

Ann C. Canastra, MS, NCC, LMHC, ACS, LMSW, LPC
Nominated by NAMI Syracuse (NY)

Nominator Narrative

Henry T. Wilcox Jr

President, NAMI Syracuse (NY)

Strengths and attributes the NAMI Board has identified as high priority needs for the 2023-2024 NAMI Board of Directors; any strengths/attributes identified by the nominator are starred and in bold:

- **Diversity of age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, language, experience, and national geography****
- **Knowledge of the philanthropic community and track record with donor cultivation****
- Experience with a variety of revenue models and financial oversight and management
- **Human capital management****
- Legal and risk management
- **Criminal Justice****

In 250 words or less, please explain how the candidate will use their skills in the areas identified here and in the Open Letter to move the mission of the NAMI Board forward. If the candidate does not have any experience in these areas, please explain what qualities you feel that the candidate possesses that the NAMI Board of Directors should consider when making their recommendations to the membership.

Ann Canastra a member of NAMI Syracuse since 2005, and has been involved in every phase of our organization. In addition, she was the NAMI New York State Board Treasure for two terms. Ann started at the Syracuse VA Medical Center as a MHICM Program Manager in 2005, and in 2011 was made MHICM Program Coordinator. For both NAMI Syracuse and the VA in Syracuse; she has helped to develop programs, taught and trained individuals to be counselors and advocates for mental health, and assisted Veterans and their families and consistently going above and beyond the call of duty. She is a Nationally Certified Counselor, Approved Clinical Supervisor, Consultant to the Mental Health Counseling Board at Regis College, she is part of The Central New York Glitter Gala Philanthropic Organization, and the direct reason for the success of The Off the Mask fund raiser for NAMI NYS. Ann is presently the Program Coordinator for NAMI Syracuse and is already exceeding expectations. Our Executive Director Sandra Carter in commenting on Ann's nomination request said, "Ann is really doing a great job as Education Program Coordinator, so I would like to support her in this." I have not listed all of Ann's qualifications, what a great asset she is to our organization, and what her friendship and dedication have meant to our Board members and constituents! I don't believe there is any candidate that is more qualified, dedicated to helping people, or more dedicated to NAMI than Ann C. Canastra!

This individual has helped advance the NAMI mission in my community by...

Ann has been a key member of NAMI Syracuse since 2005 and has always contributed to the mission of NAMI Syracuse, but also NAMI NYS where she served as NYS treasurer. She is not only an advocate for mental health education but is a respected educator teaching various courses and teaching the teachers

too. As our program director she already exceeded our boards expectations, has created forms to better control the scheduling of presentations and tabling events and created interest among members to become teachers. Her dedication to mental heath education has made her one of the most respected advocates in NYS.

This individual works well in coordination with other leaders to accomplish goals as evidenced by...

Ann has always gone above and beyond what is required and works well with everyone.