



**nami**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

# An Open Message from the NAMI Board President

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The NAMI Board of Directors seeks highly qualified leaders of all backgrounds and experiences to serve on the National Board to represent the interests of NAMI's broad coalition. NAMI has enjoyed continued growth in revenue, as well as recognized leadership in public policy, advances with strategic partnerships and steady program successes. The NAMI Board of Directors has fiduciary and legal decision-making responsibilities to sustain these successes and further strengthen the organization. Not only is the Board accountable for driving and managing revenue growth, but also for steering the organization by adopting policies for ethical and legal governance. Ultimately, the National Board is charged with ensuring NAMI's effectiveness in advancing its mission.

Another pivotal Board responsibility is leadership succession planning which, for the NAMI Board, brings this yearly Call for Candidates to enhance the Board's capacity, as terms end and yearly elections are held. People with knowledge, skills, expertise and life experiences who can contribute effective leadership for growth and impact are encouraged to come forward as Board candidates for 2023.

Given the critical responsibilities as directors of a national nonprofit organization, serving on the NAMI Board requires understanding the complex legal, fiduciary and strategic decisions the Board is routinely required to address.

Prior experiences that lend themselves to successful service include the following:

- Prior for-profit or nonprofit board service for other organizations
- National-level leadership experience—professional or volunteer
- Corporate, administrative or managerial-level experience (public or private)
- Service on the board of an effectively run NAMI State Organization or NAMI Affiliate

This year, five candidates will be elected to each serve a three-year term, replacing current board members whose terms end in June.

## ***Expertise and Experience Needed for the 2023-2024 Board***

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NAMI's core purpose is to create and manage a broad coalition of diverse individuals representing the lived experience of mental illness in order to drive changes in attitudes, policy, services and support for those impacted. NAMI's commitment to invite and include individuals with a wide array of experience honors the strengths of the NAMI movement.

- **Diversity of age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, language, experience, and national geography:** In order to best serve the widely varying needs of the NAMI movement the Board must constantly strive to reflect the diversity of those impacted by mental illness. The NAMI Board specifically seeks people of color, as well as people living in states/regions currently under-represented. All other domains of diversity are also welcomed and encouraged. Please review the profiles of the board members continuing into 2023-2024 at [www.nami.org/board](http://www.nami.org/board) and consider nominating a person you know who would bring diversity, experience, and skills currently lacking or under-represented on the National Board.

- **Knowledge of the philanthropic community and track record with donor cultivation:** NAMI relies on strong relationships with the philanthropic community in order to continue to grow the movement and deliver on the mission. Board members play an instrumental role as ambassadors and partners in identifying opportunities, engaging new supporters, and cultivating valuable connections.
- **Experience with a variety of revenue models and financial oversight and management:** Given the increasing size and complexity of the organization’s budget, the Board must be laser-focused on long-term financial sustainability in service of bringing the NAMI mission to individuals, families, and communities everywhere. Individuals with professional experience in financial management, accounting, banking, trusts, and/or investments are needed to help enhance the expertise of the Board in 2023.
- **Human capital management:** Individuals with professional experience in human resources, personnel development, and management can offer valuable insight to leadership of this rapidly growing and developing organization.
- **Legal and risk management:** NAMI’s alliance model includes interdependencies between the national office, state, and local affiliates on a wide variety of topics. Board members with expertise in legal and risk management professions are needed to advise NAMI leadership on evolving issues related to programs, policies, and infrastructure.
- **Criminal Justice:** Individuals with professional and/or lived experience in the criminal justice system (federal, state, or local) are sought to provide insight as NAMI implements this important component of its strategic plan.

The NAMI Board is asking that each candidate respond in writing specifically about his/her/their knowledge, experience, and expertise in these highly desired areas.

In addition, the NAMI Bylaws require that a minimum of 75% of the board comprise persons who have or have had mental illness, or parents or their relatives thereof, including civil and domestic partners. To ensure compliance with this requirement, all candidates are asked to identify if they have either had lived experience of mental illness or are a family member of someone with lived experience. Because all currently seated board members for the 2022-2023 term do self-identify under this definition, nominations of those who do not have lived experience as an individual or as a family member are welcomed to this 2023 election cycle.

### ***When Considering a Nomination***

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Service on the NAMI Board is a fulfilling experience. We are honored and humbled to represent the members who elected us, and we are dedicated to doing the best job possible for NAMI and its vital mission. We invite able and experienced leaders from all walks of life to join us in this remarkable journey—and we thank the thousands of NAMI members who inspire and focus us in our work.

We encourage those who are considering seeking election to contact us at [voting@nami.org](mailto:voting@nami.org). Thank you for all that you do, every day, to support NAMI!

- Learn more about NAMI Board Service [here](#).
- Learn more about the 2023 NAMI Elections, including details about the nominations and bylaws amendment proposal processes, [here](#). More information about the 2023 NAMI Elections will be posted regularly at [www.nami.org/2023elections](http://www.nami.org/2023elections).