



## Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 4 November 2008

### **Training of Trainers: October 2008**

NAMI Connection held its second training of state trainers event last month in St. Louis.

This three day training event resulted in nine new state trainers from four states. In addition to skill development and team building exercises, trainees learned about the different elements of adult learning, classroom management, cultural diversity and how to manage challenging situations.

The trainees were a very talented and compassionate bunch, and we are so happy to welcome them on board!

It's never too early to start thinking about the next Training of Trainers. If you have been facilitating a group for at least five months by April and want to become a NAMI Connection State Trainer, contact your state coordinator for details. The training will be held on April 23-26, 2009, in St. Louis, MO.

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The Newest NAMI Connection State Trainers:

Georgia: Amanda Spencer, Linda Fouts, Linda Peters

Florida: Peggy Yackulich

Michigan: Larry Ackerman, Greg Irish

South Carolina: Sarah Kaminskas, Sheryl

Sparks, Florence Sparks

### **Testimonials**

It is so liberating to be within an environment that is both judgment-free and without stigma!

As a NAMI Connection group member, I get to "take a load off" by gaining strength in sharing my experiences and listening to others respond with positive, constructive solutions.

Thanks to Connection and the friends and support I receive, I am confident that my journey in recovery will continue.



### **Training Progress:**

Facilitator Trainings: 69

Total Facilitators Trained: 1,250

Total Support Groups: 257

# For more information on NAMI Connection:

- Visit our website at www.nami.org/connection
- Call the HelpLine at 1(800) 950-NAMI (6264)
- Send an email to connection@nami.org



**Top Row:** Laura Sweeney, Linda Peters, Florence Sparks, Sheryl Sparks, Linda Fouts, Larry Ackerman, Harriet Kronick

**Bottom Row:** Beth Gould, Greg Irish, Sarah Kaminskas, Amanda Spencer, Peggy Yackulich, Gretchen Anglin



The NAMI Connection team is proud to announce that Gretchen Anglin, former Field Manager for Area Two, will now be the new NAMI Connection Field Specialist. We are very excited that Gretchen will be moving into the important role within our team. She will be working with states to help grow, sustain, and solidify the Connection program.

"I first became involved with NAMI as a family member. I was seeking help in coping everywhere I could. I saw a small ad in the newspaper in my town for a Family-to-Family class; I attended

and was very impressed. Although I had sought help with other groups, and within the system, I was so encouraged by the information and support. As programs opened up in my state of Mississippi, I was given so many opportunities to take training as a Visions for Tomorrow teacher, Support Facilitator, Provider Instructor, Family-to-Family instructor, and eventually as a state trainer and Affiliate leader. Being a Support Facilitator and Affiliate leader were the most challenging roles, and also the roles I enjoyed the most. I soon had the opportunities to develop affiliates, classes and support groups in other areas and to speak to many groups who had not heard of NAMI, all the while being able



to be a Support Facilitator, and see that as the backbone and foundation of everything else I was doing. Seeing programs grow and people become encouraged was so satisfying. The influence of NAMI and the programs on my personal and professional life was life changing for me.

My introduction to and association with the Connection program has been a perfect fit. Although I have fulfilled many roles in NAMI, I see Connection as the program which can move strongly forward and to work hand in hand with all other consumer programs. It is an answer to those dedicated states who have facilitators

working diligently to keep NAMI support going, and a way to help their states support them consistently.

More than anything, I want to see Connection succeed. My respect and admiration for those who have developed the program and worked to help it grow is immense. Right now the program is growing exponentially. Moving toward the goal of having consumer support available everywhere by 2010 is very exciting, and critical to what we have all been working for. I am honored to be a part of it." --Gretchen Anglin



### "A Successful Recovery: My Personal Story"

Written by: Linda Spillers, NAMI Connection Facilitator, Russellville, Arkansas

I am Linda, I am an average ordinary person, and I am a daughter, a sister, a mother, a grandmother, an aunt, a friend, an artist, an advocate for the Mentally Ill, and a facilitator for a support group for NAMI. I was the secretary/treasurer for my Sunday school class for eight years. I vote, I have held a job for fifteen years... and I have Schizophrenia.

I have four cats and a soul mate Terry Spillers, we have been together off and on, when life allowed us to be together since 1989. One cat, Pokes, lives on the front porch. He doesn't have any claws, someone just dumped him off. He has been with us for two years. My favorite color is purple and I love to make friends with people. The more friends I have and the more I make the more I love life. I have a daughter and two grand children. I am the member of Wesley United Methodist Church in Russellville, Arkansas and have been a member for 11 or 12 years.

In 1989 I finally asked for help and admitted that something was wrong with me. I was sent to the State Hospital for a month. When I got out of the State Hospital I stayed with my wonderful dear friends. I was barely functioning; I was living day to day. I took my medication and made my psychiatrist appointments, with the help of my friends.

After about 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  months I started feeling better. I got a job as a waitress then saved enough money to get my own apartment. The medication made me feel better. Now I thought that I was cured, that now I was OK. I also thought that I didn't need the medica-

tion anymore. A few months went by and I got sick again. My Schizophrenia stabilized around Thanksgiving of 2006. I feel like a winner! The schizophrenia attacks me still but not like it was.

If I would not have had the counseling center and their programs, if I had chosen not to take my medication, if I had not had Community support, support from my friends, my Church family, NAMI,

munity support, support from my friends, my Church family, NAMI, Medicare or Medicaid, how would I have gotten this far? I believe in working the counseling programs and taking medications and also having a good diet and exercise program. If I had not had all of these things and everyone helping me and if I had not been

I learned about NAMI Connection at the 2007 NAMI Annual Convention in San Diego. I had facilitated a NAMI-C.A.R.E. support group for NAMI Arkansas since 2005 and I wanted to be a part of the movement...the change that NAMI Connection is about...And now I am. YEA!!!!! NAMI Connection Support Groups should be a part of every community.

listening to everyone I do not think I would still be alive.

My life keeps getting better. Who knows what wonderful things will happen to me next, I can't wait!



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## Are you interested in being a champion for NAMI Connection?

In every community, NAMI is looking for Champions to help ensure that NAMI Connection becomes a successful and flourishing program.

#### Champions can:

- Work with facilitators and local affiliates to distribute NAMI Connection marketing materials to agencies, mental health centers, and other local locations
- Identify sites for NAMI Connection support groups, such as churches, clubhouses, drop-in centers, and hospitals.
- Identify and recruit potential champions and support group facilitators.

Who can become a champion? Champions are consumers, family members, peer support specialists, mental health professionals, former affiliate board members; anyone who is interested in making NAMI Connection succeed in their local area.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a champion, contact your state office or email **connection@nami.org** for more information on how to help!

### What's Happening in the NAMI Education Department?

**Peer-to-Peer:** P2P completed the annual Fall Training of Trainers, graduating 25 mentors from 12 states, as well as Mexico!

Family-to-Family: The Family-to-Family/Veterans Administration Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) project is moving along nicely. A technical assistance document "Getting Started" was prepared for the program states as a guide to determine "readiness" for the F2F/VHA start-up. The document has received positive feedback from many state F2F program directors and executive directors. Since the announcement of the MOU at the Orlando NAMI convention, 38 out of our 48 program states have connected with Veteran Administration personnel and commenced planning timelines for promotion and start-up of the F2F class. Nine states were successful in starting a F2F this fall.

**In Our Own Voice:** Be on the lookout for the new IOOV presentation video that was filmed earlier this year. Also be sure to check out the updated webpage with a 3-minute web clip!

**Basics:** NAMI Basics completed its first Training of Trainers and now has 18 state trainers from 7 states. Nine states will hold teacher trainings this quarter.

### **Upcoming Facilitator Trainings:**

Utah (Salt Lake City): December 5-7

New Mexico (Albuquerque): December 5-7

South Carolina (Winnsboro): December 5-7

Florida (Orlando): December 12-14



### **Monthly Facilitator Calls**

NAMI Connection Field Managers hold a monthly teleconfer-

ence call for the facilitators, affiliate leaders, and state coordinators in each state covering a wide variety of topics. Please contact the field manager\* for your state for more information.

IL, MI, MN, SD, UT, WI

 Anna Goodwin, 1 (866) 446-8433 or agoodwin@nami.org

AR, CT, DE, FL, GA, LA, IN, IA, KY, MD, ME, MS, MO, NE, NM, OH, PA, SC, TX, VA

 Gretchen Anglin, 1 (800) 985-2958 or gmeyer@nami.org

AK, CO, KS, MA, NH, NJ, NY

 Harriet Kronick, 1 (877) 400-2092 or hkronick@nami.org

CA, HI, MT, OK, OR, NV, WA, WY

 Beth Gould, 1 (866) 461-4569 or bgould@nami.org

\*Please note that your state may now have a different field manager.

## Do you want to contribute to the next NAMI Connection newsletter?

We want to hear from you! We're looking for people to contribute to the NAMI Connection newsletter and share their successes, tips, and creativity.

#### Including:

- Poetry
- Articles about local/state involvement in NAMI Connection
- Personal stories
- Artwork
- Spotlight suggestions
- Anything else you want to contribute to the newsletter!

For more information or to submit your piece, email connection@nami.org.