

Port Authority Awards \$160,000 In Grants For Youth Addiction Education, Research

More than \$160,000 in grants was awarded in January by the Port Authority of Kansas City to help prevent compulsive gaming among youth.

“Gambling is the nation’s fastest-growing teen addiction, in part caused by the poker craze that is promoted on television by celebrity players and big jackpot matches,” said Joanne Collins, chairperson of the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gaming and Port Authority of Kansas City commissioner. “In fact, according to the National Gambling Impact Study Commission, 70 percent of teens have gambled, with an estimated 6 percent possibly addicted.”

Three organizations were awarded grants to fund awareness programs and research to help prevent youth gaming.

- \$19,525 - Second Chance Foundation of Jefferson City;
- \$47,150 - University of Missouri-Columbia Wellness Resource Center; and
- \$93,938 - Washington University, George Warren Brown School of Social Work in St. Louis.

“Youth gaming is a problem of growing concern,” Collins said. “Awarding grants to these fine institutions and organizations gives us hope that education is the solution to prevention.”

The grant requests for proposals (RFPs) were released in conjunction with the Midwest Conference on Problem Gaming and Substance Abuse, which was held in Kansas City in August 2005.

“Receiving this grant helps us to continue our already established gaming awareness and prevention programs,” said Kim Dude, director of the University of Missouri-Columbia Wellness Resource Center. “The

grant monies will assist us in reducing problem gaming in college students at all 12 Missouri state institutions.”

The Washington University grant was awarded to Renee Cunningham-Williams, an associate professor at the university. The grant money will be used to interview hundreds of young people, between the ages of 14 and 25, to help establish prevalence rates for youth-gambling addiction and to learn more about why, how

and at what age they started gambling.

The Second Chance Foundation of Jefferson City will be using their grant money to finance theatrical presentations aimed at fourth- through sixth-grade students to educate them about the dangers of gambling. Second Chance currently presents “Addiction – The Game No One Wins” to students in sixth through eighth grade. “Addiction – The Game No One Wins” is a 45-minute assembly program funded by members of the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling.

The grants are underwritten by a Problem Gaming Fund, which is administered by the Port Authority of Kansas City and the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. The fund receives money from the Ameristar

Casino and Isle of Capri Casino that make financial contributions to the fund as part of its agreement to locate within the city.

In July of 2003 the Port Authority awarded similar grants to Harvard Medical School, the University of Missouri and Tri-County Mental Health Services Inc.

The grants funded problem gaming resources, prevention programs and research about disordered gaming in the state of Missouri.



Laura Morris (left) and Bebe Heil of the Second Chance Foundation, a recent grant recipient, present the school program.



Teachers and students participate in “Addiction - The Game No One Wins” presented by the Second Chance Foundation.

National Problem Gambling Awareness Week

March 6-12 is National Problem Gambling Awareness Week. The Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling will be helping to celebrate the week with an educational booth at the Pathways to Student Success Conference in Osage Beach, March 5-7.

Wanna Bet?



Joanne Collins

This month we are celebrating African-American History Month. On Jan. 25, I attended the annual breakfast of the African-American Student Union at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. The breakfast was honoring the life of Dr. Martin Luther King. I walked away with valuable lessons that are very relevant to the issue of problem gambling. The first came from Mayor Pro Tem Alvin Brooks, who reminded everyone that, “we are all connected.” We are in this together and what happens to one individual or group affects us all.

The second came from the Rev. Sam Mann. In speaking of Dr. King’s legacy, he highlighted that Dr. King was assassinated just after he began working to bring African-Americans and poor people together to understand and mobilize their political strength for their common survival.

As I reflected on his words and my concern for those who are impacted by problem gambling, I was also reminded of a lesson from Father Joseph Martin, one of the icons of the alcohol-recovery movement. Father Martin said with regard to alcoholism, “If it causes a problem... then it is a problem.” With the percentage of adolescent compulsive gamblers aged 12 to 16 estimated at between 4 and 6 percent and those in which gambling is considered a serious problem an additional 10 to 15 percent, we have a significant and growing problem.

The two groups most alarmingly affected are our youth and the aging baby-boomer population. We need to mobilize and increase our consciousnesses to the fact that what happens to these groups undermines the future for all of us.

Harvard Professor Howard Shaffer, a leading problem gambling researcher, has advocated for a public-health response to problem gambling that matches the intervention to the severity of the problem.

I believe this recommendation is on target. However, we barely respond programmatically to the compulsive gambler and rarely address the wider spectrum of people and families affected by problem gambling. We do not have a public education program that even approaches the current level of advertising about problem drinking and drug use. Yet the impact is equally devastating. This impact could be greatly reduced by effective prevention and community education about the risks and effects of gambling behaviors that are “causing a problem.”

When an individual whether a youth, a senior or an average citizen gambles more than they can afford, do we really embrace the impact that it has on all of us? Problem and compulsive gambling are equal opportunity social problems of a serious, persistent and progressive nature. Do we really have an adequate system in place to respond to the needs of those impacted and protect their interests? Are we committed to making a difference in the established institutionalized response? If we do not, we will all lose more than we can afford. You can bet on that.

-Joanne Collins

Upcoming Alliance Events

March 6-12

National Problem Gambling Awareness Week

March 5-7

Pathways to Student Success Conference in Osage Beach

March 9-10

Missouri Corrections Association Conference in Osage Beach

March 19-20

Show-Me Professional Development Conference in Osage Beach

April 5

Mental Health Awareness Day at the Capitol

April 6-8

Meeting of the Minds Conference hosted by Partners in Prevention in Kansas City

April 12-14

Missouri Prosecutor Attorney’s Spring Training in Lake Ozark

April 26-28

Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals Annual Drug Court Training Conference in Osage Beach

May 16-18

Missouri Department of Mental Health Spring Training Institute in Osage Beach

May 31

Deadline for Call of Poster Presentations for the Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling & Substance Abuse

Need A Speaker?

The Alliance provides speakers for groups and organizations throughout the state on topics ranging from the prevention of youth gambling to the warning signs of problem gambling. For more information about the speakers’ bureau or to arrange a presentation, please call (573) 526-7467 or (573) 522-1373.

All presentations are free of charge.

Number Of Calls To 1-888-BETSOFF

(1-888-238-7633)

	2004	2005
January	280	197
February	369	217
March	350	239
April	343	226
May	352	232
June	336	219
July	326	242
August	260	235
September	245	209
October	220	219
November	225	196
December	221	162



MRGA Becomes MGA

The Missouri Riverboat Gaming Association (MRGA), a founding member of the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling, recently changed its name to the Missouri Gaming Association (MGA).

Mike Ryan, executive director of the MGA, said the new name better reflects the mission of the organization.

Price Retires From Department Of Mental Health

Dewey Price recently retired as the Central Region District administrator for the Missouri Department of Mental Health's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse (ADA). He is a former chairman of the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling and provided

administrative oversight to the ADA's compulsive gambling program. He was a member of the first class of Missouri treatment providers completing Compulsive Gambling Counselor training and holds the first certificate awarded.

Bets Off Help Line Now Listed In Sprint Telephone Books

The 888-BETSOFF help line can now be found in telephone books throughout the state.

R.H. Donnelley, the publisher of Sprint telephone books, is now including the telephone number in Missouri phone books they publish beginning in January 2006.

Updates on additional telephone companies printing the Bets Off help line in their phone books will be included in upcoming issues of the *Bets Off Bulletin*.

Plans For 2006 Midwest Conference On Problem Gambling & Substance Abuse Are Underway



Plans are well underway for the 2006 Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling & Substance Abuse Aug. 16-18 in Kansas City.

"Improving the conference each year is our goal," said Melissa

Stephens, problem gambling administrator for the Missouri Gaming Commission and member of the conference planning committee. "We received some great proposals for presentations and panelists, so we're expecting the 2006 conference to be the best so far."

The 2006 conference is the third conference sponsored by the Midwest Consortium, which

includes Missouri, Kansas, Iowa and Nebraska. Oklahoma also joined the group this year. The planning committee includes mental health professionals, substance abuse treatment professionals, addiction program administrators, problem gambling counselors, gaming regulators and members of the gambling industry.

"We have a well-rounded group of individuals who are actively involved in the planning to ensure that the conference has something for everyone," said Nora Bock, program manager for the Missouri Department of Mental Health and a member of the conference planning committee.

The conference will again be at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center in Kansas City. For more information about the conference and upcoming deadlines, visit www.888betsoff.org.

Outstanding Contributor Award Nominations Being Accepted

Do you know of someone who goes above the call of duty to assist problem gamblers and their family members or is working hard to build awareness of problem gambling issues in Missouri? If so, then recommend that person or people for Missouri's Outstanding Contributor Award.

This statewide award will be presented to an individual who has demonstrated superior achievement in addressing issues of problem and pathological gambling in Missouri. Deadline for the 2006 nominations is June 16.

The Outstanding Contributor Award will be presented to an individual, group, organization or company outside

of the Missouri Alliance voting membership that has demonstrated superior achievement in addressing issues of problem and pathological gambling in Missouri.

The nomination form can be found at www.888betsoff.org. Nominations can be faxed or e-mailed to betsoff@molottery.com or sent by fax at (573) 751-5215.

The award recipient will be selected from all of the nominations received by the Alliance. All nominations will be confidential.

The recipient of the award will be announced at the Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling & Substance Abuse in August.

Got A Story Idea?

Do you have a story idea for the next 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, Shelly Perez, at perezs@molottery.com or call (573) 526-7467.

First Class
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #342
Jefferson City, MO

1-888-BETSOFF

BETSOFF BULLETIN is produced by the Missouri Lottery for the Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling.
Editor: Shelly Perez, responsible gaming program coordinator for the Missouri Lottery
Printer: Missouri State Printing Services, Jefferson City, MO

Membership Is Key To A Strong Alliance

Keep informed about what's happening with problem gambling in Missouri and help develop Alliance programs by becoming a participating member of the Alliance.

Any individual or organization interested in promoting and furthering the Alliance's mission to educate Missouri residents on the potential characteristics and dangers of problem and compulsive gambling and promoting the availability of treatment can join the Missouri Alliance as a participating member.

Participating members are encouraged to:

- **Participate in Alliance meetings and events;**
- **Aid in the planning of awareness events; and**
- **Provide input to further expand the Alliance's programs.**

All memberships into the Alliance are free. For more information about becoming a participating member or to join, visit the Alliance's Web site at www.888BETSOFF.org or call (573) 5264080.

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. 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. 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.com



Missouri Department of Mental Health



Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns



Missouri Gaming Commission



Missouri Lottery



Missouri Riverboat Gaming Association



Port Authority of Kansas City, MO

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 free treatment.