



nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Southern Arizona

SINCE 1983



**FIND HELP.
FIND HOPE.**

**February, 2021
Volume 39: Issue 1**

NAMISA is a Qualified Charitable Organization for the AZ Tax Credit. Now you can help people with mental illness and their loved ones and receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit.



Credits are available for a maximum of \$400 single taxpayers and \$800 married filing jointly. You have until 4/15/21 to make your 2020 tax year

It's a Date! NAMIWalks Your Way is Virtual April 10, 2021

"NAMIWalks Your Way" is the new name for our annual premier fundraiser to end stigma, and raise awareness and funds for NAMI Southern Arizona. As a grassroots non-profit without state or federal funding, this annual event supports our no-cost advocacy, education, training and support programs for all in our community affected by mental illness.

We've had to go "virtual" again due to the pandemic, but our walkers were loyal and enthusiastic last year as we reached 82% of our \$150,000 goal. We're keeping the same goal this year and hope to reach beyond it. It's up to you to get us there!



You can register as an individual or you can start a team and be a captain or a participant on that team. Simply go to www.namiwalks.org/southernarizona and click on the REGISTER NOW! Button. If you would just like to donate, click on the button

next to it!

Once you've registered, you can personalize your page with your "story," a photo, your goal, why you're walking to raise funds for NAMI Southern Arizona and even link to your Facebook page so you can easily ask your followers to help you reach your goal! It's easy and fun.



We're excited about the new NAMIWalks Your Way. As in years past, there are contests for individuals and teams with added interaction as we've adapted to our "virtual" style. If you look on the RESOURCES page, you'll find information on fundraising, team building and how to add a Facebook Fundraiser to your Facebook page.

Be sure to subscribe to our NAMIWalks updates in our weekly e-blast at www.namisa.org (on the bottom of the homepage). That is where you'll hear about new contests and other important updates as they occur. We look forward to your participation in 2021!

HIGHLIGHTS

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Advisory Council
- 5 - Volunteer Spotlight: Lana Otkina**
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- 7 - NAMIWalks Sponsorship**

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Contact Us

namisa@namisa.org
namisa.org

Business Hours

Monday - Friday
9 AM to 5 PM



From the Executive Director

After a hurricane comes a rainbow, we have arrived at a new year, a time for renewal and hope. When I watched the presidential inauguration and listened to the songs performed on the steps of the Lincoln memorial and around the country of hope and unity, I was extremely moved. A few lyrics struck me, better days are coming; its times like these we learn to live again; live and dream, laugh and make new memories. We are all Americans and we are more alike than different and we are truly better together!

We must all do our part to help those in need. Check on your friends, neighbors, family and co-workers to see how they are doing, see what they need, and if you are able lend them a helping hand. Perhaps they need you to bring or buy them groceries. Perhaps you have skills to repair something they cannot afford to fix to help them remain in their home. Even if we are not able to help financially, we all have skills, time and humanity and now more than ever we need to help our community recover from a horrible pandemic, economic downturn and a great deal of isolation.

We know that as coronavirus cases continue to climb in Pima County so does the mental health crisis. Pima County Health Department released a report regarding the increase in suicides countywide. There was a 67% increase in suicides among minors 12-17, and a 57% increase in adults ages 50-59. At a recent meeting of the Behavioral Health Coalition Meeting Susie Hune, CEO of Casa de los Niños stated that the greatest increase in suicidal ideation and substance abuse was in the 6-12 year old age group. This should alarm all of us. In 2022 the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline will be available by dialing 988, making this the number to call anywhere in the United States for mental health emergencies, just as 911 is for all emergencies now. We will keep you posted on how you can support establishing 988 in Arizona.

At the start of January through our mental health block grant, we were able to hire a new youth and family advocate Kristen Lindgren to assist children and their families find resources. A major goal of this position is to work more closely with our Ending the Silence (ETS) program in the schools and youth organizations. She will be developing a system to refer youth to NAMI SA who are experiencing mental health issues and in some instances first episode psychosis. NAMI SA has an agreement with the EPICenter (Early Psychosis Intervention Center) at the University of Arizona to prioritize youth referred by NAMI SA who may be displaying symptoms of psychosis for an evaluation. They work with Individuals ages 15-35 who are early in the course of a psychotic illness and are willing to travel to EPICenter for clinical services and are eligible to participate. Additionally, individuals must have a family member who is willing to participate in the family education and support program.

EPICenter is a community mental health program offering specialized treatment for persons early in the course of a psychotic illness, such as Psychosis NOS, Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective, and Bipolar Disorder with Psychotic Features. Signs of these illnesses can include trouble with reality testing, paranoia, hallucinations, delusions, disorganization, odd behavior or thinking, isolating emotional changes, and difficulty with work or school. Their mission is to support their members, reduce the impact of early psychosis through symptom alleviation, and reintegration into their community. At EPICenter members and their family have the opportunity to discuss their concerns, receive evidence-based specific treatment, get help with educational and professional goals, and be part of a supportive community. As with physical illness, treatment early in the course of mental illness, such as psychosis, can lead to better outcomes. The longer the illness is left untreated, the greater the disruption to the person's ability to meet the demands of transition into adulthood: school, work, meeting new people, and becoming independent.

If people are struggling with their mental health NAMI Southern Arizona is here to listen, find needed resources and help families heal each other and themselves. I for one believe better days are coming!

Join us on April 10, 2021 for our 15th annual (and second virtual) NAMIWalks Southern Arizona event, help us raise the funds to continue to support the important work we do for people with mental illness and their loved ones.



NAMI Southern Arizona No-Cost Programs & Services

EDUCATION

General Presentations*: We provide presentations on NAMI programs and services as well as about mental illness in general. *(on hold due to Covid 19— check our website, sign up for our weekly e-blast or contact staff for updates)*

Family to Family*: A no cost, 8-class course for family and friends of adults with mental illness. *For information email Judy Kowalick at jkowalick@namisa.org (Currently only available via Zoom)*

Homefront: a six-session, on line education program for family and friends of Military Service Members and Veterans with mental health conditions. To enroll go to www.nami.org/Support-Education/Mental-Health-Education/NAMI-Homefront

Peer to Peer (P2P)*: A no-cost, 8 class, peer-led, Zoom recovery education course open to any person with serious mental illness. *For information email Yazmin Garcia at ygarcia@namisa.org*

NAMI Basics: A no-cost, 6-class course for parents and caregivers of children with mental illness. *For information email Ann Lettes at alettes@namisa.org (Currently only available via Zoom)*

Ending the Silence: A no-cost, 50 minute presentation designed to give students an opportunity to learn about mental illness through discussion and short videos. *Currently only available via Zoom. For more information email Ariane Davaul at adavaul@namisa.org*

In Our Own Voice*: A presentation given by individuals with mental illness providing their testimonies. *For more information email Judi Maikoff at jmaikoff@namisa.org (Currently available via Zoom and limited in-person presentation)*

ADVOCACY

(Due to Covid-19, our Advocates are only available by phone M-F, 9am-5pm. We currently do not have a bilingual advocate.)

We have Advocates for adults and youth. Our Advocates are available to act as your second voice and to help you:

- Understand your rights whether you are an individual with mental illness or a family member
- Obtain mental health services and information
- Work with the public/private mental health and legal systems

SUPPORT

(Support groups are only available on Zoom at this time.) For more information email supportgroups@namisa.org)

Family Support Groups*: Provide the sharing of experiences, knowledge, hope and coping skills for family members and friends with a loved one with mental illness.

NAMI Connection*: A weekly recovery focused group for adults living with mental illness. *(Currently only available via Zoom)*

Heart to Heart: A friendship program for people with mental illness. Volunteers are matched with individuals who have mental illness and are trained to talk on the phone until COVID-19 allows for more contact. *For more information email Lollie Butler at butler24@cox.net*

NAMI FaithNet: Supports faith communities who want to develop a mental health ministry and educate congregations about mental illness and available community resources. For more information visit www.nami.org/faithnet

* may also be available in Spanish

Bring your used HP, Cannon or Collins printer cartridges (no laser) to our office and NAMISA receives credit for recycling them!



PLANET GREEN RECYCLE
RAISE FUNDS BY RECYCLING INK CARTRIDGES

You can support NAMISA by shopping here:



Smile.amazon.com



Goodshop.com

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Meet Our Newest Staff Member— Kristen Lindgren

In early January, Kristen Lindgren joined our staff to fill a newly created position—Youth and Child Advocate. This part-time position has been funded by a generous grant from a SAMHSA block grant.

Kristen is in remission from mental illness after suffering since childhood. She wishes to be involved in NAMI to help others with similar challenges. She is passionate about mental health and seeks to make a difference in Tucson and surrounding communities. She has worked and volunteered in community resources and nonprofit organizations benefiting children and families since relocating to Arizona in 2016. Kristen has a passion for helping others



Ensuring Your Rights

The Independent Oversight Committees (IOC), previously referred to as the Human Rights Committees (HRC), was established in the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) on August 3, 2018. The requirements for the IOCs are



defined in the Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) 41-3801 through 41-3804. The purpose of each committee is to ensure the rights of clients are protected, review

incidents of possible abuse, neglect or denial of a client's rights, and make recommendations to the director and the legislature regarding laws, rules, policies, procedures and practices to ensure the protection of clients receiving behavioral health and developmental disability services. Committee members come from diverse backgrounds and fulfill many requirements.

Meeting agendas, minutes and annual reports of the IOC are available on line at <https://ioc.az.gov/committees/ancccs>. If interested in joining the Southern IOC you may fill out the online application and email to Chairman Ken Karrels at kkarrels@aol.com or Vice Chair Barbara Carling at bcarling02@msn.com.

NAMI So Az Board meetings are held on the
4th Monday of each month, 5:30pm-7pm
via Zoom. To receive an invite, email
CBickelmann@namisa.org





Svetlana (Lana) Otkina

By Donna Derrick, Volunteer Coordinator & Office Manager

Lana has been a volunteer at NAMI SA for 10 years. She enjoys coming to the office twice a week to fold brochures and help with other tasks. She has continued to support NAMI SA during our office closure working under the strict limitations implemented because of COVID-19.

20 years ago, Lana's family came here from Belarus. Life there was a challenge and because she was a nurse, it was difficult to get the papers she needed to

come to America. One of her proudest moments was when she received her United States Citizenship. Now, Lana works as a home caregiver. She loves her job & her volunteer work because they give her the satisfaction of helping others.

You are a trouper. Thank you Lana!



Community & Nationwide Resources

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Publicly-funded Behavioral Health Services:

To find a provider, contact Arizona Complete Health 1-888-788-4408 (TTY/TDY 711)

Connections Health Solutions Crisis Center

2802 E District St, Tucson

1-520-301-2400

Substance Use Concerns or for Detox:

Community Bridges

Toole Access Point

250 S. Toole Ave. Suite B Tucson AZ 85701

520-323-1312

When you just need to talk:

The Warm Line, Peer Recovery non-emergency support by Hope, Inc.

520-770-9909 or 844-733-9912

Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Includes a Hotline for Veterans

Domestic Violence:

Emerge! Center Against Domestic Violence

Crisis Line—24/7

1-888-428-0101

WEBSITES

Crisis Intervention Team

www.citinternational.org

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)

www.dbsalliance.org

Mental Health America

www.nmha.org

Mental Health Ministries

www.mentalhealthministries.net

National Alliance on Mental Illness

www.nami.org

National Institute of Mental Health

www.nimh.nih.gov

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

www.samhsa.gov

Mental Health.gov

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS INFO

If you are in immediate crisis, whether it be for you or your loved one, call:

Community Wide 24-hour crisis line:

(520) 622-6000 or (866) 495-6735

Or if you need to call 911, ask for a *Crisis Intervention Team* (CIT) Officer who is equipped in handling a mental health crisis situation or request the *Mental Health Support Team* (MHST).

For More Community Resources:

Information and Referral Helpline

(877) 211-8661 or 211



(updated 7/2020)

Peer Corner - *Personal Stories of Recovery and Hope* — Vana Dee Lewis

My name is Vana Dee Lewis. I'm a part of the Indigenous tribe here in Tucson called the Tohono O'odham Nation. I was raised on the South Side of Tucson, Arizona.

I was exposed to A LOT of violence and personal abuse by the time I was six years old. My mother couldn't help me as she struggled with her own mental health and my father was no where to be found in his own addiction.

As far back as I can remember I struggled severely with depression, anxiety and thoughts of suicide.

I remember at the age of 15 years old the feeling of no longer wanting to live. I no longer cared to live because I didn't think of myself as valuable, as person of worth. But I did know I had survived a lot. I realized how my mental health played a huge role in my survival. AND THAT'S A BIG DEAL.



One day I tried to soothe my soul from the thoughts of suicide by watching the sunset.

**Working
On
Respecting
The
Human
You...**

In that moment I realized I needed help mentally. I realized suicide is a permanent action to a temporary issue. I realized that my existence is pure proof that I have great value!

I realized my life is W.O.R.T.H.Y of living. Not only is life worth living but my mental health issue is WORTHY of understanding and worthy of my attention. Everyday I remind myself....W.O.R.T.H.Y....

I'm worthy. You're worthy. We are worthy.

Taking care of my mental health is a blessing now—not burden and so very worth it. I truly thank NAMI Southern Arizona for the support here locally with my journey of recovery everyday.

My name is Vana Lewis. Blessings, Peace and good health to you all.



Saying Good-bye to Trish MacFarland

Trish MacFarland, a valued friend and volunteer at NAMI Southern Arizona, passed away in January due to complications from Covid-19.

Trish started teaching Peer-to-Peer classes for NAMI SA in August, 2015 and continued until October, 2017. She was always willing to help NAMI-SA; volunteering to teach a class, folding brochures and newsletters, answering the phone, at the NAMIWalk—wherever she was needed.

Yazmin Garcia, Peer-to-Peer Program Manager wrote: she had a wonderful sense of humor and a noble heart full of compassion and love. Love for her family and her cats. She loved bowling and, of course, helping others.

**“EVERY GREAT DREAM BEGINS WITH A DREAMER.
ALWAYS REMEMBER, YOU HAVE WITHIN YOU THE STRENGTH, THE
PATIENCE, AND THE PASSION TO REACH FOR THE STARS—
TO CHANGE THE WORLD.”
— HARRIET TUBMAN**



We are so grateful to our NAMI Walks 2020 sponsors! You were so important in helping us raise funds to support our programs and services.

In 2021, we will be offering more "virtual" visibility for our sponsors on our walk website www.namiwalks.org/southernarizona and in all our e-communications throughout the walk season. Without our sponsors, we could not reach our goal of \$150K. If you would like to become a sponsor email namisa@namisa.org or call us at 520-622-5182 and we will send you a sponsor brochure and information packet.

There is still time to sponsor, donate, sign up a team or register as an individual fundraiser!

Simply go to namiwalks.org/southernarizona.

Thank You 2020 NAMI Walks Your Way Sponsors!

NATIONAL SPONSORS



MEDIA SPONSORS



We have amazing support in our community. Please thank our sponsors whenever you have an opportunity.

It's because of you and our sponsors that NAMI Southern Arizona is able to provide no-cost advocacy, education, training and support for people in our community affected by mental illness! NAMI Southern Arizona does not receive funding from the State of Arizona or the federal government and all our services come with a cost. Your participation in NAMI Walks will ensure that we are able to keep these services staffed and supplied.

The website will remain open for two months after the walk until June 10th.

February is National Black History Month

March 6—Tucson Festival of Books Scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, March 7, 2021, book lovers will be able to join free, live author sessions for kids and adults with select sessions on demand. For more info visit www.tucsonfestivalofbooks.org

April 10—15th annual NAMIWalks Join us as we present it “virtually” at www.namiwalks.org/southernarizona.

You can register to participate as an individual, start a team or join a team, or simply donate! This fundraiser ensures funding for NAMI SA advocacy, education and support programming. Please help us reach our \$150,000 goal!

NAMI Southern Arizona **DEPENDS** on YOU.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP: **BECOME A MEMBER, VOLUNTEER OR DONATE.**

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Our Mission: NAMI Southern Arizona works to improve the quality of life for all those affected by mental illness.