfying field of addiction treatment. What Karlin brought from his previous endeavor, however, was the business acumen and financial contacts to get CRC to the level of success it has achieved.

Karlin started his dream with the acquisition of The Camp, a residential treatment facility in Northern California. When The Camp performed well, CRC was able to raise funds to acquire Azure Acres, a residential treatment facility in San Francisco.

(See *CRC Health*, page 4)

Caron acquires Fla. center; expands in NYC, Philadelphia

Caron Foundation, as part of its strategy to expand to other locations and enhance the kinds of services it offers to treat chemical dependency, announced last week that it has acquired an extended-care treatment center in Boca Raton, Florida.

The Wernersville, Pa.-based addiction treatment center also is continuing with an \$8 million investment in New York City, and is opening a business office in Philadelphia this week.

The moves represent “not growth for the sake of growth, but strategic growth” planned along Caron's service lines of prevention, wellness, diagnosis, treatment and aftercare, Wayne F. Stewart, Caron's executive vice president of marketing, told *ADAW*.

In Florida, the 45-bed Renaissance Institute of Palm Beach, founded in 1990, came under the Caron umbrella March 1. Both Caron and Renaissance officials declined to disclose the acquisition price.

“Renaissance has an excellent national reputation and we are proud to affiliate with them,” said Doug Tieman, Caron's president and chief executive. “The Renaissance staff brings very specialized expertise in longer term care, dual diagnosis and managing complicated cases. I welcome this expertise to the Caron continuum,” he said.

(See *Caron*, page 2)

Also This Week

- 3 Study shows extent of underage and excessive adult drinking**
- 5 Online survey of college students reveals extent of alcohol use**
- 7 Foundations partner to support smoking cessation**
- 8 Ill., Mass. receive grants for alcohol-screening program**

Winner of the inaugural Michael Q. Ford Journalism Award from the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers

(Caron, from page 1)

Sid Goodman, Renaissance's founder, executive and clinical director, told *ADAW* that he also welcomes the alliance, despite the fleeting moments of anxiety that anyone with a founding stake in an endeavor might feel.

"This is my baby, so you can imagine how proprietary I feel about Renaissance Institute and some of my anxiety in negotiating with folks, even though I've known them for a long time. But they've been great," said Goodman. "They've been respectful of our success and clinical history and our own uniqueness."

Through the alliance of the two private, non-profit centers, Goodman said, "We're hoping to contribute to a furthering of the continuum of treatment."

Renaissance, whose management, staff and programs will remain intact, provides extended treatment to people early in their recovery, decreasing the level of care as responsibilities and self-sufficiency increase. Patients will continue to be referred to the institute from treatment providers across the country. Renaissance treats more than 425 patients a year; within the last 18 months, 30 patients have been referred from Caron programs.

Many of Renaissance's patients present with a history of multiple

treatments or a "more extended pathology than your average patient," including comorbid illnesses such as depression or bipolar disorder, or other behavioral, psychological or psychiatric factors that inhibit recovery, Goodman said. The average length of stay is about six months in quarters in nearby Delray Beach.

"Renaissance has an excellent national reputation and we are proud to affiliate with them."

Doug Tieman

Goodman envisions expanding Renaissance's approach to include a family residential program — which is where Caron's resources and expertise would come into play. Goodman called Caron "the most insightful organization when it comes to family systems." Addiction, he said, "really is a family illness in the sense that everyone is affected."

Renaissance is accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and licensed by Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services.

Meanwhile, Caron is investing \$8 million to enhance and strengthen services in the New York City region in the coming year. The drive includes opening a new site in Manhattan tar-

geted to continuing care for adolescents, Stewart said. State licensing is being sought.

Noting New York's dearth of long-term recovery programs for youths, Stewart expressed disbelief that one of the biggest cities in the world "doesn't have a place for kids to go to learn how to have a sober life."

He stressed that the new Caron center would serve as an adjunct to the existing referral community and treatment services. Caron intends "to borrow" rather than claim patients, returning them to their original treatment provider once they finish the Caron program, Stewart said.

The investment also includes increasing marketing and scholarship support to patients to improve access to Caron residential services in southeastern Pennsylvania.

With 10,000 alumni, support groups, a leadership council and a medical advisory committee, Caron already has a big presence in metropolitan New York. Lois McMahon Fahey has been named director of the New York City capital campaign. Her 16-year career in the development field includes more than seven years of fundraising in the New York City region.

Also as part of its growth strategy, Caron this week is opening a business office in Philadelphia. It will be headed by Regional Vice President James F. McManus, who

ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE

Weekly

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In December and the last Monday in December, **Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Weekly** provides timely reports on national trends and developments in funding, policy, prevention, treatment and research in alcohol and other drug abuse and also covers issues on certification, reimbursement and other news of importance to public, private nonprofit and for-profit addiction treatment agencies. **Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Weekly's** yearly subscription rate is \$687. **Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Weekly** accepts no advertising and is supported solely by its readers. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: MCG, P.O. Box 9758, Providence, RI 02940-9758. ©2003 by Manisses Communications Group, Inc. Member, Newsletter & Electronic Publishers Association. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without the consent of the publisher is strictly forbidden. For reprint permission, call (800) 333-7771 (9-5 EST). Printed in the USA.

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has deep ties to Philadelphia's business community, including as a former vice president of Sovereign Bank and a former senior vice president of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce.

Components of the Philadelphia office will include marketing and development, services to the region's more than 5,000 alumni, and liaisons with students, schools and community leaders.

Caron treats more than 4,000 people a year through residential treatment and outpatient programs for adults and adolescents, as well as programs for the families of people trying to recover from addiction.

Study shows extent of underage and excessive adult drinking

Underage drinking and adult excessive drinking account for more than half of the alcohol consumed in the United States, according to a study conducted by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA).

The report, *Alcohol Consumption and Expenditures for Underage Drinking and Adult Excessive Drinking*, reveals that in 1999, underage drinking amounted to 19.7 percent of alcohol consumed and adult excessive drinking amounted to 30.4 percent of alcohol consumed — together, \$56.9 billion of the total \$116.2 billion spent on alcohol.

The findings are reported in the Feb. 26 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*.

Researchers define adult excessive drinking as more than two drinks a day. They note that the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) recommends that women limit themselves to no more than one drink a day and men limit themselves to no more than two drinks a day.

Researchers used three national sets of data to estimate the proportion of those younger than 21 years who drink: The 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA); the 1999 Monitoring the Future survey; and the 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS).

According to the study, individuals aged 12 to 20 years consumed 19.7 percent of all the alcohol consumed in the United States. Researchers said that although rates of alcohol use for persons age 12 or older have declined in the past 20

years — 63.7 percent in 2001 compared with 72.9 percent in 1979 — teenage drinking rates have declined little in the last decade.

According to researchers, a particularly disturbing trend is that the initiation of use has occurred at a younger age, increasing the chances that teenagers will have alcohol problems later in life.

The proportion of youths who begin drinking in eighth grade or earlier increased by 33 percent from 1975 to 2001. The 2000 NHSDA survey showed that the mean age of initiation of use among 12- to 20-year-olds is now 14 years, said the study. According to the study, individuals who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to become alcohol dependent than those who do not drink before age 21.

In an editorial from the same issue of *JAMA*, Glen R. Hanson, Ph.D., acting director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and Ting-Kai Li, M.D., director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), wrote that the study's definition of excessive drinking (more than two drinks per day) differs from the drinking limits used to screen patients for alcohol disorders. The screening cutoffs for men are 14 drinks per week and four drinks on any day; for women seven drinks per week and three drinks on any day, Hanson and Li wrote.

National survey data show that about a third of U.S. adults exceed these limits, some occasionally, some often, they wrote. As a group, their risk of alcohol disorders is markedly higher than those who stay within the limits. Nearly one in four individu-

als who exceed the limits meets the criteria for alcohol abuse or dependence, compared with fewer than one in 100 who drink less, Hanson and Li wrote.

They wrote that the findings by CASA researchers on underage drinking (ages 12-20 years) are of particular concern not only because of the prevalence and amount of consumption, but also because of the strong association between alcohol use and the use of tobacco and illicit drugs. They wrote that in 2001, 12- to 17-year-old youth who consumed alcohol in the past month were 7.6 times more likely to use illicit drugs than those who did not.

Campaigns urged

In response to the study, health officials have called on the public health community to mount aggressive campaigns to prevent underage drinking and to warn the public of the dangers of underage and adult excessive drinking, and for the alcohol industry to cease advertising and marketing their products to young people.

"This *JAMA* article makes clear that alcohol is a premier drug of abuse in America," said Joseph A. Califano, Jr., CASA president and chairman. "Sales to children, underage drinkers and alcohol abusers are a critical component of the alcohol industry's profits."

In a joint statement released in response to the study, Califano and former First Lady Betty Ford urged the alcohol industry to cooperate with the public health community to curb underage drinking and adult excessive drinking by immediately providing a \$1 billion endowment for an independent foundation with no ties

to the industry to work exclusively to curb underage drinking and adult excessive drinking.

“A \$1 billion endowment represents less than two percent of consumer expenditures in 1999 for underage and adult excessive drinking and less than one percent of all 1999 expenditures on alcohol,” Califano said.

Another statement by former

U.S. Surgeons General, Julius B. Richmond, M.D.; Antonia C. Novello, M.D.; and David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D., urges action by parents, the public community and the alcohol industry. They urge parents to use their influence to encourage their children to stay alcohol-free.

The Surgeons General call on the alcohol industry to include in its advertising and product labels clear

warnings of the dangers of underage drinking and adult excessive drinking, and the definition of moderate drinking as defined by the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture — no more than one drink a day for women and two drinks a day for men.

For a copy of the article, *Alcohol Consumption and Expenditures for Underage Drinking and Adult Excessive Drinking*, visit <http://jama.ama-assn.org>.

(CRC Health, from page 1)

The ability to raise funds from investors has been critical to the expansion of CRC. “Because we had done well, investors had confidence that we knew what we were doing,” said Karlin. The acquisition of CAPS was completed with \$40 million in financing from North Castle Partners (lead investor) and Credit Suisse First Boston, as well as \$70 million in senior debt financing led by BNP Paribas and Madison Capital.

Karlin said that he saw an opportunity in this fragmented industry to introduce best business practices and expand and improve through acquiring facilities. While CRC has expanded fairly rapidly, Karlin said that they have done so carefully and with respect for the facilities they acquire.

“We respect the different cultures,” said Karlin. “Typically, whatever the counselors are doing works well, and the local referral sources and the ambience as a set of characteristics are unique — you don’t want to mess with that.” Karlin added that his company is paying and cherishes and nurtures these unique characteristics and works around them in ways that do not disrupt the culture.

What CRC tries to do is add value to their acquisitions. “For example, we’ll work with them to install more sophisticated information systems that will enable the local facility to do things more efficiently,” said Karlin. Targeted marketing is another area where CRC will work with

local facilities, said Karlin.

Efforts are also made to bring clinicians from different facilities together. “They learn from one another and begin to make changes for the better,” said Karlin.

“In some respects, the industry hasn’t changed in a long time.”

Barry Karlin

While CRC has had impressive business success, Karlin lists as the company’s first goal a clinical one: helping to close the treatment gap — bringing high quality treatment to as many people as possible, Karlin says. The clientele of CRC are primarily “middle-class America,” said Karlin.

While CRC facilities hold some county contracts that serve the lower end of the socioeconomic scale, and their 31 methadone clinics serve many Medicaid clients, they mostly serve insured and private pay clients. The cost of treatment at CRC facilities is generally between \$5,000 and \$15,000 for a 30-day stay. “We currently do not have a facility in the \$25,000 a month range,” said Karlin.

What that means is that they work a lot with managed care, and Karlin’s not complaining. “We enjoy a pretty good relationship with the managed care world — we’re committed to working with them.”

Karlin said the key to working

with managed care is to recognize that they have their own pressures and work with them on a case-by-case basis. He recommends seeking approval for treatment based on medical need. “You can’t go into it asking 30 days for everyone.”

Karlin maintains that CRC has been able to get authorized lengths of stay that are comparable to their non-managed care clients. The average length of stay company-wide for CRC clients is 21 days, said Karlin.

Karlin acknowledges that the size of CRC helps in negotiating with managed care. “It’s hard to do when you’re small and not a super-profitable business.”

While the business side of CRC has been successful, Karlin maintains that the patients are the core focus of the business. Goal number two on Karlin’s list: enhancing the quality of treatment. This includes raising the education level and sophistication of counselors in the field. “In some respects, the industry hasn’t changed in a long time,” said Karlin.

As for the business side, Karlin maintains that the company has treaded carefully despite its fairly rapid expansion. “We’re well financed with a fair amount of equity,” said Karlin. “We have a fairly conservative level of debt.” Karlin added that the current capital markets are conservative. “It’s really tough, nearly impossible, to try to leverage yourself too highly — we back it up with a lot of equity.”

Online survey of college students reveals extent of alcohol use

More than three-quarters of college students who took surveys before taking an online alcohol prevention course said they're regularly drinking enough alcohol to be under the influence more hours per week than the number of hours they're in the classroom, according to findings released last month by a Boston-based health education company.

About 53 percent of the students who completed a post-survey questionnaire said they are considering changing their behavior because of what they learned in the course.

AlcoholEdu is a self-paced online program created by Outside The Classroom Inc., a company founded three years ago to address critical behavioral health issues. Students can take the course in the privacy of their dorm room or wherever they have computer access. The course has reached more than 100,000 college and university students at more than 300 institutions.

The AlcoholEdu course content features video streams, case studies, questionnaires and interactive exercises. The program prepares students to cope with alcohol advertising, educates them about the effects of alcohol on brain development and function, and delivers personalized feedback about their drinking patterns.

According to the survey, 78 percent of 27,900 students who completed survey questionnaires before taking the course last fall said they consumed an average of 9.72 drinks per week during the previous two weeks.

That much consumption is enough to register discernible blood alcohol content levels for an average of more than 18 hours per week per student — more than the roughly 15 hours per week spent in class by most college students, said the survey.

The survey revealed that 23.7 percent of students said that at least once in the previous two weeks they had attended a class with a hang-

over from drinking too much the night before.

Brandon Busted, founder and chief executive of Outside The Classroom, told *ADAW* he is encouraged that 53 percent of the students who completed the post-survey questionnaire plan to change their use of alcohol. "Very few programs, if any, show a statistic like that," he said.

Survey findings also revealed that 18.4 percent of students said that they had experienced memory impairment, forgetting what had happened to them at some point while they had been drinking in the previous two weeks.

Blood-alcohol levels

According to the survey, four out of 10 students educated by AlcoholEdu about blood alcohol content said they had previously underestimated their levels of intoxication when they had been drinking. More than 75 percent said they knew more about blood alcohol content after taking the course.

After learning about blood alcohol levels students "realized they were more drunk than they thought," said Busted.

Other results from the AlcoholEdu survey indicate that the course changes students opinions about alcohol, that it increases their awareness and understanding of key, science-based facts about alcohol's effect on them, and that they are comfortable getting this information from an interactive, web-based course.

The survey found that 84 percent of students felt that AlcoholEdu was helpful, and 25 percent found it "very" helpful.

The AlcoholEdu program also covers topics such as alcohol and society, the effects of alcohol on learning and memory, alcohol behavior and abuse and addiction. It also includes a glossary, a blood-alcohol level calculator and resources on topics including drinking and driving.

College administrators are impressed with the amount of data the survey has generated. "With colleges struggling to turn the tide of dangerous drinking, administrators are under more pressure than ever before to provide measurable results documenting the efficacy of their programs," said Kevin Kruger, associate executive director of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). "We've never before seen the quantity and quality of data on alcohol prevention that Outside The Classroom is generating from the tens of thousands of students taking the AlcoholEdu course."

Last year, Outside The Classroom, Inc., partnered with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) to develop an online alcohol prevention program for youth offenders and teen drivers (see *ADAW*, Nov. 18, 2002). The product will be released later this fall, Busted said.

Busted said he is encouraged by the results of an upcoming study about the decreased consumption of high-risk drinkers, which will be released in about four to six weeks, he said.

For more information, visit www.outsidetheclassroom.com.

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Resources

Ensuring Solutions has alcohol primers available

Ensuring Solutions to Alcohol Problems, a new research and policy unit of the George Washington University Medical Center, has released a primer, *Treating Alcoholism as a Chronic Disease*. The primer lays out evidence for treating alcoholism as a chronic disease, including a chart that compares alcohol-related problems, asthma, diabetes and high-blood pressure. It also includes steps that employers, policy makers, health care professionals and individuals can take to ensure that alcoholism is treated as a chronic disease.

Ensuring Solutions is also offering two issue briefs that describe strategies businesses can take to address alcohol problems. The briefs, *Seven Tools to Lowering the Business Costs of Alcohol Problems* and *Promote Health, Modify Alcohol Use and Save on Business Costs*, highlight case studies from companies and communities across the nation. The primer and briefs are available online at www.ensuringsolutions.org. For print copies or more information, e-mail info@ensuringsolutions.org or call Karen Gillo at (202) 530-0272.

Business Notes

Multivitamin to address nutritional needs of alcoholics

Recovery Pharmaceuticals has launched the first multivitamin/multimineral dietary supplement designed to address the nutritional needs of alcoholics, according to a company announcement. ThiaSure contains thiamine (vitamin B1) and high doses of vitamins and minerals that people who drink heavily may be lacking. The supplement also contains lower doses of nutrients that could potentially be harmful to people with compromised liver function.

Recovery Pharmaceuticals is using its Gray Matters educational and marketing campaign to raise awareness of the importance of nu-

tritional supplements for alcoholics. The company has also begun a research program to look into the possibility that the form of thiamine used in ThiaSure may be beneficial to diabetics. The thiamine in ThiaSure is a lipid soluble form that is easier for the body to absorb than forms found in other multivitamins, according to Recovery Pharmaceuticals.

Briefly Noted

Substance abuse may raise suicide risk for bipolar patients

Findings in the journal *Bipolar Disorders* indicate that patients with bipolar disorder who abuse or are dependent on alcohol or other drugs may be more likely to attempt suicide, Health Newswire reported. Researchers found that bipolar patients who also suffered from a comorbid substance use disorder had a 40 percent lifetime rate of attempted suicide, compared to a 24 percent lifetime rate among patients who did not have a comorbid disorder.

The researchers interviewed 336 patients who had been diagnosed with bipolar I, bipolar II or schizoaffective disorder (bipolar type). Twenty-six percent of the patients had comorbid anxiety disorders and 34 percent were diagnosed with substance use disorders.

Alcohol consumption increasing in Ireland

Ireland's health minister, Micheal Martin, expressed concerns over increases in alcohol consumption in Ireland at the Alcohol in Irish Society forum, the Press Association reported. Alcohol-related problems, including health problems, traffic accidents, crime and lost productivity, cost Ireland about 2.4 billion euros annually, Martin told forum attendees.

Ireland has had the greatest increase in alcohol consumption among the member countries of the European Union, said Martin. Alcohol consumption per capita in Ireland increased 49 percent between 1989 and 2001, while three European

Union members reported modest increases and 10 members experienced decreases in consumption, according to Martin.

Australian report looks at drinking, smoking, drug use

A report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare shows that youth smoking continues to be a problem, AAP Information Services Pty. Ltd. reported. Although overall smoking rates have declined, one in 10 Australian youths are daily cigarette smokers, according to the report. The number of male smokers over the age of 14 fell from 32.5 percent to 25.6 percent in the past decade, while the number of female smokers dropped from 26.7 percent to 20.8 percent, according to the report. Tobacco-related illnesses are responsible for 19,000 deaths in Australia each year.

The report also revealed that two-thirds of young people, ages 14 to 17, consumed alcohol in the past year and one in five have tried cannabis. Five percent of the youths have used amphetamines and 4 percent have used Ecstasy or other designer drugs. Marijuana/cannabis accounted for 69 percent of illicit drug arrests and heroin accounted for 9 percent in 2001, according to the report.

Higher profits may draw illicit drugs into smaller markets

The potential for higher profits may be an incentive for drugs to spread from big cities to smaller markets, the Associated Press reported. A packet of heroin that would cost \$10 in New York typically sells for \$50 in central Maine, according to Detective David Caron of the Waterville, Maine police. The profit for cocaine is also much higher in Maine than in New York, according to Caron.

Caron believes the potential to make a bigger profit is causing drugs to spread from big cities to these smaller markets. In separate drug raids by Waterville and Benton police, five of the eight people arrested were from New York.

Foundations partner to support smoking cessation

The Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF) and the American Legacy Foundation (ALF) have committed \$5 million to a new smoking cessation initiative. The foundations have formed a partnership to help raise people's awareness of the risks associated with smoking and to provide cessation services and tools to people who want to quit. The partnership hopes to increase the number of people who attempt to quit smoking; increase the number of people who successfully quit; and decrease overall smoking rates. The initiative includes a national advertising campaign, "Portraits," that will feature EIF celebrity ambassadors and direct consumers to a national information line, (800) 243-7000.

Part of the initiative will fall under ALF's new program for women struggling with nicotine addiction, "Circle of Friends: Uniting to be Smoke-Free." This part of the initiative will include the "Portraits" campaign, the information line, a website at www.join-the-circle.org, a \$1 million grants program and partnership opportunities. EIF and ALF will also develop cessation services that will target entertainment industry employees at the workplace. The foundations hope to have a pilot program ready later this year.

Nevada governor praises state drug court program

Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn has praised the state's drug court program for saving money at a time when the state faces a \$700 million budget deficit, KOLO-TV reported. The program, which began about a year-and-a-half ago, has saved nearly \$750,000 in prison costs, according to Judge Archie Blake.

Under Nevada's drug court program, drug-possession offenders can choose to undergo at least one year of self-paid counseling and drug tests instead of going to prison. The program in Carson City, Lyon, Douglas and Churchill Counties has

had an 88 percent retention rate, according to Blake.

RWJF offers grants to New Jersey programs

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF's) 2003 New Jersey Health Initiatives program will award grants of \$50,000 to \$500,000 to programs that work to improve health and health care in New Jersey communities. Up to 10 grants will be awarded to programs that improve access to affordable health care; improve care and support for people with chronic conditions; promote healthy communities and lifestyles; or reduce the harm caused by substance abuse.

For more information, visit www.njhi.org or contact Gretchen Scott at (856) 225-6733, ext. 15. The application deadline is March 26.

NIDA to coordinate Brain Awareness Week

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) in partnership with the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and other agencies of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will coordinate this year's NIH Brain Awareness Week March 10 to 16. The Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives organizes Brain Awareness Week to promote the benefits of brain research.

On March 12 in Bethesda, Md., NIH will hold a symposium that will focus on ways stress impacts the brain, body and people's lives. Speakers at the symposium will discuss the

role of trauma in substance abuse disorders and mental health; the influence of early rearing on behavioral development; the impact of stress on brain function; and the neurobiology of fear and emotion. For more information, call (301) 443-1124 or visit www.drugabuse.gov.

Court: Smokers not entitled to tobacco-settlement money

The Third U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that people with tobacco-related illnesses are not entitled to money from the 1998 tobacco settlement, the Associated Press reported. The court determined that federal law gives the states the authority to decide how the tobacco-settlement money will be spent.

Three Pennsylvania smokers filed the lawsuit on behalf of Medicaid patients with tobacco-related illnesses. Many states are using their share of the tobacco-settlement money to address budget shortfalls instead of funding health and anti-smoking programs.

Alcohol use may increase likelihood of domestic violence

Men with a history of domestic violence are more likely to be violent toward their female partners on days when they consume alcohol, according to findings in the February issue of the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. The findings indicated that the odds of any male-to-female aggression were eight times higher on days when the men drank alcohol, while the odds of severe ag-

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gression on drinking days was more than 11 times higher. On days when the male partners had six or more drinks the odds increased to more than 18 times higher for any male-to-female aggression and more than 19 times higher for severe aggression.

William Fals-Stewart, Ph.D., of the State University of New York at Buffalo's Research Institute on Addictions used diaries and calendars to obtain daily reports on drinking and partner violence over a 15-month period. Participants included 137 men who had entered a domestic violence treatment program and 135 domestically violent men who had entered an alcoholism treatment program.

Judge orders woman to undergo counseling for gambling addiction

A U.S. District judge ordered a woman who stole money to support a gambling addiction to undergo mental health counseling and attend Gambler's Anonymous meetings in addition to a two-year prison sentence, the Associated Press reported. In 1999, Norma F. Brandt began stealing money from the Illinois-based bank where she had worked for more than 30 years.

Brandt pleaded guilty to bank fraud in October 2002 and said that she had used the money to gamble at a casino. U.S. District Chief Judge G. Patrick Murphy sympathized with Brandt, criticizing the role that legalized gambling played in her situation.

Ill., Mass. receive grants for alcohol-screening program

Illinois and Massachusetts have been awarded federal grants to continue a program that screens pregnant women for alcohol use, Join Together Online reported. The Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded the Illinois Department of Human Services' Office of Family Health and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Division of Maternal, Child and Family Health each \$150,000 grants.

The grants support the replication of projects designed to encourage health care providers to systematically screen pregnant women for alcohol use. Providers will also be encouraged to provide information on the risks of drinking during pregnancy and to refer patients to intervention programs. The grants are first-year funding for what is expected to be a three-year project.

Addiction counselor indicted on drug charges

A federal grand jury has indicted an addiction counselor on charges of possession of cocaine with intent to distribute and possession of a firearm

by a convicted felon, the Philadelphia Inquirer reported. Eugene Moses, who had served time for a 1991 federal drug-dealing conviction, counseled drug addicts at the Northwestern Institute of Psychiatry in Fort Washington, Pa.

After his hours at the institute, Moses was allegedly selling cocaine on the streets. Agents allegedly observed Moses making three cocaine sales before a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) surveillance unit stopped him. Police allegedly found cocaine, a gun and drug-packaging equipment during a search of Moses' car and house, according to an affidavit.

Coming Up

The **Hazelden Foundation** will sponsor a Women Healing conference, "Reigniting the Spirit," **April 4 and 5 in Bloomington, Minn.** For more information, call (888) 257-7800, ext. 4429 or visit www.womenhealing@hazelden.org.

The **Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA)** will hold its 15th annual institute, "Productivity & People: The Business of EAPs," **April 24 to 27 in San Antonio, Texas.** For more information, call (202) 216-9623; e-mail eamainstitute@bostrom.com; or visit www.easna.org.

The **National Association of Drug Court Professionals** will hold its 9th annual Adult Drug Court Training Conference **May 15 to 17 in Reno, Nev.** For more information, visit www.nadcp.org.

Haymarket Center will present the ninth annual Summer Institute on Addictions Conference **June 11 to June 13 in Chicago.** For more information, contact Carol Blyskal at (312) 226-7984, ext. 314 or visit www.hcenter.org.

The **Center for Applied Sciences (CENAPS)** Corporation will offer a relapse prevention update, "Resiliency & Relapse In Times Of Stress," **Sept. 18 to 20 in Elk Grove Village, Ill.** For more information, call (708) 799-5000; e-mail info@cenaps.com; or visit www.cenaps.com.

In Case You Haven't Heard ...

Law enforcement officials in the state of Washington have started a methamphetamine awareness program with various individuals who have reasons to visit homes as part of their jobs, the Associated Press reported last month. Real estate agents, meter readers, trash haulers and others have been given a training session that includes spotting signs of possible methamphetamine laboratories, of which there are about 1,500 in the state, according to officials. Signs include red-stained walls, stripped batteries, blue corroded valves on propane tanks and garbage cans full of empty cold medicine bottles and pill packages. Law enforcement officials want individuals to call them if these signs are present at a house.