



NAMI Ventura County

Ventura County's Voice on Mental Illness

Newsletter

October 2007



SPEAKER'S MEETING

7:00 P.M., Tuesday, October 9, 2007

CHOICES IN RECOVERY

St. Columba's Episcopal Church Parish Hall
1251 Las Posas Road, Camarillo

PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS EARLY FOR THE
MOST POPULAR MEETING OF THE YEAR.

Pre-registration: 6:45 p.m.
Dinner: 7:00 p.m.
Speaker: 7:30 p.m.

Guest speaker: Dr. Manoj Walker

Reservations must be made by October 6.

Call 805-641-2426 or e-mail
namiventura@gmail.com

PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY IF YOU CAN. WE NEED
HELP SETTING UP TABLES AND CHAIRS

MICHAEL POWERS SHARES PLANS FOR COUNTY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Speaking to a large audience, Michael Powers, the Director of the Ventura County Health Care Agency (HCA) gave an update on the state of the County's Behavioral Health system at the NAMI General Meeting on September 11th.

Accompanied by Meloney Roy, the Acting Director of Ventura County Behavioral Health Department (BHD), and several members of the Behavioral Health Department staff, Powers stated that this was an exciting time for change thanks to the new funding stream from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). He began by reviewing the successes as well as the areas still needing improvement. Roy announced that Ventura County's Integrated Dual Diagnosis Treatment (IDDT) program, under the leadership of Dr. Linda Gertson, had received an award.

Powers reiterated that the goal of the BHD is to provide access to quality services where everyone gets treated with dignity and compassion. He explained that quality and productivity are being measured, in order to work smarter with the reduced staff resources that have been forced upon the county. Roy explained that an enhanced computer system was being evaluated, in keeping with MHSA requirements, and using MHSA funds earmarked for this purpose.

The Behavioral Health Department must listen to providers, families, clients and provide administrative leadership. The goal is to provide integrated care; Powers gave the example of the "under one roof" service center in Fillmore where medical care, public health, alcohol & drugs program, social services were all available to clients of the behavioral health clinic, allowing behavioral health clients to easily access other services as needed. He also announced plans for a similar 30,000 square foot "one-stop" center in Simi Valley which should be completed in the next 14-17 months.

Among Powers' priorities was the need to create a strategic plan for departments, a simple and clear one which should focus on actions and create a culture of perseverance to help clients and families. Another priority was the Inpatient Psychiatric Unit at Hillmont Road, and the need to have better integration between inpatient discharge to outpatient clinics. The BHD was committed to addressing the issue of more supportive housing, and

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1	General Meeting / Michael Powers
2	Meet the Staff / Kathleen Payne
3	Book Corner / Essay Contest / Revolution / Casino
4	Mental Health Board
5	Mental Health Board / VCCF Grant / Parity Bill
6	Support Groups / Outpatient Sites

Powers understood the need to build a locked sub-acute unit (or IMD) and a crisis stabilization unit, possibly with some MHSA funding available for capital projects. "We need to bring back our clients back into Ventura County", he said.

Responding to questions from the audience, Powers and Roy dealt skillfully with concerns raised on several issues including cuts in AB2034 funding, customer service skills, medically uninsured, ConRep programs, working with families, shortage of case management, demolition of the 300 Hillmont clinic building, youths transitioning to the adult system, and an increased partnership with NAMI Ventura County. ❖

MEET THE STAFF: Executive Director Margaret Yun



Where does compassion for the marginalized begin? For NAMI's Executive Director Margaret Yun, it began as a Housing Counselor, working for a non-profit housing provider, Many Mansions. As a Housing Counselor, Yun worked with the homeless and disabled, helping them apply for

Section 8 benefits, aiding them in preparing rental applications, and helping in the transition from homelessness to housing. During her tenure at Many Mansions, Yun served as Director of Education, Director of Supportive Services and Director of Adult Services before coming to NAMI Ventura County as its Program Director in September, 2006. "We moved to Thousand Oaks in 1981 and since I began assisting in the free meal program that my church is involved with, I've seen the numbers of homeless double, if not triple in the past fifteen years." Yun observed.

Yun left Many Mansions to pursue full-time study for a Master's degree and, coincidentally, NAMI Ventura County was looking for a part-time Program Director, anticipating an expansion of NAMI's programs in the County. Since coming to NAMI, Yun has assumed responsibility for the monthly newsletter, Mental Illness Awareness Week activities and workshops, and overseen the training of teams and implementation of the Provider Education Program. When asked how the first class of PEP was received by the provider community, Yun responded, "The class was even better than we had anticipated. The evaluations are in and without exception the providers thought the class was 'excellent' and that's very gratifying both for our teaching team, and for the impact that this

training will have on those affected by mental illness. It's like a ripple effect – you start with one group and they have the potential to affect so many others."

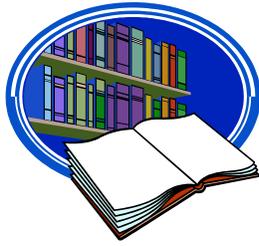
When asked about NAMI's future plans, Yun replied, "We're anticipating 2008 to be a landmark year in NAMI Ventura County's history, as it's the 25th anniversary of NAMI's establishment as a non-profit here in the County. Because of community support, including NAMIWalks donations, we're now able to have four Family to Family classes in progress now – including our first Spanish class, Familia a Familia; we have three Care and Share support groups meeting and we hope to be adding two additional groups in the next few months; we're offering two Provider Education Program classes and plan on offering two more in the Spring, we're going to be bringing the In Our Own Voice program to Ventura County this next year, and thanks to a Mental Health Initiative grant, we're also developing a Court Education Program (CEP) to educate those involved in the judicial system about mental illness.

Yun reflected, "One of the unexpected benefits of joining the NAMI team, was taking the Family to Family class. Like many others, I never knew there was such a valuable resource available that could help families, such as mine, deal with the trauma and the stigma of mental illness." ❖

KATHLEEN PAYNE – FAMILY TO FAMILY TRAIL-BLAZER

Kathleen Payne, one of the first Family to Family educators to be trained in California, blazed the trail for future Family to Family teachers in Ventura County. After her training in a "Train the Trainer" retreat in 1998, Kathleen went on to conduct three classes in 1998. As NAMI Ventura County's premier Family to Family teacher, she went on to teach four classes in 1999 and completed her volunteer teaching career with a final class in 2001. Unfortunately, NAMI California did not keep records of its fledgling Family to Family program and Kathleen's teaching credits were not honored at the first NAMI National Hall of Fame this past June. Rest assured, though, at next year's National Convention, the name of Kathleen Payne will join the ranks of those who pioneered NAMI's flagship program, paving the way for hundreds of families to benefit from the Family to Family program. ❖

**We acquire the strength we have overcome.
~Ralph Waldo Emerson**



THE BOOK CORNER

NOW AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK:

“**SHOCK** is recommended to all professionals not only to inform themselves about the history and current state of ECT but also so they can recommend it to patients. Any patient considering ECT would do well to read Dukakis and Tye’s take on this intervention. There is no better material currently available that would allow a patient to provide true informed consent for ECT that reading *Shock cover to cover*” – Psychiatric Services, the Journal of the American Psychiatry Association.

Kitty Dukakis has battled disabling depression for more than 20 years. Coupled with drug and alcohol addictions that both hid and fueled her suffering, Kitty’s despair was overwhelming. She tried every medication and treatment available; none worked for long. It wasn’t until she tried electroconvulsive therapy, or ECT, that she could reclaim her life.

Kitty’s dramatic first-person account of how she reclaimed her life through ECT is half the story of *Shock*. The other half is written by Larry Tye, an award winning medical reporter. It offers a look at the science behind ECT and its dramatic yet subterranean comeback as a safe, fast and more effective treatment for relieving serious depression than antidepressants and psychotherapy.

If you are interested in reviewing this book for the NAMI Ventura County newsletter, please contact Margaret Yun at 805-641-2426.❖

ESSAY CONTEST WINNER ANNOUNCED!

NAMI is pleased to announce that Dorothy Brock is the winner of the 2007 Convention Essay Competition. NAMI Board President Ratan Bhavnani awarded the prize, saying “It gives me great pleasure to inform you that you have been selected the winner of our Essay Competition. As your essay entry indicates, your ability to give back is a sure sign of your progress with recovery, and your desire for more knowledge to further these goals is impressive!” NAMI Ventura will pay for Ms. Brock’s trip to the upcoming NAMI California Conference, including registration fees, hotel costs, etc. The theme for this year’s event is “From Dream to Reality” and will take place at the Irvine Marriott Hotel on Friday and Saturday, September 28th and 29th.❖

NAMI PARTNERS WITH REVOLUTION CREATES ON-LINE CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH FAIR

September means back to school for most colleges, and this September students were helped to transition to college through a partnership of NAMI and Revolution who, together, sponsored an On-Line Mental Health Fair” at www.revolutionhealth.com/healthfair/. This innovative event was a showcase of information and resources from NAMI and other organizations, covering the full range of mental health issues facing college students and their parents.

At the NAMI booth visitors could:

- Learn how to manage stress on campus
- Get tips for evaluating a college’s mental health services
- Access NAMI’s online discussion group for college students and young adults
- Read first-person stories of college students who are successfully living with mental illness
- Find out how to start a NAMI On Campus club

Other participants in the health fair were: the Depression and Bipolar Support Group Alliance, the Obsessive Compulsive Foundation, National Eating Disorders Association, NARSAD, the Jed Foundation, RAINN, Anxiety Disorders Association of America, and Active Minds. Active Minds was formed six years ago and is dedicated to utilizing the student voice to raise mental health awareness on the college campus. Student and staff members work to promote understanding of the issues and a dialogue that is supportive and stigma-free. Among their projects is a campaign called “Send Silence Packing”. Since over 1100 college students are lost to suicide each year, the group plans to collect 1100 backpacks which will be publicly displayed to call attention to those promising lives that are lost each year. Active Minds is now on 70 college campuses nationwide and hopes to be in 300 college campuses in the next three years.❖

DINNER, AUCTION AND CASINO !

On Friday, November 9, at the Marriott River Ridge in Oxnard, Dr. Ron Thurston will be installed as Ventura County Medical Association’s new president. A black-tie dinner, casino night, and silent auction will benefit the VCMA’s scholarship fund and NAMI Ventura County. Some unusual and desirable items are expected to be auctioned including sports memorabilia, perhaps a timeshare or helicopter ride.❖

MENTAL HEALTH BOARD PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

On August 8, the Mental Health Board of Ventura County met for a day-long planning session to review its roles and responsibilities and plan for the 2007-2008 year. Since both the Mental Health Board (MHB) and NAMI share many of the same concerns, i.e., mental health services in the County, and so that NAMI members can become better educated about our community partners, the following article describes the roles and responsibilities of the MHB, how they're selected and what the MHB hopes to accomplish within the County.



How is the board formed and who are the members?

The members of the Mental Health Board are appointed by each of the five county supervisors, who may appoint up to four members each. Members are chosen to represent four major groups – consumers, family members, mental health professionals and the community at-large. Currently there are fourteen appointed members, including Nancy Borchard – Chair, Patricia Roach – 1st Vice Chair, Irene Mellick – 2nd Vice Chair, Jerry Harris – Secretary – who form the Executive Committee.

Mission of the Ventura County Mental Health Board:

The Mission of the Mental Health Board is to serve as a liaison between the Community, Behavioral Health Department and the Board of Supervisors, to evaluate needs, review programs and monitor progress, to make recommendations concerning mental health issues, to educate and advocate for access to and delivery of effective mental health services.

Roles and Duties:

The roles and duties of any local mental health board is to review and evaluate the community's mental health needs, services, facilities and special problems, review any county agreements entered into pursuant to section 5650, advise the governing body (BOS) and the local mental health director as to any aspect of the local mental health program, review and approve the procedure used to ensure citizen and professional involvement at all stages of the planning process, submit an annual report to the governing body (BOS) on the needs and

performance of the county's mental health system, review and make recommendations on applicants for the appointment of a local director of mental health services, review and comment on the county's performance outcome data and communicate its finding to the California Mental Health Planning Council.

Mental Health Board 2006-2007 Goals:



Among the MHB goals are: 1 – Provide oversight and evaluation of MHSA funded programs. 2 – Monitor development of next round of MHSA funding preparations to determine best ways to lift barriers to utilization of funds. 3 – Continue contract quarterly review and site visits. 4 – Review and advise BHD on agreements with other agencies. 5 Review and give recommendations concerning all BHD services and delivery of service. 6 – Gather and review data on psychiatric hospitalizations in Ventura County. 7 – Review process by which mental health care is accessed and identify what helps or hinders process. 8 – Review and approve the procedures used to ensure citizen and professional involvement at all stages of the planning process. 9 – Review and comment on the county's performance outcome data and communicate findings to the California Mental Health Planning Council. 10 – Set up one joint Mental Health board and Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board meeting per year.

MHSA oversight:

One of the MHB's primary responsibilities is to provide oversight for the MHSA funded programs. Five groups meet monthly to review and plan: the MHB Older Adults Committee – chaired by Irene Mellick, the MHB Adult and Housing Committee – chaired by Lou Matthews and Karyn Bates, the MHB Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Committee – chaired by Judith Walker and Dave Holmboe, the MHB Children's Committee – chaired by Pamela Roach, and the MHB Education and Outreach Workgroup – chaired by Irene Mellick. Each of these committees has developed its own mission statement and yearly goals.

The 2006-2007 goals for the MHSA oversight committees sound promising. For the Children's Services Committee, the goals include: 1 – Research the number of children twelve years of age and under who require hospitalization. 2 – Investigate alternatives to hospitalization for this age group, due to the lack of beds in Ventura County, and shortage of beds in Southern California. 3. Foster

the development of support groups for siblings and children of the mentally ill. The TAY Services Committee has adopted goals, some of which are: 1 – Observe and provide feedback in the development and implementation of the TAY drop-in Wellness and Recovery Center. 2 – Help transitional age youth families and community members learn about and access available resources. 3 – Advocate for the development of best practices programs, services and resources in providing a county-wide continuum of care. The Education and Outreach Workgroup hopes to provide outreach to faith-based communities, develop an anti-stigma campaign, and assemble a packet of resource information adapted to specific age groups. The Adult and Housing Committee is encouraging the development of a full continuum of quality housing, support and treatment options, ranging from independent housing to an Institute for Mental Disease (IMD – locked facility), encouraging affordable access to public transit systems and improved routes and hours of operation to better serve BHD clientele. This committee also is urging the development of a single point of responsibility for connecting behavioral health clients to service when discharged from private and public hospitals and other facilities.



Meetings, agendas, minutes:

MHB General Meetings are held monthly, the 3rd Monday of each month from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Behavioral Health Department's Williams Drive Training Room, 1911 Williams Drive, Oxnard. MHB agendas and minutes are posted on the Behavioral Health website at:

<http://www.vchca.org/mh/mhboard.htm>.

To receive copies of Board and/or Committee meeting agendas and minutes, contact: Cheryl Dugan, Management Assistant, Ventura County Behavioral Health, 1911 Williams Drive, Suite 200, Oxnard, CA 93036, or phone (806) 981-1115. ❖

"I am only one, But still I am one. I cannot do everything, But still I can do something; And because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

Keller, Helen American author and lecturer (1880–1968)

VCCF AWARDS MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE GRANT TO NAMI VENTURA COUNTY'S COURT EDUCATION PROGRAM

In August NAMI the Ventura County Community Foundation announced the recipients of its competitive Mental Health Initiative Grant process. NAMI Ventura County's grant request was funded in full, so that \$8,000 will be used to help develop a Court Education Program for Ventura County.

The Ventura County Community Foundation established the Mental Health Initiative (MHI) to encourage private philanthropy to respond to the increasing needs for mental health services, focusing on what affects those suffering from mental health problems in Ventura County. The 2007 MHI focused on three categories: paraprofessional training, education and outreach, and partnership building. NAMI's proposal addressed the areas of education and outreach.

During the MIOCR development process, it was noted among the participants that frequently the mental health professionals and court personnel seemed to be "talking a different language". In response to this need, NAMI will use the MHI grant to develop course materials, train a teaching team, and conduct workshops so that those in the judicial system who interact with the mentally ill and their families, are better able to empathize and communicate, to serve the cause of justice for those suffering with mental illness. ❖

PARITY BILL NEEDS PUSHING!

S558 IS THE MENTAL ILLNESS INSURANCE PARITY BILL. Its sponsors, Senators Pete Domenic (R-NM), Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) and Mike Enzi (R-WY) are continuing to try to expedite quick action on the bill.

Advocacy helps. Urge our Senators to support S 558 and oppose any attempt to block immediate passage of S 558 or seek additional changes. The revised version of S 558 resolves many of the concerns about state preemption that were raised by the original version.

To read more about the Senate effort to pass Mental Health Parity, go to this web site:

<http://capwiz.com/nami/utr/1/GZPMHXMGI/EXCFHMXMLX/1348069661> ❖

SUPPORT GROUPS FOR CONSUMERS/CLIENTS

Please note – These groups are for consumers/clients. Family member support groups are listed separately.

Depression/Bipolar Support Groups:

Ventura: DBSA Support Group meets every Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Bible Fellowship Church, 6950 Ralston Street (& Johnson Drive), Building 300, Room 301, Ventura. For more information, call (805) 201-0619. See: <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/DBSAVentura/>.

Ventura: DBSA Support Group meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 2 p.m.- 4 p.m. At the Adult Wellness and Recovery Center, 56 E. Main Street (at Ventura Avenue in Ventura). For directions and information, call (805) 671-5038

Oak Park: The Conejo Valley DBSA Depression Support Groups meets every Monday from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Church of the Epiphany, 5450 Churchwood Drive (Churchwood & Kanan), Oak Park. Watch for sign “CVDSG”. Info: Vincent F. Caimano, Ph.D., (818)707-9799 home, (818)292-8551 office.

MORE SUPPORT GROUPS ARE FORMING. WATCH HERE FOR LISTINGS.

SUPPORT GROUPS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

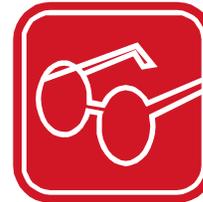
Please note –These groups are for family members. Consumer/client support groups are listed separately.

NAMI in Camarillo – Meets at 5:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month at St. Columba’s Episcopal Church, 1251 Las Posas Rd., Camarillo. The meeting is prior to the General Meeting. Info: (805)641-2426.

NAMI in Thousand Oaks – Meets at 7:00 p.m. the 3rd Monday of each month at 72 Moody Court in Thousand Oaks (Mental Health Adult Services Center). Info: (805)641-2426.

NAMI in Ventura – Meets at 6:30 p.m., the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month at College United Methodist Church, 4300 Telegraph Road, Ventura. Info: (805)641-2426.

MORE SUPPORT GROUPS ARE FORMING. WATCH HERE FOR LISTINGS.



Ventura County Behavioral Health Outpatient Service Sites

If you live in:
Ojai or Ventura (excluding
Zip code 93004)

Contact:
Ventura Outpatient Clinic
300 Hillmont Avenue
Ventura, CA 93003

The Officer of the Day
652-6768

If you live in:
Santa Paula, Fillmore,
Piru or Ventura 93004 only

Contact:
Santa Paula Outpatient Clinic
333 W. Harvard Blvd.
Santa Paula, CA 93060

The Officer of the Day
933-4868

If you live in:
Oxnard, Port Hueneme
Or El Rio

Contact:
Oxnard Outpatient Clinic
1911 Williams Dr., Ste 110
Oxnard, CA 93036

The Officer of the Day
981-4200

If you live in:
Camarillo, Thousand Oaks,
And Ventura County areas
Of Agoura, Westlake,
Bell Canyon

Contact:
Conejo Outpatient Clinic
72 Moody Court
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

The Officer of the Day
777-3500

If you live in:
Simi Valley or Moorpark

Contact
Simi Valley Outpatient Clinic
3150 Los Angeles Avenue
Simi Valley, CA 93065

The Officer of the Day
577-0830

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Ventura, CA 93002-5510
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SAVE THE DATE!!
NOVEMBER 9, 2007
5:30 - 9:00 P.M
NAMI VENTURA COUNTY
&
VENTURA COUNTY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
INSTALLATION DINNER, CASINO NIGHT AND SILENT
AUCTION

