



## ***WCPG Honors Outstanding Supporters***

*Annual awards presented at Statewide Problem Gambling Conference*

For Immediate

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(Green Bay, WI) – The Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling (WCPG) is recognizing four individuals for their outstanding efforts on behalf of the non-profit, statewide organization.

The awards are given each year to those who have gone above and beyond in helping the WCPG achieve its mission of promoting public awareness and education on problem and compulsive gambling disorders.

“We would not be able to reach the community as we do without the tremendous support we receive from our volunteers,” said Rose Gruber, WCPG Executive Director. “Our award recipients, and so many others, are critical to our success in spreading the word about the services that are available for problem and compulsive gamblers in our state.”

The 2015 WCPG award winners are:

- **Nancy Baker Award – presented Douglas LaBelle of Kenosha.** LaBelle has long been active with the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling, serving as a resource for the Helpline call takers and as a trainer and resource for a variety of WCPG efforts. LaBelle was also the recipient of the WCPG Leadership Award in 2008.
- **Leadership Award – presented to Jerry Bauerkemper of Omaha, Nebraska.** Bauerkemper has given of himself to help problem gamblers in a variety of ways in Wisconsin and beyond. He not only educates and trains people about compulsive gambling, but also work directly with those who are addicted. He’s been a frequent presenter at the WCPG Statewide Conference.
- **Spirit Award – presented to Michael Edmonds of Madison.** The former director of the Wisconsin Lottery established the first statewide media campaign to increase awareness of problem gambling, which has helped thousands become aware of the help that is available.
- **Special Recognition Award – presented to James Harrison III of Milwaukee.** Harrison has been a treatment provider for problem gamblers in Wisconsin for many years. He has also presented at the WCPG Statewide Conference three times and currently serves on WCPG’s Conference Committee.

“We are grateful for all of the support we receive,” Gruber added. “As a small, nonprofit organization, we could not accomplish everything we do without the important help we get from these community-minded award winners. Our volunteers and supporters do so much to help with our success.”

The awards were presented at the recent 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling Conference in Waukesha. Gruber also announced that the 18<sup>th</sup> annual conference will take place March 23-24, 2017 at the Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin.

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*The **Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling** is funded by a public awareness grant from the State of Wisconsin and additional funding from donors, including Wisconsin Native American Tribes. The Council operates a 24-hour Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLE-5, distributes informational brochures, organizes an annual statewide conference, makes presentations on problem gambling and conducts training sessions for treatment providers interested in the special requirements for working with compulsive gamblers and their families.*

*For more information, visit the [Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling](http://www.wisconsin-council-on-problem-gambling.org) website, visit us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/WisconsinCouncilonProblemGambling](https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinCouncilonProblemGambling) or follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/wcpgambling>*

*If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-GAMBLE-5 or Live Chat through the WCPG website at [www.wi-problemgamblers.org](http://www.wi-problemgamblers.org).*

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