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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact:

Bettie Reinhardt, Executive Director
NAMI San Diego
(619) 584-5567

Upcoming NAMI San Diego meeting recognizes local Jim Albright and introduces Fairweather Lodge to San Diego

SAN DIEGO – The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) San Diego holds its monthly Education and Advocacy Meeting the first Thursday of every month. These meetings serve as introductions for people new to NAMI and are continuing education for anyone who is already familiar with NAMI and its programs. The goal is to provide the most accurate, up to date and comprehensive education about mental illness. The monthly meetings are open to anyone interested in learning about mental illness.

The next meeting will be held Thursday, October 4, 2007, from 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. and will discuss the Fairweather Lodge Program. This program helps people reintegrate themselves into the community. Its goal is to provide emotional support, a place to live, and employment for its members.

The program was developed by Dr. George Fairweather in California in 1963 as a result of extensive experimental research. In his studies, Dr. Fairweather found that people with serious mental illness are less likely to return to the hospital when they live and work together as a group, rather than live and work individually. His research also showed that the Lodge Program helps people stay in the community longer, provides more employment opportunities, and costs less than conventional treatment programs. Because of the success of the original groups, the Fairweather Lodge Program has expanded considerably during the past 25 years, and there are now Lodges across the nation.

A building was just purchased for the first Fairweather Lodge in San Diego County without any County money. Come hear the ins and outs of how this happened from Mr. Eric Revere—the man who would not give up until it became a reality.

Special recognition will also go to Mr. Jim Albright, who was the persistent force responsible for the formation of NAMI San Diego's Albright Information & Referral Center in 1985. The Center's central feature is a helpline staffed by family members and consumers who are trained to listen and to provide information and referrals to anyone affected by mental illnesses. The Center also contains racks of information and a lending library. The Helpline Specialists now answer e-mails as well as phones and help people that walk in.

The meeting will be held, Thursday, Oct. 4 at the University Christian Church Friendship Hall, 3900 Cleveland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103-3403

For details please call the NAMI San Diego Helpline at (619) 543-1434 or 1-800-523-5933. Check out www.namisaniego.org for other NAMI information, including the annual NAMI Walk for the Mind of America coming in April, 2008.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) is a non-profit organization that provides education, support services and advocacy to improve the lives of everyone affected by mental illnesses.

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