

Up to the Minute

OACBHA UPDATE

April 9, 2008

EQUAL ACCESS BILL RECEIVES SECOND HEARING

H.B. 384, also known as the Equal Access Bill, received a second hearing this week in the House Insurance Committee. H.B. 384 seeks to prohibit discrimination in health care policies in the coverage provided for the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness and substance abuse or addiction conditions. Testimony in support of the legislation was provided by individuals representing the Ohio Citizen Advocates for Chemical Dependency Prevention and Treatment, the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities, and providers of behavioral health services.

APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

Each year the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence designates the month of April as National Alcohol Awareness Month. This year the Drug-Free Action Alliance is participating in Alcohol Awareness Month to bring attention to the disease of alcoholism and the health risks associated with drinking. Also, April 10th is National Alcohol Screening Day and online screenings can be found at www.alcoholscreening.org, and you can search for treatment programs at www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov/. For more information please visit: www.drugfreeactionalliance.org.

PAUL GUTTMAN SCHOLARSHIP

A unique scholarship opportunity exists for ADAMH/ADAS/CMH Board staff, ODADAS-certified AoD prevention and treatment program staff, and alumni of ODADAS-certified programs or drug courts who want to advance their education in an AoD-related field. It is the Paul Guttman Scholarship, named in memory of the former Executive Director of the Stark County Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services Board. Nominations must come from the Executive Directors of ADAMH/ADAS/CMH Boards. For more information on this scholarship please visit: <http://www.oacbha.org/foundation/scholarship.html?PHPSESSID=8b356ad8cffaade72c87fa34d9ce8397>.

SALVIA DIVINORUM COULD BECOME CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE IN OHIO

Last week the House Committee on Criminal Justice voted to pass H.B. 215 onto the House Floor that would make salvia divinorum and salvinorin A, the extract and the plant, a controlled substance in Ohio. The Drug Policy Alliance expressed concerns about the bill because ongoing research on salvia divinorum and salvinorin A indicates there are likely medical benefits from their use in treatment of Alzheimer's disease, schizophrenia, and drug addiction and the bill might inhibit further medical research. Salvia divinorum is a psychoactive mint used in traditional spiritual practices by the Mazatec people of Mexico and is considered to be the most potent, selective and naturally occurring hallucinogen when smoked -- rivaling the potency of the synthetic hallucinogens like LSD.

For more information about behavioral health issues in Ohio please visit:

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