Message From Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Schizophrenia. It’s a loaded word that many people don’t fully understand. Shattering that stigma and helping those challenged with schizophrenia and other psychotic brain disorders and their families is what Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America, or “SARDAA” does. SARDAA is hosting a conference, workshop, and benefit in Houston on Saturday, October 10th. The conference theme is “Brain Disorders: Global Perspectives”.

The October 10th educational benefit, “Jazz On My Mind,” features a dinner, an incredible auction and Smooth Jazz Cruise artists: Tom Braxton and Larry Braggs. Tom Braxton has generously supported SARDAA for three years; this year Larry Braggs and Vel Lewis will join Tom. “Jazz On My Mind” recognizes Buddy Bolden who was the innovator of contemporary jazz and who lived with and died due to the sometimes terminal illness of schizophrenia, as do many great artists and millions of others. Proceeds go to education, support and resources for people affected by schizophrenia-related brain disorders.

Schizophrenia and bipolar illnesses are devastating brain diseases affecting an estimated 7 - 9 million Americans. About 50 percent of those receive no treatment. Even more individuals are affected as their mothers, fathers, siblings and children are diagnosed with the diseases. Despite the number of individuals affected, they remain diseases that are stigmatized and whose patients and loved ones are ostracized due to behaviors stemming from their symptoms. Although a diagnosis can be tragic news for a family, there is hope. For those who become suicidal in the face of a diagnosis, this message is critical. With treatment, people can improve their lives and in some cases recover completely, though the cost can be enormous. That’s where SARDAA comes in.
People with serious psychiatric brain illnesses including schizophrenia-related illnesses, die an average of 25 years younger than the general population (National Association of State Mental Health Planning Directors 2006). Further, numerous studies have found that individuals with schizophrenia are at a much greater risk of dying from suicide (over 12%) and other unnatural causes (over 7%) than the general population. These statistics are especially astonishing in light of the fact that these premature deaths are almost always from preventable causes. An appalling, disturbing statistic that does not begin to convey the challenges and heartbreak people experience.

Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America (SARDAA) is a national nonprofit organization that promotes hope and recovery for individuals living with a schizophrenia-related brain disorder (mental illnesses involving psychosis) and their loved ones through support programs, education and advocacy. Undoubtedly you know someone who is affected.

Our conference and gala highlights expert presentations addressing the challenges faced daily by individuals, families, professionals, the criminal justice system and policy makers where psychiatric illness is involved. A workshop will teach people how to start and maintain a Schizophrenics Anonymous peer support group.

For more information about SARDAA’s mission and events, please visit [www.sardaa.org](http://www.sardaa.org).

Sincerely,
Linda Stalpers, MSN
Executive Director

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**2015 Annual Conference**

Saturday, October 10th JW Marriott Houston
www.SARDAA.org

Schizophrenia: A loaded word most don’t understand. 7 - 9 million Americans live with schizophrenia and bipolar brain disorders. Learn from experts addressing challenges faced daily by individuals, families, and professionals — your brothers, sisters, colleagues & community.

Contemporary Jazz On My Mind Gala featuring dinner, incredible auction, Ismael Cala and Smooth Jazz artists.

info@sardaa.org (240) 423-9432

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**Registration NOW open**

October 10, 2015
World Mental Health Awareness Day

**Brain Disorders: Global Perspectives**

SARDAA conference & GALA
Hi Everyone,

Greetings from SA!

It is the rainy season here in Mayberry. We are having lots of thunderstorms and rain, and even a few tornadoes. Today the weather was almost fall-like, cool and gusty. A hint of things to come.

I continue to be busy with SA – my “part-time” job! I am working on starting more new groups, and a week from today we will be starting a group here in Lansing, Michigan, with the blessings and support of the Community Mental Health center, where the group will be hosted. Larry A., who has led a group here in the past, will resume the Group Leader role, while I will be the Pro Support person. There are several other groups in process around the country, and I hope to have a good end-of-month report for SA with a few new groups started.

This month brought home to me the importance of Step 1: “I admit I need help. I can’t do it alone.” I had to go in the hospital for 3 days for a needed med adjustment. I had been trying to do it alone, and it didn’t work! Now, adjusted, I feel great! I had a most wonderful doctor and very supportive staff. We DO have good medical services here in Mayberry, as the hospital here is affiliated with the Mayo Clinic, and attracts good doctors and staff.

I am very much looking forward to the conference in October, and hope to see all of you there! I know it will be inspiring --- and fun, too! Please go to the website for more information.

So, good wishes for the rest of the summer. And if you are a caregiver of someone with
Events and Opportunities

Every September, SAMHSA sponsors Recovery Month to increase awareness and understanding of mental and substance use issues and celebrate the people who recover. The Recovery Month provides tips and resources for planning Recovery Month events and distributing information in communities across the nation.

http://www.recoverymonth.gov/

SARDAA is observing recovery month by collaborating with Oil ‘n Vinegar at Memorial City Mall, Houston, TX on September 12th with music by Vel Lewis and Oil ‘n Vinegar donating part of the proceeds from that day’s sales to SARDAA. Register for our October 10th Conference at the event “Brain Disorders: Global Perspectives”

Registration NOW open

We are proud to partner with Thero.org to help educate and eliminate stigma/discrimination
Welcome to SA (Schizophrenics Anonymous)!

I understand that you want to start an SA group, and that is great!

This is a brief primer on how to do just that.

First, some background about myself. I was diagnosed with schizophrenia at age 19. I went through a period of denial, but finally came to my senses and got on meds. I have been on meds and in treatment since then. My recovery now is pretty good.

In 1999, at my therapist’s recommendation, I started attending SA meetings weekly. Her concern was my isolation from people. I was not able to express my own feelings prior to that. At the SA meetings, we are not alone struggling with this cruel disease. We talked about how we deal with the symptoms everyday and encourage each other to stick with our principles. After one year of struggling, I found a sense of hope. I started accepting both normal people and people who have a mental illness by expressing myself honestly. Without help from people who were attending SA Meetings, I am very sure that I could not accomplish this.

I am hoping that one day we all go through the recovery steps and have compensated lives. Until then, we must never give up the idea that anybody can recover from mental illness. SA meetings are helpful for us to share our experiences. If somebody is suffering from mental illness, I recommend he or she to attend a SA meeting. I was one of them and am doing better today.

Of late I've had painful insight into the importance of recovery in mental illness, as a person is able. Over time I've admired those fortunate to get on that recovery road, which is not a cure at this time, but rather 'doing one's best'
accessing the many helps that are available to those diagnosed. Beyond the potential for improving life quality, I've learned that it is very important especially in averting tragedy, which can befall one having a mental illness. And to assist those toward recovery, along with the various aspects of treatment, is the ever increasing ranks of Peer Support Specialists. Who better knows of the challenges and pitfalls than those who've been there? Many also find understanding and support by joining a SA group, Schizophrenic's Anonymous, if fortunate to have one in their community. With sixty some groups throughout the country, there is need for many more to provide an unconditional welcome and acceptance. I have no doubt that the FFS community shares my appreciation of recovery.

With Heart,
Mary Ross, FFS Coordinator

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**Phone Support Groups**

**Family and Friends Support Group**
Every Tuesday - 7 pm Eastern Time
Frequent Guest Speakers

**SA Conference Call Groups**
*For Individuals Diagnosed*
Every Sunday, Thursday and Friday 7 pm Eastern Time

**Spirit of SA Conference Call**
For SA Leaders and potential Leaders
First Wednesday of Each Month 7 pm Eastern Time

**Adult Children of Parents with Psychosis**
Every Monday 7 pm Eastern Time

Toll-free calls
Applications for Board Members and Volunteers

We are currently accepting applications for new Board Members.

We are also accepting applications for virtual and Houston Volunteers and conference volunteers.

If you are interested, please contact linda.stalters@sardaa.org

Thank you so much!

Articles of Interest

FDA APPROVES NEW DRUG TO TREAT SCHIZOPHRENIA AND AS AN ADD ON TO AN ANTIDEPRESSANT TO TREAT MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER

On July 10, the United States (U.S.) Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Rexulti (brexpiprazole) tablets to treat adults with schizophrenia and as an add-on treatment to an antidepressant medication to treat adults with major depressive disorder (MDD). READ MORE

EFFECTIVENESS OF PSYCHOSOCIAL TREATMENTS FOR MENTAL DISORDERS

The Institute of Medicine has issued a report looking at the effectiveness of psychosocial treatments for mental disorders. NIMH Director Thomas Insel blogs about the need to ensure that consumers needing treatment receive evidence-based therapies. READ MORE

HOW MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE ISSUES AFFECT ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

During Minority Mental Health Month, SAMHSA is focusing on raising awareness about how mental health and substance use issues affect ethnic minority groups. This blog post highlights issues of co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders in tribal communities. READ MORE

STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

This tip sheet presents key steps to consider before the media calls, when they call, and during the interview. READ MORE

DEPRESSION AND OTHER MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Horizon Scan System Potential High Impact Reports have been updated for the six-month period ending June 2015. These 15 reports, including one on Depression and Other Mental Health Disorders, present information on the interventions which have the potential for high impact on the health care system in the next one to three years based on feedback from a variety of stakeholders on individual
topic profiles. Within the depression and other mental health disorders scan, the majority of interventions are interventions that potentially offer treatments for patients whose conditions fail to respond to available medications and behavioral therapies for bipolar depression, MDD, and PTSD. READ MORE

IS SMOKING A CAUSE OF PSYCHOSIS? Nancy Melville recently wrote an article titled: “Smoking a Cause of Psychosis?” in which she noted that smoking may play a causative role in the development of psychotic illness. READ MORE

THE PROMISE OF BIOLOGICAL MARKERS FOR TREATMENT RESPONSE IN FIRST-EPILOGUE PSYCHOSIS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW Successful treatment of first-episode psychosis is one of the major factors that impacts long-term prognosis. READ MORE

MARGERY WAKEFIELD’S LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE RECENT SHOOTINGS IN A LOUISIANA MOVIE THEATRE READ MORE

Donate to SARDAA

Clinician Extraordinaire Award Nominations still being accepted. Please submit your nomination! The deadline has been extended to September 1, 2015. Your submission must include:

- Name of the Award
- Name of nominee
- Contact information for the nominee
- Contact information for the nominator
- Address each requirement for the award and how the nominee fulfills that requirement.
- email to: Nicole.dunavant@sardaa.org or
- Or Mail to: SARDAA, PO Box 941222, Houston, TX 77094-8222

Click here for research opportunities

SUPPORT SARDAA
Please take a moment to find out how you can help support SARDAA, not only today but every day - at no extra cost to you!!

When you do your at AmazonSmile, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Schizophrenia And Related Disorders Alliance Of America.

IT'S SO SIMPLE: just bookmark this link http://smile.amazon.com/ch/33-1213657, start shopping and support us every time you shop.

Texas and Louisiana Friends:
Re-Enroll Your Kroger Plus Cards Beginning August 1st

You can support SARDAA without spending a penny! Register Schizophrenia and Related Disorders on your Kroger Plus Card and they will donate a percentage to SARDAA each time you use your card.

2014 Re-Enrollment Info in English and Spanish (PDF)
Please register online at www.krogercommunityrewards.com
Link to: Schizophrenia and Related Disorders--Kroger Plus Card 90425

Help Change Lives -- Donate Now

Thank you to those who already made a donation - Every contribution makes a difference.

Sincerely,
Linda Stalters, SARDAA Executive Director