

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence – New Jersey
360 Corporate Boulevard, Robbinsville, NJ 08691

CONTACT: Daniel Meara
609.477-7011
dmeara@ncaddnj.org

NCADD-New Jersey gala to mark agency's 25 years of promoting addiction treatment, combating stigma

TRENTON ... (October 4, 2007) –The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence-New Jersey (NCADD-NJ) will celebrate its 25th anniversary with a gala on Oct. 24 at the Hyatt Regency in New Brunswick. Throughout the past quarter century, the non-profit agency has dedicated itself to educating New Jersey's citizens about alcohol and drug use issues, to advocating on state policies concerning individuals addicted to alcohol or other drugs, and to reducing the stigma that frustrates a public health approach to the disease of addiction.

At the 25TH anniversary gala, NCADD-NJ will honor several individuals and organizations for their contributions to improving awareness, treatment and for fighting stigma towards addiction. The agency's Lifetime Achievement Award is being presented to Riley Regan for his pioneering efforts in the field of addiction treatment and prevention. The Faces and Voices Award will recognize Michael Murphy for helping reduce stigma of addiction by being a face and voice of Recovery. Sen. Joseph Vitale (D-Middlesex) is the recipient of the Public Policy Award for improving the public health policy by consistently advocating for addiction treatment funding and health care parity legislation. NCADD-NJ's Media Award will go to the Record of Bergen County for expanding public awareness of addiction-related problems through consistent reporting and editorials pertaining to addiction, treatment and recovery. For its leadership to enact parity legislation, NCADD-NJ's Corporate Award is being presented to the Torok Group.

NCADD-NJ President and CEO Wayne Wirta said that the agency has remained true to its founding ideals. "Our vision," Wirta said, "is for the agency to be the center of excellence in New Jersey addressing alcoholism and drug dependence and to serve as the premier advocacy organization for individuals, families, and communities affected by these chronic diseases. NCADD-NJ has earned a reputation for expertise and the pursuit of excellence in public policy and education, addiction care

-more-

ANNIVERSARY

PAGE TWO

coordination, and recovery leadership, as well as through the advancement of progressive treatment approaches that are outcome- and evidence-based.”

Over the past 25 years, NCADD-NJ has advocated for policy changes that seek to expand and improve treatment for addicted citizens. It has successfully directed passage of bills in the New Jersey state legislature creating regulatory protections for consumers of addiction treatment services; expanding drug-courts and other state addiction services appropriations; and, the establishing first dedicated funding in the nation of addiction services for people with disabilities. It has commissioned polling on issues, including the number of residents affected – directly or indirectly – by addiction, the degree to which youth use alcohol, the issue of incarcerating versus treating addicted non-violent offenders. From its polling and other research, the agency has developed successful media campaigns focusing on youth use of alcohol, access to treatment, and addiction recovery resulting in policy changes.

Through the agency’s state welfare-related Work First New Jersey Program-Substance Abuse Initiative, which began in 1998 following federal welfare reform, NCADD-NJ continues to promote comprehensive addiction treatment on a case-by- case basis. This program has been recognized as a tremendous success by the treatment field and has served as a template for other states.

NCADD-NJ was selected for the Drinking Under the Influence Lead Agency Project, which was implemented in 2006. Through this service, NCADD-NJ pays for treatment services provided to individuals involved in the state’s Intoxicated Drivers Resource Program. NCADD-NJ developed an automated system to keep an accounting of and provide approximately seven million dollars a year in treatment funding.

Most recently, NCADD-NJ has entered into contract with the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council to design and implement a voucher payment system for their Access to Recovery program. This service will track and provide payments to programs, businesses, and individuals providing treatment and recovery support services to members of 10 separate Native American tribal entities.

NCADD-NJ also supports a grassroots recovery organization, Friends of Addiction Recovery New Jersey (FOAR-NJ). Last month, FOAR-NJ was a sponsor of a Rally for Recovery at Liberty State Park that was the national hub event of September’s national Addiction Recovery Month.

More information about NCADD-NJ and the gala is available at the agency’s nationally recognized website, www.ncaddnj.org.

###