



# OUT OF THE FOG

The monthly newsletter of NAMI San Francisco

## Dear NAMI Members & Friends

I want to thank you all for your support of our 2nd annual NAMIWALK in Golden Gate Park on June 3. The walk was a huge success and lots of fun for the participants. These walks service to reduce the stigma of mental illness. But they are also a great fundraiser for the affiliates that participate. Last year, NAMI San Francisco received \$22,000 from the total proceeds from the walk. This year, our chapter has received approximately \$16,000, and money is still coming in.

These funds will help us realize our goals of extending services to all those in the city who may need them. Let me tell you about our plans.

### NAMI-San Francisco Office

We are going to open an office in the fall, centrally located and easily accessible by car or public transport. At first, the office will be manned by volunteers, but eventually we hope to have part-time staff. We will be open with regular posted office hours. Members can come in and borrow books and tapes on mental illness, sign up for programs, and get their questions answered.

### New Website

We have decided to redesign and update our website. You will be able to download our bulletins from the website, check out support groups and family to family classes, as well as see what our programs will be for the coming months.

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## July Meeting Notes

*By Suzanne Brady*

The July General Meeting consisted of a presentation of the NAMI signature program "In Our Own Voice: Living With Mental Illness" by Krista Radojevich and Robert Villanueva.

In Our Own Voice (IOOV) is an education program led by trained consumers meant for audiences of other consumers, families, friends, professionals and community organizations. It is for anyone who needs to know how people with bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or other serious mental illnesses cope with the realities of their disorder while recovering and reclaiming productive lives.

In her introduction, affiliate president Pam Fischer explained that one of NAMI-San Francisco's goals is to bring IOOV to our city in 2007. First, NAMI-SF needs to collect the names of consumers interested in becoming IOOV facilitators and then coordinate a training session with other affiliates throughout California. A sign-up list was circulated at the July General Meeting and several names were collected.

Currently, there is one San Francisco resident/consumer trained as an IOOV presenter - NAMI-SF Board Member Cara Hoepner. She has worked with our July meeting presenters in the past and has been instrumental in making IOOV a NAMI-SF initiative.

IOOV presentations begin with the facilitators introducing themselves and giving a general history of

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**3rd Wednesday of each month**  
6:30 - 8:00 pm  
1010 Gough St.  
(between Eddy & Ellis)

## *The Monthly Meeting*

### September 20

Beth Gray, a Nurse Specialist, will discuss the risk of diabetes connected with the newer anti-psychotic medications.

### October 18

Fawn Downs will speak about an innovative program called Multi-systemic Therapy. Children who encounter the juvenile criminal justice system are kept with their families and the entire family receives intensive case management.

# Study Finds Gene Related To Brain Development and Function Plays Causal Role In Schizophrenia

Source: *The Mount Sinai Hospital/Mount Sinai School of Medicine*, 8/15/2006

According to a new study conducted by researchers at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, variations of a gene related to brain development and function—OLIG2—may play a causal role in the development of schizophrenia, a hereditary psychiatric disorder with no known biological cause. The study is published in the August 15 printed issue of *Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences*.

Earlier research [at Mount Sinai and elsewhere] suggests that schizophrenia is associated with changes in myelin, the fatty substance or white matter in the brain that coats nerve fibers and is critical for the brain to function properly. Myelin is formed by a group of central nervous cells called oligodendrocytes, which are regulated by the gene oligodendrocyte lineage transcription factor 2 (OLIG2). Patients with schizophrenia are known to have insufficient levels of oligodendrocytes, however the source of this [deficiency] has not been identified, explains study co-author Joseph D. Buxbaum, PhD, the G. Harold and Leila Y. Mathers Research Professor of Geriatrics and Adult Development, Professor of Psychiatry and Neuroscience, and Co-Principal Investigator of the Siliva O. Conte Center for the Neuroscience of Mental Disorders.

Dr. Buxbaum and a team of Mount Sinai researchers collaborated with researchers from the Cardiff University School of Medicine in the United Kingdom to analyze DNA in blood samples taken from 673 unrelated patients with schizophrenia and compared their genetic informa-

tion to 716 patients who did not have the disease. The controls were matched for age, sex, and ethnicity; none were taking medications at the time of the study.

The study showed that genetic variation in OLIG2 was strongly associated with schizophrenia. In addition, OLIG2 also showed a genetic association with schizophrenia when examined together with two other genes previously associated with schizophrenia—CNP and ERBB4—which are also active in the development of myelin. The expression of these three genes was also coordinated. Taken together the data support an etiological role for oligodendrocyte abnormalities in the development of schizophrenia.

“Multiple genes likely have a role in schizophrenia and there are probably many things happening in the brain of a schizophrenia patient,” Dr. Buxbaum says. “The findings from this study help us tease out a potential biological cause that may be contributing to this debilitating illness. This study showed that OLIG2 has a causal etiological effect and these findings give us a stronger sense of where to look so we can develop more therapeutic targets for this very complex disease.”

Dr. Buxbaum adds that as researchers further unravel the role of oligodendrocyte and myelin in schizophrenia, it is possible that medications like those being developed for the treatment of multiple sclerosis—a disorder associated with a breakdown of myelin—may have a future impact in the treatment of schizophrenia.

## Family-To-Family Education Class


**Class starting September 16**

Call now to sign up for the acclaimed national program that helps family members understand their relative's mental illness.

Classes are free and meet once a week for 12 weeks. We generally fill the classes quickly, so call now!

*(Pre-registration is required, class size is limited)*

**Call 415-905-6264 (NAMI) or  
email [renee.deger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:renee.deger@sbcglobal.net)**



**The SFGH CAB  
CLOTHING PROJECT**

**This program is a big help to  
consumers who are in need of clothes  
while they are at SF General Hospital.**

**Just call and they will pick up your donation or meet you at  
the front door of the hospital when you bring it in.**

**Please call Amelia Truman, 415-206-4465**

# NAMI StigmaBuster Alert

August 4, 2006 Contact: [smarch@nami.org](mailto:smarch@nami.org)

## TV News: See You in September

Good news, bad news? On September 26, ABC-TV will premiere Help Me Help You, starring Ted Danson (formerly of Cheers), who is described as a doctor leading "a gaggle of eccentric folk in group therapy," except that he might be "the craziest and most self-obsessed of all." Creators of the show claim it will not make fun of mental illness. You think? Stay tuned.

On September 28, Sally Field will return to ER on NBC-TV in her role as Maggie Wycenski, the mother of one of the nurses, who also struggles with bipolar disorder. In 2001, NAMI honored ER and Field with an Outstanding Media Award for six-episodes that introduced the character and provided an accurate, balanced and intimate look at the illness.

## Funny or Not?

The current issue of The Advocate, NAMI's quarterly magazine, includes an article on "TV Humor and Mental Illness," and asks readers: "Is mental illness ever funny? Where does humor stop and stigma begin?" "I should have been an elevator operator," because of the extreme ups and downs, says comedian Drew Horn of New Jersey, who lives with bipolar disorder. He says he is building a playground for bipolar children -- complete with mood swings. His act is intended both to entertain and educate people about a deadly serious illness. He himself has been homeless four times, had three marriages fail, and attempted suicide twice.

Can mental illness be funny? Where does humor stop and stigma begin? Please send your thoughts to [smarch@nami.org](mailto:smarch@nami.org).

## National Anti-Stigma Campaign: Regional Meetings

In the war against stigma, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is launching the National Anti-Stigma Campaign (NASC), which will include public service announcements (PSAs).

SAMHSA is holding one-day regional meetings to provide sneak previews, as well as presentations and training. Success of the campaign depends on grassroots support. Consumer and family advocates and representatives of mental health agencies and organizations are invited.

Anyone interested in attending should contact SAMHSA's organizers (Vanguard Communications) for more information. Meeting locations, dates, the states in each region, and email addresses are listed as follows:

### August 25-Los Angeles, CA

**RSVP LA@vancomm.com**

Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington

### September 11—Denver, CO

**RSVP DENVER@vancomm.com**

Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Wyoming

### September 18—Washington, D.C.

**RSVP DC@vancomm.com**

Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia

### September 26—Chicago, IL

**RSVP CHICAGO@vancomm.com**

Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Wisconsin.

## County Mental Health

The County mental health access line  
for all consumers is

**415-255-3737**

The Mobile Crisis Unit is

**415-355-8300**

## Family To Family Teacher Training

Family to Family Education Program teachers are needed! If you've experienced this dynamic program, you'll get even more out of it when you share it with others - it's highly rewarding and easy to do! A training session will be offered in South Bay on Nov. 10-12. Email [renee.deger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:renee.deger@sbcglobal.net) for information.

### Behavioral Health Court

During the past year, we have collaborated with San Francisco's Behavioral Health Court, meeting frequently with them to come up with ways that NAMI can collaborate with and support their programs. We are so fortunate to have this court in our county. They are really making a difference.

### "In Our Own Voice"

We also hope to start the consumer program "In Our Own Voice" in San Francisco. At our July meeting, we signed up 8 consumers who want to take the training. After their training, these speakers go out into the community to speak at churches, schools and organizations to raise awareness about mental illness and reduce stigma.

### Bilingual Programs

We hope to start a Spanish language support group for families in the Latino community. To this end, we are working with Mission Mental Health and other providers of bilingual services.

We could use your help in seeing our plans through. For example, we need help with our phone line and with hospitality for our monthly meetings. Perhaps you would like to take the training to be a support group facilitator or a teacher for the family to family class. Leave a message on our phone line and you will be contacted by a board member.

Hope to see you all at our September 20th monthly meeting.

—Pam Fischer, President  
August 2, 2006

## Electronic Newsletter Distribution

Please Resend requests for email newsletter to  
renee.deger@sbcglobal.net

Hotmail address accounts are not feasible for low or infrequent use and the email addresses we were collecting for newsletter distribution were lost before they could be recorded.

their struggle with mental illness. They then go on to address the topics of acceptance, treatment, coping skills, success, hopes and dreams.

Krista, who is 31 years old and born and raised in Pleasanton, was first diagnosed with bipolar disorder in 2001. She couldn't sleep, felt nervous and had an inflated sense of self-esteem. Her father has bipolar disorder but because her symptoms were not extreme she didn't recognize her symptoms for the illness. When she began to talk with her parents about fears that involved the CIA and FBI, they recognized Krista was experiencing delusional thinking and encouraged her to get psychiatric help.

Robert talked about losing his home, two cars, his business and a position as a head wrestling coach as a result of his struggle with bipolar disorder. He was on disability for a year and depended on his friends for meals. Robert described starting new jobs, doing well at them for a couple of months and then no longer showing up. At first, he was diagnosed with major depression. When he was 32 years old he was too stubborn to accept that he needed to take daily medication.

Both Krista and Robert said that attending support groups and hearing people from different cities or different cultures or different socio-economic groups describe having their very same symptoms and problems, helped them to accept they had a medical condition. Neither likes taking their medication every day, but they have accepted that it is necessary for them to manage their illness and move on with their lives.

"I think of it as a mini part-time job that I'm not paid for," Krista said. "I have to take my pills. I have to see my psychiatrist. I have to go to my support group. It's a job and I do it."

It took four psychiatrists nearly six years to find the right combination of mood stabilizing medications for Robert. He's now 37 years old and knows he has to get regular sleep, pay attention to nutrition, attend support groups, and say "no" to friends whose habits won't support his good health.

"When I see people going through what I've been through it helps keep me in check," Robert said.

He has gradually rebuilt his life by achieving one goal after another: getting a job, working full time, and getting his own apartment. His next goal is to go back to college.

"I hope that people can get help sooner," he said. "Before they lose their jobs, before they lose their relationships and before they wind up on the street."

Krista, who holds a full-time job and just bought a new home, described her focus on "little successes," such as getting out of bed in the morning and having a good day.

"It's sad to see people who don't seek treatment because of stigma," she said. "Nobody judges or makes fun of people who have diabetes or a heart condition."

# A New Approach to Day Treatment

By Matthew Morrissey, M.A., MFTI

Full Spectrum Progressive Mental Health is a new, not-for-profit, innovative mental health center in San Francisco. Our well appointed, state-of-the-art center is located just off the Embarcadero near Pier 39. In addition to providing traditional psychological services we also have created a distinctive adult day treatment program.

## Our Approach

We are interested in facilitating recovery from mental disorder, or as Yale researcher Larry Davidson puts it, helping people "live outside mental illness." Davidson (2003) identified five factors in the recovery process: 1) instilling a sense of hope, 2) developing a sense of belonging, 3) reestablishing personal agency, 4) acquiring effective coping skills, and 5) reintegrating into the community. These five overarching factors inform every aspect of the day program.

Clinically we assume that the problems and conflicts that people bring to us are extremely complex and impact them at the somatic, psychological, social, and economic levels. Given this complexity, we do not offer a quick fix or magical solution to our clients. Nor do we apply rigid psychological "techniques." Instead we focus on the feelings, thoughts and behaviors that clients are bringing to the community in the moment.

Through careful listening, we have found that our clients have been subject to multiple layers of trauma that have accrued over time. In addition, the coping mechanisms they have developed to prevent future traumas often have introduced new sets of problems. The day treatment program is set up to help people, over time, to gradually work through these layers of trauma and to achieve a level of health and well-being that was previously not thought possible.

## Nuts & Bolts

Our day treatment consists of five 50-minute groups Monday through Thursday, plus a modified schedule on Friday that includes either an outing or a communal lunch. The day starts at 10 AM and ends at 4 PM. Our groups range from the more traditional talking groups to somatic approaches, expressive arts, and recreation. In addition each client can have up to two individual psychotherapy sessions per week with a staff therapist.

As we believe nutrition and healthy eating habits are an integral part of recovery, we provide daily a salad of organic mixed greens, juiced fruits and vegetables, and

Remember to donate to the



## Community Thrift Store

This is our *best source* of income  
for the NAMI SF Chapter!!

**625 Valencia Street at 17th Street**  
**415-861-4910**

fresh spring water. We also periodically offer on Fridays a psycho-educational group focused on nutrition.

The adult program enrolls 11-12 people at a time; thus on any given day about seven people attend, ensuring a high staff-to-client ratio. Though small by comparison with most day programs, it is our aim to offer the most tailored psychological treatment available. In addition, there is no set length of stay-- our clients attend the program for as long as they need (the average length of stay is about a year).

Unfortunately the day program is not covered by insurance. We are a private pay facility that operates on a sliding scale basis. We have scholarship positions available for people with Medicare and/or MediCal. People who have found our day program helpful have come to us with such diagnoses as bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder, schizoaffective disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anorexia, and substance abuse.

For more information, please visit our website at [www.fullspectrum.cc](http://www.fullspectrum.cc)

*References: Davidson, L. (2003). Living Outside Mental Illness: Qualitative Studies of Recovery in Schizophrenia. New York: New York University Press.*

## PLAN of California

Two master **Special Needs Trust Plans** are offered to families in California. The plans would designate a minimum of \$150,000 or \$300,000 to contract with PLAN to give oversight of both fiduciary and personal support services without endangering public entitlements.

Contact Baron Miller (415) 522-0500 or  
PLAN of California (888) 574-1258

## Support Groups



### Family Members' Groups

#### *African American Family Support*

1st Thursdays, 5:30-7:30 pm at  
1380 Howard St., Rm 537. Call Wanda at 255-3694

#### *San Francisco Family Support Group*

Tuesdays, 5:15-6:45 p.m. at SF General Hospital, 1001 Potrero St., Room 7M30. Info: Susanne at 415-558-5900

#### *Sibling & Adult Children Network*

Call Mary Gullekson at 474-7010 for information

#### *Berkeley Sibling Support Group*

Call Carolyn Defay at (510) 644-8579

### Bilingual & Monolingual Support Groups

*Chinese Families Mental Health Alliance.* Ed Koo 352-2047

### Consumer Self-Help Groups

#### *Depression & Bipolar Support All. (formerly DMDA)*

Saturday afternoons at 1:30-3:00 and  
1st Mondays at 6:45-8:00 pm in the Saint Francis Hospital,  
900 Hyde St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conf. Room. Call 519-0171

#### *SPIRITMENDERS Community Drop-in Center*

2940 – 16<sup>th</sup> Street #B2 (415) 552-8565

#### *OASIS (Office of Self Help)*

1095 Market Street at 7<sup>th</sup>, Suite 202 (415) 575-1400

#### *RECOVERY, Inc.* for nervous ailments.

(510) 482-5808 (meets at California Pacific in SF)

#### *Consumers with Schizophrenia*

3rd Wednesday of each month, 5:30 pm  
1380 Howard St., 5th floor. Info: Susanne at 558-5900

#### *Hoarding & Cluttering Support*

2nd Monday and 4th Wednesday of each month.  
Antonio (415) 421-2926 x306

#### *Health and Wellness Action Advocacy*

1st Thursday of each month, 1-3pm. Antonio at  
(415) 421-2926, x306

*Anxiety & Panic Self Help Group:* John (650) 755-0883

*Alcoholics Anonymous:* San Fran: (415) 621-1326

Marin: (415) 499-0400 San Mateo: (650) 573-6811

*Narcotics Anonymous SF Helpline:* (415) 621-8600

NAMI-San Francisco is a self-help organization of family members, mental health consumers, friends, professionals and other interested citizens, united to provide support, education and advocacy for persons with severe mental illness. NAMI-San Francisco is a private, non-profit organization.

## New Support Group

Wednesday, May 3

6:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.

at Jewish Family Service Agency, 2150 Post Street  
Facilitator: Ms. Laura Kleinman, M.S.W.



### NAMI-SF Support Groups

- 1) 1010 Gough  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at 6:30  
Contact Vickie at (415) 661-5208
- 2) San Francisco General Hospital  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 7 M 30  
Tuesdays, 5:15 – 6:45 p.m.  
Call Susanne Killing at 558-5900

## DBSA

### Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of San Francisco

*(formerly San Francisco Depressive  
and Manic Depressive Association)*



#### Regular Support Group:

every Monday at 6:45-8:15pm and  
every Saturday at 1:30-3:00pm.

#### Young Adults Support Group:

1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 6:45-  
8:15pm for 18 to 25+ year old people.  
Contact Harry at 650-430-2909 for information.

#### Friends And Family Support Group:

1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 6:45-  
8:15pm. Contact Jane at 415-519-0171 or  
Harry at 650-430-2909 for information.

#### Location:

2nd floor of St. Francis Hospital  
900 Hyde St.

between Pine and Bush in San Francisco  
Conference rooms B, C, and D

Meetings are on a drop in basis and are open to  
peers, please note we do not allow observers. You  
do not need to be a member to attend, however  
memberships are \$20.00 a year and you are  
encouraged to join and support the organization.

# Living Well: Making Recovery Real

The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance invites you to join us at our 2006 Conference in California

**September 9-10**  
**San Mateo Marriott, San Mateo**  
**(San Francisco Airport)**

We hope you'll join us, together with friends, family members and consumers, as we discover new recovery skills, get the latest news on treatment options, rediscover hope, become inspired and network with others who have had the same experiences...as we each seek our personal path to recovery.

The conference program will feature inspiring stories of recovery from two dynamic keynote speakers:

Actor, writer, mental health educator and consumer **Victoria Maxwell** will share her personal story of recovery through excerpts from her award-winning one-woman, show *Crazy for Life*. Victoria's honest, often hilariously irreverent approach to her own experi-

ences disarms the prejudices associated with mental illness while providing crucial information on how to deal with it openly and effectively.  
[www.victoria\\_maxwell.com](http://www.victoria_maxwell.com)

**Randy Revelle, J.D.**, health care reform leader, elected official and consumer, will present "Overcoming the Stigma: A Personal Story of Recovery from Mental Illness" --- a powerful account of his personal recovery that will inspire and motivate us all to continue on our own journeys.

In addition to our keynote speakers, our program will include our popular "Ask the Doctors" session where you can get your questions answered by nationally-recognized medical and mental health experts. An interactive round-table session, "Recovery: What It Means to You" will also be offered, followed by an afternoon of educational breakout sessions focusing on treatment, research and wellness tools --- again delivered by renowned authors and experts in the field of mental health.

Please visit our website for a complete agenda and list of speakers:  
**[www.DBSAlliance.org](http://www.DBSAlliance.org)**

*Out of the Fog* is published 10 times a year by NAMI-San Francisco, a non-profit organization affiliated with the National Alliance on Mental Illness, which goes by the acronym NAMI, and NAMI-California, the statewide affiliate.

## **NAMI San Francisco**

5214 -F Diamond Heights Blvd., Box 426  
San Francisco, CA 94131  
415-905-NAMI  
415-905-6264  
[www.namifsf.org](http://www.namifsf.org)

## **NAMI- San Francisco Executive Board**

President: Pamela Fischer  
Secretary: Suzanne Brady  
Treasurer: Dale Milfay

## **Committees**

Family to Family: Vicki Evans  
Hospitality and Support Groups: Vickie and Bob Evans  
PLAN: Baron Miller  
Out of the Fog: Renee Deger, Ruan Frenette and Dale Milfay  
Speaker's Bureau: Baron Miller  
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Send newsletter additions/submissions/change requests to [renee.deger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:renee.deger@sbcglobal.net)



## Please Join NAMI SF

NAMI-San Francisco is moving to a system where members renew in their anniversary months, but many of you are on the calendar-year system.

Please let us count you. There is power in numbers. We need the support of families, friends, consumers, professionals and others who share our goals. Your dues help us pay for the printing of the newsletter, educational materials and mailings and the Family-to-Family Education Course, an invaluable resource for people who love someone with a mental illness.

Checks may be made out to "NAMI San Francisco"

Please mail to:

NAMI-San Francisco Treasurer  
PMB 426  
5214-F Diamond Heights Blvd.  
San Francisco, CA 94131-2118

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

(Please Print)

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

This is a:

•New Membership •Renewal •Change of Address

What is your relationship to a person with a mental illness?

•self • parent • sibling • spouse

• health care/other professional

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please Check One:

• \$35 Individual or Family Membership

• \$50 Organization Membership

• \$75 Sponsoring Membership

• \$100 or more – Patron Membership

• I cannot join NAMI-San Francisco at this time but I would like to receive *Out of the Fog* or I am enclosing a donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help cover the cost of *Out of the Fog*.

## NAMI SAN FRANCISCO

5214-F Diamond Heights Blvd., Box 426  
San Francisco, CA 94131

*Return Service Requested*

PRESORTED  
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**Please Resend requests for email newsletter to [renee.deger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:renee.deger@sbcglobal.net)**  
Hotmail address accounts are not feasible for low or infrequent use and the email addresses we were collecting for newsletter distribution were lost before they could be recorded.