

October 26, 2023



D.C. Update: Spotlight on Outcomes: Guam, NIH Director Nomination Headed to Senate Floor, DEA Hosts Second Annual Family Summit on Fentanyl, and More.

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Meet The Member

Samantha Alonis, National Prevention Network Coordinator for Illinois

Samantha Alonis currently serves as Deputy Director of the Bureau of Prevention Services at the Illinois Department of Human Services - Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery, where she oversees youth substance use prevention, tobacco compliance, and overdose prevention programs. She has been in this role since March 2023, but has been a long-time advocate for systems change that could prevent health and social inequities. Ms. Alonis also serves as the National Prevention Network (NPN) Coordinator for Illinois.



Samantha has 15 years of cross-sector experience, including in social services, local government, higher education, and health care. She began her career as a social worker in a residential center for children who experienced abuse and neglect. This motivated her to pursue a Master of Science in leadership and public policy from DePaul University. Before her current role, she served as the Illinois Market Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Language Services at Ascension, a 15-hospital health care system, leading efforts to advance workplace inclusivity, trauma-informed care, and access to communications assistance for those with limited English proficiency and for those Deaf/hard of hearing.

She is passionate about preventing and responding to adverse childhood experiences, as shown by her volunteer work as a member of the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center's Policy and Government Affairs Council and the founding chair of the Abuse Prevention Workgroup of the Illinois Department of Public Health's COVID-19 Equity Team.

Spotlight on Outcomes: Guam

NASADAD is periodically going to place a spotlight on positive outcomes reported by State alcohol and drug agencies across the country. Please contact Daniel Diana, ddiana@nasadad.org, if you have an outcomes story you would like to share.

Guam is reporting reductions in tobacco use rates among both adults and youth after launching several tobacco related initiatives. Guam's legislature passed Tobacco 21, raising the minimum legal age for tobacco and nicotine sales to 21 in 2018. In addition, in 2019, Guam's legislature expanded the definition of tobacco on the Guam Code to include e-cigarettes- applying the same minimum legal age and licensing requirements to Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS). Further, all government establishments in Guam are tobacco-free. Guam has also worked diligently to reduce underage purchases of tobacco through the Synar program as their retailer violation rate is consistently below the required 20% since 2002. These efforts have all contributed to a reported decline in adult tobacco use from 30.5% in 2011 to 19.9% in 2021 and a reported decline in youth tobacco use from 21.9% of youth in 2011 to 11.9% in 2019. Guam is led by NASADAD member Theresa Arriola, Director, [Guam Behavioral Health & Wellness Center \(GBHWC\)](#), and National Prevention Network (NPN) Coordinator Sara Harrell, Acting Supervisor, GBHWC Prevention and Training Branch.

Guam conducts studies of both adults, those ages 18 and older, and youth, high school students in 6th through 12th grade. Guam has sustained the Guam Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (Guam SEOW) since 2004 to aggregate and oversee the strategic use of these data to inform substance use prevention policy and program development in the island jurisdiction. Specifically, for adult prevention outcomes, Guam utilizes data from the [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#), an annual phone survey administered through a subcontractor that is locally funded by the Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). GBHWC provides supplemental funding to this dataset for state-added questions and additional modules. For youth prevention outcomes, the Guam Department of Education (GDOE) funds and administers the [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System \(YRBS\)](#), a bi-annual survey of a defined sample of 6th through 12th grade students in the local public school system, through federal grants from the CDC and U.S. Department of Education (DOE). Certain questions are reserved for high school students due to age appropriateness. Both surveys are random population samples.

NASADAD Attends 25th Annual Drug Free Kids Campaign Awards Dinner

On October 19, NASADAD Executive Director Robert Morrison attended the 25th Annual Drug Free Kids Campaign Awards Dinner where Sue Thau, Public Policy Consultant, was recognized with the Arthur Dean 2023 Humanitarian Award for her 30 years of service. A number of current and former National Prevention Network Coordinators (NPNs) and Single State Agency (SSA) Directors attended the event. Special thanks to our partners at CADCA led by General Barrye Price.

Pictured: Janice Williams (former SSA and NPN from LA and NC); Sue Thau, CADCA; and Rob Morrison, NASADAD



NASADAD Presents at the Addiction Professionals of North Carolina (APNC) Meeting in Beaufort, N.C.

On Monday, October 23, NASADAD Executive Director Robert Morrison joined North Carolina State Director Kelly Crosbie as a presenter at the Addiction Professionals of North Carolina (APNC) conference in Beaufort, North Carolina. The lunch



panel was designed to offer meeting participants perspectives on key public policy issues from the State and federal levels. Sara Howe, Chief Executive Officer of APNC, served as moderator. Director Crosbie discussed recent State-level investments in substance use disorder service delivery, issues related to Medicaid expansion, and her commitment to serving those currently in the military and veterans. Rob Morrison talked about the status of the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, experiences in other States related to Medicaid expansion, and the importance of investing in prevention, treatment, and recovery. The current President of APNC is Flo Stein, former long-time leader of NASADAD from North Carolina. Flo served as President, Past President, Public Policy Chair, and many other positions. NASADAD wishes to recognize Director Crosbie for her leadership and APNC for the opportunity to join the meeting.

Pictured: Rob Morrison, NASADAD with Sara Howe, Chief Executive Officer, Addiction Professionals of North Carolina (APNC)

Capitol Hill Happenings

NIH Director Nomination is Headed to the Senate Floor

NIH Director Nominee Monica Bertagnolli's nomination to be the next director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) advanced out of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) yesterday in a vote of 15-6.

Dr. Bertagnolli has served as the 16th director of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) since October 3, 2022. She previously served as the Richard E. Wilson Professor of Surgery in the field of surgical oncology at Harvard Medical School, a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital, and a member of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Treatment and Sarcoma Centers at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Around the Agencies

Call for Presentations for SAMHSA's 20th Prevention Day



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) opened calls for presentations at SAMHSA's 20th Prevention Day taking place on Monday, January 29, 2024, at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center near Washington, D.C. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of SAMHSA's Prevention Day, SAMHSA is seeking presentations at the conference that will "...explore current programs, policies, innovations, and emerging issues; reflect on past accomplishments; and chart a course for the future of prevention." Interested applicants must submit an abstract that includes:

- "Participant learning objectives;
- Summary highlighting the successes, challenges, and lessons learned from your substance use prevention program or research;
- Brief explanation of how diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are being addressed;
- Which of the following SAMHSA's Prevention Day tracks relates to the proposed presentation:
 - Prevention Efforts in Public Health Policy
 - Prevention Science, Public Health Research, and Evaluation
 - Innovations in Prevention
 - Youth-led Prevention Efforts
 - Prevention Across the Lifespan and the Continuum of Care
 - Prevention Workforce (e.g., recruitment, training, support, and administration)"

The deadline to submit an abstract is November 6, at 11:50 pm ET, and must be submitted [here](#) for consideration.

DEA Hosts Second Annual Family Summit on Fentanyl

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) hosted its second annual [Family Summit on Fentanyl](#) in support of families who have lost someone to fentanyl poisoning on September 25 and 26. Attendees had the opportunity to share their experiences, build connections, and learn of resources to prevent overdose deaths, including training on how to administer Narcan. DEA Administrator Ann Milgram and Attorney General Merrick Garland delivered the [opening remarks](#), announcing \$345 million in new funding to combat fentanyl.

DEA's press release on the summit can be found [here](#).

CMS Seeking Public Comment on Processes for Assessing Compliance with Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity in Medicaid and CHIP



The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is seeking [public comments](#) regarding processes for assessing compliance with mental health parity and addiction equity requirements in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Specifically, the questions for comment concern mental health parity and addiction requirements in Medicaid managed care arrangements, Medicaid alternative benefit plans (ABP), and CHIP. The request for comments stems from "...recent updates to the underlying Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) of 2018 statutory provisions and proposed regulatory changes for private sector plans and issuers as well as concerns raised by various stakeholders including MH and SUD treatment advocates regarding barriers to accessing treatment and by state Medicaid and CHIP agencies regarding administrative burden of the current CMS parity compliance processes..." Comments must be submitted by December 4th to receive full consideration.

Additional information can be found in CMS' request for comments release, [here](#).

Research Round-Up

New CRS Report: Medicaid's Institution for Mental Diseases (IMD) Exclusion

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) recently released a report on [Medicaid's Institution for Mental Diseases \(IMD\) Exclusion](#). Medicaid's IMD exclusion limits the circumstances under which federal Medicaid funding to States is available for inpatient mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) care, currently prohibiting "...the federal government from providing federal Medicaid funds to states for services rendered to certain Medicaid-eligible individuals who are patients in IMDs..." This report examines the impact of Medicaid's IMD exclusion on access to mental health and SUD care, including offering background on the IMD Exclusion, its legislative history, inpatient mental health services and related statutes, and key recent developments.

Webinars to Watch

HRSA Webinar: Screening and Addressing Substance Use in School-Based Health Centers



The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is hosting a webinar on [Screening and Addressing Substance Use in School-Based Health Centers](#). This no-cost webinar is on November 2, at 2:00 pm ET. The webinar will feature speakers from the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), who will "...describe how the drug overdose crisis affects teens, the role of counterfeit pills and fentanyl, and how school-based service sites (SBSS) are uniquely

positioned to address teen substance use.” HRSA will also provide evidence-based resources, including teen substance use screening tools and tips for responding based on the screening result. Registration is required.

Other News

NAADAC Announces Terrence D. Walton as Next Executive Director

The Association for Addiction Professionals (NAADAC) announced that Terrence D. Walton, MSW, will serve as NAADAC’s Executive Director effective January 1, 2024, following Cynthia Moreno Tuohy’s, BWS, NCAC II, CDC III, SAP, departure at the end of the year. Mr. Walton has served as the Chief Operating Officer for All Rise for the last decade, where he leads national and international initiatives to develop the substance use disorder (SUD) workforce and treatment services. Before that, he served as director of treatment for the Pretrial Services Agency (PSA) for the District of Columbia, director of Necessary Interventions for Adolescents (NIA), and was a certified drug and alcohol counselor for more than 20 years. Mr. Walton is an active member of the International Society of Substance Use Professionals (ISSUP) and has run SUD-focused programs both domestically and internationally. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Wright State University and a Master of Social Work degree with specializations in program administration and SUD from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.



NAADAC’s press release announcing Mr. Walton’s appointment can be found [here](#).

O’Neill Institute Addiction and Public Policy Initiative Webinar: Recovery Housing and the Americans with Disabilities Act

Georgetown University’s O’Neill Institute for National & Global Health Law Addiction and Public Policy Initiative is hosting a webinar on [Recovery Housing and the Americans with Disabilities Act](#). This no-cost webinar will be held on November 7, at 12:00 pm ET. The webinar will explore the current state of recovery housing, opportunities for improving recovery housing, and ongoing State and federal efforts to expand access to housing for people in recovery from substance use disorder (SUD). The webinar will also feature Dona Dmitrovic, M.H.S., Senior Advisor, from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Office of Recovery. Registration is required.

We're Hiring!

NASADAD Hiring for Alcohol and Other Drug Research Analyst

The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) is hiring for an Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Research Analyst II- Women’s and Youth Services. See the job listing and link to apply below:

Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Research Analyst II- Women’s and Youth Services
NASADAD seeks an experienced, team-oriented person with a demonstrated understanding of substance use issues related to women and youth, excellent writing and research abilities, data analysis experience, and strong communication skills.

More information on the position, including qualifications, benefits, and how to apply can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Tracy Flinn, Ed.D., Associate Director of Planning and Program Management, at: tflinn@nasadad.org.

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