

## **Join the Patriots for Parity Event, June 11, 2013 at Stockton College**

Join the Patriots for Parity Event, June 11, 2013 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Stockton College, Campus Center Theatre, 101 Vera King Farris Drive, Galloway, NJ.

"We will hear from witnesses who have been denied treatment for mental illness or addiction, despite the federal parity law passed in 2008. Demanding the care we need, and are entitled to, is our responsibility. By documenting these stories, and standing together as one voice, we will make access to mental health and addiction care in New Jersey a reality," said The Honorable Patrick Kennedy, Former U.S. Representative and Co-founder of One Mind for Research, which seeks to increase resources and efficiency in brain disorder research.

Mr. Kennedy will also speak at the event on June 11th, along with Carol McDaid of the Parity Implementation Coalition. The event is sponsored by the college and the New Jersey chapter of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-NJ), and is being organized in partnership with the Parity Implementation Coalition, NJAMHAA and Mental Health Association in New Jersey. Following the testimonies, a panel discussion will take place to share further insights into the need for and value of parity. Panel participants will be Mr. Kennedy, Ms. McDaid and Senator Robert Singer (R-30th District); NJAMHAA CEO Debra Wentz, Ph.D.; Barbara Johnston, Director of Advocacy, Mental Health Association In New Jersey; and Candice Singer, Policy Research Analyst, NCADD-NJ.

There are so many tragic results of denying care and many invaluable benefits of ensuring treatment for mental illnesses and addictions. It is time to end discrimination and treat these illnesses the same way as all other chronic diseases. While significant progress has been made, much more needs to be done. Passing the federal Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act in 2008 and the Affordable Care Act in 2010 were important steps. Now, we must focus on ensuring that this parity legislation is fully implemented so that everyone in need of behavioral health services can benefit from the intention of these critical laws," Dr. Wentz said.

This event will serve as a kickoff to an ongoing campaign and everyone is encouraged to participate. Stay tuned for details, including opportunities to share your experiences relating to parity to bolster this critical advocacy effort.