

SAKS INSTITUTE

FOR MENTAL HEALTH LAW, POLICY, AND ETHICS

USC GOULD SCHOOL OF LAW | 2013/2014

Saks Institute Focuses on University Students Living with Mental Illness

Patrick Kennedy is keynote speaker



After decades of discrimination, stigma and silence, it is time to eliminate prejudice and put a face on mental illness, former U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy told a packed audience at an event on “University Students Living With Mental Illness: Changing the Conversation.”

Kennedy led the discussion with USC Gould Prof. Elyn Saks, USC Gould student Evan Langeringer '14 and USC psychiatry resident Michelle Wu. Stephen Behnke, director of the Ethics Office for the American Psychological Association, moderated the event sponsored by the Saks Institute for Mental Health Law, Policy, and Ethics.

“I think we’re in the midst of the beginning of a new civil rights movement,” said Kennedy, who served in the House of Representatives for 16 years. “We’re dealing with medical treatment of a medical issue, and we’re dealing with prejudice. When you marry prejudice and ignorance to-

gether you have a really ugly combination that marginalizes the treatment of these issues because they’re viewed as moral issues not medical issues, they’re viewed as character issues not chemistry issues.”

Kennedy, who has struggled with bipolar disorder, addiction and depression, sponsored the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act a 2008 bill that requires most health insurance companies to offer equal mental health and physical health coverage. “The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, is our civil rights act,” he said.

Langeringer and Wu spoke publicly for the first time about their battles with mental illness.

Wu said she developed depression as a second-year medical student at Northwestern University. She stopped showering, stopped going to class and lost 10 pounds, yet few people recognized she was depressed. “I went from the star of school to barely scraping by,” she said. “Deans told me to study more, no one asked me how I was feeling.”

Langeringer, who battles bipolar disorder, was an undergraduate at UC Berkeley when he began experiencing signs of the disorder after breaking up with his girlfriend. “Over the summer I went to see my primary care physician and I told him I just wasn’t feeling like myself. . . He prescribed an anti-depressant. But that was really terrible



to give someone who has bipolar one disorder because it shot me in a manic phase. I had full-blown mania for five months.”

Saks said that one of her goals for the Saks Institute is to eradicate stigma associated with mental health so people will seek treatment—both students and professionals. “Often, people will not get treatment because they’re embarrassed. That’s got to end. It’s funny—people proudly wear t-shirts that say, ‘breast cancer survivor.’ I would like to get to the point where I can wear a t-shirt that says ‘schizophrenia’ and not feel stigma associated with it.”



(left to right) Evan Langeringer, Patrick Kennedy, Stephen Behnke, Michelle Wu and Elyn Saks



TED Ideas worth spreading

Please take a look at the TED talk Elyn Saks gave in June 2012 to learn more about her story. So far, there have been nearly 1 million views on the talk. www.ted.com/talks/view/lang/en/id/1494

Upcoming Symposium
**College Students
Living with Mental Illness**
March 12 and 13, 2014
USC Town & Gown



Emmy Award-winning actress Glenn Close (left) is one of the new board members of the Saks Institute, founded by USC Professor Elyn Saks (right).

Glenn Close, a Champion of Mental Health Rights, Joins Saks Institute Board of Directors

Five-time Academy Award® nominee Glenn Close has joined the board of directors of USC's Saks Institute for Mental Health Law, Policy, and Ethics.

"We are thrilled to welcome Glenn to the Institute," said Elyn Saks, founder of the Saks Institute and the Orrin B. Evans Professor of Law, Psychology, and Psychiatry and the Behavioral Sciences at USC's Gould School of Law. "I am excited to work with Glenn and receive her support as we work together to de-stigmatize mental illness."

Close, whose sister Jessie has bipolar disorder and also was named to the Saks board, is founder and chair of BringChange2Mind, a campaign to eradicate the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental illness. Saks currently serves on that board.

"Elyn is an inspiration to all of us and I am honored to work with her," Close said. "Not only is she smart and caring, but she has a clear vision for what she wants to accomplish through education. Elyn and I share a common goal:

We want to bring awareness of something from which millions suffer—the toxic stigma and discrimination around mental illness. It's a story I know well because its pain has touched lives very close to me."

In addition to her extensive performances on Broadway, Close has starred in several films, including *The World According to Garp*, *The Big Chill*, *The Natural*, *Fatal Attraction* and *Dangerous Liaisons*. Close starred in the award-winning drama series *Damages*. Close has also won three Tonys®, an Obie®, three Emmys®, two Golden Globes® and a Screen Actors Guild Award®.

Also joining the board of directors are Ruby Wax, comedian and mental health advocate, and Vivian Ho, president of the Academy for Global Health Philanthropy.

"I am thrilled that these very accomplished leaders in the mental health field joined my board," Saks said. "I am looking forward to working with them on very important issues in the coming years."

Prof. Elyn Saks Joins National Advisory Council

The U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services has appointed Elyn Saks to a three-year term on the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) National Advisory Council.

Kathleen Sebelius sent Saks the formal invitation to serve on the council.

"I'm very excited about helping the community of mental health sufferers and their families," said Saks, the USC Orrin B. Evans Professor of Law, Psychology, and Psychiatry and the Behavioral Sciences.

Established in 1992 by Congress, CMHS's mission is to improve the mental health of Americans through the use of policy aimed at preventing and treating mental illness.

In a separate invitation, Vice President Joe Biden invited Saks to the 2013 Mental Health Conference at the White House, an event where he and President Barack Obama gave remarks.

The Center Cannot Hold Selected as Book Read for Incoming Pomona College Students

USC Gould Professor Elyn Saks' memoir, *The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness*, was read and discussed by hundreds of entering freshmen and transfer students at Pomona College in Claremont, Calif.

The memoir, which was described as moving, compelling and inspiring, was chosen as Pomona College's first-year book selection because it raises important questions about how the public understands, treats and talks about mental illness.

Saks visited the campus in September 2013 to give a public talk related to the book and its themes. "I am delighted that this incredible community wanted to read my story and invited me to speak," she said.

Saks Institute Examines Criminalization of Mental Illness



Rikers Island Correctional Facility. Los Angeles County Jail. Chicago's Cook County Jail. Today they are considered the largest psychiatric facilities in the country.

"This is a national scandal and national tragedy," said USC Professor Elyn Saks at the recent Criminalization of Mental Illness symposium. "We need to find alternatives to this trans-institutionalization. People with mental health disorders should get treatment, not punishment."

The two-day event, which was organized by the Saks Institute for Mental Health Law, Policy, and Ethics at USC Gould School of Law, brought together nearly a dozen scholars, government officials, professionals and a judge, all who are making significant contributions to decriminalizing mental illness. More than 400 people attended the symposium, which also addressed such topics as jail diversion programs, juvenile justice and reducing the risk of recidivism.

Richard Bonnie, director of the University of Virginia's Institute of Law, Psychiatry and Public Policy, gave the keynote address, "In the Shadow of Tragedy: Is it Possible to Control the Message?" Bonnie, who served as chairman of Virginia's Commission on Mental Health Law Reform following the 2007 shootings at Virginia Tech, has long advocated for improvements in community mental health services. He has also led an effort to build a strong legal foundation for a recovery-oriented system of care and to enact innovative legislation.

"I think we understand fully what the problems are," Bonnie said. "The question is how do we

move the ball forward on the ground? We need to identify the best practices and develop the necessary cross-system coordination. We have done that in Virginia and tried to go community-by-community. We have tried to galvanize movement and sustain the reforms."

Clinical psychologist Stephen Mayberg, former director of the California Department of Mental



Health, spoke about "Policy, Practice and Perception: Implications in the Criminalization of the Mentally Ill."

During his 17 years with the department, Mayberg embarked on major initiatives to reform the state's mental health system. He noted that confusion continues to exist in the minds of the public, policymakers and sometimes even

professionals when it comes to actions made by people struggling with mental health disorders. These include behaviors that result from being under the influence of drugs and alcohol, and behaviors that "simply result from bad decisions as though they were all the same thing," he said.

"The unfortunate effects of this confusion most notably increase stigmatization of people with mental illness as though crime and danger were a common result of their situation," Mayberg said. "It is important for us to focus on this matter of category errors in today's conversation about the criminalization of mental illness because these errors confuse professional dialogue, impede problem-solving in both our justice and treatment systems, and create false public perceptions."

Youth and teens suffering from mental illness face their own unique set of challenges—especially when they wind up in the justice system. Linda Teplin, professor at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, spoke about psychiatric disorders of youth in detention and the implications for criminalization.

"Our findings highlight the unanticipated consequences of deinstitutionalization," she said. "Nearly two-thirds of boys and three-quarters of girls in detention had one or more psychiatric disorders. By the five-year follow-up, prevalence rates had dropped substantially, but were still two to four times higher than general population rates. Jails were never intended to be mental hospitals. And police were never intended to be the street corner psychiatrist."

A Message from the Founder Elyn Saks



There is a pressing need to examine issues of law and mental health. Stigma and discrimination continue to grow. People with mental illness become homeless. People wanting and needing treatment cannot access it—we're not investing the resources. There are clearly important social policy issues that cry out for consideration.

To address the urgent need for a better understanding of these issues, I founded the Saks Institute for Mental Health Law, Policy, and Ethics at USC Gould School of Law. The Institute examines issues at the intersection of law, mental health and ethics, which are at once fascinating, complex and controversial

by their nature.

My own commitment of \$100,000 from the MacArthur grant I won was the seed money for the Institute.

Each spring the Institute hosts a symposium, which has covered topics such as *Mechanical Restraints in Psychiatric Hospitals*, *Psychotropic Medication and the Law* and *The Criminalization of Mental Illness* (people sent to jails and prisons rather than to mental health care facilities). This academic year, we are focusing on *College Students Living with Mental Illness*. We were fortunate to host a discussion on the topic in September with former Congressman Patrick Kennedy. Kennedy has been a champion of mental health services, pushing through Congress legislation that provides access to mental health treatment for millions of Americans who previously were denied care. Joining Kennedy and me on the panel were two of my students and Saks Scholars, Evan Langinger '14 and psychiatry resident Michelle Wu. It was a lively and thoughtful discussion

about how we managed our mental illnesses through our university years.

The Institute also recruits a cadre of USC Law and Mental Health Scholars—graduate students in law, psychiatry, psychology, social work, gerontology, philosophy and neuroscience. We are proud that eight of our first group of 10 students and seven of our second group have been published in two journals, *The USC Review of Law and Social Justice* and *The Journal of Mental Health Law and Policy*, a peer-reviewed journal out of Memphis Law School. Our third group of students have also completed papers. We hope and expect they will be published in years to come.

I hope you will consider becoming a member of our partnership. If you are interested in learning more about our work, making a contribution, or partnering with the Institute, I would love to hear from you. Feel free to give me a call at (213) 740-7572 or email me at esaks@law.usc.edu.

Thank you for your consideration.

THE SAKS INSTITUTE DONORS*

\$200,000+

SIDNEY R. BAER, JR. FOUNDATION

\$50,000+

ELYN SAKS
HERBERT AND BARBARA SAKS

\$5,000+

BURTON BLATT INSTITUTE
RICHARD AND CHRIS GOETZ
THE GREENWALL FOUNDATION
MICHAEL AND EVELYN KLEIN
USC DORNSIFE COLLEGE
USC DAVIS SCHOOL
OF GERONTOLOGY
USC SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY
USC DEPT. OF PSYCHIATRY &
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
USC DEPT. OF PSYCHOLOGY
USC SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

\$2,000+

JENNIFER AND GARY HOFF
DAVID MEYER

\$1,000+

DENNIE BROOKS AND INDIA CIVEY
THE DEVEREUX FOUNDATION
MICHAEL LUREY
MARIA HARRINGTON '98
LAURIE HASENCAMP '85

\$500+

HILARY FEYBUSH '11
HERBERT MELTZER
DEBORAH NATOLI
SHARON NG '99
DANA SHERMAN
UNIVERSITY SYNAGOGUE

\$250+

THE BOEING COMPANY
RICHARD BONNIE
TIMOTHY BOTELLO
ANN CHESLAW
ALEXANDER CAPRON
MARC DOYLE '97
JARED IRMAS '13
JAMES T. JONES

JACQUELINE KLEIN '11
ROBERT KREIDER
DAVID KRONEMYER '76
DAVID KRONEMYER
JEREMY NAFTEL '96
PRIM&R
DONALD RORY '93

\$25 - \$249

JOHN ACKELL '88
YUMI AHN '11
SHANNON BOYCE '03
SHELLEY CARDER '88
MONICA CASTILLO '10
LAURA CHAPMAN '93
LUKE COCALIS '10
CT LEGAL RIGHTS PROJECT, INC.
BRETT DONNER
RICHARD EICHNER
KAREN FELD '92
LAURA FINKELSTEIN '96
MARK FINKELSTEIN '94
PENELOPE AND FRED FRESE
LAURA GRECO '00

CHRISTOPHER HOPKINS '00
IRAN HOPKINS '01
DILIP JESTE
DOUGLAS LAWSON '12
EUNICE LIM '13
STEVEN R. LOPEZ
JEFFREY MALONEY '03
ROBYN MANDELBERG
AJA MOORE '04
CECILIA OGBU '03
SAIF RAHMAN '05
ANTHONY SBARDELLATI '06
JULIE SILVERMAN '93
CHRIS SLOBOGIN
LAWRENCE SOLUM
STEPHEN SONNENBERG '93
P R SOTTOLANO
GABRIEL SPOONER '08
NISAN STEINBERG '98

* as of October 20, 2013