

## **American Compulsive Gambling Counselor Certification Board Announces New Entry-level Certification**

The American Compulsive Gambling Counselor Certification Board (ACGCCB) has announced a pilot program in New Jersey. It has created a new certification status, the Associate Compulsive Gambling Counselor (ACGC). A proposal made to the Board by Donald Weinbaum, Executive Director of the New Jersey Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc. was approved by the American Certification Board at its annual meeting on October 6, 2010. "This Certification will hopefully increase the workforce in the compulsive gambling field," said Weinbaum. "We are told by prospective counselors that it is difficult to obtain the necessary work experience and supervised training hours".

The new Certification requires a candidate to complete all educational requirements for the American Certified Compulsive Gambling Counselor Certification, document attendance at self help meetings and pass the required written exam. An individual with a certification or license in mental health or addiction would be required to take 30 hours of specific education. The ACGC is designed to indicate that the applicant has acquired basic knowledge of compulsive gambling and its treatment.

The ACGC will be a stepping stone to the Certified Compulsive Gambling Counselor Certification (CCGC) and will enable qualified individuals to provide screening, referrals and education on problem gambling according to Jeffrey Beck, President of ACGCCB. An ACGC can provide treatment for compulsive gamblers if they have arranged for clinical supervision by an appropriate licensed CCGC and if the practicum and experience comply with ACGCCB requirements.

The ACGC will be for a two-year term, with renewal possible for (1) two-year term. The applicant is expected to submit a plan for obtaining supervision and experience before the end of the first cycle and to have completed same within the second term. Fees will be \$50 for application, \$50 for review, and \$50 for the Certification. All fees are to be submitted with the original application; the recertification fee will be \$120.

The ACGCCB hopes to expand gambling treatment and assessment services through these changes. There is a need for an increased workforce in the compulsive gambling field, and these changes are designed to encourage people to enter the field. The ACGCCB encourages applications by qualified individuals. Please direct any questions to Shirley Ray, Administrative Assistant at 609-588-9338.