

## Mental Health Center Participates in Southeastern Symposium

The Southeastern Symposium on Mental Health sponsored by the Greenville Health System Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine was held in Greenville May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Greenville, SC. Over two hundred and fifty individuals representing mental health professionals, consumers and community leaders from all over the region, attended workshops, general sessions and special events.



Well-known mental health advocates such as actress, Mariel Hemingway, and former US Representative and author, Patrick Kennedy, joined psychiatric experts Drs. Vladimir Maletic, Meera Narasimhan, and John Roberts in providing critical information on advocacy, practice and policy in the area of mental health and adult psychiatry.

The director of the Greenville Mental Health Center, Dr. Al Edwards, delivered a workshop entitled, *“Lincoln’s Hat: Local Trends and Integration in Community Mental Health Treatment Service Delivery”* as part of the clinical track at the conference.

Patrick Kennedy, author of the best seller *“A Common Struggle: A Personal Journey Through the Past and Future of Mental Illness and Addiction”*, signed copies of his book during the conference. Former Governor Richard (Dick) Riley, a long-time Kennedy family friend and colleague, introduced Patrick at the General Session luncheon on Saturday, where Kennedy spoke candidly about his and his family’s experiences with their “family secrets” of addiction and mental illness.



He also spoke of the effort it took to pass the landmark 2008 Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, a federal law that generally prevents group health plans and health insurance issuers that provide



mental health or substance use disorder (MH/SUD) benefits from imposing less favorable benefit limitations on those benefits than on medical/surgical benefits.

The Greenville Mental Health Center joined a wide variety of companies and organizations who exhibited at this year’s Symposium. Next year’s Symposium will be held May 5 and 6. The 2017 theme is **“Children’s Mental Health Matters!”**