



The Times

NAMI Pinellas County, Florida
National Alliance on Mental Illness

Clearwater - Dunedin - Largo - Oldsmar - Palm Harbor - Pinellas Park - St. Petersburg - Tarpon Springs

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday, March 1st

Peer to Peer Classes begin.
[See details in newsletter.]

Wednesday, March 5th

Family to Family begins.
[See details in newsletter.]

Thursday, March 6th

7:00 pm – NAMI Pinellas
County Education Meeting.
“Everything You
Always Wanted to Know
About PEMHS”

Tuesday, March 18th

TEMPORARY CHANGE
7:30 pm -Family Support
Group Meeting.

Thursday, April 3rd

7:00 pm – NAMI Pinellas
Education Meeting.
Two Presentations:
“Voters Registration”
with Deborah Clark and
“FACT Facts” by Three
FACT Team Leaders

Thursday, April 17th

7:30 pm -Family Support
Group Meeting.

Thursday, April 24th

9 a.m. - 12 noon
Community Resource Fair
Hospice South Service Ctr
1st Ave. S--St. Petersburg

Thursday, May 1st

7:00 pm -NAMI Pinellas
Education Meeting
“Mental Health Month”,
Guest Speaker: Bob
Dillinger, Public Defender

Saturday, May 10th

“Picnic in the Park” and
“NAMI Iris Awards”
11 am to 2 pm,
Anderson Park -- Shelters
4 and 5, Tarpon Springs

THE TIMES--THEY ARE A'CHANGIN'

Isn't that the name of a song?

Or maybe since it is Spring already and life seems to be passing by more quickly, it just feels like times are changing faster...and faster...and faster...and even faster!

Actually, we are talking about our newsletter THE TIMES. You have probably noticed a few changes in the last three issues. We hope you like our new format and the way we share information with you.

Sometimes our articles seem a little wordy (like this one, for example). But other times, we have so much to tell you that it seems there is not enough space!

Most of our photos are taken by Board member Steven Thompson. Not only do we owe him a big Thank You, but we also thank each of you for your willingness to share your image and your cooperation every time Steven brings you into focus and shouts, “Hold Still and Smile!”

What's not changing is the education programs and support meetings sponsored by your local NAMI affiliate. This issue is filled with notices about the activities we have

SPRING EDUCATION MEETINGS

PEMHS FEATURED IN MARCH

On March 6, **Tom Wedekind, Executive Director/CEO** and **Dr. Mary Sheehan, Medical Director**, will answer all your questions about **PEMHS (Personal Enrichment through Mental Health Services)**. They'll give an overview of the services offered at PEMHS, including the Baker Act Centralized Receiving Facility and the Family Emergency Treatment Center (FETC).

And as a special bonus, they'll answer all your questions. Those of you who call the NAMI Hotline with your questions about crisis stabilization will be able to get your answers directly from PEMHS!

NOTICE. THE MARCH BOARD MEETING AND SUPPORT GROUP HAVE CHANGED TO TUESDAY, MARCH 18TH.

planned for you this Spring. We'll keep you busy while you learn, network, collaborate, and support each other!

So, choose a rainy Spring afternoon to read this issue, turn every page, have your calendar ready and remember that our primary mission is to provide support, advocacy and education. Please join us!



APRIL IS A “DOUBLE HEADER”

The April 3rd Education meeting will feature **Deborah Clark, Supervisor of Elections, Pinellas County**, who will speak on “Voter Registration” and other information concerning the up-coming national General Election on November 4th.

Also on April 3rd, representatives from area FACT Teams--**Florida Assertive Community Treatment (FACT)** will provide an in-depth briefing of services provided by each FACT Team. Three Team Leaders will present: **Kevin Marrone--Boley Centers, Lynda Wagner--Suncoast Center for Community Mental Health, and Crystal Kirksy-- Mental Health Resources Center of Clearwater.**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Super Bowl is over, the holidays are gone, and now it is time to roll up our shirt sleeves and get busy. Members of the Board of Directors participated in a Board Retreat on February 9th to develop our Strategic Plan for the year. So many great ideas flowed from this energized Board. Everyone comes with lots of talent and a passion to make things better. Stay tuned for lots of changes in 2008!

We need to contact our Legislators to inform them of our issues so they can vote wisely. Funding cuts are going to adversely effect mental health services provided. I strongly encourage each of you to set up an appointment to meet with your legislators regarding cost-effective alternatives for legislative action in 2008. If you cannot visit them in person, then please call or write.

As advocates for persons with mental illness, we totally support the recommendations made in the Florida Supreme Court's extensive report on transforming the criminal justice system. [See article on page 9.] The entire 170 page report can be viewed by going to the Florida's Partners in Crisis website www.flpic.org. Click on Judge Steven Leifman's photo in the left column; then, click on "Mental Health: Transforming Florida's Mental Health System." which is in the text



President Judy Turnbaugh

of the article about Judge Steven Leifman. Judge Leifman has been a tireless champion in advocating for better mental health services and one of our most outstanding advocates. Thank you, Judge Leifman!

Florida Partners in Crisis speaks with "One Voice--Advocating Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services." NAMI Pinellas County is a member and we recommend that you check out their website www.flpic.org for current information. (See page 12)

On a personal note, I wish to thank Suncoast Center for Community Mental Health for honoring me at their 11th Annual Sunrise Award Luncheon. All of the praise that NAMI receives is because of the hard work of our Board of Directors and the support of our members. Congratulations Suncoast for all you do for so many in our community!

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St. Petersburg, FL 33702
www.nami-pinellas.org**

NAMI Pinellas County, Inc., is a corporation organized under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service codes (FIN: 59-2819044). State Solicitation No. CH-17506, Contributions to NAMI Pinellas County, Inc., are tax deductible for the fullest extent the law allows.

This newsletter is written and published by the Board of Directors of NAMI Pinellas County, Florida. Edited and designed by Board Member Gay Hawk of Windmoor Healthcare. To contribute articles, e-mail to: turnj@aol.com

**BECOME A MEMBER OF
NAMI PINELLAS COUNTY**



Commissioner John Morroni, left, and Sheriff Jim Coats, right, present the first CIT Award to Sgt Tom Acker.

Commissioner John Morroni Honors Sgt. J. Thomas Acker Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

State senators and representatives, county commissioners, mayors, and other dignitaries joined 500 guests at Commissioner *John Morroni's* 14th Annual Appreciation Dinner for Emergency Personnel. Other distinguished guests included *Tom Wedekind* and *Maxine Booker* of PEMHS, NAMI Pinellas members *Anne and John Jones, Patricia Hall, Dianne and Elliott Steele, Bill Trahman, and Judy and Donald Turnbaugh.* *Sgt. Acker* and his supervisor, *Captain Teresa Dioquino* joined Board members at the NAMI table at this event that honors *local Law Enforcement, Fire Fighters and EMS Personnel.*

Commissioner Morroni added the first Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Award at the affair this year. *Sheriff Jim Coats* presented the award to our very own Sgt. Thomas Acker, Chairman of our CIT Committee. Sgt. Acker was recognized for his innovation as Psychological Services Coordinator for the Pinellas County Sheriffs Office (PCSO) and for his community leadership not only with CIT, but also as the chair of the Mental Health Coalition. He also was honored for his commitment and involvement in initiating a new dispatch system for the Sheriff's office which locates and dispatches CIT officers to calls involving mental health crisis.

Donald Turnbaugh also was recognized for all of his dedication and work in starting CIT in Pinellas, as well as throughout Florida. Sheriff Coats stated that "Donald's determination, persistence and leadership have changed minds and saved lives of officers and persons with mental illness here in Pinellas County."

Other worthy recipients for the 2007 Awards were: Dispatcher/Paramedic Kristen Wieck, Sunstar EMS; Officer Brad Lyons, St. Petersburg PD; District Chief William Barrs III, Dunedin FD; Deputy Scott E. Reid, Pinellas County SO; Officer Dennis W. Porter & Canine Partner, "Bodie," St. Petersburg PD; Sgt. Raymond Ada, FHP.

John Jones, CIT Coordinator and Past President

Resource/Job Fair

The 2nd annual Community Resources/Education/Job Fair will be held Thursday, April 24th from 9 a.m.-noon at the Hospice South Services Center, 3050 1st Ave. South, St. Petersburg.

The event will highlight local opportunities and resources for individuals with disabilities. Representatives from area organizations will be present to answer questions to help attendees link with resources, educational programs and employment opportunities.

NAMI joins several other local organizations to co-sponsor this event. All are invited to attend. For more information, please contact Steven Thompson, (727) 443-4715; sthompson134@tampabay.rr.com

Next CIT class is June

The Pinellas County Mental Health Coalition and the CIT Committee are pleased to announce our next CIT class will be held June 2nd thru 6th, 2008, at the Sunstar EMS Center, 12490 Ulmerton Road, Largo.

Graduation will be Friday, June 6th at the Pinellas County Medical Examiners Office, 10900 Ulmerton Road, Largo. Guests who would like to attend the graduation are welcome.

The next National CIT conference will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, November 4th thru 6th, 2008. Interested parties are encouraged to attend. Contact Pat Strode, CIT program Administrator for NAMI Georgia, 770-234-9347, or please visit their website at: www.NAMIGA.org

Election 2008: Help NAMI Make a Difference

Mental illness does not discriminate between Republicans and Democrats. As the presidential nominating process for both parties is heating up, NAMI is working to educate and encourage the candidates to address mental health issues.

Politics often hinges on close personal encounters, but the advice NAMI is giving voters can be used anywhere. We need your help. Here's the plan of action:

- √ Make sure you and your friends **register to vote**. To find out how, come to the NAMI Pinellas Education Meeting April 3rd.
- √ On General Election Day, November 4, 2008, **vote** and plan to bring at least two friends with you so they can vote.
- √ Speak out. Write a **letter to the editor** about the importance of candidates addressing mental health issues.
- √ Tell one or more of the campaigns in advance that you'd like to hear what each candidate has to say about mental illness—before you decide whom to support. **Make an appointment** to visit your state senator and representative before the election. Most campaigns include email addresses on their Web sites where messages can be sent.
- √ **Attend a candidate event and ask a question**. And have a friend ask another. NAMI's Election 2008 tool kit suggests 10 ways that a person can make a difference and eight questions to ask.

NAMI HELPLINE

Dick and Nancy Durstein are the NAMI members who staff our HelpLine 24 hours a day, with help from other volunteers. Dick also is a member of the board for NAMI Florida. Below is a sample of the type of calls they receive.

Frantic call from lady in Georgia. Has tried all website medical help lines with no success. Sister with major depression had stroke and is now in hospital on ventilator for 10 days. Hospital says sister must be discharged to acute care nursing home. Nearest one with open bed is in Illinois.

Caller wanted sister in Florida close to other family members. Emergency meeting set up for next morning. Since Helpline NAMI member had experience as a guardian with similar cases, he agreed to go to the meeting.

A thorough search of Florida facilities during 90 minute meeting revealed Miami nursing home with opening. Transfer there arranged.

NAMI CLASSES SET TO BEGIN IN MARCH

Peer to Peer is a free nine-week course, two hours per week, taught by trained NAMI Consumers (Peers) to teach other consumers with mental illnesses how to establish and maintain their wellness and recovery.

**Every Saturday from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
March 1 through May 3, 2008**

No class on Saturday March 22 due to a holiday

The Hospice of the Florida Suncoast
5771 Roosevelt Blvd.
Building 100---East Conference Room
Clearwater, FL 33760

(Bus Routes 52, 79 and 11)

Registration is required by contacting:
Steven Thompson (727) 443-4715 or e-mail:
sthompson134@tampabay.rr.com

or the

NAMI HELP LINE (727-791-3434)

Family-to-Family is a free 12-week course for family and friends of individuals with serious mental illness. It is taught by trained NAMI family members. Attendees must attend all 12 classes. Learn about the signs and symptoms of the illnesses, medications, coping skills and treatment resources available.

**Every Wednesday evening from 6-8:30 p.m.
March 5 through May 21, 2008**

The Hospice of the Florida Suncoast
5771 Roosevelt Blvd.
The Garden House
Clearwater, FL 33760

(Bus Routes 52, 79 and 11)

Registration is required by contacting
Marianne Martin (727) 443-3149 or email:
memartin1943@yahoo.com

or the

NAMI HELP LINE (727-791-3434)

CONSUMER CORNER

In Memory of Chip Corell

by *Steven Thompson*

The NAMI Pinellas County Consumer Council is starting to take itself forward. We are working on several events in the next few months. First are our second and third Peer-to-Peer Consumer Education/Relapse Prevention classes starting in March and August, respectively. We are looking for consumers for both classes. It is a 9 week class, two- hours on Saturday morning and is free. The only requirement is that you must now be, or in the past, receiving therapy/counseling for a Psychiatric Disorder and be willing to talk about the illness in the class and then back to your support network.

Next is the Macy's Charity Event March 1st at all Macy's stores. We are selling tickets to the event for \$5.00 that can be used March 1 at Macy's for up to 20% off many items in the store. The week prior to the event our council is planning to set up a booth at the entrance of the Westfield Countryside Store to raise awareness of mental health and try to put a light against stigma associated with Psychiatric Disabilities, plus raise a dollar or two.

Next is the Disability Training. Since the last NAMI Pinellas Co. Times' newsletter we have done trainings at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium and at USF in St. Petersburg, both with Directions for Mental Health. Another training is also scheduled for mid-April at the Museum of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg with the Committee

to Advocate for Persons with Impairments (CAPI). For more information on what the training is, see the November-December issue of our Times newsletter.

Finally we are still selling cookbooks as a fundraiser for the NAMI Florida Consumer Council. Proceeds also go to the NAMI Consumer Council. Cost is only \$12 per copy. It would make a great gift for Moms, friends, and relatives!

As you can see, there is a lot going on and much more to do in the future. If you would like to be part of our Consumer Council, to participate in the Peer-to-Peer class, buy Macy's tickets or buy a cookbook contact me at: (727) 443-4715 or E-mail sthompson134@tampabay.rr.com.

WE'VE MOVED (Well no, not really) NEW MAILING ADDRESS

We may not have an actual office for NAMI, but we do have a new mailing address. Please contact us to send a donation, renew your membership, or mail a memorial gift:

NAMI Pinellas County, Florida, Inc.
466 94th Ave. N.

St. Petersburg, FL 33702

And, speaking of addresses, please let our membership chair Anne Jones know if you have moved so she can update our mailing list without delay.

Speaking of offices...
DO YOU HAVE ONE?

NAMI Pinellas is looking for an office where we can hang our hats, meet in a centralized place and store our records. Anybody interested????? Call our vice president Gay Hawk at 727-541-2646, ext. 1514.



Congratulations to Windmoor Healthcare on the remodeling of their Partial Hospitalization Program. NAMI Board members helped Windmoor staff celebrate with a Valentine's Open House. From left to right are Brian Talley-- Director of the WIN Team and PHP; Gay Hawk-- Director of Public Relations; Carla Murphy-- COO and HR Director; Wendy Merson--CEO and Dr. Karl Jones-- Medical Director.

NAMI Conference comes to Orlando

A DREAM COMES TRUE

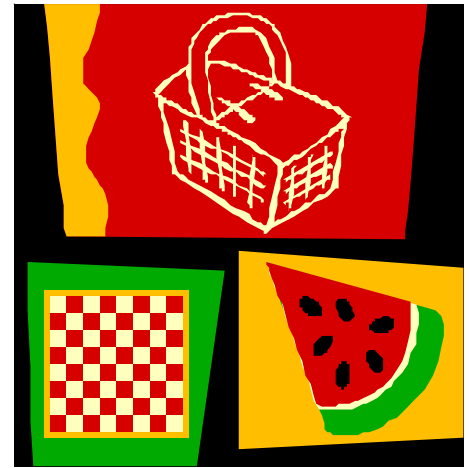
A dream is a wish your heart makes when you're fast asleep; or, at least that's what one of those Disney characters used to sing. Some of you have only dreamed of attending a NAMI National conference. Well, this is the year that dreams can come true! The NAMI National Annual Conference is June 13th -16th, right here in **Orlando, FLORIDA!**

Since Cinderella's Castle was booked for those dates, the convention hotel will be on the famous grid-locked road--International Drive! The Rosen Centre Hotel has graciously agreed to accept your cash or unexpired, almost-maxed-out, identity-theft-proof credit card to pay the paltry sum of \$134+ for a wanna-be luxurious room.

Other even less expensive accommodations are nearby, such as: Days Inn at \$72+, Red Roof Inn at \$74+, and the always-open, never-full Orange County Jail! (Just kidding on the last one.)

So, pack your lotion, chap-stick, lawn chairs, beach blanket, and shades. Wait a minute! This is a NAMI convention. There's no swimming, tanning, napping, or any of the other stuff that usually goes on at a resort. But, there are WORK-Shops, - tons of them; great presentations by terrific speakers; Ask-the-Doctor sessions where you can, like, ask the doctor questions; limited time to eat unlimited food; so-called entertainment by some rare-to-well-done talent; and the greatest bunch of people you would like to throw-off an island!

Sound like fun? Well, it is, - lots of it. See you there!



Just an early reminder that the NAMI Pinellas County Annual *Picnic-in-the-Park* and *Iris Awards* event is on **Saturday, May 10, 2008, 11 a.m. -2 p.m.** at Anderson Park, on U.S. Hwy 19 in Tarpon Springs. We will have Shelters 4 and 5! So, get out your pen and mark this event on your calendar so you won't forget! Come hungry!

MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW FOR NAMI'S 2008 NATIONAL CONVENTION

ROSEN CENTRE HOTEL • ORLANDO, FLORIDA • FRIDAY, JUNE 13 – MONDAY, JUNE 16

IF YOU'VE NEVER ATTENDED A NAMI NATIONAL CONVENTION YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE MISSING. JUST READ WHAT SOME OF LAST YEAR'S ATTENDEES HAD TO SAY ABOUT THEIR CONVENTION EXPERIENCE:

"This conference was extremely motivating and inspirational. It filled me with hope!"

"When I see and hear about the absolutely incredible things that have been accomplished by consumers and family advocates around the country, I leave here inspired to keep up the good fight!"

"It is so lovely to spend time with my NAMI "family" and feel totally myself—not only accepted but embraced. Thanks for the love. We're all in it together!"

DON'T MISS OUT! HOTEL ROOMS RANGING FROM \$72-\$134/ NIGHT ARE AVAILABLE FOR NAMI MEMBERS AT AREA HOTELS. DETAILED PROGRAM, HOTEL AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION IS NOW AVAILABLE ON THE CONVENTION WEB SITE AT WWW.NAMI.ORG/CONVENTION.



NAMI 2008
ORLANDO



Tampa to host National Conference:

Women & Recovery

The third annual national Women's Conference on Women, Addiction and Recovery will be held September 15th --17th at the Mariott Tampa Waterside Hotel.

The conference brings together the leaders, directors and other stakeholders in women's services to hear current research, discuss implementation and promote effective leadership to professionals and stakeholders to assist women with substance use disorders and their families.

The conference is sponsored by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, NCI Systems, Inc. and the Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association (FADAA).

If you are interested in presenting at the conference, or if you need additional information, visit the web site at www.fadaa.org/women.

The conference will be held during National Recovery Month 2008 and will be coordinated with related activities taking place in the area.

LEARN ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

At the Pinellas County Recovery & Resiliency Taskforce meeting on Wednesday, March 5, 2008 from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. the guest speakers are: Janney Gard & Jill Godde, Professional Relations Officers, Division of Disability Determination. They will speak on: Social Security and Mental Illness and share information on how the disability determination process works. The meeting will be held at: Suncoast Center for Community Mental Health, Wellness Center, 3822 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg. Please RSVP to: 813-558-5972.



Terry Taggart, left, Johnny Limbaugh and Steven Thompson, standing, at the WEDU Awards luncheon.

WEDU celebrates 50 years of local broadcasting

Happy 50th Anniversary to WEDU! And, what were nine NAMI Pinellas members doing at the party with 500 other people? We were the guests of Guardian Pooled Trusts (Travis Finchum and Larry Poteet) and we were candidates for one of the WEDU "Be More" Awards, - that is NAMI Pinellas and 82 other non-profits!

It was a grand affair. From the Hall of Heroes, an exhibit room ringed with tables and displays of some of the many worthy non-profits in the Tampa Bay area, to the "all-you-can-almost eat" chicken Caesar salad, and dreamy dessert, to the Awards presentations.

No, NAMI Pinellas didn't win, - this year. But, we can dream of next year. The winning organizations were: University of Florida 4H Youth Development, Little Red Wagon Foundation, Girls Incorporated of Sarasota County, Big Cat Rescue, Lazydays Partners Foundation, The John & Mabel Ringling Museum of Art, Family Network on Disabilities of Manatee/Sarasota, Inc., and The Spring of Tampa Bay, Inc.

**MAY IS
MENTAL HEALTH
MONTH.
CELEBRATE WITH
THE NAMI PICNIC
MAY 10TH!**

Ask the Pharmacist

Our Guest Speaker for our February Education Meeting, **Mark Ather**, Pharmacy Manager of Center Pharmacy, did a great job in discussing the various medications and how they interact with each other. Keeping that train of thought, here is information on a new NAMI program.

“Ask the Psychiatric Pharmacist” is a new section of the NAMI Web site where board-certified psychiatric pharmacists write and answer questions that they experience in the course of their work with individuals with mental illness.

These questions are provided by members of the College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (CPNP) (www.cpn.org), who also write NAMI’s medication [fact sheets](#).

CPNP is pleased to provide this service to consumers and caregivers and welcomes your input for future columns by emailing info@cpnp.org. Read “Ask the Psychiatric Pharmacist” [Question and Answers](#).



Mark Ather--Center Pharmacy



Rod & Martina Atkins have volunteered to work on our NAMI website, which is currently under construction. Stay tuned for future changes.

2008 Legislative session begins March 4th

The 2008 Florida Legislature regular session begins on March 4, 2008. NAMI will be tracking several bills. You may be requested to contact your state Senator or Representative in support of or opposition to certain bills. The easiest and fastest way to do this is on the internet. The websites named in this article will be of assistance.

Websites to each member of the Florida Legislature contain the Member’s Name, district, address, biography, and email address of each Senator and Representative. They also

contain information on Bills, assignments, councils and committees and other valuable information.

www.myfloridahouse.gov
Contains information on the Florida House of Representatives.

www.flsenate.gov
Contains information on the Florida Senate.

www.myflorida.com
Contains information on Florida Government overall, for example, the Executive Branch, the Legislative Branch, and the Judicial Branch.

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY ACT EXTENDED A YEAR

The House passed legislation February 7, 2008, extending the 1996 Mental Health Parity Act for an additional year.

The measure, HR 4848, now moves to the Senate where it is expected to pass quickly. The Act requires equitable coverage for mental illness treatment in group health plans, but only with respect to annual and lifetime dollar limits. Since 2001, Congress has renewed the law annually for one year at a time.

Learn more about ongoing efforts to pass a comprehensive federal parity bill on www.nami.org.

RECOMMENDATIONS ISSUED BY SUPREME COURT REPORT ON TRANSFORMING FLORIDA'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

In April 2007, the **Florida Supreme Court appointed Judge Steven Leifman** (Miami-Dade) to serve as special advisor to bring together representatives of all branches of state government to help identify and recommend ways to improve the response of both the public mental health system and the criminal justice system to persons

with mental illnesses. He completed his study and a report was issued last June.

A redesigned and transformed system of care will require community-based services and supports able to access care that is effective, efficient, safe, and appropriate to individual needs

and circumstances and available in the community when and where they are needed. Each community must be guided by a common vision and current knowledge regarding evidence-based and promising practices.

The 16-key recommendations are summarized below.

1 Phased-in **implementation of enhanced services** to individuals **involved in or at risk of becoming involved in the criminal and juvenile justice systems**, with **reasonable start-up costs**.

2 Creation of an **Integrated Specialty Care Network** which maximizes state funding to serve individuals in the justice system or other institutional levels of care.

3 Development of **financing strategies** that create incentives to prevent individuals from inappropriately entering the justice systems, and to quickly respond to individuals who do.

4 **Certification of local providers** and communities who demonstrate the ability, commitment, and readiness to deliver effective, high-quality services, across systems of care.

5 Establishment of a **classification system** based on risk of institutional involvement to target enhanced services based on necessary level of care.

6 Establishment of a **partnership between DCF and AHCA to maximize funding streams**.

7 Implementation of **strategies to maximize enrollment in federally supported entitlement** benefits such as Medicaid and SSI/SSDI.

8 Establishment of a **Statewide Leadership Group** to provide administrative oversight and facilitate technical assistance with the development of state and local plans.

9 Development of comprehensive and competent **community-based mental health systems** based on evidence-based and promising practices.

10 Development of comprehensive and competent **interventions targeting adults** at risk or involved in the criminal justice system based on evidence-based and promising practices.

11 Development of comprehensive and competent **interventions targeting youth** at risk or involved in the criminal or juvenile justice systems based on evidence-based and promising practices.

12 Recommendations to promote and sustain a **more effective, competent, and sustained mental health/substance abuse treatment workforce**.

13 Recommendations for **oversight of psychotherapeutic medication prescribing practices** in the dependency system and child-protective services.

14 Recommendations for **best practices in screening and assessment in the juvenile justice system**.

15 Recommendations for **educating judges** and other professionals in the courts.

16 Recommendations for **judicial leadership and the development of community collaborations**.

HARVARD PSYCHIATRY BRAIN COLLECTION

Did you know that when you sign the back of your driver's license to donate your organs, the brain is **NOT** included?



Sign up as a brain donor
1-800-BrainBank



www.brainbank.mclean.org

NAMI Florida Selects NAMI member Judi Evans as new Executive Director

NAMI Florida President Linda McKinnon announced the selection of long-time NAMI member **Judi Evans** as Executive Director.

According to McKinnon, "Judi's prior leadership as an advocate and educator for NAMI Affiliates throughout Florida will be of great assistance to the state office, persons with mental illness, and their families."

"Her knowledge and understanding of NAMI and its Affiliates will serve NAMI members and all Floridians with serious and persistent mental illnesses and/or co-occurring substance abuse disorders as she engages NAMI's primary roles in: Support, Advocacy, Fundraising, and Education (SAFE)", she added.

Judi has served as the NAMI Collier County Affiliate President and president of the National NAMI Affiliates' Presidents Council. From these positions, she developed a broad understanding of both National and Florida requirements to raise the awareness of mental illness, remove the stigma surrounding it, and obtain funding to support our programs.

"I am looking forward to a long and productive relationship with the Board of Directors and all NAMI members in our mutual efforts to improve the lives of persons with mental illness," Judi said.

NAMI Florida 2008 Public Policy identifies five priorities for 2008

NAMI Florida's 2008 Public Policy identifies five priorities requiring legislative action:

- 1. Fund the System:** Historically, Florida does not adequately fund social services, specifically mental health and substance abuse services.
- 2. Criminal Justice Issues:** Arrest and detention are often the primary entry methods for mental health treatment.
- 3. Children's Issues:** The continuation of a gross lack of critical early detection, diagnosis, treatment, and family support programs.
- 4. Housing:** Most decent housing is beyond the scope of persons with mental illness.
- 5. Parity:** Equitable mental health insurance coverage is not obtainable.

NAMI, founded in 1979, has become the nation's "voice on mental illness" through its 200,000 members and 1,100 local affiliates. NAMI Florida, celebrating its 20th Anniversary, is comprised of 2,000 members in 35 Affiliates. Untreated, biologically based brain disorders, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder can profoundly disrupt a person's ability to think, feel, and relate to others and their environment. Affecting one in five families, mental illness strikes persons from all walks of life, regardless of age, race, income, religion, or education.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS FORUM

Largo Mid-Pinellas Chamber of Commerce hosted their inaugural Women in Business Forum and Expo in February at the Largo Cultural Center. The theme was "A Balancing Act" and featured several extraordinary guest speakers. Lila Jane, Committee Chair, was the Emcee and she introduced Mayor Pat Gerard, City of Largo, who presented her with a Proclamation honoring the event.

Speakers included Mary Ramsay of Body-Mind Balance; Bevv Beirl, CEO and Editor-in-Chief, Bay Area Business Magazine; Karly Schweitzer, Brain Injury Survivor, and Nicole Johnson, 1999 Miss America.

Patricia Hall, Lynn Hensley and Judy Turnbaugh from NAMI Pinellas County, Florida, welcomed the hundreds of guests to the NAMI Exhibit. Special thanks is sent to Lila Jane and members of the Largo Mid-Pinellas Chamber of Commerce for inviting NAMI to participate.

We look forward to next year's event!



NAMI members joined other local business women at Largo Cultural Center

The Pinellas Park-Gateway Chamber of Commerce 2008 "Country in the Park Trade Show" will host the Community Service Expo, a showcase for area non-profit and government agencies
 Visit the NAMI Pinellas County booth on Saturday, March 15th beginning at 10 am, at the England Brother's Bandshell, located in Pinellas Park at Town Square Plaza Park.

Become a Member of NAMI Pinellas Today!

Name: _____

(Title) (First) (Last) -or- (Name of Organization)

Address: _____ Apt./Unit # _____

(Street Address)

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

Phone [____] _____ E-mail: _____

New Membership: Yes No -or- Membership Renewal: Yes No

Type of membership (Please check):

- Individual (\$40) Family (\$50) Supporter (\$100)
 Open Door (\$3) Student (\$15) Corporate-Business (\$250)
 I believe in NAMI's mission and wish to donate \$ _____.

Relationship to Consumer (please check one if applicable):

- Parent of Adult Child Parent (child under 18) Spouse Adult Child
 Consumer (Self) Sibling or Other Relative Friend Professional

Reason for joining (please check all that apply):

- Family to Family Peer to Peer CIT
 Support Group Education Programs Membership Drive
 Other: _____ (Mar-Apr 2008)

Please make checks payable to: **NAMI Pinellas County, Florida, Inc. and mail to NAMI Pinellas County, Florida, Inc., 466 94th Ave. N. St. Petersburg, FL 33702**

PARTNERS IN CRISIS--FOCUS ON COLLABORATION

Florida Partners in Crisis is a unique statewide organization. The Board of Directors and membership include judges, law enforcement and correctional officials, prosecutors, public defenders, mental health and substance abuse providers, hospital administrators, people recovering from mental illnesses and/or substance use disorders and their families and loved ones.

Membership in Partners is a way to stay informed of mental health, substance abuse and criminal justice system policy developments and funding decisions. It also offers members opportunities for effective advocacy on behalf of mental health and substance abuse services for people in need.

The Mission -- Florida Partners in Crisis promotes state and community collaboration across the mental health, substance abuse and criminal justice systems to reduce contact of people with mental illnesses and substance use disorders with the justice system and support their recovery.

Florida Partners in Crisis strives to achieve the following goals:

1. Promoting education and fostering awareness of mental illnesses and/or substance use disorders and effective treatments
2. Advocating for appropriate and adequate resources for prevention, care, treatment and follow-up services for those who have a mental illness and/or substance use disorder
3. Encouraging community collaboration to promote and implement best practices around effective police response, jail diversion, court intervention programs and re-entry programs that reduce the criminalization for those who have a mental illness and/or substance use disorder
4. Encouraging accountability of providers across systems

NAMI **Meetings Schedule**

Education Meetings

1st Thursday--7:00 p. m. Monthly

Board Meetings

3rd Thursday--6:00 p.m. Monthly

TEMPORARY CHANGE TO
TUESDAY MARCH 18TH

Family Support Groups

3rd Thursday--7:30 p.m. Monthly

TEMPORARY CHANGE TO
TUESDAY MARCH 18TH

NAMI Connections

Consumer Support Groups
Every Monday, 6:30 p.m.

NAMI Connections

Consumer Support Groups
Every Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. at
Directions for Mental Health
8823 115th Avenue
Largo, FL 33773

All meetings are held at
Hospice of the Florida Suncoast
5771 Roosevelt Blvd.
Building 100
The Gathering Place
Clearwater, FL 33760
(unless otherwise indicated)

NAMI Pinellas County, Florida, Inc.
466 94th Avenue North
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Is It Time to Renew? Check the label below for your membership dues date and remember to mail your dues!