



THE VOICE

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS
PALM BEACH COUNTY

PUBLISHED MONTHLY
ISSUE 3 ~ VOL. II

GENERAL MEETING ON DIABETES

CRISTINA ANDREOLI

At the NAMI/PBC General Meeting on February 8, Alyse November, LCSW, gave an overview of the psychological effects of diabetes on its sufferers and the crucial importance of its correct management. She discussed the link between diabetes and anti-psychotic medications. The empathetic talk was held in the beautiful chapel of the United Methodist Church of the Palm Beaches.

Alyse explained that Diabetes is an “anxiety-producing” illness where the strain of gauging the right amounts and types of food correlated to someone’s blood sugar level often has an emotional toll on the patient. Diabetes management requires the support of the whole family and the related medical community (endocrinologists and psychiatrists) since it is often accompanied by denial. One of the implications of this illness is that it is often difficult for patients to live alone. The resulting anger, anxiety and depression in diabetes patients makes psychotherapy and attendance at support groups necessary. In addition, education on the illness for the individual and family is a must.

Alyse November discussed the very troublesome fact that certain anti-psychotic medications for schizophrenia and other serious mental illnesses produce diabetes as a side-effect in people with brain disorders, which is compounded by the weight gain factor that accompanies the taking of these medications. Weight gain does increase a per-

(Continued on page 2)

 **NAMI Palm Beach County**
National Alliance on Mental Illness

PROUDLY PRESENTS...

JEFF INDUSTRIES

AND THE

SERVICES THEY

PROVIDE

Presented by

Claudia Roberts

Executive Director

of

Jeff Industries

TUESDAY

MARCH 8, 2010

6:30 - 8:00 PM

**United Methodist Church
of the Palm Beaches**

**900 Brandywine Road
West Palm Beach, FL 33409**

(Chapel)

***NAMI/PBC General Meetings Are Free
& Open to the Public***

National Alliance on Mental Illness/PBC

***PALM BEACH COUNTY'S
VOICE ON MENTAL ILLNESS***

son's chances of getting diabetes, she added. Conversely, with diet and exercise diabetes can be managed to a degree. The control of diabetes depends on accurately studying/reporting to the endocrinologist the negative effects that foods have on the person in terms of diabetes symptoms such as dizziness, confusion and fatigue. The keeping of a journal of the experiences was considered crucial.

NAMI/PBC ended the interesting interactive discussions by stating that the Palm Health Care-led Community panel discussions, which were held on November 19 for the community, and in which NAMI/PBC was a participant, had concluded that the priorities for action included diabetes prevention, early screening and management. The experts stated that there is a need for staff/patient education and the related treatment of depression. Paraphrasing a proverb, they gave us an apropos mantra – **“It takes a family to beat diabetes”**.

PROTECT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FROM BUDGET AXE

JUDITH EVANS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAMI/
FLORIDA AND SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT FOR A
TAMPA NEWSPAPER

The tragic shootings in Tucson have served as a wakeup call in communities across the nation on the importance of early intervention and treatment for people with serious mental illnesses. The actions of this individual have renewed the exigencies of mental-health-care funding in state budgets such as ours.

Cutting mental health budgets will not make Florida's mental health budget problems go away; they will simply materialize in the form of higher

ER visits, more incarcerations and a sharp increase in homelessness. Florida already has one of the lowest budgets in the nation, ranking 49th in mental health spending and 35th in substance abuse services.

In Florida, as in many other states, mental-health services fall far short of meeting the need. Given a "D" rating in the National Alliance on Mental Illness' (NAMI) "Grading the States" report, Florida currently is meeting slightly over half of the need for publicly funded adult and children's mental services.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, about 26 percent of Americans 18 and older are affected by a mental disorder. Based on FY 2008-2009 figures from the Florida Department of Children & Families, 168,305 adults and 61,137 children who are eligible for and in need of services did not get treatment.

These services are vital to Floridians who need specialized care beyond a clinical physician to stay productive and healthy. According to the nonprofit advocacy group Florida Partners in Crisis, suggested cuts would affect over 300,000 Floridians currently receiving treatment in an already under-funded program.

NAMI Florida, the statewide organization representing individuals with mental illnesses and their families, is urging our state legislators to strengthen Florida's mental-health system so people can get the right help at the right time. With Florida being hit so hard during this financial crisis, these services are needed now more than ever as families struggle to make ends meet. These families would be left with only services offered by Medicaid, and then only those whose household incomes were below the poverty line.

Last year, despite a revenue shortfall, legisla-

tors recognized the value of maintaining these critical treatment services and provided nonrecurring funds to avoid reducing services. This year, yet another deficit is forcing legislators to search for ways to reduce spending.

It's clear from discussions during recent legislative committee meetings that mental-health services are again in jeopardy. Reducing these services will only exacerbate the problems we are already facing. When states reduce budgets and lay off employees, cut contracts to third parties and reduce benefits, the need for mental-health care is increased exponentially.

Thousands of people now receiving services could be affected, and still others could lose their jobs as community programs are cut back or closed. The services at stake range from suicide prevention to emergency crisis care to community-based residential treatment. These are all part of the safety net Florida communities have come to depend on.

Mental health-care cuts actually end up costing us all even more: more children in foster care, more homelessness, more people on welfare and more expensive costs for hospital emergency rooms, police and courts, jails and prisons.

Research has shown there are science-based, cost-effective treatment services that return good value to taxpayers. It has been demonstrated that timely and appropriate treatment can help prevent psychiatric crises and help people with mental illnesses lead independent and productive lives. Protecting services that are vital to the health and safety of our communities is smart spending.

At no charge, NAMI affiliates offer classes and support networks for young people and adults. People can call their local NAMI affiliate or the NAMI Florida state office toll-free at 877-626-4352.

NAMI/PBC FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS

WEST BOCA RATON

West Boca County Library

18685 State Road 7 Boca Raton, FL

Meets the 1st Tuesday of the Month; 6:30–8 pm

BOYNTON BEACH/DELRAY BEACH

Hagen Ranch County Library

14350 Hagen Ranch Road, Delray Beach, FL

Meets the 2nd Wednesday of the Month;

6:30pm

LAKE WORTH

NAMI/PBC Office

1520 10th Ave., No., Ste D, Lake Worth, FL

Meets the 4th Monday of the Month; 3pm

JUPITER

County Library on Military Trail

705 Military Trail, Jupiter, FL

Meets the 3rd Thursday; 6:30–8pm

WELLINGTON

Wellington County Library

1951 Royal Fern Dr., Wellington, FL

Meets the 2nd Monday of the Month; 6:30–

8:30pm

CALL 561-588-3477 FOR INFO

PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

NAMI CONNECTION

RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP

Jo's Place @ South County MHC

16158 S. Military Trail, Delray Beach, FL

Mondays, 1:30-3pm

YOUNG ADULTS SUPPORT GROUP

(18-28)

**For more information call the
NAMI/PBC office at (561) 588-3477**

ANNOUNCEMENT

The *NAMI/PBC Spanish-speaking Family Support Group* is being launched on Tuesday, March 15 from 6:30-8:00 pm at the NAMI/PBC Office by Leonora Torregroza as facilitator and Elsy Bauer as back-up facilitator for this group. The support group will be held every 3rd Tuesday of the month.

For further information, please call the NAMI/PBC Office at 561-588-3477

BLAKE OLIVER—THE NAMI/PBC TREASURER

The importance of a Treasurer's post cannot be underestimated. A Treasurer manages a non-profit's financial system and keeps a tight control of the use of revenues against aspirations and financial projections. A bright and eclectic talent, Blake Oliver is the hard working Treasurer for NAMI/PBC. It is with regret that we see him leave Palm Beach County for California.

Currently, Blake Oliver is, also, an office manager at a tutoring school in Boca Raton, and a performing cellist in his spare time. Additionally, he is responsible for working on the layout of the monthly NAMI/PBC newsletter "The Voice" and the bi-annual Peer Council newsletter "The White

Picket Fence." He is, also, our affiliate's webmaster and has helped the organization shine with its optimally designed Web page – the bright door to NAMI/PBC.

Blake has had a peripatetic childhood in many different locations in the USA. He is a graduate of Northwestern University, where he obtained his major in cello studies. In following his fiancée (now wife) to Florida, he successfully tapped into his diverse skills to construct a career for himself in Palm Beach County. Drawing on his past experience as the Treasurer of his school's fraternity, he became a mathematics tutor in the first instance and then a bookkeeper for NAMI/PBC, prior to donating his time by becoming its Board Member/Treasurer.

Blake is planning to move to Los Angeles to support his wife who has just been accepted into an interesting job position in the media. Blake's plans will continue to burgeon to include a business degree at either UCLA or USC, to which he has applied, and, of course, employment, which he plans to seek.

He emphasizes to Curtis Russ and myself that it has been an honor and a pleasure for him to work on the NAMI/PBC Board and that he has indeed been happy to have had the opportunity to give back. He foresees continuing to be associated for a while with our organization via internet from California as a bookkeeper and newsletter layout organizer. He states that outsourcing is the way of the future for nonprofits. We told Blake that NAMI/PBC is very sorry to see him go and that we are all very grateful for the time and energy that he has put into the organization, first as an employee and then as a volunteer.

DR. FRED FRESE, NAMI
NATIONAL BOARD
MEMBER, TO JOIN THE
CIT INTERNATIONAL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SUBMITTED BY
DOROTHY KELLEHER

On December 16, 2010 the CIT International membership submitted their votes for the CIT International Board of Directors. Dr. Fred Frese was overwhelmingly selected. Dr. Frese comes to the CIT International Board with many years of experience (both personal and professional) of addressing the needs for people with serious mental illnesses. Active in both local state and national CIT, he has delivered the opening day lectures on mental illness and coordinated the CIT Drop in Center visits for the Summit County, Ohio, CIT Training program for over 10 years. He has also delivered lectures in over 15 counties in Ohio, at state-wide conferences and at the CIT National and International conferences in Columbus, Ohio; Orlando, Florida; Memphis, Tennessee and San Antonio, Texas.

When asked in the nomination questionnaire what his most valuable talent is that he brings to the CIT International Board, he replied, "The most valuable asset I feel I have to contribute is that of having the experience of living with schizophrenia and having been delivering mental health services to persons disabled with serious mental illness for over 40 years. Additionally, I have experience in being active at the national level in the consumer advocacy arena, having served as both

NAMI/PBC
ANNOUNCEMENT: MARIJUANA AND THE EARLY INCIDENCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS

CRISTINA ANDREOLI

I informed the last monthly General Meeting that the "link between using marijuana and developing serious mental illnesses *"had recently been found by researchers at the University of South Wales in Sydney, Australia to be "strongest in youngest smokers – 12 to 15 years old, or kids even younger"*. The study had led the researchers to announce that the onset of schizophrenia had come nearly three years earlier when preceded by marijuana use.

NAMI/PBC mentioned the importance that an extra three years would have on teenagers. The implications were that with an extra three years teenagers could thus *"achieve important developmental milestones of adolescence," finish school and obtain skills that would reduce their chances of having a disability for the rest of their lives.*

We should add that this message is important since anti-marijuana campaigns focus on older groups and not on pre-teens and adolescents who often obtain their drugs *"from older siblings and peers"*.

From msnbc.com article "Pot Linked to Earlier Onset of Mental Illness."

president of the National Mental Health Consumers Association and vice president of the national NAMI organization. “

Dr. Frese hopes to lend his experience, knowledge and talents to CIT International as the organization continues to grow. He believes the organization’s emphasis should continue to be on facilitating the establishment of CIT programs throughout the U.S. and in other countries. Dr. Frese further believes that CIT International can play a significant role in advancing similar training for other criminal justice professionals working in jails, prisons and community corrections.

STRENGTHOFUS.ORG: LIVE A BETTER LIFE THROUGH COMMUNITY

STRENGTHOFUS REACHES MORE THAN 1,600 COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND CONTINUES TO GROW

DANA MARKEY PROGRAM MANAGER, NAMI CHILD AND ADOLESCENT ACTION CENTER

New Interactive Resources and Celebrity Videos Coming Soon.

StrengthofUs.org is the NAMI online resource center and social networking website for young adults (ages 18-30) living with mental health conditions. It exists to empower young adults to live out their dreams and goals through peer support and resource sharing. We believe every young adult deserves to feel hopeful, supported and encouraged to love who they are.

We are excited to announce that StrengthofUs.org has empowered more than 1,600 young adult community members since launching in March. The site continues to grow rapidly with inspiring young adults, guest blogs, positive discussions, resources and much more! This is a trib-

ute to all of the thoughtful young adults on the site who have created a welcoming community where users can share their challenges, successes and strategies of living with a mental health condition and, most of all draw strength from each other.

Starting next week, we will be posting new daily activities, interactive resources and videos from celebrities who share their personal stories combating mental health issues. Please pass the word along through your networks and see the attached ad to promote StrengthofUs.org. Join this supportive community today at StrengthofUs.org.

Also, check out our Face book page at www.facebook.com/StrengthofUs to keep up with the latest happenings on StrengthofUs.org.

Do you want to help StrengthofUs.org achieve its mission? Email Dana Markey, Program Manager, at danac@nami.org to learn about opportunities to get involved!

Thanks.

SECOND GUESSING

LORI JO BAACH

Was my decision to take the plunge and go off disability to work full-time many, many years ago the right decision? Up until most recently, I said yes. Now I second guess myself.

I have been flourishing as a 40 hour week salaried employee for the past two decades earning benefits and gaining notoriety from my peers, coworkers and family for my efforts of being in the mainstream of the workforce. I have felt great pride in doing so. In my designated role as the Peer Specialist, I often feel challenged to keep up the pace but my report card reflects in my regular

evaluations all “exceptionals”. Therefore, on an objective declaration, I am validated for serving my purpose and then some...

Here is where the predicament introduces itself to me directly. As we are all well aware, the new health care system seems to be crippling everyone. For me, it has now presented heads on. At work, we are in the process of changing health care providers. I did some research and was extremely disturbed (actually left work early in tears and panic) upon finding that neither my current psychiatrist nor therapist that I have been seeing for about five years are not covered under the new plan. How horrible a commentary is this?

We talk about continuity of care. We talk about consistency. We talk about stability. So, I have several grave options. I can pay out of pocket (My pockets are empty), I can start all over again with new providers (Here we go again...), I can see the psychiatrist every three months for scripts and put it on the good old credit card and seize therapy (as I am quite stable these days... until this insurance thing rocked me) and I can continue to try to be creative. (I have already brought the quandary to Human Resources at work to see if they can help out).

The purpose of this article was to address whether going off disability was a positive decision. Considering this current insurance dilemma I'm not so sure. As for receiving a monthly disability check? I question this as well. My salary is such a pittance that I often do the math and find that if I went back and received SSDI and worked the full part-time that would not interfere with my check, I would probably come out relatively the same (and have the insurance of Medicaid/Medicare built in). So...I second guess...

BOOK REVIEW

DONNA GEPHART

Welcome to the Jungle (Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Bipolar But Were Too Freaked Out to Ask) by Hilary Smith

As an author, I read a lot of books.

As a parent of a bipolar son, I read a lot of books about bipolar disorder.

I'd give *Welcome to the Jungle* to any young person dealing with this illness. It's hip, brimming with practical advice and, in the author's own words, “badass!”

The author infuses humor – yes, humor! – in chapters with titles like: Mania, Depression, Psychosis, OH MY! (A Whirlwind Tour Through the Episodes of Bipolar Disorder), This is Your Manager Speaking (Taming Episodes with Food, Sleep and Exercise) and The Game of Life (Bipolar in College and at Work).

Smith, who has bipolar disorder, offers help, hope and a great resource section in the back of the book. She writes as though she's a good friend, helping the reader through every aspect of this illness.

“Dating someone when you have bipolar disorder is a lot like dating someone when you don't have bipolar disorder, except when you have bipolar, your significant other (or S.O.) has to be cool with things like meds, depression and occasionally being locked out of his own house at 1 a.m. while you spontaneously rewallpaper his bedroom.”

Buy this hip, helpful book for someone you love who's dealing with bipolar disorder.

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NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
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PERMIT NO. 1327

Or Current Resident



Palm Beach County

Membership

- Voting \$45 Family \$55 Professional \$65
 Corporate \$250 Open Door \$5

NAMI Membership exists at 3 levels: Affiliate, State & National; with just 1 payment, you'll be joining all 3 at once! As a member, you will receive: cutting-edge newsletters & publications, like *The Voice* & *The Advocate*, action alerts & leadership opportunities, plus advanced notice of upcoming meetings, classes & events.

NAMI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, charitable organization—contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. *Together*, we can continue to fight for all those affected by mental illness. *Thank you!*

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WWW.NAMIPBC.ORG
INFO@NAMIPBC.ORG

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I'd like to support NAMI/
PBC with a donation of:

- \$25 **\$50** \$100
other: \$ _____

- I'm interested in volunteering with NAMI/PBC.
 I wish to receive NAMI National's solicitations.

Members are NAMI/PBC's lifeblood; your joining helps us continue to provide free outreach, support & education. In bringing mental health issues to wider attention, we advocate for better treatment. As our membership base grows, our voice becomes stronger.

***Respect, Compassion
& Hope ... NAMI Works!***