For the past 32 years, National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse has been the identity of this organization. This name has always been a tremendous asset for us. It’s been a tongue- twister, a moniker, and, recently, a barrier to people-first language.

We read living with it by adopting a fresh logo and color palettes in 2015, and then by shortening it to NCADA in 2017. We felt like the name was synonymous with who we were, and to abandon it would somehow mean that we were abandoning our mission and our Board. None of that is true, of course, it somehow felt true.

But, alas, the proverbial final straw came this spring when our parent organization experienced significant financial difficulties and filed for bankruptcy. Upon learning this news, our Board of Directors unanimously decided to disaffiliate from the national organization. And because we are no longer “National,” we found ourselves in an identity crisis.

And now, this organization is facing a tremendous opportunity to rebirth.

So, in preparation for our 55th birthday, we are restating our name, our reputation, and the way we ‘show up’ in this community. This summer we engaged over 20 groups of stakeholders (funders, coalition members, legislators, treatment centers, etc.) in discussions about our mission and our impact. We surveyed our staff and Board for their insight, and we organized a team to hone our core values and set naming parameters. (No Acronym!)

NCADA was honored to be chosen as one of 35 pilot sites nationwide for the New Teen Mental Health First Aid (TMHFA) program. We will partner with Northwest High School in Jefferson County to launch the pilot program with the junior class. This training expands our peer-education programs which empower young people to support each other. NCADA is continuing to offer Youth Mental Health First Aid for adults who work with adolescents (see the Events page for more detailed information). We’re also offering tMHFA, an in-person training for grades 10 to 12, teachers about mental illnesses and how to identify and respond to a developing mental or substance abuse problem among their peers. Similar to CPR, students learn a 5-step approach plan to help friends who may be facing a mental health problem or impending crisis (such as suicide), and highlights the importance of involving a responsible and trusted adult.

Our next steps include hiring a marketing/advertising firm who ‘gets us’. Yes, we need a new name and a new logo, but we also insist on maintaining the same mission and our impact. We want to honor our past, and embrace the future. We want to double down on our youth prevention focus and validate the experiences of those in treatment and recovery.

That is who we are. That is who we have always been. Stay tuned and watch this space.

ndawsey@ncada-stl.org

Teens Mental Health First Aid

NIchole Dawsey
Executive Director

NDACA

Teens Mental Health First Aid

The Born This Way Foundation founded by Lady Gaga and her mother Cynthia Germanotta is a major sponsor of the Teen Mental Health First Aid Program.

For additional information visit mhfa-stl.org. 

September 1987: The Key announces that the St. Louis affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism will change its name to the “National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse – St. Louis Area” (NCADA).

The 4th Annual Heroes/Opioid Remembrance Event

Sponsored by BARTLO’S

The Newsletter of NCADA

NDACA – a New Name is in the Works - Legislative Update New Programs - Tributes & Contributions - Golf Tournament Message

Save the Evening Details coming soon

The 4th Annual Heroes/Opioid Remembrance Event

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Our first Sans Bar was a success, the sky is the limit for the upcoming pop-up in November. Well at least 236 more. (Saturday 5:00 pm – midnight Venu 17, 1034 S. Brentwood Blvd. #100, St. Louis, MO 63117)

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Schrödinger’s Medical Program

Can Missouri’s Medical Marijuana Program be Two Things at Once?

In the 1930s, scientists learned that by subjecting particles to a single state at the same time and then collapsing them down to a single state when they interact with another particle, Unuible to understand this phenomenon, researchers drifted from science into philosophy, and discovered that particles could collapse into a single state when viewed by a conscious observer. In 1935, an Austrian physicist named Erwin Schrödinger devised a thought experiment to illustrate the problem with this interpretation.

In Schrödinger’s imaginary experiment, a cat is placed in a sealed box (where it cannot be seen by any conscious observer) with a tiny bit of radioactive substance. When the radioactive substance decays, a fume is created that is detected by a device. Because the radioactive substance follows the laws of quantum mechanics, it starts in a combined state of both “decaying” and “not decaying,” and since there is no conscious observer, this superposition remains a combination of the two possibilities. The cat, according to quantum theory, ends up both dead and alive at the same time.

In 2019 we are in a comparable situation with Missouri’s new medical marijuana program. Just as we know the cat must either be alive or dead, existing on this massive social experiment will either be a net gain or a net loss. It can’t be both.

There’s evidence that this profound issue influences some health outcomes. A 2017 study found that female rats showing those suffering from delirium to seek relief.

• The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services has issued regulations that take into account that := the potential for abuse and other industry entities from marketing to children by limiting the number of retail stores in urban areas.

• Sellers must place a plan to address diversion, recognize the signs of cannabis dependence, and refer to local substance misuse organizations. NCAAD has worked with many local health departments and municipal governments – discussing zoning laws and how to minimize the harm of normalizing marijuana use.

• Legislation has been introduced in the general assembly that would add certain forms of edible marijuana to the list of substances that must be seized to ensure substantial penalties for diversion of medical marijuana products.

• Many medical providers are seeking solutions on what health benefits may or may not truly exist with medical marijuana.

• For all of the above reasons, some are trying to take advantage of the system.

• Some clinics are assuring patients that almost anyone who needs access to medical marijuana can obtain it.

• Providers and companies that are more interested in getting rich than helping those with legitimate medical conditions are emerging from other states.

There are currently no controls on how providers can advertise. Social media ads, billboards, and even signs stapled to trees can appear anywhere.

The result will most likely be somewhere in the middle, with some restrictions and regulations on business practices. But the ultimate goal is to prevent the simplistic targeting of young people and those prone to substance abuse disorders, all at the same time of turning a profit.

Schrödinger’r Medical Program will continue to monitor events, and advocates for public health solutions that protect our youth and minimize the harms associated with legally available marijuana use.

For more information, please contact Brandon Conatzer at healthnews@osumc.edu or (573) 962-3456.