



The Nova Scotia Gaming Foundation

May 2010

Charting the Course

An update from the NSGF Board of Directors

Stepping Up to Problem Gambling

Spring is here, and in the spirit of rejuvenation the Board of Directors and staff of the Nova Scotia Gaming Foundation have moved forward with a number of new initiatives to address the harmful consequences of gambling in Nova Scotia. The following pages highlight a few of these efforts.

Over the past few months, the Board of Directors and staff have also been developing a new strategic plan and will be seeking stakeholder input on its direction in the coming months. In addition to continuing with its three current **strategic priorities**, the NSGF has adopted a new priority: *Raising Awareness of Gambling as a Public Health Issue*.

It is with great pleasure that the NSGF announces the appointment of four new members to its **Board of Directors**: James Smith, Paulette Anderson, Shannon Doubleday, and William Kilfoil (see biographies on page three). All appointments are effective July 2, 2010.

Building Capacity to Make a Difference

In an effort to increase and strengthen stakeholder relationships and build the NSGF's capacity to increase balanced dialogue on problem gambling issues, **Julie-Ann Vincent** was appointed to the newly developed role of Stakeholder Relations/Public Issues Coordinator in February of 2010.

2009-2010 Research Studentship Program

The **NSGF's Research Studentship program** provides funding to Master's and Ph.D. students to pursue research in the area of problem gambling in Nova Scotia. The NSGF is pleased to announce the recipients of 2009-2010 Research Studentships: Amanda Hudson, Rod Clark, and Mike Buckley.

Affective Biases in Problem Gamblers - Amanda Hudson

Amanda's research will look at how problem gambling behaviour may reflect a means of dealing with emotional motives such as seeking or repairing negative mood. The project will examine potential emotional and decision-making impairments in problem gamblers and results may provide insight into factors that contribute to problem gambling.



NSGF Vision

Individuals, families, and communities free from gambling harm

NSGF Mission

To make positive changes in the lives of individuals, families, and communities affected by problem gambling

Four Strategic Priorities

Building Capacity to Make a Difference

Informing Balanced Dialogue on Gambling Problems

Mitigating or Reducing the Undesirable Effects of Gambling

Raising Awareness of Gambling as a Public Health Issue

Board of Directors

Jim MacCormack, Chair
Ben Eoin, N.S.

Jerome Aucoin
Sydney, N.S.

Janice Fraser
New Glasgow, N.S.

Gary C. Grant
Hammonds Plains, N.S.

Dave Whiting
Yarmouth, N.S.

An Investigation of Implicit Associations across Gambling Treatments - Rod Clark

Rod's work will examine the implicit associations that may contribute to problem gambling. His project will look reward and relief associations in gamblers who undergo treatment in order to determine if there are different implicit associations for action vs. escape gamblers at the outset of treatment. The research will also explore whether implicit associations change from the start to the end of treatment.

A Self Administered Problem Gambling Screen as Motivational Therapy for Problem Gambling - Mike Buckley

Mike's research involves the Self Administered Problem Gambling Screen (SAPGS), a new kind of screening instrument designed to be user-friendly and self-scored. His study will evaluate the ability of the SAPGS to motivate gamblers who are currently not in treatment to move through the Transtheoretical model (TTM) stages of change (precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance) towards a more balanced, controlled, and/or gambling-free life.

Community Projects and Community Health Boards

The deadline for NSGF 2010-2011 [Community Projects I & II](#) applications was May 14th. Once project proposals are peer-reviewed, a separate Review Committee will make recommendations to the Board of Directors for final approval. The NSGF looks forward to supporting several new initiatives in communities across Nova Scotia.

On June 18th, the Community Health Board (CHB) Stakeholder Working Group will meet to continue work on the new and revised application process for CHBs to obtain funding from the NSGF.

Informing Balanced Dialogue on Gambling Problems

The NSGF is committed to facilitating balanced dialogue on gambling problems and uses multi-level communication strategies to inform and engage Nova Scotians. Recently, improvements have been made to the [NSGF website](#) to make it more accessible and user-

friendly. To keep stakeholders apprised of the gambling-related news articles and reports that are added to the site on a daily basis, the NSGF now distributes [UPDATES](#), a monthly e-bulletin of what's new at www.nsgamingfoundation.org.

In addition, the NSGF continues to produce [Touchpoint](#), its bi-weekly communiqué and will release the next issue of its newsletter, [Dialogue](#), in the summer. The theme of the summer newsletter is "Prevention and Treatment of Problem Gambling" and will feature services available to Nova Scotians impacted by problem gambling.

2010 Student Scholarship Essay Contest

In March of 2010, the NSGF announced the launch of its 2010 [Student Scholarship Essay Contest](#). An opportunity for graduating Nova Scotia high school students to think critically about problem gambling, the contest invites participants to craft a 1200-word essay that explores the potential risks of internet gambling for youth. The top three essayists will receive scholarships towards their postsecondary education at a university or community college in Nova Scotia: \$2,000.00 for 1st place, \$1,000.00 for 2nd place, and \$500.00 for 3rd place. Submissions are due May 28, 2010.

NSGF to Host Special Guest John Stansfield

In June 2010, the NSGF will host John Stansfield, former CEO of the Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand (PGFNZ), for an informative discussion about collaborative responses to gambling as a public health issue. Stansfield was CEO of the PGFNZ from 2003 to 2008 and was instrumental in engineering the PGFNZ as the lead New Zealand provider of clinical, educational, and public health services in the problem-gambling sector. PGFNZ is now recognized as a world leader in the field of eliminating gambling harm and has strong collaborations across the sector.

Mitigating or Reducing the Undesirable Effects of Gambling

The Nova Scotia Gaming Foundation is pleased to announce the launch of the [Gambling Research Synopsis Inventory \(aka the Synopsis Project\)](#), an online database of gambling-related research literature for researchers,

government agencies, stakeholders, and the public. The Synopsis Project is accessible via the homepage of the NSGF (www.nsgamingfoundation.org) and contains concise summaries of gambling-related research articles that have appeared in peer-reviewed journals. The NSGF has partnered with the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre (OPGRC) and the Centre of Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) to bring this gambling-specific research tool to Nova Scotians.

In the last issue of *Charting the Course*, we reported on the NSGF's independent research study of the Informed Player Choice System (IPCS). The IPCS, which was developed by Techlink Entertainment and administered by the Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation, is a recently announced new technology designed to encourage responsible gambling behaviours. The NSGF's study, conducted by Focal Research Consultants Limited, will examine how the IPCS influences gambling risk and harm for VLT players in Nova Scotia, including impacts for problem gambling. To date, the first phase of the project is complete: Focal research has recruited over 1000 individuals who have agreed to be contacted to join a confidential research panel. In the coming weeks these individuals will be contacted to participate in a baseline survey to determine benchmark measures for ongoing tracking and current player profiles on video lottery play.

Meet the new NSGF Board Members

James (Jim) Smith, Amherst

Jim has worked in the Financial Industry for over 30 years and has held various roles from Loans Officer to Branch Manager. Currently he is the Regional Sales Manager at TD for North Eastern Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador. During his years in the financial industry, he has seen firsthand the impact problem gambling can have on Nova Scotian families and is honoured to serve as a NSGF Board Member. Over the course of his career, Jim has been involved with various committees: Communities in Bloom, Fredericton 150 Committee, Trans Canada Trail, the Children's Trust Fund, and the Springhill, Oxford, Amherst Regional Community Health Board.

Shannon Doubleday, Kentville

Shannon has been working with clients impacted by problem substance use and addiction for 13 years. Currently the Senior Counsellor at a residential treatment centre in the Annapolis Valley, Sharon also has a private practice which provides contracted services to the Department of National Defence, Veterans Affairs, and Health Canada. She has a Master's degree in Counselling with a specialization in Counselling Psychology and is a member of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association and the Nova Scotia Association of Counselling Therapists. Shannon is a mother of three boys and - in her own words - wife to an "amazing husband". She relocated to Nova Scotia from Alberta two years ago in search of a better community to raise her family.

William (Bill) J. Kilfoil, Oyster Pond

Bill recently retired from the Halifax Regional School board, after spending 31 years in public school education. Bill spent most of his career as a school-based administrator, specifically as vice-principal of several schools on the Eastern Shore and principal of Auburn Drive High School in Dartmouth. He spent the last three years of his career as the Coordinator of System Leadership for the Halifax Regional School Board, where he led a group of supervisors responsible for principal evaluation and leadership development. Bill now lives in Oyster Pond and is enjoying his time with his wife, children, and grandchildren.

Paulette Anderson, Plymouth

During her 29-year career with the Provincial Government in New Glasgow, Paulette also ran a men's retail clothing store and raised two children and a husband (who, according to Paulette, remains a "work in progress"). When with the Province's Department of Consumer Affairs, she provided counselling to individuals and families and witnessed the impact gambling could have on financial health. Since retiring in 2004, Paulette runs Pawlee's Pet Sitting Service and has served as a Public Representative for the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society and the Advisory Committee for Provincial Judicial Appointments. Originally from Cape Breton, Paulette now resides in Plymouth, Pictou County, with her husband David and an Old English Sheepdog named Giggles.