



Winter 2021

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Holiday  
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# NAMI TALKS Ventura County

## NAMIWalks Kicks Off 2021 Season

Maya Lazos

The numbers don't lie. Mental illness is everywhere.

Over 43 million adults experience mental illness each year yet we're still not talking about it.

In October, everything from the NFL to grocery store aisles turn pink to remind us about breast cancer. That's followed quickly by No-Shave November, where men go burly and bearded to raise awareness of prostate cancer.

We go to galas and golf tournaments. We run 5ks and share memes while couchsurfing for everything from heart disease to autism. They're all valuable contributions to health awareness.

And somehow, we're still not talking about mental illness.

Mental illness remains one of the leading causes of disability not only in our country but across the world. Suicide rates continue to rise among adolescents and adults as well among first responders and veterans.

In California, suicide is the second leading cause of death of youth between the ages of 10 and 24. Do you know a 10-year-old child? Can you imagine a fourth

grader feeling so much pain that, in their mind, suicide becomes a reasonable alternative?

It's heartbreaking that some of you will understand because you've lost a child to suicide. I understand because I lived it.

I survived several suicide attempts as an adolescent and young adult. I experienced my first trauma at age 5.

Adverse Childhood Experiences, known as ACES, measures early exposure to traumatic events including abuse, neglect, and other hallmarks of a rough childhood. The higher the score on a scale of one to 10, the greater the risk for chronic disease, mental illness, violence and being a victim of violence.

I scored a 10 and have experienced all of the above.

*See NAMIWALK, Page 9*

*Let's Keep Pace*



*At the Kickoff: Port Hueneme City Council Member Misty Perez (center left) and Maya Lazos (center right) commit to amplifying the conversation along with first responders from across Ventura County.*



President's Message

Looking Forward, Growing Impact

I am humbled, honored and privileged to assume the role of President of NAMI Ventura County.

I am deeply grateful to my predecessor, Shirley Brandon, for her leadership and outstanding contributions to NAMI Ventura County during her presidency, and the members of the Executive Committee and Board, along with our small but mighty staff. I am inspired by their commitment to NAMI VC and all of their achievements.

Indeed, the growth of NAMI VC has been propelled collectively by the individuals and all the past presidents and past members of the Board and Executive Committee. I look forward to continuing this important work towards fulfilling the mission of advocating for mental health services, awareness, education and outreach to our community.

We've navigated the COVID-19 restrictions and developed an even stronger presence in Ventura County. Through it all we have provided support groups, programs and classes, even conducted fundraising virtually!

As we get ready to celebrate NAMI Ventura County's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, I plan to collaborate with all of our stakeholders to build our presence in Ventura County. This includes expanding NAMI Homefront for our military community, and supporting vigorous and innovative fundraising efforts to continue our



Patti Pape  
President, Board of Directors

contributions to the well-being of individuals and families living with mental illness.

I look forward to being a part of the future of NAMI VC, our impact is and will continue to be deep and wide. Please feel free to contact me at any time, together we are able to realize our potential and move the agenda of NAMI forward.

In gratitude,  
Patti Pape



ARE YOU CONNECTED?

NAMI Ventura County

namiventura

@namiventura

NAMI Ventura County

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Fax: (805) 275-2188

Email: info@namiventura.org

Website: www.namiventura.org

Memorial Donations 2020-2021

In Memory of:

Margaret Broughton Reiko Osumi

Joshua Newstat Jax Films

Eric Pape Ray & Anne Higgins

George Perry Karen Portillo

Georgia Perry Kathy Asher

Lyndell Pool Melanie Nelson Betty Roina

Ken McKee Reiko Osumi

Zack Kanny Elizabeth Nevins

In Honor of:

Robert Hurwich Susan Hurwich

Memorial Donations can be made to NAMI Ventura County through trusts, payroll deductions, Paypal, check, and credit card. For more information, please call (805) 641-2426.

Don't Forget:

May is MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

In Memoriam

Georgia Lyn Schultz Perry 1954-2021

To know her is to love her.

Passionate and gracious Georgia Lyn Schultz Perry, passed away on February 7th, 2021 after a valiant battle with cancer. Georgia was born in Ventura, CA on May 11, 1954 to Kathryn Anne Schultz and Former Ventura City Fire Chief Dean Schultz.

She graduated from Ventura High School in 1973 and remained a loyal Cougar fan throughout her life. She married her husband, Dennis Keith Perry in Somis CA, 1985, and their union blessed them with two sons, James Dean Perry and George Canning Perry.

Georgia was a volunteer extraordinaire in various organizations that promoted and honored all people. She was active in NAMI Ventura County, NCL Juniors, Las Patronas Auxiliary, Ventura High School Boosters, Ventura Unified School Attendance Review Board and the Ventura Education Partnership. Georgia brought her flair and passion into every organization as she advocated and worked for the dignity and well-being of others. Georgia was honored by the Ventura Education Partnership as Volunteer of the Year in 2016 for her far-reaching contributions. Georgia loved all children and youth, and devoted her life to their education and wellbeing as a Montessori teacher and in active support of public education. She truly loved people and enjoyed her retail sales opportunities to share with, and benefit others.



When Georgia was in the room, there was joy, flair, style and laughter. Her inner and outer beauty were undeniable and she shared that beauty with everyone she met. Georgia was a lover of hearts... heart jewelry always adorned her. Today our hearts are broken, but tomorrow we will find her in the laughter of friends, the smiles of children, the kindness of strangers, and the brilliance of sunsets and our hearts will be full once again.

Georgia is survived by her mother Kathryn Schultz, husband Dennis Perry, son James Dean (JD) Perry, and brothers, Alan Karl Schultz and Eric Dean Schultz. She is preceded by her father Dean Schultz and her beloved son, George Perry. In addition to her beloved family, Georgia is mourned by an entire community who are better because she was here. Just an old sweet song, keeps Georgia on our mind... and forever in our hearts.

A celebration of life will be held when we all can gather safely. Georgia requested any memorial donations that you consider Turning Point Foundation's, Growing Works Nursery; NAMI Ventura County; or your favorite charity.





## Membership & Membership Renewal Application

Support NAMI by becoming a member. Your membership counts!

Become a NAMI member or renew your membership today to add your name to the list of thousands raising their voices to demand services, support and respect for the millions affected by mental illness. NAMI membership demonstrates your support for the important work being done at NAMI and helps us make our voice heard in our community, in Sacramento, and in the nation's capital.

Members receive NAMI's national news magazine, the Advocate, in addition to local and state newsletters. Members also enjoy reduced costs at conventions, the NAMI Store, and other events, as well as voting privileges to shape the future of America's largest grassroots organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions affected by mental illness. Your membership in NAMI Ventura County supports our programs, increases our ability to help more families and allows us to advocate effectively on behalf of people affected by mental health conditions.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First

Last

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Your annual dues include:

- \$10 for membership in NAMI National and the quarterly newsmagazine, The Advocate
- \$10 for membership in NAMI California and the monthly electronic newsletter
- The NAMI Ventura County newsletter

### Choose Your Membership Level:

☐ \$60.00 Household Membership ☐ \$40.00 Individual Membership ☐ \$5.00 Open Door Membership

This membership is: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

### Make a Donation:

- ☐ I want to donate \$100.00 to **Pay It Forward**
- ☐ I would like to make a one-time donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ in addition to my membership.
- ☐ I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ monthly to become a Mental Health Hero

Please bill my credit card: \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ Master Card \_\_\_\_\_ American Express

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Digit Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please use this form to renew my membership annually.

### Pay by Check:

Make checks payable to NAMI Ventura County. Mail to NAMI Ventura County, P.O. Box 1613, Camarillo, CA 93011-1613

NAMI Ventura County is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization and all donations are tax deductible.  
Federal Tax ID #77-0037450

## 2020 Impact Report

The world changed in 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic shifted how we all live, work, and care for ourselves and our loved ones. Determined to rise to the occasion, NAMI Ventura County staff and volunteers met new challenges with grit and gusto. That persistence resulted in NAMI VC expanding programs and access across Ventura County.

**PIVOT**  
In 2020, NAMI VC created virtual NAMIWalks events and re-imagining the Annual Holiday Party and brand-new Valentine's Day event in socially-distanced formats

**ZOOM**  
By April 2020, NAMI VC adopted Zoom as our virtual platform. Volunteers trained as TechProducers to help participants navigate new technologies

**67%**  
Increase in the students receiving stigma-reducing in Our Own Voice presentations



**4,203** LIVES TOUCHED IN 2020 BY NAMI VC PROGRAMS

**1,937** INDIVIDUALS  
**ADVOCACY PROGRAMS**  
• Ending the Silence • In Our Own Voice • FaithNet • Annual Holiday Party •

**1,561** INDIVIDUALS  
**SUPPORT PROGRAMS**  
• Family Support Group • Grupo de Apoyo • NAMI Connections • Community Resource Line •

**705** INDIVIDUALS  
**EDUCATION PROGRAMS**  
• Family to Family • Familia a Familia • Provider Education • Peer to Peer • Family & Friends • Community Cares •

**66%**  
Increase in individuals using education programs

**94**  
**2,724** hours  
Volunteers donated

**NEW**  
In response to increasing mental health concerns, NAMI VC created a new program. Community Cares busts stigma and builds skills in awareness, self-care, and communication

The mission of NAMI Ventura County is to provide emotional support, education and resources for families affected by mental illness. Through community collaboration and education, we advocate for a life of quality and dignity — one without discrimination — for all people affected by this illness.

NAMI Ventura County • PO Box 1613 • Camarillo, CA 93011-1613 • 805.641.2426 • www.namiventura.org



# Delivering Joy: Not Even a Pandemic Could Prevent a Very NAMI Holiday Celebration

**Kimberly Quinn**  
Program Coordinator

Have you ever heard the idiom “seeing is believing”? That quip is actually only half of the original quote from Thomas Fuller, a 17th century clergyman. The full quote goes, “Seeing is believing, but feeling is the truth.”

If there’s anything our pandemic year has taught me, it’s that feelings are the truth and the motivator behind all the work we do here at NAMI Ventura County. Our 2020 Holiday Party was all about the feelings.

All year long, we hear comments about the

holiday party. All the guests have a great time and, aside from NAMIWalks, it’s easily the most popular event we host for volunteers. For some of our guests, the NAMI Holiday Party is the only celebration they’ll enjoy. For others, the gift-filled stockings are not only a delightful surprise but the only gifts they will receive.

The joy generated is immense.

The NAMI staff knew, of course, that our traditional format wasn’t going to work in the midst of a pandemic. And here’s where those feelings come in. They came out loud and clear in our staff meeting. There was simply no way,

whatsoever, that NAMI Ventura County would not bring cheer to board and care residents.

So, we rolled up our sleeves and determined to continue the joyful tradition. We spent long planning sessions (and plenty of late nights) creating a holiday event that could still bring

dinner, gifts, and fun to over 400 residents at mental health facilities and board and care homes.

That’s how the Holiday Party in a Box came to life. If our guests couldn’t come to us, we would bring the party to them!

“How nice is this!”  
&  
“Gifts too!”

-Veterans House Residents

**The Three Elements:** Every location received a party box. Every resident recieved a gift bag and dinner.

**In the Party Box:** Snacks, Festive party games, DJ Vince’s Music Mix, Door prizes, and Photo booth props.

**Dinner:** Yum! Dinner was provided by Gerald Everett, of the LA Rams, and NFL sponsor Cracker Barrel.

**Gift Bags:** Gift bags were filled to the brim with goodies.

“I can’t remember the last time I got a gift”

-Our Place Safe Haven Resident

“NAMI is good to us”  
&  
“Things like this make you feel good”

-Stephenson’s Place Residents

“Wow! What a blessing”  
&  
“It’s nice to be remembered”

-River Haven Residents

**Boxes and Bags and Dinner, Oh My!**

The NAMI Holiday Party Caravan made deliveries on Tuesday, December 15 escorted by city and county law enforcement and fire units.

At every stop, DJ Vince cranked up holiday tunes and Gerald Everett graciously took socially distanced photos with fans along the way.

“Wow! This is amazing”  
&  
“We are grateful and thankful, meal was excellent”

-Villa Calleguas Residents

“How cool is this!”  
&  
“I can’t believe they did this for us”

-Wooley House Residents



# Learn Something New in May for Mental Health Awareness Month

## Community Resource Programs

**Community Resource Line:** NAMI Ventura County’s Resource Line is staffed by knowledgeable volunteers who answer general questions about mental illness and recovery as well as provide referrals to NAMI programs and other community mental health resources. Call 805-500-NAMI.

**Community Cares Webinar:** A 2-hour webinar for all community members (including peers and family members) introduces mental health education with a focus on building resilience with a foundation of self-awareness, self-care and communication. Available in Spanish as Cuidado entra la comunidad.

**In Our Own Voice:** A unique public education program developed by NAMI, in which two trained consumer speakers share compelling personal stories about living with mental illness and achieving recovery. IOOV is also an opportunity for those who have struggled with mental illness to gain confidence and to share their individual experiences of recovery and transformation. Available in Spanish as En Nuestra Propia Voz.

## Family Programs

**Family to Family Class:** An 8-week education course for families, partners and friends of individuals living with a mental health condition taught by trained family members. Available in Spanish as Familia a Familia.

**Family & Friends Webinar:** A 4-hour webinar that informs and supports family members, partners, friends and significant others who have loved ones with a mental health condition. Webinar leaders are family members and know what it is like to have a loved one with a mental health condition. Also available in Spanish as Familia y amigos.

**Family Support Groups:** These groups are for caregivers of individuals living with a mental health condition, including parents, siblings, spouses, partners or friends. Available in Spanish as Grupo de Apoyo.

*For more information, schedules and registration, go to [www.namiventura.org/](http://www.namiventura.org/) programs or email [info@namiventura.org](mailto:info@namiventura.org).*

Register now at [www.namiventura.org](http://www.namiventura.org)

## School Programs

**Ending the Silence for Students:** An educational program to lessen stigma and raise awareness about mental illness. ETS for Students is designed for 7th through 12th grade audiences.

**Ending the Silence for School Staff:** An educational presentation designed to inform educators and school administrators about student mental health. This 1-hour presentation includes information about warning signs, facts and statistics, how to approach students and how to work with families

**Ending the Silence for Families:** This presentation is designed specifically for adults with middle or high school aged youth. The presentation includes warning signs, facts and statistics, how to talk with your child and how to work with school staff

**NAMI On Campus:** When students connect with one another, they can share common experiences and support each other. NAMI on Campus helps make those connections happen. NAMI on Campus clubs work to end the stigma that makes it hard for students to talk about mental health and get the help they need. Clubs plan innovative awareness events and other NAMI programs through partnership with NAMI Ventura County.

## Professional Programs

**Provider Education Seminar:** A 4-hour program that presents a penetrating, subjective view of family and consumer experiences with serious mental illness to staff at organizations working directly with people experiencing severe and persistent mental illnesses. (CEUs available)

## Faith Community Programs

**FaithNet:** NAMI FaithNet is an interfaith resource network for faith communities welcoming and supporting persons and families living with mental illness. FaithNet can connect NAMI programs to the need in your congregation.

## Peer Programs

**Peer to Peer Class:** NAMI Peer-to-Peer is a 8-week education class for adults with mental illness who are looking to better understand their condition and journey toward recovery. Taught by a trained team of peers living in recovery from mental health challenges.

**NAMI Connection:** A twice-monthly recovery support group for people living with mental illness where people learn from each other’s experiences, share coping strategies, and offer encouragement and understanding.

## Special Events

**NAMIWalks:** Every journey begins with that first step! Join us as NAMIWalks Ventura County celebrates our 16th Anniversary in 2021. Through NAMIWalks’ public, active display of support for people affected by mental illness, we are changing communities and ensuring that help and hope are available for those in need.

**General Meeting & Guest Speakers:** These quarterly education and advocacy meetings are free and open to anyone interested in learning about mental illness. Guest speakers address a wide range of topics. Past guest speakers have included psychiatrists, therapists, psych pharmacologists, state and local mental health leaders and more.

**Community Holiday Party:** A festive and popular NAMI Ventura County tradition where individuals living in board and care facilities are invited to share in the delights of the holiday season. The party, whether in-person or by delivery includes a delicious dinner, fun games, and gifts.



# La salud mental importa, toma una clase en mayo

**Familia a Familia Clase:** Un curso educativo de 12 semanas para familias, parejas y amigos de personas que viven con una afección de salud mental impartido en español por familiares capacitados.

**Familia y amigos seminario web:** El Seminario de Familia y Amigos del Condado de NAMI Ventura es un programa de 4 horas (o 2.5 horas) diseñado para presentar la educación de salud mental basada en la evidencia y la experiencia con un enfoque en la empatía, la acción y la esperanza. Los líderes de seminarios capacitados tienen experiencia personal en el manejo de enfermedades mentales dentro de su propia familia inmediata. Ya sea que tenga un amigo cercano o un pariente que viva con una enfermedad mental o esté interesado en aprender a abordar las necesidades dentro de su comunidad, el seminario Familia y amigos es un excelente lugar para comenzar.

**Cuidado entre la comunidad seminario web:** El programa de 2 horas está diseñado para presentar evidencia y educación de salud mental basada en la experiencia con un enfoque en el bienestar, la recuperación y la esperanza. El tono de la presentación es casual. Los presentadores cubren la importancia de la salud y el bienestar mental, los diagnósticos y tratamientos comunes, las habilidades de autocuidado y comunicación, y presentan los recursos y programas de NAMI. El seminario web será impartido por un equipo de dos personas capacitadas. Tanto los miembros de la familia como los compañeros recibirán formación como facilitadores y aportarán a la presentación su experiencia personal para navegar por las enfermedades mentales y la recuperación.

Regístrese ahora en [www.namiventura.org](http://www.namiventura.org)



**En Nuestra Propia Voz:** En Nuestra Propia Voz de NAMI es un programa de educación pública único en la cual dos oradores comparten impactantes historias personales derivadas de vivir con los retos de una enfermedad mental y de lograr recuperarse. El rango de audiencias incluye individuos que viven con una enfermedad mental, estudiantes de todas las edades, personal del orden público, miembros de comunidades religiosas, personal militar retirado y proveedores de servicios. Mientras el público se beneficia de historias inspiradoras y motivadoras, los presentadores tienen la posibilidad de aumentar la confianza en sí mismos y desarrollar habilidades de liderazgo.

**Termina el Silencio:** Poniendo fin al silencio para las familias: esta presentación está diseñada específicamente para adultos con jóvenes en edad de escuela intermedia o secundaria. La presentación incluye señales de advertencia, datos y estadísticas, cómo hablar con su hijo y cómo trabajar con el personal de la escuela.

**Grupo de Apoyo:** Este grupo gratuito (en español) ofrece apoyo a miembros de familia y amigos que se enfrentan con la preocupación, el estrés, y la sobrecarga emocional de cuidar a una persona que tiene una enfermedad mental seria. Este grupo de apoyo es diseñado para compartir información sobre las enfermedades mentales de nuestros seres queridos, para aprender como cuidarse a si mismo y para encontrar servicios apropiados en la comunidad.

*Para obtener más información, horarios y registro, vaya a <https://namiventura.org/clases-en-espanol/> o correo electrónico [info@namiventura.org](mailto:info@namiventura.org).*



Solicite un programa para su empresa, grupo u organización

## What is NAMI On Demand?

The OnDemand class format is an adaptation of in-person education programs. These programs are self-paced and available online 24/7. OnDemand programs offer the flexibility of participating in the course on your schedule. Both formats provide identical information, strategies and the opportunity to connect with other caregivers. Participants can sign up at [nami.org](http://nami.org).

**NAMI Homefront:** Based on the nationally Family-to-Family program, NAMI Homefront is a free, six-session program designed to address the unique needs of family, caregivers and friends of those who have served or are currently serving our country. The program is taught by trained family members of service members/veterans with mental health conditions.

**NAMI Basics** is a free, six-session program designed for parents and other family caregivers of children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral difficulties. NAMI Basics helps parents and other family caregivers of children to understand the illnesses that are causing those behavioral difficulties, and the critical role families play in the treatment of those illnesses. The program is taught by trained teachers who are also the parents or family caregivers.





# Upcoming Events

Register at [www.namiventura.org](http://www.namiventura.org)

## Family & Friends Webinar

April 21 (6-8:30pm) via Zoom.

May 8 (9-11am) via Zoom.

## Community Cares Webinar

April 29 (6:30-8:30pm) via Zoom.

May 15 (9-11am) via Zoom.

May 15 (1-3pm) via Zoom.

May 27 (6:30-8:30pm) via Zoom.

## Family to Family Class

April 17 (9:30am-12pm) via Zoom/8 weeks.

## Provider Education Seminar

Tues. June 15 (10am-2:30pm) via Zoom. .

## Family Support Groups

Ongoing via Zoom (1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Tues). Please visit [namiventura.org](http://namiventura.org) for the full schedule and registration.

## NAMI Connections Support Group

Ongoing via Zoom (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Weds). Please visit [namiventura.org](http://namiventura.org) for the full schedule and registration.

# Próximos Eventos

Registrarse en  
[www.namiventura.org](http://www.namiventura.org)

## Familia y amigos seminario web

April 21 (6-8:30pm) via Zoom.

May 8 (9-11am) via Zoom.

## Cuidado entre la comunidad seminario web

29 de abril (6:30-8:30pm) via Zoom.

15 de mayo (9-11am) via Zoom.

15 de mayo (1-3pm) via Zoom.

27 de mayo (6:30-8:30pm) via Zoom.

# Resources

**In an immediate psychiatric and/or medical emergency, please dial 911.  
Request a CIT Officer.**

## Ventura County Behavioral Health

For individuals in need of mental health services or experiencing a mental health crisis, please call:

**Star Program:** (866) 998-2243 Available 24/7 or (805) 981-4233

**Adult Crisis Team:** (877) 327-4747 or 911 (Request a CIT officer)

## Acute Care Psychiatric Hospitals

### Aurora Vista del Mar

Medicare and private insurance only  
(805) 653-6434  
801 Seneca St, Ventura

Hillmont Psychiatric Center

All county residents  
(805) 652-6729  
200 Hillmont Ave, Ventura

## NAMI VC Community Resource Line

(805) 500-NAMI: M-F 9am-5pm

## Treatment Referral

**SAMHSA's National Helpline** is a free, confidential, 24/7 treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders. 1-800-662-HELP (4357). Also available online at [www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov)

## Reach Out

**California Peer-Run Warm Line** (available 24/7) 855-845-7415 or chat online at [www.mentalhealthsf.org/peer-run-warmline](http://www.mentalhealthsf.org/peer-run-warmline)

## Behavioral Health Advisory Board

**3rd Monday of each month at 1pm These meetings are open to the public. For more details please call (805) 981-1115.**

During the current emergency, all in-person meetings of the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) have been suspended until further notice. Meetings will be conducted online through Zoom. As always, community members are encouraged to attend.

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** (available 24/7) 1-800-273-TALK (8255), by text (text NAMI to 741741), or chat online at [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

**The Trevor Project Lifeline** (LGBTQ+ Youth) (available 24/7) 1-866-488-7386, by text (text START to 678678) or chat online at [www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

**The National Domestic Violence Hotline** (available 24/7) 1-800-799-SAFE (7233), by text (text LOVEIS to 22522) or chat online at [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)

## Youth Resources

**JedFoundation.org:** The Jed Foundation is committed to the mental and emotional health of college students and preventing suicide. The foundation runs several free online self-assessment and resource programs.

**OktoTalk.org:** It's time we talked about mental health. Share what's on your mind.

## COVID-19 Resources

**2-1-1 Ventura County:** Information and referral service for Ventura County. Call 2-1-1, text COVID19 to 211211 or visit [211ventura.org](http://211ventura.org).

**Coping During Coronavirus: Online Support Groups:** Coronavirus emotional wellness online support groups (English and Spanish) and more. Visit [www.giveanhour.org/initiatives-and-programs/covid19-ca/](http://www.giveanhour.org/initiatives-and-programs/covid19-ca/)

Meeting materials will be posted ([www.vcbh.org/en/behavioral-health-advisory-board-meetings](http://www.vcbh.org/en/behavioral-health-advisory-board-meetings)) and sent by email.

The mission of the BHAB is to advocate for community members living with mental illness and/or substance use disorders and their families. This is accomplished through support, review, and evaluation of treatment services provided and/or coordinated through the Ventura County Behavioral Health Department.



## NAMIWalk from page 1

My 12-year-old, habitual runaway self owes the Oxnard Police Department an apology for cursing them out in attempts to get arrested rather than be returned home. At the time, I was asking for help the only way I knew how.

Unfortunately, I didn't get the help I needed. The schools didn't offer me help or support. Multiple arrests as a teenager didn't raise any flags. Traumatic events kept piling on. Decades of trauma without interventions or treatment accumulated. I was too fearful of the stigma to seek out help.

I came to believe suicide was my only option.

In 2012, as a student at Cal Lutheran, I starting having extreme panic attacks and breakdowns in my Spanish class. I could not understand what was going on with me. My professor

sent me to the counseling center on campus where counselling journey began. Through counseling, I identified that speaking Spanish triggered my Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

That professor recognized the signs and reached out. She was familiar with the resources. She knew to adjust my learning experience so that I could succeed in her class. I can't help but think how my life might be different if that intervention had come when I was a child.

That is why I walk. I walk to raise awareness.

I support NAMIWalks to ensure as many people as possible know these free educational classes and support groups are available.

You have an opportunity through NAMIWalks

2021. Join our efforts to stop stigma, spread education, and make mental health a priority. You have the chance to change someone's life.

NAMIWalks is more than a fundraiser. It's an opportunity to change our culture. We each have the power to create a better tomorrow.

*Maya Lazos is the chairperson for the NAMIWalks Team Captain Committee. She tackles every task with an amazing energy and is has been nicknamed Make-It-Happen Maya by the NAMI VC staff.*



NAMI Ventura County staff and board members show off their signs of hope at the NAMIWalks 2021 Team Captain Kickoff Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup>.





# **Empower Your Mental Health**

**Education.**

**Support.**

**Advocacy.**

**Start Here.**



Ventura County