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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **Power outage, 9/11 anniversary puts nerves on edge, but NAMI San Diego can help**

SAN DIEGO—Thursday's power outage and Sunday's ten-year anniversary of the September 11 attacks on the United States can make people feel nervous, anxious, fearful and out of control, but the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI San Diego) can help.

NAMI San Diego is a non-profit organization that provides education, support services and advocacy to improve the lives of everyone affected by mental illnesses. One of their free programs includes a Family and Peer Support Helpline that offers free, safe, confidential information, referrals, and support. The numbers for this line are: (619) 543-1434 or (800) 523-5933.

“These are trying times and people may be feeling anxious and need someone to talk to or a referral for services for themselves or their loved ones in order to deal with a mental health challenge,” said NAMI San Diego Executive Director Shannon Jaccard. “If people can get help early the rate of recovery is often much higher, which is what we strive to achieve with the Family and Peer Support Helpline and with all of NAMI San Diego services.”

The Helpline operates from 10 am to 6 pm, Monday-Friday and after-hours calls are returned the next business day. The Helpline is funded by the County of San Diego. It is managed by a clinically trained Social Worker and the phone operators are trained Family and Peer Support Specialists who have over 100 years of combined experience in the mental health system. The Family and Peer Support Helpline is available in 170 different languages.

While the NAMI San Diego Helpline operates as a conduit to helpful information and resources in mental health, the San Diego Access and Crisis Line is a 24-hour hotline equipped to deal with mental health crisis situations. If you find that you need information about how to handle a mental health crisis, you can talk to a trained

counselor who can help with your specific situation by calling the Access and Crisis Line at 1-800-479-3339.

NAMI San Diego offers all of its services, including education classes, meetings and support groups, free of charge to the public. In order for NAMI San Diego to continue offering these types of services, the organization holds two large fundraising events each year. One is the NAMI Walk which is held in the spring at Balboa Park, and the other is the upcoming NAMI San Diego Inspiration Awards Dinner.

This year's 8<sup>th</sup> annual dinner will feature Father Joe Carroll as the Inspirational Person of the Year Award winner and keynote speaker as well as other local individuals and organizations that champion mental health, such as Lifetime Achievement Award-winner Dilip V. Jeste, M.D of UCSD Medical Center and the "It's Up 2 Us" Mental Health Awareness Campaign as winner of the Media Award. A total of six Inspiration Awards will be given out at the dinner.

The Inspiration Awards dinner will be held at the Catamaran Resort in Mission Beach on October 7, 2011. Tickets are on-sale now and can be purchased by calling the NAMI San Diego office at (800) 523-5933 or online at [www.namisandiego.org](http://www.namisandiego.org).

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