



nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Santa Clara County Community Resource & Support Center

Newsletter Volume XXXVII· No. 12

December 2013/January 2014

Inside This Issue

General Meeting	1
Newsletter Changes	1
NAMI SCC Board Officer Nominations	1
Student Video Contest	1
General Meeting Write-Up: Affordable Care Act	2
American Taxpayer Relief Act	2
NAMI Walks Update	3
Staff Spotlight	3
Connect 2 U/Nature Walks	3
IOOV Needs Presenters	3
Momentum Family Night	3
Holiday Gift Drive	4

General Meeting, January 14, 2014

Finding Low-income Housing in Santa Clara County/Robert Dolci

NOTE: No General Meeting in December.

Please join us at our January 2014 meeting. Our speaker will be **Robert Dolci**. Bob has an extensive background in housing, having worked for EHC LifeBuilders, a homeless service provider, for 13 years before joining the SCC Mental Health Department as Housing and Homeless Concerns Coordinator, a position he has held for 7+ years. Additionally, he works with nonprofit housing developers to build, buy/rehab housing units for the mentally ill.

At our meeting, Bob will address housing concerns in Santa Clara County. Whether you are moving to your first apartment or moving again because you have to, one of the most important

decisions you'll make is where to live.

Bob's presentation will help you to:

- ◆ understand the laws;
- ◆ make preparations to contact a landlord;
- ◆ search for housing.

Please join us at Good Samaritan Hospital at **7:30 P.M.** for NAMI announcements. The presentation will be from **8-9 P.M.**

NOTE: Go to www.maps.yahoo.com for directions to Good Sam. The auditorium is in the basement of the main building.

NAMI Membership: Registration/Renewal can be done at the General Meeting.

Calendar

- ◆ **Dec. 3 & Jan. 7/Tues.**
NAMI SCC Board Meetings (p.2)
- ◆ **Dec. 4/Wed.**
Momentum Family Night (p.3)
- ◆ **Dec. 7, 21/Sat.**
Connect 2 U Social Group (p.3)
- ◆ **Dec. 14/Sat.**
Santa's Workshop (p.4)
- ◆ **Dec. 14, 28/Sat.**
Nature Walks (p.3)
- ◆ **Jan. 5/Sun.**
New Nature Walk (p.3)

Changes to NAMI Santa Clara County Newsletter

This issue of our Newsletter reflects a number of changes that we have made. Most importantly, we have turned our 8-page newsletter into two publications: one 4-page Newsletter and one 4-page Resource Guide. Some things to note:

- ◆ The Resource Guide includes information about financial assistance, crisis housing, food and clothing, legal assistance and

work assistance, as well as emergency numbers and all of our support groups.

- ◆ The Newsletter has a new 3-column format with all the same kinds of information you have received from us: upcoming meetings, events and announcements, as well as our General Meeting presenters and write-ups of past meetings, NAMI Walk updates and general articles of interest to our members.

NAMI SCC Board Officer Nominations

In accordance with our bylaws, our annual election of officers will take place at the March, 2014 General Meeting. We need candidates for:

- President
- 4 Vice Presidents
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Recorder

If you are interested in any of these positions, or wish to suggest someone else, please contact the nominating committee — **Navah Statman** and **Beverly Lozoff** — or call our office.

Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the February and March general meetings, and installation of officers will take place at the April meeting, following the election in March.

Contact Us!

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Community Resource &
Support Center**

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408.453.2100

www.namisantaclara.org

Directing Change Student Video Contest

Win \$500!

Take action by developing a 60-second public service announcement about suicide prevention or ending the silence about mental illness. All California high school students are invited to participate. Both winning team and associated high school will receive a \$500 cash award.

Submissions are due **February 1, 2014**. For contest rules and more information, visit www.directingchange.org.

Who's Who at the NAMI SCC Office

Jen Hong:

Board President

Kathy Forward:

Acting Executive Director
Outreach and Program
Director

Francesca Merchant:

Office Manager

Donna Mechanic:

Data Entry

Monica Nay:

Accounting/Contracts
Manager

Sanja Pesich:

Volunteer Services Manager

Karen Fifer:

Volunteer Coordinator

Program Coordinators

Jennifer Blostein:

Family-to-Family

Greg Osborn:

Provider

Sharon Ruhl:

Basics

David DeTata:

Peer PALS

Barbara Thompson,

Kathy Williams:

Peer-to-Peer

Raschell Lade:

In Our Own Voice (IOOV)

Kathy Forward:

Ending the Silence (ETS)

Parent and Teachers as
Allies (PTAA)

Nina Veeravalli:

Hearts & Minds

NAMI SCC Newsletter

Published 10 times per
year by the Newsletter
Crew: **Cole Buxbaum**

(Editor), **Beverly Lozoff**
(Coordinator), **Donna-Jo**
(Typesetter) and our great
volunteers.

Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) October 8, 2013 NAMI SCC General Meeting Write-Up

By Cole Buxbaum

Grace-Sonia Melanio, Director of Communications and Health Policy at the Community Health Partnership* in SCC, discussed the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also called Obamacare, and covered such topics as how the ACA impacts mental health, new coverage options that will begin in 2014, and the penalty for not having health insurance.

Grace-Sonia asked if anyone in the audience experienced such a large medical bill or knows someone who had an emergency bill so large that it wiped out their savings. Or do they know someone denied health insurance due to a pre-existing condition. These are situations that the new law is trying to address.

State Senator Jim Beall, who attended, has been active in developing a health care forum where people can learn important tips in finding an affordable health plan that fits their needs.

Over 50 million Americans are uninsured. Americans spend the most, but tend to be the sickest of all industrialized countries. Over 11 million adults with mental illness have no coverage; 7.6 million doctor visits last year were made for mental health reasons, and over 1 in 8 were uninsured.

Grace-Sonia referred to the ACA as a "three-legged stool that 1) mandates consumer protection in the health care industry; 2) improves health care quality while lowering cost; and 3) expands health care coverage and access.

Beginning in 2014, Medi-Cal will be expanded and will be available to anyone with an income at or below 138% of FPL (federal poverty level);

256,202 adults with mental illness will qualify for the Medi-Cal expansion. Expanding Medi-Cal will help people get mental health services before their symptoms get worse and they experience debilitating outcomes.

New services for mental health include:

- ◆ Individual and group mental health evaluation and treatment (psychotherapy);
- ◆ Psychological testing when clinically indicated to evaluate a mental health condition;
- ◆ Outpatient services for monitoring drug therapy;
- ◆ Outpatient laboratory, drugs, supplies and supplements;
- ◆ Psychiatric consultation;
- ◆ Specialty mental health services currently provided by County Mental Health Plans will continue to be available.

Californians can apply for coverage in one of three ways: **in person** at a community health center or county social service office; **online** by emailing www.coveredca.com or by emailing www.mybenefitscalwin.org; or by **calling** a Call Center.

A description of the new law and its impact on the mentally ill is available at the NAMI SCC office. Grace-Sonia can be reached at **408-579-6014** or grace-sonia@chpscc.org.

*The Community Health Partnership is a consortium of nonprofit community health centers and clinics whose mission is to advocate for affordable and accessible health services for our diverse communities regardless of one's background.

A Very Special Giving Opportunity: The American Taxpayer Relief Act Extended Through the End of 2013!

Planned gifts are a useful way to ensure that NAMI Santa Clara County has the resources it needs to support its unique and successful education, outreach, support and advocacy programs.

The American Taxpayer Relief Act allows you to make a tax-free gift to NAMI SCC directly from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA), meaning that you can contribute from your IRA to NAMI SCC without having to recognize the contributed amount as income on your tax return. To be eligible, your gifts are limited to \$100,000 per year and you must be at least 70-1/2 when the gift is made; contributions must be paid directly from the IRA.

Charitable gifts made from an IRA also count towards your IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). RMD is the requirement that you withdraw a certain amount from your IRA, 401(k) plan, and other retirement savings plans when you are 70-1/2 or older. These withdrawals are taxed as ordinary income.

Making this contribution is easy. Simply instruct your IRA manager to distribute funds directly to NAMI SCC, Federal Tax # 94-2430956.

If you have questions and to ensure that you receive proper acknowledgment for your contribution, please write to NAMI SCC or email **Alex Gorelik** at alexander.gorelik@gmail.com.

NAMI SCC Board Meetings

Held the first Tuesday of the month. The next Board Meetings will be on **Tuesday, Dec. 3 and Jan. 7, 7-9 P.M.**, at the NAMI SCC office.

All are welcome!

Officers of the NAMI SCC Board

President:

Jen Hong

Past President:

Navah Statman

Vice Presidents:

Gerry Larvey

Victor Ojakian

Juan Perez

Beverly Lozoff

Treasurer:

Jerry Gruhn

Secretary:

Meg Stein

Recorder:

Peter Newman

Members-at-Large:

Alan Cade

Lowanda Pierson

A Big Thank You!

Mike and Lilly Hennings' Monday night Family-to-Family class participants have been extremely generous each week by bringing in socks and other miscellaneous personal items for our Holiday Gift Drive. NAMI SCC extends a big thank you to them for their generosity.

We are always in need of items (such as socks and personal-care items) to distribute to consumers.



NAMIWalk SF Bay Area 2014: 10th Anniversary

By **Gini Mitchem**

NAMIWalk Bay Area Steering Committee Co-Chair & NAMI SCC Walk Committee

The date is confirmed, and nine affiliates will join together on **Saturday, May 31, 2014** for the 10th Anniversary of NAMIWalk SF Bay Area. The NAMIWalk Steering Committee is currently reviewing sponsorship opportunities, and the next All-Affiliate meeting is scheduled for **January 11**.

Our local NAMIWalk Committee gathers regularly to continue planning. **Alex, Barbara, Donna, Tracy,**

Harold, Shannon, Jen, Sanja, Navah, Rick V, thanks so much, and others, too, for input. Please let us know if you are interested in joining us.

Meanwhile, ideas are brewing for exciting Pre-Walk Day events: Our February NAMIWalk/ Reunion General Meeting Celebration as well as new opportunities to meet fellow team captains and walkers.

Thanks for all you do to support our NAMIWalk. Contact **Gini Mitchem** or others on our local committee for information or with questions: vmitchem@hotmail.com, 408-259-2256, or call

Staff Spotlight: Sanja Pesich



In September we welcomed our newest office staff member Volunteer Services Manager **Sanja Pesich**. Sanja graduated from our Family-to-Family class last year.

Sanja has always had an interest in working for nonprofits and became involved with the Global Women's Leadership Network through Santa Clara University while pursuing her MBA there. Because this organization's focus is on the social needs of underserved communities around the world, Sanja developed an interest in improving the

well-being others specifically related to health. Sanja feels this fits in well with her interest in understanding and helping others with their own mental health.

In her free time, Sanja enjoys yoga and meditation, doing poetry translation in other languages with her husband, and learning more about cultures and where people come from. She also enjoys utilizing her prior teaching experience to continue teaching students in her native Serbian language.

Connect 2 U and Nature Walks

December is the last month that Connect 2 U will be offered. The Nature Walk group will have a new schedule in January.

Connect 2 U: Come to our office on **Sat., Dec. 7 and 21** from **2-4 P.M.** for board games, art projects and light snacks. Info: **Kathy, 408-354-7077**.

Nature Walks: Join the group on **Sat., Dec. 14 and 28** at **9 A.M.** Rain or Shine! The group meets at

Campbell Park in Campbell (corner of Campbell & Gilman) near the playground.

Beginning in January, 2014, the Nature Walk group will move to the **1st Sunday of the month at 9 A.M.** and will be coordinated by the **Davé** family. Contact the **Davé** Family at **408-946-4379** for more information.

NAMI SCC Needs In Our Own Voice (IOOV) Presenters

IOOV, a powerful NAMI program, consists of presentations by trained people with lived experience of mental illness to groups of others with lived experience, as well as to family members, community groups, college students and professionals.

Raschell Lade, Program Coordinator, is seeking additional presenters. Presenters must have taken NAMI's Peer-to-Peer course. If you want to learn more about this opportunity, please contact **Raschell** at ioov@namisantaclara.org.

Momentum's Family Advisory Board Hosts Family Night

Join in the Holiday Celebration at Momentum. There will be delicious holiday foods and games. Ideas for coping with holiday stressors will also be presented. Everyone is welcome!

WHEN: **Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2013, 7-9 P.M.**
WHERE: **2001 The Alameda San Jose 95126**
CONTACTS: **Janna Mitchell, 408-261-7777x2212;**
Lynn Dellaporta, Family Advisory Board Member,
408-247-1362



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**NAMI SCC
 Mission Statement**

NAMI Santa Clara County's mission is to help people living with mental illness, families and the community by providing support, education and advocacy for those suffering from mental illness; to promote research; to reduce stigma and discrimination; and to improve services by working with mental health professionals and families.



Check our Facebook page at **NAMI Santa Clara County** for recently posted articles and links to other organizations. Be sure to *like* us!

NAMI SCC Extends Wishes for a Very Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

The NAMI Office will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- ◆ **Nov. 28–29/Thurs., Fri. Thanksgiving**
- ◆ **Dec. 25/Wed. Christmas**
- ◆ **Jan. 1, 2014/Wed. New Year's Day**

NAMI SCC Holiday Gift Drive 2013

This holiday season we will be distributing gifts to the Santa Clara County Self-Help Centers. Here is a list of the donated items needed so that all the gifts will be equitable for both men and women.



- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| ◆ Socks | ◆ Toiletries |
| ◆ Scarves | ◆ \$5 Gift Certificates (Starbucks, Peet's, Jamba Juice, Burger King, and McDonalds) |
| ◆ Winter Hats | |
| ◆ Gloves | |
| ◆ Power Bars | |
| ◆ Notebooks | |
| ◆ 2014 Pocket Calendars | |

Monetary donations are especially appreciated.

Important Dates for the Holiday Drive

- ◆ **Mon., Dec. 2:** Please have your donations at the office by this date. Monetary donations are most needed, since our budget for this project is well over \$4,000.
- ◆ **Sat., Dec. 7, noon:** Planning Session at the NAMI office. If you are interested in participating, call the NAMI office and provide your name and contact info.
- ◆ **Sat., Dec. 14, 11 A.M.–3 P.M.:** All gift bags will be assembled at the NAMI office.

NOTE: Donor letters are available if you choose to solicit at businesses to get discounts.