

NAMI STANISLAUS NEWSLETTER February 2016



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New Family Support Group

Last Tuesday of each month, 10:30-Noon at First United Methodist Church Library (16th & I Streets)

NAMI Stanislaus promotes mental health services in the Stanislaus County areas. Operating since 1990 as a non-profit organization NAMI Stanislaus helps people with mental illness, their families and the community by providing emotional support, education and advocacy.

Mark Your Calendars:

Board Meeting – Wednesday February 10th at 3:00 p.m.

General Meeting – No general meeting in February.

Upcoming events

February 19	Lobby Day in Sacramento
March or April	NAMIWalk yard sale - Modesto
April (tbd)	NAMI Fundraiser - Affiliate
May 7	Annual NAMIWalk - Sacramento
May (tbd)	Day of Hope, Mental Health Month
July 6-9	NAMI National Convention in Denver, CO
August 26-27	NAMI California Conference in Burlingame

Family to Family classes: see following article.

Please check our [calendar](#) or call the office at (209) 558-4555.

NAMI Stanislaus Office Schedule

Eileen Brasuell is our office assistant working part time at 500 N. 9TH Street, Suite D, Modesto. Her hours are:

Mon. 2:30-5:30 pm.
Tues. 2:30-5:30 p.m.
Thurs. 2:30-5:30 p.m.

Eileen maintains our library and has books, DVDs and videos available for checkout to our NAMI Stanislaus members. If you are looking for literature or help with some referrals, please stop by our office. It would be a good idea to call and confirm her schedule – (209) 558-4555. Her email address is EBrasuell@stanbhrs.org.

Interview with Christina Kenney, Program Director of the Empowerment Center

By Rhonda Allen

What is the Empowerment Center (E.C.) and what services does it provide?

The E.C. is a wellness center for individuals 18 and over with mental illness. Clients must be receiving mental health services or helping a family member with such services. The center is peer- driven, providing support to reduce isolation and increase independence of clients. Peer support is provided through group and individual classes, volunteering opportunities, encouragement to develop personal interests, and linking to other needed services, such as social security, disability, financial and medical services.

How long has the Empowerment Center been in operation?

The E.C. was developed and funded as part of the Mental Health Services Act in 2006.

It moved from the Scenic Avenue location to 1001 Needham Avenue in October 2014.

What agencies do you partner with?

The Integrated Services Agency complements our agency. We also partner with Josie's Place, Telecare, the Wellness Center, Parent Resource Center, NAMI, and other agencies under the adult system of care.

What would you like NAMI clients to know about the Empowerment Center?

NAMI members are often the experts, because they have received training about mental illness. We would love to access NAMI members as peer models of recovery. They can become volunteers to give support to clients just beginning their journey to recovery. Developing a relationship with NAMI would definitely benefit our agency.

What brought you to work at the Empowerment Center?

I have worked here since 2011 as an activity coordinator. I entered the health field as a result of personal experiences with mental illness in my family. My mother had schizophrenia and both my parents were addicts. I know personally what it's like to not have a support system. I started out in nursing, but

realized this was the end of a journey and there was no room for prevention. I wanted to work where clients could change their circumstances.

What do you like about your job?

I feel truly blessed to be in a place to give people the tools they need to improve their lives. The E.C. provides individualized services. We walk clients through the process of getting care, such as reading and submitting forms. We encourage them to become their own advocates. They learn how to ask questions and take ownership of their recovery. With our help, we can often speed up the referral time and get them linked to medical providers quicker. When clients can identify their own needs clearly, they are much more successful. We have many members who have become peer volunteers and some who have been employed in health services. We love those success stories!

When is the Empowerment Center open and about how many clients do you serve?

We are open Mon. – Fri. from 7:30 – 3:00 pm. On average, we have about 1,000 visits in a monthly period, which includes repeating customers. Last year we had about 455 new clients.



(Christina Kenney is an enthusiastic advocate for folks needing mental health services. Stop by to see the good work they are doing at the Empowerment Center on Needham Avenue.)

Thank You's

Donations in Memory of Paul Alberti, Jr.

Cathlene Azevedo
Sandro & Giovanna Boggeri
Bob & Lillian Briton
Mr. & Mrs. Colin Christian
Dennis Larson & Laurel D. Ruddy
Modesto Women's 500
Dave & Dolores Ramos
Steven V. Schmitz
David P. Silva
Doris & George Tavernas
David Trogdon
Robert O. Yohanen, Sr.

Other Donations

Lori Armagost
Daniel & Deborah Callahan (in Memory of Joanna Padlo)
Jamie Fabela
Eugene & Mabel Kraft
Lynn Padlo (in Memory of Don Padlo)
Robert, Phyllis & Ronald Bordona

Memberships

Lori Armagost	Heidi Arno
Linda Byrne	Amanda Corbin
Inga Doyle	Eugene & Mabel Kraft
Shirley Moran	Sandra Proctor
Jaime Smith	

We wish to thank Dr. Paul Golden for his information on the various mental illnesses, and insightful personal experiences. More than 50 people attended the meeting. He stated some of His (& NAMI's) principle messages: be proactive, care for the complete person, have a good support team, educate yourself, understand the dangers of **SELF**-stigma, and manage a career strategically. There are several books in our NAMI library if members would like to borrow a copy, and there are books and Kindle version on Amazon. Dr. Golden can be contacted at: Paul Golden, M.D., P. O. Box 577677, Modesto, CA 95357, paul@mdgolden.com, www.mdgolden.com

Thank You, Dr. Golden



Family-to-Family Classes

If you have a loved one living with a mental illness, we would like to invite you to attend one of our upcoming Family-to-Family classes. Last month we published an article written by a mother who just graduated from our Modesto Family-to-Family class. She explained the experience so well. This class was life changing for her.

It is a 12-week commitment, which is a long time, but you will be surprised how fast that time passes. This is an opportunity to learn about the mental illness your loved one is living with and other mental illnesses as well. This can be a

time to connect with others struggling like you are. This class opened my mind to what mental illness is and is not. You will not only learn about how the brain is affected with the various illnesses, you will also learn about medications, communication tools, problem solving, importance of self-care and recovery. We will also have guest speakers in two of the classes.

We are offering a class in Oakdale, starting February 10th at 6:30 p.m., and one in Turlock on March 7th @ 6:30 p.m. To register or if you have any questions, please call Dar @ (209) 656-8855. The Oakdale class is filling up fast.

Message from Our Executive Director and Education Coordination, Lynn Padlo

The New Year always brings us a time to reflect on our lives. I like a quote I saw in a magazine from Ruth Ginsburg, Supreme court Justice: **“Fight for the things that you care about. But do it in a way that will lead others to join you.”** NAMI is very lucky this year to have dedicated leaders who are doing just that. Many of our teachers, speakers, and facilitators are bringing others into the group to help erase stigma, eliminate barriers to housing and jobs, educating families and helping others to access services for mental health. There is a long way to go still, but they are spreading the word that there is hope and recovery in mental health.

Stanislaus NAMI membership has increased this year. We now have ten Family-to-Family teachers, and are planning to train two more. Our peer group, Connection, now has four locations – bi-weekly in Oakdale, Turlock and Modesto (2). This is a peer-led group and as one attendee said: “I got more

out of this group than anything else to help me in my recovery.” Our teachers and leaders are reaching out to schools now as we have learned twenty percent of youth have a diagnosed mental illness. Programs such as **In our Own Voice, Ending the Silence** and **Parents and Teachers as Allies**, help staff and parents by educating, supporting and advocating for them.

Our family panel and peer panel also speak to law enforcement twice a year in the CIT training offered by our county mental health department. We have been told that this part of their training is very impactful for them.

Looking ahead, we hope to organize more classes for Spanish speaking parents and peers and reach out to the outlying areas in our county to offer free classes and support for them.

We have a long ways to go yet, but with our strong leaders, we will accomplish more in 2016.

Education Report: Semi-Annual

IOOV	63 presentations	1,257 audience members
ETS	10 presentations	821 students
PTAA	1 presentation	28 staff members



Spring Cleaning?

Save some good stuff for our NAMI
BIG YARD Sale coming up in March or
early April to raise funds for
NAMIWalk teams, 2016.