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FaithWorks Announces Interfaith Mental Health Conference

ATLANTA (October 11, 2010)—This morning, FaithWorks founder Dr. Branko Radulovacki, an Atlanta-area psychiatrist, announced detailed plans for an Interfaith Mental Health Conference, "Faith, Family, and Mental Health," to be held at Temple Sinai in Sandy Springs on November 18, 2010. Metro Atlanta clergy of all faith traditions, as well as community nonprofit leaders, mental health professionals, and interested members of the public are invited to attend the conference.

The conference purpose is to heighten faith leaders' awareness of mental and addictive illness, to educate them about valuable resources which can help address congregational and community needs, and to build partnerships with mental health advocacy organizations. According to Dr. Radulovacki, "This conference will educate, equip and empower Georgia's faith leaders to recognize mental health needs in congregations and communities, and to address them with currently-available resources."

The conference will feature 10 well-known guest speakers addressing mental health issues, including:

- How to Transform The Community: Collaboration between faith communities and mental health advocacy groups, from concept to results
- Mental Health Issues Among Today's Youth: Addressing adolescent mental health needs with community resources, particularly emphasizing suicide prevention
- Addiction Solutions: Forming partnerships to tackle issues of addictive illness and treatment

According to Temple Sinai Senior Rabbi, Ron Segal, "We consider the FaithWorks Conference tremendously important to every faith community. Too often, physical illness is openly discussed from the pulpit and within congregations, while mental illness is hidden, denied or ignored. It is time to equip faith leaders to support and care for those with mental illness and addiction. This conference will be a big step in that direction."

Dr. Radulovacki strongly agrees. "Georgia's state mental health crisis hasn't been resolved. And in the meantime, there is a profound need for mental health care that crosses all racial, geographic and economic lines. We have to do something for the helpless and hopeless among us."

Sarah Schwartz, Executive Director of Mental Health America of GA, welcomes the chance to work directly with faith leaders. "The relationship between mental health advocates and faith institutions has never been more important than it is now. We can strengthen each others' work at this difficult time in Georgia and around the nation, doing much more good together than separately."

The conference will be held at Temple Sinai on November 18, 2010, from 9 am-2:30 pm. The synagogue is located at 5645 Dupree Drive, N.W., Sandy Springs, GA 30327. Registration fee is \$10, which includes parking and lunch. To register, please contact Ethel Ware Carter, Regional Council of Churches of Atlanta at 404-523-5554 ext. 231 or via email at ecarter@rccatl.org.

FaithWorks was founded by Dr. Branko Radulovacki in response to the state mental health crisis. Its objective was to galvanize the faith community in response to an urgent need. FaithWorks' mission has since expanded to include educating and equipping faith leaders to utilize existing resources by partnering with mental health advocates in order to meet congregational and community mental health needs.