Media Release

Appointment of Research Fellows

UNLV’s International Center for Gaming Regulation (ICGR) is pleased to announce the grant of two part-time Academic Research Fellowships.

Following a call earlier this year for research proposals aimed at promoting excellence in gaming regulation around the world and an independent peer review process, the ICGR awarded two research fellowship positions to Dr. Katherine Spilde and Dr. Kahlil Philander. Dr. Spilde is an Associate Professor in the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at San Diego State University and a leading authority on American Indian economic development in the United States. Dr. Philander is an Assistant Professor at Washington State University’s Carson College of Business and one of the world’s leading experts in responsible gambling programs.

The research proposed by Dr. Spilde will document, describe, and analyze the need for (and appropriate techniques to deliver) education and training for U.S. tribal gaming regulatory agencies with an emphasis on tribal gaming commissions. This study weighs the perceived educational needs of tribal gaming regulators against the course content of existing education and training options. This study will also highlight the ways that tribal governments strive to develop institutions and strategies that support both tribal nation building and corporate governance due to tribes’ dual role as gaming operators and regulators. Dr. Spilde commented: "I am thrilled to be working with UNLV’s International Center for Gaming Regulation to examine the current state of education and training in the tribal gaming industry. In addition to helping expand training options, this project also has the potential to encourage productive and mutually supportive relationships with those engaged in the policy debates surrounding tribal gaming regulation, including in regions where once there was very little positive interaction between tribes with land-based gaming facilities and their neighbors or competitors. Ultimately, this analysis can help verify the scope and effectiveness of tribal regulatory initiatives, including consumer protection, to local and state governments, perhaps easing intergovernmental relations and strengthening tribal nation building."

Dr. Philander’s research focuses on educational programs for workers in responsible gambling. Specifically, he will conduct a training needs assessment study to develop a responsible gambling professional education program. The research will include consultation with global responsible gambling experts, and is expected to inform what content areas of knowledge are needed by responsible gambling specialists working in industry today. Dr. Philander commented: "Presently, responsible training programs are typically geared towards educating frontline employees in how
to respond to customers. There is a gap in educational programs for the subject matter experts that must design and oversee responsible gambling policies and programs. I am quite pleased that the International Center for Gaming Regulation has elected to support research in this area, and am honored to receive this Research Fellowship. Through this study, we hope to develop the foundation of a curriculum that could inform responsible gambling professionals at regulators, operators, and manufacturers."

Both these studies will culminate in presentations at various international conferences, including gaming industry and regulators conferences. The aim is to produce two white papers that will serve as a basis for further discussion and debate amongst regulators around the world with a view to develop best regulatory practices.

According to Andre Wilsenach, Executive Director of the ICGR: “We have received sixteen high quality and very relevant proposals from researchers around the world which have been subjected to a rigorous review process involving academics and professionals in the gaming space. I am convinced that the two research projects that have been selected will contribute significantly to the ICGR’s objective of promoting excellence in gaming regulation around the world.”

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