Message from SARDA, CEO

Dear Friends,

We are HONORED and PROUD to announce that Parents for Care has merged with Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America (SARDAA).

Laura Pogliano founded Parents for Care to help families affected by serious neuro-psychiatric brain illnesses obtain the help they desperately seek. Laura has organized support groups, provided small grants to families trying to make ends meet, and advocated to change systems of care and improve support. Because of our shared goals, patient and family-centered approach and the passion to increase access for families to services and support, Parents for Care has merged with Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America (SARDAA).

SARDAA is the leading international organization promoting a BOLD new agenda for lives affected by BRAIN illnesses involving psychosis from the integrated and comprehensive approach via the medical,
social, community, diagnosed and family perspective.

It is imperative that we join forces to achieve our goals to reclassify schizophrenia spectrum BRAIN illnesses; insure that people are supported and treated; and to eliminate the discrimination that leads to the barbaric lack of treatment, incarceration, homelessness, abuse and death.

Laura Pogliano, has joined SARDAA’s Board of Directors and will pilot a state Chapter. Dan Peat has joined Grace Lee on the Steering Committee for the Jr. Board of Directors. Leah Peat, Lauren Levy, Angie Pogliano, and Evelyn Burton formerly of the Parents for Care Board, will continue to volunteer with SARDAA.

Our combined organization extends our reach: specializing in resources and peer support groups for diagnosed individuals and families, both locally and via weekly conference calls. All support groups will continue to be developed by and led by those directly affected. In alignment with our merge, Families and Friends Support (FFS) Group will now be Families For Care Support (FFC) – Conference Call Group remains on Tuesdays at 7 PM Eastern Time

Call-in information: (855) 640-8271 Entry code: 88286491#
International Number: (720) 362-6499

If you are interested in joining a private Facebook page:
  Diagnosed Individuals: SARDAA Support Join the Group HERE
  Caregivers ONLY: SARDAA Families for Care Join the Group HERE
  Diagnosed, Caregivers, professionals: LOBBY CCAC - Circle of Comfort and Assistance Community Join the Group HERE

SARDAA will implement former Parents for Care Small Grant program which assists families living with BRAIN illnesses involving psychosis with one-time, small financial grants through SARDAA’s developing nationwide local chapters.

This is an exciting advancement in our growth and we will need all the support we can get to make continued success possible.

We’re hoping we can count on you to support this effort.

START treating people humanely-
Shift from “Restrain and Arrest”
To “Support and Treat”
Lead a Coalition to create the change

Very best,
Linda Stalters, MSN, APRN (ret)
Chief Executive Officer
Schizophrenia And Related Disorders Alliance of America
I am sad for my daughter's inability to enter recovery, thus her immensely suffering life. I have done everything I knew how to do, but know that one cannot do it for another. Thus in my self care, I came to understand that, granted her diagnosis accounts for the majority of her challenges, there is a degree, possibly small, that her decisions do play a part in her life quality. I related this to the wisdom of Thich Nhat Hahn, a Buddhist Monk, in which he wrote “The Five Remembrances”, as follows:

“I am of the nature to grow old. There is no way to escape growing old.
I am of the nature to have ill health. There is no way to escape ill
health.
I am of the nature to die. There is no way to escape death.
All that is dear to me, and everyone I love, are of the nature to
change. There is no way to escape being separated from them. My
actions are my only true beginning. I cannot escape the
consequences of my actions. My actions are the ground upon which I
stand”.

With Heart,
Mary Ross

Message from SA Staff Supporter

Bucket List for 2019
By Sandy Dimiterchik

Happy New Year’s! The New Year brings many
opportunities to do all the things you want to
do, i.e., everything on your bucket list! That includes starting a SA
group in your city. We provide training and each month you have the
opportunity to get feedback from potential and current group leaders
at our Spirit of SA Conference Call. The SA meetings last an hour or
so and we provide the meeting format for you in our Blue Book,
especially our signature 6 Steps of Recovery. Everybody takes a turn
if they want to, choosing a step or steps and then describing how
their week has been. In my experience, all of the participants are
compassionate and welcoming. To “try out” a group, if you have
schizophrenia or a related disorder, call in to one of our conference
calls. The information is on our website, sardaa.org.

Here are the 6 Steps of Recovery:

I SURRENDER… I admit I need help. I can’t do it alone.
I CHOOSE… I choose to be well. I take full responsibility for my
choices and realize the choices I make directly influence the quality
of my days.
I BELIEVE… I now come to believe that I have been provided with
great inner resources and I will use these resources to help myself
and others.
I FORGIVE… I forgive myself for all the mistakes I have made. I also
forgive and release everyone who has injured or harmed me in any
way.
I UNDERSTAND… I now understand that erroneous, self-defeating
thinking contributes to my problems, failures, unhappiness and fears.
I am ready to have my belief system altered so my life can be
transformed.
I DECIDE… I make a decision to turn my life over to the care of a
higher power/God, AS I UNDERSTAND that higher power/God,
surrendering my will and false beliefs. I ask to be changed in depth.
Personal Story of SA Members

Larry Z.

I first attended Schizophrenia Alliance in the summer of 1987. I found it to be a friendly group of individuals, with background similar to mine, who struggled with many of the same symptoms that I endured for years. I liked the non-threatening atmosphere and thought that it might be a nice place to make a friend or two.

It was hard to speak when my turn came, but I felt that the understanding and compassion of the members would excuse the confused words that I nervously spoke. I returned the following Sunday and every Sunday since.

Looking back, I can see that I have received much more than I had hoped for. I have formed friendships that have added meaning to my life. I learned to accept my paranoia and have discovered that there is life and beauty beyond the rigid limits imposed by fear. The humanity of the members has helped me to survive the occasional trauma of social awkwardness on my part.

By beginning to accept myself with all my weaknesses, I have discovered inner strengths that have permitted me to grow as a person and contribute to society. I still can’t work but have been able to volunteer two days a week at a community mental health clinic. I also have been entrusted to start and lead a chapter of Schizophrenia Alliance there.

The main benefit I have received is the confidence that I will continue to grow and become a more complete person. I am a participant, struggling day-by-day towards a fuller existence. I am no longer a spectator, passively recoiling from symptoms, afraid and alone. I hope to be able to work full-time someday and to find a soul mate to spend the remainder of my life with, but I can optimistically accept my poverty and emptiness because I am actively working to improve myself. With Schizophrenia Alliance I am rebuilding my life. I know that I will succeed at becoming the very best that I can be.

We welcome your message/art from SA Members for inclusion in the newsletter. Please submit your message to: info@sardaa.org or mail to SARDAA PO Box 941222, Houston, TX 77094-8222 for consideration for next month's newsletter.

Your story might be included in a SARDAA 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
Saturdays - 1 pm Eastern Time

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

Families For Care Conference Call
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

Facebook Support Group
Only for individuals diagnosed
JOIN The Facebook Group Here
This is a Closed group, ask to be added.
Health advocates say schizophrenia should be reclassified as a brain disease
Changing the definition could unlock more money for cures.
Brianna Ehley
January 5, 2019
Mental health advocates are lobbying Congress to help them get schizophrenia classified as a brain disease like Parkinson’s or Alzheimer’s, instead of as a mental illness, a move that could reduce stigma and lead to more dollars for a cure.

Federal health officials, scientists and doctors say conditions that cause psychosis, such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, are poorly understood and, in the public mind, often associated with violent behavior. Patients are more likely to be homeless, incarcerated, commit suicide and die younger than those with any other neurological diseases.

READ MORE

Huge Brain Study Uncovers “Buried” Genetic Networks Linked to Mental Illness
Linda Geddes, Nature magazine
December 14, 2018
Brain conditions such as schizophrenia and autism spectrum disorder have long been known to have an inherited component, but pinpointing how gene variants contribute to disease has been a major challenge. Now, some of the first findings from the most comprehensive genomic analysis of the human brain ever undertaken are shedding light on the roots of these disorders.

Mental Health Care Coverage Is Leaving Kids Behind And Families Reeling
Anita Raghavan
A family's ongoing battle with health insurance shows how insurance companies are failing children with psychiatric disorders.

Enrolling locally from the Washington, D.C. metro region
NIMH Healthy Research Volunteer Study
People in good health are invited to participate as a research study volunteer. Study participants play a vital role in biomedical research by helping scientists advance knowledge and better understand, treat, and ultimately, improve health.

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is conducting this study to create a list of healthy research volunteers who are interested in participating in additional NIMH studies. Data from healthy research volunteers compared to data from those with mental health conditions can help us understand why some people are affected while others are not.

'WSJ' Report: Psychiatric Hospitals With Safety Violations Remain Accredited
December 27, 2018
Heard on All Things Considered
NPR's Ari Shapiro talks to Wall Street Journal reporter Stephanie Armour about her investigation of how many psychiatric hospitals with troubling safety records continue to receive accreditation.

Hyperconnectivity In A Brain Circuit May Predict Psychosis
NIMH
December 4, 2018
Scientists have discovered a pattern in the way a brain circuit works that may help predict the onset of psychosis in a study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). High levels of chatter, or “hyperconnectivity,” in a circuit involving the cerebellum, thalamus, and cortex emerged as a potential “neural signature” in a functional
magnetic resonance imaging study. The degree of hyperconnectivity within this circuit predicted the length of time it took for an individual to convert from a state of risk to full psychosis – hallucinations, delusions, and disorganized thought and behavior. The researchers also found this same pattern of hyperactivity in a separate group of individuals with schizophrenia.

**Studies Support Use of Team-Based Care For Early Psychosis**
NIMH  
December 11, 2018  
Two recent studies add to the evidence from NIMH’s Recovery After an Initial Schizophrenia Episode program that team-based early intervention services are feasible in real-world health care settings and result in improved outcomes for patients experiencing first episode psychosis.

**2,000 Human Brains Yield Clues to How Genes Raise Risk for Mental Illnesses**
NIMH  
December 20, 2018  
It’s one thing to detect sites in the genome associated with mental disorders; it’s quite another to discover the biological mechanisms by which these changes in DNA work in the human brain to boost risk. In their first concerted effort to tackle the latter, 15 collaborating research teams of the National Institutes of Health- (NIH-) funded PsychENCODE Consortium leveraged statistical power gained from a large sample of about 2000 postmortem human brains.

The teams published their findings in seven research articles, spotlighted on the cover of a “psychiatric genomics” special issue of Science – along with two in Translational Medicine and one in Science Advances – on December 14, 2018. In addition, the Consortium is sharing their data with the research community via the online PsychENCODE Knowledge Portal.

**Translational Research: From Research Findings to Transformative Treatments**  
Joshua Gordon, Director, NIMH  
December 20, 2018  
Last month, I wrote about some fascinating basic science discoveries presented at the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) annual meeting. Hard on the heels of SfN is another annual meeting—that of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP). ACNP focuses on the next phase of neuroscience research—research which translates basic neuroscience findings into novel treatments. Here
too, there was a lot of excitement as scientists presented their latest findings (which I’ll elaborate on below), presaging tomorrow’s transformative treatments.

Our Door Is Open: FDA Puts Patients First
Andrea C. Furia-Helms, M.P.H., and Samir Shaikh, M.B.A.
We believe patients are experts when it comes to their health conditions. Ultimately, they’re the ones who can share aspects of their diseases that even our most qualified doctors and scientists couldn’t possibly know. This valuable patient input is a critical part of our understanding of diseases and conditions that may help us to advance medical product development.

For this reason, patients are at the forefront of everything we do. Supporting and understanding the patient experience and incorporating patient feedback into our work is an agency-wide priority. More and more, we are integrating patient perspectives throughout the lifecycle of product development and regulation.

National Advisory Mental health Council Meeting
January 31, 2019, 9:00 am ET
The National Advisory Mental Health Council (NAMHC) advises the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the NIH Director, and the NIMH Director on all policies and activities relating to the conduct and support of mental health research, research training, and other NIMH programs. An open session of the January 2019 NAMHC meeting will be available live via videocast and will be archived for future viewing.

Find Clinical Trial Participation by State: HERE

Schizophrenia Health Storylines™ Mobile App
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. Download the app today!
Help Support Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America

Amazon donates to Schizophrenia & Related Disorders Alliance. Shop for great deals at smile.amazon.com/ch/33-1213657

Easy steps to support Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America through Amazon Smile:

Sign in to your Amazon account at smile.amazon.com.

Select Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America Search for and select Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America as your charity. Once selected, you will receive a confirmation email.

Shop and checkout as you would on Amazon. No extra cost is passed on to you, but Amazon will automatically donate 0.5% of your purchases to Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America.

Please share with your friends and family to join you to support Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America!

By choosing Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America as your charity on smile.amazon.com, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America.

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!!

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

Shop with PayPal and choose SARDAA to Donate with PayPal Giving Fund to help support SARDAA.

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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)
Link to: Schizophrenia and Related Disorders–Kroger Plus Card **XA142**

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**Help Change Lives -- Donate Now**

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

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**Sincerely,**
Jordan Helwig, Creative Designer
Angel White, Editor