



NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY (www.namislo.org)

Volume 25

June 2009

Number 6

General Meeting.

GENERAL MEETING: Tuesday June 23 at 7:00 P.M. Come and learn about NAMI/T-MHA's Peer to Peer program in San Luis Obispo County. Peer to Peer is a NAMI National developed support program now administered by Transitions-Mental Health Association (T-MHA) in SLO county. This program is a great example of the cooperative efforts of NAMI and T-MHA in SLO County. You are welcome to bring "finger food" to share. Coffee and juice is provided.

The NAMISLOCO General Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month (except December and July) at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church on the corner of Pismo and Nipomo Sts., SLO. The *Facilitated Family Support Group* starts at 5:30 PM on the same evening and runs until 6:45 PM, so that those who want can attend both the support group and the meeting.

Beyond The Happy Faces

Breaking the stigma of mental illness

From The Gazette-Times by Kyle Odegard, February 11, 2009

Ross Szabo was a popular, A-student-athlete in high school, and traces of that are easy to see in the 30-year-old. But the charismatic Los Angeles resident also has struggled with bipolar disorder for half of his life. He attempted suicide as a teen. He still has bouts of depression about every year or so, and he still is getting treatment.

Szabo came to Oregon State University to raise awareness and to break stereotypes about mental health issues.

"People think of the worst-case scenarios when they think of mental health," Szabo told his audience.

Szabo is the director of youth outreach for the National Mental Health Awareness Campaign, and he frequently gives presentations at middle schools, high schools and colleges. Most people don't talk about mental health until a crisis happens, and Szabo said he hoped his new book, **Behind Happy Faces: Taking Charge of Your Mental Health**, would ease them through that process. "I wanted this book to normalize mental health," he said.

It's a serious disorder, and one that needs to be taken seriously, according to an American College Health Association survey. Taken in the spring of 2008, the survey indicated that 7.5 percent of OSU students said they'd seriously considered suicide in the past year; 1 percent actually attempted suicide during that time.

Yet many people having a mental health crisis often struggle in silence, Szabo said. They don't seek help because mental health is stigmatized as a character defect rather than recognized as a medical issue.

"It took me about six or seven years for me to accept the idea that I had bipolar disorder," Szabo said, in response to

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Help Needed

We need a volunteer to bring coffee and juice for the general meetings in June, Sept. and October. (Just need to make coffee and buy juice. Everything else is provided.) Please call Nancy Griffin for more info 543-9399.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

12:00 till 6:00 PM, JUNE 26, 2009, TMHA 25 YEAR Anniversary Celebration at Growing Grounds Farm, 3740 Orcutt Rd., San Luis Obispo. For more information please call 805-543-6071.

There are two vacancies on the mental health board for a consumer or family member. For more information, anyone interested could call **Jane at 781-4719.**

Year at a Glance

January thru June: Support Group and General Mtg, 4th Tuesday

July: Annual Picnic, July 22 **no Support Group or General Meeting**

August: Summer Vacation: no meeting, newsletter or support group

September: Support Group and General Meeting 4th Tuesday

October 3rd: Beautiful Minds Walk

October: Mental Illness Awareness Event: 4th Tuesday of October.

November: Support Group and General Meeting 4th Tuesday

December: Holiday Party: Dec 8, 2009 no Support Group/Gen. Mtg

Parents and Teachers as Allies

Parents and Teachers as Allies will be doing a training session this summer and **Lisa needs the names of those individuals interested in doing presentations at local schools.** If you are interested please contact Lisa at 788-0869 or lisakelley@hotmail.com.

The **San Luis County Mental Health Board** meets at 3:00 PM on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Behavioral Health Campus (old General Hospital). Contact the MHD office (Phone: 781-4719) to confirm date and room location.

NAMI NATIONAL CONFERENCE IS IN SAN FRANCISCO THIS YEAR ON July 6-9th. This would be a great year to attend.

NAMI-SLOCO Library:

We now have an on-line catalog of the books, tapes, CDs and DVDs in our extensive library.

Go to <http://www.namislo.org> and click on "Library"

No Kidding, Me Too!

Actor Pantoliano puts spotlight on mental illness stigma

From The Acorn by Paul Schott, February 12, 2009

Actor Joe Pantoliano remembers one of the greatest days of his life vividly. It was not when he landed the role of Cypher in The Matrix or when he won an Emmy for his memorable turn as troubled mobster Ralphie Cifaretto on The Sopranos. It happened a few years ago when he was diagnosed with clinical depression. When Mr. Pantoliano heard the news he was not devastated; instead he experienced "an instantaneous feeling of euphoria."

For years before, Mr. Pantoliano had been "falling apart," weighed down by the effects of undiagnosed depression. Plagued by alcoholism, severe loneliness, and thoughts of suicide, the veteran of such films as Risky Business, Midnight Run, and Memento mistakenly thought that professional success could bury his hurt. In a phone interview last week, Mr. Pantoliano, a Wilton resident, said, "I thought if I could make a million dollars, I'd feel better."

Now Mr. Pantoliano is on a mission to help the millions of other Americans who struggle with the shame and pain of mental illness, or "brain disease" as he prefers to call it. **The acclaimed actor is currently working on a documentary, which he directs and narrates, called "No Kidding, Me Too!" which shows how diagnosis and treatment can empower those with brain diseases to lead fulfilling lives.**

As well as chronicling Mr. Pantoliano's own battle with clinical depression, "No Kidding, Me Too!" prominently features young people who have struggled with depression, drug addiction, and self-injuring. Adolescents and young adults are particularly vulnerable to the harmful repercussions of undiagnosed brain diseases, says Mr. Pantoliano. He adds that with the documentary, he wants to teach young people that "it's cool to talk about your feelings."

Removing the social stigma of brain diseases or mental illness is also one of the goals of the organization that Mr. Pantoliano founded, also called "No Kidding, Me Too!" The name of Mr. Pantoliano's documentary and nonprofit comes from the hope that one day all people with brain diseases will feel comfortable sharing their story and that another person with a mental illness will respond, "No kidding, me too!"

Brain diseases constitute a huge threat, said Mr. Pantoliano. He cites statistics from the National Institute of Mental Health that one in four Americans suffers from mental illness at some point in their lives, and he adds that 18 American military veterans take their own lives every day because of brain diseases caused by war such as post-traumatic stress disorder. Despite these sobering numbers, Mr. Pantoliano points out the extent to which mental illness is still stigmatized, even in the medical profession. The brain "should have the same medical equality as the gall bladder," he said, "and it doesn't."

Mr. Pantoliano also urges those interested in helping his cause to go to the "No Kidding, Me Too!" Web site, www.nkm2.org. He especially encourages young people to help raise awareness of brain diseases, noting that "mental illness doesn't have the luxury of anonymity."

Source: The Acorn

Have You Paid Your Dues?

Thanks to all of you who have taken time to renew your NAMI membership. With each active membership, NAMI becomes that much stronger. For those of you pending, why not send in your membership check today? You and we will be glad you did!

Pam Zweifel, Membership Chair

(Continued from page 1 - Beyond the happy faces)

an audience member who said her daughter was resisting treatment.

Szabo said he hopes to make mental health part of a K-12 curriculum, the way the United States has focused on preventing drug abuse or obesity.

Steve Delmore came to the book discussion to learn more about mental health issues, partly because his niece recently was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Delmore said he also counsels young people at Suburban Christian Church in Corvallis. He has encountered many people in crisis during his 30 years of service with the Corvallis Fire Department.

Rachael Bergstad, 26, a financial aid processor for OSU, said she attended the book discussion because she had depression and anxiety issues in college because of family and financial troubles.

"There is more (mental health services) available than there used to be, and I can tell," Bergstad said.

Source: Gazette-Times

Beautiful Minds Walk VOLUNTEER HELPERS WANTED FOR NAMI SLOCO "BEAUTIFUL MINDS WALK"

A group of energetic folks is now planning this special event in recognition of the annual NAMI Mental Illness Awareness Week on October 3, 2009 at Laguna Lake Park in San Luis Obispo. Many helpers are needed to ensure that this ambitious event runs smoothly and provides a truly memorable experience for all who attend. To learn more and volunteer your help, please call Marcia Bess at 805-481-4847.

Thank you Walter Heath for your excellent presentation of "Health Care for All" initiative and for answering our many questions at our May Meeting.



NAMI PEER-TO-PEER

PEER TO PEER NEWS: Peer-to-Peer Classes are led by mentors who have achieved recovery from mental illness and are now able to teach recovery coping strategies to others.

CALL FOR DETAILS AND RESERVATIONS (Required).
Peer-to-Peer Coordinator - Betty McGraw (541-5144 X 113)
Email BMcgraw@t-mha.org

NEW-Peer to Peer is now offering "WRAP" Group-Wellness and Recovery Action Plan: an educational course in the journey to recovery.

NAMI-SLOCO Presents "FAMILY-TO-FAMILY"



A Class offering:
Education and Support for Family Members
Whose Relative or Loved One Suffers from:

- MAJOR DEPRESSION
- BIPOLAR DISORDER (MANIC DEPRESSION)
- SCHIZOPHRENIA
- SCHIZOAFFECTIVE DISORDER
- PANIC DISORDER, or
- OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER
- OTHER RELATED DISORDERS

"Family-to-Family" provides up-to-date information & education on the diseases, their causes, & treatments available, as well as help & coping tools for you as the caregiver or loved one. The class is presented in 12 weekly meetings of 2.5 hours per evening.

THE CLASS IS FREE BUT PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED! CALL FOR DETAILS & RESERVATIONS for 2008/2009 Family-to-Family Coordinator - John Kimala 805-550-3889 JohnKimala@aol.com.

Congratulations to all of the new Family-to-Family graduates from the North County, South county and SLO classes.

The NAMI SLOCO executive board meets from 11:30 - 1:30 on the first Wednesday of the month at The Boysdon Room, Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, SLO .



REQUEST FOR A SPANISH-SPEAKING MEMBER INTERESTED IN TAKING TEACHER TRAINING FOR THE SPANISH FAMILY - TO - FAMILY CLASS.

Please contact John Klimala@ 550-3889/929-3299 if you are interested or know someone who is interested in training to become a Family-to-Family teacher in the Spanish-speaking community.

PARENTS AND TEACHERS AS ALLIES NEWS: - Congratulations to **Lisa, Phillip, Marcia, Madeleine, JoAnne** for presenting **Parents and Teachers as Allies** to the **Cuesta College Early Childhood Ed class on May 12 . One more presentation is scheduled for May.**



For more information, please contact Lisa Kelley, Coordinator for Parents and Teachers as Allies, at 788-0869.

NAMI Basics Education Program

The fundamentals of caring for you, your family and your child with mental illness

What is NAMI Basics?

NAMI Basics is the new signature education program for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illnesses. The program was developed around elements that have been extensively tested and found to be highly effective in the field, including:

- Recognition of mental illness as a continuing traumatic event for the child and the family
- Sensitivity to the subjective emotional issues faced by family caregivers and well children in the family
- Recognition of the need to help ameliorate the day-to-day objective burdens of care and management
- Gaining confidence and stamina for what can be a life-long role of family understanding and support
- Empowerment of family caregivers as effective advocates for their children

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT THE MENTAL HEALTH OF A CHILD OR TEEN? NAMI Basics can help. NAMI Basics is a FREE 6-week education class for Caregivers of Children and Adolescents with Behavioral/Mental Health issues

SLO County / T-MHA FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAMS

The County Family Advocates for Adult Mental Health Services offer **CONFIDENTIAL ASSISTANCE, INFORMATION, AND SUPPORT** to help improve the quality of life for families and caregivers, to help families and caregivers navigate the Mental Health system, and to help families and caregivers cope with the many challenges they face. Family Advocates also provide referrals and resources for further support and education.

San Luis Obispo County

Contact: Janice Holmes, Lead Family Advocate, Adult Services: 805-541-5144 x.171 or jholmes@t-mha.org. Office: 277 South St. Suite Y, San Luis Obispo, CA or Henry Herrera, Family Advocate, Adult Services (Se habla espanol), 805-541-5144 X 129 or hherrera@t-mha.org.

NAMI SLOCO extends its sincere appreciation to the El Paso de Robles Youth Correctional Facility Staff Benefit Fund for its most generous donation to NAMI SLOCO. We look forward to being financially able to offer more "NAMI Basics" classes to parents and caregivers of children and youth with SED or SMI as well as more "Parents and Teachers as Allies" presentations to education professionals this coming year.

DONATIONS GREATLY APPRECIATED. PLEASE MAKE DONATIONS TO: NAMI SLOCO, P.O. BOX 3158, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93403.

NAMI SLOCO (IRS ID# 77-0099671, CA non-profit # C1535087) is a 501(c)(3), charitable, non-profit, tax-exempt organization. Donations and contributions are tax-deductible as provided by law.

T-MHA YOUTH FAMILY PARTNER, FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP. For parents, guardians, and caregivers of minor children who experience emotional or behavioral problems

For more information please contact either Jackie Garza, Ph: 805-458-6388, email: jgarza@t-mha.org or Patty Ramirez, Ph: 805-541-5144 x129, email: pramirez@t-mha.org.

Consider inviting "IN OUR OWN VOICE" TO MAKE A PRESENTATION TO YOUR GROUP.



This program is a 1.5 hour presentation on stages of mental illness recovery by 2 people that have achieved recovery. For information, contact Betty McGraw, 541-5144 ext. 113 or BMcGraw@t-mha.org .

Our Librarian, Carole Wallace requests that we return library books at the monthly meetings. Please help Carole by returning your books so they can be shared with other members.

NAMI 2009 Membership (membership in NAMI SLO CO also includes mebership in NAMI Cal. & NAMI Nat'l.)

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

PLEASE PRINT

NAMI SLO CO is a charitable, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization affiliated with the NAMI California and NAMI.

NAME(S) _____ DATE _____

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NAMI SLO CO
P.O. Box 3158
San Luis Obispo, Ca
93403

New
 Renewal

- \$30 Individual
- \$35 Family
- \$50 Friend
- \$7 Client

DONATION _____

Mental Health Support Groups In SLO County

Facilitated FAMILY SUPPORT Groups

San Luis Obispo

4th Tuesday of the month 5:30 to 6:45 PM
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Pismo and Nipomo Sts. SLO

San Luis Obispo

Tuesday Afternoons T-MHA Orientation Class 12:00-1:00
Tuesday Afternoons T-MHA Family Support Group 1:00-3:00 PM
Facilitated by Janice Holmes
Transitions Mental Health Association
277 South St. Suite Y, SLO.
Any questions Contact:
Janice Holmes, Family Advocate
805 541-5144 X 171

Atascadero

Third Monday of every month
6:30 -8:00 PM
5395 El Camino Real "B" (parking behind bldg.)
Info. Call James or Diane @ 461-1286

Youth Family Support Group

Multiple Groups meet weekly throughout the county.
T-MHA Youth Family Partners
Contacts: **Jackie Garza**, Ph: 805-458-6388, email: jgarza@t-mha.org or
Patty Ramirez, Ph: 805-541-5144 x129, email: pramirez@t-mha.org

PEER RUN SUPPORT GROUPS

*Support for individuals with all major mental illnesses or co-occurring disorders are invited to attend.
(No Charge for attending)*

The times for these meetings change often so please call
Jessica Vieira TMHA's Socialization/Peer Programs Manager
541-5144 EXT 165 JVieira@tmha.org
San Luis Obispo
452 Higuera St

Peer Support

Dual Recovery Anonymous

**SLO Peer—Run support groups are now also offering
"W.R.A.P." - Group-Wellness and Recovery Action Plan:
an educational journey to recovery.**

Atascadero

5395 El Camino, Suite B.
Peer Support

(Continued in next column)

Paso Robles

Paso Robles Library Storybook Rm.
1000 Spring St.
Peer Support

For info call Betty McGraw, 541-5144 x 113 or
BMcGraw@t-mha.org.

MEDI-CAL PATIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCATE
Gerald Clare 781-4700

T-MHA Special Projects Coordinator for: **"The Shaken Tree: Families Living with Mental Illness"**. John Klimala, Special Projects Coordinator, Transitions-Mental Health Association Phone: 541-5144 ext. 125; Email: jklimala@t-mha.org

Family Advocate, Adult Services

Janice Holmes, Lead Family Advocate
T-MHA Phone 541-5144 X 171
Henry Herrera, Family Advocate, Adult Services (Se habla espanol)
T-MHA Phone 805-541-5144 X 129 or hherrera@t-mha.org

For corrections to this section please contact
Ed Garner - egarner@calpoly.edu

Officers

Lisa Kelley President..... 788-0869
Vice-president — OPEN
Pam Zweifel Secretary..... 543-1825
Nancy Griffin Treasurer..... 543-9399

Standing Committee Chairs

Naoma Wright Publicity.....543-5232
Roger Gamsb Newsletter,Peer to Peer Liaison.....461-6590
Ed &Kathy Garner Newsletter & Website.....550-3117
Carole Wallace Librarian..... 771-9063
Cindy Lamas Membership..... 466-4691
Norma Hoffman Housing..... 544-2725
Rae Belle Gamsb Forensic.....461-6590
Mary Jo Paxton—
Support Group Facilitator..... 489-0575

Special Committee Chairs

Lillian Bareither - Newsletter Mailing..... 595-2821
Jerry Howe – Farmers Market..... 543-2261
John Klimala-
Family to Family Coordinator 550-3889
Lisa Kelley—
Parents and Teachers as Allies Coordinator 788-0869
Carole Wallace NAMI Basics Coordinator.....771-9063
Lisa Kelley NAMI Basics Coordinator788-0869

NAMI SLOCO WEBSITE: www.namislo.org

**Next Meeting
June 23, 2009
(www.namislo.org)**

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