



## NEWS RELEASE

# Illinois Division of Mental Health and the Ben Gordon Center partner to offer free trainings for our communities

The Division of Mental Health and the Ben Gordon Center in DeKalb, Illinois have partnered to provide a series of town hall meetings and community webinars to assist concerned community members, providers, healthcare professionals, landlords, school systems, universities, consumers and families to understand the affects of tragedy in their communities.

"As much as we'd all like to forget what occurred on the NIU campus, an unexpectedly violent act typically impacts our wellbeing long past the day it happens," stated Division of Mental Health Director, Dr. Lorrie Jones. "For that reason we're continuing to proactively support the efforts of both Ben Gordon through the town hall meetings and the University to respond to the increased need for counseling services."

"The Ben Gordon Center is proud to work with the Illinois Division of Mental Health and Dr. Harvey Barker to provide these town hall meetings and webinars over the next several months", said Michael Flora, President and CEO of the Ben Gordon Center. "These workshops and town hall meetings are open to everyone in our community", he added...

A kick off webinar will be held on Friday, August 22 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm CDT. Individuals interested in attending this on line kick off to explain the SERG Grant and the activities to be held over the next month are invited to attend at

### **Space is limited.**

Reserve your Webinar seat now at:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/762002063>

Or e-mail Barbara Stagner at [bgcbs@bengordoncenter](mailto:bgcbs@bengordoncenter) to register for the Free Webinar Kick off event

Illinois Mental Health Director and Campus Security Task Force representative Lorrie Jones states, "With students returning to campus to begin a new academic year, we have a special responsibility to ensure that our colleges and universities as well as their local communities have the necessary resources to respond quickly and positively to both external and self-induced pressures. That requires us to stay aware of the specific ways that community members may still be struggling with the tragedy and consequently need professional support."

"The start up of fall classes is a reminder that to many on the NIU campus and the local community that the wound is still fresh. Consequently, we not only support the town hall meetings, we're also continuing to marshal every available resources we can to assist in the healing process and to build resilience for dealing with both the ongoing and unexpected pressures of daily life," stated Illinois Mental Health Director, Dr. Lorrie Jones.

In addition, three consecutive town hall trainings will be held on August 25, 26 and 27, 2008. Dr. Harvey Barker, Executive Director from New River Valley Community Services in Blacksburg, Virginia, Michael Flora, President and CEO from the Ben Gordon Center in DeKalb, Illinois and Kris Povlsen, Director of Prevention for Ben Gordon Center, DeKalb, Illinois, will provide information on how their organizations met the challenges in their communities and lessons learned.

### **Training Faculty:**

Harvey M. Barker, Ph.D. is currently the Executive Director of New River Valley Community Services in Blacksburg, Virginia. He has worked in community mental health for over twenty-five years and has also maintained a small counseling private practice. He is trained as a Mental Health Disaster Responder but learned "under fire" what disaster mental health actually means with his experience in responding to the Virginia Tech shooting in April 2007.

Michael Flora is the President and CEO of the Ben Gordon Center in DeKalb, Illinois. Mr. Flora has over twenty-five years experience in clinical practice and mental health administration. He has lectured throughout the state and on the national conference level on behalf of treatment and administrative issues. Most recently Mr. Flora's work has been highlighted in *Behavioral Healthcare*, *Mental Health Weekly* and *The National Council News*. He has authored a chapter featured in the 2002 book *How to Deliver Accountable Care* by David R. Lloyd. In 2007, Mr. Flora's work was featured in the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare's publication *How to get and Keep the Best Employees: a Guide to Workforce Innovation*.

Kris Povlsen is the Director of Prevention at Ben Gordon Center. He is currently the Mayor and Liquor Commissioner for the City of DeKalb and served as an Alderman for DeKalb for

eleven years. He taught Psychology at Kishwaukee College for twenty-one years and has been involved in prevention since 1981. Kris is the Project Coordinator for the DeKalb County Partnership for a Safe, Active and Family Environment (DCP/SAFE) and has coordinated several Social Norms Prevention Projects using Environmental Strategies that include alcohol and tobacco prevention, violence prevention, literacy with grade school children, and DUI/traffic safety.

**August 25, 26 and 27, 2008: Three Consecutive Repeated Town Hall Meetings and Training Institutes in Region 1 and Region 2:**

**“Coming Together: What communities need to know in the event of a community tragedy”**

Dr. Harvey Barker, Michael Flora and Kris Povlsen will present how two community mental health centers responded to the shootings in their communities and lessons learned.

Learning Objectives:

- Review clinical time lines for response
- Review Community, Students and Faculty Needs in response to a community tragedy
- Preparing for the anniversary in your community
- Bringing the community together

The Town Hall meetings will be held from **9:00 am to 2:00 pm** at the following dates and locations:

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| August 25 | Rockford, IL – The Mildred Berry Center, 8616 Northern Ave.<br>Rockford Illinois       |
| August 26 | DeKalb, IL area – Kishwaukee Community College BID Center Rm A 247,<br>Malta, Illinois |
| August 27 | Chicago, IL – Read Mental Health Center, 4200 N. Oak Park Ave,<br>Chicago, Illinois    |

For more information call the Ben Gordon Center at 815-756-4875 or email [bgcbs@bengordoncenter.org](mailto:bgcbs@bengordoncenter.org) or visit [www.bengordoncenter.org](http://www.bengordoncenter.org)

Ben Gordon Center, Inc. is an experienced provider of behavioral health services including mental health, chemical dependency and substance abuse disorders. Ben Gordon Center, Inc. offers services in DeKalb, Genoa and Sandwich.

*For More information about Psychiatric Services, Mental Health and Substance Abuse  
Services at the Ben Gordon Center*

*Call 815-756-4875*

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