

# FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH

Association of California

## Newsletter

February 2008

### 2008 FMHAC Conference *Moving Ahead: Building a Better Continuum of Care*

The Forensic Mental Health Association of California (FMHAC) is gearing up for a great conference next month! We are excited to have former FBI profiler John Douglas, Judge Lawrence Karlton and Mark Willenbring, MD, of the NIAAA/NIH as main speakers this year. If you haven't taken a look at the full conference line-up, you can find it on our website, [www.fmhac.net](http://www.fmhac.net).

#### HOTEL RESERVATIONS

The Embassy Suites is completely booked! If you haven't yet reserved your hotel accommodations, please take a look at our list of other hotels in the Seaside/Monterey area at [www.fmhac.net](http://www.fmhac.net).

#### MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THURSDAY EVENING

Conference attendees are cordially invited to a reception hosted by the American Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology (AACFP) on Thursday evening, March 20, from 8:30-10pm in the atrium of the Embassy Suites. We all hope to see you there!

Molly Willenbring  
Executive Director

#### In This Issue

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### Council on Mentally Ill Offenders Best Practices Awards

The California Council on Mentally Ill Offenders (COMIO) will be awarding the 2008 Best Practices Awards to exemplary juvenile and adult projects from throughout California. Many excellent proposals were submitted, and as expected, it was a tough competition - Californians should be proud!

The Council will announce the honorees at the FMHAC Conference!

Wednesday, March 19, 2008  
Embassy Suites, Seaside  
7:00 pm

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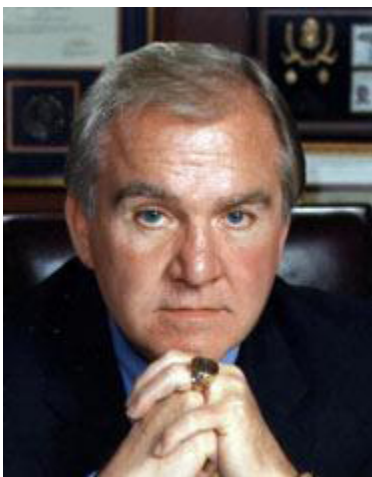
Munir Sewani, PhD  
Director of Conference

David Polak, LCSW  
Director of Education

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## PRESENTER SPOTLIGHT



### John Douglas, EdD

Founder FBI's Investigative Support Unit &  
Former FBI Profiler

Over his 25-year career with the FBI, John Douglas aided police departments and prosecutors from around the world. With several television series based on his experiences, he is one of the most dynamic personalities to emerge in modern law enforcement. In addition to providing assistance to police and victims of crimes, Douglas hosts a crime analysis radio show called "The Mindhunter" each week on talk radio station KFI-640 AM. As a high-profile expert, Douglas provided consultation in the OJ Simpson civil case and the JonBenet Ramsey murder investigation. He is the author of numerous articles and has done countless presentations on criminology. He also authored the landmark books "Sexual Homicide: Patterns and Motives" and "Motives and Crime Classification Manual." A veteran of the Air Force, Douglas holds a Doctor of Education degree and lives in the Washington, DC area.

Mr. Douglas will be the Pre-Conference speaker at the upcoming FMHAC conference.

Wednesday, March 19, 2008  
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

## Forensic Mental Health Association Health Committee

Mitchell Marquez, LCSW  
Health Committee Chair

Understanding the effects of long term methamphetamine abuse is critical for law enforcement officers and forensic mental health professionals. In addition to the problems of addiction, professionals working in forensic settings see other impacts of this drug on their clients, including violent behavior, increased crime, confusion and anxiety. Individuals abusing methamphetamines can display a number of psychotic features including auditory hallucinations, mood disturbances, delusions and paranoia which can result in homicidal and/or suicidal thoughts.

To help forensic mental health professionals and law enforcement officers work with these difficult clients, the Forensic Mental Health Association Health Committee is providing two trainings on methamphetamine abuse, its impact in forensic settings, emerging research and approaches in treatment. The first is with the Sonoma County CONREP and Mental Health Programs on February 29th and the next is being scheduled with the Ventura Youth Correctional Facility.

Stop by our exhibit table at the annual FMHAC Conference being held at the Embassy Suites in Seaside from March 19-21 this year for more information, articles and books on methamphetamine abuse and other health issues that impact the clients of forensic mental health professionals. We will have a list of trainings we can provide if you might be interested in having one at your setting.

We look forward to seeing you at the conference!

### HEALTH COMMITTEE TRAINING: METHAMPHETAMINE ABUSE IN FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH CLIENTS

Friday, February 29, 2008  
1:00 - 2:30 PM  
Sonoma County CONREP  
Administration Building  
3313 Chanate Road  
Rotunda conference room

Please RSVP to Rhonda Darrow at (707) 565-4909

## 2008 FMHAC Conference

# *Moving Ahead: Building a Better Continuum of Care*

Munir Sewani, PhD  
Director of Conference

Jessica's Law  
Laura's Law  
Megan's Law  
Proposition 63/Mental Health Service Act  
Coleman Decision  
Farrell v. Allen  
DOJ and State Mental Health Hospital Visits  
Senate Bill 81  
The Recovery Based Treatment Model

In the last few years, these court decisions and legislative and administrative actions have greatly influenced the delivery of mental health services in California. Influencing the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the Department of Mental Health, county mental health service agencies, probation, law enforcement agencies and, thus, the majority of forensic mental health providers, our membership is greatly effected by these changes. Challenged to address the diversity of a membership that includes mental health practitioners, law enforcement, mental health administrators, parole, and probation and correction officers, the FMHAC Board of Directors sought this year to develop a slate of presentations that address these changes and the difficulty of so many organizations working together under these constraints and more.

This train of thought led to this year's conference theme, *Moving Ahead: Building a Better Continuum of Care*, to focus on the needs of mentally ill individuals as they transition from arrest and custody to community integration. This progression is a complex process that brings mentally ill individuals into contact with law enforcement personnel, custody staff, attorneys, court personnel, probation and parole officers and mental health providers. Classes at our conference such as **"Rehabilitation and Re-Entry: New Hope for Inmates"** presented by

CDCR Chief Deputy Secretary Robin Dezember, JD, MPA, and **"Integrating Mental Health and Criminal Justice: A Model of Collaboration that Works"** presented by a panel of Sonoma County mental health and criminal justice professionals address the complexity of this situation.

At every step in the mental health-criminal justice continuum of care, the needs of mentally ill individuals are many and the challenges for the numerous service providers are frequent as they try to understand their mentally ill clients and provide the services they need. Conference workshops such as **"Working with California's Most Difficult Youth"** presented by CDCR Chief psychologist James Telander, PsyD, and **"The Assessment and Management of Violence in Mental Health"** presented by David Williamson, MD, and **"The Application of Paradoxical Strategies"** presented by Patton State Hospital psychologist Steven Berman, PhD, are important trainings for an effective practitioner.

FMHAC is also thrilled to host American Psychological Association Office of Ethics Director Stephen Behnke, JD, who will present **"Ethical Challenges for Mental Health Providers in Changing Mental Health Delivery Systems,"** Philip Erdberg, PhD, presenting **"Topics in Forensic Assessment,"** and former FBI profiler John Douglas presenting **"Criminal Investigative Analysis from the Crime Scene to the Courtroom."** If you haven't yet seen the full conference line-up, please visit our website, [www.fmhac.net](http://www.fmhac.net).

I greatly appreciate the efforts of the FMHAC Planning Committee members, Denise Betting, Alison Stanley, Malia Haas, and Jean Mariani, who were instrumental in assembling such high quality presenters. We know you will enjoy them and learn a great deal.

I am looking forward to seeing you at the conference next month!

# Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction Grant Program: An Update

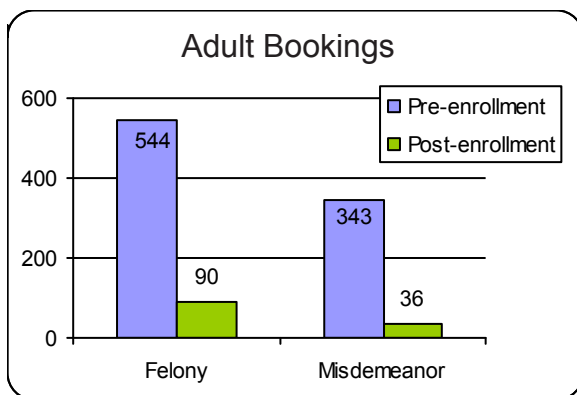
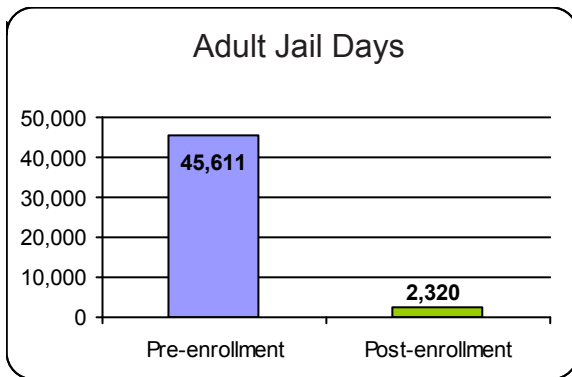
David Polak, LCSW  
Director of Education

When the second round of Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction grant (MIOCR) projects were implemented, the projected outcomes were lofty, including a significant reduction in jail days for adult mentally ill offenders and in detention days for participating juvenile offenders. Preliminary findings on the MIOCR projects have been released, based on 10 months of data, and show

that the projects are achieving these extraordinary goals with a 95% decline in jail days for adults and 70% decline in detention days for juveniles! The following statistics and graphs are courtesy of Helene Zentner at the Corrections, Planning and Programs Division of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

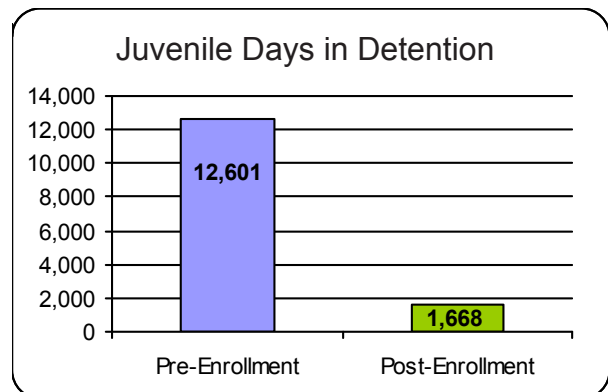
## ADULT PROGRAMS

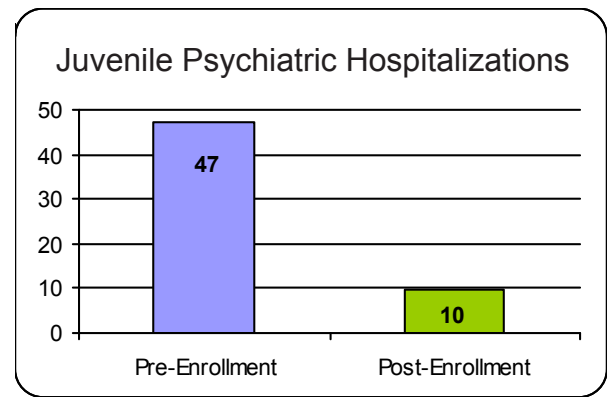
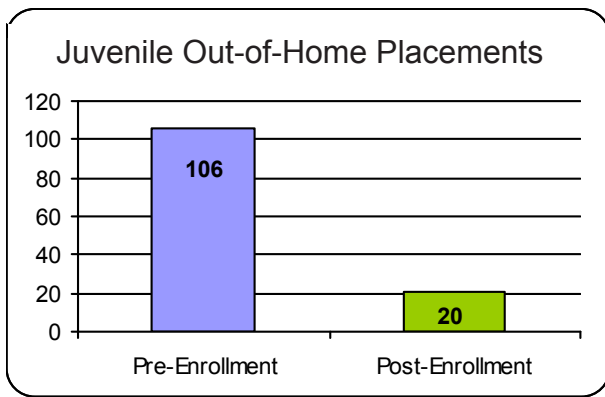
The adult MIOCR projects have currently enrolled approximately 500 participants. As you can see from the charts below, not only did the number of jail days decline dramatically but also the number of bookings for program participants has dropped considerably from a total of 887 pre-program enrollment bookings to 126 post-program enrollment bookings.



## JUVENILE PROGRAMS

The 20 juvenile programs have also enrolled approximately 500 participants and have enjoyed similarly positive outcomes as the adult programs. The number of juvenile hall commitments for program participants reduced 55% from pre-program to program enrollment and the number of days in detention also declined dramatically once youth became enrolled in the MIOCR programs. Program participants spent a total of 12,601 days in detention during the year prior to enrollment. This number dropped to just 1,668 days after program enrollment - a 71% decrease. The number of MIOCR youth committed to a placement outside the home also decreased considerably. Only 20 participants have been committed to out of home placement, compared to 106 prior to MIOCR program enrollment. Acute psychiatric hospitalizations also declined - by 79%!





Graphs and statistics from Helene Zentner, CDCR

## MENTAL HEALTH COURTS

Establishment of mental health courts is a significant feature of the adult MIOCR projects and there are a total of 28 Mental Health Courts currently operating in MIOCR projects (16 adult and 12 juvenile courts). Although the operational procedures vary from county to county, these courts are demonstrating increased success with this target population. According to the preliminary MIOCR statistics, clients who participate in a mental health court spend less time in jail than clients who don't.

Based on both statistics and observations, mental health courts have generated a great deal of support from consumer and mental health advocacy groups throughout the state. The September 2007 edition of the American Journal of Psychiatry included a study of San Francisco's Behavioral Health Court, providing compelling evidence that mental health courts achieve their goal of reducing recidivism among offenders with mental disorders. The study found that mental health court participants go longer between arrests compared with similar individuals who did not participate in the program. We are also seeing significant success and interest in the participants in the MIOCR programs that have supported employment components.

In January 2008, the Governor Schwarzenegger unveiled his proposed budget for the 2008-09 fiscal year. In the first draft of the budget, the governor proposed a 10% reduction in funds for the MIOCR programs, consistent with his "10% across the board" budget cut proposal. This is a positive sign and is something that most of the projects can absorb. However, we are long way away from the final budget next summer. Most of the counties in California are

facing major cuts to existing programs as a result of being over-budget in inpatient and hospital facilities combined with the governor's proposed 10% cuts to managed care funding. In addition, most counties have not seen an increase in realignment funds for a number of years. As a result, many pre-existing programs will be cut or terminated (only programs linked to MHPA funding may avoid cuts.) Many of these programs are non-mandated services, such as vocational and employment services - the same services that are proving successful in MIOCR programs. The budget cuts proposed for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, particularly the early release of parolees, will have a significant impact on the local jails and the mental health services they provide. Although these cuts may be unavoidable this year, it makes continued funding of MIOCR projects even more important.

The previous MIOCR programs, established between 1999 and 2003, showed their best results in the second and third years of operation. With such extremely positive results during the first 10 months of these programs we can expect their effectiveness to increase as they refine their best practices in relation to each county's unique demographics. As funding for MIOCR programs will most certainly be scrutinized in the legislative budget committees this year, we must continue to lobby our local legislators to maintain funding for these programs. With such overwhelmingly positive results, we cannot afford to lose these programs!