



National Counseling Group, Inc.
Since 1993

MEDIA RELEASE

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CONTACT:

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**Community Resources Officer Sylvia Copeland-Murphy to be
Honored with *Community Service Award* at
National Counseling Group's National Conference in Richmond**

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***Community Resource Officer for Newport News Redevelopment and
Housing Authority Recognized;
Featured at Event Held to Bring Awareness to Virginia's Mental Health Care Challenges
During Tough Economic Times and Showcase Benefits of Public-Private Partnerships***

Richmond, Va. – Mrs. Sylvia Copeland-Murphy, Community Resources Officer for Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority, will be honored with a *Community Service Award* at the National Counseling Group's Third Annual Conference, which will take place on Wednesday, October 7, from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Greater Richmond Convention Center (403 North Third Street, Richmond, Va.). Mrs. Copeland-Murphy, who is also an Assistant Pastor with Oak Grove Baptist Church in Suffolk, Virginia is being recognized for supporting individuals and families in her community in exceptional ways, both through her job as with the Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority and through her extensive community and church involvement.

In her position as Community Resources Officer, Mrs. Copeland-Murphy works with over 5,000 residents from infancy to seniors in Public Housing and in some Section 8 units. The Newport News Housing Authority has 2,119 heads of households and some have 3, 4 and 5 children. Mrs. Copeland-Murphy has the remarkable challenge of coordinating programs, resources and referrals to meet the varying needs of all residents. She does this through collaboration with an extensive network of agencies. "I rely heavily on faith-based organizations and agencies like NCG to that provide programs my residents can access and benefit from".

Specifically for seniors, Mrs. Copeland-Murphy coordinates a program designed to increase access to resources, thereby improving their ability to live independently. For those residents needing jobs, she writes grants designed to bring job training to the housing authority's job training center. Mrs. Copeland-Murphy and her team of 11 staff then monitor those grants as well as manage the Homeowners Program, work to make sure all residents are literate or have access to literacy training when needed, and administer a scholarship program designed to bring residents opportunities some never dreamed they would have access to. Mrs. Copeland-Murphy is also the 504 Coordinator, ensuring that all facilities meet fair housing standards.

"The energy and compassion that Mrs. Copeland-Murphy brings to the residents of the Newport News Housing Authority is extraordinary", states NCG President and CEO, Tom Minnick. "She goes to great lengths to bring resource to these residents, both through the existing programs she administers to the monthly newsletter that Sylvia developed and NCG has had the privilege to contribute to on a regular basis."

“I am a Pastor first and foremost”, says Mrs. Copeland-Murphy. “Everything I do is on behalf others and for the sake of others. That is what a servant does”, says Sylvia Copeland-Murphy as she talks about how much she enjoys being a part of the lives of the residents she serves and how her staff and the residents inspire her every day.

The NCG National Conference where Mrs. Copeland-Murphy will be honored in Richmond will also feature remarks from Richmond City Mayor, Dwight C. Jones, Delegates Dave Marsden, Steve Shannon and Lionell Spruill, former Secretary of Education Jim Dyke, and Reverend Luke Torian. In addition to presenting a Community Service Award to Mrs. Copeland-Murphy, NCG will also honor Karen Kennedy Schultz, Director of the Institute for Government and Public Service at Shenandoah University and Jane Lanham, CSA Specialist with Chesterfield/Colonial Heights CSA.

The overall focus of the conference will be on raising awareness about Virginia’s mental health policy challenges during touch economic times and showcasing the benefits of public-private partnerships in bringing care to those most in need.

Attendance at the conference is free for members of the media with advance registration; Contact Debbie Sikes or 703-932-5896 to register.

BACKGROUND:

The National Counseling Group, Inc. (NCG) is a private organization that was established in 1993 by Thomas W. Minnick in order to provide an outpatient program designed to more effectively address the needs of individuals suffering from the combination of mental health and substance abuse disorders by treating dual diagnosis under one roof. Comprised of highly skilled, professional and caring counselors, NCG has provided premium therapeutic services to individuals and families throughout Virginia for over 16 years and has received many accolades for the variety of community-based, school-based and outpatient services available to address mental health needs throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. NCG currently has 20 offices with locations in Winchester, Exmore, Herndon, Petersburg, Manassas, Marshall, Martinsville, Newport News, Richmond, Virginia Beach, Roanoke, Annandale, Fredericksburg, Culpeper, Front Royal, Harrisonburg, Staunton and Warrenton.

NCG specializes in treating behavioral problems, substance abuse issues, mental health disorders, and family discord through a multi-systemic approach and evidence-based practice. NCG has contracts with over 100 public agencies, including various Departments of Social Services, Court Services Units, Community Service Boards and public schools, serving clients in more than 50 counties across the Commonwealth.

In addition, NCG is continues to play a major role to increase the accessibility of care to children, adults and families through public-private partnerships, provision of community-based programming, school-based programming, Therapeutic Foster Care, offering Medicaid-funded services and through charitable giving. In fact, in 2008 alone, NCG provided more than 300,000 units of care to over 6,000 individuals and families and donated more than \$160,000 to charitable causes including contributions for clothing and Christmas gifts for foster care children, church donations, college scholarships, Wolf Trap Foundation and the SAFE Initiative. Additionally, NCG dedicated more than \$650,000 to Public/Professional Service Trainings, public advocacy and clinical quality control.

NCG has been recognized for its innovative and excellent professional services by President Ronald Reagan, Governor Tim Kaine, The Washington Post, the Clinton Administration, and twice by the Virginia General Assembly. In July of 2008, Mr. Minnick was featured on the cover of the NFIB My Business Magazine. For more information about NCG, visit www.nationalcounselinggroup.com.

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