



SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION NETWORK USA
Opening Minds. Changing Policy. Saving Lives.

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SPAN USA Welcomes New Field Development Coordinator

Jason H. Padgett to Lead SPAN USA's Grassroots Outreach Efforts

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Nov. 1, 2006) — The Suicide Prevention Action Network (SPAN USA) is pleased to welcome Jason H. Padgett as the new field development coordinator at its Washington, D.C., headquarters. Padgett is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the field support program and grassroots engagement activities, including communications, field liaison training and other education efforts consistent with the mission of SPAN USA. He will also support public policy, development and special projects program efforts.

"Jason brings valuable experience in the field of mental health and suicide prevention to SPAN USA," said Jerry Reed, executive director of SPAN USA. "He has achieved great successes in his home state of Kentucky, and has worked with experts across the country. His experience, combined with his dedication to the cause, will bring our grassroots efforts to the next level."

Padgett was most recently the suicide prevention program administrator for the Kentucky Department for Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services (KDMHMRS). He also served as a liaison to community mental health centers regarding children's behavioral health, division coordinator for the Web site and as a member of the state's child fatality team. Padgett encouraged and assisted communities in developing and/or enhancing their local suicide prevention efforts, and developed an evaluation system to measure efforts within Kentucky. He often collaborated with local and national suicide prevention, advocacy, clinical intervention and aftercare experts. He also coordinated a statewide conference to unveil Kentucky's suicide prevention plan, in addition to facilitating local meetings and press conferences.

Padgett also worked in the IMPACT Plus program, a joint children's mental health initiative between KDMHMRS and the Kentucky Department for Medicaid Services. His duties included planning and participating in site reviews of enrolled mental health service agencies; assisting with program evaluation, regulation and policy; and helping families access the program. He provided technical assistance to program partners, numerous state agencies and mental health service agencies.

Padgett holds a Bachelor of Science in psychology from the University of the Cumberlands (formerly Cumberland College) and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Kentucky.

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SPAN USA is the nation's only suicide prevention organization dedicated to leveraging grassroots support among suicide survivors and others to advance public policies that prevent suicide. Since its founding 10 years ago, SPAN USA has led the drive to make suicide a public health priority by building political will and calling for the development and implementation of a national strategy for suicide prevention. Using its extensive grassroots network of survivors and advocates, SPAN USA has actively promoted the cause on Capitol Hill and in state legislatures. For more information, please visit www.spanusa.org.