

# **Conference on Assessment & Treatment of Compulsive Gambling Among Asian Americans**

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**Friday, October 26, 2007**

**Schwartz Lecture Hall E  
New York University School of Medicine  
550 First Avenue, New York City**

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**A National Conference Hosted by  
New York Coalition for Asian American Mental Health  
Hamilton Madison House**

**Co-sponsored by  
Center for the Study of Asian American Health  
St. Vincent's Hospital Behavioral Health Services  
NYSPA: Division of Culture, Race & Ethnicity**

# Welcome

Dear Conference Participants,

Studies have indicated that Asians gamble more frequently than other racial groups in the U.S., making up 10% of the nation's gamblers while constituting only 4% of the total population. Not only is gambling a widespread phenomenon among Asian Americans, this leisure activity has become a serious social and economic problem for many. A study conducted in Connecticut of South East Asian refugees indicated that 59% of them have a lifelong pathological addiction to gambling. Although no known study has been conducted on gambling problems among Asians in New York City, anecdotal data from mental health practitioners indicated that it is a widespread and growing phenomenon. The proximity of casinos is an especially big draw to Asians in the Tri-State Area.

While the causes for problematic gambling are plentiful, such as the lure of easy money, feelings of ecstasy when winning, illusive feelings of being in control, and fantasies of fixing financial woes, some are idiosyncratic to Asian immigrants. Many immigrants are not able to appreciate mainstream entertainments such as sports games or movies due to cultural and language barriers; thus, gambling becomes an attractive and easily accessible outlet. The cultural acceptance of gambling as a form of celebration and legitimate entertainment also reinforces the development of addiction, especially among younger Asians.

The impact of problem gambling goes beyond the individual gamblers, affecting their families, employers and acquaintances. Pathological gambling has been related to domestic violence, separation, divorce, and child neglect in the clinical setting. When deep in debt, forgery, robbery, and other crimes become enticing alternatives to the gamblers, ultimately leading to legal entanglements and even attempted suicides to end their shame and financial burdens. Some experience withdrawal symptoms such as depression when they stop gambling, similar to those suffering from other forms of addiction.

We hope the knowledge shared by the nationally known experts at this conference will not only help us gain better insights and understanding of the complexity and widespread occurrence of problematic gambling among Asian Americans, but through better understanding of the psychosocial and cultural aspects of this phenomenon, it will enable clinicians and social work services professionals to better address this compulsive behavior.

We thank you for your participation and we welcome the sharing of your thoughts, expertise and suggestions at this conference.

Sincerely,

Peter Yee, LMSW  
President, NY Coalition for Asian American Mental Health

Conference Committee Executive Members:  
Pamela Yew Schwartz, Ph.D.  
Winnie Kung, Ph.D.  
Kin Wah Lee, MPS

# Introduction

**The New York Coalition for Asian American Mental Health (NYCAAMH)**, a not-for-profit 501(C)(3) organization founded in 1989 by a group of concerned health and mental health professionals with a mission to improve the quality of mental health services available to Asian Americans in the New York City metropolitan area. All members are volunteers and membership of the Coalition is open to anyone who is concerned about the care and services for Asian Americans with mental health needs. To this regard, the NYCAAMH has been hosting conferences on various mental health issues annually since 1999 with the aim to promote better understanding of culturally competent assessment, care and treatment for those who are providing mental health services to the Asian American community. For more details regarding the activities of the NY Coalition for Asian American Mental Health, visit the Coalition's web site at [www.asianmentalhealth.org](http://www.asianmentalhealth.org) where mental health information and resources, including an online directory of Asian American Behavioral Health Services for the Metropolitan NY are available.

**Hamilton-Madison House** is a non-profit settlement house dedicated to improving the quality of life of its community, primarily those in the Two Bridges/Chinatown area of Manhattan's Lower East Side. The neighborhood is a federally designated poverty area with a regularly shifting mixture of ethnic groups. The programs are critical to alleviating emerging community issues such as poverty, lack of immigrant services, crime, educational deficiencies, substance abuse, quality childcare, employment opportunities, and a severe lack of positive social and recreational resource.

Hamilton-Madison House's mission and commitment to its community has remained consistent throughout its 109 year history. Although the primary immigrant population has changed since the organization's founding, the primary needs for social, educational, and enrichment activities for the new immigrants and the long-time low-income families have not.

Programs are provided at 22 locations, 19 of which are in Manhattan and 3 are in Queens, and meet the appropriate linguistic requirements of the populations served. Programs are staffed by 150 volunteers and 220 full-time and 80 part-time employees who speak 4 Chinese dialects as well as Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Cambodian and Spanish. Programs include early childhood education, youth development, adult education, senior services, and behavioral health services.

# Acknowledgements

## **Conference Co-Sponsors:**

- NYU Center for the Study of Asian American Health
- St. Vincent's Hospital Behavioral Health Services
- NYSPA: Division of Culture, Race & Ethnicity

## **Special Acknowledgement**

- Frank L. Modica, LMSW, Executive Director, Hamilton Madison House
- Peter Yee, LMSW, Hamilton Madison House
- Kin Wah Lee, MPS, Kingsboro Psychiatric Center
- Tracy Luo, LCSW, Asian LifeNet, Mental Health Association of NY
- Stuart Linder, MBA, NYS Office of Mental Health
- Irene Chung, Ph.D., LCSW, Hunter College, School of Social Work
- Winnie Kung, Ph.D., Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service
- Pamela Yew Schwartz, Ph.D., Visiting Nurse Service of New York's Hospice Care program
- Frances Wong, LCSW, ADS, Director of Asian Services, St. Vincent's Hospital – Manhattan
- Henrietta Ho-Asjoe, MPS, NYU Center for the Study of Asian American Health
- Douglas Nam Le, NYU Center for the Study of Asian American Health
- Grace Wong, Ph.D., Psychologist, South Beach Psychiatric Center
- Joy Luangphaxay, Hunter College School of Social Work
- Hui-Ling Hsu, LCSW, Creedmoore Psychiatric Center

## **Unrestricted Conference Support**

- Janssen Pharmaceutica, Inc.
- Eli Lilly and Company

# Program

8:30 a.m. **Registration / Continental Breakfast**

9:00 a.m. **Welcome & Opening Remarks** – Kin Wah Lee, MPS, Kingsboro Psychiatric Center

- Peter Yee, LMSW, President, NY Coalition for Asian American Mental Health
- Frank T. Modica, LMSW, Executive Director, Hamilton Madison House
- City Council Member Alan J. Gerson

9:30 a.m. **Keynote Address:**

- An Overview: Prevalence, Etiology, Symptom Manifestation, and Treatment Outcomes**

Jon Grant, J.D., M.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Minnesota Medical School, MN

- An Overview for Asian Americans: Prevalence, Etiology, Assessment, Clinical Picture and Impact of Gambling Addiction**

Timothy Fong, M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, Department of Psychiatry and Bio-behavioral Sciences, UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Resnick Neuropsychiatry Hospital, Los Angeles, CA

11:00 a.m. **Break**

11:15 a.m. **Panel Discussion-Clinical Pictures of Compulsive Gambling Among Various Asian Ethnic Groups**

Moderator: Pamela Schwartz, Ph.D., Visiting Nurse Service of New York's Hospice Care program

- Treatment of a Chinese Woman with Pathological Gambling: Taking Cultural Factors into Account**

Stephen Ross, M.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, NYU Medical School; Director, Division of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Bellevue Hospital, New York City, NY

- Case Presentation of a Korean Immigrant Gambler: Thomas's Story**

Kunsook Song Bernstein, Ph.D., R.N., Korean American Behavioral Health Association, NYC, NY

- Compulsive Gambling and Other Related Issues Among South Asians**

Antony Stephen, Ph.D. M.S.W., Executive Director of the New Jersey Asian American Association for Human Services, New Jersey

12:30 p.m. **Lunch**

1:30 p.m. **Treatment:**

Moderator: Winnie Kung, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Graduate School of Social Work, Fordham University, New York City, NY

- Working with Gamblers**

Eddie Chiu, Ph.D., Psychologist, Richmond Area Multi-Services Center; Faculty, Alliant International University, San Francisco, CA

- Working with the Families**

Patrick Au, R.S.W., C.Q.S.W., Director, Chinese Family Services of Ontario, Toronto, Canada

3:00 p.m. **Prevention:**

- Prevention of Problematic Gambling Among Asian Americans**

Chien-Chi Huang, Asian Community Program Specialist, Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, Boston, MA

3:30 p.m. **Break**

3:45 p.m. **Resources in the Tri-state Area**

Moderator: Peter Yee, LMSW, President, NY Coalition for Asian American Mental Health

- Analucia A. Alegria, Gambling Counselor, Anxiety Disorder Clinic at New York State Psychiatric Institute, Columbia University, New York City, NY

- Rebecca Martell, LCSW, NCGS, NYCGTS, Problem Gambling Coordinator, NYS OASAS, New York

- Karen Shufleder M.A., OTR/L, NYCGTC, Behavioral Health Services, Saint Vincent's Hospital, NYC NY

4:45 p.m. **Conference Adjourns / Networking Reception**

# Biography

**Analucía A. Alegría, B.S.** is a Gambling Counselor at the New York State Psychiatric Institute's Anxiety Disorder Clinic with a certification in Problem Gambling Treatment from the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. She received her clinical psychology degree from Lima Peru. Her dissertation is entitled "Treatment Dropout in Pathological Gamblers" and she is currently working on a manuscript on Cognitive-Behavioral & Motivational Interviewing treatment Manual for Adolescent Pathological Gambling with Dr. Carlos Blanco.

**Patrick Au** is the Executive Director of Chinese Family Services of Ontario. He has over 30 years of frontline & management experience in the field of family services, problem gambling, drug addiction and mental health services in Hong Kong, England and Canada. He has obtained his bachelor degree in Social Work in Hong Kong and graduate diploma in Psychiatric Social Work in England. Patrick Au is a registered social worker, certified problem gambling counselor and field instructor for the social work students. Patrick Au is also one of the founding members of the Canadian Problem Gambling Certification Board. He is also the ex-President of the Chinese Interagency Network of Greater Toronto. He has been actively involved in the treatment, intervention, prevention and consultation of problem gambling since 1994. He is the author of the "Development of an Intervention Model for the Problem Gamblers in the Chinese Community".

**Kunsook Bernstein, Ph.D.** is a board member, Korean American Behavioral Association, and also an Assistant Professor and Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Program Coordinator at the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, City University of New York. She also has a private practice as psychiatric nurse practitioner. Dr. Bernstein received her MA in nursing from New York University, New York, NY and PhD in Nursing from Adelphi University, Garden City, New York. Her research, teaching and clinical interests include: Psychiatric/mental health nursing, addiction nursing, psychopharmacology, and transcultural issues.

**Carlos Blanco, M.D., Ph.D.** is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons, New York, New York. The focus of his research is on the commonalities and treatment of substance abuse and problem gambling with and without co-occurring disorders, and on the treatment of mood and anxiety disorders. Dr. Blanco completed his psychiatry residency and research fellowship at Columbia University. His work has been funded by NIMH, NIDA, the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, as well as several private foundations. Dr. Blanco also holds Masters degrees in Health Resource Management and Biostatistics. He has over 60 peer-reviewed publications. Since 1998 he has been Director of the Gambling Disorders Clinic at the New York State Psychiatric Institute.

**Eddie Yu-Wai Chiu, Ph.D.** is an Assistant Professor at the California School of Professional Psychology, Alliant International University, San Francisco. He is a bilingual Chinese American psychologist and co-found the Asian Gambling Treatment Center at Richmond Area Multi-Services in San Francisco. He provides training and supervision to clinicians on working with gamblers and family members. Recently he completed a research study on Asian adolescent gambling behaviors. He has been working in community mental health and private practice settings for many years. His research interests include ethnic minority stress and coping, immigrant and refugee mental health, cultural specific assessment and intervention, problem gambling, and child and family issues.

**Timothy W. Fong M.D.** is an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute and Hospital. Dr. Fong completed his undergraduate and medical school at Northwestern University in Chicago. He then came to UCLA and finished his residency in general psychiatry in 2002 and was the first accredited addiction psychiatry fellow at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute (2002-2004). Currently, he is the director of the Impulse Control Disorders Clinic and is co-director of the UCLA Gambling Studies Program. The purpose of the UCLA Gambling Studies Program is to address the basic questions in understanding pathological gambling. It does this through a collaborative network of academic researchers and treatment providers located throughout the state and at a national level. Recent research projects include documenting the impact of pathological gambling on Asian Pacific Islander communities and characterizing Internet gambling patterns of undergraduate students. Current research projects include developing and testing the efficacy of brief interventions for pathological gamblers and characterizing the neurobiological changes found in pathological gamblers.

**Jon E. Grant, M.D.** is an Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Minnesota and co-directs a clinic for Impulse Control Disorders at the University of Minnesota Medical Center. Dr. Grant completed a law degree from Cornell University, a medical degree from Brown University, and a Masters degree in public health from Harvard University. He is the author of *Stop Me Because I Can't Stop Myself*, a book on impulse control disorders, and editor of *Pathological Gambling: A Clinical Guide to Treatment* and *Textbook of Men's Mental Health*. Dr. Grant's research is funded by the National Institutes of Mental Health. He has over 130 publications and numerous professional presentations.

**Alan J. Gerson**, a lifelong New York City resident, is a member of the New York City Council. Mr. Gerson practiced law for 18 years, during which he devoted countless pro bono hours to indigent individuals and not-for-profit organizations. For the past two decades, Alan has been a leader of New York's civic community in a variety of leadership capacities. His civic positions have included the following: President of the Chelsea Housing group - assisting tenants and preserving affordable housing; President of the Village Reform Democratic Club; President of Congregation Emunath Israel, where he helped organize and maintain the acclaimed Project ORE, a non-sectarian homeless center.

**Chien-Chi Huang, BA, MS** is the Asian Community Program Specialist at the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling. In this capacity, she has engaged the Asian community at all levels, from the general public, community leaders, service providers, to the media outlets. Her efforts to raise the public awareness in the Asian community include an intensive media campaign, outreach to ESL classes and faith-based organizations, field surveys and sponsorships at community events, and network with community service agencies. Ms. Huang has a Master degree in Mass Communications from Boston University and is fluent in Chinese

**Winnie Kung, Ph.D.**, is associate professor at Fordham University, Graduate School of Social Service. Dr. Kung's research interest is in the areas of mental health and family, especially with the minority population. Her recent research and publication include caregiving among Chinese families in America and Mainland China with a patient suffering from schizophrenia, help seeking behavior on emotional distress among Chinese Americans, sociocultural impact on divorce decision and coping with stress. She also did studies on depression and marital distress. She just got funded for a pilot intervention study on an ethnically sensitive family psychoeducation for Chinese American families with a member suffering from schizophrenia.

**Kin Wah Lee, MPS**, has a Master of Professional Studies degree in Health Service Administration from the New School for Social Research and a certificate from the Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. She holds an executive cabinet position at Kingsboro Psychiatric Center as the Deputy Director for Quality Management. From 1998 to 2003, Ms. Lee served as the President of the New York Coalition for Asian American Mental Health.

**Rebecca Martell** is a licensed social worker as well as a National and New York State Certified Gambling Supervisor. She has been working in the problem gambling field for over 12 years. She is currently the Problem Gambling Coordinator for the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. Her responsibilities include overseeing the development and coordination of all problem gambling services in NYS. Prior to her position at OASAS, Rebecca was the Program Director for the Center for Problem Gambling in Albany, NY and worked in both outpatient and inpatient chemical dependency programs. Rebecca has had several research articles published, and has spoken regionally and nationally on various topics related to problem gambling. Rebecca was also an Employee Assistance Counselor for several years prior to getting into the problem gambling field and is currently the EAP Coordinator for OASAS.

**Frank T. Modica, LMSW**, is a Licensed Master Social Worker who has been the Executive Director of Hamilton-Madison House for 31 years. During his tenure, Hamilton-Madison House has grown from an operating budget of less than \$1,100,000 to approximately \$14 million. Mr. Modica is a member of boards of directors on a number of local, national and international organizations including United Neighborhood Centers of America and International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers. He has been Chairman of the Board of Two Bridges Neighborhood Council for 24 years and has played a critical role in building 1,500 units of low and moderate income housing. The scope of social services that are provided, under his leadership, have adapted to meet the changing needs of the community.

**Stephen Ross M.D.** is the Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Director of the Division of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse at Bellevue Hospital and the Associate Director for Addiction Education at NYU School of Medicine. Dr. Ross has received many distinguished awards including Teacher of the Year Award for the Association of Academic Psychiatry in 2007.

**Pamela Yew Schwartz, Ph.D.** was a psychologist at the Manhattan Psychiatric Center for the past 27 years, working with the severely and persistently mentally ill population. She was also involved in serving the Chinese patients at Kirby Forensic Psychiatric Center for 9 years. Currently, she is doing bereavement work with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York's Hospice Care program. Dr. Schwartz has worked in the Chinatown communities of both Boston and New York. She is a founding member of the New York Coalition for Asian American Mental Health and has been active in the Coalition since then. She has published in the area of mental health and Chinese immigrant. She continues to be interested in the areas of depression, suicide and loss as well as resilience in the Asian population.

**Karen Shufleder** is a Certified Gambling Counselor and Senior Occupational Therapist in the Outpatient Chemical Dependence Program at St. Vincent's Hospital. She has specialized in the treatment of addiction since receiving her Masters Degree in Occupational Therapy from New York University. Ms Shufleder is also the Occupational Therapy Student Fieldwork Coordinator. She has presented at Ground Rounds on the function of Occupational Therapy in Behavioral Health and the prevalence of gambling in the geriatric population.

**Antony Stephen, Ph.D.** is a licensed clinical social worker providing mental health services to patients with diverse cultural backgrounds at NJVA Health Care System, East Orange, New Jersey. He is also the current Executive Director of the New Jersey Asian American Association for Human Services. In this capacity he has so far organized and chaired four major statewide conferences on Asian American Health, Substance Abuse among Asian Americans, Mental Health of the Asian Elderly and End of Life Care and Asian Americans. He has also given numerous presentations at the national and international level, particularly the Asian American Perspective on Dementia Care, Culture, and Care-giving, Providing Culturally Competent Mental Health Services to Asian Americans, Stigma in a Cross Cultural Context: South Asian Perspective and Basic Alcohol and Drug Diagnosis in the Multicultural Environment. Dr. Stephen received his Ph. D. from Fordham University in New York. During his career as a professional, he has played many roles such as program director, coordinator, supervisor, adjunct professor, consultant and writer. He has published three books in his native language in India. Dr. Stephen is a former member of NJ Office of Minority and Multicultural Health Advisory Committee and is an Executive Board member of National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse (NAPAFASA). He has been a member of Cultural Competence Work Group – CSAT, Silver Springs, Maryland and served as a field reviewer for TIP 41: Substance Abuse Treatment: Group Therapy and for TIP 42: Substance Abuse Treatment for Persons With Co-Occurring Disorders.

**Peter Yee, LMSW**, Peter Yee is currently the Assistant Executive Director at *Hamilton-Madison House*, a voluntary, non-profit settlement house dedicated to improving the quality of life of its community. He is in charge of the Behavioral Health Services and has been instrumental in developing Hamilton-Madison House's Project Liberty program which received an Award for Excellence in Mental Health from the NYC Department of Mental Health and the 9/11/01 Special Achievement Award from the New York State Department of Mental Health. He is also the current President of the New York Coalition for Asian American Mental Health, and serves on the boards of the New York chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, the Coalition of Voluntary Mental Health Agencies, and the Urban Institute for Behavioral Health of New York City. Mr. Yee was born in Hong Kong, is proficient in Cantonese and possesses a working knowledge of Mandarin. He has been active for years in mental health and held the post of Vice President of Residential/Community Services at the *Postgraduate Center for Mental Health* from 1991-1997. Other positions include Director of Operations at *Fountain House* and Associate Executive Director of *Urban Pathways, Inc.* — a non-profit agency that administers social services to the homeless population of New York City. In At the Fountain House, he designed programs specific to mentally ill and homeless populations, developed strategic plans and managed an operational and capital budget of over 16M. His acumen in cultivating business relationships within the private sector had a dual effect with lasting impact. One such accomplishment is his development of the Ben & Jerry's Partnership located on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. While this business further contributed to the agency's financial base, it also forged greater community participation by developing an innovative business venture managed in part by homeless and mentally ill individuals.

# TWENTY QUESTIONS

**Gamblers Anonymous offers the following questions to anyone who may have a gambling problem. These questions are provided to help the individual decide if he or she is a compulsive gambler and wants to stop gambling.**

1. Did you ever lose time from work or school due to gambling?
2. Has gambling ever made your home life unhappy?
3. Did gambling affect your reputation?
4. Have you ever felt remorse after gambling?
5. Did you ever gamble to get money with which to pay debts or otherwise solve financial difficulties?
6. Did gambling cause a decrease in your ambition or efficiency?
7. After losing did you feel you must return as soon as possible and win back your losses?
8. After a win did you have a strong urge to return and win more?
9. Did you often gamble until your last dollar was gone?
10. Did you ever borrow to finance your gambling?
11. Have you ever sold anything to finance gambling?
12. Were you reluctant to use "gambling money" for normal expenditures?
13. Did gambling make you careless of the welfare of yourself or your family?
14. Did you ever gamble longer than you had planned?
15. Have you ever gambled to escape worry or trouble?
16. Have you ever committed, or considered committing, an illegal act to finance gambling?
17. Did gambling cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
18. Do arguments, disappointments or frustrations create within you an urge to gamble?
19. Did you ever have an urge to celebrate any good fortune by a few hours of gambling?
20. Have you ever considered self destruction or suicide as a result of your gambling?

**Most compulsive gamblers will answer yes to at least seven of these questions.**

# Gambling Resources - Helpful Links

## **Gamblers Anonymous**

International Service Office

P.O. Box 17173

Los Angeles, CA 90017

P: 213 386-8789

F: 213 386-0030

New York City Hotline Number: (877) 66GA4NY ( 877-664-2469 )

## **New York Council on Problem Gambling**

24 hr Helpline: 1-800-437-1611

## **Problem Gambling Helpline**

1-800-GAMBLER

## **Gam-Anon International Service Office, Inc.**

PO Box 157

Whitestone, NY 11357

P: 718 352-1671

F: 718 746-2571

## **California Council on Problem Gambling**

800 S Harbor Blvd Ste 225

Anaheim CA 92805

T: 714 765-5804

F: 714 765-5807

[info@calproblemgambling.org](mailto:info@calproblemgambling.org)

## **The National Council on Problem Gambling**

216 G Street NE, Suite 200

Washington, D.C. 20002

P: 202 547-9204

F: 202 547-9206

Confidential National Hotline: (800) 522-4700

[ncpg@ncpgambling.org](mailto:ncpg@ncpgambling.org)

## **Office of Problem Gambling**

California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs

1700 K Street

Sacramento, CA 95814-4037

[opg@adp.ca.gov](mailto:opg@adp.ca.gov)