

2011 JUDGES & ATTORNEYS SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ETHICS SEMINAR

Melanie Ferretti, Office of Network Information Technology

The 2011 Judges and Attorneys Substance Abuse and Ethics Seminar was held at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Institute of Psychiatry Auditorium in Charleston, on December 2. With more than 120 in attendance, this one-day seminar brought together some of South Carolina's best scientific and legal professionals to present the latest information available on substance abuse and related mental health problems and how the legal system deals with them.



DMH State Director John H. Magill, Capers Barr, and Monique Lee.

The seminar was presented by the MUSC Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and was co-sponsored by the South Carolina Bar Lawyers Helping Lawyers Program of the South Carolina Bar and DMH. Opening remarks were given by DMH State Director John H. Magill, who began the tradition of holding this annual seminar 28 years ago while CEO of Fenwick Hall, a private facility he founded for the treatment of addictions and psychiatric disorders.

Each year, the seminar planning committee meets to discuss desired outcomes and choose which lecturers to enlist to best meet those goals. While some members of the planning committee serve

intermittently, there are four core members: Magill, Capers G. Barr, III, Esq., The Honorable Jack I. Guedalia, and J. Robert Turnbull, Jr., Esq.

In on the ground floor with Magill was Barr, of Barr, Unger & McIntosh, who, at that time, was the attorney representing Fenwick Hall. Judge Guedalia, Associate Judge of Probate, Charleston County, and Attorney Turnbull, program director of Lawyers Helping Lawyers, have been members of the committee for 24 and 18 years, respectively. "It takes a lot of planning, effort, and expertise to orchestrate this seminar. We are grateful to MUSC Continuing Education Coordinator Caitlyn Norfleet. We depend heavily upon her to pull it all together," said Judge Guedalia.

This year's topics included:

- Neurobiology of Addiction and Recovery
- Lawyers Helping Lawyers (Panel Presentation)
- Substance Abuse and Depression
- Suicide Prevention for Judges and Lawyers
- Drug Courts and Mental Health Courts (Panel Presentation)
- Update on SCDMH and Addictive Disease Resources

Moderated by Magill, *Neurobiology of Addiction and Recovery* was presented by Suzanne Thomas, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences of MUSC. "Dr. Thomas is an outstanding speaker who has a unique ability to present complex clinical information in a way that is engaging, informative, and easy to understand," said Magill.

Moderated by Turnbull, the *Lawyers Helping Lawyers* (LHL) panel was presented by John L. Drennan, Esq., of Drennan Law Firm, LLC and Assistant Director of LHL Beth Padgett. LHL, a

program of the South Carolina Bar, provides programs and services to assist members of the legal profession in South Carolina who suffer from substance abuse or depression, which affect their professional and/or personal life. Members of the LHL Committee comprise a support network of recovering judges and lawyers, who assist in carrying the Recovery message. LHL provides referral services, peer support, monitoring services, and preventative educational and awareness outreach.

Seminar co-sponsor since 2003, LHL arranges for at least one lawyer each year to share his or her personal story of recovery and provide information about the availability of services the organization provides. According to Turnbull, depression, suicide, and substance abuse are more prevalent in the legal profession than any other; the third leading cause of death for attorneys is suicide, after heart disease and cancer.

The mandatory Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program, adopted by the Supreme Court of South Carolina, establishes minimum requirements for continuing legal education for SC attorneys and judges. The seminar awards 6 CLE hours with 2 hours in ethics. "This seminar is especially valuable since a new mandate, effective March 1, 2011, requires at least one CLE ethics hour in a three-year timeframe be devoted exclusively to substance abuse or mental health issues concerning the legal profession," said Turnbull.

Substance Abuse and Depression was moderated by Judge Guedalia and presented by Morris Village Medical Director Trey Causey, MD. Morris Village, a DMH facility located in Columbia, SC, provides comprehensive evaluation, safe detoxification, and treatment for those requiring an inpatient level of care for alcohol and other drug addiction, and when indicated, treatment for co-morbid psychiatric illnesses.

As Associate Judge of Probate of Charleston County, Judge Guedalia hears cases in the Commitment Division; he knows the symptoms to look for in those who may be a danger to themselves or others, either suicidal or homicidal. On occasion,

he mandates involuntary commitment of individuals for alcohol/drug problems and/or mental illness, and frequently refers clients to the Charleston/Dorchester Mental Health Center (CDMHC). "A major benefit of this seminar is that attorneys who don't deal with these issues on a regular basis learn the thought processes of those with substance abuse and/or depression. The depth of knowledge of the speakers gives the lawyers serious insight into these difficult matters," said Guedalia.

The session *Suicide Prevention for Judges and Lawyers* was presented by Suicide Prevention Coordinator of the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center Mark De Santis, PsyD, and moderated by Barr. "This seminar helps lawyers in three ways," said Barr. "One, it helps lawyers relate to their clients with substance abuse and mental health issues. Two, it helps lawyers deal with their own substance abuse and mental health issues. And three, it helps lawyers to help other lawyers suffering from substance abuse and mental health issues. I don't think there is such a thing as too much education, not just on substance abuse and mental illness, but also about treatment. We need more programs that are accessible and affordable. It's frustrating to have



Drug Courts and Mental Health Courts Panel, Honorable Irvin G. Condon at the podium

clients that need help when we don't have anywhere to send them. Especially when you know that if they don't get help, they'll be right back in the court system. I was pleased to hear Governor Haley's pledge to provide more support for the mentally ill."

The *Drug Courts and Mental Health Courts* session was presented by Charleston County's Honorable Irvin G. Condon, Judge of Probate, and was moderated by CDMHC Executive Director Deborah Blalock. Drug courts provide cost-effective alternatives to traditional prosecution and incarceration of nonviolent offenders with substance

abuse problems or mental illness. Participants are heavily monitored and required to demonstrate personal responsibility and commitment to recovery and treatment. “Incentives work better than sanctions. We’re not trying to punish, we’re just trying to change behavior,” said Condon.

The final session of the day, *Update on the South Carolina Department of Mental Health and Addictive Disease Resources*, was presented and moderated by State Director Magill and DMH Attorney Monique Montgomery Lee. Magill gave brief histories of both mental health and alcohol and drug treatment in SC. He outlined the massive size of DMH operations, which comprises 17 outpatient mental health centers, 42 outpatient clinics, two adult psychiatric hospitals, one children’s psychiatric hospital, one alcohol and drug treatment center, three veterans’ nursing homes, one community nursing home, a Forensics Unit, and a Sexually Violent Predators Program. Also, according to

Magill, the Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) consists of 33 subcontracted county alcohol and drug abuse authorities that provide direct services to citizens in all 46 counties of the state. A wide array of prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery support services are provided through the DAODAS community-based system of care.

“I’d like to thank all those who organize and contribute to this seminar to make it a success. It’s amazing to me that that an idea I had 28 years ago continues to grow. I believe the benefits to the community of this seminar are incalculable and I hope the tradition of holding this seminar continues for many more years to come,” said Magill. The core planning committee members all agreed that this year’s seminar was one of the best. Turnbull summed it up when he said, “It’s a quality seminar and you can’t beat the price. It’s all good.”

AIKEN BARNWELL MHC ANNOUNCES AWARD OF CRISIS STABILIZATION AND HOMESHARE FUNDS

[Tamara Smith, Aiken Barnwell Mental Health Center](#)

Aiken Barnwell Mental Health Center (ABMHC) is pleased to announce the award of Crisis Stabilization Funds from DMH to expand existing projects and enhance behavioral services in the local community.

ABMHC received funds to hire a full-time Behavioral Health Consultant (BHC) to work in the primary care setting in conjunction with the Margaret J Weston Community Health Center (MJWCHC) and the Center’s Integrated Healthcare Program. The BHC will provide behavioral health consultation to children, adolescents, adults, and families. Services are designed to be short-term and to serve clients who normally would not be receiving treatment at the Center. When clients come in to see their medical doctor at Margaret J Weston, they will have access to behavioral services as needed. Currently, a BHC is available on Monday and Thursday afternoons at the MJWCHC Clearwater location.

ABMHC also received funds to expand its Homeshare Program, which helps move psychiatrically disabled adults into the community with people who are willing to share their homes. One client, for whom the provider is reimbursed, lives like a member of the household. The Homeshare Program’s purpose is to provide support to help clients make a successful transition into community life and to become fully participating members of their community. It promotes optimal mental, physical, and social wellness and helps improve compliance with prescribed treatment recommendations. It also minimizes psychiatric hospitalizations and improves clients’ social and independent living skills.

In the award letter to ABMHC, DMH Deputy Director of Community Mental Health Services Geoffrey J. Mason said, “The treatment of individuals in crisis and the challenge of transitioning long-term clients is a daunting yet achievable goal with programs like the Integrated Primary and Behavioral Health Care Program and Homeshare. Thank you for assisting the mission of providing quality community services and residential options for the people we serve and our agency. Congratulations on the award.”

State of South Carolina

Governor's Proclamation

WHEREAS, social workers are positive and compassionate professionals with the proper education and experience to guide individuals, families, and communities through complex issues and choices; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to improving the society in which we live, social workers connect individuals, families, and communities to available resources; and

WHEREAS, social workers stand up for others to ensure that everyone has access to the same basic rights, protections, and opportunities; and

WHEREAS, social workers help people help themselves, whenever and wherever they need it most.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Nikki R. Haley, Governor of the Great State of South Carolina, do hereby proclaim March 2012 as

PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH

throughout the state and encourage all South Carolinians to honor professional social workers for their dedication to individuals, families and communities through legislative advocacy, service delivery, research, and education.



Handwritten signature of Nikki R. Haley in black ink.

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

CHARLESTON DORCHESTER MHC ASSESSMENT/MOBILE CRISIS NEWS

Ann Dwyer, DMH Office of General Counsel

Recently, Heidi Warren-Brewer of the Charleston Dorchester MHC Assessment/Mobile Crisis (AMC) Team received a call from an unnamed man who said that he had come across their number in the contact list of his phone. He explained that after weeks of seeing this number in his phone and not knowing who it belonged to, he decided to call and find out. Initially, the man was perplexed about how this number was stored in his phone.

Then he shared that approximately three months before, he had called a suicide hotline and was connected to “some lady from Daniel’s Island” (Jackie Horseman, AMC staff). He told Warren-Brewer, “I was going to die that night and she saved my life.” He recounted how, at the time of the call, he was extremely suicidal, had given up on life, had lost his family, and was going to act on his suicidal thoughts, “but something made me reach out for help one more time.” He explained that he talked with the lady from Daniel’s Island for over an hour in the early morning until his phone battery died and the call was disconnected. An hour later, when his phone was recharged, he checked his phone “and the lady had called and left me a message.”

By this point in the conversation with Warren-Brewer, the gentleman was weeping. “I just want to thank her, she saved my life that night and I don’t even know her name,” he said, adding, “I want her

to know that I’ve been sober for 60 days now, I have reclaimed my family, and life is so much better.”

He then said, “I want her to know that I wake up every morning and I listen to the message she left on my phone. She saved my life, and it’s Christmas, and I want her to know she saved my life that night.”

The AMC Team was extremely touched by this phone call and was reminded of the powerful affect their words can have on someone in crisis who has lost all hope.

In January, the Team received a call from a lawyer who had received a voicemail from a client expressing suicidal ideations. AMC staff member Shayna Epstein looked up the client’s name and called law enforcement for the Holly Hill area, the last address in EMR for him. Warren-Brewer then called the next of kin listed in EMR and spoke with the client’s daughter-in-law, who was able to give a little more information, but did not have his current address. Police in Orangeburg County were able to get client’s address through the DMV and were dispatched to his home.

Staff ultimately learned that the client had overdosed on 100 Benadryl and was transported to the local emergency department. The quick thinking and actions of the AMC Team saved his life.

The Art of Recovery - 2012 Event Calendar

The Art of Recovery is calling all artists to submit works for inclusion in its 2012 Art of Recovery galleries. The deadline for clients to submit works for consideration of inclusion in upcoming exhibits is Thursday, March 15, 2012.

- *May - June* South Carolina State Museum, Columbia
- *June 20* NAMI Conference, Columbia
- *July 2 - 28* S & S Art Supply, Columbia – opening, silent auction
- *October* South Carolina Governor's School for Science & Mathematics, Hartsville

To learn more, view the call for entries flyer: http://dmhhome/art_of_recovery/2012_aor_call.pdf

COLUMBIA AREA MHC EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION COMMITTEE KEEPS SPIRITS SOARING

Claudia M. Aldamuy, Columbia Area MHC

2011 was a tumultuous year of budget cuts and layoffs, and days laden with the burden of trying to do more with less. Without raises, fewer staff and resources, employees at Columbia Area Mental Health Center (CAMHC) found themselves in the same predicament as those at other state agencies: struggling to continue providing quality services to its clients. Work was tough and through it all Center staff found time to smile and share special moments with colleagues and friends, due to the efforts of the Center's Employee Recognition Committee.

The Committee recognizes the efforts of staff and boosts morale. One way it does so is by hosting special events throughout the year, providing much needed down-time for staff. A favorite is the Ice-Cream Social, which is held in early spring on the lawn in front of the Center's administration building. The Committee treats the staff to ice-cream, cookies, and beverages. It also organizes fun games with small prizes and provides music for dancing. A talented staff member usually volunteers to act as photographer, and at the end of each event, the Committee creates a fun slideshow for everyone to enjoy.

The fall brings a Halloween Party, complete with costume contests and other fun games and prizes. Prompted by the harsh economic environment, the Committee



2011 Thanksgiving Luncheon



Dr. Bank carves the turkey at the 2011 Thanksgiving Luncheon.



2011 Staff Member of the Year Betty Frazier, with Dr. Bank and Stephen Hatrich



Board Chair David Jameson at the 2011 Holiday celebration

decided to host a Thanksgiving Luncheon, allowing the

employees an opportunity to express what they are thankful for.

In addition to homemade dishes, goodies, and treats made by the staff, the Committee honored tradition and anchored the meal with the donation of two large turkeys. Center Director Robert Bank, MD, was on hand to do the carving. To add to the casual atmosphere, the meal was served buffet style, with staff sitting in clusters around small tables. "It was good to hear all the laughter and chatter in the room. Also, meeting staff that we talk to on the phone but have never met, and placing faces with names was great. I really enjoyed it and look forward to the next one," said Marilyn Murphy, a staff member from Medical Services.

The Committee rounded out the year with the annual Employee Recognition Holiday Celebration, where it honored the Staff Member of the Year, long-term employees marking 10, 20, and 30 years of service, and those who recently retired. Board Chair David Jameson attended, as did other invited guests. Once again, as a surprise, the family of the Staff Member of the Year, Betty Frazier of the Business Office, was quietly ushered in undetected.

In addition to the many events it hosts, the CAMHC Employee Recognition Committee distributes several awards throughout the year to deserving employees.

The *You've Made a Difference Award* is given to a staff member

who is nominated by a co-worker for going above and beyond the call of duty. Each month, a staff member with a similar story of selfless commitment is recognized by the committee.



You've Made a Difference Winner Daphne Williams and co-workers



You've Made a Difference Winner Natasha Kennedy of ACS and colleagues



You've Made a Difference Winner Renell Livingston (striped shirt) of CAF Services and co-workers

The *Lifesaver Award* (a bucket of Lifesavers® candy, inscribed with the words “Because the work you do saves lives”) is awarded randomly each month to a program area or unit within the Center.

Another popular staff favorite is the *You're so Cool Award*, which gives clients an opportunity to nominate a staff member who is

“cool” or who they believe has significantly contributed to their recovery. The staff member receives a coupon for free ice-cream.

These awards are not only designed to help staff know they are appreciated, but also to bring a smile and to help employees unwind, if only for a minute. This is the case with the *Prescription Award*, which is the brain-child of committee member Jordyn Baker of New Solutions.

Baker needed something to do with the hundreds of empty pill bottles she had stashed away in her office, so the committee came up with the idea to fill them with Skittles® candies and send them out to the staff. Each staff member receives a randomly sent prescription from “Dr. Feel Good” with the instructions to “take as needed for relief of anxiety or stress or for a badly needed attitude adjustment.” Feedback from the staff suggests they love receiving the small bottles of candy and that somehow it always gets to the right person at the right time - just when the employee needs a good laugh or a reality check.

The Committee’s newest morale boosting effort is the creation of a new game called *Where in the world is Dr. Bank?* The game is played on the Committee’s new web page, via the CAMHC intranet. Staff can log onto the intranet and go to the Employee Recognition page, where they will see a partial photo of Bank with the phrase, “Where in the world is Dr. Bank?” Employees can post comments and guesses to the page. If no one guesses correctly, another portion of the picture will

be revealed until the entire picture is visible on the third week. The



Dancing at a CAMHC ice cream social!

last game discovered the center director hanging out near the fountain in Finlay Park. The new web page also has listings of upcoming events, pictures, award winners, and a link where staff can send suggestions.



Staff enjoy ice cream social fun and games!

The Committee has become so popular that the required service commitment is usually exceeded, and many members continue far longer than their mandatory two-year obligation. I serve as committee chair, and have been on the Committee since 2006; Co-chair Cheryl Krumholtz has been a member for well over 10 years.

As staff continue to work hard, they can always count on the Committee to acknowledge their efforts and lift their spirits, and with the support of Center Director Bank, it will continue to go about the business of honoring staff and boosting morale in 2012!

ACTIVITY THERAPY SERVICE HOLDS HOLIDAY FORENSIC PROGRAM

Kim Grant, Activity Therapy Director, Forensic Services

Each year we all anticipate the month of December, filled with extra special events, parties, and gift giving. The patients in the Forensic Program not only experienced all of the above this last holiday season, but were also treated to a performance of the play “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” performed by a very talented group of their peers. We definitely have a group of thespians, as this play followed closely behind the successful “A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving.”

Patients made props and gathered costumes to complete the show. Christina is credited for her artistic work, drawing the backdrop on blank paper and helping her peers paint what turned out to be an amazing scene! Of course the play would not be complete without Charlie Brown’s “poor” Christmas tree and a dog house made especially for Snoopy.

Many hours of work paid off, as the group entertained an audience of nearly 80 (we may need a ticket office next year!). Special thanks to Rick Harmon, AT, for his diligent supervision of the patients in painting the beautiful scene. It took several hours (almost 30 hours over 2 weeks), but was well worth the effort.



Anthony N, Farris A, Dewitt S, Carolyn H, Allison C, Althea B, Trey B, James S, Melverick E, and Christina M took part in the highly acclaimed production of “A Charlie Brown Christmas.”

Thanks to all of the forensic clinical staff for their dedication to the many holiday activities throughout December. In the January 17 Consumer Rights meeting, Christina M. said, “It was the best Christmas ever!” I have to agree with her. Rick Harmon and Mekia Alston had the idea for the play and coordinated rehearsals. Thanks to the Forensic Activity staff: Terry Edwards, Mike Mallard, Melvin Barlow, Michael Bethel, and Paula Haynes for their support in making it happen. Happy New Year!

GREENVILLE MHC STOMPS OUT STIGMA!

Marie Young, Statistical and Research Analyst, Greenville MHC



Every December, the St. Francis Foundation hosts a Festival of Trees in downtown Greenville. In 2011, the staff of Greenville Mental Health Center (GMHC) chose to bring the message of hope to the community by participating in the festival as a decorator.

Staff donated gently worn shoes and new socks, which adorned their tree in a most unusual fashion. Mingling between traditional beauties, the tree fashioned with shoes and socks caught the eye of many and quickly spread its message, “Stomp Out Stigma.”

The community was so greatly touched by the tree that it received many *extra* trimmings during its month-long debut. The Foundation received many calls from viewers, and GMHC received Honorable Mention for its design. By January, the tree was overflowing with the splendor of shoes and socks for those who need it most. All donations were given to Greenville’s local soup kitchen, Project Host.

Left: GMHC’s “Stomp Out Stigma” Tree at the 2011 Greenville Festival of Trees

DMH PARTICIPATES IN SUICIDE PREVENTION EDUCATION EVENT

Melanie Ferretti, Office of Network Information Technology

On January 27, approximately 400 people attended the free, day-long Suicide Prevention Education Event, held at the Charleston Area Convention Center in North Charleston. Educators, military personnel, health care, child care, and mental health providers, students, parents, and other members of the general public from across the state gathered to receive free suicide preventive education.

During opening remarks, DMH State Director John H. Magill said, "Suicide is a preventable major health problem that affects every age, race, gender, and socio-economic group. We all need to take the time to look for signs and symptoms, to ask the right questions, and to get professional help for those we suspect may be contemplating self-harm. Doing so may prevent many tragic deaths."

The U.S. military is especially hard hit; approximately 6,000 veterans die from suicide annually. Colonel Judith Hughes, of the 628th Air Base Wing from Joint Base Charleston, reviewed some of the unique stressors placed on military personnel and their families, prior to introducing Jackie Garrick. Garrick, acting director of the Defense Suicide Prevention and Risk Reduction Office of the Department of Defense spoke about the efforts being made to reduce suicides of those who serve in the armed forces.

Clark Flatt shared his personal experience of the devastation of losing a loved one to suicide. On July 16, 1997, he lost his son, Jason, to suicide. Flatt explained

that the facts reveal a 'silent epidemic of youth suicide' is ravaging our nation. Suicide ranks as the third leading cause of death for young people aged 10 to 24. In the past 40 years, youth suicide rates have tripled; each week in our nation, we lose more than 100 young people to suicide.

Flatt is founder and CEO of the Jason Foundation, Inc. (JFI), a nationally recognized provider of educational curricula and training programs for students, educators, youth workers and parents. JFI's programs build awareness of the national health problem of youth suicide, educate participants in recognizing the warning signs or signs of concern, provide information on identifying at-risk behavior and elevated risk groups, and direct participants to local resources to deal with possible suicidal ideation.

Since 2007, the Jason Flatt Act, which requires at least 2 hours of training for teachers and other school personnel on youth suicide awareness and prevention through in-service training or teacher certification requirements, has been passed into law in six states. The day before the conference South Carolina State Senators Robert Hayes, Jr. and Michael T. Rose introduced bill 1148 to the Senate, and South Carolina State Representatives Phillip Owens, James M. Neal, Andrew S. Patrick, and Mark Willis introduced bill 4690 to the House of Representatives to enact the Jason Flatt Act in South Carolina.

Dr. Tracy Cross, President-elect of the National Association of Gifted Children, and professor at the College of William and Mary's Center for Gifted Children, pointed out that contrary to popular belief, studies have not proven that gifted children are at higher risk of attempting suicide than other children. Primarily due to the fact that gifted children are hard to typify, there is no set definition of gifted, so generalizations can't be easily applied. According to Cross, "People kill themselves to escape pain, and we are left to ask ourselves how we didn't know they were suffering. If we look for signs of distress and are caring people, we may prevent the tragedy of suicide. The difference between suicide attempts and completions is time and method. Our plan should be to show concern and get professional help, to buy the time necessary for someone to get through his or her desire to self-harm, to get into mental health treatment, and to begin working toward recovery."

DMH employees played a variety of roles in the event's breakout sessions. The Public Health-Suicide Prevention Panel Discussion comprised Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center (CDMHC) employees Esther Hennessee, director of Special Operations and Dr. Katherine Smith, medical director, and the Berkeley County Mental Health Center Medical Director Dr. Ray Hodges.



Medical Directors Dr. Katherine Smith (Charleston Dorchester MHC) and Dr. Ray Hodges Berkeley CMHC)

They joined Caroline Byrd, vice president of Trident United Way 2-1-1 Services, in discussing the importance of keeping the channels of communication open, what to expect if a family member or friend has been identified as suicidal, and fielded questions from the audience.

DMH employees also participated in the Community Resources Discussion Panel. CDMHC Executive Director Deborah Blalock joined National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Executive Director Bill Lindsey, Palmetto Low Country Behavioral Health Chief Operating Officer Dr. Marc Turner, and R.H. Johnson Veteran's Medical Center Suicide Prevention Coordinator Dr. Mark De Santis. Blalock discussed the many resources available in the Tri-County area, including a Mobile Crisis Unit (which she described as a Psychiatric EMS), a Psychiatric Urgent Care Walk-in Clinic, and the Highway to Hope

RV. Lindsey talked about NAMI, a non-profit grass roots organization dedicated to advocacy for those with mental illness and education to decrease stigma and increase understanding of mental illness issues. NAMI offers courses like Parents and Teachers as Allies to high school teachers and Crisis Intervention Training to members of law enforcement. All NAMI trainings are provided free of charge.

Kennard DuBose, program manager in the DMH Division of Community Mental Health Services, served as moderator for two military focused sessions: "Operation S.A.V.E & Management of Suicidal Individuals," led by Dr. De Santis and "Reducing Suicidal Behavior: Improving Outcomes in the Face of Substance Abuse," led by R.H. Johnson Veteran's Medical Center Substance Abuse Treatment Center Psychologist Kathy Bottanari. "My involvement in this conference was important because of the awareness theme," DuBose said. "Often, we, as licensed professionals, may think we have a pretty good grasp on this problem; however the statistics for children, young adults, and specifically veterans continue to be alarming. Suicide is a major preventable public health problem. That is the message that has resonated with

me as a result of this event and that I hope with others as well."

The conference was successfully coordinated by Stacey Lindbergh, who is not only the director of Business Development and Community Relations of Palmetto Behavioral Health, but also president-elect of the Rotary Club of North Charleston - Breakfast, and a board member of the Berkeley Community Mental Health Center.



Berkeley Mental Health Center board member Stacey Lindbergh coordinated the event.

The event was sponsored by the Rotary Club of North Charleston - Breakfast, Palmetto Behavioral Health, Heritage Trust Federal Credit Union, Palmetto Scholars Academy, and DMH; those in attendance were awarded free continuing education units in a variety of areas.

TWO RE-APPOINTED TO DMH INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Tracy LaPointe, Office of Public Affairs

Effective February 1, Ruth Abramson, Ph.D. and Katherine Roberts, MPH, were re-appointed for three year terms to the DMH Institutional Review Board (IRB). In keeping with its goal to advance treatment while protecting research subjects, the Department formed its own IRB, in accordance with Health and Human Services regulations, in order to safeguard the rights, welfare, and private health information of these subjects. Outside of the Educational system, DMH is one of the few state agencies with its own IRB.

DMH's IRB has developed an online site providing researchers with tools and information necessary to ensure these obligations are met and help facilitate the research approval process. Currently, more than 20 research projects are being conducted in house and/or with research partners, including faculty and staff from USC, MUSC, and Clemson.

DMH EMPLOYEE GUIDE TO POLITICAL ACTIVITY

(Adapted from U.S. Office of Special Counsel materials. For additional general information about the “Hatch Act” see <http://www.osc.gov/hatchact.htm>, and/or contact the DMH Office of General Counsel or DMH Human Resource Services.)

DMH Directive “Political Activity” 361-75 requires that all DMH employees conform to the requirements of the “Hatch Act” (a federal law pertaining to political activity by federal and many state or other public employees.) In addition to disciplinary actions for violation of the DMH “Political Activity” Directive, DMH employees may also be subject to investigation by the U. S. Office of Special Counsel and subsequent sanctions affecting their current and future DMH and state employment.

DMH EMPLOYEES MAY (ACTING IN A PERSONAL CAPACITY/OFF DUTY):

1. Register and vote as you choose
2. Assist in voter registration drives
3. Express opinions about political candidates and issues
4. Join and be an active member of (including holding office in) a political party, club or organization
5. Contribute money or other donations to a political party, organization or candidate
- 6.
7. Attend political fundraising activities, rallies, meetings or activity
8. Campaign for or against a candidate, referendum, constitutional amendment, ordinance, etc.
9. Be a candidate for public office in a **NON-PARTISAN** election (NO candidates represent a political party)
E.g. You may run for school board as long as NO one running in the election represents a political party.
10. Be appointed to fill a vacancy for an elective office and serve out the unexpired term.
E.g. You may be appointed and finish the term but may not run for re-election in a partisan election.

DMH EMPLOYEES MAY NOT:

1. Be a candidate for public office in a **PARTISAN** election
E.g. You may NOT run in an election if ANY of the candidates represent a political party.
2. Organize or participate in a “write-in” candidacy for yourself during a **PARTISAN** election
E.g. You may NOT solicit voters to write your name on the ballot when they vote on election day.
3. Use your DMH position, authority or influence, to interfere with or affect a public election or nomination
E.g. You may NOT ask a subordinate employee to support or not support a political party or candidate.
4. Use DMH property, equipment or other resources for political activity unless authorized by DMH
E.g. You may NOT use a DMH computer or email for political activity unless authorized by DMH (e.g. related to your job involving a legislative matter)
5. Attempt to coerce or require other DMH employees to pay, lend or contribute anything of value to a political party, organization, candidate or person for political purposes
E.g. You may NOT ask a subordinate to buy tickets to a political fundraiser/other political contribution.

Mental Health Matters is a newsletter of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health (DMH). Produced by the Office of Public Affairs, it aims to bring items of interest within the DMH system to the attention of Agency personnel, the Mental Health Commission, mental health advocates, and other stakeholders.

Editor/Layout & Design: Tracy LaPointe

*Contact: (803) 898-8581
TLL06@scdmh.org*