

IMHCA NEWS

Official Newsletter of the Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association Summer 2004

A Word from the President, Carol Charles-Rohlf

The 7th Annual Iowa Mental Health Counselors Conference was both enjoyable and informative for those in attendance. What an important event to kick off Mental Health Counselors Week during this, the Year of Mental Health Awareness.

Iowa Governor Vilsack, Cedar Falls Mayor John Crews and Waterloo Mayor Timothy Hurley signed a Proclamation designating 9/11/03 through 9/10/04 as The Year of Mental Health Awareness; the Week of May 1, Mental Health Counselors Week. They support the American Mental Health Counselors Association and its chapters' efforts in pursuing a Mental Health Awareness U.S. Postage Stamp.

This year could still prove to be a critical shift for our profession, not only in Iowa but across the country. With a record number of bipartisan co-sponsors, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act isn't dead yet. Passage however requires that policymakers hear from their constituents. Although there are 360 national organizations lobbying for the passage, the most public event planned in Washington, D.C., on June 10 had to be canceled due to the death of former President Reagan.

Your state chapter persevered despite a short deadline and uncertain weather and held a public event in conjunction with the National Alliance of the Mentally Ill. The event was held in Cedar Falls, Iowa on June 10 with close to 100 persons in attendance. The Waterloo-Cedar Falls Channel 7-KWWL covered the event live on the noon news. Numerous politicians were present to voice their support for equitable treatment for persons with mental illness; some shared personal stories which ensures their strong advocacy efforts.

Increasing IMHCA's members' political knowledge and presence was a top priority to me when assuming office in 2001 as president-elect. We have established a network of like-minded organizations and will continue to work in conjunction with them on issues effecting the mental wellness of Iowans and the profession of mental health counseling.

We are, however, only a view voices representing over 600 licensed mental health counselors. It is critical that IMHCA speaks for all of you. Please take advantage of e-mail technology and communicate your position on these or other issues you face. Let the Board of Directors know the direction you wish to see the organization move and how we can ensure your participation and meet your needs. This is YOUR organization - TAKE OWNERSHIP - NOW.

AMHCA 2004 Membership Directory Published

Executive Director W. Mark Hamilton, PhD. has announced the publication of the new and long-awaited printed AMHCA Membership Directory. For the first time in many years a printed membership directory is available for purchase. The new directory is available in both the standard edition and deluxe edition.

AMHCA members now have an updated list of their colleagues across the U.S. and around the globe. Contacting colleagues and networking is now much easier. Members are listed by name, geographic setting, counseling specialty codes, work setting codes and certification codes.

Directory orders and inquiries should be given to Harris Publishing Inc. at 800-877-6554 and customerservice@bcharrispub.com.

**CONFERENCE ATTENDEES REQUEST KEYNOTE
CONTACT INFO**

Raymond DiGuiseppe can be contacted at the following email address: rayrebt@aol.com

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IMHCA Online

IMHCA will maintain an online membership directory and has discontinued its annual printed directory to contain costs rather than raise dues while improving service to members. **Additional** web site updates, changes and enhanced features, authorized by the board, were **unveiled** in July. **Log on to IMHCA.net regularly for critical updates and association news.**

House Defense Bill Mandates Pentagon to Review Mental Health Services for Troops

E-News from Washington
Vol.04-15 • May 21, 2004

Amendment to 2005 Defense Bill Mandates Study of Mental Health Services Available to U.S. Soldiers and their Families

On May 20, 2004, the House of Representatives voted in support of an amendment drafted by U.S. Reps. Brian Baird (D-WA) and Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), requiring the Secretary of Defense to launch a comprehensive review of the mental health and counseling services available to U.S. soldiers and their families. The Baird-Kennedy amendment was included in the fiscal year 2005 Defense Authorization Act.

The amendment will force the Department of Defense (DOD) to address tough issues, such as how the decision to seek mental health treatment can impact a service members career, and the extent to which the militaries lack of firm confidentiality policies hamper treatment of soldiers and combat veterans. The amendment will also require DOD to examine disparities between the mental health services available to active duty military, and those available to members of the Reserve and National Guard.

In a press statement, Rep. Baird said, Iwo owe this to our soldiers and their families. In past conflicts, we have failed to provide adequate mental health care for our soldiers, and many have suffered. Baird worked extensively with veterans of the Vietnam War as a clinical psychologist prior to being elected to Congress.

The amendment requires the Secretary of Defense to submit the findings of the study to Congress, including a section detailing any shortcomings identified, and specific recommendations for addressing them, not more than 90 days after the President signs the bill into law.

The House passed the Defense Authorization Act on Thursday, May 20, 2004, by a vote of 391 to 34. The Senate is unlikely to finish debate on their version of the defense bill before the chamber adjourns for the weeklong Memorial Day recess period.

Beth Powell
Director, Public Policy and Professional Issues

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The only organization working exclusively for mental health counselors.

Attend the AMHCA Annual Conference in Washington DC, July 15-17, 2004

***New Board
Member Bios***

Stephanie Newsom MA, NCC - Treasurer

I received my undergraduate degree in psychology from Central College and my Master's in Counseling from UNI. I am a Licensed Mental Health Counselor as well as a National Certified Counselor. I have been the Director of Counseling Services at Wartburg College for 5 years. Prior to that I was the Executive Director of Seeds of Hope (a domestic violence and sexual assault agency) for five years. I am a member of ACA and IMHCA. My office is an internship site for UNI Master's in Counseling interns. I am a member of the Bremer County Pathways Behavioral Services Advisory Board and the Bremer County Covenant Clinic Psychiatry Advisory Board.

I am interested in the IMHCA Board because it is a way for me to interact with other counseling professionals across the state, as well as stay up to date on mental health issues in Iowa, and nationwide. Working in a college setting, I often only have the chance to interact with other small, private institutions of higher education. I think being a part of the IMHCA Board will provide a new opportunity to interact with other clinicians outside of that arena, as well as increase my referral network. I also would like to be able to give back to the counseling profession, which I think will be possible by being part of the board.

Linda Nebbe - Ph.D., NCC - Public Policy/Legislation

I have been involved in many aspects of Mental Health Counseling including an elementary school counselor; a mental health professional and Clinical Director in a Methadone Program; a counselor at the county jail; a counselor in a domestic abuse agency; and a program chair, instructor, advisor, and supervisor in a Counseling Education Graduate Program. I have been fortunate to have special interests that I have led to involvement on a national and international level. I have been honored to serve on the Behavioral Science License Board in Iowa.

Although I have been an active consumer of my professional organizations for years, I have never had the opportunity to become more involved. This is something within my profession that I have not done and that I would like to do. I have chosen the Public Policy and Legislation position because I have a strong interest in public policy. What I believe I can bring to this position is some training at the American Counseling Association Legislative Institute and a great network of contacts in Iowa. I also believe that I will gain a great deal from this position and I truly would like to learn more.

Thus, for the above reasons I am looking forward to serving as a board member of the Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association in the position of Public Policy and Legislation.

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY RALLY - JUNE 10TH - OVERMAN PARK CEDAR FALLS

The Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association was the proud sponsor of a Mental Health Parity Rally on June 10, 2004, in Cedar Falls, IA. The rally, held in conjunction with numerous other rallies across the country was intended to increase public awareness of the need for equal insurance coverage for physical and mental illnesses. Mental health parity legislation is desired by an overwhelming majority of Americans and has a record number of cosponsors from both political parties. Despite this, the business and insurance lobbies have thus far prevented the legislation from being enacted.

Use the toll-free Parity Hotline, 1-866-parity4 (1-866-727-4894), to call your Senators and Representatives to urge prompt passage of mental health parity legislation (S. 486 and H.R. 953). The Parity Hotline reaches the Capitol switchboard, which can connect callers to their Members of Congress.

For additional information on mental health parity news and updates:
<http://www.cnn.com/2004/HEALTH/06/11/mental.health.ap/index.html>

Supporters of parity legislation



Susan Hoppenworth, Midwest Region Director, American Mental Health Counselors Association



Carol Charles Rohlf, President, Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association



Brian Merrick, Board Member, Iowa Mental Health Counselors Association

2003-2004 IMHCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Non-voting positions :

Database manager - Scott Brockmann*
Web site manager - Scott Brockmann*
Conference planning committee - Marvita Robison Tweedt/Carol Charles Rohlf*
Newsletter editor - Carol Charles Rohlf*