



Dr. Tom Insel 1



NAMI Walks 1



Pumpkin Patch 2



General Meeting 2



Holiday Drive 3



"TRUST" 3

NAMI Santa Clara County

November 2021



nami
National Alliance on Mental Illness

NEWS

The Future of Mental Health, According to Tom Insel October 12 General Meeting

By Moryt Milo



After thirteen years as the National Institute of Mental Health Director, **Tom Insel** left his government job. Some might say he turned into a renegade, when Insel acknowledged that limited progress had been made to improve the lives

of those with severe mental illness.

"We decided, in some odd way, that the care we provided for treating the serious mentally ill was based on a medical model as if we were treating an infectious disease—as long as we can get you the right antibiotics or vaccines you are good. These disorders are categorically different. They require a comprehensive approach that combines medical, social, and environmental factors."

While other diseases such as cancer and diabetes made major strides during the last 50 years, mental illness fell drastically behind. Instead of treating a population with serious brain diseases, this demographic became homeless and incarcerated.

"We have failed to deliver in such an egregious way, we have more people with

serious mental illness in the criminal justice system than the health-care system. That's the piece that stands out," Insel said.

After Insel left the government, he moved to California. He took on an advisory role with California Gov. Gavin Newsom who needed solutions to the homeless crisis and overcrowded prisons. The common denominator was mental illness, which impacted both demographics.

Insel traveled up and down the state only to discover that California's 58 counties operated in mental health siloes. There was no cohesive mental health plan. California had no mental health department or central authority to set basic standards and goals to hold the counties accountable.

"There should be someone in the state who says this is what we are aiming for in mental health. This is the gold standard. These are the outcomes we are committed to," Insel said.

He also looked at the workforce, and proposed a behavioral health education program called Coach for California. The mental health workforce would come from community colleges and represent the diversity of the state. Students would receive the training necessary to work in

schools, with homeless, or in child welfare.

Key to all of it was changing how those with mental illness were perceived. He wanted to toss out the word *stigma* and replace it with *discrimination*.

"This is not just a health-care problem. It's a social justice problem. It's a form of discrimination."

Changing perception meant the creation of a national movement. "Just the way we pushed the civil rights movement, marriage equality, and climate change into a national conversation," he said. "That's what we need to do with mental health."

To read the complete interview with Dr. Insel and his vision for the future of mental health, [click here](#) or to watch the video of the interview, [click here](#).

Dr. Insel's book *Healing: Our Path from Mental Illness to Mental Health* out February 2022, is available for preorder. [Click here](#) to preorder.

Learn more about *MindSite News*, co-founded by Tom Insel, a nonprofit, non-partisan website dedicated exclusively to reporting on mental health in America. You can sign up for their newsletter on their website.

NAMI Walks Your Way Silicon Valley 2021

We'd like to extend a special thank you to everyone who participated in NAMI Walks Your Way Silicon Valley on Saturday, October 9, 2021. We had a great turnout and felt true togetherness and hope for the future of mental health.

We are very excited to share that we exceeded our goal of \$230,000 with your help and support. Our work does not stop here! Together, we will advocate for mental health for all. The more we spread the word and offer mental health services and resources, the more we fight the stigma!

(continued on p3)

Robbins Nest Builds a Community

By Moryt Milo



Sylvia Robbins's driveway was lined with pumpkins—none meant to be carved. Each one was custom designed with fall decorations and an array of succulents in a bed of moss atop a pumpkin.

This unique pumpkin patch caught the eye of passersby and friends of NAMI-Santa Clara County. People stopped to browse through the delightful selection and pick a favorite. All the proceeds went to the Robbins Nest NAMIWalks team, which raised \$3,000 this year. This is the third year Sylvia, friends, and family have created these whimsical pumpkins. They produced about 100. The pumpkins served as a portal to mental health education. Near the pumpkins were NAMI literature and signs that encouraged people to ask questions or take information to read later.

Like many who volunteer at NAMI, Sylvia's journey began when her son exhibited symptoms of mental illness at age 16. "He was at the top of his game," said Sylvia, a retired surgical nurse who left the field to take care of her child. "Once he became ill, he couldn't function the way he used to. High school became difficult."

Even though Sylvia worked in the health-care profession, this was new territory. She soon discovered that the psychiatric side of medicine functioned differently from mainstream medicine.

"I was used to a collaboration with caretakers and doctors," she said. "I was used to talking with them directly and exchanging ideas."

She discovered it didn't work that way. "When your husband has a heart attack, the doctors talk to the wife," she said. "When someone has a mental health problem, there is no transparency or coordination with the family."

She needed guidance, education, and support. NAMI gave her that. Now, Sylvia is giving back in a variety of ways. She has worked on the NAMI Warmline and helps teach Family-to-Family classes.

The idea for the pumpkins sprouted about four years ago after a friend started decorating pumpkins with succulents. Sylvia saw an opportunity to develop the idea into a fundraiser. She created a NAMIWalks team dubbed Robbins Nest, combining her last name with the importance of forming a "nest" around family and community—one that supports those with mental health conditions and educates the community about mental illness.

Sylvia's pumpkins symbolize just that. If tended to, the entire pumpkin can eventually be planted in the ground. The succulent will continue to grow above the soil and pumpkin seeds can sprout from below. A reminder that just as it takes time to cultivate a garden, so does it take time to educate a community about mental illness.

If you are interested in purchasing a pumpkin, you may do so with a donation to the Robbins Nest NAMIWalks team. Please email Sylvia at sylviarobbins@comcast.net



November 9 General Meeting



Marjorie Baldwin "Living and Working with a Serious Mental Illness"

The stigma associated with serious mental illness affects both persons with mental disorders and their families. **Marjorie Baldwin**, Professor of Economics at Arizona State University, has experienced that stigma as the parent of a son with schizophrenia and has studied the impact of mental illness-related stigma in her

research on employment discrimination against persons with disabilities. In her talk, Professor Baldwin draws on her personal experiences and her research to describe the negative stereotypes of mental illness that are the source of stigma and explain why the stereotypes should not define the lives of persons living with mental illness.

Marjorie Baldwin is a professor in the Department of Economics at the W. P. Carey School of Business, Arizona State University. She is a health economist with an international reputation for her

research on employment discrimination against workers with disabilities—in particular, workers with mental disorders—and for her research on the costs and outcomes of work-related injuries.

Professor Baldwin is a prolific writer on the subject. She also authored *Beyond Schizophrenia: Living and Working with a Serious Mental Illness*. The book analyzes the barriers to employment encountered by the SMI population, from the dual perspectives of a health economist and a parent. Professor Baldwin's research has been supported by the National Institute of Mental Health, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, and the National Institute of Drug and Alcohol Abuse. She is currently the principal investigator for a four-year study on disclosure of serious mental illness in the workplace, sponsored by NIMH.

Professor Baldwin is a member of the National Academy of Social Insurance, the American Society of Health Economists, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and serves on the National Advisory Mental Health Council for NIMH.

NOTE: Past General Meeting presentations can be viewed by going to our website www.namisantaclara.org under News & Events and clicking "General Meetings."

NAMIWalks Your Way Silicon Valley 2021

(continued from p.1)

There's still time to fundraise! Fundraising on our NAMIWalks website is open until December 8. Ask your friends and family, create a Facebook fundraiser, and get involved with NAMI-Santa Clara County!

Donate at www.namiwalks.org/siliconvalley

If you participated in NAMIWalks Silicon Valley, we would love to see how you made the walk *your way*! Please post your photos or videos by using the tag @namisantaclara and use our hashtag #namiwalksSV

**We would like to take this opportunity to thank our amazing sponsors.
We could not have done it without you.**



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Holiday Drive

This holiday season, NAMI-Santa Clara County will distribute gifts to patients in hospitals, residents at board and care homes and homeless shelters, as well as participants at self-help and veterans centers.

This year, we plan on gifting a gift card and warm, fuzzy socks for the winter chill.

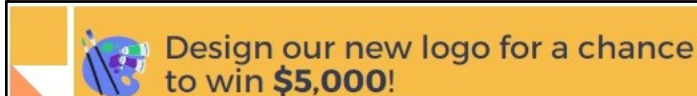
NAMI-SCC is looking for contributions in the form of cash, checks, or online donations. Each year, we distribute gift bags to over 700 individuals, which costs us over \$8,000. Please help us bring a smile to folks at local hospitals, board and care homes, homeless shelters, and self-help and veterans centers.

If you would like to donate or sponsor the Holiday Drive, please send a check to:

NAMI-Santa Clara County
1150 S Bascom Ave #24
San Jose, CA 95128

Or donate through our website www.namisantaclara.org

Trusted Response Urgent Support Team (TRUST)



The County of Santa Clara Behavioral Health Services Department (BHSD) is sponsoring a contest open to all community artists for an opportunity to design a logo for the TRUST program that aides in confronting stigma and negative attitudes about seeking mental health assistance.

TRUST is a community-driven mobile crisis response team that will use community residents, mental health workers, and emergency medical services providers to respond to needs and crises in the community, ensuring more individuals and families have access to mental health and crisis services without involving law enforcement.

Visit the [BHSD MHSA Website](#) for Official Rules and Contest Entry Forms. Designs can be submitted between now and November 12 and winners will be notified by December 31.

The official logo of the TRUST Program will be announced in January 2022.

SVILC's "Peoples Thanksgiving" Grocery Gift Card Giveaway!

Generous donors have allowed SVILC to provide Safeway Gift Cards to consumers who need some additional food support during the November holiday. There are also a few extra frozen turkeys from Second Harvest for any families who would like to cook a turkey dinner!

Call SVILC at 408-894-9041 by November 5 to let Frances or Isabel know that you'd like a frozen turkey (while supplies last) or a Safeway Gift Card. Turkeys will be delivered on Wednesday, November 17. Gift cards will be mailed.



The 10th Annual Directing Change Film Contest has launched. Students and young adults are invited to create films to start conversations about mental health and advocate for change. Films are due by March 1, 2022. Read more about the submission categories, including the new Hope and Justice category, and contest rules by going to www.directingchange.org

Giving Tuesday—Nov. 30

NAMI-Santa Clara County has never closed. We have been working with the same passion as before the pandemic, if not more. Why is that? Because it is needed!

NAMI-Santa Clara County is participating in Giving Tuesday on November 30. Giving Tuesday is an opportunity for people around the world to stand together in unity—to use their individual power of generosity to remain connected and heal.

This year, we experienced a large increase in warmline calls and support group attendance. It has not been easy for any of us and we need to continue to make this world safe for those affected by mental health issues.

With your help and generosity, NAMI-Santa Clara County can offer our services and stomp out the stigma together!

So, on November 30, please consider a donation to NAMI-Santa Clara County and give back to our community. More info to come.



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.namisanclaara.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.namisanclaara.org
office@namisanclaara.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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