

### From the Director's Desk

Denise Hien, Ph.D., ABPP

Welcome back to the spring semester and to the fourth edition of our CAS newsletter! As we navigate through a new phase of the coronavirus pandemic with better testing and a national vaccination

strategy, we have recently been thinking about the converging epidemics our communities have been facing. Individually, the coronavirus pandemic and opioid epidemic have each been responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths. Systemic racism has contributed to ongoing disparities underlying these health crises, including public perceptions about opioid users, inadequate substance abuse prevention and treatment efforts, heightened coronavirus exposure risks, and inadequate access to testing and health care. We at CAS provide a framework for considering the three colliding epidemics, coronavirus, opioids, and racism (COR) as a syndemic (read more [here](#)) with traumatic stress centering all three. Meanwhile, we continue to offer our highest quality addiction education for peer specialists and certified drug and alcohol counselors delivered in a webinar format, and are preparing for another Summer School that will be in full compliance with state pandemic guidelines. We have even re-envisioned our Alcohol and Drug Counselor Certificate program and have a new special relationship with the VA who will fully fund any veterans with access to the GI bill to take our program and get either a certificate, college-credits or both. In this issue, you will read about ongoing research at CAS by faculty, scholars and affiliates, meet our new colleagues, and register for some of the many events that we have planned for student and practitioner scholars. As always, may all of you and your loved ones stay safe and healthy.

### IN THIS NEWSLETTER

- New Jersey prepares to legalize marijuana
- President Biden quietly reforms drug policies
- British and Chinese research teams translate brain pathways in alcoholism from animal models to big data
- Why not "Dry March?"
- Upcoming Conferences
- The films of Hiroyasu Miyazaki



# In The News



## Rutgers Libraries Launch Marijuana Research Guide in the Wake of Legalization

Voters in New Jersey legalized marijuana in November 2020 with a constitutional amendment, and the state legislature passed a legal framework in February 2021. CAS Affiliate, Dr. Judit Ward wants to explore how the state got here, and where its fledgling marijuana market is going.

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## President Biden Takes a Stand on Addiction Treatment, Guided by His Son's Recovery

Hunter Biden, the son of the President, is releasing a tell-all book about his struggles with addiction. Federal guidelines are being re-written to focus on rehabilitation instead of punishment for the first time. Is this a new détente in the War on Drugs?

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## British and Chinese Research Teams Translate Brain Pathways in Alcoholism from Animal Models to Big Data

On February 3rd 2021, an international team of researchers published a groundbreaking study showing the power of translational research in modeling human behaviors. Released in the [Science Advances](#) magazine, this paper represents the collaborative efforts of twenty-six researchers between three universities.

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# In The Center



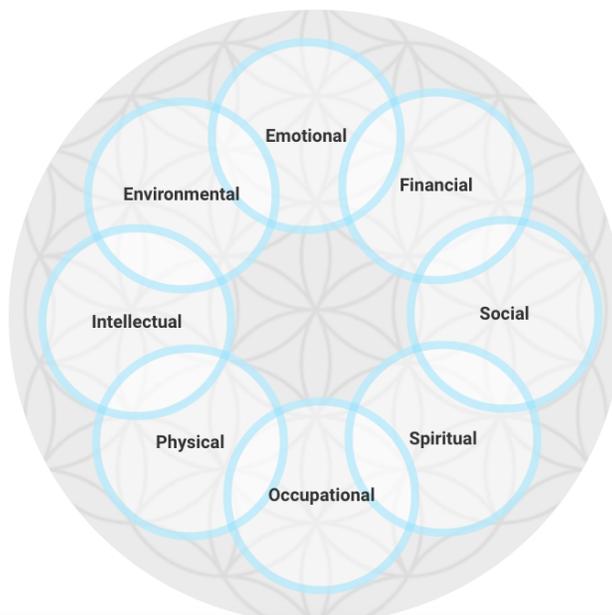
## **Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling Certificate Program Career Training Opportunities for Veterans**

We are thrilled to announce that the Center has been approved by the NJ State Approving Agency for Veterans Training! The Veteran Training is eligible for reimbursement under the GI Bill. The Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling Certificate Program requires 6 undergraduate courses, which encompass the 270 educational hours necessary for the New Jersey State Alcohol and Drug Counselor certificate. These undergraduate courses can be taken as part of the certificate program or as electives, and they are open to any and all recipients of GI Bill benefits who are interested in the course topics. All course topics could benefit students seeking information related to substance use disorders and their treatment.

[View our courses](#)

## **Take Our WiNR Wellness Quiz**

This revised Wellness Inventory will help you think about what you are doing now in terms of your wellness habits. This inventory gives you a way of thinking about what you are doing and how you are feeling. When you read each item, think about the things you are doing now for your personal wellness. Answer each item in a way



that best captures how often the statement is true for you. There are no right or wrong answers. This inventory will give you a chance to look at your typical day and week.

Take the Quiz



### "Why Not Dry March?" --- Sobriety in a Global Pandemic

With work and school moved online, different localities having a patchwork of different regulations on the use of public space, and a continued lack of clear direction from the federal government, COVID-19 has forced most to completely restructure their daily routine.

The effect of shifts like this can have an impact on the body and mind, no matter what the substance is or how frequently used. What matters, according to Dr.Hien, is how substance use has wired the individual's internal clock.

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"We've been in a year of incredible strain and stress. For many people, there's been more than that, there has been actual trauma."

-Denise Hien,  
PhD, ABPP

**We're thrilled to welcome new faculty and staff!**



Dr. Angelo DiBello is an Assistant Professor CAS



and the Department of Applied Psychology at GSAPP. He is the Director of the Social Health Addiction & Relationship Processes (SHARP) Laboratory. Dr. DiBello is well published in top tier journals and is both the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator of several ongoing randomized clinical trials funded by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

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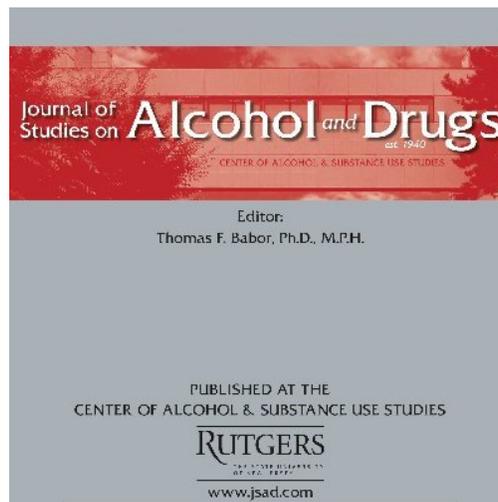
Sam Leibowitz-Lord is the Science Writer and Social Media Intern. He is a senior Journalism student in SCI with a focus on scientific and educational copywriting. He serves as an in-house student reporter who assists in the production of broadCAST and other CAS publications. Sam focuses on news around the Center, in the community, in the field of substance use studies, and at the national level.

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Dr. Peggy Swarbrick is an expert in community behavioral health care practice, focused on topics such as wellness coaching, peer support, health disparities and social determinants of health, and self-care. She developed a strength based 8-dimensional wellness model to promote recovery from mental health and substance use. She has joined CAS as the new Associate Director and is a Research Professor in the Applied Psychology Department of GSAPP.

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## Recent Publications from Our Journal



### Public Health Thinking Around Alcohol-Related Harm: Why Does Per Capita Consumption Matter?

*Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 82(1), 9–17 (2021).

Ingeborg Rossow , Ph.D., Pia Mäkelä , Ph.D.

Alcohol per capita consumption (APC) is used for monitoring harmful alcohol exposure in populations and assessing progress with goals set internationally and nationally. Recently, the alcohol industry challenged the use of this indicator. Here, we assessed the validity of APC as an indicator for reducing alcohol-related harm.

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### Alcohol Marketing in the Era of Digital Media Platforms

*Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 82(1), 18–27 (2021).

Nicholas Carah , Ph.D., & Sven Brodmerkel , Ph.D.

This article is a conceptual review drawing on research on digital alcohol marketing in the public health literature, conceptualizations of digital platforms in media and communication literature, and instructive examples from industry sources.

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### **Recreational Marijuana Legalization and Use Among California Adolescents: Findings From a Statewide Survey**

*Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 82(1), 103–111 (2021).

Mallie J. Paschall , Ph.D., Grisel García-Ramírez , Ph.D., & Joel W. Grube , Ph.D.

The legalization of recreational marijuana use and retail sales raises concerns about possible effects on marijuana use among adolescents. We evaluated the effects of recreational marijuana legalization (RML) in California in November 2016 on use among adolescents and investigated subgroup differences in these effects.

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## In The Community

### **Recent Seminars: George Mumford, Sports Psychology Super-Star**

On February 18th, 2021 the Center had the pleasure of hosting a virtual evening of mindfulness, fostering resilience, and confronting unprecedented challenges with George Mumford, a leading expert in sports psychology. Mumford, known as the “Sports Medicine Whisperer,” has been credited by Phil Jackson as a “secret weapon” for any championship-winning team.

Mumford has worked with the Chicago Bulls, the New York Knicks, and the Los Angeles Lakers as the go-to mental health professional. Mumford’s seminar at the Center focused on how students, athletes, community leaders, and mentors can help build self-awareness and mindfulness in a highly competitive, team-based setting. Attendees at the seminar received 2 Continuing Education credits.



“George helped me understand the art of mindfulness. To be neither distracted or focused, rigid or flexible, passive or aggressive. I learned just to be.”

— Kobe Bryant, 5-time NBA champion

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### **New Jersey Native on the Frontlines of Recovery in the New Biden Administration**

New Jersey native and former NJ-HHS secretary Carole Johnson has been nominated to lead a key White House COVID task-force, suggesting the new government's COVID response will re-integrate key sectors of public health through the federal government. Johnson's swathe of experience working with some of the state's most vulnerable populations, including the homeless, those in recovery, and those with disabilities, has led to New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy endorsing Biden's COVID response within the first seven days of his presidency.

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“From day one, Carole Johnson has been one of our most valuable team members and a leading voice for serving New Jersey’s most vulnerable residents,” Murphy said in announcing her move. “We’re sad to see her depart, but we are excited that she’ll be taking a critical role serving President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris in the White House as our nation continues to battle the COVID-19 pandemic.”



## In the Future

### **Trauma and Addictions Conference**

The Trauma and Addictions Conference is a one day intensive professional development experience designed to provide comprehensive continuing education in the area of Trauma and addiction. The theme of the conference this year will be Myths of Trauma Treatment: How to Work With Clients Experiencing Trauma.

The conference will include speakers, panel, and a choice of afternoon workshops. The keynote address will be delivered by Dr. Sonya Norman, an expert in clinical trauma and addiction studies.



Sonya Norman, PhD is Director of the PTSD Consultation Program through the Executive Branch of the National Center for PTSD, Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at

The conference will be delivered virtually on April 8th, 2021, from 9:00am to 3:00pm. The conference offers 5 clinical CE credits.

the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), and in the Psychotherapy Unit of the VA Center of Excellence for Stress and Mental Health.

[Register Here](#)

## In the Arts



For those who haven't had the delight of enjoying Miyazaki's classic films, now is the perfect time to do so. With snow blanketing much of the country and many regions still facing pandemic restrictions, most days can easily turn into movie nights.

Hiyao Miyazaki is a celebrated Japanese filmmaker whose animated masterpieces brought the Japanese tradition of "anime" cinema to the American screen. His films have come to mind as an ongoing socio-economic crisis ravages much of the world in the wake of COVID-19.

Miyazaki is considered an artistic master due to his colorful, vibrant recreations of classic Japanese art forms using both digital and hand-drawn animation. One particularly striking element of his art style is how he portrays characters experiencing various magical health crises; characters in states of magical distress that follow the consumption of a magical substance are often seen vomiting, sweating, and shivering, all with discoloration of the skin and a general incoherence. The imagery is highly reminiscent of many symptoms of serious substance withdrawal.

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