



**Board of Directors**

**Chairman & President**

Virgil Stucker, MBA,  
Mill Spring, NC

**Vice Chairperson**

William Anthony, Ph.D.  
Reading, MA

**Secretary/Treasurer**

Donald R. Cooper  
Black Mountain, NC

**Ass't Secretary/Ass't  
Treasurer**

Larry Abrams, JD  
Stamford, CT

Dan Fisher, MD, Ph.D.  
Cambridge, MA

John H. Gilmore, MD  
Chapel Hill, NC

Courtenay Harding, Ph.D.  
Princeton, NJ

David Healy, MD  
United Kingdom

Robert E. Nikkel, MSW  
Grants Pass, OR

Louisa Putnam, LPC  
Santa Fe, NM

Fran Silvestri, MBA  
Pakuranga, Auckland  
New Zealand

**Staff and Committee Chairs**

**Executive Director**

Gina Nikkel, Ph.D.  
Wilsonville, OR

**Administrative Manager**

Patty Terhune  
Oregon City, OR

**Campaign Director**

Alex Comfort  
Mars Hill, NC

**Chair of the Scientific  
Advisory Committee**

Judith Pentz, MD  
Albuquerque, NM

February 28, 2012

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Contact:**

Virgil Stucker, Chairman and President  
Foundation for Excellence in Mental Health Care  
(828)899-4673

[virgil@mentalhealthexcellence.org](mailto:virgil@mentalhealthexcellence.org)

[www.mentalhealthexcellence.org](http://www.mentalhealthexcellence.org)

***Daniel B. Fisher elected to the Board of the Foundation for Excellence in Mental Health Care.***

Daniel B. Fisher, MD, Ph.D. has been elected to the Board of the Foundation for Excellence in Mental Health Care, a newly formed, international community foundation. The Foundation, through its research, practice education initiatives, and program development, seeks to demonstrate that people diagnosed with severe mental illnesses can recover. The Foundation values comprehensive, community-based, peer-supported approaches that endorse collaboration and individual choice, while avoiding approaches that overly focus on the use of psychiatric medications. Foundation projects will help to restore the balance between psychosocial and biological approaches, and in so doing help increasing numbers of people to recover.

Dr. Fisher's life testifies to the fact that recovery is to be expected. In an effort to uncover the biochemical basis of mental illness, Dan obtained a PhD and carried out neurochemical research at NIMH. However, during that research, at the age of 25, he was diagnosed with schizophrenia and hospitalized on 3 occasions. During the next 5 years, he recovered from schizophrenia, and dreamt of humanizing the mental health system. To fulfill that dream, Dr. Fisher earned an MD and completed psychiatric training at Harvard Medical School. He has practiced as a board-certified, community psychiatrist for 30 years. To transform national policies, he founded the National Empowerment Center, was a member of the New Freedom Commission on Mental Health (2002-03) and has helped organize the National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery. To non-coercively assist person in crisis, Dan has worked to create peer-run crisis respites and developed emotionalCPR, a program for teaching

101 Healing Farm Lane, Mill Spring, NC 28756 (828)899-4673

PO Box 3772, Wilsonville, OR 97070 (503)930-0349

[www.MentalHealthExcellence.org](http://www.MentalHealthExcellence.org)

all community members how to provide trauma-informed care to others who have experienced trauma.

Board Chairman and President Virgil Stucker says, “Imagine a new mainstream where individuals and families whose lives have been impeded by mental illness recover. Dr. Fisher is one of our heroes who has moved his life from misery to meaning. He is an inspiration to us all. We are deeply honored to have Dr. Fisher on our Board!”

In the face of despair and diminishing public resources, the Foundation is positioned to use creative philanthropy effectively to help hundreds of thousands in the coming years. All those with creative ideas for improving mental health care are encouraged to contact the Foundation and learn more about it at [www.MentalHealthExcellence.org](http://www.MentalHealthExcellence.org)