



Officer Elections 1



General Mtg. 2



NAMI Walks 3



Connection Group 3



Legislation 3



Support Housing 4

NAMI-Santa Clara County



Helpline (408) 453-0400 x1

March 2024



**nami**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

**NEWS**

## High Demand for School-based Counseling

By Moryt Milo



Nationwide, headlines describe teens in emotional crisis, with high levels of anxiety and depression. Yet, many have questioning whether the news is overblown.

Counselors and therapists working with teens said the crisis is real. The pandemic laid it bare, with parent referrals skyrocketing by 700% for mental health services, CASSY Executive Director Marico Sayoc said. Everyone was at home and parents began to understand what was happening to their children on a daily basis, which was exacerbated by remote learning, isolation, and social media.

In fact, California is in the bottom third of states when it comes to a child's well-being, with rates of depression and suicidal feelings steadily increasing in the last decade, Sayoc said.

"The No. 1 reason for hospitalizations of a school-age child is a mental health admission," she said. "All the services come when it's an emergency."

CASSY provides counseling and support services to 40 schools in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. The Milpitas-based organization helps to offset school administrator responsibilities by

connecting with students and providing school-based counseling.

"During the pandemic, schools were asked to provide everything for their communities, now they are asked to provide school-based mental health services as the conduit to all youth in crisis," Sayoc said.

School-based counseling has demonstrated it's a strong support system for multiple reasons.

When mental health counseling is on campus, numerous barriers are eliminated immediately. There are no logistical issues when it comes to arranging transportation or a time to meet therapists off-site. There is also no cost for the counseling services.

Another big issue is fear and stigma, especially for an elementary school student. In a school setting, the counselor or therapist is someone who is part of the community. The child is connecting with a familiar face.

Third, with organizations like CASSY on campus, they can provide classroom presentations on mental health which increases the number of students an agency can reach. This means at some point all students will have exposure to a therapist, helping to destigmatize mental health and normalize seeing a therapist on campus.

The impact of this approach is apparent.

Sayoc said that in Santa Clara County 100% of students and families referred to school-based mental health services receive them. Compared to just 8% of students and families following up when referred to off-site clinics.

Sayoc said that when a student and family meet with counselors at the school everything is confidential and the agency abides by HIPAA requirements, unless there is a risk to the school, family, or individual. Then CASSY is obliged to report the matter.

The program's impact supports the school-based structure:

- ◆ 97% of students and parents said school-based counseling met their needs and would refer the services to peers and other parents.
- ◆ 98% of students increased or stabilized their daily functioning.
- ◆ 98% of students made progress on at least one of their treatment goals.

"By building that strong community network of mental health, you really do ripple it out into the entire community," Sayoc said.

To read the full story, [click here](#).  
To watch Marico Sayoc's YouTube presentation, [click here](#).

## Election of Board Officers 2024-2025

Here is our slate of candidates for 2024-2025:

President: Uday Kapoor

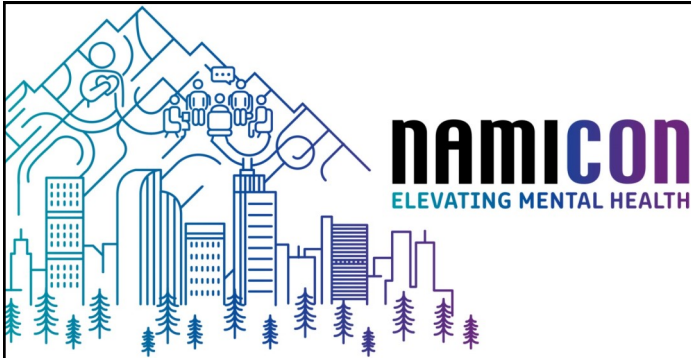
VPs: Beverly Lozoff, Juan Perez, Frank Alioto, Moryt Milo

Treasurer: Steve Wade

Secretary: Peter Newman

The slate will be voted on at the March general meeting and installation of officers will take place in April.

## NAMI Convention 2024 Elevating Mental Health



The 2024 NAMI Convention will take place Tuesday, June 4, through Thursday, June 6, in Denver, Colorado at the Sheraton Downtown Denver Hotel.

Join hundreds of passionate and vibrant voices from around the world to elevate mental health!

Get ready for an energizing in-person celebration of all the unique and important voices—including yours—who are creating positive change in mental health. Whether you're a long-time NAMI advocate or brand new to our movement, NAMICon is for you.

## BeWellLine

BeWellLine is a new CalHOPE initiative which offers no-cost, compassionate emotional support in Santa Clara County. The goal is to create an environment where individuals can access high-quality mental health services without the burden of financial constraints. The free services provided include crisis support, peer counseling, and support groups. BeWellLine combines practical advice with peer companionship.

The process begins with a call to the BeWellLine warmline or by beginning a chat online. A trained peer counselor provides a kind and empathetic welcome and a safe space to assess the situation, set expectations, and explore solutions. Together the caller and peer create a personalized plan, setting achievable goals to move forward. You can reach BeWellLine at **650-866-1788** or <https://sbcs.bewellline.com>

## Charitable Giving

Anytime you sell appreciated stock, you'll owe capital gains tax. But by gifting the stock to a qualified charity, you might be able to avoid paying capital gains tax, thereby increasing the value of your gift.

Learn more here: [Is It Better to Give Stock or Cash to a Charity?](#) | Charles Schwab

## Luncheon for our Volunteers

On January 23rd, volunteers gathered at the NAMI-SCC office for a "Thank You" luncheon. At the event, volunteers dined on catered lunch from Golden Harvest catering and socialized with other volunteers and staff. Volunteers were also given gift bags as an appreciation for their hard work.

Thank you, volunteers, for your dedication and commitment to NAMI-Santa Clara County!

Interested in volunteering? Please visit:

<https://namisantaclara.org/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities-at-nami-santa-clara/>



## Upcoming March 12 General Meeting: TRUST



**What is TRUST? How and when did TRUST start? How to use TRUST? Who makes up the TRUST team?**

TRUST (Trusted Response Urgent Support Team) is a community service that helps Santa Clara County residents during an urgent mental health or substance-use situation. TRUST's team of responders includes behavioral health staff from community organizations. Team members have knowledge and experience assisting people struggling with behavioral health challenges. The field response team works together to meet the unique needs of each person and those around them. It's the only mobile crisis unit that operates without law enforcement.

Paula Giannoni, the Community Collaborator, will be facilitating a presentation about TRUST and the great services they offer! Paula is a first-generation college student majoring in sociology. She is the mother of three and grew up in Palo Alto. She attended Gunn High School and prioritizes Mental Health Awareness. She joined Momentum for Health seven months ago and focuses on bridging the connection between the community and the TRUST program offerings.

**NOTE:** Past General Meeting presentations can be viewed by going to our website, [www.namisantaclara.org](http://www.namisantaclara.org), under News & Events and clicking "General Meetings."

**Note About NAMI-Santa Clara County Board Meetings:** NAMI-Santa Clara County's Board of Directors meets ten times per year (except August and December) on the first Tuesday of the month at 5:30 P.M. The board meetings are open to the public and we welcome your attendance. Please check our website for location.

## NAMIWalks SV 2023 Is in Top 10 of NAMIWalks Fundraisers Nationwide

NAMIWalks Silicon Valley made NAMIWalks history! Our NAMIWalks was the ninth top walk of all NAMIWalks nationwide in 2023. Thanks to your unwavering support, NAMI-Walks Silicon Valley saw an incredible turnout of over 860 registered participants, with a remarkable fundraising achievement of \$272,919.75. Thank you for your commitment to mental health advocacy in our community. We extend heartfelt gratitude to each one of you.

## NAMIWalks SV 2024 Website Live!

SAVE THE DATE: NAMIWalks Silicon Valley 2024 will take place on October 5, 2024. Our website is now LIVE! We'd like to invite you on this journey for mental health for all.

Keep checking the following website for updated information:  
<https://namiwalks.org/siliconvalley>

## Inside View of a Connection Support Group

By Coordinators Jeanine and Naliah



In the book titled *The Body Keeps the Score*, Bessel van der Kolk states, "Social support is ... being truly heard and seen by the people around us. Feeling that we are in someone else's mind and heart." NAMI Connection is a peer-led support group for people with symptoms of mental illness.

According to NAMI, there are 3 Stages of Recovery: Crisis, Stabilization and Transition, and the New Normal. Our support groups are practical in that participants talk about their most pressing needs and hear what's worked for others. With this in mind, we offer you a look at NAMI Connection Support Group from a participant's perspective.

"My current most pressing need is to stick to a sleep schedule, and I am in Stage 2 of Recovery," says Judy. The facilitator opens up Judy's most pressing need to the group by reminding them of NAMI Connection's guiding principles: empathy, hope, and recovery.

George is called on and says, "Chamomile tea works really well for me."

Paul, another attendee, says, "No screens within an hour before bedtime always helps me."

Susie, yet another participant, says, "I like to use the Calm app's soothing sounds or guided meditations to lead me to sleep."

Then the facilitator asks Judy to pick a principle of support. Judy chooses, "We find strength in sharing experiences." After the last participant shares, all attendees recite the following principles of support:

- ◆ We forgive ourselves and reject guilt.
- ◆ We embrace humor as healthy.
- ◆ We will never give up hope.

At NAMI Connection, we are here to walk alongside you in the journey to mental health. We are here for you and you are always welcome.

*NAMI Connection meets every Sunday from 3-4:30 P.M. in a hybrid Zoom and in-person group. NAMI Connection also meets every Monday and Thursday from 7-8:30 P.M. via Zoom, rain or shine.*

For more information, go to the Connection Support Group page on our website: <https://namisantaclara.org/classes/support-groups-3/>

## Legislative Update: How to Get Involved

By Frank Alioto

There are many ways to have your voice and opinions heard by our elected officials through NAMI when it comes to mental health care in Santa Clara County.

Two years ago, our affiliate made a commitment to expand our outreach to include elected officials, to be a voice for members of the NAMI community unable to speak for themselves because of their illnesses.

To facilitate improved communication with those officials, we did what any red-blooded service organization does: we formed a committee. When doing so, we agreed that unlike most similar committees in many organizations, we were not forming a group to go and bang heads with folks elected to public office, but rather to collaborate with our elected officials for the betterment of those unable to help themselves.

After two years, we have met with just about all of our elected officials in Santa Clara County from county supervisors to state legislators and even to some in Washington, D.C.—some of them



many times. We also have a representative who sits on the Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Board.

We have also taken to the streets, for example, when Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) announced the closure of the critical care psychiatric unit at Good Samaritan Hospital. Our demonstration generated

regional concern and anger by the public. And recently California State Senator Dave Cortese introduced a bill (CA 1300) that would modify the regulations when a hospital wants to discontinue providing an essential public service.

How can you help the mental health cause in Santa Clara County? As a starter, what you can do is get out and VOTE. Every candidate has at least one website. The candidates state what they are for and what they oppose. Vote for those who are strong on mental health.

Secondly, join us in the fight for better mental health care in California and particularly here in Santa Clara County. It doesn't cost any money and there are no hidden commitments.

[www.namisantaclara.org](http://www.namisantaclara.org)



# Support Safe Housing for Behavioral Health Clients

By Lorraine Zeller

## DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO SHARE ABOUT UNLICENSED BOARD & CARE?

If so, we want to hear it--anonymously! Leave a voicemail, but not your name. Tell us about your experiences with unlicensed Board & Care.



## “Unlicensed Board & Care”

Shared housing where low-income behavioral health clients are referred or placed by their health care providers.

These “homes” are also known as room and board or independent livings.

Being unlicensed means there is no oversight which leads to, in too many cases, freedom for operators to take advantage of tenants endangering their health and welfare.

Please support our campaign by spreading the word.

**Let’s ensure healthy housing for all!**

## Know Your Rights: Access to Mental Health Services Upcoming Presentations

**Date:** Saturday, March 16 **Time:** 4:00–5:00 P.M.

**Location:** Palo Alto Library–Mitchell Park, 3700 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto, CA 94303

**Additional Info:** Registration is preferred but not required.

<https://paltoalto.bibliocommons.com/events/658b7fd1817cb6bf4e9d76ac>

**Date:** Thursday, March 21 **Time:** 4:30–6:00 P.M.

**Location:** Los Gatos Library, 100 Villa Avenue, Los Gatos, CA 95032

**Additional Info:** Registration is preferred but not required

<https://losgatosca.libcal.com/event/11883200>

## 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

I would like to donate:

- ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

My company has a Matching Gift Program \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

To pay online, go to [www.namisanclaara.org](http://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.  
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](http://www.namisanclaara.org)  
[office@namisanclaara.org](mailto:office@namisanclaara.org)

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

To reach our Helpline, call

**408-453-0400 Option 1;**

after hours, press **Option 4.**

### Board of Directors

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