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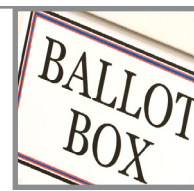
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NAMI-Santa Clara County

February 2020



nami
National Alliance on Mental Illness

NEWS

Luisa Perez Receives Community Merit Award



Luisa Perez has dedicated over 50 years of her life educating the community, in particular the Latino community, about mental health. When Luisa was a child, she and her family moved to San Jose from Arizona. Luisa graduated from Lincoln High School in 1948

and married shortly thereafter. She became a single mother of five when she divorced after 25 years of marriage due to domestic abuse.

Her daughter presented symptoms of schizophrenia at 17, and Luisa had no idea what to do. The family's doctor suggested that she take her daughter to the hospital where she was diagnosed.

A few years later, her son presented the same symptoms and Luisa knew what to do.

Luisa was interested in learning more about mental health and took her first NAMI-SCC Family-to-Family class and attended support groups. She was very happy to find the support she needed, but realized there was nothing in Spanish.

In 1993, Perez began her activism to have classes in Spanish. What began with a handful of family members has now grown to a room full of people eager to learn, volunteer, and support other Latino families with mental health diagnosis. Perez has received many awards for her hard work. In 2006, she received the Award for Service to the Latino Mental Health Community at the 12th Annual Latino Behavioral Institute Conference. In 2007, she received the Junior League of San Jose Crystal Bowl for Outstanding Volunteer Work for NAMI-SCC. And in 2008, she received the Jefferson Award from KCBS Radio, TV Channel 5, and the San Francisco Chronicle. That same year she received NAMI's National Multicultural Outreach Award.

Now 92 years old, Luisa continues to support Familia a Familia by attending every graduation. She shares her story with family members and invites them to volunteer, continue to learn and participate in NAMI-SCC's programs.

Thanks to Luisa, more Spanish-speaking family members are volunteering at mental health fairs and events.

Family Support Group Launches in Gilroy

NAMI-SCC announced that a new family support group will launch in Gilroy.

Executive Director, Kathy Forward, said, "Launching a new family support group in Gilroy is going to help people who cannot make it to our office due to time constraints and traffic. It is important that people get the support they need."

Two Family Support Group meetings will be held in Gilroy:

- 1) On the second Thursday of the month from 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Louise Regional Hospital in the No Name Uno Board Room.
- 2) On the fourth Tuesday of the month from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the Gilroy Library.

Community Peer Program Gets Makeover

January 2020 begins with changes in our Community Peer Program. We are replacing Peer PALS with Peer Connectors. They will now receive weekly trainings that will prepare them to better support their Participants.

Peer Mentors continue to support Participants referred by hospitals. They will also mentor Connectors so they are better prepared to support Participants.

As they grow and learn, Connectors will become Mentors. We begin 2020 with ten active Connectors.

A new decade with an updated program ready to serve those who need support in their wellness and recovery!

My Cause My Cleats: 49er Represents NAMI



Laken Tomlinson wore the NAMI Cleats at the *My Cause My Cleats* game against the Saints.

The 49ers offensive guard Laken Tomlinson showed his support for NAMI during the *My Cause My Cleats* football game on December 8 when they beat the New Orleans Saints.

The 2019 *My Cause My Cleats* event featured shoes from 38 nonprofits worn by the 49ers players. Tomlinson said that wearing the NAMI-designed cleats was very important to him and this was the second year that he was representing NAMI. “Millions of Americans struggle with mental illness, but we still lack the resources to provide appropriate help to everyone who needs it. NAMI is committed to helping raise awareness and provide support and education to those in need within the community,” Tomlinson said.

Liz Malara, Coordinator of Community Relations for the 49ers, was asked how players chose the nonprofits they represented. “It is all up to the players! We assist them in navigating through reputable charities and organizations that align with the cause they want to support. Laken specifically chose NAMI all on his own and first supported NAMI last year – also through the *My Cause My Cleats* campaign,” Malara said.

Executive Director of NAMI-Santa Clara County, Kathy Forward, said she was very encouraged by the 49ers *My Cause My Cleats* event to bring awareness about the various nonprofits in our area that are working hard to support the community and make a positive impact on people’s lives.

General Meeting Information



Tamekia Johnson and William Couch Jr. from Blackbird House

January General Meeting Summary

January’s General Meeting proved to be informative and educational with speakers from Blackbird House and the Crisis Stabilization Unit.

William Couch Jr. and Tamekia Johnson from Blackbird House shared that the House has been open for one year and offers a temporary refuge for people who are experiencing a mental health crisis, but do not need to be hospitalized. People in crisis can stay at Blackbird House for up to 14 days. The House is run by peers who have “been there” and have received extensive training.

Bindu Khurana-Brown, manager of the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) shared information with the audience about how CSU can help people find clarity and get the help they need if they are experiencing challenges with their mental health. CSU allows a person to stay just under 24 hours. According to Khurana-Brown, “CSU provides clients with a sense of control and allows them to have a say in treatment.”



Bindu Khurana-Brown from Crisis Stabilization Unit

Upcoming February General Meeting

Join us at our upcoming General Meeting on February 11 at Good Samaritan Hospital Auditorium at 7 p.m., where we will welcome Dr. Matt Lilly who will provide an overview of schizophrenia, with a focus on its potential causes, risk factors, and treatment options. A question and answer period will follow.

Dr. Lilly hails from Newfoundland, Canada, where he completed his medical school and psychiatry residency training, followed by a fellowship in geriatric psychiatry at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. He and his wife and five cats moved to Morgan Hill in 2013.

After working for Kaiser Santa Clara for four years as an adult, geriatric, and consultation-liaison psychiatrist, Dr. Lilly took on the Lead Psychiatrist position for Psynergy Programs - an organization that runs several augmented board and care homes for people with severe mental illness, primarily schizophrenia.

Note: Tune in to our General Meeting via Facebook Live Stream.

NAMIWalks Update: Gearing Up for 2020



NAMIWalks season has officially begun. NAMI-Santa Clara County held their first Walk Planning Committee meeting. The Walk Planning Committee is responsible for sponsorship and team fundraising, as well as planning and managing walk day events.

Shanna Webb, Walk Manager and Development Director, said, "This year we are celebrating our fifth year as NAMIWalks Silicon Valley. It's a milestone for us."

NAMIWalks Silicon Valley is NAMI-SCC's largest fundraising and awareness-building event of the year. The fundraising goal for the 2020 walk season is \$320,000. In 2019, NAMI-SCC raised \$302,000. Monies raised from the NAMIWalks Silicon Valley event go to support programs and educational courses so that we may continue to help families and those living with serious mental illness find wellness and recovery. If you are interested in joining the walk committee, please email Shanna Webb at swebb@namisantaclara.org.

NAMI Packs Holiday Bags Full of Hope



NAMI-SCC celebrated a busy season including the Annual Holiday Gift Bag Drive.

Over 30 volunteers showed up at the office and stuffed more than 750 bags that went to local board and care homes, mental health facilities, and homeless shelters.

The gift bags were filled with essential items including hygiene products, hats, gloves, scarves and socks, pocket calendars, and journals to write in. This year's drive saw a sharp



increase in requests for bags from local organizations.

NAMI Executive Director Kathy Forward said, "This year we saw a significant increase in requests for bags - more than 150 bags requested compared to last year. We are so proud of the Holiday Gift Bag Drive event because this is our chance to show people in our community how much we care, and for some this bag will be the only thing they receive this holiday season."

Community Hero Award Nominees Sought

Santa Clara County's Behavioral Health Board is seeking nominees for Community Heroes Awards. Please ensure your nomination is submitted by February 29. The intent is to recognize 11 community members/organizations who have made an extraordinary difference and improved the quality of lives by supporting people and/or their families with behavioral health challenges.

All nominations will be reviewed by the Behavioral Health Board Selection Committee and the final award recipients will be voted on by the Behavioral Health Board. Awards will be presented to the selected recipients at the 9th Annual Behavioral Health Community Heroes Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, May 6, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Three Flames Restaurant in San Jose.

NAMI-SCC Seeks New Executive Director

Kathy Forward, NAMI-SCC Executive Director, announced her upcoming retirement, and we are currently searching for a new Executive Director.

Reporting to a dedicated 11-person Board of Directors, the Executive Director should be knowledgeable about mental health conditions. The Executive Director leads an organization with five staff members and provides education training, support services and programs, including a warmline, peer-to-peer support, and faith-based programs. This candidate must be comfortable with public interactions and presentations, as well as managing a large volunteer effort.

If you are interested in applying for this position, please send your resume and cover letter to sbadgis@namisantaclara.org.

Spotlight: NAMI Welcomes New Employees



Erika Alvarez is NAMI-SCC's new Familia a Familia resource assistant and NAMI's Español assistant coordinator. Alvarez learned about NAMI and our programs in 2017 when she attended WRAP (Wellness and

Support Group) in Spanish. Shortly thereafter, she took the Family-to-Family course followed by Persona a Persona, the Spanish version of Peer-to-Peer.

Having a mental illness motivated her to help others in her community and she decided to become a Persona a Persona teacher. Alvarez is working towards becoming a facilitator with Familia a Familia by the spring.

Lisa Bauman joins NAMI on our Warmline team. Eighteen months ago, her oldest son was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Her family was shocked and unprepared because he graduated from college and had been working successfully for five years.

As she started talking to people about what her family was going through, she found that many families are struggling with mental health issues but nobody openly talks about it because of the stigma.



NAMI was there for Bauman when she needed to find a support group. She took the Family-to-Family class last January. "The people at NAMI are the kindest and bravest people I have ever met."

Valley Med to Hold Focus Group on New Facility

Calling all advocates! Please join a focus group to let your voice be heard. Valley Medical Hospital is building a new psychiatric hospital for adults, adolescents, and children.

They need input for the hospital design and want to

hear from clients and family members who have experienced a psychiatric hospitalization. The focus group will be held at our office on February 29 from 1-3 p.m. Space is limited, so please RSVP to our Warmline 408-453-0400 option 1.

NAMI-SCC Seeks New Board Members

In accordance with our bylaws, our annual election of officers will take place at the March 2020 General Meeting. We need candidates for:

President
4 Vice Presidents
Treasurer
Secretary

If you are interested in joining our Board of Directors, or wish to suggest someone, please contact NAMI Board Co-President Beverly Lozoff at blozoff@namisantaclara.org. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the February and March general meetings.

Directing Change Film Contest

Every year the California Mental Health Services Authority sponsors a film contest for students. It is part of a statewide effort to prevent suicide, reduce stigma and discrimination of mental illness, and promote mental health and wellness.

Middle and high school students and young adults (ages 14–25) are invited to create 60-second films in one of two categories:

Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Matters.

The winning teams and their associated schools win prizes and receive mental health or suicide prevention programs for their school or organization. Information can be found at www.directingchange.org. March 1 is the final submission date.



Membership/Donation Form

Donate, renew, or join NAMI-SCC also at www.namisantaclara.org

☐ Individual (\$40)

☐ Household (\$60)

☐ Open Door (\$5)

☐ Renewal Membership

☐ New Membership

I would like to donate:

☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250

Other \$ _____

☐ In Honor of ☐ In Memory of

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

☐ My company has a Matching Gift Program: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email: _____

To pay online go to www.namisantaclara.org and click on "Join NAMI." Learn how to include NAMI-SCC in your estate plan. Go to our website: Get Involved/ Planned Giving.

NAMI-SCC welcomes your membership. Memberships are valid for one year. Part of the membership dues enrolls you at NAMI State and NAMI National, which in turn automatically registers you as a member at all levels. Your additional donation helps ensure that we are able to maintain our office, as well as our educational programs. Your membership and donations are tax deductible. **Tax# 94-2430956**

NAMI-Santa Clara County Community Resource & Support Center

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office@namisantaclara.org

Office Hours: 9 a.m.-6 p.m. M-F

To reach our Warmline please
call 408-453-0400 Option 1

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Beverly Lozoff

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Treasurer:
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