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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Save a life: learn about suicide prevention at Sept. NAMI meeting in Hillcrest**

SAN DIEGO—Survivors of Suicide Loss (SOSL) and Yellow Ribbon will team up for suicide prevention at the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI San Diego) Education and Advocacy meeting on Thursday, September 3.

Consider these facts:

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 15 – 24.
- 90% of all people who die by suicide have a diagnosable psychiatric disorder at the time of death.
- 60% of all people who die by suicide suffer from major depression - the most treatable of psychiatric illnesses.
- Senior citizens have the highest rate of suicide over any other age group.

Because suicide is such a serious problem in the United States, the Surgeon General issued a call to action that resulted in the U.S National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, Goals and Objectives for Action. Learning about suicide and how to prevent it is part of these objectives.

Bonnie J. Bear is the Executive Director of SOSL of San Diego County. She lost her husband of 37 years, Gordon R. Bear, to suicide on August 29, 2002 and has found healing in the work she does at SOSL. Prior to coming to SOSL, Bonnie worked as school nurse for 27 years and is co-author of the Manual of School Health, 3rd Edition (Saunders-Elsevier, 2009). She continues to speak throughout the country on school health issues.

Survivors of Suicide Loss is a nonprofit nonsectarian, organization that was started in 1981. SOSL's mission is to support survivors of suicide loss and educate the community about suicide and suicide prevention.

Yellow Ribbon: The Light for Life Foundation of Southern California is also dedicated to saving and enriching lives through the use of The Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program. Carol Skiljan will be speaking about Yellow Ribbon and how they can help the community.

In addition, an informal discussion featuring psychiatrist and senior resident from UCSD Dr. Steve Koh will be held at 6:30 pm. This will involve a question and answer format where the audience will be able to ask Dr. Koh things they have not been able to ask their own doctors. They will also be able to share what it is like to live with mental illness directly and in the family.

NAMI is a non-profit organization that provides education, support services and advocacy to improve the lives of everyone affected by mental illnesses. They hold two Education and Advocacy meetings each month at no charge to the public. The first Thursday of every month meeting is in San Diego and the second Tuesday meeting is in Escondido. These feature expert speakers on timely topics.

The meeting on September 3 starts at 6:30 pm and will be held at the University Christian Church Friendship Hall at 3900 Cleveland Ave in San Diego (across from the Post Office).

Mark your calendar and if you need more information, contact NAMI San Diego at (800) 523-5933. Or visit [www.namisandiego.org](http://www.namisandiego.org)

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