



nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI Humboldt County News

The Newsletter of NAMI Humboldt County

Find Help. Find Hope

August 2019

Local Resource Information

Humboldt County Mental Health Crisis Line:

707-445-7715

HOPE Center: 2933 H Street
Eureka, Open M-Sat.8

441-3783

Hopecenter@gmail.com

Humboldt County Mental Health Facility

720 Wood St., Eureka 268-2900

Veterans Center

Counseling Services

2830 G St. Eureka 444-8271

Individual, group and family counseling for combat veterans and sexual trauma survivors

HSU has counseling for

students. Call 826-3236

Ending the Revolving Doors of Mental Illness and Incarceration

By Debbe Hartridge

For the last year and a half, NAMI members Tim Ash, Ira Blatt and Mary Lou Lowry joined with mental health staff, county supervisors, and representatives from law enforcement, the courts and the Public Defender to look for ways to provide alternatives to incarceration for people with serious mental illnesses who encounter the criminal justice system. The group has been using an approach called Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM), which has been used in many states. Facilitators were brought in to organize this process and come up with a report at the end to give direction. It includes recommendations that hopefully will lead to improvements. Many of us know, by personal experience, that being in jail is not likely to be therapeutic for our family member, who is not at fault for an action caused by an illness and not their choice.

The report includes a list of twelve priorities for change, some of which have been of special interest to NAMI members, including:

Number 9: Explore Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT), know as Laura's Law, a California law that offers treatment rather than jail as an alternative for individuals who meet certain criteria. Our understanding is that the numbers of people enrolled in these programs in counties where it is in effect are small, (for example we understand that Mendocino has five enrollees), but AOT has been successful in keeping people out of jail and sticking with a treatment plan and is worth the effort.

Number 10: Explore a Mental Health Court/docket. Mental health courts channel people into treatment and support rather than jail, and go hand in hand with Recommendation 9, above. In a July 3 Lost Coast Outpost article, reporter Ryan Burns interviews Public Defender Carey Russo, who expresses disappointment that the County chose not to apply for state funds recently made available through Assembly Bill 1810 that could have helped establish a mental health court and fund AOT. Russo said: "As I see it this could have been seed money for the creation of a true mental health court, which this county desperately needs."

The article goes on to quote Russo stating "the advantages would be far-reaching: money saved in law enforcement and health care, reductions in crime and a cleaner community, one where tourists are more inclined so spend money and medical professionals (among others) are more inclined to put down roots."

The system is broken and it takes persistent effort to change things for the better. We thank our NAMI members who have been part of the SIM process, and who work on the Crisis Intervention Training for first responders that happens about once a year and will take place this October. Every step forward has the potential to make someone's life better. Written plans like the SIM report can be used to measure progress or lack of it. **To read the full report, see our website nami-humboldt.com.**

***Come to the
Spaghetti Feed and
Dutch Raffle at the
Elks Lodge
September 19
Contact Brenda for
tickets at: 443-2628***

***\$20 Adults
\$15 Children under 12***

**Current NAMI Humboldt
Board and Committee
Chairs 2019**

President: Angela Winogradov

Vice President: Lea Nagy

Treasurer: Brenda Flores

Secretary: Vicki Zeitlin

Past President: Tim Ash

Board Members: Ruby Bayan MD,
Ira Blatt, Tim Doty, Debbe Hartridge
Mary Lou Lowry

Family to Family: Angela Winogradov

Membership : Mary Lou Lowry

Newsletter: Debbe Hartridge

Webmaster: Tom Travis

Support groups: Lea Nagy

From Board Members Tim Doty and Mary Lou Lowry:

Hope you will come to our meet and greet brunch in January so you can know more about who we are what we are doing in Humboldt! Our local affiliate has been around for decades but we remain a large family who cares about the needs of our loved ones with serious mental disorders. We have almost 100 active members and about 330 on our mailing list. You are a part of us. While you are with us you will:

- Meet our Board with several new members.
- Meet some of our new Family to Family teachers.
- Learn more about our support groups.
- Receive information about our new Family Advisory Board to the County Mental Health Department.
 - Learn more about our public forums.
 - Learn more about our Holiday Gift program, support of the Hope Center and activities to support the work at Semper Virens.
 - Share with us some of your experience and insights on the work we do together.

**NAMI Humboldt
P.O. Box 1225
Eureka, CA 95502
Tel:707-444-1600
Nami-humboldt.org**

We'd like you to meet some of our new Board Members and new teachers for our Family to Family courses. We want to keep you informed on our Family Support groups, our advocacy and outreach work. We are active in the new Family Advisory Board at the County Mental Health Department and want you to know more about this. We'll share with you about some of our changes and hopes for the future.

Tickets Available!

**Eat Spaghetti With Your
NAMI Friends
On Sept 19 at the Elk's
Lodge, Eureka
Contact Brenda: 443-2628**

We're hosting an informal light Brunch (food and beverages provided) at the Humboldt Area Foundation on Indianola Road on Saturday, January 18, 2020 from 10:30 to 12:00.

We're proud of what we are doing and hope you will come and join us.

For info contact Tim Doty at timdoty@suddenlink.net

**If you'd rather read this twice
yearly newsletter via e-mail please
send a brief message to
nami.humboldt@gmail.com**

Social Work Interns from Humboldt State University Get Hands on Experience in County Mental Health Programs

By Debbe Hartridge

In April Tim Doty and I were invited to be on an interview panel with 5 staff members from County Mental Health in order to choose interns for the coming year for different Mental Health programs. We interviewed eleven students, all women, (from early 20s to mid forties) from the HSU Masters of Social Work Department. The panel was looking to take on 7 interns. Several of the college students seemed especially strong candidates; a couple of them alluded to having family members with mental health challenges or substance abuse issues. Among the group were students who shared that they themselves had mental health struggles of their own which they were grappling with and had under control.

Kelly Johnson, who works with Mobile Outreach and also helps organize the Crisis Intervention Training for first responders, which NAMI members help with, led the process. Other Mental Health staff were licensed clinical social workers heading different programs including Adult Outpatient, Community Corrections Resource Center, Comprehensive Community Treatment, HumWORKS, Older Adults, New Horizons (Regional Youth Facility), Regional Services (to outlying areas, So Hum, Orick, Eastern Hum), Semper Vivens Hospital. Tim and I both felt we knew more about these different services after the day was over. I was impressed with the candidates, most of whom were articulate and had some experience working with adults with serious mental illness, such as in care facilities or homeless programs. The applicants were presented with short statements about each of the areas of service listed above and asked if any programs particularly appealed to them. Several said they wanted to do something in their internships that would be new to them. Most aspire to getting their social work licenses eventually.

Being on the panel was a good experience for me. I was happy to see the caring qualities of the students, all of whom expressed a desire to make a difference. One question we asked each one was: How would you handle a client screaming at you and calling you names? Several said they had experienced this, and the internship candidate who currently works at Arcata House (serving homeless folks) said this was not unusual. Most seemed able to take it in stride, not take the hostility personally, give the screaming person distance, reflect their feelings, wait for a calmer period to discuss underlying issues.

The panel members were supportive of all the student interviewees. One student asked about the work culture in the various mental health programs and all staff said good things about their situations, and alluded to positive changes at Mental Health that have occurred in recent years, which is a change from the prior situation that many of us were aware of several years ago when underlying problems were covered by local media. Some of these previous problems have been addressed, for example by having a security guard at Semper Vivens Hospital. Some problems remain, such as staff turnover in some areas.

I felt I contributed to the interview process by asking potential interns how they saw the role of family members in the treatment and care of mental illness. It felt like a question worth asking, and seemed a new idea to some of the students. This is understandable since the level of help and support many families can provide is limited, due to being burned out etc. and staff may not encounter many families who are supportive. I was pleased when one of the MH staff members quoted a statistic about the positive value of family involvement in improving outcomes for folks with mental illness.

*Thanks for Your
Recent Donation*

Susan Hansen Trust
Dr. Katy Wilson
Debbe Hartridge and Ira Blatt
Mark and Claudia Hapgood
Amazon Smile



*Welcome to our new
board secretary, Vicki
Zeitlin! Vicki lives in
Loleta and shares her life
with her horse, dog, two
cats and a goat.*

May activities included a proclamation presented to the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors. Pictured with others who were part of the day's events, is NAMI President Angela Winoogradov in the lower left. Angela, along with NAMI members Lea Nagy and Tim Ash addressed the Supervisors. NAMI also had a popular table with games and prizes at the Hope Center Barbecue at Carson Park in Eureka. Angela attended the NAMI National Conference this June and gained ideas and inspiration, as well as the perspective that for a small affiliate, we accomplish a lot. (Angela rode from Eureka to Seattle on a motorcycle with husband Dale!)

Some Principles of Support offered at our Family Support Meetings

- We see the individual first, not the illness.*
- We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own.*
- We accept that we cannot resolve all problems.*
- We find strength in sharing experiences.*

Join NAMI Now-Fill Out and mail with your check to NAMI
Treasurer, PO Box 1225, Eureka, CA 95502

Name_____

Address_____

City, State, Zip Code_____

Phone_____ E-mail_____

My membership is: New_____

Renewal_____

Are you interested in volunteering? _____

Individual Membership ___ \$40

Household Membership___ \$60

Open Door /low income Membership___\$5

Donation of _____ in memory
of_____.

*We thank you in advance for your deductible donation. Your dues support and provide membership in our affiliate as well as membership in NAMI California and NAMI National. When you join NAMI Humboldt, you will receive membership in all three and will receive publications in the mail: The Advocate, the Connection and NAMI Humboldt News. Please let us know if your contact info has changed. **We do not share your information with any other group.** We welcome supporters who want to help or participate in our activities, but we also greatly appreciate our members who support the organization just by joining.*

You may also join on-line at NAMI.org

Current and Ongoing Support and Education E-mail nami.humboldt@gmail for information

Family to Family: A twelve session class for family members with loved ones living with mental illness. Taught by trained NAMI volunteers. Contact Angela Winogradov @ 707-498-1258

Support Groups for family members: First and third Mondays in **Fortuna** at 5:30at 922 N St (First Methodist Church) For information call Sharon at 725-8853 or e-mail sharonbenda19@gmail.com. Mondays at 4:30 and Thursdays at noon in **Eureka** at HC Mental Health, 720 Wood St. Drop-ins welcome. Contact Lea @845-3233. A group also meets in **Redway** every Thursday 5:00-6:30 at the Family Resource Center, 344 Humboldt. Ave. Contact Lea as well.

Crisis Intervention Training for First Responders: NAMI teams with local law enforcement to bring a mental health perspective to crisis situations. Currently offered about once a year.

HOPE Center: Peer support in a welcoming environment on the HC Mental Health Campus. 441-3783

PTSD Support Groups: (Post traumatic stress disorder.) For eligible veterans. At the Vet Center, 2830 G St. Eureka 444-8271

Kunle Center: Volunteer staffed peer support warmline: 707-599-2381 Open for callers Fri, Sat., Sun for 6pm to midnight-also offers support groups for suicide attempt survivors.

Sept 19: Spaghetti Feed at Elks Lodge

5:30 to 7:30 Advanced tickets please! **\$20 for adults and \$15 for children under 12.** If you have new items for our *Dutch auction*, you can take them to *Brenda Flores* after *August 1*. Contact her at *443-2628* for tickets and info. This is our only fundraiser, and besides being a good evening of fellowship and feasting it helps pay for our costs including insurance, our P.O Box, our website, and more. Come and have fun with your NAMI community!

October 9: Presentation by the Public Guardian and the Patients Rights Advocate

6:00-7:30 p.m. Professional Building 507 F St. Eureka

Learn about the services these two offices provide, such as conservatorship and representative payee.

Saturday, January 18, 2020 Brunch at Humboldt Area Foundation

10:30 to 12:00. *Time to learn more about NAMI Humboldt people and programs, see page 2.*



Who is the suited-up motorcyclist on her way to Seattle.? (Photo taken by the driver of the bike, her husband.)

Read Page 4 to find out who it was and where she was headed!

**NAMI Humboldt County
P.O. Box 1225
Eureka, CA 95502**