

## CONARD HOUSE SPONSORS ANNUAL NAMI WALK TO RAISE MONEY AND AWARENESS FOR THE TREATMENT AND RECOVERY OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

San Francisco, Calif. –May 20, 2009– Conard House, a pioneering nonprofit organization helping people self-manage mental illness since 1960, announced today that it is a sponsor of the San Francisco affiliate in the annual Bay Area NAMIWalk for the Mind of America. The Walk is an annual nationwide fundraising and mental health awareness event that will be held in over 70 communities around the country as part of Mental Health Month. The San Francisco walk is Saturday, May 30, 2009. Check in is at 9 a.m. and the Walk begins at 11 a.m. at Speedway Meadows, Golden Gate Park.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) is a grassroots education and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of all those affected by serious mental illness. This includes those diagnosed with a mental illness; their family members and friends; mental health professionals; and all who share NAMI's vision and mission.

"This year, thousands of concerned citizens in communities across the nation are joining the *"Campaign for the Mind of America,"*" said Dr. Giff Boyce Smith, President of NAMI-San Francisco. "We're walking together to raise money and awareness about our country's need for a world-class treatment and recovery system for people with mental illness."

Millions of Americans, involving an estimated one in four families, are living with mental illness today. Most NAMI families are personally touched by a severe, biologically-based brain disorder such as: schizophrenia and other schizophrenia spectrum disorders, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder or severe anxiety disorders, including panic disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

All proceeds from the Walk will be used to fund NAMI's programs, locally and nationally, to support recovery of individuals and to reduce stigma in our communities. For details on how to participate in the walk or for more information, visit the NAMI site at <http://www.namiwalksfbay.org/index.html>.

"NAMI-San Francisco is such an important organization – we are honored to be a sponsor," said Richard Heasley, Conard House Executive Director. "Like Conard House, NAMI is committed to helping improve lives of and offering hope to people living with chronic mental illness and their families."

### **About Conard House**

Conard House, Inc. is a private, nonprofit organization providing mental health services to residents of San Francisco. Founded upon core principles of self-empowerment, self-determination and the least restrictive, community-based living, Conard House opened its doors in 1960 as the City's first "halfway house" for adults following hospitalization. Today it serves more than 2,100 people in a dozen locations. Support for its programs and services come from various city agencies, service fees from organizations, rents from residents, foundation grants and donor gifts. For more information about Conard House and its programs, please visit [www.conard.org](http://www.conard.org).

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