

**MISSION:** To empower persons affected by mental illness and their family members to achieve a better quality of life by providing them with mutual support, practical information, referral, advocacy and educational resources.

## Homefront Debuts at NAMI Greater Cleveland



NAMI Greater Cleveland is pleased to announce the addition of a new program designed to meet the needs of family members and friends of Military Service Members and Veterans with mental health conditions. The inaugural program debuts this month at Calvary Lutheran Church in Parma. The six-session program focuses on the unique needs of military and veteran communities, such as post-deployment and post-discharge transitions.

Mental health statistics among military veterans are grim according to NAMI:

1. Almost one in three veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq confront mental health problems.
2. On an average day in this country, suicide claims the lives of 18 veterans.
3. Approximately 30 percent of veterans treated in the veterans health system suffer from depressive symptoms, two to three times the rate of the general population.
4. More Vietnam veterans have now died from suicide than were killed directly during the war.

Homefront is designed to help family members understand and support their loved ones while maintaining their own well-being. The six-session program being taught by long-time NAMI Greater Cleveland volunteers Senator Robert, a military veteran and wife Mary Spada. They have received specific training to facilitate the Homefront program.

“We deeply appreciate Community West Foundation’s support, as well as their enthusiasm to join NAMI in providing support to our Military Veterans and their families,” commented NAMI Greater Cleveland Executive Director Michael Baskin.

A second Homefront program will run sometime this fall. The program is free and open to the public, but registration is required. *Contact Terri Miller at 216-875-7776 or [tmiller@namicleveland.org](mailto:tmiller@namicleveland.org) to register for more information.*



Never underestimate your ability to make someone else’s life better.

*Here’s how you can help:*

- Register to walk at [www.namiwalks.org/greatercleveland](http://www.namiwalks.org/greatercleveland)
- Support a walker or a team by making a donation by going to [www.namiwalks.org/greatercleveland](http://www.namiwalks.org/greatercleveland) and click on the Donate Now button on the left.
- Help spread the word. Contact Lisa Dellafiora at [ldellafiora@namicleveland.org](mailto:ldellafiora@namicleveland.org) or 216-875-0266 for a supply of brochures and posters to share with your friends and favorite merchants.
- Volunteer on the day of the Walk: contact Lisa Dellafiora at [ldellafiora@namicleveland.org](mailto:ldellafiora@namicleveland.org) or 216-875-0266.

*Presented by the Cleveland Clinic*

**Saturday, August 29** at Edgewater Park

Check-in: 9 a.m. Start time: 10 a.m.

Distance: 2.5 miles

Goal: \$154,000 – All proceeds benefit NAMI GC



# NEWS & NOTES FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MICHAEL BASKIN

## BOARD & STAFF UPDATES

### Beth Elersich Voted as Board Director

Congratulations to Ms. Beth Elersich as she was voted on as a trustee at our May Board meeting. From her experience as a family member living with a loved one with mental illness, Beth in her application to become a board member wrote, "I know how difficult it is for [all] parties as well as for [other children in the family]... I know what it's like to have no support, and to not know where to turn." Beth currently co-leads the Family Support Group at PLAN in Lyndhurst. In 2013, Ms. Elersich co-facilitated the *Understanding Mental Illness* course, co-taught *Family to Family* in 2014, and plans to teach both of these courses in 2015. Beth also volunteers working with kindergartners at the Literacy Co-op helping kids learn basic reading skills and has served as an officer of the community association where she lives. Beth writes, "I believe being on the board and serving on various committees, I will be of service to others on a larger scale."

### Kathleen Stock and Elliot Myers Selected as Board Members Emeritus

Congratulations to Kathleen and Elliot who were named Board Directors Emeritus. Each has served NAMI for many years, both as part of the Executive Committee, Kathleen as President for four years, Elliot as Parliamentarian for four. Both served in a variety of critical roles helping the agency to expand, and earn NAMI GC the honor of being named the 2014 Affiliate of the Year awarded by NAMI National. We're so pleased to be able to recognize these committed individuals who worked so diligently over so many years helping us to build our programs and improve the lives of those affected by mental illness.

### James Vernon Leaves NAMI Board

Thanks to Jim Vernon for his work as a board director since 2012. James served in many capacities including being a member on the Program Planning and Evaluation Committee and as part of the Planning Team for our most recent Strategic Plan. Jim will continue his important work at Connections: Health Wellness Advocacy.

### Jane Arnoff-Logsdon's New Position

After two plus years, our Volunteer Coordinator Jane has taken a position with Vitas Innovative Hospice of Cleveland as the Volunteer/ Bereavement Manager. Jane did an wonderful job here formalizing the Volunteer Program in the areas of recruitment, training and retention of volunteers. We wish her the best in her new position.

## ADVOCACY ISSUES

### Working to Support Senate Bill S.B. 162 Exemption from the Death Penalty Defendants with Serious Mental Illness

On May 13th, State Senators Bill Seitz and Sandra Williams, along with twelve other co-sponsors, introduced S.B. 162 at the request of NAMI Ohio, the Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Association, and Disability Rights Ohio, to exclude individuals with serious mental illness from the death penalty just as individuals with intellectual disabilities and juveniles are currently exempted. Specifically, the bill would exempt defendants from the death penalty 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 their conduct,
- (b) conform their conduct to the requirements of the law, or
- (c) appreciate the nature, consequences or wrongfulness of their conduct.

Defendants would still be found guilty and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. "We believe that those who commit violent crimes while in the grip of a psychotic delusion, hallucination or other disabling psychological condition lack judgment, understanding or self-control. Until such time as the U.S. Supreme Court decides on this question, the responsibility for prohibiting the execution of such individuals in Ohio rests with the Ohio General Assembly," said Terry Russell and Janet Shaw, in a joint letter to the members of the Senate. "The death penalty is not the answer to the problem of violence committed by persons with severe mental disorders. The better policy is access to appropriate mental health care – ideally before such a tragedy occurs – and, most

definitely, in place of executing some of Ohio's most critically ill individuals," the letter said. To download a copy of the bill, go to [www.legislature.ohio.gov](http://www.legislature.ohio.gov) or contact NAMI Ohio at [namiohio@namiohio.org](mailto:namiohio@namiohio.org). (Betsy Johnson, Assistant Director, NAMI OHIO provided the information for this article.)

## AT THE MOVIES

### LOVE AND MERCY: THE BEACH BOY "TOUCHED BY FIRE"

If you haven't seen the Bryan Wilson saga, *Love and Mercy*, you may be interested in going to view this biopic which in part, tells the story of Wilson's struggle with mental illness and the exploitation by a psychologist who treated Wilson in the 80s, Dr. Eugene Landy. It's also a trip back in time to the music and culture from the 60s to now, and a portrait of a creative artist in his struggle to survive and prevail.

## MAJOR SUPPORT FOR NAMI GC COMES FROM THE FOLLOWING

- o ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga Co.
- o Community Shares of Greater Cleveland
- o Community West Foundation
- o Genentech
- o Ginn Foundation
- o Frank Hadley and Cornelia Root Ginn Charitable Trust
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- o Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation
- o Mt. Sinai Healthcare Foundation
- o NAMI (National)-Sharing Hope Project
- o Pfizer
- o Stolier Family Foundation
- o Ridgecliff Foundation
- o Woodruff Foundation

## Thank You To All Of Our Sponsors!

*Hope you have a wonderful summer. See you at the Walk!*



Michael, July 2015  
[mbaskin@namicleveland.org](mailto:mbaskin@namicleveland.org)



# ANNUAL MEETING

A record-breaking crowd of more than 300 people attended NAMI Greater Cleveland's Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony on April 27 at Windows on the River. During the meeting, Executive Director Michael Baskin reported on the growth of NAMI's signature programs as well as the addition of VIDA our six-week, Spanish language educational program for Latina women with depression and anxiety. Our keynote speaker U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown shared the story of John Lewis, the great civil rights pioneer and the idea of "making good trouble" and encouraged those present to peacefully take action for mental health issues. Finally, four individuals and one organization were recognized for outstanding achievement in promoting and providing mental health services. Below is a listing of this year's winners and sponsors.

## **Jai Menon**

*The Scott Adamson Memorial Peer Award*

## **Anne McCabe**

*Mental Health Family/Caregiver Award*

**Cynthia Cekanski,  
Regional Director of Operations,  
CommuniCare Health Services**

*Cultural Competence in  
Mental Health Award*

**Roberta Taliaferro, PCC-S  
Counseling and Community Services  
Coordinator, May Dugan Center**

*Mental Health Provider Award*

**Cuyahoga County Adult Probation  
Mental Health Unit**

*Eugene Brudno Memorial  
Organization Award*

## **Clara T. Rankin**

*Lifetime Achievement Award*

## Presenting Sponsor

Community West Foundation

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## Contributing Sponsor

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U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown addresses guests at NAMI Greater Cleveland's Annual Meeting.



(left to right) Executive Director Michael Baskin, Mrs. Clara Rankin recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, NAMI Greater Cleveland Board President Christine Young, and Constituent Services Liason Meredith Turner from Senator Brown's office.

## **We have a new look!**

We are pleased to announce that our website has a new look. Take a few minutes to reacquaint yourself with the great information it offers related to education, support and advocacy for individuals living with a mental health challenge and their family members. Go to [www.namigreatercleveland.org](http://www.namigreatercleveland.org)

## **Remember NAMI Greater Cleveland's Endowment in Your Estate Plans**

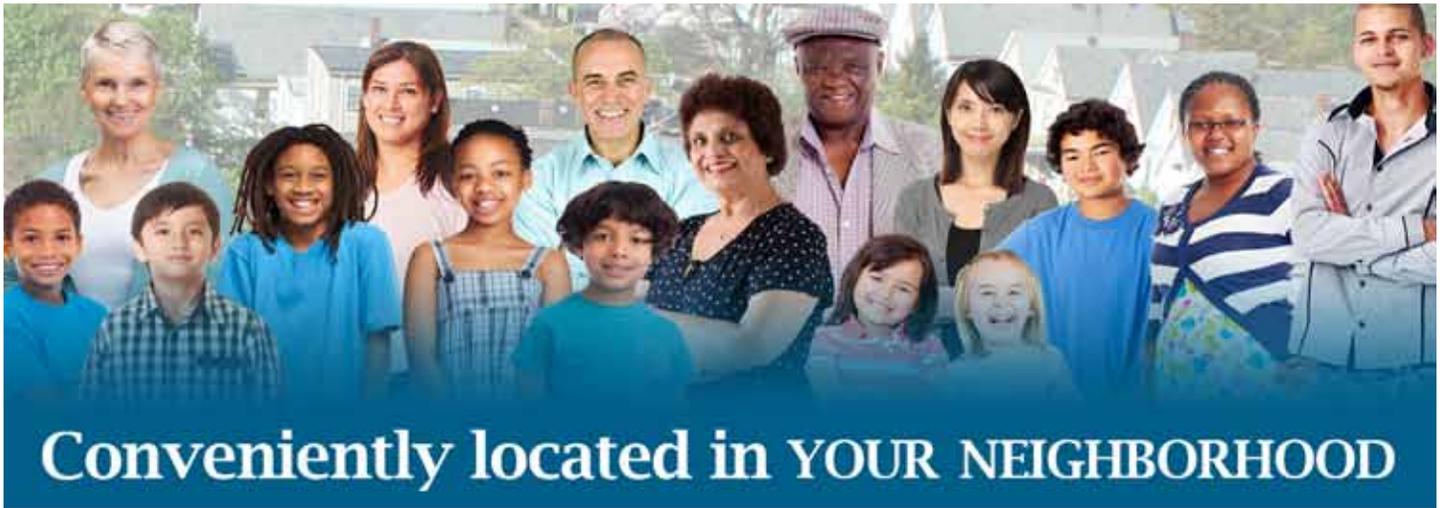
Please help NAMI Greater Cleveland by designating the Endowment Fund as a beneficiary in your will, trust or funeral memorial. The Endowment is designed to help insure the long-term strength of NAMI Greater Cleveland. It's easy to facilitate, simply share your intentions with your financial planner or estate planning attorney.

# Opportunity for Comprehensive Mental Health Reform

By Mary Giliberti, Executive Director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness

Representatives Tim Murphy (R-Pa.) and Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-Texas) have introduced HR 2646, the "Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2015." This introduction begins a legislative process toward mental health reform, which is long overdue. NAMI has submitted a letter of support to Representatives Murphy and Johnson indicating our appreciation of their leadership and our commitment to work with them to pass comprehensive mental health legislation. HR 2646 has many positive aspects, including provisions to improve integration of mental healthcare and physical healthcare in Medicaid, spur early intervention in the treatment of psychosis, improve the use of health information technology in mental health care and provide resources for suicide prevention. HR 2646 also contains provisions designed to improve data collection and outcomes measurement and expand the availability of evidence-based services. It contains provisions to remove discriminatory barriers to acute inpatient treatment in Medicaid and Medicare and it advances enforcement of the mental health insurance parity law as well. HR 2646 also addresses issues that have generated much discussion within NAMI and other organizations, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and access to information for caregivers, the role of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Protection and Advocacy System and Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT). We have carefully reviewed the bill and believe it takes a more thoughtful approach to these complex issues. However, we have heard from many of you and are very aware that there are strong, diverse opinions about these issues and some questions about the new provisions. For example, members and leaders have asked questions about the scope of the Protection and Advocacy systems' jurisdiction under the new "abuse and neglect" standard and whether that includes advocacy for housing and recovery supports, which is an important question that we will seek to clarify as the bill moves forward. Some of you know the process on Capitol Hill well, but for those who do not, here are next steps. The next stage of the legislative process is a mark-up in committee where the bill gets careful consideration and sometimes amendments are offered. Then, it would go to the floor of the House for a vote. We also understand that Senators Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) and Bill Cassidy (R-La.) are working on a Senate version of the bill. It is not likely to be identical, but it will address many of the same issues to improve the mental health system for people with serious mental illness. The Senate

will also need to carefully consider their bill in committee and then it would be voted on by the Senate. Often the next step is a Conference Committee to reconcile differences between the House and Senate versions of legislation before it goes to both Houses for a final vote. Although it may seem like a long process, NAMI is very hopeful regarding legislative action given that the efforts in both Houses are bipartisan. This year, we have an unprecedented opportunity to pass legislation to improve mental health services. It is very important that NAMI is at the table as this process ensues. We look forward to continuing our dialogue together because NAMI, more than any other organization, understands that the status quo is unacceptable and needs to change. As the bills work their way through this process, we would like to continue hearing from all of you. If you have thoughts about the bill or mental health reform in general, please email us at [MHPolicy@nami.org](mailto:MHPolicy@nami.org). I can't promise you we will have the time to respond to each email but I can promise you that we will read and consider every one carefully. The hallmark of NAMI is an inclusive community of individuals, families and friends whose lives have been changed by the experience of mental illness. These experiences make us very passionate about these issues. Passion will be important because we will not get mental health reform without it. But passion cannot get in the way of respectful dialogue, understanding and listening to the perspectives of others. Only by talking together and reviewing information with an open mind and in recognition of the ongoing process will we achieve reform that promotes recovery and wellness for all people with mental illness, including those with the most serious conditions. It is unlikely that all NAMI supporters will agree with all provisions or all changes that have been made to the bill already and those that may be made in the future. But hopefully, we all can get behind the need for comprehensive reform and by working and talking together, we can achieve final legislation that will significantly improve lives. Before Congressman Murphy focused on these issues, there was little discussion in Congress. Now there is momentum and bipartisan support. NAMI will continue to listen to our members and leaders as the legislative process continues and we will tirelessly work for a better system for those affected by mental illness. We will also continue to communicate regularly with you about the bill and the issues it addresses. Thank you for your leadership and advocacy!



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# Giant Eagle Gift Cards

Purchase Giant Eagle cards from NAMIGC. Use them to purchase groceries, gas, or other gift cards. NAMI receives 5% of the amount purchased.



## NAMI/Giant Eagle Gift Card Order Form

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<b>TOTAL AMOUNT DUE</b>		\$ _____

Please submit your check payment with this form. We will mail you the card(s). Please make checks payable to: *NAMI Greater Cleveland*

NAME _____		STREET ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP _____	PHONE _____	

# Flyer Drop-Off Form

Do you think your patrons would be interested in our NAMI Greater Cleveland brochure?

Please complete this form and we will deliver them to your office. (Plastic holder available upon request.)

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Volunteer Corner

We're certain you have heard the adage: It takes a village to raise a child. The same could be said for implementing NAMI Greater Cleveland's mission. Volunteers are a critical resource in helping NAMI Greater Cleveland provide free programs and support groups to people living with mental illness or their family and friends.

Our current needs include:

- Answering Helpline calls
- Data entry
- Program preparation
- Staffing the NAMI table at health fairs
- Telephone reception

Consider contributing your time and talent. Contact Marsha Blanks at 216-875-0266 or [mblanks@namicleveland.org](mailto:mblanks@namicleveland.org).

## Volunteer Appreciation Reception



Peer Support Specialist Becky Fela (center) poses with Michael Trzcinski (left) and Jonathan Epstein (right) during our inaugural Volunteer Appreciation Reception.

More than 60 NAMI volunteers gathered at Sky Light Offices on the ninth floor of the United Bank Building taking in a spectacular view of downtown Cleveland while enjoying the fellowship of kindred spirits.

# Upcoming Programs

## Peer to Peer

A ten-session experiential education program on the topic of recovery for persons 18 and older with mental illness who are interested in establishing and maintaining wellness.

## Louis Stokes Cleveland VAMC – PRRC

7000 Euclid Avenue, Suite 202 – Cleveland, OH

Fridays: September 4 – November 6, 2015

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

## Blessed Trinity Catholic Church

14040 Puritas Ave. – Cleveland, OH

Thursdays: September 3 – November 5, 2015

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

*While these program are free and open to the public, registration is required. Please call 216-875-7776 to reserve your space.*

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## Kick-Off Luncheon

NAMIWalks 2015 officially opened on Wednesday, June 24 with our Kick-Off Luncheon sponsored by University Hospitals. More than 150 guests attended enjoying lunch and testing their skills at Minute to Win It games. Once again, 19 Action News Anchor Danielle Serino honored us by serving as our Mistress of Ceremonies and shared with our guests about her personal journey.

## 19 Action News Hosts NAMI Phone Bank

Tune into 19 Action News on Wednesday, August 5 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. when NAMI staff members and volunteers will be answering calls from the community about mental illness and NAMI Greater Cleveland.

## AKA-NAMI Greater Cleveland Partnership

We are pleased to announce that Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKA) and NAMI have joined forces on a local and national level. AKA is the country's oldest sorority founded by African American college-trained women, to prepare new volunteer leaders for the future and reach broader constituencies as part of a growing movement to address unmet mental health needs. Together we will work to provide information about mental health, treatment and recovery to the African American community.

The four year partnership between the local chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated – Lambda Phi Omega Chapter (AKA) and NAMI Greater Cleveland is underway. In May, Cleveland area chapter representatives of AKA spearheaded an effort to light the Terminal Tower green in honor of May is Mental Health Month.



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## Gratitude Corner

**Hailie Dorflinger**, Marketing Team Leader and the entire staff at **Whole Foods Market Chagrin** for selecting NAMI Greater Cleveland as the beneficiary of the **Nickels for Non Profit** program, from April through July.

**Bernice Kaldy**, Publisher of *Image Publishers Marketing Inc.*, who raises awareness of NAMI Greater Cleveland with ads in her **Image Builder** magazines throughout northeast Ohio. **Plain Dealer** columnist **Regina Brett** who mentioned NAMI Greater Cleveland in her May 17, 2015 article entitled *The Stigma of Mental Illness Ends with Us*. We appreciate her efforts in promoting NAMI as a resource for people living with mental illness and their families!



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