



The NAMI Contra Costa Newsletter and e-newsletter are available on the web at: www.namicontracosta.org
 You can get a copy of this newsletter and/or the e-News newsletter by e mailing: info@namicontracosta.org
 Email: Ashley@namicontracosta.org Warm Line: (925) 465-3864 Office Number: (925) 942-0767

NAMI CC CELEBRATES JUNETEENTH FEDERAL HOLIDAY

For Juneteenth, NAMI Contra Costa West County Coordinator Eddie Morris joined citizens of Richmond for the Juneteenth “Beautiful Struggle—Celebrating Our Freedom” community caravan and rally event, which had a special feel, since our government passed a Federal holiday status this year.

The move comes after growing support nationwide for observing the day of celebration and reflection. Spurred on by the advocates and the Congressional Black Caucus, on June 15, 2021, the Senate unanimously passed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, establishing Juneteenth, the holiday commemorating the end of slavery by marking the day enslaved people in Texas learned they were free, as a federal holiday; it subsequently passed through the House of Representatives by a 415-14 vote on June 16.

Citizens of Richmond participated in the Juneteenth caravan parade instead of the usual festival which was still compliant with the COVID-19 health and safety regulations.

At 10:00 a.m., the crowd showed pride with decorated cars and had an intimate gathering at North Richmond Missionary Baptist Church, 1427 Fred Jackson Way and ended at Kennedy High School, 4300 Cutting Blvd. where acknowledgements and awards were given and some speeches were ended by 2:00 p.m.

NAMI NATIONAL CONVENTION

July 27-28
nami.org/convention

JULY IS MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Each year, millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition. Mental health conditions do not discriminate based on race, color, gender or identity. Anyone can experience the challenges of mental illness regardless of their background. However, culture, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation can make access to mental health treatment much more difficult.

In many communities, these problems are increased by less access to care, cultural stigma and lower quality care. Taking on the challenges of mental health conditions, health coverage and the stigma of mental illness requires all of us.

National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month offers an opportunity to civic leaders and national and local media to spotlight issues affecting African American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Latino and Native American communities.

America’s entire mental health system needs improvement, including when it comes to serving marginalized communities. When trying to access treatment, these communities have to contend with language barriers, a culturally insensitive system, racism, bias and discrimination in treatment settings, lower quality care, lower chance of health coverage, and stigma from several angles (for being a minority and for having mental illness).

We can all help ignite change against these disparities and fight stigma this Minority Health Awareness Month. It simply starts with learning about mental health and informing your community.

NAMI CONTRA COSTA IS NOW MULTILINGUAL

View the Site in Your Language!



NAMI Contra Costa is dedicated to serving our multicultural community. Now, our website can be translated into many languages. Just go to the upper left-hand corner of the website where the flags are, choose from the Spanish, Chinese Traditional, Chinese Simplified logos or click the drop down menu and choose your language. Note—Only the calendar on the calendar page does not translate as it is imported from another site.

Should your language not be listed (we have over 50 to choose from), please e-mail us at info@namicontracosta.org and we will see if we can include it. Note—Changes to the website take 24 hours to show up in other languages.

Visit in Your Language:
www.namicontracosta.org

NAMI CC Support Groups—Offered by Zoom

NAMI CC Warm Line 925-942-0767

A non-emergency hotline for anyone seeking emotional support, information, and/or linkage to community resources.

Connection Support Group Time: Every Wednesday, 7:00—8:30 p.m. Meeting ID: 950 5621 9162 Passcode: 917027

Contact: Nancy Bolcerek
Nancycybolcerek@namicontracosta.org

East County Connection Support Group Time: Every Friday, 7:00— 8:30 p.m. Meeting ID: 926 6083 1829 Passcode: 917027

Contact: Nancy Bolcerek
Nancycybolcerek@namicontracosta.org

Transitional Age Youth Support Group Time: Every Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.—7:30 pm Meeting ID: 980 5061 6682 Contact: Tristan Siebold E-mail: Tristan.siebold@namicontracosta.org

Peer Dual Diagnosis Support Group Time: Every Friday, 5:30 p.m.—6:30 p.m. Meeting ID: 940 2675 0226 Contact: Greg Beckner E-mail: Ashley@namicontracosta.org

Family Support Group Time: 1st & 3rd Monday, 7:00 p.m.—8:30 p.m. Meeting ID: 1st Monday: 983 9317 0658 3rd Monday: 983 4603 3191 Contact: Michele O'Keefe E-mail: Michele@namicontracosta.org

Spanish Support Group

Time: Every Monday,
6:30—8:00 p.m.
Meeting ID: 958 8167 6173
Contact: Gerardo Peniche or
Alejandra Escobedo
E-mail:
Gerardo.peniche@namicontracosta.org
Or Alejandraescobedo2@gmail.com

API/Mandarin Support Group

Time: Every 3rd Sunday,
3:00—4:30 p.m.
Meeting ID: 990 6004 9476
Contact: Shelly Ji,
E-mail: Shelly@namicontracosta.org

Men's Support Group Time: 2nd & 4th Saturday, 1:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m., Meeting ID: 2nd Saturday: 930 9814 2482 Passcode: 585218 4th Saturday: 946 1602 2036 Passcode: 449069 Contact: Eddie Morris E-mail: Eddie.m@namicontracosta.org

The Parent Connection Time: 2nd & 4th Monday, 8:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m. Meeting ID: 2nd Momday: 987 3209 5699 4th Monday: 924 4351 8216 Contact: Susan Horrocks, E-mail: susanh@namicontracosta.org

Men of Wellness & Men of Faith Support Group Time: 2nd & 4th Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. Meeting ID: 932 5929 0303 Passcode: 585218 Contact: Eddie Morris or Al- fonzo Edwards E-mail: eddie.m@namicontracosta.org or Alfonzo.edwards@namicontracosta.org

African American Family Support Group

Time: 4th Wednesday,
6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m.
Contact Gigi Crowder for more
information at (510) 990-2670
E-mail: gigi@namicontracosta.org

Writer's Group

Time: 2nd Saturday,
10:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
Meeting ID: 993 0455 9380
Contact: Margaret Netherby,
E-mail: Mlnetherby@yahoo.com

Brentwood Family Support Group

Time: Last Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.
Meeting ID: 394 327 3226
Contact: Laurel Howard-Fong
E-mail: lphfong19@gmail.com

NAMI CC CalHope Warm Line

Offering non-clinical crisis services
to African Americans during
COVID-19.
Contact Naomi Gashaw
925-765-9268
Naomi.gashaw@namicontracosta.org

NAMI Basics OnDemand

NAMI Basics onDemand is a free, 6
-session online education program
for caregivers of youth aged 22 or
younger who are experiencing men-
tal health symptom s.
Contact: susanh@namicontracosta.org
Register: basics.nami.org

Mental Health Crash Course— Orientation

Time: Every Wednesday,
6:00—8:00 p.m.
Mhcrashcourse.org
Contact: Dave Kahler or Michele
O'Keefe
E-mail: dk122932@aol.com
Michele@namicontracosta.org

NAMI Contra Costa

National Alliance on Mental Illness

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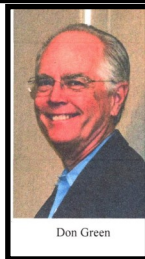
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Newsletter Deadline:

20th of Each Month

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD'S COLUMN

By Don Green



There's so much to do, and it sometimes seems we'll need forever to do it. July is Minority Health Awareness Month, calling us all to recognize that America remains a country where the added stress from discrimination and bigotry against minorities seriously exacerbates the harm from severe mental illness.

It doesn't really matter that "race" is an anti-scientific social construct invented to justify oppression of non-Europeans, especially the brutal enslavement of millions of people. People believing themselves to be civilized and religious required a massive mental trick to justify their enslaving human beings. And, so, the idea that humans are from different "races" became so deeply woven into our consciousness that racism, based on illusory "races," manifests in our lives every day.

The problem Minority Mental Health Awareness Month confronts is not limited to "racial" minorities. Given how irrational racism is, there's no surprise that the bigotry and prejudice also target culture, ancestry, religion, sexuality, body details and illness (including, of course, mental health) and anything else that some people mention after the phrase "All of those people

are/do..." I'm not saying all of the discrimination is equivalent, but every kind of minority discrimination, combined with mental illness (itself a kind of minority), makes the mental illness worse.

The big problem is what to do to change this situation. That requires us all, through NAMI CC and in our daily lives, to do what we can. That is so hard. Sometimes we will make mistakes, sometimes we will fail. The problem is so widespread and complex that all we can and must do is continue to work so that, over time, the moral arc of the universe will continue to bend toward justice and equality.

At NAMI CC our work with mental illness is always influenced by awareness of minority issues. We continue to expand our outreach by overcoming language barriers. Our website is now multilingual (although, of course, not universal). We participate in public forums addressing minority issues, and celebrate developing equality where we can (e.g. Pride Month and Juneteenth).

If for no other reason, please join us in the effort to end the discrimination against minorities, because that discrimination falls particularly hard on those affected by mental illness.



NAMI Contra Costa's Mission Statement:

Our Mission is to provide support, outreach, education and advocacy to families affected by and individuals living with a mental illness.

MEASURE X COUNTY MEETING RECAP

On June 23, 2021, 132 people joined the marathon Measure X Community Advisory Board meeting for the wide-ranging special needs areas of mental and behavioral health and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Various county and community-based organizations (CBOs) gave over 2.5 hours of presentations asking on funding requirements needs.

Of special note, several of the presentations and many public comments (especially by fire and police chiefs as well as mayors of cities around the county) specifically focused on the great need for the Miles Hall Mental Health Crisis Response Hub encompassing three distinct levels of crisis needs. In summarizing the ongoing multi-month work of the Crisis Response Rapid Improvement Event “workgroup,” Ms. Anna Roth, RN, MS, MPH, Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) Director said the focus is for a “from the ground up” revamp toward a “gold” standard 24/7 county-wide non-police crisis response program. She also said this program will need “multiple millions of dollars” in ongoing Measure X funding.

NAMI CC presenter Shelly Ji, Lead Volunteer Coordinator, emphasized the need for linguistic and culturally responsive services for the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community, of which there are very few in this county. Another NAMI CC presenter, Greg Beckner, Volunteer Coordinator for faith outreach, recounted his experiences of many mental health challenges and the need for law and regulations that would make it easier for families of and persons with mental health challenges to get the help they really need.

Gigi Crowder, NAMI CC Executive Director and an alternate member of the Measure X Advisory Board, emphasized the great need for “out of the box” innovative funding for various faith-based communities to expand their outreach of services to the most mentally vulnerable among us.

The following meeting was on Wednesday, June 30, from 5-8:00 p.m. and focused on the need for expanding funding of housing for our most mentally vulnerable. Contact the Family Network at 925-942-0767 M-Th 8:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m. or 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Friday for more information.

“UNDER OUR ROOF”

Book Review By Mark Cohen

“Under Our Roof: A Son’s Battle for Recovery, A Mother’s Battle for Her Son” by Madeleine Dean and Harry Cunnane is an unusual book in some ways and yet the thesis is so common. Ostensibly it is a tale about how a young man becomes hooked on (addicted to) street drugs and manages, eventually, to achieve recovery. What makes it unusual is how the tale is woven.

Harry Cunnane was a typical teenager with the usual adolescent angsts. With friends, he explores marijuana, alcohol and later other drugs. He finds that they give him a feeling of euphoria and relieve feelings of inadequacy.

His parents become concerned about his changing behavior and school performance.

The book continuously weaves chronologically and sequentially between Harry’s experience and viewpoints and that of his mother Madeleine Dean, a Congresswoman from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Through Harry we experience how addiction takes over his life and leads him to desperate, often illegal, behavior and actions. It was very difficult for him to finally ask for help. We experience through Madeleine how families are affected and the role in helping loved ones during recovery.

The hardest lesson for both addicts and their families to learn is that addiction is a disease and it needs treatment. It does not mean that the addict is a bad person.

Harry, who has been in recovery for eight years, works as a Resource Director for the same treatment center where he originally sought help for his own addiction.

He exclaimed, “The experience made me more open-minded. Watching your worldview, your entire belief system, shatter, will do that to you, I learned that asking for help was more valuable than trying to ‘man up.’”

RAPID IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

At the recent Rapid Improvement Event series, a multidisciplinary and county-wide design team including health experts, first responders, law enforcement, community based organizations and community members who shared their lived experience wanted mental health crisis support services to be available to anyone, anywhere, anytime, reinforcing the time to elevate behavioral health services into the fourth arm (Law enforcement, Medical, Fire, Behavioral Health) of emergency response. Elevating these services is a big undertaking and will make a huge impact for every person in our county.

Through strong voices and advocacy the county will name the program after Miles Hall, a young man who was experiencing a behavioral health episode, and due to our broken system, was tragically killed in the process. In recognition of the countless Contra Costans who face not only the challenge of behavioral health incidents but also the added jeopardy of not getting the help they need or the wrong help because of a system not designed for unique situations, the Miles Hall Community Crisis Hub is the core of the work. Sadly, the fact that Miles Hall and his family struggled to access services when they needed them is shared by too many.

In developing a caring and compassionate approach that was culturally and clinically responsible, they identified the key needs for anyone addressing a mental health crisis: a need for help, someone to talk to, someone to respond, and a place to go. As an alternative to 911, calls to the Miles Hall Community Crisis Hub will be answered 24/7 by clinical staff who will triage the needs, determine the level of behavioral health services needed, dispatch the appropriate mobile crisis team or deescalate the situation over the phone. The model includes alternate destinations that are not detention or unnecessary visits to the emergency room. They can be peer respite for example.

The Miles Hall Community Crisis Hub pilot will likely be in place by mid-August. The pilot will help us redefine the model, determine the resources needed, and plan for a county-wide transition and implementation. As an advocacy agency NAMI CC will lift its voice to ensure the county is indeed rolling out a plan that will embrace the needs of anyone, any place, anytime.

SUPPORTING RETURNING STUDENTS

After a year and a half of restrictions and other changes, the COVID-19 pandemic has increased mental health issues among students. According to a Jed Foundation survey on the emotional readiness for the fall 2020 semester, about 63% of students reported that their mental health was worse during the pandemic than it was prior to life dealing with COVID-19.

Currently, there is a NAMI CC on Diablo Valley College (DVC) Club and a club on the Contra Costa College campus is underway for the future in collaboration with Professor Aminta Mickles of the Health and Human Services department. Recently, NAMI CC was asked by Los Medanos college Student Services department to collaborate in providing support for returning students once the campus reopens to in-person learning to educate youth in understanding and coping with any mental wellness issues.

NAMI Contra Costa is currently expanding its Transitional Age Youth program with new staff, including Tristan Siebold, Juan Soria and Bella Quinto Collins who facilitate a weekly support group on Tuesdays from 6-7:30 p.m. for individuals impacted by mental illness between the ages 16-24. Mariela Acosta and Jesse Robbins have returned and will be continuing Ending the Silence, a 50-minute program designed for middle and high school audiences. This transformational program is devoted to giving students an opportunity to learn about mental illness through an informative presentation with short videos and personal testimony. Through the presentation, students learn symptoms and indicators of mental illness, and are given ideas about how to help themselves, friends, or family members who may be in need of support. Time is left after the presentation for Q&A where the students can have interaction. NAMI CC presented to four high schools virtually during the winter months. If you are between the ages of 13-27 and would like to become a presenter for ETS, contact Mariela at Mariela@namicontracosta.org or Jesse at jesse.robbins@namicontracosta.org.

OUR MONTHLY STARS

Meet Bella Quinto Collins

Bella Quinto Collins (pronounced Beya or Bella), the sister of Angelo Quinto who was killed by police officers during a mental health crisis six months ago, has recently joined the NAMI CC staff force of activists involved in advocating for a non-police response to mental health emergencies. She is also helping out with the Transitional Age Youth, Spanish and API Outreach and is currently studying psychology and English in college.

On December 23, 2020, Bella's brother, Angelo, was experiencing a mental health crisis and when police became involved they restrained him by kneeling on his neck, which made him unresponsive for four and a half minutes. George Floyd has been killed by police who used the very same restraint. Angelo had a documented history of mental illness as he was placed on a 5150 hold just two months prior. After Angelo was taken to the hospital by ambulance with little brain activity, his family was basically left in the dark about his condition until December 26, when he officially passed away.

The Quinto family met Taun Hall, the loving mother of Miles Hall, a 23 year-old African American who was shot and killed in Walnut Creek in 2019 by police after experiencing a mental health emergency by officers who had access to his mental health history. The two families have emotionally supported each other, and, since they cannot bring their loved ones back, are making sure that less people have to endure this in the future by continuing to share their stories. Taun Hall works closely with NAMI CC, which is how the Quinto family met Executive Director Gigi Crowder, a powerful voice in advocacy for mental illness and fierce social justice leader for change. Through their legislation, the Miles Hall Lifeline Act of AB-988, which offers a 988 number for people experiencing mental health crisis to reach trained mental health professionals, has reached the Senate floor.

This year, Bella and her family are advocating for banning and prohibiting police restraints that cause positional asphyxia (AB-490). Bella believes that a Mental Health Crisis Response Team (if in place) would deploy de-escalation techni-

ques and monitor the situation closely while addressing the mental health condition.

"It's frightening that this situation can happen to any of us, I certainly didn't think it would happen to anyone I loved. Remember that seeking help for your mental health struggles isn't a weakness, it is a strength," Bella said.

July 2021 GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, July 15, 2021

**July is Minority Mental
Health Awareness Month—
We Will Address Disparities
in Our Criminal Justice System**

Speaker

Stephanie Regular, Contra Costa County Public Defender Office



July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. For our General Meeting our focus will be on addressing disparities in the criminal justice system. Our Speaker will be Stephanie Regular from the Contra Costa County Public Defender Office, joined by NAMI CC West County Coordinator Eddie Morris and Executive Director Gigi Crowder. There is an invitation for other criminal justice advocates as well as others who have been unfairly treated and criminalized, especially individuals from BIPOC communities.

**Announcements at 7:00 pm
Meeting at 7:15 pm**

Location:

Zoom

Meeting ID: 977 4203 1160

Open To The Public—
Free Admission

AOT WORKGROUP MEETING RECAP

On June 25, 2021 39 people, including Assisted Outpatient workgroup members and members of the general public met via Zoom to hear the PowerPoint summary of a detailed Research Development Associates (RDA) report covering the 2019-2020 fiscal year. It covered the beginning of Shelter in Place (SIP) state and local government orders as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. This made data gathering and program operations significantly more challenging. However, this report, as much as possible, “captured” how all persons involved have done their “level” best to surmount these challenges.

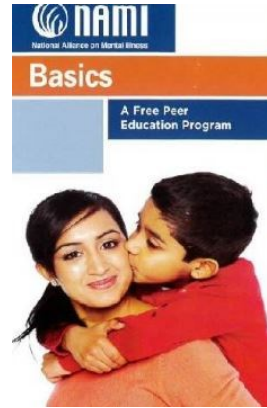
In addition, there was Court and well as county Forensic Mental Health (FMH) and Mental Health Systems, Inc. (MHS) progress reports. All of the reports clearly showed far definite improvements in compliance, employment ability, and life skills confidence for the 90 persons served in this program.

Carolyn Goldstein-Hidalgo, newly promoted from AOT Program Manager to Vice President, Clinical Services, updated the workgroup on promotions within and new persons added to ACTiOn staff. Of particular note, Ivette Kwan is now Program Manager, and Michael Sisler is now Program Supervisor.

Public questions, concerns, and comments from the public focused on the great need for additional housing as well as needed and improved additional laws and tools to actively encourage hard-to-engage persons to participate in this program.

Of note to NAMI Contra Costa members, Don Green, NAMI CC President and Gigi Crowder, NAMI CC Executive Director, are members of this workgroup. If you would like e-copies of the county 2019-2020 Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT a.k.a “Laura’s Law”) program and PowerPoint presentation, contact the Family Network at 925-942-0767 M-Th 8:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m. or 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Friday for more information.

BASICS IN-PERSON CLASS TO START IN THE FALL



NAMI Basics is a 6-session educational program for parents, family members and caregivers of children and adolescents, ages 5-22, who are experiencing behavioral and emotional difficulties.

NAMI Basics Education class will be held at the NAMI CC office at 2151 Salvio Street, Suite V in Concord, from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., beginning Wednesday, September 22, 2021. The class and all materials are provided free of charge.

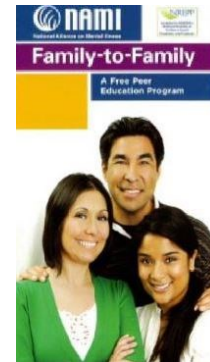
For information or required preregistration contact Susan at Susan@namicontracosta.org or call 925-262-3404.

SIGN UP FOR BASES ON ZOOM

In Spanish, beginning August 6, 2021 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Registration: Telephone 925-765-9980. E-mail: latinx@namicontracosta.org.

FAMILY TO FAMILY EDUCATION COURSE



We are currently in session and plan to have two more upcoming in-person classes in the fall.

Family to Family Education Course is a free, 8-week course that assists family members through education of the symptoms and treatment of major mental illnesses, as well as skills to help family members and friends communicate with, and advocate for, your loved ones more effectively. The Family to Family course content will broaden the perspective of family members as well as strengthen a person’s view of themselves.

For Information and to Register:

Gloria (925) 244-0873
Namif2fcourse@gmail.com

To register for training to become a NAM Family to Family teacher, contact Program Coordinator Nancy Seibert at fam2fam4u@gmail.com.



BECOME A NAMI CC VOLUNTEER TODAY!



Welcome to NAMI Contra Costa to people interested in volunteering four hours or more a month within the Family Support Network (FSN) on any of our supportive network committees. We would like to extend the invitation to get involved if you want to reach out and inspire hope and help to other families. Your lived experience can make a difference.

After becoming a volunteer, you initially will go through five training modules which will help you learn more about NAMI CC history, the behavioral health system in Contra Costa County, mental health and wellness, psychological disorders and multiculturalism. Once your application is filled out we can notify you when the trainings will start.

In English, Spanish and Mandarin, committees available to volunteers include Fundraising, Mental Health Advocacy, Conferences, Front Office and Administration, Database, Family Support, FaithNet, Crash Course Seminar, In Our Own Voice Speakers, Support Group Facilitator, Signature Programs Teacher, Social Media, Hospitality, Membership, and Transitional Age Youth Suicide Prevention.

Call the office at 925-942-0767 or e-mail info@namicontracosta.org today to find the best fit for you. Our weekly volunteer meeting is on Thursdays at 2:00 p.m. Join Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID: 994 1308 8715 Passcode: 424905

NAMI DONATIONS

If you lost a loved one, and would like to direct funds to NAMI Contra Costa, please contact Jo Fetterly at jojac6996@gmail.com

Donations

Margaret Luna	Nick & Nader Soudipour	Anonymous
Linnea Soderlund		
Mary Schreiber	Oliver Brihante	
Ruth & Larry Goldberg	Orgie Strogatz	
	Mujahidun Sumchai	
Susan & Joseph McGregor	Yvonne Boyer	

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Joan Calder
Louise Diracles

In Memory of Ria Kamegai-Karadi

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In Memory of Jay Mahler

Susan & Keith Horrocks

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Cindi Preece	Adrienne Johnson
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In Memory of Lynette

Martha Gonzales

In Memory of Jenny Cipko

Teresa Gleason

Donation QR Code:**FAMILY ADVOCATE**

Bob Thigpen
925-957 5139

robert.thigpen@hsd.cccounty.us,
Bob Thigpen is the
County's Family Advocate.
You can talk directly with him at the Crash
Course. (925-676- 5771) xnamicc@aol.com

Stamp

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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
NAMI CONTRA COSTA

Make check payable to NAMI Contra Costa
Complete this information and please return to:

Treasurer
NAMI Contra Costa
2151 Salvio Street, Suite V
Concord, CA., 94520

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Cell _____

Email Address: _____

- ☐ Renewal ☐ New Member
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