



nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Coastal Virginia

Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach & the Eastern Shore

June 25, 2024

Mr. Troy Wagers, Post Commander
Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 392
2408 Bowland Parkway
Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Dear Commander Wagers:

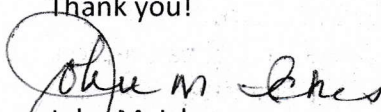
One of the most devastating elements facing America's military today may stretch well beyond the battlefield. Statistics show that 20% of the active duty force will experience a significant mental health condition each year. While this mirrors numbers in the non-military community, those in uniform (and those that support them) face unique challenges. Claudia Sanchez Bustamante, writing in *Health.mil* (the official website of the military health system) points out that "...the stigma of mental health is grounded in the cultural misperception that a service member must have "zero defects" to be mission ready." This has an immediate and significantly negative impact on the servicemember and also those who care for them.

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, has established a no-cost, six-week course entitled "NAMI Homefront", which offers evidence-based lessons for the loved ones of active duty members and for veterans. This course, taught by trained facilitators with experience in mental health and also military service, has proven to be extremely valuable in pulling aside some of the curtains that cloud what is really happening, and ways that those involved can have a much greater level of control over how mental health issues effect their lives.

NAMI Coastal Virginia will offer this course beginning Tuesday, September 3, 2024 in Virginia Beach. With a class each Tuesday, the six-week session will examine the basis for mental health concerns, diagnoses, medications, communications and self-care. We've enclosed a flyer that talks to these elements and we're asking you to please share this with your organization and with other interested persons.

Again, there is no cost for taking this course, and we fully respect the confidentiality of those attending. If you like, we'd be happy to attend one of your meetings and share our stories and the resources available through NAMI.

Thank you!


John M. Ickes
LT, USN (Ret.)

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Contribute through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC-6038) & the Combined Virginia Campaign (CVC-6092) or just list NAMI Coastal Virginia

