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Join Us For The NAMIWalks NYS on September 23rd at Jennings Landing, Albany

2017 Education Conference
November 10-12
The Desmond Hotel and Conference Center, Albany

Three Pronged Approach to Sustainable Mental Health Recovery

See page 14 for more details.
Executive Director’s Message  By Wendy Burch

This edition of the NAMI-NYS newsletter includes a lot of emphasis on outreach. Not enough people know about NAMI and what it can offer in terms of support and education. And certainly not enough people are aware of the lack of mental health resources for people with mental illness or their family members and care givers. We must focus our efforts on ensuring that support and treatment are available, as well as on eliminating the stigma of mental illness so people will not be afraid to seek help when they need it.

We at NAMI-NYS have given a lot of effort to promoting the Ribbon Awareness Campaign. The campaign originated with NAMI Westchester a few years ago and was quickly adopted by NAMI Mid-Hudson. Both affiliates were able to create valuable partnerships within their communities, while raising awareness about mental illness. Having witnessed first-hand the positive effects the Ribbon Campaign has yielded in my own community, I can say what a powerful outreach tool it can be. Not only have we formed community partnerships and interested potential sponsors and supporters, but the NAMI-NYS Information and Resource Helpline has received an increased volume of calls as a result of the campaign, both by people seeking resources and others who want to know how they can become involved.

NAMI has some of the most dedicated volunteers in the world. It’s personal for each and every one of them. Yet NAMI is still not the household name it should be. I would challenge NAMI members and supporters to continue to engage the public, particularly young people, so that we can live in a world where we are not constantly fighting for resources and instead can just concentrate on our or our loved ones’ treatment of care.

The Ribbon Campaign, NAMIWalks events, tabling opportunities and presentations are just some of the ways we can reach the public and educate them about mental illness and the support and superior programing that NAMI offers. Social media is another inexpensive tool for spreading the word.

So far this year has been a whirlwind of activity and I’m excited for what we have planned for the rest of it. The Education Conference Committee is putting together an outstanding conference for the fall. We’d love to see you there. I’m also really looking forward to our Walk here in Albany in September. Last year was so much fun, and it was really inspiring to see so many people come together in support of improving the lives of those with mental illness and their families.

Thank you all for everything you do to support the NAMI mission!
President’s Message
By Judy Watt MSRN, NAMI-NYS, Board President

As I reflect on Memorial Day Weekend, many memories and feelings come to mind for my family and others who have lost family members in service to our country and also through brain diseases, mental illnesses, cancer, addictions and other serious illnesses. Our Veterans and their families cannot be thanked enough for extraordinary sacrifices they have made in serving our country. I also believe our people who are or have suffered with serious addictions, mental and physical illnesses need recognition along with their families. These folks have had to work very hard in life to keep themselves and others safe and well. They have suffered significant losses due to these illnesses.

Since 1980’s when NAMI began, I have seen our programs get stronger and more diverse to meet the needs of so many more people and families. Our Veterans and families are invited to any of our groups but also have programs and groups especially to meet their needs. Our young people can participate in groups and activities with their peers. Parents, siblings, relatives and friends all have groups and educational programs. Professional people have a place and role in NAMI programs. We are also working very hard to have more opportunities for hearing impaired and our non-English speaking people.

I am very pleased to be part of our NAMI-NYS Board. We have an Executive Director, staff and Board of Directors who care and are very competent. Financial and administrative support for so many of our leader trainings and programs are supported by this office for all affiliates across the state. Our staff and members actively address with our Legislative representatives the importance of keeping services and need to expand services for our seriously mentally ill people. A major focus now is helping the last few affiliates complete their applications for reaffiliation. Watch for more detail on this year’s conference, also.

Among other activities, staff are planning a NAMIWalk in Albany. Our hope is we can raise funds to support more programs throughout NYS affiliates. Our Board is forming a team or teams.

Please join the fun by coming with your team or joining ours to bring more awareness of NAMI in Albany and across our state. Decreasing Stigma continues to be so important along with education and advocacy.

This and other Newsletters along with our Helpline and Website are valuable information resources for all of us.

I am so grateful for our NAMI family for past 35 years! NAMI is here for all of us!

New Board Member

NAMI-NYS welcomes Ellen Ritz to the Board of Directors. Ellen was appointed to the Board at the April Board meeting upon the resignation of Chemene Webber. Ellen is a registered nurse and a member of the NAMI Queens/Nassau Board. She is a certified Family-to-Family teacher and NAMI Family Support Group facilitator and is very active in the community. In her own words, “I am passionate about helping others – whether through F2F, the support group, raising funds to help NAMI continue its wonderful programs and to advocate for better laws, more support of mental health research to get better medications and increased understanding of the brain, better justice system, better legislation and so much more.” We are excited to have Ellen advocating on behalf of NAMI at the state level.

At the same time, we wish the best to Chemene and hope she will have to time to come back to the NAMI-NYS Board in the future. We appreciate the many contributions she made to NAMI-NYS.
Originally from Boston, MA, **Ben Wurmfeld** is a student at Southern Vermont College. Slated to graduate in May 2018, Ben is pursuing an undergraduate degree in psychology, and is minoring in creative writing as part of SVC’s Shires Press publishing program. Here at NAMI-NYS, Ben assists with our Helpline and with translating our Family Toolkit into Spanish.

**Randy Budram** is an accounting student from Bryant & Stratton College. Randy is working with Sharon Clairmont in the finance office for the summer semester. At the end of his internship, he is hoping to become much more proficient with Quickbooks. He will also be helping Heide Garner on preparations for the NAMIWalks as well.

**Abigail Myrie** is a junior from SUNY Albany who has been a volunteer for the Spring Semester. Although she is a psychology major, she enjoys journalism and writing. Abbie was a great help to Matt Shapiro in summarizing articles for the e-News and also did some social media articles. Although Abbie has gone home for the summer, she will be back in the Fall as an intern to help with the NAMIWalks and the Education Conference.

**Tricia Wazadally** was an accounting student from Bryant & Stratton College who worked with Sharon Clairmont in the finance office during the Spring Semester. Tricia had a great personality and was able to master Quickbooks quite well by the time she left. She also did some other administrative duties while being here at NAMI-NYS and we appreciate all she did for us.

**Jasmine Wong** is also a volunteer from SUNY Albany who worked briefly with Bill Wallace doing some Outreach and hung ribbons for the Ribbon Campaign. Jasmine is a biology and psychology major.

**Layne Garner** is passionate about mental health awareness. He knows the effect stigma has had on his loved ones. It has made him a strong advocate and a wonderful volunteer for NAMI.

**MaryBeth Honsinger** is helping out in the office one day a week, mostly working with Heide Garner on the NAMIWalks and answering the phones. She has also been spending a lot of time helping Christine and Heide with preparations for the NAMIWalks Kick-off Party.

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### Mental Health Now

NAMI-NYS continues to produce the *Mental Health Now* television show out of the Town of Colonie. The purpose of the program is to educate the public about issues related to mental health. Past topics have included Assisted Outpatient Treatment, mental health education in schools and mental health issues affecting young adults. The show, hosted by NAMI-NYS’s Matthew Shapiro, has featured several prominent individuals from around the state and the country. The commissioner of the NYS Office of Mental Health Dr. Ann Marie Sullivan, Congressman Paul Tonko, Super Bowl Champion Keith O’Neil and the NIMH Director of the Division of Services and Intervention Dr. Robert K. Heinssen have all appeared on the program. If you would like to suggest a topic for an upcoming episode, please contact the NAMI-NYS office. Episodes are archived on the NAMI-NYS website for those interested in viewing past broadcasts.

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### Albany County Department of Mental Health’s Annual Health Fair

NAMI-NYS had the honor of attending the Albany County Department of Mental Health’s Annual Health Fair on May 24th. Every year many local agencies attend this event as it gives them an opportunity to provide consumers in Albany County with information and resources. The Health Fair also offers a unique opportunity for local mental health agencies to network and learn about the services that other agencies offer within our community. In attendance was Albany County Executive Daniel McCoy, who continues to be a huge supporter of mental health in Albany County.
The 2017 What's Great in Our State – A Celebration of Children’s Mental Health Awareness took place on Tuesday, May 2nd, and was a major success. NAMI-NYS was proud to serve on the event’s steering committee (which is comprised of several state agencies and non-profit organizations). NAMI-NYS played a visible role at the event which took place at the New York State Museum.

NAMI Huntington’s Beth Ramme was one of this year’s five honorees. Beth was recognized for her innovative work in adapting the NAMI Basics program and offering it in women’s prisons and to mental health professionals.

NAMI Ending the Silence presenter Joseph Fusaro gave the Young Adult Voice of Recovery Address and inspired the audience by telling his remarkable story of how mental illness gripped him from childhood, how he has been able to recover, and his experiences presenting on mental health issues in schools.

NAMI-NYS Associate Director for Public Affairs, Matthew Shapiro, introduced Senator Jesse Hamilton who was recognized for his commitment to children’s mental health issues.

The other four honorees were:

- **Foundations in Feelings “CAP” Program** – FIF is an early childhood mental health consultation model designed to help children struggling with challenging behavior excel in preschool. A trained social worker provides assistance in creating support plans and coaching for classroom teachers in Westchester County.

- **Regina Barros-Rivera** – The Associate Executive Director of North Shore Child and Family Guidance Center (Nassau County), Ms. Barros-Rivera is addressing the special needs of immigrant Latino families, especially girls, by implementing culturally appropriate mental health services. She has had an impact in the school-based health programs in all 56 school districts.

- **Sheila Shea** – As Director of Mental Hygiene Legal Services in the Third Judicial Department in Albany, Ms. Shea is helping children and youth with mental health or developmental disabilities secure needed treatment or appropriate placement.

- **Voices United 4 Change** – This program is dedicated to raising awareness and eliminating stigma of children’s mental health issues throughout Orange County. Along with their advocacy work on behalf of these children and youth, they sponsor a number of support groups, including some that are peer led.

The event also featured a keynote address from Michael T. Compton, MD, MPH, Director of Adult Medical Services for the New York State Office of Mental Health, and a presentation by Governor Cuomo’s office of a proclamation declaring Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week in New York State.
Our annual NAMIWalks Team Captain Kickoff party is being held this year on June 17th. We have asked our team captains to dust off their hats & boots and come join us for a country-themed party with live music, line dancing lessons, and a free barbecue! It is not too late to join NAMIWalks NYS as a team captain and enjoy the special events and giveaways we offer to our captains!

**Why Do We Walk??**

The NAMIWalks events are a valuable tool to raise awareness about mental illness. Each walker has a personal reason for participating, and we like to put a face to mental illness by highlighting individual stories and motivations to walk. Although we all bring a different lived experience, we come together to meet a common goal—that of stomping out the stigma of mental illness and ensuring services are available for all who need them.

We always like to give our walk participants the opportunity to remind everyone why they walk. The NAMIWalks are about the people affected by mental illness and their commitment to making a difference.

Our hope is that everyone who reads this will participate in some way with NAMIWalks. And we'd love to see you at NAMI-NYS’s walk on September 23rd in Albany!

**Kickoff Party—Contest**

It’s Contest Time!

Any new walkers that register by July 31st and donate $15.00 will be entered to win a $25.00 Stewart's Shops gift card! The gift card can be used at any Stewart's location throughout upstate New York State and Southern Vermont.

**Walk Teams**

We are off to a great start with 17 walk teams already created!

- CDPC
- IT WORKS CREW
- Let's Talk About It
- NAMI Cayuga
- NAMI-NYS Board
- Net Walkers
- Rensselaer Challengers
- Rising Up
- Saint Peters Health Partners
- Small But Mighty ~ NAMI-MFH
- Squirts Squad
- Stigma Free
- Is the Way To Be
- Stigma Stompers
- Stomp Out Stigma
- Sunflower Sanctuary
- Team Alkermes
- Team Walk and Talk About It!
As summer quickly approaches, we are gearing up for 2017 NAMIWalks NYS! The walk will once again be held at beautiful Jennings Landing, 1 Quay Street, Albany, NY 12207, on September 23rd. Registration will begin at 8:30 am and the Walk will kick off at 10:00 am. We will also be holding a Wellness Fair at the Walk with vendors from many local agencies. One of our very own local bands, “Missing Link,” will be performing live before the Walk. Come join us for a fun-filled morning as we take steps to stomp out stigma!

For more information or to register for the Walk, please visit our website at www.namiwalks.org/newyorkstate or contact Heide Garner NAMIWalks Manager at (518) 462-2000 or heide@naminys.org.

NAMIWalks NYS Recognition Items

NAMIWalks NYS recognition items are our way of saying thank you for all the hard work and dedication the walkers show for this amazing cause. The items are cumulative. As each individual walker reaches the dollar amount associated with an item, they earn that item. As their fundraising grows, they have the potential to earn all five prizes!!!
NAMI-NYS Once Again Leads the Way to A Brighter Day with Annual Event

The fifth annual “A Brighter Day” event took place on Friday, April 21st. It was a wonderful evening. The event was generously hosted by Bob and Evelyn Keplinger and Glennpeter Jewelers.

The event’s featured speaker was Dr. John Forsythe, a Professor of Psychology and Director of the Anxiety Disorders Research Program at the University at Albany. Dr. Forsythe is also a highly sought after teacher and trainer in the practical use of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and mindfulness practices to alleviate human suffering, awaken the heart and spirit, and to cultivate living well. He gave an interesting presentation on how to take a different view on mental health, disease, and wellness.

A Brighter Day took place on the same weekend as the statewide NAMI Peer-to-Peer (P2P) training. We were fortunate to be joined by P2P trainers Cynthia Scott and Donna Israel. Cynthia and Donna are the embodiment of the NAMI spirit and they spoke to how NAMI has helped them in their recovery and how in turn NAMI has given them the ability to help others. They put an incredible face on the power of NAMI and why those in attendance should support NAMI-NYS.

It was an inspirational evening all around. NAMI-NYS would like to extend our deep appreciation to Bob and Evelyn Keplinger for hosting the evening, Jeff Wise and the staff at Glennpeter Jewelers for letting us use their store and supplying the food, Dr. Forsythe, Cynthia and Donna, the myriad of businesses who donated to the event’s raffle and silent auction and, of course, to everyone who came out and supported NAMI-NYS.

Fundraisers

There is still time to take advantage of a new fundraising initiative this Walk season. We partnered with Yankee Candle to benefit NAMIWalks NYS. The promotion was set to run from April 7th – May 31st. But since we have had such a positive response to the campaign, we have extended it until June 30th! If you would like to order some amazing products, while helping NAMIWalks NYS, please visit our web store at www.yankeecandlefundraising.com/store.htm. If asked for a campaign code, enter 999968124.

We held our first “Bowling for Hope” fundraiser on May 12th. It was a fun-filled evening of bowling, friendship, and prizes! We gave out prizes for the best and the worst games bowled, held a 50/50 raffle, as well as a chance to win 15 free games! It was so much fun we are doing it again!

**Bowling for Hope Second Strike**
July 21, 2017
6-8 pm
East Greenbush Bowling Center
570 Columbia Turnpike
East Greenbush, NY 12061

**There are so many ways to contribute to NAMI-NYS:**
- An on-line payment via the NAMI-NYS website
- Mail a contribution to the NAMI-NYS office
- Attend a NAMI-NYS fundraiser
- Consider naming NAMI-NYS in a will, trust or life insurance policy
- Start or join a NAMIWalks NYS team
- Support a walker
- Participate in the NAMI-NYS Education Conference
- Volunteer!
We are Most Grateful to Those Who Made Financial Donations To NAMI-NYS during The 1st and 2nd Quarter 2017

$1,000  Concern For Independent Living
$500  Maria Walski
$200-$300  Susan Kaplan, Richard H. McCarthy, Christine Robinson Cooley, Mr. & Mrs. Ferdinand Smith III, Janet Tretin
$100-$200  David Belsky, Daryl Bennett, Alicia Burns, Adam Chandler, Joe Coppola, Eugene Hammond, Donna Leftwich, Jordon Markell, Lynn Matott, Sharon McCarthy, David C Morris, Carolyn Patterson, FMHCNY PPLC, Jeanette Taverna, Gilbert Yablon, Peter Zimmerman

Why Support NAMI New York State?

Most NAMI members and supporters, when donating to NAMI, quite rightly want to see their contribution be invested directly into their local communities. So if you are already supporting your local affiliate, why should you also donate to NAMI-NYS?

Did you know that NAMI-NYS provides thousands of brochures and other informational literature on mental health issues free of charge to the affiliates for dissemination? Last year, the state office provided almost 50,000 informational brochures that were distributed to the public through NAMI affiliates around New York.

Were you aware that NAMI-NYS trains all teachers/facilitators/presenters in the state to prepare them to deliver NAMI programs? That includes NAMI Family to Family, Peer to Peer, Basics, Homefront, In Our Own Voice, Ending the Silence, Parents and Teachers as Allies, Provider Ed and Smarts, as well as support group leaders for Family Support Group and Connections. The state office covers the costs of the training, furnishes class materials for classes and provides reimbursements for completed classes and presentations to the affiliates.

What else does NAMI-NYS do to support New Yorkers impacted by mental illness?

The NAMI-NYS Information and Referral Helpline fields calls from all areas of the state, referring callers to local NAMI affiliates or other mental health resources in their areas. NAMI-NYS also disseminates information about mental illness and related issues through its website, social media outlets, weekly e-news, print newsletter and Mental Health Now television show. The annual Education Conference brings experts from all over the state and beyond to present on topics of interest to our audience, including research, treatments and advocacy issues.

NAMI members and supporters are proud to be advocates for those with serious mental illness and their families. NAMI-NYS coordinates advocacy efforts at the state level, keeping the membership apprised of legislative developments affecting the mental health field at all levels of government. The state office also continues to develop outreach tools to spread the word about what NAMI offers and eliminate the stigma of mental illness. NAMI-NYS is able to draw on the grassroots advocacy of New York’s NAMI affiliates and share their innovative ideas with the rest of the state.

NAMI-NYS is committed to supporting the efforts of NAMI members and volunteers throughout New York to improve the lives of those living with mental illness and their families. We’re all in this together and we appreciate all you do every day to meet this common goal!
The Ribbon Campaign
State and Local Governments Participate in NAMI-NYS Ribbon Campaign

Top Row (L to R): Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Senate Mental Health Chair Robert Ortt, Assembly Mental Health Chair Aileen Gunther.

Middle Row: Senator David Carlucci, Senator Jesse Hamilton, Assistant Assembly Speaker Felix Ortiz.

Bottom Row (left): Ulster County Executive Mike Hein presents NAMI Mid-Hudson’s Tina Lee with a proclamation in front of a tree with a NAMI Ribbon.

Bottom Row (right): Martin Ascher (representing Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins), City of Yonkers Councilman Christopher Johnson, Fabiola Tambini-Mallette, Eva Hale Leighton and Sharon McCarthy of NAMI Westchester, City of Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, City of Yonkers Councilman Mike Breen, Representative for Yonkers Council President Liam McLaughlin, Marie Considine of NAMI Westchester.
Longtime NAMI-NYS volunteer Bill Wallace has recently taken on the position of Outreach Coordinator for the organization, replacing Alicia Burns after she accepted a job with New York State. Bill has been associated with NAMI for over two years, during which time he volunteered in the NAMI-NYS office and served as our (un)-official photographer at NAMI-NYS events. We are so pleased to have Bill on board. He has been working to engage businesses, schools and other organizations in the community and inform them of the support and services that NAMI offers.

2017 NAMI-NYS Ribbon Campaign

The reluctance to discuss and in some cases seek treatment for a mental health condition is far too often the result of the fear many people still feel regarding the social stigma associated with mental illness. The NAMI-NYS Ribbon Campaign, which coincides with the Mental Health Awareness month of May, has once again brought the fight to destigmatize mental illness to our communities. Through the efforts of NAMI-NYS employees, our affiliates, and volunteers throughout New York, we have been able to distribute hundreds of ribbons in businesses, local and state governments, police departments, fire houses, parks, schools, and mental health and substance abuse clinics.

Our Ribbon Campaign brings with it the opportunity to raise greater awareness of NAMI-NYS and the services we offer. The conversations with business owners, doctor's offices, school staff, first responders, individuals, and civic leaders regarding the Ribbon Campaign also provide a forum to make the community aware of the invaluable resources of NAMI-NYS and the opportunities individuals and organization have to partner with NAMI-NYS and use our programs as a resource.

In conducting the campaign, we have witnessed the kindness of communities across the state as they embrace the opportunity to raise awareness and demonstrate that it is okay to talk about mental health issues. The goal of the campaign is to guide people to getting help if they need it and know that NAMI-NYS is a place to find help and find hope for both individuals and families. Forming new community partnerships will help us and our affiliates expand as we aim to attract new members, volunteers and fundraising supporters.

With the help of all the communities engaging in the campaign, we can reduce the stigma of mental illness, bring knowledge of the resources available to treat and support our friends and family members with a psychiatric disorder, and advocate at local, state, and national levels of government for the funding to improve the lives of our loved ones. Together, hand in hand, with our burdens lightened, the fear of mental illness will no longer keep individuals and families from getting the help they need.

If you did not participate in this year’s NAMI-NYS Ribbon Campaign, we encourage you to do so next year and help us spread our message of care and hope for individuals with mental illnesses, their friends, and families.

NAMI-NYS wants to thank Albany County DA David Soares and his office

NAMI-NYS wants to thank Albany County District Attorney David Soares and his office for their commitment to raising mental health awareness and NAMI-NYS. DA Soares and his staff participated in the NAMI-NYS Ribbon Campaign. They also posted on social media about Mental Health Awareness Month and included a link to NAMI-NYS. Improving the mental illness-criminal justice interface is one of NAMI-NYS’s top priorities and we are fortunate to partner with Albany County in this endeavor. Along with working with the DA’s office, Albany County has had NAMI-NYS participate in Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for police departments throughout the county.
Members of NAMI-NYS to Make Their Voices Heard in Congress

NAMI-NYS looks forward to using the upcoming NAMI National Convention to reach out and engage the New York State Congressional Delegation as part of NAMI's Hill Day. On June 29th, NAMI-NYS members will be visiting with the offices of Senator Chuck Schumer and many of our House Representatives.

The purpose of the meetings is to discuss the NAMI Action Agenda to improve the delivery of mental health care. Specific issues include:

- Investing in mental health and innovation
- Promoting early intervention
- Improving integration of care
- Supporting caregivers, military service members & veteran
- Ending the criminalization of mental illness
- Funding the mental health initiatives in the 21st Century Cures Act
- Sustained funding for the National Institute of Mental Health

For those unable to attend the convention, we encourage you to make your voices heard and engage your House Representatives by visiting their district offices. You can contact Matthew Shapiro at Matthew@NAMINYS.org for materials to use for district House visits.

NAMI Syracuse Task Force

A bipartisan Task Force launched by U.S. Rep. John Katko (NY-24) and NYS Assemblyman Bill Magnarelli (129th District) in 2015 released its final, comprehensive report in March, outlining the largest gaps in youth behavioral and mental health services in Central New York and providing recommendations to improve access to care. NAMI Syracuse played an active role in the task force and had both Rep. Katko and Assemblyman Magnarelli at their 2016 Education Conference.

NAMI Syracuse President Karen Winter Schwartz said of the affiliate's participation: “During these complicated political times, more than ever, we need to advocate and fight for our loved ones and ourselves. The challenges facing those dealing with serious mental illness seem insurmountable, but joining forces with so many concerned members of The Youth Mental Health Task Force has given our NAMI Syracuse members renewed hope and the ammunition to continue our mission. It was refreshing to collaborate with individuals who could put their political differences aside and get something done! As president of NAMI Syracuse, I look forward to continuing working with Congressman Katko and Assemblyman Magnarelli to improve mental health care services and the lives of individuals and their families who struggle with brain disorders such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and severe depression.”

Girl Scouts Give Back

The girl scouts of Service Unit 191, part of the Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York and covering the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk school district, enthusiastically embraced the NAMI Ribbon Awareness Campaign this spring as their Girl Scouts Give Back Service Project. At the end of March and in early April, NAMI-NYS held two separate information meetings with the scouts that included information about mental illness, what NAMI does and the details of the campaign.

The troops were also provided with informational packets to distribute to businesses, schools, municipalities and other organizations, and NAMI-NYS staff taught the scouts different ways to tie the ribbons. By the first of May, the NAMI ribbons blanketed the community, starting valuable conversations around mental health and mental illness.

Not only did NAMI-NYS develop a strong partnership with the Girl Scouts in the area, the collaboration also facilitated connections with various organizations within the community. The Ribbon Awareness Campaign is just another way to make NAMI a household name, making it easier to point those in need to resources and eliminating the stigma surrounding mental illness.
NAMI-NYS is excited to share with you the details of our 2017 Education Conference Recovery – Intervention, Engagement, Implementation: Three Pronged Approach to Sustainable Mental Health Recovery, taking place November 10-12 at the Desmond Hotel in Albany. Once again the conference will present national leaders in progressing advances in mental health research, practices, and advocacy issues. This year, we are increasing the scope of the conference and incorporating new elements.

The main addition will be the inaugural NAMI Honors Leaders in Mental Health Awareness Celebration taking place Friday evening. NAMI-NYS has chosen three individuals who are using various forms of media to enhance the understanding of how mental health issues impact both individuals and families. Among the honorees are Ron Powers, the Pulitzer Prize winning author of Flags of Our Fathers and Mark Twain: A Life. Mr. Powers’ new book No One Cares About Crazy People: The Chaos and Heartbreak of Mental Health in America details both his experience of having two sons with schizophrenia as well as America’s history of failing to provide adequate mental health care.

Also being honored is singer/songwriter Matt Butler. Weaving personal experience with a timeless style, Butler brings honesty and openness to his classic approach to songwriting. His critically acclaimed album Reckless Son chronicles his experience with mental health and substance abuse issues and many of the songs (which Matt will be performing at the event) are achingly honest depictions of how his illness impacted members of his family.

Our third honoree will be Keith O’Neil, who was the special teams captain of the Super Bowl champion Indianapolis Colts and author of the upcoming book Under My Helmet: A Football Player’s Lifelong Battle with Bipolar Disorder. Keith has become a good friend to NAMI-NYS serving as the Grand Marshall of the inaugural NAMIWalks NYS and working with NAMI Buffalo. This will be a stirring celebration you will not want to miss. The inspiration of Friday evening and the use of media to detail the realities of living with a mental illness will be mirrored on Saturday evening with a special screening of the movie Beyond Silence. The documentary follows the efforts of Jeff Fink, Lauren Burke and Lloyd Hale to live well and break through the silence often associated with mental illness. The film provides a glimpse into their lives and their diagnoses—which include bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, depression and anxiety—ultimately weaving together a cohesive narrative about how speaking up is key to living well with a mental health condition. Following the screening, we are honored to be joined by Jeff, Lauren and Lloyd for a panel discussion.

Life experiences, self-advocacy and the role of family support will also be offered during Saturday’s lunch session With Intervention, Engagement and Implementation Recovery is Possible. This panel discussion, moderated by John Allen, the New York State Office of Mental Health’s Special Advisor to the Commissioner, will feature insights on recovery from people who have overcome severe and persistent mental illness. Other panelists so far include:

- Fred Frese, PhD, FAPA, FAPPA, Professor of Psychiatry, Northeast Ohio Medical University and Coordinator of the Recovery Project. Dr. Frese has been living with schizophrenia for almost a half a century and has become a leading psychiatric professor and mental health advocate.
- Hakeem Rahim, one of NAMI-NYS’s leading faces of recovery, will also be participating to tell his story, which has taken him from developing severe delusions caused by bi-polar disorder while at Harvard University to traveling the globe informing students about mental health, testifying before the U.S. Senate and being one of the featured faces of recovery in the New York City Thrive campaign.
- John Allen

Saturday will feature the presentation of the NAMI-NYS Excellence in Research Award to Kristen Brennand, PhD, Director of Brennand Laboratory at the Ichahn Medical Institution. Dr. Brennand is a stem cell biologist working to bridge the fields of developmental neuroscience and psychiatry. Her presentation on her work developing in vitro models for schizophrenia in order to identify novel insights into the molecular and cellular phenotypes of mental illness, will be one of the
Suicide Hogan from New York State Commissioner, Office of Mental Health, are thrilled to welcome following Friday’s lunch. We are thrilled to welcome back former New York State Office of Mental Health Commissioner, Michael Hogan, PhD, to moderate the session. The ZERO Suicide discussion will also feature Rosa Gil, PhD, Founder, President and CEO of Comunlife, Inc., and Brett Scudder, Executive Director, Scudder.

Among Sunday’s highlights are a Town Hall Session with Lloyd Sederer, MD, Chief Medical Officer of the New York State Office of Mental Health, and an Ask the Doctor session with our trusted advisor, Lew Opler, MD.

This year’s conference will expand our offering of CEU credits. NAMI-NYS will be making many exciting additions to the conference agenda in the coming weeks, so be sure to look for updates through our E-Newsletter and special email announcements. As always be sure to visit naminys.org for all the latest information.

We look forward to seeing you in November for what will surely be a memorable weekend.

### FRIDAY, November 10th

- **9:00am** – Registration Begins
- **10:15-11:15am** – Multitrack Session 1
- **12:15-2:15pm** – Zero Suicide Plenary
- **2:30-3:30pm** – Multitrack Session 2
- **3:45-5:00pm** – Workshops on Affiliate Development and Community Partnerships
- **5:15-6:15pm** – Meet the Candidates
- **6:45pm** – NAMI Honors Leaders in Mental Health Awareness Banquet

### SATURDAY, November 11th

- **8:15-8:45am** – Business Meeting
- **9:00-11:00am** – Morning Plenary
- **11:15-12:00 noon** – Excellence in Research Award Presentation
- **1:00-2:30pm** – Featured Session: *With Intervention, Engagement, and Implementation, Recovery Is Possible*
- **3:00-4:00pm** – Workshops
- **4:30-5:30pm** – Workshops
- **5:45 pm** – Town Hall
- **6:45 pm** – Banquet with Screening of *Beyond Silence*

### SUNDAY, November 12th

- **8:00am** – Discussion Groups
- **8:30am** – Interfaith Service
- **9:00-10:00am** – Morning Plenary
- **10:00-11:00am** – Town Hall Session
- **11:15am-Noon** – Ask The Doctor

### EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION FEES: (Before Oct. 20)

**MEMBER FEE**
- $215 Entire Conference 3 Days (6 meals)
- $195 Friday and Saturday Only (5 meals)
- $120 Saturday and Sunday Only (3 meals)
- $100 Friday All Day (2 meals—no breakfast)
  - $75 Friday Daytime Only 9am - 5 pm (Lunch only)
- $100 Saturday All Day (2 meals—no breakfast)
  - $75 Saturday Daytime Only 9am - 5 pm (Lunch only)

**NONMEMBERS**
- $75 Additional Fee to any above rate OR
- $40 Join NAMI-NYS TODAY and Save on Registration

A $25 late fee will be assessed after October 20th. Or join us for a Luncheon or Banquet:
- $50 Friday Lunch – Zero Suicide Prevention Panel
- $60 Friday Evening – NAMI Honors Leaders Banquet
- $50 Saturday Lunch – *Recovery: Intervention, Engagement, & Implementation*
- $60 Saturday Evening – *Beyond Silence* Screening/Panel Discussion

### HOTEL/LODGING:

If you need lodging, please call The Desmond Hotel & Conference Center directly. To receive the special NAMI group rate of $128 per room per night (single or double occupancy), reservations must be made no later than October 27, 2017. Directions are available at www.desmondhotelsalbany.com.

**CEU’s:**

This year’s conference will expand our offering of CEU credits. CEU’s will be available for selected sessions. Check our website or contact Wendy Burch at wendy@naminys.org for more details.

### SCHOLARSHIPS:

A limited number of both partial and full scholarships for consumers and family members of NAMI-NYS will be awarded on a lottery basis. Scholarships include conference registration, conference meals and a shared offsite hotel room for two nights. Travel expenses will not be reimbursed. Scholarship applications can be found on the conference website or obtained by contacting Tammie Paradis at tammie@naminys.org.
Congress is targeting mental health coverage.
Take action now.

#KeepWhatWorks

Legislative Advocacy Update

The past six months have certainly been interesting in regards to legislative issues impacting mental health care. On both the state and national level, we have seen developments that have been extremely positive and some that will curtail the progress we have made.

Surely, the most positive event in the last six months was President Obama signing the 21st Century Cures Act. This was a major victory for NAMI advocates as the bill contained many of the initiatives from the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act that NAMI had been advocating on behalf of for several years. Highlights of the bill include:

- Establishing an Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use to head the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
- Creating a coordinating committee to evaluate federal programs related to serious mental illness (SMI) and provide recommendations to better coordinate services for people with SMI.
- Reauthorizing grants to support integrated care models for primary care and behavioral health care services.
- Reauthorizing and making technical updates to develop and implement programs to divert individuals with a mental illness from the criminal justice system to community-based services.
- Increasing and extending an existing authorization for a grant program for Assisted Outpatient Treatment at SAMHSA.
- Establishing a grant program to maintain or expand assertive community treatment programs for adults with SMI.

The excitement generated by the enactment of the 21st Century Cures Act was soon to be replaced by concern as the Trump administration made repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and reducing Medicaid a priority. The cuts to Medicaid could have disastrous ramifications in New York State as one-third of our budget comes from the federal level. The Cuomo administration addressed the possible Medicaid reduction at the end of 2016 by receiving federal approval to extend its Medicaid waiver for five years, taking it beyond the first term of the current administration and providing much sought-after security to health policymakers.

Early this year, the House of Representatives introduced the American Health Care Act (AHCA), their bill to repeal and replace the ACA. NAMI and other health advocates immediately expressed serious concerns about the AHCA. Among the apprehensions was that the AHCA would reduce funding for health coverage from insurance plans to Medicaid and put mental health care at risk. Under the AHCA, 14 million fewer people would be covered by Medicaid over the next 10 years.

The changes to Medicaid were another major objectionable aspect in the AHCA. Medicaid funding would be replaced with a “per capita cap,” which means states would get a fixed amount of federal funding per person. This would slash federal Medicaid support to states by $880 billion by 2026, forcing states to make unacceptable cuts.

After the House failed in their first attempt to pass the AHCA, they added the controversial “MacArthur Amendment” to the bill. The "MacArthur Amendment" allows states to get waivers allowing health insurance plans to not cover mental health and substance use treatment (also known as letting insurers scrap "essential health benefits") and charge people with a mental illness more. The ACHA was also amended so plans could deny coverage to or charge more for people with pre-existing conditions (including mental illnesses).

The House passed the amended ACHA bill by a slim margin on May 4th. NAMI released the following statement: "NAMI is deeply disappointed that the U.S. House passed the AHCA today by a narrow 217-213 vote. We need more mental health coverage, not less. The AHCA will, instead, have a devastating impact on mental health coverage for the 60 million children and adults in our country who are affected by mental health conditions."

Health advocates were also deeply concerned by the release of President Trump’s budget proposal as it called for deep cuts across the federal budget including serious cuts to the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIH/NIMH). However, Congress reached a budget deal that not only restored the cuts to NIH/NIMH but expanded the Institute’s budget.

Finally, the last major federal development was President Trump nominating Elinore McCance-Katz, MD, as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health & Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (the position created by the 21st Century Cures Act). NAMI praised the choice of Dr. McCance-Katz.

New York State has also seen an eventful legislative session so far. As the session started, NAMI-NYS’s top priorities in our Action Agenda were increasing the availability of community housing with wrap-around support services, extending Kendra’s Law with the hope of making it permanent, and improving the criminal justice-mental illness interface.

Governor Cuomo’s budget proposal had some positive aspects. Among them was $10 million to enhance support for existing residential programs. While this was somewhat positive, NAMI-NYS responded by stating “housing is essential to recovery and $10M is a small investment that fails to address the multiple housing needs for people with serious mental illness.” NAMI-NYS once again participated in housing advocacy coalition consisting of the Association for Community Living of NYS (ACLEYS), the Mental Health Association of NYS (MHANYS), and the New York Association for Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services (NYAPRS). Together we called for $38M annually for the next three years to address the lack of funding for housing.

The budget proposal also contained a small investment in Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) ($500K, one-third of what NAMI-NYS called for) as well as calling for the enactment of the Raise the Age proposal. NAMI-NYS Executive Director, Wendy Burch, and Government Affairs Chair, Irene Turski, both provided testimony at the Joint Budget Hearing for Mental Hygiene to
detail NAMI-NYS's concerns regarding the shortfalls in the Governor's budget proposal. As is tradition, NAMI-NYS's largest projection of our advocacy voice was our annual legislative advocacy day which took place on February 14th. The event was a major success as NAMI-NYS members made more than 75 legislative visits throughout the day. New York State Office for Mental Health (OMH) Commissioner, Dr. Ann Marie Sullivan, and Assembly Mental Health Chair, Aileen Gunther, both spoke at the event. The session saw NAMI-NYS working closely with other mental health advocates. Associate Director for Public Affairs, Matthew Shapiro, presented on CIT at the NYAPRS Legislative Day. Later that day, NAMI-NYS participated in a press conference with our housing coalition to explain why the housing issue is so important for family members.

The largest advocacy coalition NAMI-NYS participated in came together quickly after the state announced that it would be providing funding to support staff members for providers licensed through the New York State Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). The state did not offer the same for the Office of Mental Health or the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS).

NAMI-NYS has made supporting the mental health workforce a priority, as the ability to hire and retain qualified and caring staff is essential to providing continuity of care that is so important to recovery. For three weeks, NAMI-NYS joined advocates from the mental health and substance abuse field in an intense effort which included literally visiting every legislator’s office and calling for supporting the full behavioral health workforce equally. In the end, we were victorious and by next April, the mental health direct workforce will be supported by a 6.5% raise, which mirrors the support to the OPWDD staff. This investment will address a large part of the funding we wanted for housing as it will allow housing providers to better support their employees, thus leading to more stability.

Other victories in the final budget agreement were the funding amount for CIT that NAMI-NYS called for and the enactment of the Raise the Age initiative. As for Kendra’s Law, as we go to print, it looks like the Assisted Outpatient Treatment initiative will be refunded through 2022, but it remains to be seen if it will be made permanent or include several enhancements suggested by OMH.

With all the developments on the state and national level, NAMI-NYS sent out more action alerts than we have in the past. We want to thank all of you who repeatedly answered the call to make your advocacy voice heard.
Eating Disorders: About More Than Food, which explains how eating disorders are real, treatable medical illnesses. They frequently coexist with other illnesses such as depression, substance abuse, or anxiety disorders. Other symptoms can become life-threatening if a person does not receive treatment, which is reflected by anorexia being associated with the highest mortality rate of any psychiatric disorder.

It also details the different disorders and how they are treated.

Schizophrenia, which answers questions many people have about this commonly misunderstood disease. It details the positive, negative and cognitive symptoms of schizophrenia. It discusses the difficult subjects related to the disease such as: “Are people with schizophrenia violent?” as well as how it is tied to substance abuse and suicide. Most importantly, it explains how schizophrenia is treated and how you can help someone with schizophrenia.

Depression: What You Need To Know, which will help readers learn the following four things that everyone should know about depression:

1) Depression is a real illness.
2) Depression affects people in different ways.
3) Depression is treatable.
4) If you have depression, you are not alone.

It also contains information on the signs and symptoms of depression, treatment and support options, and a listing of additional resources. It is intended for informational purposes only and should not be considered a guide for making medical decisions.

How to View e-Books:
To download and view NIMH e-books from the NIMH website (www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/booklets.shtml) on your device:

Kindle: Select Kindle. Use a USB cable to transfer the file to your Kindle.

Smartphone or tablet: Do you have an app for e-books? If so, select ePub to download and view NIMH e-books with your app. If you don’t have an app, select PDF.

Desktop or laptop computer: Free software is available to read e-books on your computer. Adobe Digital Editions is one option for ePub and Calibre is one for Kindle.

M E N T A L  H E A L T H  N O W

Special Episode Featuring

Robert Heinssen, PhD, ABPP, Director,
Division of Services and Intervention Research, National Institute of Mental Health

NAMI-NYS was honored to have Dr. Robert Heinssen, Director, Division of Services and Intervention Research at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), appear as a guest on our television program Mental Health Now. The episode was recorded when Dr. Heinssen was one of the featured speakers at our 2016 Education Conference. In the episode, Dr. Heinssen discusses several NIMH initiatives, the road ahead with new director Dr. Joshua Gordon, NAMI-NYS role as the NIMH Outreach Partner in New York State and how New York State took findings from the NIMH Recovery After Initial Schizophrenic Episode (RAISE) study to introduce the progressive early intervention program OnTrackNY. All episodes of Mental Health Now can be viewed on the media section of our website.
The NAMI NYS Information and Resource Helpline provides information, referrals and support to people living with a mental health condition, family members, caregivers, and mental health providers. We can answer your questions and find resources regarding mental health issues such as support groups and services, education programs, vocational resources, housing/facilities, legal issues/AOT/ACT/Mental Health Courts, Insurance/Medicare/Medicaid/SSI/SSDI, and knowing the symptoms of mental illness, different treatment options along with how to help family members get treatment for their loved ones.

Our team of trained staff, interns and volunteers are available to take your calls, emails and letters Monday - Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm.

We are unable to provide counseling or therapy. We are here to listen. It is always comforting to know you don’t have to go through any situation alone. In case of an emergency, call 911 and/or your local Mobile Crisis Unit.

Being the Resource Coordinator isn’t just about handling the numerous telephone calls requesting help and finding resources each day, but also handling all of the many brochures in the office. To save some of the costs of buying brochures, I have started creating our own brochures covering many of the major mental illnesses. We have new pamphlets on Major Depression, PTSD, OCD, Bipolar, Borderline Personality Disorder, Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder and more. These resources are not just available in print, but also as PDFs, so that you can print them in your own affiliate as needed.

They are available on our website at www.naminys.org, by contacting Christine at 518-462-2000, or email christine@naminys.org. I am always looking for suggestions for pamphlets; please don’t hesitate to send me your ideas for upcoming literature.

Christine Rickeman/NAMI-NYS Information and Resource Helpline Coordinator 1-800-950-6484/christine@naminys.org.
New Membership Structure Coming in July 2017

The NAMI Board of Directors periodically evaluates NAMI’s membership program to ensure that it meets the needs of the organization and its members. This year after a lengthy review and evaluation process that took into consideration your feedback, the Board of Directors has decided to add a Household membership category to our membership structure.

In addition to the Household membership category, the Board has decided to increase the dues for Regular and Open Door memberships. All of these changes will become effective as of July 1, 2017 as outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Membership Dues</th>
<th>National Portion</th>
<th>State Portion</th>
<th>Affiliate Portion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$7</td>
<td>$23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Door</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$1</td>
<td>$2</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some other things to keep in mind:
- A household membership will apply to everyone living in a single household. Regular and Open Door memberships will apply only to one individual.
- For voting purposes, each membership (including Household) will be counted as one (1) membership.
- More information will be forthcoming on changes in NAMI 360 to accommodate this change.

Why become a NAMI Member?

When you join and become a NAMI member, you become a member of your local NAMI affiliate, NAMI New York State, and the NAMI national organization.

Membership benefits include but are not limited to:
- NAMI-NYS bi-yearly printed newsletter
- NAMI-NYS weekly e-news
- E-alerts at the local, state and national levels
- NAMI-NYS Lending Library
- The Advocate magazine
- Access to NAMI’s online community
- Member discounts on NAMI “store” purchase’s at nami.org
- NAMI-NYS Education Conference and other events discount
- Convention registration discounts
- Learn how to advocate in your community
- Up-to-date information on research, medication, and legislative issues
- Voting privileges at the local and state level
- Builds local affiliate voting strength at the NAMI national level
- Be part of the Largest Grassroots Mental Health Organization
- The more members NAMI has, the more of a voice NAMI can provide
- Add your voice to the mental health movement
MEMBERSHIP AND REAFFILIATION NEWS

Re-Affiliation Update  By Tammie Paradis

At the March Board meeting, the NAMI-NYS Board of Directors reaffirmed the re-affiliation deadline of July 31, 2017. Affiliates that have not met the re-affiliation requirements by that date risk being placed on a hold status, which could affect the support that they receive from the NAMI New York State office.

We are here to answer any questions and to help in any way that we can. Please contact us either by phone (518) 462-2000 or by email, tammie@naminys.org. NAMI-NYS would like to remind everyone how important each and every one of the NAMI affiliates is to the community. NAMI-NYS remains concerned about the future of all of our affiliates and will continue to work with everyone to ensure we are able to allow everyone to be successful and continue supporting the NAMI mission.

Here is another overview of the changes the affiliates have made since the re-affiliation process has started. NAMI Boro Park, NAMI Bronx, NAMI Broome, NAMI Chautauqua County, NAMI Cortland, NAMI Ontario, Seneca & Yates, and NAMI St. Lawrence have dissolved. NAMI Manhattan (formerly known as NAMI GLBT) has merged with NAMI NYC Staten Island. NAMI Nassau University Medical Center has merged with NAMI LAMP SW Nassau. NAMI North Country has merged with NAMI Saratoga. At this time, there are a total of 36 NAMI affiliates in New York State.

NAMI-NYS would like to again congratulate the following five affiliates that have completed the re-affiliation process: NAMI Orange County, NAMI Queens Nassau, NAMI Rochester, NAMI Rockland, and NAMI Westchester County.

Some of the reasons NAMI initiated the re-affiliation process are:

■ To ensure consistency throughout the country.
■ NAMI Signature programs must be delivered the same way by all teachers/facilitators/presenters to maintain consistency – an individual attending a support group in one state should receive the same experience as another state.
■ SAMSHA (Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration) has designated Family-to-Family as evidence-based and is evaluating NAMI’s other programs for designation. Therefore, all trainers should be trained in the same way and deliver the programs in adherence to that training. Oversight of these programs is essential to ensuring consistency.

■ Establishing a national identity enables NAMI to reach a wider audience. It does not prohibit affiliates from operating in their communities on a grass roots level.

■ Certain aspects of re-affiliation, such as ensuring insurance coverage, is necessary to protect the affiliates and its members. Without the protection of Directors and Officers and liability insurance, for example, legal action against the affiliate could subject board and members’ own personal assets to legal judgement.

■ To be eligible for most grants, affiliates must be incorporated and have a 501 (c) 3 non-profit status designated by the IRS.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns that you may have regarding re-affiliation.

SUPPORT GROUPS

NAMI Support Groups

One of the most essential services provided by NAMI is support. NAMI support groups have helped millions of people around the country by showing them that they are not alone and providing them the opportunity to share their feelings and struggles. These groups are led by dedicated volunteers who have had similar experiences and can relate to what the participants are going through. Through the years, NAMI has created a unique peer-led model where everyone has the chance to participate. NAMI Family Support Group (FSG) is geared towards family members and friends of those living with mental illness, and NAMI Connections is designed for those living with a mental health condition themselves.

The NAMI-NYS Information and Referral Helpline daily fields calls from people seeking support groups in New York. While there are NAMI Family Support Groups in a good portion of the state, New York has few NAMI Connections groups. We would like to see every area of the state offer support groups for both family members and those living with a mental health condition. Since the needs of those living with a mental illness and the needs of their loved ones can so often differ, being able to offer both NAMI FSG and Connections is ideal. While a combined support group has its benefits, participants may tend to hold back for fear of offending or hurting other attendees. We have heard anecdotes from people with mental illness being hurt by a family member in the group when the family member details struggles with a loved one. The family members are very sensitive to this and often refrain from sharing to avoid offending.

If you have benefitted from a support group, whether you are a family member or a person living with a mental health condition, why not consider becoming a support group leader? As current facilitators can tell you, it is a truly rewarding experience to be able to help others cope with the struggles that mental illness can cause and share resources amongst the group. NAMI-NYS offers trainings for both FSG and Connections.

NAMI-NYS is so grateful to the support group leaders who dedicate their time on a regular basis to help others. You are all truly an inspiration!
## 2017 NAMI-NYS Training Schedule

*Please contact your local affiliate program leaders for more information and how to enroll.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Trainers</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAMI In Our Own Voice Presenter Training</td>
<td>June 24th-25th</td>
<td>Cynthia Scott &amp; Lady Charmaine Day</td>
<td>NAMI-NYS Office, Albany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAMI Family-to-Family Teacher Training</td>
<td>July 14th-16th</td>
<td>Ann Canastra &amp; Cheri Caiella</td>
<td>Comfort Suites, Cicero-Syracuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAMI Homefront Teacher Training</td>
<td>September 16th-17th</td>
<td>Pam Solomon &amp; Geraldine Burton</td>
<td>NAMI-NYS Office, Albany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAMI Family Support Group</td>
<td>September 30th – October 1st</td>
<td>Deniece Chi</td>
<td>NAMI-NYS Office, Albany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAMI Family-to-Family Teacher Training</td>
<td>October 20th-22nd</td>
<td>Patti Sacher &amp; Pam Solomon</td>
<td>NAMI-NYS Office, Albany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NAMI Syracuse Inc. By Mary Gandino**

NAMI Syracuse Children’s Conference, *Mood Disorders: Surviving & Thriving the Ups & Downs*, May 3rd was a resounding success. The Children’s conference was held at the Bishop Harrison Center, Syracuse, a comfortable and convenient location with plenty of parking. The caterers were “Friends of Dorothy” – Nick, Dwayne and Chris. The food was delicious! The speakers were top notch and all donated their time and talent.

Dr. James Demer from Upstate was informative and presented concepts that could be readily understand. His warm, gracious and compassionate manner kept the attendees spellbound. Many commented it was the best talk on mood disorders they had ever heard.

Lacey Roy, a member of the NAMI Syracuse Board, shared her struggles as a child hearing voices and experiencing mood swings. Her story was straight from the heart and helped people understand the internal experience of psychosis. Her loneliness and struggle to be the person her parents wanted her to be brought tears to many of us. She shared how she managed to excel and learn to cope with symptoms that were not relieved with medications. Her triumph is a story she wants to continue to share. She wants to offer hope to others and understanding to families. She is an active speaker on the NAMI speakers bureau. We are grateful she is willing to share her talent and charm with NAMI.

Nicole Semmens provided an entertaining and knowledgeable talk about the Nurtured Heart Approach. She shared her story of working with homeless youth and her own family. She will share more on the NAMI Syracuse website when she does her all day trainings for providers and family members who want to learn more about this compassionate approach.

The day wrapped up with Beckie and Danae Hidy speaking about their journey as a teen with mood disorder and a family searching for answers. This was their first public speaking engagement and they did an incredible job. They have encountered many of the same obstacles and roadblocks families face with schools, mental health services, insurance, residential support and treatment. They have endured and persisted as they seek answers. Their story inspired many.

The day built on information Dr. Demer shared and the presentations complemented each other. When planning conferences it is a challenge to predict if the day will blend together. The conference planners outdid themselves!

NAMI Syracuse is grateful to all the speakers for their generosity and courage.
Training

NAMI Peer-to-Peer Mentor Training
On April 21-23, 2017 NAMI-NYS held NAMI Peer-to-Peer Mentor Training. With a large turnout, we had 15 graduates who are now certified NAMI P2P mentors and are very eager and excited to begin this new chapter in their lives. Everyone left feeling so empowered and found a new sense of purpose within their journey in recovery. A big thank you goes to our great state trainers Donna Israel & Cynthia Scott. Congratulations to all our new NAMI Peer-to-Peer Mentors.

NAMI Train the Trainer – Arlington, VA
NAMI held the national Train the Trainer event in Arlington, VA on April 28 - May 1. This weekend was full of excitement as many from across the country were trained as state trainers in various programs. Eight NAMI-NYS members, who were recommended by their local affiliate and NAMI-NYS, participated and were trained to lead Ending the Silence, Family-to-Family, NAMI Connections and NAMI Family Support Group trainings. NAMI-NYS’s eight new trainers are: Laura DeToia (NAMI Westchester), Alexis Hill (NAMI Mid-Hudson), Sharon Bogart (NAMI-NYC Metro), Patti Sacher (NAMI-NYC Metro), Sharon McCarthy (NAMI Westchester), Audrey McInerney (NAMI Westchester), and Michaela Rizzuto (NAMI Westchester). Thank you for your commitment to NAMI, NAMI-NYS and your dedication to help others.

NAMI Basics Training – Hosted by NAMI Rockland
On April 1-2, 2017, NAMI Rockland was our host affiliate for the NAMI Basics Teachers Training. This weekend, we had 10 participants attend the training and have dedicated their time to learn all they need to go out and lead their classes. Everyone worked extremely hard during the training and it would not have been such a success without our wonderful trainers Deniece Chi & Almarie Tulloch. Thank you to Anne Arias, for helping coordinate the weekend and to NAMI Rockland for being such a great host affiliate. We are very excited to have new NAMI Basics teachers. Congratulations from all of us at NAMI-NYS.

Programs in NAMI Rochester By Beth Winslow-D’Amico

NAMI Rochester finished another successful Family-to-Family course over the winter, led by Vicki Spurr and Jim Mossgraber. A week later, we started the spring class, led by Brenda Steffon and Rose Muir, the second of three Family-to-Family classes scheduled for this year. Our latest Peer-to-Peer class also started in April, led by Louise Windig and Andrea Moracco.

A NAMI Homefront class led by Bill Perun and Julie Borgen was held as part of a collaboration with the Department of Veteran Affairs. The class was held at the Vet Center in Rochester, with another class expected to take place there in the fall. NAMI Rochester will also be attending the 2017 VA Mental Health Summit at Nazareth College in May. The purpose of the Summit is to showcase the collaboration between the VA and their community partners as well as the resources that are available within these entities that benefit Veterans and their families.

A Connection and Family Support Group Facilitator Training was held in March at NAMI Rochester. Eight new Family Support Group facilitators were certified, along with four new Connection facilitators. Our next training at NAMI Rochester is scheduled to be in June for In Our Own Voice, led by Bill Perun and Chris Wasilenko.

NAMI Rochester will be the beneficiary of proceeds from an upcoming community fundraiser, Unmask Stigma, created by Kara Passamonte, will take place on June 1st and feature an evening of essays, music, poetry, and comedy, to benefit NAMI Rochester. Kristina Mossgraber, NAMI Rochester's Special Event Coordinator, will perform at the event, which will be emceed by NAMI Rochester’s Program Coordinator, Beth Winslow-D’Amico.
Support Group Training

On June 3-4, 2017, NAMI-NYS held our first combined Support Group Training. This training consisted of both the family member and consumer. The training was a huge success. Feedback from the participants showed they all were able to benefit from each experience shared throughout the group. Having a combined training allowed us at NAMI-NYS to see how important we all are, that we can learn from one another, and most importantly understanding our differences is important in our journey through recovery. To learn more about our Family Support Group and Connections Support Group, contact your local affiliate.

NAMI Basics

NAMI Rensselaer is happy to announce the completion of the NAMI Basics class. The class was held March 9th through April 13th led by Mary Crowley and Paul Klein. This class was a great experience for all and friendships made. They are currently holding a Family-to-Family Class which started April 21st and will be holding graduation class 12 on July 3rd.

NAMI-NYS Participates in CIT Training Organized by Albany County

On Tuesday, January 17th, NAMI-NYS Associate Director for Public Affairs Matthew Shapiro took part in the first CIT type training offered to cadets at the Albany Police Academy. NAMI-NYS applauds the Albany County and the Albany Police Department for their commitment to providing their officers with the tools to best handle interactions with people living with a mental illness and their families. NAMI-NYS believes all police need this training and providing it as part of academy training is a very progressive initiative. We thank Lt. Flack of the Albany Police Department for including us in the training to offer the perspective of people living with a mental illness and their families and what they experience during a crisis.

On Friday, May 26th, NAMI-NYS was honored to once again be asked by Albany County to participate in a Crisis Intervention Team training. Associate Director of Public Affairs Matthew Shapiro participated in a panel that offered the perspective of individuals living with a mental illness and family members. Matthew discussed the importance of listening to family members’ insights when intervening and explained that when they are interacting with family members during a crisis that they are encountering family members during a traumatic period and to be sensitive of that. Since police from the SUNY Campus attended, Matthew also discussed how symptoms of many severe mental illnesses first present during the ages of 18-25 and how coupling this fact with the lack of adequate mental health services on many college campuses may force campus police into a unique role in helping generate the best outcomes for students experiencing a mental illness. In all, 29 officers participated in the training representing the Albany Police Department, the SUNY Police, correction officers and the Watervliet and Cohoes Police Departments.

NAMI-NYS thanks Katie Flanigan from Albany County and Lt. Willie Flack from the Albany Police Department for inviting us to participate.
Marcy Rose MHA Advocate of the Year

Marcy Rose, former President of NAMI Buffalo & Erie County and Board member of NAMI NYS was honored with the Mental Health Association of Erie County Advocate of the year award on April 12th, 2017 at their annual dinner.

As a teacher for our Family-to-Family class for over ten years, Marcy provides continuing inspiration to others so they may train to become teachers. She recognizes others’ gifts and leadership potential and actively encourages them; to join, participate, and lead so NAMI can continue its legacy to educate, advocate for, and support families coping with a loved one’s serious mental illness.

Marcy has given countless hours taking calls from, and responding to families desperately seeking answers on how to provide support and care for an ill loved one. She is generous in sharing her own family’s experience, helping to break the stigma, and pain so often present and discouraging to families when mental illness strikes.

The following are some of her many contributions to NAMI:
- A Champion for Kendra’s Law.
- Speaking with school and community groups about mental illness.
- Teacher for our Family-to-Family class for over 10 years
- Teacher trainer for Family-to-Family
- Taught Homefront for veterans in a pilot program as 1 of only 6 States across the country.
- Advocating for the Western New York Children’s Psychiatric Center
- Presenting regularly to CIT trainees (Crisis Intervention Team) and trainees at the police academy, sharing her personal experiences about advocating for a loved one with mental illness.
- Initiated a collaboration with Erie County Medical Center in 2015 by sharing our speaker, Sam Cochran, the founder of CIT training for police and other first responders.
- Provided the sole invited testimony at the hearing for the appointment of a new Commissioner of Mental Health for Erie County

NAMI Otsego County News By Kate Hewlett & Amanda Miles

On April 6, 2017 at SUNY Oneonta, NAMI Otsego County hosted its annual Spring program with the title “Fear and Hard Conversations” that was organized by Amanda Miles. A short TED talk was shown about the dangers of hiding in a closet and the importance of having those hard conversations.

One Speaker, Stephanie Poplock, spoke about cognitive distortions and mind reading. She shared a personal family experience and explained how one of the dangers of mind reading is that it feeds into the belief that we know how others will receive our story. Another Speaker, Kate Hewlett, shared her personal story as an example of the importance of staying true to yourself in the face of a psychiatric diagnosis. She talked about the need to be direct with your providers and your family, be unapologetic as you advocate to get the best treatment that works for you, and to remember that just because you have a psychiatric diagnosis, you are not the diagnosis. The event had a great turnout and had lots of wonderful questions and comments from the community leading into a great discussion.

We decided that it is important for community based organizations to understand who NAMI Otsego is, and pursuing community participation and engagement is the best way to make it happen. This has helped with an increase in our membership. We did some outreach where we played games and gave out NAMI Otsego T-shirts as prizes. We have also provided information booths at different events, including Family Service Associations “Love the Life you Live” Women’s Expo, OH-Fest (SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College street fair), and Family Resource Networks “Resiliency Fair.” We look forward to working with other community based organizations to help educate others about mental health, wellness, and the importance of fighting stigma.

An In Our Own Voice presentation, by Kate Hewlett, was held at First Presbyterian Church in Cooperstown, NY, May 18, 2017, to celebrate Mental Health Month. We look forward to an exciting and busy summer!

Social Media

Website: www.naminy.org  NAMINewYorkState  @NAMINEWYORK
NAMI Schenectady’s Jail Team

NAMI Schenectady hosted a panel highlighting a program at the Schenectady County Jail. The panel participants, a team consisting of social workers, peer mentors and probation officers, are working with the inmates to assist them to turn their lives around. The inmates they engage typically have either mental illness, substance abuse issues or were homeless before they became embroiled in the criminal justice system.

Team members acting as peer mentors meet face to face with the inmates (they prefer to call them participants) in groups and individually. They talk in the jail library with a men’s group every Tuesday and the women on Fridays. The leaders’ job is to discuss with them how they can turn their lives around, how they can get help to stay out of trouble when they are released from jail, and to give them hope of a better life. The idea is that too often young people make mistakes and they can be helped to avoid them and reduce the recidivism that oppresses people in these situations.

The team has additional roles with this population in helping to enlist them for drug court and both city and county alternative treatment courts, and then following their progress in these courts. They address the immediate needs of these individuals, talking about jobs on the outside, and lining them up for drug recovery, mental health clinic and PROS programs. They connect them to housing through Mohawk Opportunities, Rehabilitation Support Services and the YMCA, as well as the county Social Services and Probation.

The team enlists the use of the sequential intercept mapping model, working to identify points where offenders can be diverted from incarceration into treatment. A crucial component is collaboration with the alternative treatment court (ATC) in Schenectady County, which addresses the unique problems of individuals with mental health or substance issues.

The panelists explained that the treatment court is for someone committed to treatment versus doing time in jail. It is usually a one-year term for the misdemeanor ATC program but felony ATC can extend up to three years. The judge can refer people with a diagnosis to the program. The program is voluntary, the individual is supervised by a probation officer, must stay on the prescribed medication and follow through with sanctions. Some can do an overnight or weekend in jail if they stumble. Every two weeks the team reviews the people in the program.

The program has met with success, but the panel admits that there is still much to be done to reform the criminal justice system. The team finds the jail short on medical services. The wait is significant—people may wait a week or longer for meds. The jail contracts with Correctional Medical Corporation (CMC) for medical services, providing two social workers, nurses and a part-time psychiatrist who may only come once a week or less. Ellis Hospital also provides a mental health social worker to help with the discharge process. Hometown Health supplies prescriptions. Medicaid doesn’t pay for medication or other health care for jail inmates, leaving the expense to the county.

The panel emphasized this omission, also posing the question of why they can’t bring treatment into the jail rather than wait till the person gets out.

NAMI Sullivan County

NAMI Sullivan County, NY took Sullivan County by storm during Mental Health Month, covering more area this year than last with our Ribbon Campaign to raise awareness about mental health. Over six dozen ribbons were placed in many areas around Sullivan County, including (pictured) at each entrance to Catskill Regional Medical Center, as well as post offices, businesses in many of the townships, libraries, village halls, and SUNY Sullivan. We even had requests from two of our local newspapers, the Sullivan County Democrat in Callicoon and the River Reporter in Narrowsburg who wanted to display ribbons outside their offices!

Thanks to staff and Board members for covering so much area, and especially to Board Member, Marie Buckstad who made the bulk of the ribbons.
Breaking Out of the Box Rather than Thinking Outside the Box.
By Tina Yun Lee, Executive Director, NAMI Mid-Hudson

How many times do we hear that nonprofits need to “Think Outside the Box” to increase visibility and achieve sustainability? At NAMI Mid-Hudson, we have found that a more effective approach is to ‘Break Out of The Box’ and to have the courage to innovate, think differently about the work we do, and how to be inclusive in our mission and vision.

NAMI Mid-Hudson has found that in order to standout among peer organizations, so as to capture the attention of our potential investors, we needed to change how we communicate our impact and how we raise funds. We need to “universalize” our message and not pigeonhole ourselves. Instead of approaching the community solely with our mission to support families and individuals living with mental health conditions, we changed our verbiage to bring mental wellness to our community with a tag line of: Healthy Minds = Healthy Communities.

This year, Ulster County Mike Hein recognized that the NAMI NYS Ribbon Campaign was a bold and innovative move to support his initiative to be the “Healthiest County in New York”.

Hein proclaimed May is Mental Health Awareness Month in Ulster and also requested NAMI bows to be tied at his County Office.

NAMI Mid-Hudson also invited legislators such as the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council Chairwoman, Natasha Cherry and Common Council Legislator: Christopher Petsas to come out and tie ribbons at City Hall. NAMI Mid-Hudson took the opportunity to talk about hard core issues of substance and opioid abuse, minority mental health, and youth incarceration and how NAMI Programs help support wellness in the City of Poughkeepsie.

Many nonprofits are fundraising for and communicating their mission in much the same way they were decades ago even though funding partners are transitioning from the traditional approaches of grant making to a model that embraces social investment.

This year, we added an additional component to our Annual Walk: a Wellness Expo hosted by Health Alliance Hospitals and Midhudson Regional Hospital Medical to again emphasize the importance of prioritizing mental health and wellness in our communities and to support organizations like NAMI because we provide the educational and support infrastructure for wellness to illness to recovery.

In conjunction with our traditional annual Walk, NAMI Mid-Hudson focused on ‘mini’ fundraisers and workshops throughout the year instead of just during the month of May with the same objectives of raising funds and awareness to target particular populations such as youth, the elderly, and educators.

Judy Walker, a NAMI Mid-Hudson Basics teacher and a pre-school school teacher at the Community Nursery School held a fundraiser for NAMI Mid-Hudson to highlight Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week and focus on the importance of Children’s Mental Health at their school. Plants donated by a local nursery for the fundraiser and a resource table featuring County Resources and NAMI’s programs was available for the children and families. Judy also wanted to help eradicate the stigma surrounding mental health conditions and let parents know it is appropriate to talk about with their child’s teachers. Judy stated, “A child’s best chance at success in school is when the child, teacher and parents are all working together. Clearly, we need to begin doing this as soon as a child enters a school setting, even as young as preschool. As early childhood educators, we know mental health plays just as important of a role as physical and emotional health in our students. We have the ability to start teaching mental wellness habits at the very start of their school careers. Looking back on my own daughter’s school experience, I wish I had been educated earlier on how to look for “warning signs” of a mental health condition. If I had known what to look for, or who I could have turned to for guidance; I may have been able to get her the help she needed at a younger age.”

Recently, Avalon Assisted Living Director, Melissa Madison reached out to NAMI Mid-Hudson. Madison’s goal was to increase mental health literacy among her staff and also raise some funds for our NAMI programs. NAMI Mid-Hudson presented a NAMI Mid-Hudson signature presentation: “Minds Matter: Raising Mental Health Awareness in Our Community” and Ending the Silence to over 40 staff members and Directors about the importance of mental wellness not only for their clients but also in themselves. Participants responded that they not only gained knowledge of mental health, the warning signs, and community resources; but also a new perspective of how to be more effective, compassionate and empathetic to their patients. Madison has asked us to present to their other staff members and Directors at their other facilities.

In November, NAMI Mid-Hudson will be hosting another mini fundraiser via an educational workshop with Dr. Ross Greene. Offering this workshop

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to the community as a community investment has sparked an interest for not only several school districts and their educators and clinicians but also pediatricians and their staff in our community.

Several pediatric groups have approached NAMI Mid-Hudson to work together to bring mental wellness to their patients and their families. We presented our NAMI Programs from a perspective of overall wellness both physical and mental. NAMI Mid-Hudson focused on catching mental health conditions at the ‘pink’ flag stage as opposed to the ‘red’ flag stage and reaching both physical and mental milestones instead of the traditional focus on physical hygiene.

Over the next few months, NAMI Mid-Hudson will be working with local restaurants and bakeries and holding a rock concert to raise funds and awareness.

NAMI Mid-Hudson also sees this shift to present our NAMI programs and services in a way that potential investors are able to understand not only the immediate impact of their investment, but the potential returns in the future.

NAMI Mid-Hudson approached the Kiwanis Club of Dutchess County to talk about mental wellness and the connection between mental health and the Opioid Epidemic that is affecting communities across the nation and how both of our organizations can partner in future projects such as providing Narcan trainings and public forums. As one Kiwanis board member recognized that: “NAMI is the step before drug usage and suicide.” The board members felt that NAMI Mid-Hudson was a solid investment because it provided a message of prevention and overall wellness.

Changing how NAMI affiliates speak about our programs is another way of breaking out of the box. For example, when approaching schools to discuss Ending the Silence, we have shifted our description from a program about mental illness to Ending the Silence as a mental health literacy program that empowers and supports good citizenship skills in their students: If you see something, to say something and to potentially save your own or a peer’s life. We have had no push back from any school district once we changed our verbiage.

In a National Student Survey, the top reason why college students drop out is because of mental health issues. Mental health issues are a leading impediment to academic success among college students. Untreated mental illness in the college student population— including depression, anxiety and eating disorders—is associated with lower GPA and higher probability of dropping out of school. The cost of college attrition not only hurts the students but also the colleges and universities. Local colleges are reaching out to NAMI Mid-Hudson to reduce these numbers of student drop outs. NAMI Mid-Hudson is pursuing an opportunity to hold a Peer-to-Peer on campus at SUNY Dutchess for this Fall. Working with the Counseling Service and the Human Service Department, the college has embraced Peer to Peer as a diversion program to encourage students to stay well and stay in school.

Peer to Peer will primarily be focused as a seminar class to those students in the Human Service Department and those using the Counseling Department services. The reach goal is to have Peer to Peer as a credit class. Both college departments have acknowledged the importance of peer support on campus especially those with a mental health condition and see the benefit of Peer-to-Peer. A reach goal is also starting a NAMI Connections group on campus.

We are all too familiar with the consequences of untreated serious mental illnesses. Mental illnesses costs Americans over $193 billion in lost earnings each year. Additionally, those with a mental health condition have the highest student dropout rate among any other disability group, are more prone to homelessness, chronic health conditions, and criminal justice activity.

This is why we NAMI Affiliates continue to do what we do, and we must continue to correctly message our investors that the return of his/her commitment to NAMI is not only a personal investment but a community and societal commitment. The promotion and preservation of mental wellness is a basic human right that we all should have access to regardless of race, socio-economic or gender.

NAMI needs to not only be the voice on mental illness, but the face of mental wellness and recovery.

NAMI Rensselaer

In May, NAMI Rensselaer County participated in the Ribbon Campaign for Mental Health Awareness Month to Help Stomp out the Stigma.

We have added two new support groups to the Capital Region to better serve our local individuals in need of support. On the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month we now offer a Family Support Group at the Church of Latter Day Saints, 420 New Scotland Ave, Albany. And on the 4th Thursday of each month, we have a NAMI Connection Group that meets at SUNYA School of Health, One University Place, Rensselaer, along with our previous Family Support Group on the 1st and the 3rd Wednesday of each month at SUNYA School of Health, One University Place, Rensselaer.

Lastly we want to welcome Heide Garner as our newest Member to the NAMI Rensselaer County Board. We will miss having Bettye Zerunge as a member of our board, and wish her much luck on her move to Louisiana.
NAMI Queens/Nassau holds Suicide Prevention Workshop
By Jeannette Wells, NAMI Queens Nassau F2F Coordinator

The Suicide Prevention Workshop held on April 17, 2017 at Rochdale Village Community Center, Jamaica NY, went very well. The event was well attended with about 50 people. A young 26 year old man suffering with anxiety jumped from the 12th floor balcony on February 14, 2017. Days after the event, I was approached by The Rochdale Community Center to do a workshop for the grieving community, to which I consented.

Now the RVCC and NAMI are partners. We plan to collaborate on a variety of different subjects each month with a mental health component. They intend to give us space for a Family to Family class in the fall of 2017.

We had tables with information from the Vet Center in Queens, the most active center in the nation. NAMI Queens/Nassau also had a table of suicide and mental health pamphlets. Administration for Children Services also had a table of suicide information.

Members of the Greater Springfield Community Church was also in attendance as their church also was deeply impacted by their member's death by suicide.

The panel consisted of Rev. Val Gittens, who spoke on the spiritual and cultural aspects of suicide; she was excellent. Panelist Dr. Lakisha Homer, a New York State Psychologist, informed the audience of the risks, signs and symptoms of Suicide and what to do in a crisis. Mrs. Carmen Moxom, a Vet and Nurse Administrator, shared her testimony as a survivor and how her faith saved and blessed her life. Another panel member, Mr. John Johnson, was another suicide survivor, also a NAMI IIOV speaker, who now is the director of The Boys and Girl Club in Brooklyn. He also depended on his faith and prayer for all his success in life. The last panel speaker, a different Mr. John Johnson, a Chaplain, NAMI F2F facilitator, and Vietnam Vet, gave the audience a perspective on how Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome affects some veterans when they return home and where to get help.

Monica Johnson's dance troupe of 15 girls performed “Break Every Chain,” a really beautiful and moving performance. GAC Evangelist Carolyn Clemens gave the invocation and a brief preaching, and Rev. Gonzalez gave the “Where Do We Go From Here” speech, a charge of action, and an ending prayer. As MC, I kept the program moving along. We received “excellent” in all areas on the surveys. Because of these deaths by suicide and our community response and involvement, we have the biggest request for F2F course in history. Now 45 people are taking our class from June through August at The Greater Allen Cathedral of New York, Jamaica NY 11434. We plan to cut the class in half and plan to have two F2F teams run the classes simultaneously.

Our next program is on Wednesday, May 17, 2017 at 6-9 pm, Stop the Violence Issues and Solutions against Bullying & Gang Violence seminar and workshop.

It was a great experience to share resources with the Jamaica Queens community.

NAMI Queens/Nassau Leaders Raise Awareness

NAMI Queens/Nassau had a busy spring, with several advocacy/outreach events. One interesting tool NAMI Q/N has developed is a What is Mental Illness? questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to promote conversation with questions like “What causes mental illness?” and “Would you rather tell a friend you were in jail or a mental hospital?” The affiliate introduced the questionnaire at a tabling event at Hofstra University. It yielded productive discussions about mental illness and an opportunity for the affiliate to educate the participants. In addition to several tabling events in the affiliate’s area, NAMI Q/N was able to reach the community through presentations at Oceanside High School, Zucker Hillside Hospital and Temple Israel. NAMI Q/N President Janet Susin and Co-Vice President Ellen Victor also appeared on Ellen’s radio show, Special Needs Long Island, to promote the services NAMI Q/N offers. NAMI Q/N also found time to co-sponsor a suicide prevention event with the Rochdale Community Center.
Three years ago, in recognition of Bebe Campbell Moore Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, we started our community mental health fair—NAMI C.A.R.E.S. (Community Advocacy, Resources, Education, & Services). Each year, we look for neighborhood organizations to partner with. This deepens our connection to these neighborhoods, and allows us to introduce our audience to those organizations who they may not know. There are medical and mental health screenings, presentations on information relevant to that unique community, family-friendly activities, and of course, free swag.

In 2015, we went to East Harlem. In 2016, we went to Washington Heights. This year we’re heading to the Lower East Side. These photos are from last year’s fair. The space was lovely (and air-conditioned!), and we heard many people say how glad they were to learn about all of these options nearby. Arlene and Sonja gave an In Our Own Voice presentation. And we set up a “What’s your ‘recovery’ word?” photo booth (which staff enjoyed as well!).

This year’s NAMI C.A.R.E.S. will be held on Saturday July 22, from 12 to 4 pm, at the Chinatown YMCA. Sign up on our website to receive our email, and get more info!

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**Outreach at Stewart Airport – Y2Kids**

Y2K event is organized by Orange Ulster BOCES in Orange County. It is a school career day or field trip for students & school staff from different school districts. Many Agencies and organizations throughout the county participates in this event in order to share with young people what their company or agency does every day and are willing to share their expertise with young people.

Audience include girls and boys ages 9 to 14 or Middle/Junior High School levels (Grades 5 through 9). More than 2,000 kids, teachers and parents participate in this program.
**Putnam County Awareness Walk**

NAMI Putnam sponsored the Fourth Annual Putnam County Awareness Walk on Saturday, May 6th. The walk began at the Carmel Fire House on Gleneida Avenue in Carmel, New York with the participation of our County Executive, MaryEllen Odell, County Judge James Reitz, Councilman Frank Lombardi, as well as officers, members and supporters of NAMI Putnam.

The Pledge of Alliance was led by Dale Cusak, Chairman of the Putnam County Joint Veterans Council, in front of the Historical Putnam County Court House. We were proud to display our NAMI Ribbons on the four columns of the Court House and our Stigma Free Banner.

**NAMIWalks Rochester 2017** By Kristina Mossgraber

The threat of inclement weather didn’t stop over 700 people from coming out to the Village Gate Square on Saturday, May 6 for the fifth annual NAMIWalks Rochester! Featuring a drum circle led by professional music therapists, complimentary chair massages, face painters, community partners, a raffle and remarks by the Monroe County Sheriff, this year’s walk offered something for everyone. The sheriff reiterated the importance of law enforcement working together with the mental health community – a very relevant and important topic in today’s climate. A tribute to Gary Stern, who with his wife Marcia brought the walk to Rochester through their personal generosity was a special part of the opening ceremony. Gary, who was also the owner of Village Gate where the walk is held each year, passed away in November 2016, and is deeply missed by NAMI Rochester and the community at large.

Over $95,000 was raised to support NAMI Rochester’s signature programs and support offerings in the five surrounding counties. A record breaking 75 teams participated, with much of the total dollars coming from the peer to peer fundraising efforts of participants. Proceeds of the event will allow NAMI Rochester to continue growth efforts to meet the increased need from the region, in particular the Ending the Silence program delivered at the middle and high school level many school districts in numerous counties.

Feedback from participants has been very positive, including this statement from a Family to Family participant that joined the movement this year - "Our family participated for the first time this year, and I wanted to share with you that I thought everything was excellent—remarks (nice to see that commitment from law enforcement), drummers, massages and basically an overall great feeling."

**NAMIWalks NYC 2017**

*Walk Day was awesome! We didn’t let a little rain get us down!*

On Saturday, May 13, NAMIWalks NYC celebrated our eleventh anniversary Walk/Run.

Thousands of caring and compassionate walkers from across the tri-state area gathered at the South Street Seaport Promenade to cross the Brooklyn Bridge, with Grand Marshal, The King of Walk, Darryl DMC McDaniels, inspiring us all. It rained—a lot—but spirits were high, and the energy of the community gathered was invigorating. Our generous walkers have raised over $560,000 so far, and we’re on our way to reach our goal of $600,000. This year, we added an Advocacy Station, where we provided pre-addressed postcards to send to Senators Gillibrand and Schumer, and President Trump, in support of the ACA. We brought the rest back to the office and ask people in our classes and support groups to sign them. Despite the rain, it was a wonderful day!

“If you don’t reveal what you feel, you can never heal! If you remove the guilt and shame, you remove the pain!” – King of Walk, Darryl DMC McDaniels.

Front of the postcard to Senator Gillibrand

**NAMI Mid-Hudson**

Closing out May as Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI Mid-Hudson along with Mental Health America of Dutchess County held their 5th Annual Stomp Out the Stigma Walk at the Walkway Over the Hudson, Poughkeepsie NY. Over 350 people attended the event. Dutchess County Executive Marcus Molinaro, Legislator Micki Strawinski, and Senator Sue Serino spoke about the importance of peer support and the stigma surrounding mental illness and addiction issues and to see the humanity in all individuals.

The walk also included a Health and Wellness expo sponsored by the Health Alliance Hospitals and MidHudson Regional Hospitals with other community partners and agencies highlighting services for the Veterans, Children, and the homeless population.