The Journal

NAMI is a grassroots organization serving those impacted by mental illness.
We are guided by our belief in the reality of recovery. We reach out, educate, and advocate.
2550 E. Foothill Boulevard, Suite 135, Pasadena, CA 91107 Phone: 626.577.6697

Volume 33, Number 8 October 2018

The Distinguished Speaker Meeting in October will be replaced by the annual Lecture Series organized by and featuring Dr. Michael DiPaolo. Please see page seven for complete information on the Lecture Series.

2019 NAMI San Gabriel Valley Board of Directors Nominations

Within the next few weeks, a nominating committee of NAMI SGV members will be appointed by the President, NAMI SG, to select a slate of nominees for the 2019 SGV Board of Directors. All SGV members are encouraged to suggest candidates for any and all of the current board positions. The positions include: President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, VP Operations, VP Consumer Education and Support, VP Fundraising/Development, VP Community Liaison & Safety, and VP Multicultural Outreach.

You may email your suggestions to sgvnami@pacificclinics.org, call the office and leave a message with your suggestions, or send your suggestion by mail to NAMI SGV, Attn: Board Nominations, 2550 E Foothill Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91107.

As this Journal is going to print, our Affiliate’s fundraising efforts for NAMI Walks 2018, are well underway. Last year, NAMI San Gabriel Valley set the bar very high, raising over $56,000 from sponsors and donors. This year’s theme is: MAKING WAVES in Mental Illness; we are off to a great head start and are ready to ride the waves even higher, in true Californian style.

Our free education programs depend directly on the money we raise through the Walk. It’s not too late to donate for the 2018 campaign. To do so, visit our page at: https://namisangabrielvalley.org/get-involved/nami-walk

Simone Porcu & Pam Dart
NAMI Walks 2018 Chairs for NAMI SGV
Contact: simoneporcu.NAMI@gmail.com

Grand Park, Los Angeles
Saturday, October 6, 2018
Check-in from 8 AM
Walk begins 10 AM

Affiliated with NAMI California and NAMI USA
NAMI SGV email: sgvnami@pacificclinics.org
NAMI SGV website: http://namisangabrielvalley.org
NAMI National website: http://www.nami.org
President’s Message
Wayne Meseberg

NAMI San Gabriel Valley Distinguished Speaker Series, chaired by Patricia O’Neill, Ph.D., will be without its Chair, effective October 1, 2018. For personal reasons, Patricia has decided to step down. Since very early 2015, she has been the face of this excellent speaker program series for our NAMI affiliate. This program has brought an extraordinary list of speakers and a wide range of mental illness and mental health topics before us during the past three and a half years.

Programs she has arranged have included numerous mental health education and advocacy issues, such as “Laura’s Law: Assisted Outpatient Treatment For Those in Greatest Need;” Knowing Your Disability Rights and Advocating For Them;” and “Mental Health Journaling.”

The Distinguished Speaker Series has also included topics in the areas of communications skills and self-care such as the Leap Method based on the book “I Am Not Sick, I Don’t Need Help;” “Symptoms of Caregiver Stress and Self-Care Strategies;” and “Stress and Nutrition: What’s the Link?”

There were also informative programs about services on behalf of peers, including “Understanding and Setting Up a Special Needs Trust;” Affordable Housing;” “Coordinated Care Initiative (CCI);” and a leadership panel discussion by the Pasadena Chapter of DBSA (Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance). Patricia has brought to us many rock stars in the mental health field, both local and national, such as a video of Gayathri Ramprasad, Keynote Speaker for NAMI CA 2017 Conference and author of the book “Shadows in the Sun: Healing from Depression and Finding the Light Within;” “Criminal Justice/Mental Health Reform in LA County,” by Mark Gale, Criminal Justice Chair, LACC; “Systems Theory” by Helena Ditko, LACO DMH; and “NAMI LACC: Countywide NAMI Impact Beyond Local Affiliates” by Brittney Weissman, Executive Director NAMI LACC.

Not to mention, Partricia herself has spoken on at least three occasions, the most recent presentation being: “Finding the Best Therapist & Understanding the Psychotherapy Process.”

So where am I going with this? Patricia is leaving, and we need to fill her shoes with a new Chair, Distinguished Speaker Series. If you feel that you are a good fit for this position either solo, or as part of a small committee of two or three volunteers to vet and select speakers for this program going forward, please contact me through the NAMI Office, by leaving me a message at 626.577.6697, or by email at sgvnami@pacificclinics.org.

NAMI SGV is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Dues and donations are tax-deductible. Dues payable annually. Effective July 1, 2017
Household Membership: $60 Individual $40
Open Door: $5
Membership includes newsletter subscription. For more information contact 626.577.6697.
Call for Nominations: Marita Pinkel Award

The Marita Pinkel Award is given annually to an exceptional NAMI San Gabriel Valley volunteer whose body of work over time has contributed significantly to the development and continuation of our mission. Selection of an awardee is based upon careful consideration of written nominations submitted by our general membership. The president appoints a committee to consider the nominations.

All NAMI SGV members are invited to submit written nominations. In your own words, please list and describe all of the volunteer work your nominee has done, and add any comments you think are important. Nominees must be members in good standing of NAMI San Gabriel Valley.

Please mail your nominations by October 29th, 2018 to:
NAMI SGV, Attention: M. Pinkel Award
2550 E. Foothill Blvd, Suite 135
Pasadena, CA 91107

Do you have a vehicle you wish to donate to NAMI?
Submitted by Wayne Meseberg, President

In the September 2017 issue of The Journal, an article appeared explaining in detail how to donate the proceeds of a vehicle donation to NAMI San Gabriel Valley. Since then, NAMI members have donated two vehicles to our SGV affiliate! Below is an added note just to make the donation process more user-friendly.

Instead of calling the NAMI SGV office to make this donation, call Riteway Charity Services at 888.250.4490, and tell their representative that you wish to donate a vehicle to NAMI San Gabriel Valley. The Riteway representative will then walk you through the donation process.

Donate to NAMI SGV the Easy Way!

Shop at Amazon Smile and Amazon will make a donation to NAMI San Gabriel Valley. It’s easy—login to:
Amazon.Smile.com and follow the directions to choose NAMI SGV.
Working Together to Prevent Suicide

Suicide Prevention Week was Sept. 9 – 15, 2018. During that week individuals and organizations around the country joined their voices to broadcast the message that suicide can be prevented, and to reach as many people as possible with the tools and resources to support themselves and those around them. This year’s theme was “Working Together to Prevent Suicide.”

Approximately 70% of suicides are among working age adults. Working age adults are the sandwich generation. They are so busy taking care of children and often aging parents and relatives that taking time for themselves is a luxury few feel they can afford. Concerns about finances, marital and family problems, and simple exhaustion can feel overwhelming.

It can be a challenge to reach working age adults. Where they live, recreate, and work vary widely. However, most will spend a significant portion of their day at work. The workplace offers an excellent opportunity to offer a lifeline to those in distress.

Consider your own workplace. If you were in a crisis would you know where to turn? Is your workplace supportive when employees are experiencing emotional health challenges? What resources are available to offer to the person you are concerned about. Have resources available to refer them to.

The following actions can help:

Create a supportive environment wherever you work, live and play: Supportive environments make healthy choices easier. The following steps are geared toward workplaces but they can broadcast a message of help and hope in any environment.

Know the Signs: Most people who are considering suicide show some warning signs or signals of their intentions. You may have noticed that a coworker or a friend has been frequently late to work or missed more days than usual or hasn’t been able to keep up with their daily routine. There may be more going on under the surface. They may be experiencing mental health or substance abuse issues, having financial problems, going through a divorce, or coping with illness in the family. They may feel hopeless, that there is no way out from their problems, and fear that they may lose their job, their house, or disappoint their family.

Learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide by visiting the Know the Signs website www.suicideispreventable.org.

Find the Words: Check in with the people around you, especially if you notice that something may be wrong, or their behavior has changed. Avoid rushing to judgement and instead find a time to have a real conversation with them. Lead with open ended questions. Let them know you are available to listen and to help. Ask them directly if they are thinking about suicide. This can be difficult to do, but being direct provides an opportunity for them to open up and talk about their distress and will not suggest the idea to them if they aren’t already thinking about it.

The “Find the Words” section of the Know the Signs website www.suicideispreventable.org suggests ways to start the conversation.

Reach Out: You are not alone in this. Before having the conversation, become familiar with some resources to offer to the person you are concerned about. Have resources available to refer them to.

Visit the Reach Out section of the Know the Signs resources page to find California statewide and local resources in your county: www.suicideispreventable.org

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, help is available 24/7 by calling the Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1.800.273.8255). The Lifeline offers free and confidential assistance from trained counselors in your area. The Lifeline is also available in Spanish, and for veterans or for those concerned about a veteran, by selecting a prompt to be connected to counselors specifically trained to support veterans.
Remember—You Are Not Alone
Support Groups/Classes Offered by NAMI SGV

♦ Connection Support Meetings
  Connection is taking a break and will be starting sometime this fall. If interested, please contact Jackie Labrie Pulido at namisgvconsumer@gmail.com

♦ Peer to Peer
  September 10th—November 19th
  1:30 PM—3:30 PM every Monday for 10 weeks.
  Pre-registration required. Location will be provided upon registration.

Family Support Group
Every Thursday
5:30—7:30 PM
Wilson Auditorium
2471 E. Walnut Street
Pasadena
(For more information about the groups above call the NAMI SGV office 626.577.6697.)

♦ Frontline
  For information: 818.478.5740 or sgvfrontline@gmail.com

♦ Family to Family
  September 8th—October 20th
  Learn about symptoms and treatments for anxiety, depression, bi-polar, schizophrenia and other brain disorders. You will learn coping and communication skills in a safe and supported environment.

To register for these classes or to obtain additional information, please visit our website namisangabrielvalley.org or contact our education coordinator Sylvia Gil sylvia@namilaccc.org or 323.351.0999.

Suicide Loss: Why the Deaths of Celebrities Affects Us so Deeply

Many people were deeply saddened by the suicide deaths of Kate Spade, Anthony Bourdain and Chester Bennington. Survivors of suicide loss are usually understood to be family and friends of the person who died. But many of us feel very close to the stars we admire, even if we never met them. We listened to their music, bought their products. We’ve immersed ourselves in their books, albums, films; they spoke to us as if they knew who we were. And when they die, we’re inundated with news about them. So it’s not surprising that we may feel the same emotions that are often experienced after suicide deaths: shock, blame, grief. We are left with unresolved feelings: it may feel profoundly unfair to lose them so young; we may be angry that they took their own lives. And if we’ve lost other people close to us, these new deaths can re-awaken those former griefs as well.

What can you do?
Former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy says, “I think of emotional well-being as a resource within each of us that allows us to do more and to perform better. That doesn’t mean just the absence of mental illness. It’s the presence of positive emotions that allows us to be resilient in the face of adversity.” He suggests we ask ourselves: where do we turn for comfort? To food, alcohol, drugs, bad habits? Or to the company of friends, walks in nature, art, music, exercise? There is no “right way” to mourn; just because you are grieving someone you never met doesn’t make your loss any less real.

♦ Take comfort in what the person you admired has left behind: their music, writing, recipes, art. It’s okay if you need to avoid these memories for a time.

♦ Perhaps hold a ceremony or gathering with others who share your feelings. Watch your favorite videos or listen to your favorite songs together and treasure the memories. It can help to feel you’re part of a community.

♦ Take your time but stay connected with others.

♦ Don’t wait for your friends and family to share their distress. Reach out to them; ask how they’re doing. Acknowledge the loss that they feel and take time to listen to their views. All of us can offer love and compassion and provide comfort to others.
Too Much Left Unspent on Mental Health
Los Angeles Times, September 10, 2018

 Counties are sitting on millions of dollars that could be used to catch problems before they grow severe.

Like much of the rest of the nation, California went only halfway toward keeping its promise to improve mental health care. It closed psychiatric hospitals, some of which were really just costly warehouses for the sick rather than modern medical facilities offering effective treatment. However, the state didn’t follow through on its commitment to provide better alternatives, like community-based clinics that deliver the treatment and services needed to integrate patients into society, working and living independently where possible.

We can see the result of those half-measures every day. About a third of homeless people in Los Angeles and across the country are on the street because of untreated mental illnesses that prevent them from staying housed or holding down a job.

We’ve begun to make amends, at least of a sort. Fourteen years ago, voters passed Proposition 63, raising billions of dollars for services through a surtax on high incomes. More recently, Los Angeles voters adopted tax measures to raise money for supportive housing—units that will give homeless people the opportunity for dignified and independent living while receiving the medical care and services they need to hold their illnesses at bay and stay off the streets.

These are fine programs, but if they’re all we’ve got they will be futile. The ranks of mentally ill homeless Californians are constantly being replenished. As fast as we can lead them into homes, they are replaced on the street by new generations of people whose mental illnesses were left undiagnosed or untreated at an early stage, when they still could have been held in check. If only California also had funding for prevention, diagnosis, intervention and treatment early enough that patients’ illnesses do not progress to the point where they can no longer lead independent lives.

Actually, we do have the funding. The tragedy is that we haven’t spent it wisely, or in many cases haven’t spent it at all.

Twenty percent of Proposition 63 funding allocated to counties is supposed to be spent on prevention and early intervention programs and treatment. Yet a recent state audit found that counties hadn’t spent most of that money, despite statutory deadlines meant to deter hoarding.

Why? There is too little guidance on how to effectively spend those tax dollars. A state Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission is supposed to direct counties to best practices, but that loose system has led us to where we are: unmet needs and unspent funds. There is little strategic vision. Programs aren’t measured for their effectiveness. Counties aren’t held accountable for results.

The law should be tightened to ensure data are gathered, outcomes are measured and the commission offers more exacting spending guidance that prioritizes treatment for young patients.

After all, researchers have found that signs and symptoms of mental illness—hallucinations, delusions and other evidence of psychotic episodes—first present themselves in the patients’ early teen years and into their mid-20s. Treatment at or just after the onset of these symptoms can prevent, or at least allow patients to manage, serious mental illness that worsens over time. Failure to respond quickly makes effective treatment later in life much more difficult—and feeds the pipeline that sends sick adults to the street.

A bipartisan bill (Senate Bill 1004) would provide the appropriate spending guidelines and promote some uniformity in treatment around the state while leaving counties the flexibility to spend on different priorities if they can make a persuasive case for them. The measure cleared the Legislature and is now on Governor Jerry Brown’s desk.

Brown’s Department of Finance opposes it, arguing that the commission can do everything the bill can simply by changing the appropriate regulations. Perhaps it could—but the point is that it hasn’t.

Some critics also object to increasing the focus on the young. Yet that’s where the greatest need is for prevention and intervention services, and where funding can provide the greatest value. Besides, the bill would also direct funding to programs that address the particular mental health challenges of older people as well. The bill is a targeted solution to an exasperating problem. It deserves the governor’s signature.
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HOW TO: SURVIVE AND THRIVE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

Dr. Michael Di Paolo presents: The latest in evidence-based information

FREE TO THE PUBLIC
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Wilson Auditorium
2471 E. Walnut St.
Pasadena

Northwest corner of Altadena Dr. & Walnut St.
Adjacent to Red Cross Center

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NAMI San Gabriel Valley
Pacific Clinics

TUESDAY OCT 9 | UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY & DEPRESSION
TUESDAY OCT 16 | UNDERSTANDING BIPOLAR DISORDER
TUESDAY OCT 23 | UNDERSTANDING SCHIZOPHRENIA
TUESDAY OCT 30 | THE FAMILY AS AN ALLY, HELPFUL SKILLS
RESOURCE INFORMATION  (October 2018)

- L A County DMH Arcadia Mental Health Center
  626.254.1400 Monday-Friday, 8 AM-5 PM.

- DMH Psychiatric Mobile Response Team (PMRT):
  626.258.2004 for crisis management in Service Area 3
  Monday-Friday 8 AM—5 PM. For PMRT at other times use
  Access Line listed below.

- DMH 24-hr Access Line: 800.854.7771, for information &
  consultation, and for Psychiatric Mobile Response Team after
  hours and week ends. LACO Sheriff/DMH Mental
  Evaluation Team (MET). operates 5 PM to 1 AM. Call Local
  Sheriff Station (or 911 if dire emergency) to request MET
  response. For general information: 626.258.3002.

- LACO DMH Family Advocate: 213.738.3948.

- LACO DMH Family Engagement and Adult Services:
  213.738.2868.

- DMH Court program (Diversion): 626.403.4370.

- Mental Health Justice programs: Ira Lesser, MD, Chair of
  Psychiatry at Harbor UCLA 310.222.3101.

- DMH Jail Mental Health Services: Dr. Kidwell, Mental
  Health Clinical District Chief, 213.974.9083.

- DMH Clerical Office, 213.473.1734. Give booking number
  for inmate information.

- Twin Towers Jail Inmate Reception Center: phone
  213. 893.5385, fax 213.229.9991.

- Patient Information Center: 213 473.6080 or 213.473.6100
  or on website www.lasd.org; click on “inmate information
  center” then enter name or booking number.

- Jail Inpatient Unit: Neil Ortego, MD 213.893.5391.

- Men’s Outpatient Unit: Sara Hough, Psy.D., Program Head
  213.473.1752.

- Women’s Outpatient Unit: Mary Whaley, LCSW, Program
  Head 323.568.4578.

- Friends Outside Los Angeles County, Mary Weaver,
  Executive Director 626.795.7607 ext. 104.

- Suicide Prevention Center Crisis Line 24 hrs. 7 days

- New information as of 11/17/16: Los Angeles County
  Sheriff’s Department has a new jail mental health
  liaison. You can reach Sergeant Shawn Barnes or his staff
  at 213. 974.1081 or scbarnes@lasd.org.