

## **Al Guida, Jr., J.D. joins the Eating Disorders Coalition Policy Team**

**Washington DC, - March 8, 2012** – The Eating Disorders Coalition is pleased to officially announce the addition of Policy Consultant Al Guida to their policy team in order to increase their lobbying efforts and expand their influence.

The EDC's Policy Director, Jeanine Cogan Ph.D., welcomed the additional talent "Al is a great addition to our team. He has an outstanding reputation as a lobbyist on Capitol Hill with a proven track record of passing sound mental health policies. Al will open new doors for the Eating Disorders Coalition."

Al Guida comes with over 25 years of experience in Washington DC advocating for mental health causes. Guida was instrumental in securing the passage of four amendments in both the Senate Finance Committee and the House Energy & Commerce Committee addressing topics like medical homes and the structure of insurance exchange health benefits. Additionally he was a member of a small lobby group that conceived and implemented a Capitol Hill legislative strategy that pressured the current Administration to issue federal regulations implementing the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008.

Guida also has experience specifically with Eating Disorders advocacy. He argued for the inclusion of eating disorders in the Equitable Care for Severe Mental Illness Act sponsored by Sen. Pete Domenici. In 1996, this objective was attained with the introduction of the Mental Health Parity Act co-sponsored by both Sen. Domenici and Sen. Paul Wellstone.

In response to joining the EDC, Al Guida commented "Having spent half of my professional career advocating for children and adults with mental illnesses, I am proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Eating Disorders Coalition in our battle to improve research and services for eating disorders on Capitol Hill."

### [About The Eating Disorders Coalition and The FREED Act:](#)

The Eating Disorders for Research, Policy & Action is a 35 plus member organization of eating disorders organizations who have come together for eating disorders federal advocacy. The EDC helps individuals use their voice to advocate for laws and policies that make a difference in the lives of all those affected by eating disorders. Currently, the EDC is focusing much of the advocacy work on the F.R.E.E.D Act. The Federal Response to Eliminate Eating Disorders (FREED) Act is the first eating disorders bill conceptualized and drafted with input from dozens of eating disorder organizations around the country. Among the many initiatives this bill will address include: creating Centers of Excellence to fill the current gap in eating disorders research, improving training of health and school professionals to appropriately identify and respond to eating disorders, and requiring insurance companies to reimburse for eating disorders treatment on par with physical illnesses.