



*Your Professional Home*  
**Minnesota Counseling Association**

Vol.1, Issue 2  
2008

September

**In this Issue**

- Message from the President
- Legislative Issues
- Conference Update
- Member Alert: Election
- New Member News
- Announcements

**LEGISLATIVE ACTION NEEDED BY MNCA MEMBERS**

The Senate is about to vote on broad tax relief extension legislation which includes mental health and addictive disorder parity provisions! The parity provisions are the result of long, careful negotiations and the passage by both the House and Senate of landmark parity bills (H.R. 1424 / S. 558) earlier this Congress. A vote is expected either today (Thursday, 9/18) or tomorrow.

**This month . . .**

- [President's Letter](#)
- [CONFERENCE UPDATE 2008](#)
- [Board Members Photo](#)
- [Member Alert: Election](#)
- [Legislative Report](#)
- [New Member News](#)

**THE E.NEWSLETTER IS IN A NEW FORMAT AND COMES OUT SIX TIMES EACH YEAR.  
TAKE A MOMENT AND **TELL US** WHAT YOU THINK!**

New MnCA President: Renae Ludwig, MS, LPCC, NCC



**PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

Dear MnCA members,

or tomorrow.

**ACTION NEEDED:** Call your Senators to ask them to VOTE FOR the tax extenders legislation, including the mental health parity provisions.

**SUGGESTED MESSAGE:** "I'm calling to ask the Senator to vote for the tax relief extension legislation, and the important mental health parity provisions included in the legislation. American with private health insurance deserve the same parity of insurance coverage for mental and addictive disorders that members of Congress and all other federal employees get."

As always, be sure to leave your name and postal address with the Senator's staff person, and feel free to share your individual concerns regarding the lack of health insurance parity for coverage of mental health services. All Senate offices can be reached by calling the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-225-3121, and asking for a particular Senator's office. To find out who your Senators are, go to <http://capwiz.com/counseling>, and enter your zip code in the space provided.

President MnCA  
Renaë Ludwig

- Links:

- [ACA](#)
  - [MnCA](#)
  - [BBHT](#)
  - [MSCA](#)

- Job Search

- [DOER](#)

**Featured Opening:**

Heritage of America (HOA), a designated disabled veteran owned company, has been awarded a large contract to provide counseling services to veterans through the Department of Veterans Affairs. ACA is the major subcontractor for this contract and we are pleased to be able to provide ACA members with the opportunity to provide compensated services to those who have served in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other countries. ACA members are needed in the District of Columbia and all states except Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee (HOA did not get the contract for these six states). ACA members living outside the United States are also needed in Canada, Mexico,

This is my first newsletter as President of MnCA. I would like to thank you for being a member of MnCA. Your membership keeps us moving forward to help counselors in Mn. This year, my goal as President is to help members get jobs and get licensed in the great state of Mn.

### Career Development!

To that end, we are working together as board members to improve our website so that it is more amenable to adding information expediently. We will be taking recent job postings from members and employers and we also want to keep members aware of current legislative grassroots efforts needed to pass legislation to include LPCCs as Mental Health Professionals in Mn.

We are available with questions about applying for licensure as an LPC and LPCC. Some of us have been through both application processes and can be of assistance in this sometimes difficult endeavor.

We plan to have a monthly spotlight of a MnCA member. This bio would include career path history and goals in the counseling field, hopefully giving others ideas and inspiration to get the best possible experience in the counseling field. Please submit to us your experience and be our poster counselor. I will start out this month with my own history. See the Member Spotlight.

### New Board members!

I'm excited to report that we have new board and committee members and two applying for board positions!

Cindi Fossan is applying for Secretary and is representing MnCA at the Mid-West Conference in Chicago along with Blanca Svedberg, who is applying for President Elect. Blanca has been Secretary of the board and has done a tremendous job for us.

We have a new Ethics Committee member, Alexander Wild and two new Chairs of the Legislative Committee, Valerie Fitzgerald and Kristy Bordsen.

All members are welcome to attend our next meeting in Bemidji on Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>. We will be meeting at 11am and will post the directions and location on the website. We welcome all. It is a great opportunity for those in the Northwest to meet the board without a long trip to the cities. Hope to see you there.

Renaë Ludwig, MS, LPCC, NCC  
President of MnCA

[BACK TO TOP](#)

[CONFERENCE 2008](#)  
[UPDATE](#)

Central America, South America, Asia, Australia, and the Pacific Rim including Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Guam and Samoa.

The contract requires professional counselors who have a masters or doctoral degree and are licensed to diagnose and treat mental disorders (e.g. LPC, LCPC, LMHC). The FAQ's below give additional information. If you meet the above qualifications and - after reading the FAQ's below - would be interested in providing services under this contract, please send an e-mail expressing your interest, along with a copy of your resume to: Tom Kiley, VP/CFO  
Heritage of America, LLC  
[tom@heritageofamerica.com](mailto:tom@heritageofamerica.com)

• **Tell US**

What you Think!

Contact MnCA Marketing:  
[Ljackson@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:Ljackson@bemidjistate.edu)

## ***THROUGH A COUNSELOR'S EYES: COUNSELOR'S IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT***

### **CONFERENCE '08 UPDATE:**

- Our conference brochure is finally out! You will be receiving it by mail any day.
- Our keynote speaker this year is Colleen Logan, Ph.D., LPCC, LMFT and current ACA president.
- We also have experienced presenters that will talk interesting topics, which includes: impact of bullying, ethics and supervision, issues on working with difficult clients, as well as other topics of interest to the professional counselor.
- Insurance companies' representatives will be part of a panel, talking about the process of getting a Provider Number.
- Members of BBHT will provide the latest information about LPCC.
- Come and join us on November 07, 2008 at the Holiday Inn St. Cloud for a day full of activities, information, and opportunities for networking.
- If you have questions or comments related with the conference, don't hesitate to send me an e-mail to [blancas08@hotmail.com](mailto:blancas08@hotmail.com)
- Looking forward to seeing you at the conference!

Blanca Svedberg, M.Ed.  
MnCA Conference Committee Coordinator

[BACK TO TOP](#)

### **MNCA BOARD MEMBERS**



Board Members from left: Renae Ludwig-President, Blanca Svedberg-Conference Committee Chair, Leeann Jorgensen-Treasurer, Cindi Fossan-Secretary Elect, Louise Jackson-Marketing.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

**Member Alert: Election**



The Minnesota Counseling Association is the voice for professional counselors in Minnesota. Have you wondered what happens at board meetings? Wondered how the board members decide what should happen? Then you are cordially invited to apply for a position on the board.

This year there are two elected openings.

President Elect - A one year term with expectation of moving to the presidential position the following year.

Candidate: Blanca Svedberg

Secretary - A two year term

Candidate: Cindi Fossan

Members in favor of these appointments can send their names to Renae.

If you are interested in being on the ballot for these positions, please contact Melissa Engstrom, MnCA President or Maggie Glazer, Membership Chair. These are elected positions, so applicants are asked to send a short letter of interest in the position which can be shared with members who are voting.

Appointed positions will be made by incoming president Renae Ludwig. Persons interested in chairing or working on these committees are encouraged to contact Renae Ludwig. [Renae.Ludwig@cignabehavioral.com](mailto:Renae.Ludwig@cignabehavioral.com)  
<<mailto:Renae.Ludwig@cignabehavioral.com>>

The Minnesota Counseling Association is a volunteer organization, leadership comes from the members, so we encourage you to consider offering your time and talents to assure we have a healthy, member centered organization.

Committees

Public Relations

Newsletter

Membership

Legislative

Conference

Ethics

Thanks for your consideration.

MnCA Board

Leeann Jorgensen, Ph.D., L.P., N.C.C.

Associate Professor

Community Counseling

[Legislative Report](#)

## Take Legislative Action for LPCC! By Valerie Fitzgerald, Co-Chair, Legislative Committee

As we near the November elections, please keep in mind that the Minnesota Counseling Association continues to advocate for LPCC licensure in the legislature. Check out the MNCA's website at <http://www.mncounseling.org/> to see their new e-newsletter, which includes a summary of the last legislative session.

### Goals

- *Mental health professional status in Minnesota.* We made a lot of progress over the last couple of years, and we are well positioned to gain mental health professional status this session. This means we can get Medicaid reimbursement for our services.
- *Medicare eligibility.* At the federal level, the House and Senate passed important legislation that maintains funding for Medicare providers. If LPCCs get Medicare reimbursement, they are automatically eligible for Medicaid reimbursement as well.

### Talking Points

There are some things you can do to work for recognition of LPCC licensure. Since you will be trying to persuade others of the importance of adding another group of licensed mental health care professionals, start by thinking through the reasons why LPCC licensure will benefit the people of Minnesota.

- It is generally agreed that there is a need for more mental health care providers, especially in greater Minnesota, and that the need is not going to decrease. In its Labor Market Information, [The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development](#) classifies the growth of demand for mental health counselors as "well above average." [Iseek.org](#), which provides employment information for the state of Minnesota, designates mental health counselor as one of the 50 fastest growing careers in the state.
- Many states already provide Medicaid reimbursement to LPCs. In Minnesota, LPCs have been providing counseling services since 2004. The LPCC level of licensure was introduced in 2007. It is more rigorous, requiring additional coursework and more supervised hours. The goal of the LPCC is to bring counselors in line with other mental health professionals in Minnesota, and that goal has been met.
- The cost of adding LPCCs to the ranks of mental health professionals providing outpatient care was projected at \$102,000 in 2009, and \$203,000 by 2010. Corresponding savings are projected to come with increased outpatient practice that replaces more expensive, higher levels of care such as in-patient treatment.
- While there are already licensed psychologists, social workers and marriage & family therapists providing services, the LPCC does not represent overlapping or redundant services. The licensed psychologist is a Ph.D. level licensure, while LPCCs have a master's degree and are

less costly. Social workers function within the frame work of state and local health and human services systems, while marriage & family therapists approach mental health issues from the perspective of family systems. LPCCs provide counseling from an individual perspective, rather than systems perspectives.

- LPCCs are a diverse group with diverse strengths. Think about your particular skills. Who do you hope to work with? What experience (paid, volunteer, personal, student) do you bring that makes your contribution unique?

## **Poli Sci 101**

Once you are familiar with these reasons to support mental health professional status for LPCCs, get in touch with your legislators.

- Find out who represents you at <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/Districtfinder.asp>.
  - At the state level, there are 67 state legislative districts. Each district has two representatives and one senator. The governor vetoes or approves the legislation introduced by the state house and senate.
  - At the national level, there are 8 federal legislative districts, each with one representative:
    - [Walz, Timothy J.](#), Minnesota, 1st
    - [Kline, John](#), Minnesota, 2nd
    - [Ramstad, Jim](#), Minnesota, 3rd
    - [McCollum, Betty](#), Minnesota, 4th
    - [Ellison, Keith](#), Minnesota, 5th
    - [Bachmann, Michele](#), Minnesota, 6th
    - [Peterson, Collin C.](#), Minnesota, 7th
    - [Oberstar, James L.](#), Minnesota, 8th
  - Also at the national level, there are 2 U.S. senators: Norm Coleman and Amy Klobuchar.
  - At the national level, the president vetoes or approves legislation.
- This is an election year, so find out who is running in your district.
  - Go to the Secretary of State's Election Center page for a list of offices to be voted for in the General State Election (<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/home/>).
  - In each state legislative district, one representative is seeking re-election
  - In each federal legislative district, one representative is seeking re-election
- In the past we have been represented by Jim Abeler (R), district 48B. His phone number is 203 296-1729 and his email is [rep.jim.abeler@house.mn](mailto:rep.jim.abeler@house.mn).
- Get in touch with your representatives in the house and senate. Talk to them about LPCC licensure, and find out if they support our work.

## **Over the coming session**

The two-year session begins in January 2009 and will continue, with recesses, through summer 2010. You can learn about the process by which a bill

becomes a law in Minnesota by visiting [this website](#). There are some significant things you need to be aware of in order to advocate for LPCC.

- *Health and Human Services Committee.* This committee is heavily involved in our legislative work, so it is important to become familiar with the committee members. When the Health and Human Services Committee is appointed, I will send you their names and contact information.
- *Introduction of legislation.* I will contact you when legislation relevant to LPCC is introduced. I will provide you with the bill number, the name and contact information of the bill's author(s), and contact information for people who are working on the bill (such as the people on the Health and Human Services Committee). This will keep the issue on their radar.

If you can send an email periodically throughout the coming biennium, your voice will make a difference in our efforts. Hopefully by this time next year, LPCCs will have mental health professional status and assurance of reimbursement for services.

[Back to Top](#)

## New Member News



### Welcome New Member!

**Name:** Valerie Fitzgerald

**Committee:** Legislative

**Bio:** Valerie Fitzgerald is pursuing a master's degree, with a double emphasis in counseling and human development, from Saint Mary's University. She has a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Minnesota. Valerie joined the Minnesota Counseling Association in early 2008 and began working on the legislative committee soon afterward. In addition to being a student there, Valerie works at Saint Mary's University and volunteers at La Conexion, an organization serving the Latino community in South Minneapolis.

[Back to Top](#)