



# **PATHWAYS TO PROMISE**

Interfaith Ministries and Prolonged Mental Illnesses

**PRESS RELEASE**

For Information Contact:  
Vicki Eichhorn  
(314)877-6489  
[Pathways@mimh.edu](mailto:Pathways@mimh.edu)

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## **AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC FOUNDATION AWARDS PATHWAYS TO PROMISE \$87,900 GRANT FOR ANTI-STIGMA CAMPAIGN**

SAINT LOUIS, Mo., June 1, 2006 -- With funding from the American Psychiatric Foundation, Pathways will collaborate with the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC), National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), NAMI FaithNet (CA), and nine national faith groups to distribute informational, anti-stigma poster packets to approximately 26,000 congregations nationwide.

“The utilization of Faith Communities as an access point for information, education and treatment resources is extremely important and timely,” said Douglas M. Ronsheim, executive director of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors.

Participating faith groups include the Presbyterian Church USA, United Church of Christ, Roman Catholic Dioceses, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod’s Board for Human Care Ministries, United Methodist Church-General Board of Church and Society, Episcopal Mental Illness Network, and the Union for Reform Judaism.

This project has the potential to reach 10 million people with the faith-relevant message that “light can emerge from darkness” for people with mental illnesses. Packets and subsequent materials to be ordered by local congregations will include information on the effectiveness of appropriate psychiatric treatment, how to access such treatment, how to obtain family support, and how to develop a more caring congregation for individuals and their families coping with mental illness. An attention-getting poster—based on artwork from a person with mental illness—photocopy-ready information sheets, and bulletin inserts will convey this vital information.

Evaluation of the project will utilize postcard survey responses and in-depth interviews with a sample of congregations from each of the participating faith groups. The evaluation will document the extent to which local congregations are better able to refer people to appropriate treatment, develop connections with local NAMI affiliates and other helpful organizations, and respond in more tangibly supportive ways to individuals and families coping with mental illness.

Pathways to Promise is an interfaith resource center in St. Louis offering liturgical and educational materials, program models, and networking information to promote a caring ministry with people with mental illness and their families.

The American Psychiatric Foundation is the philanthropic and educational arm of the American Psychiatric Association. The mission of the foundation is to advance public understanding that mental illnesses are real and can be effectively treated.

For more information, visit the Pathways to Promise web site at [www.Pathways2Promise.org](http://www.Pathways2Promise.org).

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**5400 Arsenal Street  
St. Louis, Missouri 63139  
[www.Pathways2Promise.org](http://www.Pathways2Promise.org)**

**Phone (314) 877-6489  
Fax (314) 877-6405  
[Pathways@mimh.edu](mailto:Pathways@mimh.edu)**