

First Annual National Counseling Conference in Bhutan

The first annual National Counseling Conference in Bhutan, organized by NBCC International (NBCC-I), took place in Thimphu February 7-8, 2011, in collaboration with RENEW (Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women), a women's counseling agency; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Health; and the Royal University of Bhutan.



Bhutan, a small country in Asia, is on its way to developing nationwide counseling services for a variety of issues.

On the first day of the conference, the globalization of counseling and counselor education was emphasized, and the day ended with a panel discussion concerning counseling initiatives in Bhutan. On day two, three tracks, including mental health counseling, school counseling and youth counseling, were offered in workshop formats. Topics included assessing and addressing family violence, counseling students with special needs and career development for teens. All topics for the conference were selected by Bhutan's counselors to meet locally specified training needs.

The second day of the conference ended with the initial meeting of Bhutan's counselors for the purpose of developing an organization to promote counseling in Bhutan. Representatives from several agencies attended and NBCC-I moderated the meeting.

During the conference, NBCC Bhutan was officially opened as a national office of NBCC-I by Her Majesty Queen Ashi Sangay Choden Wangchuck. Upon request, NBCC-I collaborates with colleagues in other countries to open a national office. The office serves as a local presence to facilitate the development of the counseling profession in that country or region and is staffed by local professionals knowledgeable in the development of counseling within that country. NBCC Bhutan will be advancing initiatives concerning counselor education and training, as well as Bhutan's Mental Health Facilitator program.

"The conference was a tremendous success, with literally every counselor in Bhutan in attendance," reports NBCC-I's Dr. Wendi Schweiger, a member of the conference committee. She adds, "Bhutan, a small country in Asia, is well on its way to developing nationwide counseling services for a variety of issues and concerns, including specialized services for women, children and young adults."

Mental Health Facilitator (MHF) Update

The Mental Health Facilitator (MHF) program continues to expand mental health service capacity in areas with underserved populations. As part of this growth, additional master trainers have been trained in the recent months. The following is a list of the most recent trainings and our newest registered master trainers.

- A master training was held in Thimphu, Bhutan, in February 2011, in partnership with Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women (RENEW). This is the second master training offered abroad. NBCC-I is pleased to welcome the 10 participants who were trained and registered as master trainers: Ms. Bokhu, Ms. Kesang Dhendup Choden, Ms. Tshering Dolkar, Ms. Dolma, Ms. Ambika Neopaney, Ms. Yeshey Om, Ms. Sonam Pelden, Ms. Tashi Pelzom, Dr. Meenakshi Rai and Ms. Dechen Wangmo. Dr. Scott Hinkle trained these new master trainers.
- A fourth master training was held at NBCC headquarters in April 2011. NBCC-I is pleased to welcome the nine participants who were trained and registered as master trainers: Dr. Dibya Choudhuri, Dr. Jean-Claude Dutès, Ms. Beth Fier, Mr. Kevin Gallagher, Dr. Troyann Gentile, Ms. Pamela Harrod, Dr. Clement Marcantonio, Dr. Laura Schmuldt and Dr. Joseph Wehrman. Dr. Scott Hinkle and Dr. Donna Henderson conducted the training.

A fifth master training will be conducted at NBCC headquarters in July. All available slots for this training have been filled.

We look forward to additional partnerships and training opportunities during the coming years.

The Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) announces the 2011 International Counselling Conference
Professionalism Challenges in Contemporary Counselling Practice In Africa

■ ■ **September 6-7, 2011**

■ ■ **Kano City, Nigeria**

For more information, refer to CASSON'S Web site at www.cassonnigeria.org.