



MCPG

Maryland Council on Problem Gambling

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Annual Report

2019 - 2020



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WHO WE ARE

Maryland Council on Problem Gambling

The Maryland Council on Problem Gambling (MCPG) is a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation. Its mission focuses on 3 A's: Advocacy, Awareness, and Assistance. The primary mission of MCPG is one of advocacy for those affected by gambling problems, working to increase public awareness about problem gambling, and advocate for assistance in the areas of treatment, education, prevention, and research for those adversely affected by gambling and for the community at large. MCPG maintains a neutral stance on gambling; we are not for or against gambling and our primary mission is to raise public awareness and advocate for supportive resources for persons/communities affected by problem gambling. MCPG "meets persons where they are and uses a social justice, inclusion, and cultural competency model for advocacy, awareness, and assistance."

Our Board Members are:

Deborah G. Haskins, Ph.D., LCPC, MAC, ICGC-II, CCGSO, BACC
President

Tineka Rice, LCSW-C, CCGSO
Vice President

Dr. Shandra Parks, MSW, CCGSO
Secretary

Tamala Law, MBA
Treasurer

TO THE PUBLIC

Strategic Highlights

The Maryland Council on Problem Gambling (501-c-3 nonprofit) continued its mission of providing gambling and disordered gambling advocacy, awareness, and assistance. The Behavioral Health Administration and the Maryland Center of Excellence (The “Center”) renewed the Faith-Based Initiative Contract for 2019-2020, and we are excited to collaborate on our mission to expand advocacy, awareness, and assistance. MCPG achieved the following highlights during the 2019-2020 fiscal year:

- Twenty-one (21) participants attended the Fall 2019 and 2020 Spring International Gambling Counselor Certification Board (IGCCB) Trainings. Due to COVID-19, MCPG immediately changed in-person trainings to virtual ZOOM live webinars successfully. The virtual education format expanded accessibility and convenience for community stakeholders.



The flyer features the MCPG logo at the top, which includes a stylized graphic of four human silhouettes in red, black, yellow, and black. Below the logo, the text reads: "Clergy/Lay Ministers Problem Gambling Credential (IGCCB) Trainings". A decorative line of yellow dots separates the title from the location information: "All four module trainings will take place at the Maryland Center for Addiction Treatment, 11100 Billingsley Road, Waldorf, MD 20602, 9:00am-3:30pm". Another decorative line of yellow dots follows. The dates for the Fall 2019 trainings are listed as "September 28th", "October 12th", "November 2nd", and "December 7th". A note states "*meals, snacks, and refreshments will be provided*". At the bottom, contact information is provided: "FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT REGISTRATION AND QUESTIONS, CONTACT MARYLANDCOUNCILPG@YAHOO.COM". Logos for the University of Maryland School of Medicine and the Maryland Department of Health Behavioral Health Administration are also present.



The Maryland Council on Problem Gambling is offering four days of training for the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board (IGCCB) Clergy/Lay Minister Certification in Gambling Addiction Prevention, Education, Awareness and Spiritual Outreach Care.

The IGCCB certification provides a process for recognizing and certifying clergy, lay ministers, religious persons, and other faith leaders to offer guidance, educational materials, support, hope, spiritual care, and help to people and families affected by problem gambling and addiction.

The training will be held on the dates of **February 22** (February 29 snow date), **March 14**, **March 28**, and **April 25, 2020**. **Attendees must complete all four days of the training in order to be eligible for certification.** Those who are not interested in receiving the certification, but have the desire to attend and apply this knowledge in their ministry/outreach settings are welcome to attend as well.

A light breakfast and lunch will be provided for each training day, and sessions will be held from **9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.** at the **Set The Captives Free Fellowship Hall** located at **7111 Windsor Blvd Windsor Mill, MD 21244**. **Pre-registration is required.**

For logistical questions contact Brina Olunkwa at marylandcouncilpg@yahoo.com; for course content questions, contact Dr. Deborah Haskins at dghmosaic@gmail.com.

To Register, please visit www.marylandproblemgambling.org and click the events tab to complete the

- IGCCB Certification trainings were hosted by an ongoing faith community partner, Set the Captives Free (Dr. Karen Bethea and Pastor Linwood Bethea, Woodlawn, MD) and a new community partnership was developed with the Maryland Center for Addiction Treatment (Waldorf, Maryland). We are excited to engage this new partnership in Southern Maryland which MCPG lacked presence thanks to one of our trained IGCCB participants, Rev. Richard

Davis, who developed the Southern Maryland capacity building for his IGCCB Certification Project.

- Hosted a webinar during Problem Gambling Awareness Month, **“Youth Gamers and Gamblers: Is It Just Innocent Fun, Curiosity or a Problem?”** for 23 participants by Preventionist Mr. Carl Robertson (formerly with the Center) with 83% of respondents rated the webinar as 4.1/5.0 points, 100% rated the presenter as knowledgeable in content area, 94% rated the seminar exceeding their expectations, and 94% knew the 1-800-GAMBLER Helpline as a resource.

Maryland Council on Problem Gambling - MCPG
Posted by Brina Olunkwa
Apr 14 · 🌐

Due to technical difficulties on March 25th, the webinar on youth gambling has been postponed. This webinar will be held tomorrow. Register TODAY at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2941368832495888651>

Youth are Gamers and Gamblers: Is It Just Innocent Fun, Curiosity or a Problem?
*New date due to technical difficulties

Attention Faith-Based Community!	Wednesday, April 15, 2020 1:00-2:00 pm	CEUS AVAILABLE	Presented by Carl E. Robertson, MDiv, M.R.E.
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What we will review:

- youth gamblers in Maryland and nationally;
- what are the prevalence rates that we can communicate and utilize for needs assessments
- youth gamers: what are the risks linked to youth gambling behaviors
- youth gambling prevention strategies that can be resources to families, schools and community advocates

Carl E. Robertson is formerly the Prevention Manager at the Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling (retired) and is currently an Executive Member of the National Council on Problem Gambling Prevention Committee and Co-chair of the Special Populations Subcommittee. He is also a Gambling Prevention Professional and the creator of the Smart Choice: Youth Gambling Prevention Program in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

Register at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2941368832495888651>

Announcing!

THE MARYLAND COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING IS NOW OFFERING SMALL GRANTS TO INCREASE PROBLEM GAMBLING WELLNESS UNTIL APRIL 1, 2020. APPLY NOW!

FOR FAITH/SPIRITUAL COMMUNITIES OF ALLEGANY COUNTY, ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, BALTIMORE CITY, CECIL COUNTY, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, AND WORCESTER COUNTY

- One (1) Problem Gambling Small Grant was awarded to Essex United Methodist Church (Dr. Mary Robinson, Pastor,

The Maryland Center of Excellence on **PROBLEM GAMBLING**

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1-800-GAMBLER
helpmygamblingproblem.org

Essex, MD) to implement their proposed Responsible Gambling Center at Essex United Methodist Church in

the AA/NA Meetings Room and to support their food insecurity ministry. Four hundred and fifty (450) recyclable grocery bags with food donations were distributed at the Tuesday and Thursday Food Pantry (100 bags), MD Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry (3rd Tuesday of the Month, 250 bags), and the Table of Grace for two Wednesdays (100). Each information bag had the church name and the 1-800-GAMBLER Helpline number printed on the bag

and included problem gambling resources from MCPG, the Center, and the MD Coalition of Families. The distributions occurred after the CDC Guidelines were implemented according to the Baltimore-Washington United Methodist Church Conference requirements per Bishop Easterling. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the church was unable to implement the resource center and that portion of proposal monies were returned to MCPG budget. Evaluation ratings were completed by the Ministry Coordinators because of the State CDC guidelines restricting public social gatherings and touch efforts. Ratings averaged 3.5 that the problem gambling activity was Good to Excellent. Feedback stated that unfortunately COVID-19 impacted implementation of the Resource Center. COVID-19 hindered faith/community settings to apply and implement the small grant proposals, and MCPG is providing technical assistance to help faith/spiritual partners creatively program during the pandemic.

- MCPG's goal of expanding our capacity in the 3 A's is to increasingly integrate IGCCB Certification trained and engaged faith/spiritual community leaders/advocates as part of our IGCCB Training Team. We welcomed Dr. Mary Robinson, CCGSO to our training team in Fall 2019 (newly appointed to pastor St. John's United Methodist Church in Baltimore City) and presents the Spirituality Module.
- Eight (8) problem gambling community public awareness events were held, with 6 occurring prior to the pandemic. COVID-19 pandemic drastically impacted our ability to offer "live" public awareness events in early 2020 due to the CDC Guidelines of social distancing and Governor Larry Hogan's mandate to cease social gatherings of any form. MCPG offered 2 events virtually using the ZOOM Platform during March-May 2020 and will continue to offer online public awareness during the pandemic and beyond. Events included:
 - **Problem Gambling Awareness Seminar**, October 2019, Dr. Paula Langford, CCGSO, Social Worker and retired professor, The Interfaith Academy Church

(Baltimore, MD 21215, Bishop William Sewel). Twenty-six (26) persons attended this successful event.

- **Stress and Cultural and Personal Challenges**, October 2019, Dr. Deborah Haskins, The YWCA at The Stadium (Baltimore, MD 21239, invited by Dr. Marco Merrick; Dr. Brad Braxton, Senior Pastor, The Open Church). Dr. Haskins presented on emotional outcomes of stress, tips/unhealthy coping including high risk gambling. Approximately 30 African-descent church members attended this successful event which included other panel presenters.
- **Small Business Event – Problem Gambling Wellness and Accessing Help**, November, 2019, Dr. Shandra Park (MCPG Board Secretary and a Social Worker) was a vendor at the Small Business Event (Randallstown, MD) and provided information and answered questions regarding problem gambling awareness and distributed MCPG and The Center materials.
- **Holiday Bazaar**, November 2019, Dr. Shandra Parks (Board Secretary) provided gambling awareness information.
- **Facebook Live Announcement**, January 2020, Dr. Deborah Haskins (Board President) provided a Facebook Live announcement at the invitation of one of our community partners, Dr. Karen Bethea of Set the Captives Free to share upcoming IGCCB Trainings and Small Grants Opportunity.
- **Gambling Awareness and Resources**, February 2020, Dr. Shandra Parks (Board Secretary) provided gambling awareness information to the North Arundel County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and the Annapolis/Anne Arundel Financial Education Coalition.

- **Grief and Loss, Trauma and ACEs Workshop Leadership Day Training**, March 2020, Dr. Deborah Haskins shared information about Problem Gambling Awareness Month and information on the links between childhood adversity, trauma, and disordered gambling. Statewide helping resources were shared.
- **Personal and Financial Wellness Webinar**, May, 2020, Dr. Shandra Parks (Board Secretary) provided a personal and financial wellness webinar on ZOOM (also shared on FB and YouTube) to educate about personal and financial wellness, disordered gambling threats, and state-wide disordered gambling assistance resources.
- **MCPG Facebook/Linked In/Instagram**. Brina Olunkwa (Administrative Assistant) provides weekly gambling awareness and disordered gambling research, information, and resources year-round. MCPG promotes all information from our alliance with the NAACD, the Center, BHA, NCPG, MD Alliance of Responsible Gambling and State Affiliates.
- **IGCCB Longitudinal Assessment** MCPG launched with the Maryland Center of Excellence Research division the *IGCCB Longitudinal Assessment* to assess learning outcomes after participants complete the IGCCB trainings and impact on their spiritual outreach and linking faith community and communities to statewide resources (Center peer recovery staff, GA/GAM-Anon, 1-800 GAMBLER, state funded treatment, etc.). Participants are assessed at 3, 6, 12 and 24 months post-IGCCB trainings. Benchmark outcome data will inform legislature, community partners, and guide BHA, the Center, and MCPG's continued awareness, assistance, and advocacy.

Financial Highlights

MCPG is financially solvent. Interested parties can request the Financial Statement at MarylandCouncilPG@yahoo.com. Mr. Dennis Bobo of PBF Global, LLC (Silver Spring, MD) provides accounting services for MCPG. The Financial Statement is prepared on a calendar year basis according to the Internal Revenue Service legal reporting requirements.

Operating Highlights

MCPG is a 100% volunteer Board, has 1 part-time administrative assistance (Brina Olunkwa), and all Board members and friends of the Board (trained participants and other committed problem gambling advocates) collaborate to implement MCPG's mission as a grassroots community advocacy organization. Our Board members promote and implement all trainings, the BHA/Center *Faith-Initiative Contract*, and community wellness and outreach. Since Board members are located throughout the state of Maryland, the majority of the work is conducted virtually (there is no physical office), the COVID-19 pandemic did not impair us. Instead, MCPG mobilized and conducted ZOOM Virtual training of all trainers in order to achieve a successful, new IGCCB Certification training program in accordance with the Center for Disease Control and State of Maryland safety guidelines.

All in-person trainings since March 2020 were cancelled; Spring 2020 participants who had completed one module were surveyed regarding their availability in light of the new pandemic stressors; and MCPG offered Modules 2-4 during June and July to support participants' certification completion. The virtual IGCCB Certification evaluation ratings averaged 1.22 (Excellent). Modules 1-3 were held by June 30; Module 4 was held in July due to participant availability and will be reported in the next fiscal cycle. To expand our operating capacity, MCPG is seeking additional funding to support hiring a part-time Executive Director and expand wellness programming and advocacy to help citizens develop coping skills before they reach high risk gambling proportions.



MCPG has trained approximately 120 faith and spiritual community stakeholders in problem gambling and spiritual outreach since 2017, including 21 participants during 2019-2020. Fifty percent of the IGCCB Certified Clergy-Lay are from the State of Maryland.

Looking Ahead

The 2019-2020 year is recognized by the American Mental Health Counselors Association as “The Perfect Storm” with challenging times of the COVID-19 public health crisis, racial and social injustice, and economic crisis resulting from the pandemic. MCPG is guided by the value of *“Using a social justice, inclusion, and cultural competency model for advocacy, awareness, and assistance; recognizing structural barriers, cultural contexts, and the intersectionality of cultural worldviews and identities that are important to honor and consider in problem gambling advocacy, awareness, and assistance.”* MCPG incorporated these values into our mission and purpose in 2017, and our social justice advocacy supports gamblers, affected others, and communities “breath through” threats to their psychological, spiritual, and physical health. Dr. Deborah G. Haskins (President) was invited by the National Council on Problem Gambling Executive Director (Keith Whyte) and Board of Directors to serve on the inaugural Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Advisory Committee during June 2019 (after the death of George Floyd) due to her over 25 years expertise as a social justice and diversity public health leader/advocate.

COVID-19 Pandemic is providing MCPG and the National Council on Problem Gambling State Affiliates with new, innovative opportunities to engage communities and expand disordered gambling and mental health wellness, including prevention unlike never before. We are excited to expand our Board and intend to increase the diverse, inclusive representation throughout Maryland, especially in Cecil County, Western





Maryland, and the Eastern Shore. Because our trainings are now virtual until the pandemic ceases, we are committed to engaging all Marylanders so that they can provide gambling advocacy, awareness, and assistance to further the mission of gambling wellness.

Submitted by:

Dr. Deborah G. Haskins, LCPC, ACS, MAC, ICGC-II, CCGSO, BACC
President, Maryland Council on Problem Gambling
September 2020