



July 23, 2020

Mental Health matters in our community now more than ever

I am supporting Dario Anselmo for Hennepin County Commissioner. Dario's balanced civic approach and proven ability to listen to divergent voices make him a great fit for this non-partisan position. He is an experienced, engaged, committed and caring leader who cuts across ideology, find solutions, and takes action.

Mental health is one particular area where he has championed awareness, worked for positive change, and has shown leadership. I have experienced his committed and caring leadership both personally and professionally.

Helping people impacted by mental health issues is not an abstraction for Dario. Unlike many leaders, he shares how mental illness has impacted his family, creating open and honest dialogue in our community. When my son died by suicide in 2015, Dario and his family provided foundational support and resources to help us rebuild the broken pieces all around us. His support has continued, including reaching out to us and others in our community to provide input on the civic work he is doing to improve mental health.

Professionally, Dario has been a leader on mental health issues in Hennepin County and Minnesota for the past 30 years. When serving as a state representative he passed a bill for suicide detection and training for teachers in the public schools. He served as the president for Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance for 10 years as well as being a long-time board member of Mental Health MN.

Although progress is being made, mental illness is pervasive with nearly 1 in 5 adults living with a mental illness. Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death overall in the United States (data from the National Institute of Mental Health) and the third leading cause of death for adolescents in Hennepin County (data from Hennepin County Public Health).

As Hennepin County Commissioner, Dario is committed to raising awareness for mental health issues. He will leverage his 30 years of mental health experience and advocacy, working in private and public roles, to help Hennepin County strengthen its approach to mental health so that our whole community can thrive.

Sam Shuster

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