

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR NPGA'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE



When: Sept. 19-20, 2013

Where: Earle Brown Heritage Center, Brooklyn Center, Minn.

Conference Highlights: The theme for this year's conference is *Problem Gambling: A Changing Landscape*. Topics will include basic and advanced counseling techniques, a look at the impact of technology and the internet on problem gambling, the history and stigma of problem gambling from a Minnesota perspective, and more. A special two-hour training for professionals (psychologists, marriage and family therapists, social workers, etc.) who have little to no knowledge of problem gambling will be available from 4 to 6 p.m. on Thursday, Sept 19. Participants may receive CEU credits for attending the two-hour training on Thursday. Additional credits are available for those attending the Friday program. Thursday evening will also feature an open event for the public, including food, recovery stories and a special presentation.

For More Information: Look for detailed conference information on www.NorthstarProblemGambling.org in mid-July.

Northstar Brings Problem Gambling AWARENESS TO AUGSBURG COLLEGE



The perception that all college students spend their spring breaks sprawled out on the beaches of Florida is, well, not always true. Some, including those from Augsburg College's EPIC (Educating Peers on Issues and Choices) group, used the opportunity to learn more about gambling behavior and gambling addiction.

Through a "Tweets for Treats" social media campaign at Augsburg College on March 12, Northstar helped educate students about problem gambling. In exchange for a treat (small toy or candy item of their choosing) students tweeted or shared information about college gambling on Facebook.

"The students were surprised to learn how many young people engage in gambling," says Susan Campion, former Northstar training manager, who coordinated the event. "They hadn't considered gambling as something that could develop into a problem."

"Once you open up a dialog, people share stories about who they know, people who have lost their house from gambling, etc." says Susan. Some students also reflected on roommates who they thought might be addicted to online gambling.

The "Tweets for Treats" social media campaign at Augsburg College helped educate students about problem gambling.

The goal of the event was to raise awareness about college gambling and to impress upon students how it can become an addiction. Susan estimated that Twitter tweets and Facebook updates may have been viewed by up to 1,000 students.

Northstar's outreach efforts were well received by the EPIC program, whose mission is to provide an effective peer network to encourage, support, and promote healthful living for all students. The program seeks to make students aware of the issues associated with unhealthy behaviors through education and up-to date information, as well as life skills training to assist students in making healthy lifestyle choices.

If you'd like Northstar to make a presentation to a youth group or other audience, please call Linda Bisdorf at (612) 424-8595 or email at linda@northstarproblemgambling.org.



Cathie Perrault
Executive Director
NPGA

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

We thank all our members, donors, volunteers and affiliates who have contributed to our mission.

Become a member today. Visit www.NorthstarProblemGambling.org to join us.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Work Continues

The conclusion of our fiscal year on June 30 presents an opportunity to reflect on the work we've accomplished over the last 12 months. As always, when I look back at the flurry of activity, I'm reminded just how much effort it takes to get the word out about problem gambling and to make people aware about the resources available to help.

From July 2012 through June 2013, our staff, alliance of volunteers, members, contractors, donors and others conducted a vast array of projects. By any measure – verbal feedback, statistical measures and survey results – we know we are making a difference in Minnesotans' awareness of problem gambling as an addiction.

Some of the highlights from the last fiscal year include:

- Northstar speakers conducted 16 presentations for community groups and professionals, including counselors, therapists, attorneys, probation officers and CPAs.*
- We hosted information booths and provided community outreach at 14 events and professional conferences.*
- The National Problem Gambling Awareness Week campaign (March 3-9) reached hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans through billboards, newspaper stories, radio ads, online stories and television interviews. Our website data from March reflected a 40 percent increase in the number of people visiting www.NorthstarProblemGambling.org over the three previous months.*
- A year-long educational ad campaign targeting sports fans reached followers of the Gophers hockey and basketball teams, the Timberwolves and the Twins. We have plans to reach Vikings fans this fall.*

Going forward, our work continues. On Sunday, Aug. 25, look for the Northstar booth at the WCCO building at the Minnesota State Fair. We will be handing out giveaways and sharing information on how people can get help for themselves or others. And, of course, there's NPGA's annual conference in September (see front page for details).

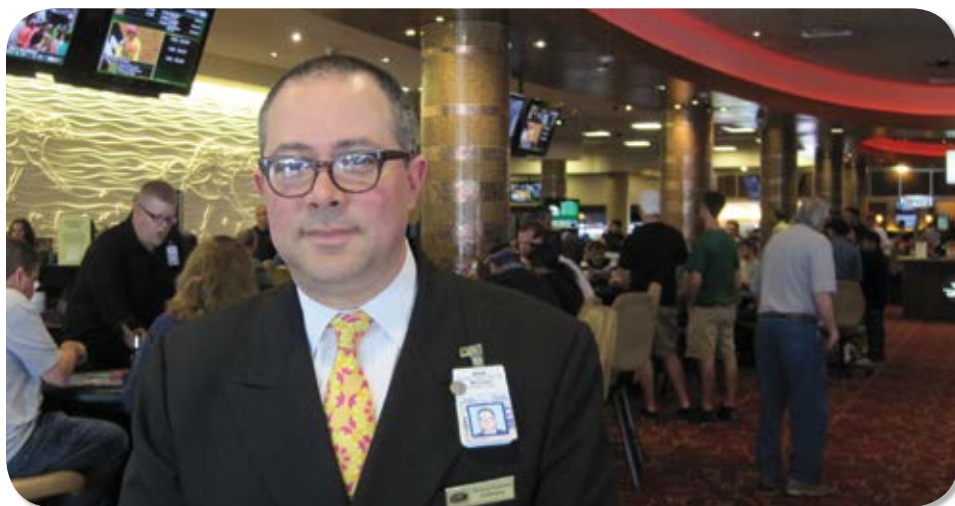
In the meantime, I hope you are enjoying some summer relaxation before the busy fall season and "back to school" is suddenly upon us.

Northstar Problem Gambling Alliance is a nonprofit agency whose mission is to help those affected by problem gambling in Minnesota. We do this by promoting awareness and understanding of the issue via our website, newsletter, community education programs, sponsorship of the Minnesota State Conference on Problem Gambling, and training of professionals in preventing and treating problem gambling.

Northern Light is funded by a grant from the state of Minnesota. Designer: ESD Graphics. Writer: Bill Stein

MICHAEL HOCHMAN

Brings Fresh Perspective to Northstar Board



Michael Hochman, Senior Director of Casino Operations at Canterbury Park, provides a gambling perspective to the Northstar board. As a 25-year veteran of the gaming industry, Michael brings valuable insights into efforts to reduce the impact and incidence of problem gambling.

“I think it’s important that the board have the perspective of a gaming operator to maximize success,” says Michael, who joined the board in 2011. “Having worked in casinos for most of my adult life, I hope to contribute ideas to help identify those at risk for problem gambling.”

Michael came to Minnesota in 2000 to open up the card room at Canterbury Park, the first legal poker room in the state of Minnesota. Prior to coming to Canterbury, Michael opened a poker room in Seattle and worked in Las Vegas.

Michael’s original plan was to make a living as a professional gambler, having left college in Georgia to pursue his passion in Las Vegas. However, he quickly realized that was a tall order. “Playing poker for a living is tough work,” says Michael. “I was essentially busted after two years.” Once he gave up on his initial dream, Michael talked

himself into a job dealing poker at the Sahara Casino and then as a poker dealer at the Luxor.

Having grown up in the industry, Michael understands the pressures faced by both players and dealers. In fact, he believes there’s a higher rate of problem gambling among those who work in the business, such as dealers, than in the general public.

Michael has found his involvement with Northstar to be an eye-opening experience. For starters, he admits to being one of the many who thought people who couldn’t stop gambling simply lacked the willpower to walk away. “I realize I was naïve to think that problem gamblers were simply bad gamblers.”

He’s also been impressed with the level of knowledge about problem gambling that exists at Northstar. “People like Roger Svendsen and Susan Champion really understand this business and have been tremendous resources.”

As Michael’s become more enlightened about gambling addiction, he’s sought to educate both his employees and customers. He helped form a problem gambling committee at Canterbury last year with the goal of raising awareness about

“Having worked in casinos for most of my adult life, I hope to contribute ideas to help identify those at risk for problem gambling.”

problem gambling. “I believe we have a responsibility to the community and to our own employees to help in whatever way we can,” says Michael.

Michael envisions two types of training for casino employees. One would educate dealers about compulsive gambling and the treatment that’s available, as they are vulnerable to problem gambling themselves. A second training would ensure there’s someone on the floor at all times who could talk to a player who may have a problem – sort of a ‘first responder’ for someone who’s having a difficult time with their gambling. “I think it’s important that the responsibility of talking to problem gamblers doesn’t fall directly on the dealers as that puts them in a tough position.”

Another idea of Michael’s is to extend Northstar’s Speaker’s Network so that someone would come to speak to dealers, floor men and others in casino operations about problem gambling. He sees this as a gambling-addiction equivalent to the TIPS (Training for Intervention ProcedureS) program used in restaurants to educate servers about responsible alcohol consumption.

When he’s not managing the Canterbury Park casino, Michael enjoys spending most of his time with his two young children, Lilly and Lucy, and his wife, Elizabeth.



REAL *Voices*



Recovery from gambling addiction is possible. Here's one such story.



I can't believe how different my life is now. It is so much better. I don't ever want to go back to the way things were.

Like many other gambling addicts, I was literally on the brink of suicide before I was ready for change.

If I wasn't gambling, I was drinking. My addiction had taken total control of my life. One night after being in the bar, I came home to find that I just couldn't live this way any longer. I called a friend, told her I didn't want to live any more, and said I was going to take my own life. She told me to hold on, and within five minutes she arrived at my house. She took me to a friend's house and let me cry all night.

The next day, I made a call to my old counselor from an outpatient treatment group. She asked me a single question: "Have you had enough?" I had. She told me that I had to call Vanguard. They wouldn't

take me unless I went for a Rule 25 alcohol assessment and agreed to inpatient CD treatment as well. I went in on September 18, 2002, and have not gambled or drunk since.

Of course it was a long road that took me to that fateful day. I suppose it started way back when I was about 12 and my mother took me to play Bingo in Chicago. I won \$300, but my mom had to say that she won. She kept the money and gave me \$20. I had that rush.... and so it began.

Both of my parents were gamblers and alcoholics, and I learned it all at an early age. My mother owned a restaurant at one time and then later a bar. They would often have card games going for money with their friends and be drinking. My four siblings and I are all addicts.

My husband at the time, myself and my children eventually moved to Duluth. I played bingo in a casino in an old-type setting that also included pulltabs. They had a bingo machine and I loved it. I would spend hours playing. I later moved back to Chicago and found the bingo halls there.

I borrowed money from friends and was unable to pay bills. I did this over and over . . . This endless search for money eventually led to the day I was ready to end my life.

At first I went to play bingo once a month. It was my night out away from my kids and my husband. I never won any money. Then I went every two weeks ... then every week and then twice a week. At first, I'd bring \$10 a day to spend on gambling. Then it became \$20. Then \$40. My addiction was accelerating. By the time I stopped gambling, I wouldn't walk into the casino bingo hall with less than \$200. I did that three to four times a week.

I realized that I had a problem. I went to GA, but I didn't like it. Instead, my gambling problem worsened and I remember lying to a credit union to get money I couldn't pay back. I borrowed money from friends and was unable to pay bills. I did this over and over.

When I wasn't gambling I was drinking. I went to outpatient treatment off and on for both my addictions for several years, but that never worked for me. I did stay clean and sober for five months, but relapsed on \$12.

I won a \$2,500 jackpot, the first big money I'd ever won, and then things got worse. I spent every penny I had as well as other peoples' money. One time my mother had given me money that was to be used to paint a bedroom. She was dying, and I used it for gambling. I convinced someone who was just about a total stranger to me to lend me the money so I could get the bedroom painted. I needed to show it to my mother before she died. After hours on the phone begging and pleading for the money, she lent it to me to cover my lie. Another time, my nephew earned some money from a catering job and I took it and made up stories about how I hadn't gotten it yet. I took the money and gambled, and then had to make another deal with someone else, who used it to blackmail me later. This endless search for money eventually led to the day I was ready to end my life.

It's been more than 10 years now since I've been in a better place. I've been a keynote speaker at the Minnesota GA conference. I am the trustee of my area and represent some of the finest people I know. I talk about gambling issues and how they affect our area. This is something I could never have dreamed of. I started my own business in 2007 and it is thriving. I got remarried and have a wonderful relationship with my children.

I can't believe how different my life is now. It is so much better. I don't ever want to go back to the way things were. I don't have to, as long as I choose not to gamble, one day at a time.



12

The number of state-funded hours of counseling available to Minnesotans whose lives are affected by problem gamblers.

130.5

The amount of money (in millions) bet at the Kentucky Derby in May.¹

6.8

Percent of Maryland residents aged 18 to 29 considered at risk of becoming problem gamblers.²

3

The number of states scheduled to offer online gambling (Nevada, New Jersey and Delaware). Another 10 states are considering online gambling.³

24

The number of hours per day (seven days per week) that the Minnesota state problem gambling helpline is available to state residents. The helpline number is **1-800-333-HOPE**.

1 Source: *Daily Racing Form*

2 Source: *The Washington Post*, "Problem Gambling: Who is at Risk?" June 1, 2013.

3 Source: *USA Today*, June 26, 2013.



Provider Profile:

PAUL MLADNICK



Paul Mladnick, supervisor for Hazelden's family program in Center City, MN, practices gambling counseling at Bridges and Pathways Counseling Service in Forest Lake and is a certified counselor through the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board.

Paul Mladnick, LADC, NCGC, LMFT, has worked in the counseling field for more than 25 years. His work has focused primarily on addiction, including alcohol and drug abuse as well as compulsive gambling. Paul is the supervisor for Hazelden's family program in Center City, MN. He practices gambling counseling at Bridges and Pathways Counseling Service in Forest Lake and is a certified counselor through the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board.

Paul received his training in 1994 through the then Minnesota Council on Problem Gambling. He also serves as a clinical supervisor for the National Council on Problem Gambling and was a trainer for the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling for many years.

Paul provides assessment, treatment (including individual and family counseling) and referrals for clients with gambling addiction. He employs an approach that stresses cognitive behavioral therapy and uses motivational interviewing in his work with clients. Paul also encourages all clients to attend Gamblers Anonymous for additional support.

Paul believes the basis for a good recovery consists of three fundamentals: 1) total abstinence from gambling, 2) finding

constructive ways of coping and replacing the void created by the abstinence, and 3) incorporating a spiritual element of some kind that's a cornerstone of the Twelve Steps.

The concern that those in recovery from chemical and alcohol abuse may turn to gambling is something Paul is particularly sensitive about. "Five of the seven individuals in my first gambling group had been through chemical dependency," says Paul. "I've seen people get clean and sober but then start gambling and transfer addictions. I believe gambling is very high risk for people in early recovery from chemical dependency."

While Paul is concerned about the increased availability of gambling and the role that it may play in producing more problem gamblers, he is buoyed by the fact that the American Psychiatric Association's latest Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM-V) now recognizes problem gambling as an addiction. He's also grateful that Minnesota is generally ahead of most states in allocating treatment dollars for problem gambling. "Most of the time when gamblers seek treatment, they're out of money," says Paul, "so it's very helpful that state funds are available to support treatment."



It's Official: DSM-V CHANGES CLASSIFICATION FOR PROBLEM GAMBLING

After years of discussion, research, speculation and debate, the newly revised 5th edition of the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-V) has changed the way problem gambling is classified. The DSM is the handbook of mental disorders in the United States and is used by health care providers, insurance companies, researchers and practitioners. Major changes to the classification of problem gambling may have a significant impact on the assessment, treatment and insurance coverage for problem gambling.

From Impulse Control to Addiction

Pathological gambling was added to the DSM in 1980 and was classified under "Impulse-Control Disorders" in the 4th edition. This placed problem gambling in company with disorders such as compulsive stealing and fire starting. The new edition moved pathological gambling under a new classification called "Addiction and Related Disorders," essentially recognizing that gambling addiction is vastly similar to alcohol and drug addiction.

This change has been driven by extensive brain research indicating pathological gambling produces the same effect on the reward and pleasure center of the brain as does substance abuse and other similar addictions. The DSM is available at <http://psychiatryonline.org/index.aspx>.

Access Northstar Social Media

TO STAY ABREAST OF PROBLEM GAMBLING DEVELOPMENTS

Whether you're a Twitter fanatic, Facebook enthusiast, or simply a reader of news, Northstar has you covered. Our social media outlets allow us to provide information that we're unable to include in *Northern Light*. Each outlet presents a variety of news about the compulsive gambling field as well as developments unique to Minnesota.



NORTHSTAR SOCIAL MEDIA

 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Northstar-Problem-Gambling-Alliance/142615222475869>

 Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MNProbGambling>

 Northstar Blog: <http://www.northstarproblemgambling.org/northstar-blog/>

You may also access links to social media pages directly from Northstar's website.



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Subscribe to Our E-newsletter For More News

In addition to *Northern Light*, we also produce a monthly electronic newsletter. This includes additional information about problem gambling and related developments in Minnesota. To receive our electronic newsletter, please email Linda Bisdorf at linda@northstarproblemgambling.org or call (612) 424-8595.



scan to visit
www.NorthstarProblemGambling.org

Northern Light

NORTHSTAR PROBLEM GAMBLING ALLIANCE

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Changing Problem Gambling Behavior through:
AWARENESS • EDUCATION • RESEARCH • ADVOCACY