

## 2008 Midwest Conference Offers Attendees Insight, Plans Underway for 2009

More than 200 addiction experts, treatment providers and representatives of the gambling industry, from 20 states and three countries, gathered in St. Louis for the fifth annual Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse at the Crowne Plaza Hotel-Clayton, Aug. 13-15. "Roads to Recovery – A Collaborative Approach" was the focus of the conference, which was partially funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The conference, which featured nationally acclaimed addiction experts from throughout the country, was a result of a joint endeavor by organizations throughout the five-state region – Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma. The three-day event provided more than 20 workshops and presentations from internationally and nationally renowned experts in the field of problem gambling, substance abuse and co-occurring disorders.

The conference opened at 6 p.m. Aug. 13 with a keynote address presented by Dr. H. Westley Clark, director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, followed by a panel discussion titled "Recovery Systems – A Collaborative Approach" involving several experts in the addiction and recovery fields. The opening evening keynote address and panel discussion were free and open to the public. In addition to Clark, other keynote speakers for the conference included: Judge Mark Farrell, senior justice in the Amherst, New York Criminal and Civil Court; Pamela Lightsey, dean of students at Garret-Evangelical Theological seminary; and Nancy Petry, professor at the University of Connecticut Health Center.

Two individuals were also recognized at the Conference for their hard work and dedication to the field of problem gambling and substance abuse. Arlene Miller received the 2008 Outstanding Contributor Award and Richard Cox was selected to receive the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling's Service Award.

Plans are already underway to make the 2009 Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse, which will be held Aug. 12-14 at the Hilton Frontenac in St. Louis, another educational and exciting event. Due to positive feedback regarding the 2008 theme, next year's conference will also utilize "Roads to Recovery" as the focus of the theme. More detailed information will be posted as it becomes available.

For a complete list of presenters and conference information, please visit the Alliance's Web site at: [www.888betsoff.org](http://www.888betsoff.org).



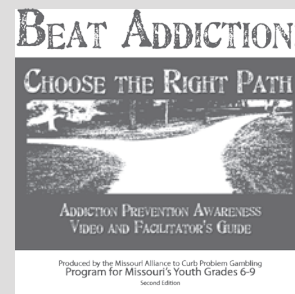
### New Version Of 'Beat Addiction' To Be Released Soon

The award-winning "Beat Addiction: Choose the Right Path" youth addiction prevention video is being revised and updated. The newer edition of the video is expected to be completed this fall and will be available to schools later this year.

The original "Beat Addiction: Choose the Right Path" video and facilitator's guide, which were designed for students in grades 6-9, was introduced in 2003. The video kit was made available for free to all Missouri schools. More than 700 Missouri schools requested copies of the video kit. The video was also used and shown in several other states and countries throughout the world.

The updated video will include four personal stories, from a diverse cast of youth in recovery from various addictions, including gambling and substance abuse.

"Students that watched the first version of 'Beat Addiction' said they wanted to hear from people that were closer to their age. In the new version, we interviewed young addicts in recovery that were forced to overcome enormous obstacles," said Frank Finely, video producer for the Missouri Lottery.



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## Winter Named New Alliance Chair

Michael Winter, executive director of the Missouri Gaming Association, recently was named the chairperson of the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling. Winter, who previously served as vice chairperson of the Alliance, will assume the yearlong leadership role from Gary Gonder, director of Integrated Services at the Missouri Lottery, in September.

Under Gonder's leadership, the Alliance made strides by creating a strategic plan for the upcoming year.

"Gary Gonder, our outgoing chair, has laid a good foundation on which we can build over the next year. The strategic plan now in place gives us a starting point from which the Alliance can now move forward," said Winter.

The Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling is a partnership between the Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns Inc., the Missouri Department of Mental Health's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, the Missouri Gaming Association, the Missouri Gaming Commission, the Missouri Lottery and the Port Authority of Kansas City.

According to Winter, one of the main goals of the Alliance is to educate Missourians on the characteristics and potential dangers of problem and compulsive gambling.

"It's our job not only to educate, but to also promote responsible gaming and refer compulsive gamblers and their family and friends to free treatment through a toll-free help line at 1-888-BETSOFF," said Winter.

To learn more about the Alliance, please visit: <http://www.888betsoff.org/alliance/index.htm>



Michael Winter

## Have A Story Idea?

Do you have a story idea for the next *Betsoff Bulletin*, or would you like to write a story for the next issue? There's a lot going on in Missouri concerning problem gambling, and we would like to include as much as possible in the *Bulletin* and on our Web site, so please be sure to pass on any ideas you may have.

To suggest story ideas for the *Bulletin* or the Web site, contact the editor, Holly Koofer, at [betsoff@molottery.com](mailto:betsoff@molottery.com), or call (573) 526-7467.

## Proposals For Workshops, Presentations Being Sought

Proposals are currently being accepted for workshops and poster presentations for the 2009 Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse, which will be held Aug. 12-14 at the Hilton St. Louis Frontenac in St. Louis. All proposals must be submitted by Dec. 31. Tentative workshops scheduled will focus on clinical application, research, public policy, industry innovation, regulation, therapeutic justice, recovery and special populations.

According to Melissa Stephens, problem gambling program administrator for the Missouri Gaming Commission and member of the Midwest Conference program committee, there are numerous reasons to attend the 2009 Midwest Conference.

"The Midwest Conference will offer attendees an opportunity to communicate with nationally recognized experts in the field of gambling treatment and substance abuse. Attendees will also learn how to recognize and treat clients affected by mental health or substance abuse issues co-occurring with gambling or problem gambling behaviors, and discover more about persons who gamble and how that affects their families," said Stephens.

Additionally, 2009 attendees will be presented with the opportunity to interact with a community committed to making a difference in the substance abuse and problem gambling field, network with state-certified gambling treatment counselors, find out about available resources and learn how to provide quality services for persons with problem gambling behaviors.

More information on the 2009 Midwest Conference will be posted on the Conference Web site as it becomes available: [www.888betsoff.org](http://www.888betsoff.org).

### Tentative Timeline and Deadlines:

- *Dec. 31, 2008*: Call for presentations, posters deadline
- *Spring 2009*: Speakers and workshops announced
- *May 31, 2009*: Call for late-breaking research posters deadline
- *June 30, 2009*: Early-bird registration discount deadline
- *July 28, 2009*: Hotel room block reservation deadline



## New Version Of 'Beat Addiction' To Be Released Soon

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According to Finely, the goal of the second version of "Beat Addiction" is to help students understand that choices they make today will impact the rest of their lives.

The facilitator's guide, with assistance from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, is also being revised to incorporate the Missouri Show Me Standards, which are curriculum guides established in response to federal mandates.

## Koofer Joins Missouri Lottery and Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling

Holly Koofer of Jefferson City recently joined the Missouri Lottery as a public information coordinator. Koofer will be responsible for writing and editing the Lottery's publications including the Bets Off Bulletin, handling winner awareness and serving as the responsible gaming coordinator for the Lottery.

"I'm really looking forward to becoming more involved with the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling. It will be rewarding to educate Missourians about problem gambling and help direct those in need to the proper treatment services," said Koofer.

Prior to joining the Lottery, Koofer, a graduate from Penn State University in Altoona, Pa., worked at the Missouri Pharmacy Association in Jefferson City.



Holly Koofer

## Miller Recognized for Contributions to Assist Problem Gamblers

Arlene Miller received the 2008 Outstanding Contributor Award from the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling during the 2008 Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse held Aug. 13-15 in St. Louis.

The Outstanding Contributor Award is presented annually to an individual, group, organization or company who has demonstrated superior achievement in addressing problem and pathological gambling issues.



Arlene Miller

"You all fooled me," said Miller to a group of conference attendees at the luncheon-turned-award presentation on the final day of the 2008 Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse. "I had no idea I was going to win this award. Everyone did a great job of keeping this a secret. I'm very honored."

Miller, a certified Gestalt Therapist, created and taught one of the first college credit courses on problem gambling at St. Louis Community College - Meramec. Miller has presented basic and advanced gambling training to varied audiences including agencies, schools, congregations and professionals.

Miller, who was initially trained as a community mental health counselor, is currently a social worker in private practice in St. Louis.

## Compulsive Gambling Counselor Receives Award

Richard Cox, a Missouri certified compulsive gambling counselor with 22 years of experience in the field of substance abuse, was selected to receive the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling's Service Award.

Cox, who has been a counselor at Bridgeway Behavioral Health in St. Charles since 1998, carries a caseload of 45 compulsive gamblers and also serves as a board member for the Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns.

The award, which was presented to Cox during the 2008 Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse, is given in recognition of extraordinary contributions to the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling over the course of the past year by an individual or representative of a member organization.



Richard Cox

## It's A Girl!

A very special congratulations goes out to Alliance member Mark Rembecki and his wife Sarah! They welcomed their fourth child, Jenna, to the world on Aug. 29.

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## Awareness Materials Available Through Web Site

A variety of problem gambling awareness materials are available for free through the Missouri Alliance, including posters and brochures from the latest Alliance awareness campaign, "Hope for You and Yours."



Visit the Alliance's Web site for more information about items available to order for your business, school or office. All items available through the Alliance are free to Missouri residents and businesses.

### Need A Speaker?

The Alliance provides speakers for groups and organizations throughout the state. For more information about the speakers bureau or to arrange a presentation, please call (573) 526-7467 or (573) 526-4080.

All presentations are free of charge.

## Want To Receive The *Bulletin*?

In an attempt to streamline costs, the *Betsoff Bulletin* is available through the Alliance's Web site, [www.888betsoff.org](http://www.888betsoff.org). We have an e-mail list of individuals who are interested in receiving notification when a new issue is available at the Web site, so please forward your e-mail address to [betsoff@molottery.com](mailto:betsoff@molottery.com). If you would prefer to receive a free printed copy of the *Bulletin* through the regular mail service, please let us know by calling (573) 526-7467.

If you received notification by e-mail about this issue, you're already on our e-mail list, but remember to send us updates on any e-mail address changes. In addition, please feel free to forward the link for the newsletter to anyone else who may be interested in reading it.

Thank you for your interest in the *Bulletin*.

Alliance news and event schedules are available on the Web at:

**[www.888betsoff.org](http://www.888betsoff.org)**



The Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling's mission is to heighten public awareness for the dangers of problem gambling; develop prevention and education programs for gamblers of all ages; and direct problem gamblers and their families to the 1-888-BETSOFF help line and treatment.