



nami

Southern Arizona

National Alliance on Mental Illness

SINCE 1983



FIND HELP.
FIND HOPE.

May, 2021

Volume 39: Issue 2

May Is Mental Health Month—You Are Not Alone

NAMI encourages speaking out about mental health as a way to reduce stigma and know that “*you are not alone.*” One story on their website at www.nami.org/Personal-Stories was written by Tega Orhorhoro and reads: Growing up in my African household, we wouldn't bring up feelings of discomfort or depression because the answer was always the same: pray about it.

Pray the depression away. This was the mindset I was conditioned to believe when it came to my mental health issues. I was always told to be strong and to never show weakness even when you are experiencing hardships.

“It was scary to show weakness because, as an African, I should never be weak.”

“My first panic attack was in college. I was a freshman getting ready for finals week, and I was part of a program that was designed to help students during the transition from high school to college. This program cared more about passing grades and external factors than the pressure and stress that would come with the transition and changing expectations. I tried to talk to my

mentor about what I was feeling during this time, but those feelings were brushed over many times, and I again felt the outside pressure to ignore and compartmentalize my feelings while focusing on my academic performance.

“My anxiety attacks would come soon after and my depression would also get worse. I was scared to open up and talk to my friends and family about what was happening to me. It was scary to show weakness because, as an African, I should never be weak.

“A friend once told me, **you are never weak when you seek help.** This was the push that I needed to talk to my school therapist. I talked about my childhood trauma of losing my mom at a young age. We talked about moving from a different country and how not having family close anymore would affect me. We talked about a lot of different issues that I was scared to open up about, but I knew that it was a safe place to be vulnerable.

“Seeking help for my mental health has helped me so much that I now talk about it openly on my different platforms. I

remind people of color to seek help when they need it, and I talk about mental health awareness and resources. I know this to be true: we can't be scared to talk about our mental health because of the way we grew up. Speak up about the issues you are facing and find strength in vulnerability.”

YOU ARE
NOT
ALONE

Now more than ever, we need to find ways to stay connected with our community. No one should feel alone or without the information, support and help they need.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 - Executive Director's Message**
- 3 - NAMI So AZ Programs**
- 4 - Remembering Volunteer Ron Holcomb**
- 5 - Peer Corner-personal story**
- 6 - NAMI SA Presents at NAMICON 2021, Legacy of Hope**
- 7 - NAMIWalks SA 2021**

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Contact Us

namisa@namisa.org
www.namisa.org

Business Hours

Monday - Friday
9 AM to 5 PM



Christina Bickelmann

From the Executive Director

2021 is starting to look like a great year; vaccines are rolling out for everyone over 16 who wants them and things are starting to open up a bit. Our office has not yet opened to the public, however, staff is starting to work more hours in the office and we are working toward opening by late summer or early fall. We recently received a grant from the Stonewall Foundation to expand our front porch area, which will allow us to meet with clients outside and provide a space for people to wait as an alternative to the lobby. We look forward to getting started on that project very soon.

Our classes and support groups continue to be on Zoom until it is safer to meet in person, which we hope will also be this fall. As our Ending the Silence and In Our Own Voice presenters become fully vaccinated we will be starting those presentations in person. We anticipate continuing some classes and support groups on Zoom to allow those with transportation, time constraints or living out of the Tucson metro area to be able to participate.

Our NAMIWalks was held virtually for the second year, on April 10th and was a very successful fundraising effort. We received a very special donation from the Koch family in memory of their son Brian who took his life earlier this year. They saw our article in the Arizona Daily Star about raising funds to support mental health and decided to donate \$40,000 to make sure we made it to our \$150,000 goal, which we have. All of the money raised stays with NAMI Southern Arizona to support our no-cost programs and services. We are already setting our date for 2022 and expect to be in-person back at Kennedy Park again next April. We have missed seeing everyone and we can't wait to get you all together for the largest mental health walk in Tucson in 2022!

Now to switch gears a bit, I believe we are in a special time in history where racial injustice, discrimination in all forms and illness on a massive scale have intersected and we must meet each other in the middle to heal, and to work together to denounce hate and judgement.

I had a bit of an epiphany recently, that what we have faced this past year with COVID-19 has truly tested our resolve. It puts many things in perspective. Illness does not discriminate, it does not care what color you are, your gender preference, how much money you make, your age, or what country you live in, we are all vulnerable. We have had to acknowledge that our collective recoveries and health are important to everyone's well-being.

Just as no one can escape a pandemic unaffected, it is time to stop discriminating against all people affected by mental illness and more than time for nurturing and support.

I believe it is our moment in time to acknowledge illnesses of any type are no fault of our own. Families and individuals affected by mental illness like anyone with any other illness have had to develop gratitude and resolve to move forward. Life will always have its struggles, however, I believe in the people we help and give hope. We believe that everyone has talent and something to offer and by facing adversity true strength evolves, I have seen it and I believe.

Mental illness does not define you or where you are capable of going in life- let NAMI Southern Arizona provide the tools, education and support to help you live your best life.

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.

Family to Family*: An 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 in English or Spanish)*

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*

ADVOCACY

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

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



A Big THANK YOU to HAMSTRA HELPING HANDS who volunteered on Saturday, May 1 (May Day) to stop by NAMISA and pull weeds, rake and sweep our property which was littered with weeds and trash.

HAMSTRA AIR CONDITIONING has been in business in Tucson since 1983 and their employees feel it's important to give back to the community in which they do business.

If only MORE Tucson businesses felt that way...

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June 10th is the last day to donate to 2021 NAMI Walks Southern Arizona. Your support is still needed! Please go to www.namiwalks.org/southernarizona



Volunteers
do not necessarily
have the time;
they just have the *heart*.



We Say Farewell to Ron Holcomb—NAMI SA Friend, Volunteer and Supporter



At 73, Ron Holcomb has succumbed to his battle with cancer. Ron and his wife

Martha retired to Tucson 11 years ago. He had been a Post Master in Texas. They found NAMI Southern Arizona and signed up as Outreach Volunteers manning the tables and brochures at presentations and events.

With a quick sense of humor and a smile for everyone, he will be missed by all who volunteered at his side. Thank you Ron!

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.

Peer Corner - Personal Stories of Recovery and Hope

My name is Christabel Apostol and I am proud to say that I am now a mental health advocate. Born in The Philippines I have lived in Brunei, Phoenix, Mesa, and Louisiana. In 2000, I moved to Tucson and have been happy here ever since.

Diagnosed with bipolar at thirteen, I faced many struggles and at times felt defeated. With episodes and hospital stays, life and school were difficult for me. I hid my illness. I didn't want anyone to know; I would smile through a thousand tears. I pretended to be happy but inside I was a mess. I felt awful and sad about the stigma associated with my illness. Now I realize that being bipolar is not my fault or anything to be ashamed of.



Somehow I knew to trust in my struggles. I now know the freedom of being transparent about my illness; I have the desire to help others. I want people to know that despite their illness, they can achieve anything and be successful. I set goals and have achieved them graduating from Pima CC with a Liberal Arts degree in 2008 and in 2012 from The University of Arizona in Elementary Education. My parents were very proud of me. My children are proud of me, and I was proud of me.

I have two teenagers that I adore. They say being a mother is the hardest job of all, being yourself shouldn't be. Let's help reduce the stigma and be stigma free!

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

Pima Council on Aging Caregiver Services
520-790-7262

Veterans Crisis Line
800-273-TALK (8255)

WEBSITES

Anxiety & Depression Association of America
www.adaa.org

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

Suicide Prevention Resource Center
www.sprc.org

[Mental Health.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.gov)

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS INFO

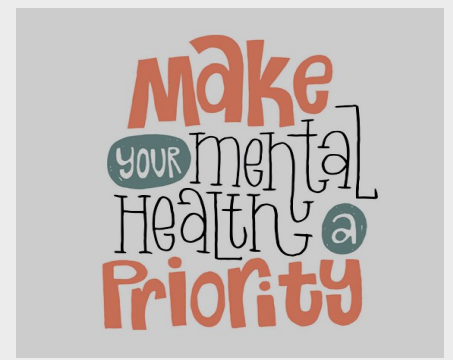
If you are in immediate crisis, whether it be for you or your loved one, call:

Community Wide 24-hour crisis line:
520-622-6000 or 866- 495-6735
(TDD/TTY: 1-877-613-2076)

Crisis Text Line: Text TALK to 741741
Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to talk to a counselor

Or if you need to call 911, ask for a *Crisis Intervention Trained (CIT)* Officer who is equipped in handling a mental health crisis situation

For More Community Resources:
Information and Referral Helpline
(877) 211-8661 or 211



(updated 4/2021)

LEAVE A LEGACY OF HOPE by Mary Ann Johnson, Immediate Past President Board of Directors

Many of us have a very personal connection to NAMI Southern Arizona because of the ways that mental illness has affected our own lives and the lives of people who are important to us. Like many of you, I found a wealth of knowledge, skills, support and friendship through the formal programs and the informal networks that NAMI provides and I want to ensure that this work continues into the future. That's why I became a member of NAMI Southern Arizona's *Legacy of Hope Society*.

NAMI Southern Arizona established the *Legacy of Hope Society* in 2012 to honor those who make a planned gift. ***A planned gift is one that you make by way of a will, trust, beneficiary designation or through a special charitable annuity or trust arrangement.***

In 2016 NAMI Southern Arizona also established a permanent **Endowment Fund** that is managed by the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona. The policies of the Endowment Fund prohibit spending from the principal. Only the income can be used to meet the purposes of the endowment.

You can designate **NAMI Southern Arizona** or the **NAMI Southern Arizona Endowment Fund** as a beneficiary in your will or trust or as a beneficiary (or partial beneficiary) on a life insurance policy, IRA, 401(k) or any other financial asset. It is also possible to establish a charitable trust or charitable gift annuity designating NAMI Southern Arizona or the NAMI Southern Arizona Endowment Fund as the ultimate beneficiary.

How can you get started? Discuss your options with a legal, financial or other qualified professional advisor to evaluate your unique tax and financial circumstances.

To download our brochure go to <https://www.namisa.org/planned-giving/> For more information or to let us know that you have already designated NAMI Southern Arizona in your estate plan, please contact Christina Bickelmann, Executive Director at 520-622-5582 or email cbickelmann@namisa.org.

NAMI Southern Arizona is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization 86-0405977.



NAMI SA Ending the Silence to Present at 2021 NAMICON! - by Ariane Davaul

NAMI Southern Arizona's Ending the Silence was approved to present a virtual workshop at this year's NAMICON with Raquel Goodrich from Text, Talk, Act! The name of our workshop is "Using Innovative Methods to Engage Youth and Connect Schools to Services".

Youth are experiencing added challenges to seeking mental health treatment, due to stigma, socioeconomic factors, cultural disparities, and COVID-19 shutdowns. NAMI Southern Arizona is building better systems of care by utilizing a text messaging platform that engages and amplifies youth voices and partnering with behavioral health providers to directly connect youth to services. Participants will learn how to utilize technology to more effectively engage youth and how to develop relationships to strengthen connections to local community resources.

The exact date and time of the workshop have not yet been decided but the dates for NAMICON are July 27th to 28th, 2021. The presentation will cover how ETS and TTA have collaborated with Casa De Los Niños to bring more services and easier

referrals to Southern Arizona families. The workshop will be presented by Raquel Goodrich - Text, Talk, Act CEO/Owner, Ariane Davaul – ETS Program Manager, and a Casa De Los Niños representative.

Virtual	July 27 – 28
NAMICON 2021	
Bringing People Together for Mental Health – The Time Is Now	

If you haven't attended a NAMICON before, this is the year to try it! A convenient, online experience means your internet connection gives you access to the event no matter where you are. NAMICON is only \$10 for

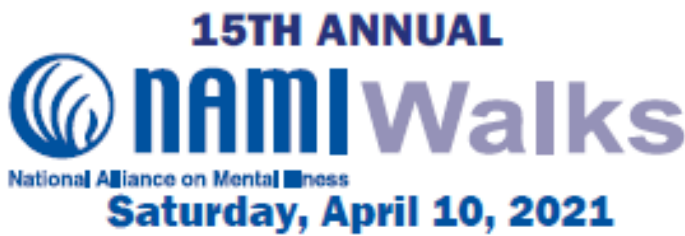
students and peers, \$15 for NAMI members, and \$25 for non-members. More info: <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Attend-the-NAMI-National-Convention>

2021 NAMIWalks Southern Arizona Finishes Over \$9,000 Above Our \$150,000 Goal

The Friday before our “virtual” walk on April 10, we received a call from a family in Green Valley who had read an article published in the Arizona Star about our NAMIWalks and our goal. At the time, we were only at \$110,000. Mr & Mrs Koch who had recently lost their son Brian to suicide, decided we needed to meet our goal and arrived at our office with a \$40,000 check! We can’t thank them enough for their generosity in remembering the loss of their son Brian by helping us raise the funds we need to continue providing NO COST education, advocacy and support to ALL in our community affected by mental illness.

Our 2021 Walk Stars!

- Mr & Mrs Koch—\$40,000
- Marsi Quigley—\$5,349
- Ardith Powell—\$5,090
- Mary Ann Johnson—\$3,545
- Christina Bickelmann—\$3,385
- Ann Lettes—\$1,805
- Eric Bergstrom—\$1,500
- Dawn Priestman—\$1,160
- Robert Baker—\$1,060
- Valeri Kading—\$1,000



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THANK YOU 2021 SPONSORS!
Benefiting NAMI Southern Arizona



Some of our walkers walking “their way” are Callie Jameson from sponsor Alkermes, Charlie Jernigan-Ethan’s Heaven, Christabel & Kuwannah at Reid Park and Mr & Mrs Koch-For Brian at NAMI SA. Check out our videos on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7x4bB2Lf9cW7F6ZSakIBSA>





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National Alliance on Mental Illness

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MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH—During May, NAMI Southern Arizona joins the national movement to raise awareness about mental health.

MAY 31—Memorial Day (office closed)

JUNE IS LGBTQ MONTH - Celebrating equality for all

JUNE 20—Father’s Day

JULY IS NATIONAL MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH—spreading awareness of the barriers of minority mental health and sharing stories from diverse communities

JULY 4—Independence Day (office closed July 5th)

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 improves the quality of life for all those affected by mental illness.