Message From Executive Director

Dear Friends,

2016 was a great year for the people SARDAA serves. With your help, the 21st Century Cures Bill was passed and signed by the President. Read
highlights here. This is a huge step forward for our community but there is so much more for us to do. Rep. Tim Murphy’s Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act was somewhat incorporated into the 21st Century Cures Bill with measures still needed to help the most critically ill. We continue to urge for the creation of:

• An exception in HIPAA for caregivers of those with serious brain diseases
• Increase in the number of neuro-psychiatric hospital beds

Call your two Senators. Encourage your friends and family to call. The Senate is back in session for a limited 'lame-duck' session.

Dial: (202) 224-3121
Press #1
Enter your zip code
You will be connected to your Senator's office assistant.

You can encourage your Senator to pass a mental health reform bill that includes the provisions of Representative Tim Murphy’s The Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act that will help people with the most serious brain illnesses.

The Washington state Supreme Court has a new ruling - Volk v. De Meerleer. This ruling evidently expanded the so-called Tarasoff standard regarding a brain health clinician’s duty to protect and warn a third party of possible violence, asserting that the duty extends to any possible victim—even one that has not been specifically identified by the patient.
My commentary: The patient deserves to be treated, in spite of anosognosia, in a manner that provides improved health and safety for the diagnosed individual and others. Merely focusing on the clinician's “duty to warn” and a potential catastrophe, we need to focus on the patient who is suffering and requires treatment. This ruling is absurd in that a clinician is not able to identify a potential third party if the patient has not disclosed that person. It is also absurd that a clinician can report to someone that they might be in danger, but HIPPA prevents the clinician from discussing anything with carers that might be helpful for a person's recovery (medications, treatment plan, appointments, etc). We must provide treatment so a person has the opportunity to live a life free of catastrophe.

With your help, the Hearing Voices of Support (HVoS) jumbo-tron continues on Times Square at 1500 Broadway at 43rd. Our “flash mob” on Times Square highlighting HVoS was spectacular and the crowds were touched by the message. We are working now to produce an HVoS Experiential Exhibit in New York City during Schizophrenia Awareness Week, the Third Week of May. The more people we can reach with the message of Hope, Compassion and Understanding the sooner we will achieve parity, improved treatment and elimination of schizophrenia related brain disease.

Thank you for a successful 2016 and the Hope for a fantastic 2017.

With sincerest Gratitude,

Linda Stalters, MSN
Executive Director
Schizophrenia And Related Disorders Alliance of America
Dave has had a varied work life, which included joining the US Air Force, working as a fireman, and operating trains. He has also been to law school. But if you ask him the best thing he has ever done, he'll tell you it is marrying Katie. His wife, Katie, first had signs of schizophrenia at the age of 14. [WATCH HIS STORY HERE]

Katie had symptoms of schizophrenia from the age of 14, and was first hospitalized at 16. Suffering, with no family support, Katie contemplated suicide many times before seeking help from a
therapist. Katie states her current stability is due to her husband, and wants other people suffering to know there is hope.  

WATCH HER STORY HERE

Message from FFS, Family and Friends, Coordinator

On the subject of 'hope', “Show Up. Step Up. You are Stronger Than You Think” is a quote by JJ Virgin, a renowned nutrition and fitness expert, and most significant to us, a survivor and thrives of life altering adversities which may be thrust our way. I learned of this author and the strengths she discovered in herself and employed as the result of significant challenges she has met and mastered...yes, mastered, and which she wishes to share with others on the same path, to impart hope that life can be the best it can be. Further information can be found on the Web at http://www.jjvirgin.com, including information about a new book, and possibly a documentary about the family challenges she has dealt with and championed, scheduled for release in 2017.
You likely are familiar with the importance that attitude plays in our lives. A related term which I'm currently hearing is 'mindset'. In her lived experience and teachings JJ Virgin refers to “miracle mindset”. This is an offering which she strives to impart for those facing great challenges in life. I was inspired by her encouragement of developing self-empowerment, her knowledge and heart in helping others, and I share this in hope that you might be too.

Lastly, know that SELF CARE is uppermost on her list of priorities for care partners. More on this in time to come, but keep it in the back of your mind…. better yet at the top of your daily priorities.

With heart,
Mary Ross

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**Message from Schizophrenia Alliance, Coordinator**

This time of year, I like to reflect on the past year and make plans for the new. For some this past year has been a struggle. Perhaps, the loss of a loved one or a hospital stay. Maybe, you've struggled with finances or personal relationships. Now, we have a new year and we can forgive ourselves for our mistakes and move on to a new, more hopeful, year.

Hopefully, the new year will bring peace and prosperity. Through trials we grow and learn; we learn new coping mechanisms and try to become better and more whole.
What will you do to improve your life this year? Will you learn new coping skills? Perhaps, you can reach out to your support network. Whatever you do in the new year just remember that you are not alone and that you are loved.

Best wishes for the new year,
Katie L.

The newest version of the You Are Not Alone Blue Books are available for order. Please contact Angel at 240-423-9432 or angel.white@sardaa.org to order.

We are now accepting messages from SA Members to include in the newsletter. Please submit your message to: info@sardaa.org or mail to SARDAPO Box 941222, Houston, TX 77094-8222 for consideration for next month's newsletter.

Your story might be included in a SARDA newsletter and might be published in a future edition of the SA Blue Book.

Phone Support Groups
SA Conference Call Groups
Only for individuals diagnosed
Sundays - 7 pm Eastern Time
Mondays - 4 pm Eastern Time
Thursdays - 7 pm Eastern Time
Fridays - 7 pm Eastern Time
**Spirit of SA Conference Call**
For SA Leaders and Potential Leaders
First Wednesday of Each Month - 7 pm Eastern Time

**Family and Friends Support Group**
Not for individuals diagnosed
Every Tuesday - 7 pm Eastern Time

**Toll-free Calls**
Call-in information (855) 640-8271
Entry Code 88286491#
International Number (720) 362-6499

*** HOW TO START AND GROW A SA GROUP ***
By Margery Wakefield

Welcome to SA (Schizophrenics Alliance)! I understand that you want to start an SA group, and that is great!  

**Help for people with Schizophrenia and Related Disorders.**

Now it is easy to record details and specifics about symptoms, medication, moods, and more. Choose what you want to track, and see all the information you need to help you or your loved one who is living with schizophrenia and related disorders.

**Get the Schizophrenia Health Storylines™ Mobile App Today!**
The mobile app is FREE for all users on iOS and Android devices. There is also a web version available, accessible through the browser of any desktop computer or mobile device.
What are you doing for your self-care today? With your feedback, Schizophrenia Health Storylines introduces two new health tools to help you track your self-care and physical activities. Self-care goes beyond the pill and we want to make sure your tools reflect that. With the new and improved tools, you will be able to:

- **Reflect holistically on your self-care activities with the Self-Care Reflection Tool**
- **Track the intensity of your physical activity with the Physical Activity Tracker**
The RAISE Connection Program: Psychopharmacological Treatment of People With a First Episode of Schizophrenia. Abstract

OBJECTIVE:
This study examined the adherence of psychiatrists to the Schedule of Recommended First and Second Line Antipsychotic Medications ("Antipsychotic Schedule"), which was implemented in two Recovery After an Initial Schizophrenia Episode (RAISE) Connection Program Implementation and Evaluation Study clinics. READ MORE

Family member engagement with early psychosis specialty care.

Abstract

BACKGROUND:
Family members of individuals with early psychosis (EP) play critical roles in their engagement with EP services, but family member experiences of those roles are insufficiently understood. READ MORE

Childhood brain injury linked to adult psychiatric illness, earlier death

Skip sharing on social media links, NIH
Young people who sustain a traumatic brain injury before the age of 25 may be more likely experience a psychiatric illness and die earlier than those who have not had such an injury, according to an analysis funded by the National Institutes of Health. The researchers also found that those who had a head injury may complete fewer years of school and are more likely receive a disability pension.  READ MORE

SAMHSA provides up to $121 million for adult mental health and substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery
The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has awarded up to a total of $121 million over the next five years for mental health and substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery. These SAMHSA grants are geared toward expanding and enhancing behavioral health care services for adults across the nation.
“This funding will help fulfill SAMHSA's commitment to reduce the impact of substance use and mental health disorders on America’s communities,” said SAMHSA Principal Deputy Administrator Kana Enomoto. “It will provide services to a number of vulnerable groups including people with HIV/AIDS and the homeless, among others.”  READ MORE

NIMH Director's Message: The Push for Suicide Prevention, By Joshua Gordon
I wrote in my welcome message about my priorities. First, we need to fund excellent science. Second, we should support studies that will yield benefits on short, medium, and long-term timescales. I also have three particular areas of interest: neural circuits, computational and theoretical psychiatry, and suicide prevention. Here I will discuss possible approaches to suicide prevention, representing an area of research with the potential to yield benefits in the short-term.  READ MORE
The All of Us Research Program Seeks Feedback from the Community

The All of Us Research Program will create a community of one million or more people from across the U.S. to improve the future of health. Those who join the program will contribute their health, environment, and lifestyle information over an extended period of time. By gathering information from such a large group of people, researchers will be able to learn how specific factors impact an individual’s health, and disease prevention and treatment. This approach to tailoring health care for each unique individual is called, "precision medicine." The research program developers want to hear from everyone about their thoughts and ideas for how to make All of Us a success. Ideas on topics such as participant engagement and communications, health information data security, and the type of data to be collected are welcome from researchers, health care providers, patients, or anyone who wants to contribute to greater knowledge. **ONLINE FORM CLICK HERE**

Presentation: The Affordable Care Act for Individuals and Families
January 10, 2016, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

This presentation will describe the ACA and the Health Insurance Marketplace, how to enroll in health insurance, key websites, and resources on the law. The open enrollment period closes soon, on January 31, 2017. **REGISTER HERE**
SAMHSA-NIDA Webinar: Substance Use Disorder and The Adolescent Brain
January 17, 2017, 1:00-2:00 PM ET
This SAMHSA-NIDA webinar will focus on the adolescent brain, provide information on those adolescents who are at increased risk for drug use, and present the major impact of home, family, and peers. In addition, the presenter will address the increased potency of marijuana and its potential long-term impact on this population. REGISTER HERE

NIMH WEBINAR: Mental Health Research: What You Need to Know
January 23, 2017, 1:00-1:30 PM ET
Clinical research is medical research that involves people like you. People volunteer to participate in carefully conducted investigations that may ultimately uncover better ways to treat, prevent, diagnose, and understand human disease such as mental illnesses. Join Kalene DeHaut, LCSW, of the NIMH for this webinar on clinical research. Learn about the basics of clinical research – what it is, why it’s important, key research concepts, and steps to take if you, a family member, or a client is interested in participating in clinical research. REGISTER HERE

Donate to SARDAAP
Brain Campaign:

I will change my language from Behavioral or Mental disorder to Brain disorder.
I will educate others to change their language from mental illnesses to brain illness.
I will not use stigmatizing, discriminatory or derogatory language related to brain disorders.
I will encourage my peers, family members, and colleagues to advocate when they see discriminatory language or practices in the
media or in public.
I will advocate that people with brain disorders have equal and comprehensive health care.
I will treat all people with brain disorders with respect and compassion.

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 shopping 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

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.

Please register online at [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com)
Help Change Lives -- Donate Now

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

Sincerely,
Angel White, Editor