

## **Local Academy Opens New, Expanded Student Facility**

**Vocational school expands to accommodate larger student census and expanded programs**

The Academy for Addiction Professionals has recently expanded to a brand new 4,000 square foot facility in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The new facility is dedicated to creating an environment in which students can learn more effectively while teachers have the necessary tools to ensure every student receives the level of attention that they need and deserve.

The Academy for Addiction Professionals has grown steadily over the years since its inception in 2008. Starting in a break room / cafeteria with five students and one teacher, the Academy has now grown to a census of over 30 in-class full-time students and an additional several dozen taking classes online. There are currently six highly skilled instructors teaching classes ranging from professional readiness to pharmacology.

The new teaching facility boasts a larger classroom area as well as dedicated administrative, counseling and student relations staff on site. "We are very pleased to have this new and exciting facility for our in class students as well as distance learning students that may find themselves in the area," says Shira Ackerman, director of the Academy for Addiction Professionals. "With our new and expanded facilities, we are able to offer our students and teachers alike greater latitude in their endeavors."

Indeed, the new facility has allowed for a computer center, which in turn spawned a new fifteen-hour class that trains addiction counselors on how to effectively use software tools in their day-to-day jobs. Further, the new facility will now be able to host job fairs as well as educational workshops with guest speakers on a regular basis. One-off continuing education events will also be offered for existing addiction professionals.

"The student population at the Academy is very diverse in its experience. Some need additional help learning the material, understanding addiction counselor best practices and understanding technology," continues Ackerman, "our new facility is yet another step toward becoming the most comprehensive addiction counselor training center in the nation."

The Academy for Addiction Professionals has even bigger plans for the future. Ben Brafman, Dean and Founder of the Academy, sees national accreditation and ultimately a full-fledged college in the Academy's future.

### **About The Academy for Addiction Professionals**

The Academy for Addiction Professionals offers aspiring addiction counselors the education and training necessary to become certified in one of four specialties: CAP, CAC, CAS and CBHT. As Florida Certification Board approved education providers, the Academy also offers continuing education classes to existing addiction counselors. Classes are held on Mondays and Wednesday evenings while a second parallel track is held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

## **Local Vocational Academy Gains National Foot Print through Online Classes**

Since 2008, the Academy for Addiction Professionals has steadily grown in class size and scope. From humble beginnings, the Academy has now opened a new 4,000 square foot training facility in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This new facility has the capacity to double the current in-class student census. In-class students pursue a 14 month training and education course toward certification in the field of addiction.

Over the past year, the Academy for Addiction Professionals completed a series of online courses that can be applied towards the certification requirements of prospective addiction counselors. These online courses allow those in states with reciprocal agreements with the Florida Certification Board to take classes toward certification in their own locality. Further, those who may not be able to attend classes in person in Fort Lauderdale on a regular basis will benefit from these distance learning courses.

The Academy for Addiction Professionals is an approved education provider of the Florida Certification Board, which oversees the training, certification and ethical standards of addiction counselors throughout the state of Florida. FCB certifications are also reciprocated in dozens of states and countries. Indeed, there are certification organizations in every state similar to the FCB and each has their own set of criteria for certification of an addiction counselor, many of which are very similar to that of the FCB.

“We are very proud to be able to offer comprehensive certification courses to students nationwide,” says Ben Brafman, Dean of the Academy for Addiction Professionals. “Under the leadership of Academy director Shira Ackerman, we have been able to expand our school to accommodate the hundreds of requests we get every month for distance learning.”

The Academy for Addiction Professionals offers certification in several addiction specialties including the CAP, CAC, CAS and CBHT. They also offer continuing education credits for existing addiction counselors. Each of these certifications requires a different set of educational and work experience criteria to be met before certification.

The field of addiction counseling is growing significantly as substance abuse becomes more prevalent and treatment becomes more specialized. The Bureau of Labor statistics estimates that addiction counseling will grow by 27% from 2010 to 2020. Becoming certified as an addiction counselor is the first step in what can be potentially a significant and impactful career for those interested in the industry.

### **About The Academy for Addiction Professionals**

The Academy for Addiction Professionals, located in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, provides students with a multidisciplinary approach to learning about addiction counseling. Using a combination of classroom and real-world experience, students are exposed to a wide variety of professionals and situations that may arise throughout their career. Critical thinking skills, as well as a comprehensive understanding of the addiction field, are the focus of a 14 month education program to train for addiction counselor certification. Classes are held on Mondays and Wednesday evenings while a second parallel track is held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.