



NAMIWalks

1



MH Treatment Facility 2



General Meeting

2



Giving Tuesday

3



Season's Greetings

4

NAMI Santa Clara County

December '20 / January '21

**nami**

National Alliance on Mental Illness

NEWS

NAMI FaithNet Brings a Guiding Light

By Moryt Milo

Spirituality can be a bridge between mental illness and science without proselytizing. This is the role of NAMI FaithNet. **Cindy McCalmont**, an ordained United Methodist Minister for 15 years, is part of the NAMI-Santa Clara County leadership team for FaithNet. She notes that FaithNet is not a religious network. The focus is to assist clergy and congregations of all faiths in mental health education and awareness. In doing so, FaithNet offers a seamless way to fold in spirituality for those who seek such comfort to ease their recovery.

"Just because someone becomes psychotic, faith leaders should not be afraid. We also explain this to the laity, who are often closest to those suffering and can bring understanding, support, and help," Cindy said.

FaithNet outreach coordinators can provide suicide prevention training. Teach how to recognize when someone is in distress, or help with de-escalation training when someone is showing symptoms. Through a Santa Clara County Innovation Grant, FaithNet has 18 part-time staffers. **Vincent Ngo**, who is studying to be a marriage and family therapist, is the Vietnamese outreach coordinator. The other five targeted communities include African-American, Latino, Korean, Filipino and Chinese. Vincent makes the point that today's faith leaders function as first responders. "People go to their faith leader for help and these individuals don't know what to do. We want to reach out and offer them the tools and provide the education to help their parishioners with support and resources."

Rabbi **Melanie Aron**, who leads Shir Hadash in Los Gatos, works with NAMI FaithNet and has noticed a rise in anxiety and loneliness among her members during COVID. "The congregation is a special place because it brings together people of all ages, occupations, and that creates community," Rabbi Aron said. "Getting clergy to incorporate this sense of community with those that may have mental health issues is very important."

She does not, however, dismiss the importance of psychiatry, believing science and faith can find balance. The psychopharmacology aspect of psychiatry along with an individual's faith community have a place in a person's healing.

To read the expanded version of this story, go to <https://namisantaclara.org/nami-santa-clara-blogs/>

To learn more about NAMI FaithNet, go to <https://namisantaclara.org/classes/faith-net-2/> or call 408-453-0400 ext. 3035.

It's Not a Sprint, It's a Marathon

NAMIWalks Your Way Silicon Valley has been a major success! Our first-ever livestream event reached over 300 viewers and raised over \$200,000. Supporters from all over the country joined us on October 10 and united on the National Day of Hope. Events like this are important because it brings us together. Whether it was online or face-to-face, our NAMI brothers and sisters walked for mental health advocacy and shared their stories. NAMI-Santa Clara County is proud of our staff, volunteers, and participants who persevered through the toughest year and made this event one of the best we've had. But our work doesn't stop here.

With one step at a time and another NAMIWalks almost completed, we stomp out the stigma and advocate for mental health. Fundraising, awareness, and positivity are the heart of this event and with your support, the marathon continues.

Silent Auction: NAMI-Santa Clara County's first-ever online silent auction is officially LIVE! Choose from an extraordinary catalog of fine art, wine, handmade decor, and some epic sports memorabilia that will get every Warriors or 49er fan on the

edge of their seat! We have a photo of #30 **Stephen Curry** and an official #1 **Damion Lee** jersey, both autographed with a certificate of authenticity. We have artwork from internationally acclaimed painter **Tonya Mami** and artist/fashion designer **Ellen Brook**, and wine from the private collection of one of NAMI-SCC's Board of Directors.

These are perfect holiday gifts to give someone dear while helping your community. Everything featured in the auction starts at nearly 40% of market value, so act now! The auction is open until **December 18 at 8 P.M. PST**. To place your bid, please visit <http://nscs.betterworld.org/auctions/NAMIWalks>

For any questions about the Walk or other programs, please contact KGalimba@namisantaclara.org

If you haven't seen the Walk entertainment yet, please visit our YouTube channel by searching NAMI-Santa Clara County in the YouTube search bar. You will find all the videos under "playlists" and you can choose to watch different talent pieces, a baking class, dance class, and more.

NAMI-SCC Board Officer Nominations for 2021-2022

In accordance with our bylaws, our annual election of officers will take place at the March, 2021 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-SCC Board Co-President **Beverly Lozoff** at blozoff@namisantaclara.org

Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the February and March 2021 general meetings.

Main Jail May Become MH Treatment Facility

Excerpted from an article by Robert Salonga in The Mercury News, Nov. 19, 2020

Backed by the passionate urging of South Bay criminal justice reform advocates, Santa Clara County leaders are moving ahead to replace a five-years-in-the-making jail project with a rehabilitation center focused on mental health treatment and gave themselves a 10-month deadline (till September 2021) to come up with a concrete plan for the facility. A unanimous 5-0 vote by the supervisors Tuesday was a continuation of plans they signaled in October to rethink the \$390 million replacement for Main Jail South amid an intense national movement for police and criminal justice reform. The supervisors also were emboldened by an unplanned jail depopulation experiment conducted statewide in which special amnesty and court-induced measures, to keep low-level arrestees out of jail to relieve crowding and stem COVID-19 outbreak risks, did not yield significant increases in crime. "This is a moment of pride for those of us who have been fighting against incarceration since Michael Tyree's murder and through three hunger strikes," reads a statement from **Jose Valle II**, an organizer for Silicon Valley De-Bug who has focused on improving inmates' rights and conditions. "It is an acknowledgment that building a jail is not a solution to the harm of incarceration, does not address our communities and our county can and must do better."

Plans for seeking residents' input are pending, but Supervisor **Susan Ellenberg** said Tuesday that it is "critical we engage the community and stakeholders" in shaping the new facility.

General Meeting Information

November 10 General Meeting Summary Impact of Vicarious Trauma on Family-Support Systems

Our November General Meeting speakers, **Brianne Baker** and **Laura Tannenwald**, are with El Camino Hospital's Scrivner Center for Mental Health and Addiction Services. Their talk focused on the impact of vicarious trauma on family-support systems and some things that can be done about it.

Vicarious trauma is a term used to define the impact that the world, people, and life circumstances have on us and how we are influenced by those we care for and support on a daily basis. We don't always notice how much we are impacted when we are hearing other people's stories and absorbing that information we don't know where to put. Vicarious trauma refers to the negative changes in a provider's view of self, others, and the world resulting from repeated, empathic, engagement with family members' trauma-related thoughts, memories and emotions.

One impactful quotation from the presentation addresses this: "The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet."

If vicarious trauma is the negative, vicarious resilience is the positive. We can build resilience (ability to bounce back in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, etc.) for ourselves when we are supporting other people. It involves the process of learning about overcoming adversity from the trauma survivor/(mental health survivor) and the resulting positive transformation and empowerment through their empathy and interaction. Essentially we "latch on" to their growth and journey. The result is an increased sense of hope, understanding and belief in the possibility of recovery from trauma.

How can we continue to show up for another person? Self-care and nurturing are key; they allow us to hold our own boundaries.

NOTE: We encourage you to view the full presentation (as well as past presentations) by going to www.namisantaclara.org and scrolling down to "General Meeting."

NOTE: There is *no* general meeting in December.

Upcoming January 12, 2021 General Meeting Suicide Prevention

The January 12, 2021 presentation by **Mego Lien** will showcase the County of Santa Clara's Suicide Prevention (SP) Program, which was developed in 2010 in response to a cluster of suicides that took place in Palo Alto high schools. With the overall goal of reducing and preventing suicides in Santa Clara County, the SP Program applies a community-wide, preventative, and public health approach to the issue of suicide. While the program targets youth, middle-aged, and older adults through its work, the SP Program and Suicide Prevention Oversight Committee also specify target populations, according to annual suicide data analysis that accounts for disproportionately affected cultural groups. The success of the County's program, the data-driven approach, the strong participation of community advocates, and the outcomes produced have all helped to prioritize this program with the County Board of Supervisors and executives.

As Suicide Prevention Manager of the Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services Department, Mego Lien manages public health efforts to prevent suicide across the County. Previously, Mego worked on the Injury and Trauma Prevention team at Prevention Institute, a national public health nonprofit that advocates for primary prevention and community well-being. She also has several years of experience in prevention of chronic disease and injury in low- and middle-income countries. Mego has worked as a suicide crisis line volunteer in New York City and as a sexual assault counselor and advocate in San Mateo County. She holds dual Masters of Public Health and International Relations from Columbia University in New York and a Bachelors in Psychology and Education from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania.



Giving Tuesday

NAMI-Santa Clara County is once again participating in #GivingTuesday on December 1, the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving. To support, please visit our Facebook page or search NAMI-Santa Clara County on Facebook to find us. (Don't forget to follow, like, and share so you and your friends are notified for Giving Tuesday!) Facebook will match all donations made to NAMI-Santa Clara County on December 1, so mark your calendars!

NAMI-SCC Receives \$100,000 Grant

We are thrilled to announce that **Cigna** has awarded NAMI-Santa Clara County a \$100,000 grant for "the organization's innovative Community Peer Program. This peer-led, person-centered program addresses the importance of creating a vision for one's life that includes setting goals that put wellness as the first priority."



The new year approaches and that means NAMI-Santa Clara County's Holiday Drive is underway! We wish we could have volunteers at the office as we did before, but we will focus on the spirit of giving instead!

On **Jan. 12 & 13, 2021** from **10 A.M.-2 P.M.**, NAMI-SCC will have heartfelt gifts available for pickup at our office. This holiday season we will once again distribute gifts to people in hospitals, self-help centers, board and care homes, veterans centers, and homeless shelters. If you would like to donate, please go to <https://namisantaclara.org/get-involved/donate-nowx/> or mail a check made out to "NAMI-Santa Clara County" to our office.

Questions? Please email kgalimba@namisantaclara.org

If you would like to contribute by buying gifts, please visit our Amazon Smile wishlist at <https://a.co/3UAWExH>

Coping with the Holidays

Excerpted from a piece by Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroeder, Coordinator of Mental Health Ministries

The holiday season is supposed to be a time of joy, parties, and gatherings with friends and families. But the holidays can be a difficult time for those dealing with personal grief, loneliness, illnesses of all kinds, economic concerns, separation from family members, and issues like separation or divorce. And all of these things are exacerbated right now due to COVID-19. While some people experience temporary periods of depression like the "holiday blues" or Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), many of us live with mental health conditions every day.

Tips for Persons Living with a Mental Illness: The holidays are especially difficult when our own feelings of sadness, loneliness, depression, and anxiety are the opposite of the "Hallmark" images around us. The holidays can be times of stress for everyone—which makes *self-care* even more important than at other times. Try as much as possible to maintain your routines like sleeping, regular meals, exercising, taking medication, keeping appointments with mental health professionals, and attending support groups.

During this time, we may find ourselves at gatherings with people who do not understand about our illness. Some people may be uncomfortable and not know what to say. Others may say hurtful things or offer cliché advice out of ignorance and the stigma of mental illness. It is helpful to prepare yourself by knowing who may be at a gathering. Know that whatever you are feeling, it is right for you. It is all right to excuse yourself for some time away. There may be times when you may want to excuse yourself and go to a quiet place. While continually isolating yourself is not helpful, there are times when solitude can be a time of replenishment, reconnection with yourself, and deeply satisfying.

On the other hand, for some it is hard to feel down when you are helping someone else. There are many opportunities to volunteer during the holiday season. The satisfaction of giving to others can help you put your own problems in perspective.

Live in the now! Try to let go of past regrets and experiences and find joy in the present moment. And remember, laughter is good medicine!

Volunteer Spotlight: Moryt Milo

In March 2013, **Moryt Milo** walked into the NAMI-SCC office for help. Her son had stopped his medications and she was frantic for guidance. That day **Navah Statman** was at the Warmline desk. Her steady hand gave Moryt comfort, and Navah's recommendations provided direction. Later, NAMI support groups and the Family-to-Family class helped Moryt through difficult times. She promised herself that she would give back to the nonprofit after her son's challenges with schizophrenia opened her eyes to a world she never knew existed.

As a veteran journalist and former editor of the Silicon Valley Business Journal, Moryt has written hundreds of commentaries and editorials. She also served as a reporter and editor for several community newspapers that became part of San Jose Mercury News/Bay Area News Group. Although she has garnered numerous awards for her writing, none of that compares to writing for a cause. Today, she advocates for

mental health changes through her voice and her words. She has spoken at conferences and events. She volunteers as a writer and blogger for the NAMI-SCC newsletter and blog at www.morytmilo.com and on Medium.

Moryt lives in Campbell with her husband, son, and orange tabby, Scooter. Her daughter lives in Seattle. In her spare time she enjoys escaping for walks on the beach or hiking, cooking, and reading round out her universe.



Covered California

The Open Enrollment period for Covered California 2020-2021 is **November 1, 2020–January 31, 2021**. During Open Enrollment, people can purchase health insurance for the upcoming year. Also, during this period, you can apply without a Qualifying Life Event. **NOTE:** Covered California is the state's Obamacare exchange, meaning your Obamacare plan options are the same as your Covered California options.

Holiday Gifts of NARSAD Cards and Jewelry



Looking for that perfect gift? Don't forget about NARSAD Art Cards and NAMI Jewelry! Choose one-of-a-kind cards by and on behalf of persons with mental illness, or handcrafted earrings, pins, pendants, bracelets & money clips that feature NAMI's signature grassroots symbol designed by family member **Mike Warner**. Call NAMI SMC to place an order, (650-638-0800) or go to <https://namisanmateo.org/gift-shop/>



NAMI-Santa Clara County Extends Wishes for a Very Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

The NAMI Office will be closed on these days:
Fri., Dec. 25, 2020 (Christmas Day)
Fri., Jan. 1, 2021 (New Year's Day)

Suicide Prevention Training: QPR

Question. Persuade. Refer. (QPR)

Anyone can learn these three steps to help prevent suicide: Question. Persuade. Refer. (QPR) is a FREE suicide prevention training available to anyone 18 years of age or older who lives or works in Santa Clara County.

What You Will Learn:

- ◆ How to Question, Persuade and Refer someone who may be suicidal
- ◆ How to get help for yourself or learn more about preventing suicide
- ◆ The common causes of suicidal behavior
- ◆ The warning signs of suicide
- ◆ How to get help for someone in crisis

For more information, contact **Evelyn Quintanilla**, Community Outreach Specialist, Suicide Prevention Program. Email evelyn.quintanilla@hhs.sccgov.org, call **408-885-3723**, or go to <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/bhd/Services/SP/Pages/SPC.aspx> to receive your free online training code.

MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

Join, renew, and/or donate to NAMI-SCC

I would like to join:

- ☐ Individual (\$40)
- ☐ Household (\$60)
- ☐ Open Door (\$5)
- ☐ New Membership
- ☐ Renewal Membership
- ☐ My company has a Matching Gift Program: _____

I would like to donate:

- ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250

Other _____

- ☐ In Honor of: ☐ In Memory of

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email: _____

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

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 ID #94-2430956**

NAMI-Santa Clara County Community Resource & Support Center

1150 S Bascom Av #24
 San Jose, CA 95128
 Phone: 408-453-0400
 Fax: 408-453-2100

www.namisanclara.org

office@namisanclara.org

Office Hours: 10 A.M.-6 P.M. M-F

To reach our Warmline, call **408-453-0400 Option 1**; after hours, press **Option 4**.

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