



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Senator Addabbo Hosted a Virtual Problem Gaming Education Session

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR. September 18, 2023



In recognition of September as both Responsible Gaming Education Month and Recovery Month, Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. hosted a virtual discussion on September 13, 2023 to educate people on problem gambling and connect those in need of services with organizations that can help.

Participants were allowed to remain anonymous during the discreet meeting, which was presented in partnership with the New York Council on Problem Gambling and co-

sponsored by Resorts World NYC Casino.

Scott Meyer, a husband, father, grandfather, financial advisor, coach and Certified Peer Recovery Advocate with NYCPG, facilitated the meeting. Meyer has lived experience with gambling harm and uses that experience as well as his training as a CRPA to educate others who are impacted by their own or someone else's problem gambling.

Meyer uses his talent and passion to help others find their path to recovery. He spoke about his own journey in which his gambling addiction led him to run-ins with law enforcement and three suicide attempts. He said at one point his gambling addiction was “the central point of my total existence.”

In addition to Meyer sharing his personal story, the hour-long meeting also included examples of harms caused by problem gambling and the warning signs, services available in New York State such as NYCPG and Gambler’s Anonymous, and a Q&A session.

The participants “got important information for themselves and their families and left knowing that help is available,” said Michelle Hadden, Assistant Executive Director, Program New York Council on Problem Gambling. “The impact of that cannot be underestimated.”

Warlito Deleon, Training Manager at Resorts World New York City, said at the meeting that the entity is not “soulless,” like some gambling critics may believe, and noted that the staff is trained to be empathetic, compassionate and caring to anyone who approaches them and asks for help because they believe they have an addiction.

2 million adults in the U.S. meet severe gambling criteria in a given year, according to the National Council on Problem Gaming and another 4 to 6 million American adults have mild or moderate problems. 4.3% of adult residents in New York State are experiencing problems related to their gambling activity (over 600,000 adults), according to the NYCPG.

“For some, gaming is a casual pastime, but for others it becomes all-consuming, and they need help,” Addabbo said. “As the Chairman of the NYS Senate Committee on Racing, Gaming and Wagering, I believe I have a responsibility to bring this event to the community for the public good and will always consider the issue of problem gambling a high priority when safely expanding gaming in New York. If we can help individuals from taking this preventable trip down the road to self-destruction, then we have accomplished something really important.”