President Obama Signs Veterans Suicide Prevention Act

After being held up by a single Senator last year, the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans (SAV) Act passed both houses of Congress unanimously and was signed by President Obama. Along with veteran service organizations and the military and veteran communities, NAMI supporters rallied to advocate for this significant legislation.

The Clay Hunt, SAV Act was named in honor of Clay Hunt a marine who served our country honorably. After serving multiple tours, Clay volunteered in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake. He then focused on helping other veterans, who like himself were dealing with conditions such as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression. Tragically Clay died by suicide in 2011 like the 22 veterans who die by suicide each day.

This law is designed to expand suicide prevention programs at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in the following ways:

- Streamline the transition for exiting service members
- Enhance peer support for troubled veterans
- Implement a mandatory annual survey of VA mental health and suicide prevention programs
- Recruit psychiatrists into the VA

Clay dedicated himself to helping others. We hope this law will continue his efforts as an important step in addressing the mental health of our veterans and service members. From the nami.org website.

Meet some of NAMI GC’s newest people!

Meet our New Multicultural Outreach Specialist, Autra M. Dozier. Autra was born and raised in Cleveland and received her BS Degree from David N. Myers College in 2009. Autra has chosen to work in the mental health field because her father had bipolar disorder. She began working with NAMI GC in 2013 as a volunteer and has participated in the community mental health workshops as well as our Fresh Friday events. We are thrilled to have Autra as our newest staff member!

ADVOCACY UPDATES

Governor’s Budget Proposal FY 2016-2017

HB 64, the 2 year operating budget, was introduced in February. Changes to how taxes are collected proposed by Governor Kasich as well as proposed Medicaid eligibility changes are of interest to us.

Marijuana Legalization Campaign

Responsible Ohio is proposing a ballot initiative to legalize personal use of marijuana for those 21 and over, and make the medical version available to people with debilitating medical conditions in the amount of an ounce or less. There are two other proposals regarding marijuana that are being considered.

Exemption From the Death Penalty Defendants With Serious Mental Illness

We along with NAMI Ohio will be following a legislative proposal to exempt from the death penalty defendants who, at the time of the offense, had a serious mental illness that significantly impaired their capacity to (a) exercise rational judgment in relation to conduct, (b) to conform their conduct to the requirements of law, or (c) to appreciate the nature, consequences or wrongfulness of their conduct.

Help us go green! Would you like to receive The Voice as an e-newsletter only? Email: jaroff-logsdon@namicleveland.org
NEWS & NOTES FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MICHAEL BASKIN

Board Updates
Board Director, Ben Miladin took over as Chair of the Fund Development Committee which will merge with the Marketing Committee. They met on March 11th for the first time as a joint committee to determine a plan for increasing NAMI’s visibility and sustaining financial growth.

The Program Committee met in February to learn about 2014 program results, plan for programming in 2015, and to learn more about how we evaluate our services.

NAMI Ohio Conference April 24-25: A Matter of Life, Strife or Death
We hope to see you at the NAMI Ohio Conference at the Hyatt Regency in Columbus. For details go to: namiohio.org.

Best Wishes for a Speedy Recovery to Elliot and Ruth Myers
Well wishes go out to longtime Support Group Leaders Elliot and Ruth Myers who have both been ill and are recovering. Both Elliot and Ruth have facilitated the family group that meets weekly on Thursday nights at JFSA Beachwood since the 1990s.

The 2015 NAMI National Convention: Come Find Your Heart In San Francisco
July 6-9, San Francisco, CA. Look for us there! Our Mental Health Workshop is a unique model, developed within the Multicultural Outreach Program by Marsha Mitchell-Blanks, Program Director at NAMI GC and providers Renita Allen, Dr. Natalie Whitlow, all of whom will be presenting at the conference.

Medical Advisory Board
We met on March 12 at Skylight Tower where Dr. Farah Munir was introduced as our new Chairperson. Dr. Munir led a discussion regarding the makeup of the Medical Advisors, as well as future participation and goals for the group.

SPOTLIGHT ON EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY
The Woodruff Foundation has been a significant partner and contributor to NAMI GC since our inception in 2005.

The Woodruff Foundation was founded in 1986 to enhance and support the development and delivery of mental health services in Cuyahoga County. Woodruff Foundation’s work addresses behavioral health with a focus on: treatment, research, education, and coordination of resources in the community. Many thanks to Christin Slesh, President of Foundation Management Services, for her work over the years in assisting with support for NAMI GC’s Community Education programs.

We welcome the new chair of our Medical Advisory Board, Dr. Farah Munir, as well as our Multicultural Outreach Specialist, Autra Dozier. See more about both of them on pages 1 and 3. Finally, see advocacy updates on issues of interest to members on page 1.

Enjoy Spring,

Michael, March 2015
mbaskin@namicleveland.org

Have you also Experienced A Traumatic Event that has caused lingering effects like anxiety, insomnia or nightmares?

If so, you may want to volunteer for our clinical research study of an investigational new drug.

Our research study is for those who have served or are currently serving in the ARMED FORCES, LAW ENFORCEMENT or as a MILITARY CONTRACTOR.

Study participants’ information is confidential. Study-drug and study-related medical care are provided at no cost. Other compensation may also be available.

For more information, call 216-844-3922
Tell us a little about your professional experience and specialties.

- I received my undergraduate degree in Psychology at Northwestern University and my medical degree from University of North Texas Health Sciences Center.
- I completed my adult psychiatry residency at the Cleveland Clinic 2002-2006 and served as chief resident 2005-2006. Many years later, I completed the CWRU fellowship in Public and Community Psychiatry.
- I am Board-Certified in General Adult Psychiatry.
- I joined the Psychiatry faculty at University Hospitals, CWRU School of Medicine in 2006.
- I am a fellow of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and a past recipient of the APA Public and Community Fellowship award. I am currently the president of the Cleveland Psychiatric Society (CPS).

Clinical Roles
- Recovery Resources and The Centers
- Oberlin College Counseling
- The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland
- Outpatient and inpatient adult psychiatry services at University Hospitals Case Medical Center and UH Richmond Medical Center

Mental Health Administrative
- Past: Medical Director at Recovery Resources – provided oversight over the medical/somatic department.
- Current: Chief Wellness Officer at The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland – provide oversight over all clinical operations (dental, behavioral health and medical departments) of the health center

Educational Roles
- Clinical education of University Hospitals/CWRU psychiatry residents
- Associate Director of the CWRU Fellowship in Public and Community Psychiatry

Do you have any hobbies or pets?
- Hobbies – Cooking, hiking, reading. If I hadn't opted to become a physician, I think I would have enjoyed going to culinary school!
- Pets – My husband Brad and I serve as the full-time staff for two unbelievably pampered cats: Tigger, a striped Tabby and Cartman, a Seal Point Siamese.

What do you think are the most critical current issues in mental health care?

There are so many, I am sure my list does not do this question justice. However, here are some issues which I feel have been on my mind a great deal in the recent past:
- Suicide education, awareness and prevention
- Early intervention and prevention efforts for severe and persistent mental illness
- Team based care models and the role of BH in patient centered medical home
- Integration of primary and behavioral health care
- Mental health workforce development
- Social determinants of health
- Mental health disparities
- Need for improved access to all types of recovery-oriented treatment modalities
- Genetics, neuroscience and translational research
- Opiate epidemic
- Link between mental wellness and physical wellbeing
- Dementia research and management
- Making the business case for increased use of evidence based practices in mental health

How did you become aware of NAMI and what inspired you to become more involved?

I've been aware of NAMI since I was in college and have been a supporter and/or walker for NAMIWalks in Greater Cleveland for many years. NAMI is a profoundly influential organization and has an established track record of galvanizing grass roots support to improve the lives of so many individuals. I feel fortunate to be able to contribute to the efforts locally in some small way.

How would you summarize your vision of the Medical Advisory Board supporting NAMI GC's work and mission?

I believe that the MAB can be of help to NAMI GC's work and mission by offering support in the following areas:
- Fundraising & Advocacy
- Education- pharmacological and non-pharmacological
- Participation in outreach and awareness campaigns
- Partnerships with other non-profit organizations and professional/trade groups and in-kind support for NAMI activities
- Social Media and other interactive means of communication between individuals/families and providers
- Expanding the type of professionals to better represent the evolving psychiatric workforce
Programming at NAMI GC is thriving! Along with our 18 Support Groups (9 each for Peers, 9 for Family/Caregivers and growing), we are conducting mental health workshops through our MCO department in the Terrace Towers and Kingsbury housing complexes, visiting five different hospitals weekly through our Hospital Network Program and spreading the word about mental health through our Bridges of Hope initiative. And that’s just a sampling!

**Upcoming Community Events**

**Malley’s Candy Sales**
Malley’s Candy is a special treat at every spring holiday or a great hostess gift, and a portion of every sale benefits NAMIWalks 2015. Deadline for online orders is March 30. Go to [www.malleys.com/nami-greatercleveland](http://www.malleys.com/nami-greatercleveland).

**NAMI Greater Cleveland’s 2015 Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony**
Monday, April 20
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Windows on the River, 2000 Sycamore Street
Complimentary Parking
Guest Speaker: Senator Sherrod Brown

Make your reservation online by going to [www.namicleveland.org](http://www.namicleveland.org) or by phone 216-875-0266.

**April 12-18th is National Volunteer Appreciation week!** Look for more information as it gets closer!

**NAMI Ohio Conference**
April 24-25
Hyatt Regency, 350 N. High Street, Columbus, OH
Keynote Speaker: Chicago’s Cook County Sherriff Thomas J. Dart, presenting “The Shameful Criminalization of Mental Illness in the Midwest and Beyond”
For more information and to register visit [namiohioconference2015.eventbrite.com](http://namiohioconference2015.eventbrite.com).

**NAMI Walks 2015 Kick-Off Luncheon**
Wednesday, June 24
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Slovenian National Home, 6409 St. Clair Ave.

**May is Mental Health Month:** look for information and events as it gets closer on our website and social media.

**July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. Fresh Friday**
Friday, July 31
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Warrensville Branch of the Cuyahoga County Library
4415 Northfield Center Road, Warrensville Heights

**NAMIWalks 2015**
Goal: $154,000
Saturday, August 29
Registration: 9 a.m., Walk begins @ 10 a.m.
Edgewater Park

**50/50 Raffle Benefits NAMIWalks**
Tickets are now available for this year’s 50/50 Raffle. Half the money goes to the winner and the other half benefits NAMI Greater Cleveland’s programs, support groups, classes and Helpline.
Tickets are $1 each or 6 tickets for $5.
To purchase tickets or order a supply of tickets to sell to your family and friends, contact Kari at 216-875-0266 or kkepic@namicleveland.org.
*It takes only one chance to win!*
Volunteer Spotlight

Five of our fabulous volunteers answered phones during the WCLV Pledge Drive in February. Thanks to their willingness to help, we were given great on air publicity during our shift! We thank all of you for your time and help!

From left to right: Volunteers Jon Epstein, Sharon Phillips, Ben Seeley, Volunteer Coordinator Jane Arnoff Logsdon, Denis Mullaney, Karen Jones

Helpline and Membership Committee Volunteer Kelly Walsh will be receiving the Greater Cleveland Volunteers Limelight Award at their annual volunteer recognition event on April 29th. Kelly was nominated for her excellent work in the last year with us. Congratulations, Kelly!

NAMI GC at the Cleveland International Film Festival (CIFF)

FORCED PERSPECTIVE

Nick Cavalier's Documentary traces Cleveland Derek Hess' transformation from an unknown concert poster illustrator at Euclid Tavern into an internationally renowned t-shirt designer, post-hardcore concert organizer, and fine artist. In extensive interviews, he opens up about his artistic process and ongoing struggles with alcoholism and bipolar disorder. Through his intensely expressive mixed media art, he works through his demons and inspires his fans from around the world to do the same.

Friday, March 27, 8:30 p.m. at The Cleveland Museum of Art

Saturday, March 28, at 6:30 p.m. at Tower City Cinemas

Please use the code NAMI for $2 off when purchasing your tickets to CIFF

Tickets available…

Online: www.clevelandfilm.org
Telephone: 1-877-304-FILM
In person: Film Festival Box Office, in the Lobby of Tower City Cinemas

Congratulations to our 2015 Award Winners

The Scott Adamson Memorial Peer Award
Jai Menon

Mental Health Family/Caregiver Award
Anne McCabe

Mental Health Provider Award
Roberta Taliaferro, PPC-S Counseling and Community Services Coordinator
May Dugan Center

Eugene Brudno Memorial Organization Award
Cuyahoga County Adult Probation Mental Health Unit

Cultural Competence in Mental Health Award
Cynthia Cekanski Regional Director of Operations
CommuniCare Health Services

Lifetime Achievement Award
Clara T. Rankin Hopewell

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Cynthia Cekanski Regional Director of Operations
CommuniCare Health Services

Lifetime Achievement Award
Clara T. Rankin Hopewell
Peer Poetry

You Are Not Alone
by Tom McCabe

I want to speak of honey,
but bitterness restrains me.
How can I explain the beauty I see in tears
To a world terrified of suffering,
To the faint-hearted that turn away,
That squeeze their eyes and hold their breath
Until the danger wave is passed?
I can’t really blame them: the pain
Is sometimes nearly unbearable, and I
have been one of them, from time to time
Squeezing my eyes and turning my face, and I,
From time to time, have known and lived the pain
When hope abandons you to stone sadness
When your own mind practices betrayal
When your strangeness delivers you into
ALONE, where friendship and love seem
A dream forbidden to you for eternity
Where, oh where, do you turn?
Where, oh where, do you turn?
Let us walk together, you and I,
Where wounds and sorrows dwell
And when the weight is too much to bear
I will reach, and lift up your soul,
As you will mine, when my need is great
For we both know the beauty and
The desperation of our tears
And then, perhaps, we will find hope
Together, in the wild, lonely places of living
Though the darkness looms all around us
We will light the path
We will find the way

Untitled Poem

Save me, sky, from these clouded patterns.
Hold me, ground, from this unearthly matter.
Make me smile,
Let me need,
Make me burn,
let me bleed.
Take me sun, from these frozen ways.
Give me up nights; let me seize days.
Make me want
Let me give
Make me frown
Let me live.
Keep me, conscience, from uncanny mistakes.
Forbid me, hands, from unfriendly shakes.
Make me cry,
Show me pain,
Take my clouds
and give me rain
There’s no reciprocity until you learn to give
There’s no reality until you learn to live.
Can’t I shine?
Why can’t I see?
There’s just too many masks for me to be me…

©Jaime Lynn Smith

NAMI GC Walk Intern, Erin McCabe and Helpline Volunteer (and Mental Health Caregiver Winner) Anne McCabe
Anonymous (19)  
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Karen Jarr  
Gail Arnoff in Recognition of  
Jane Arnoff Logsdon  
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Remember NAMI Greater Cleveland in Your Estate Plans

Consider naming NAMI Greater Cleveland as a beneficiary in your will or estate plans. By designating a specific amount or a certain percentage, you provide NAMI Greater Cleveland with the resources needed to implement new initiatives as well as sustain current programming.

Our apologies… to the members of the Murtis Taylor Support Network Walk Team led by Cheynne Toole and Danyelle Simpkins. We unintentionally omitted their name from the list of Walk Teams published in the last issue of The Voice. We appreciate their many efforts and enthusiasm which raised more than $1,000 for NAMIWalks 2014!
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