



# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

11 February 2015

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### **NCRG AWARDED NEARLY ONE MILLION DOLLARS IN 2014 TO PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF GAMBLING DISORDER**

*Ten grants announced, including first-ever online help for college students*

BEVERLY, MASS – The National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG) today reported the full portfolio of research grants awarded in 2014, totaling nearly \$1 million. The NCRG awards, which demonstrate its continued leadership in the field, include the testing of an online intervention for college students, an investigation of how and why disordered gamblers seek to change their behaviors, and an assessment of risky behaviors, including gambling, among Native American youth.

“We are excited to award \$948,681 in support of 10 new innovative and high quality research projects,” said Ken C. Winters, Ph.D., chairman of the NCRG Scientific Advisory Board and professor, department of psychiatry, University of Minnesota Medical School. “These studies will move the needle for the gambling disorder field by expanding the body of scientifically rigorous and peer-reviewed research that will eventually inform effective prevention and treatment approaches.”

The NCRG is the only organization dedicated to funding research on gambling disorder and has awarded more than \$17 million in research grants since it’s founding in 1996.

The NCRG awarded grants for the following research projects in 2014:

#### **Large Grants**

- **Evaluation and Implementation of Personalized Normative Feedback for CollegeGambling.org** – Clayton Neighbors, Ph.D., University of Houston was awarded \$233,570 to test the first-ever online screen/brief intervention for gambling among college and university students. The instrument, BetOnU, is available at the NCRG’s website, [CollegeGambling.org/BetOnU](http://CollegeGambling.org/BetOnU).
- **Biobehavioral Assessment and Validation of Animal Phenotype of Pathological Gambling** – Martin Zack, Ph.D., Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto, was awarded \$101,200 to develop an animal model

that accurately reflects the brain and behavioral profile of disordered gamblers in order to test medications for the treatment of gambling disorder.

- **Modifying the Automatic Approach Bias toward Gambling Stimuli in Problem Gamblers: A Novel Intervention for Changing Excessive Gambling Behavior** – Sherry H. Stewart, Ph.D., Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, was awarded \$172,500 to conduct a two-part study to understand the implicit thought patterns that could play a role in the development of a gambling disorder, by exploring whether or not disordered gamblers have an “approach bias” (i.e. the automatic tendency to approach or conduct a risky-behavior rather than avoid it).
- **Personality Traits, Affective Context and Pathological Gambling: An Experience Sampling Approach** – Donald R. Lynam, Ph.D., Purdue University, was awarded \$172,037 to develop a model to understand the intersecting factors of affect and impulse control traits on the development of a gambling disorder. By learning how these two factors impact gambling disorder development and treatment, this model could allow for tailored interventions for disordered gamblers.

### **Seed Grants**

- **Discontinuity and Change among Disordered Gamblers** - Michael J.A. Wohl, Ph.D., Carleton University, was awarded \$27,772 to conduct a longitudinal study designed to determine what factors influence a person’s readiness to change behavior and receive help for a gambling disorder.
- **Risk and Resilience among Native American Youth in the Pacific Northwest** – Debi LaPlante, Ph.D., Harvard Medical School and Cambridge Health Alliance, was awarded \$34,447 to partner with the Healing Lodge of Seven Nations and engage tribal youth in a brief risk and resilience assessment during planned community events.
- **Assessing Risk-preference and Compulsive Behavior in a Rodent Gambling Task** – Jamie Donahey Roitman, Ph.D., University of Illinois at Chicago, was awarded \$34,500 to devise an animal model of disordered gambling to understand the extent to which risky decision-making processes are innate or altered by experience; how different patterns of neural activity drive behavior toward risk-seeking or avoidance; and how therapeutic methods can alter neural activity to reduce disordered gambling behavior.

### **Post-doctoral Individual Fellowship**

- **On the Usefulness of Training Motor Response Inhibition Under Craving States in Individuals with Gambling Disorder** – Damien Brevers, Ph.D., University of Southern California’s Brain and Creativity Institute, was awarded \$169,861 to conduct a study that examines the interaction between inhibition control, impulsivity and craving processes in addiction at a behavioral and neurobiological level.

## Travel Grants

- **Rapid Intermittent Deep Brain Stimulation Biases Behavior in a Financial Decision-making Task** – Shaun Patel, Ph.D., of Massachusetts General Hospital was awarded \$1,500 to present a poster at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience on a study of patients undergoing deep brain stimulation while engaged in a financial decision-making task.
- **Effects of Mixed-Function Serotonergic Compounds in a Novel Rodent Cost/Benefit Decision-Making Task** – Amanda Persons, Ph.D., Rush University Medical Center, was awarded \$1,294 to present a poster at the 2014 annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience on a study testing the impact of a serotonergic medication on decision making, using a novel rat model of cost/benefit decision making.

The NCRG is the only national organization devoted to funding research on gambling disorder and responsible gaming. Grant recipients were chosen through a rigorous review process led by the NCRG's Scientific Advisory Board, composed of leading independent scientists with expertise in addiction and gambling disorder. For more on the Scientific Advisory Board and the NCRG's grant making process, visit [www.ncrg.org/research-center](http://www.ncrg.org/research-center).

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*The National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG) is the only national organization exclusively devoted to funding research that helps increase understanding of gambling disorder and youth gambling and find effective methods of treatment for the disorder. Each year, the NCRG allocates approximately \$1 million for research, and reaches a half million individuals with trainings and education resources. For more information, visit the NCRG website: [www.ncrg.org](http://www.ncrg.org).*