Rodney Hoffman, President of the Board of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, is pleased to announce that Marlene Warner, a resident of Salem, has been named the new Executive Director of the organization.

Marlene worked at the Council for 10 years as Program Director. During that time, she helped the non-profit organization to achieve many objectives including: offering both online and regional training opportunities for clinicians, expanding the Helpline to offer live chat, working with financial services industries and the corrections community to help individuals understand the impact of problem gambling, and developing more programs and services to serve ethnic and linguistic minority populations experiencing problems with the disorder.

According to Hoffman, “In her years with the Council, Marlene has grown as much as the work of the Council has grown. She has the confidence of both her colleagues and the Board and is well-respected in the field. We have no doubt that Marlene will continue to build upon the Council’s leadership in the field to promote awareness, prevention and treatment, but most of all to help people experiencing problems with gambling.”

“It is a real pleasure and an honor to follow in the footsteps of Kathy Scanlan and prior to her, Tom Cummings. I will work diligently to uphold the respect and hard work that they both delivered to make the Council what it is today,” said Warner.

For more information, about Ms. Warner or the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling please call 617-426-4554 or visit www.masscompulsivegambling.org.

Don’t Miss

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE
In Boston this Summer!

It is not too late to register for the 25th National Conference on Problem Gambling. The oldest and largest conference on problem gambling in the world will take place July 1 to July 2, 2011 at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel and Towers.

For a quarter of a century, the conference has brought together leaders in prevention, education, treatment, responsible gaming, research and recovery to present the latest developments. Whether you are a seasoned professional or a newcomer to gambling issues, you will find more than 75 presentations packed with high-quality information. Based on popular demand, the National Council has added two full days (Wednesday, June 29 and Thursday, June 30) of intensive skill-building pre-conference workshops. You may also consider our ‘Live Learning Center’ option which offers synchronized audio and PowerPoint access to over 60 hours of content, so you won’t miss a session.

Additionally, there are several fun events planned. No trip to Boston is complete without wicked good ‘chowdah’ and a tasty ‘lobstah.’ Savor both during a Traditional New England Style Clambake on the evening of Friday, July 1! You may also want to join the Mass. Council staff for special “tours” of Boston on the evening on Saturday, July 2. From Chinatown to the Boston waterfront, there’s something for everyone to enjoy. For more information or to register, log on to www.ncpgambling.org/tours.

We look forward to seeing you in Boston, during the 4th of July holiday, for 2-4 days of exciting speakers, practical solutions, networking and great fun with leaders and stakeholders from across the country. There are several registration options including a ‘total conference package’ and a ‘one-day conference’ rate. To learn more visit www.ncpgambling.org/conference or call the National Council at 202-547-9204.

Working with the Recovery Community
Save the Date “Post Traumatic Stress and Problem Gambling”
We’re Blogging!
**WORKING WITH THE RECOVERY COMMUNITY**

Over the past three years, the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling has worked to integrate problem gambling services into the six Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services-Funded Peer Recovery Support Centers. According to Council Prevention Director, Jim Wulfing, “Pathological gamblers are significantly more likely to have substance use disorders compared to those without gambling problems. Research examining a large, representative sample of U.S. citizens found that 35% of pathological gamblers, 75% also had an alcohol disorder and 38% also had a drug use disorder. (see the Council’s New Problem Gambling and Substance Use Disorders fact sheet). Therefore, initiatives within a broader recovery community make a lot of sense in terms of identifying people at risk for developing gambling problems, and putting protective factors in place.”

In 2010, Mass. Council staff members visited all of the Recovery Centers to find collaborative projects, and to share information about problem gambling prevention, intervention and treatment resources. The first project the Council undertook at the centers was delivering financial literacy programs. As a result, people in recovery learned about bank accounts, credit and money management. “Education is an integral early strategy in the prevention of problem gambling,” said Wulfing.

In 2011, Council staff members returned to the Centers to show the movie, “One Last Ride,” an emotionally gripping film about one main character’s battle to end a self-destructive path of compulsive gambling. After showing the movie, Council staff engaged Recovery Center members in open and honest discussions about gambling and gambling addiction; many members were surprised at how similar gambling addiction was to their own experience with alcohol and other drug addiction.

**POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER & PROBLEM GAMBLING**

**Wednesday, July 25 – 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The Body Hotel, 350 Street Street, Boston MA 02116**

Lisa Najavits, PhD, professor of psychiatry at Boston University School of Medicine, will lead a treatment provider workshop entitled, “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Problem Gambling,” on Tuesday, July 26, 2011. There is no cost to attend, and this session has been approved for two hours of continuing education units.

Dr. Najavits is nationally known for her program “Seeking Safety,” an evidence-based treatment for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and problem gambling, and for her research on problem gambling in PTSD populations. During the event she will discuss her research findings, as well as the “Seeking Safety” treatment approach. This treatment has been used to treat problem gamblers as well as substance use disorder clients, is a present-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy approach offering psychoeducation and coping skills to help patients attain greater safety in their lives.

The event is being co-sponsored by the National Center for Responsible Gambling (NCRG) and the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling. For more information or to register for the training, please contact Amy Martin, Communications and Outreach Manager, NCRG at amartin@ncrg.org / 202-352-2689.

**FINANCIAL TRAINING OF TRAINERS**

May 17-18, 2011, the Mass. Council invited nine people in recovery (or associated with recovery-oriented programs) to take part in a Training of Trainers (TOT) event in Marlborough, MA. Participants learned about the Council’s financial education and literacy program, and about how to train future volunteers to deliver the Council’s curriculum to best present and teach the information themselves.

The TOT was based upon Consumer Action and Capital One’s MoneyWise Program. The Mass. Council has adapted the program’s materials and content to be more accessible to audiences in early recovery who are struggling with financial situations caused by various addictions, incarceration and or homelessness, programs that the new core of Council trainers will deliver statewide.

The first two modules will focus on Money Management and Banking Basics. In Money Management group members will create budget categories, follow a case study, and find solutions toward better financial organization. In Banking Basics, group members will engage in a “scavenger hunt” to determine the differences between banks and credit unions, the benefits and drawbacks to debit cards versus credit cards, and to learn about how people can repair bad banking experiences through an oversight agency.

For more information about the Council’s financial literacy programs, or to learn about becoming a trainer, please contact Council Assistant Director of Programs, Haner Hernandez at haner@masscompulsivegambling.org / 617-426-4554.

**ALL RECOVERY RETREAT**

**On Saturday, May 14 the Council held its first All Recovery Retreat at The International in Boston. There were 36 people in attendance at the event, which was open to all people in recovery for any addiction, from gambling and alcohol to food.**

“People often have co-existing disorders or swap one addiction for another,” said Marlene Warner, Executive Director at the Council. “That is why the Council has identified people in recovery as an at-risk population, and is working with recovery communities to grow awareness about the problem,” she continued.

The event included breakout sessions on the following topics: acceptance, forgiveness, spirituality, engaging people in early recovery, not picking up another addiction, prayer and meditation, and gratitude.

According to participant, Mac M., “The Retreat was awesome. As a compulsive gambler and an alcoholic, it was good to see the Mass. Council invite people experiencing problems with different addictions to the event. It was a great day in support of the recovery lifestyle.”

Scott S., who also took part in the event said, “Although I had a lot of the people at the Retreat I felt a strong connection to all of the individuals in recovery, and I felt very safe, as did both my brothers, Jason D. and Steve F. It was a spiritually fulfilling day.”

The setting was fantastic.”

Breakfast and lunch were provided and many participants remarked about how much they had enjoyed the day. For more information, please contact Council Special Projects Assistant, Karen Sichert at karen@masscompulsivegambling.org / 617-426-4554.

**VETERAN’S SUMMIT**

**On May 6, 2011, the Council held an event entitled, “An Integration of Services Symposium: Preventing, Interfering and Treating Gambling Disorders with Active Duty Military/Veteran Personal” at the Wellesley National Guard Center. The Summit was the result of the Council’s work to reach out to populations at-risk for developing problems with gambling. Two veterans who served in Iraq attended, as did attendants from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Bedford VA Veteran’s Association, the Statewide Head Injury Program, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and representatives from treatment centers: Steppingstone in Fall River, LUK in Pittsfield, and Community Care Services in Attleboro and Taunton.”

One of the issues addressed at the Summit was isolation, and how both gambling and substance use can become problematic on military bases, due to feelings of isolation. In fact, it was discussed that slot machines net about $200 million a year from gambling on military bases. In addition, the Council learned that many National Guard and service people return to the U.S. with tax-free money that they often spend at casinos. Yet, no federal funds are spent on problem gambling services.

Services available to active military and veterans are provided through Chapter 115 benefits, SAVE program, Women Veteran’s Outreach Program, Veteran’s Affairs Counseling, Military OneSource, VET Center, and a Veteran’s Affairs Suicide Prevention Program.

At the end of the day, everyone who attended the Summit expressed that they felt there was a need to continue to research the prevalence and effects of problem gambling, and to find solutions to help military personal experiencing problems with gambling, as well as other addictions.

A second summit has been scheduled for the fall. If you are interested in attending, please contact Council Special Projects Assistant, Karen Sichert at karen@masscompulsivegambling.org / 617-426-4554.

**RECOVERY COACH ACADEMY A SUCCESS**

Council staff members, Haner Hernandez, Ph.D. and Jim Wulfing, photographed above, attended the Arizona State Problem Gambling Conference, which took place on March 7 in Phoenix and was entitled, “Challenges and Principles of Prevention: Collaboration and Progress.” Jim also played a role in the Montana Council on Problem Gambling’s “Training Series” on May 6 and 7 in Missoula, where he facilitated the “Developing Successful Support Groups for Problem Gamblers” session.

If you are interested in attending Massachusetts Council staff members on your upcoming projects, please contact Council Office Manager, Flora Peters at flora@masscompulsivegambling.org / 617-426-4554.
The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is a private, non-profit health agency dedicated to reducing the social, financial and emotional costs of problem gambling. The Council provides prevention, information, education, advocacy, and referral services for problem gamblers, their loved ones, and the greater community.

The Council is funded in part by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services.

Massachusetts Problem Gambling Treatment Centers
Boston ASAP, Boston: 617.482.5292
Child and Family Services, New Bedford: 508.984.5566
Community Care Services, Attleboro MA: 508-226-1660, ext. 213
The Gandara Center, Springfield: 413.736.0395
Henry Lee Willis Community Center, Worcester: 508.799.2934
Kit Clark Senior Center: 617.825.5000
Let Us Know (LUK), Inc., Fitchburg: 978.829.2244
Lowell House, Inc., Lowell: 978.459.8656
Mt. Auburn Hospital Prevention & Recovery Center, Cambridge: 617.499.5051
North Suffolk Mental Health Services, Chelsea: 888.294.7802
The Psychological Center, Lawrence: 978.685.1337
Stanley Street Treatment & Resources, Inc., Fall River: 508.679.5222
Steppingstone, Inc., Fall River: 508.674.2788 ext. 120
Team Coordinating Agency, Inc., Haverhill: 978.373.1181 ext. 42

Resources
Bettors Anonymous: 978.988.1777 or 781.662.5199
Department of Veterans’ Services: 888.844.2838
Division on Addictions, Cambridge Health Alliance, a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School: 781.306.8600
Gam-Anon (family/friends): 888.644.8482
Gamblers Anonymous MA Hotline: 888-GA HELPS (888.424.3577)
Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling Helpline: 800.426.1234
National Council on Problem Gambling Helpline: 800.522.4700

Karen Sicher hired as Special Projects Assistant
Karen began her career with the Council as a volunteer. In 2011, she became the Council’s Special Projects Assistant. Her professional background includes administrative support roles in the healthcare industry, as well as experience in the non-profit sector. As a person in recovery for problem gambling, Karen brings unique understanding and compassion to the job. She’s a highly-organized, personable, go-getter who plans to use her experience and position at the Council to facilitate programs for women seeking help with gambling problems.

We’re BLOGGING!
The Council wants the public to feel connected to our work and to generate more awareness about all of the great programs and services that we’re offering. We hope that you’ll consider following our blog at http://masscouncil.blogspot.com and sharing your very valuable feedback with us!