



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI Central Iowa

FROM THE DIRECTOR

This year, we received one holiday gift a little early. At an awards ceremony at Reiman Gardens on November 9, Story County Community Foundation (SCCF) awarded NAMI Central Iowa a grant of \$20,000.00 to continue the work of the Mental Health Wellness Center. The pilot project that was funded by United Way of Story County endowment funds ends on January 31, 2012.

The Wellness Center has been a great success so far, with around 200 visits each month, thanks to the hard work of our coordinator Linda Sawyer and her core of volunteers. The \$20,000.00 will cover rent, utilities, supplies, and salary for the coordinator through June 30, 2012.

It also will allow us to find a permanent location and refurbish it to fit the ongoing programs of the center. We are deeply grateful to SCCF for this money which will help people living with mental illness have a space of their own to learn new skills, set goals for a healthy lifestyle, socialize, and reach out to help others. This is definitely a gift that will keep on giving!



FREE SERVICES PROVIDED BY NAMI-CI

DAILY

- Support and information available at the NAMI-CI office*
- Support and activities for persons with mental illness at the Mental Health Wellness Center, Monday to Friday, 1-4PM, Trinity Church**

WEEKLY

NAMI Connection support group for persons with mental illness:

Thursday 2-3:30PM Trinity Church**

MONTHLY

• Educational meetings featuring local specialists speaking on topics relating to mental health

3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:00PM
(location varies, see calendar on p.4)

• Support group for family members

4th Thursday of the month at 7:00PM

Trinity Church (**December 29 this month**)**

YEARLY series of educational classes offered for persons with mental illness and for family members

Family to Family for family members of adults with mental illness

Peer to Peer for adults with mental illness

**Trinity Church, 3626 Ontario Street, Ames, IA

Director: Deb Niehof (515) 292-9400; namiofci@gmail.com

***Office Hours:** 9-12AM Monday-Wednesday; 1-4PM Thursday-Friday

***Office Address:** 130 S. Sheldon #306, Ames, Iowa 50014

Learning to Advocate by Lynne Baltzer

Peir Corner (*PEIR = PErson(s) In Recovery*)

Since the beginning of NAMI's history, advocating for the best possible treatment, research, and support for people with mental illness and their loved ones has been a high priority. Attending the national convention in July of this year reminded me that NAMI and NAMI-CI provide resources that all of us can use to advocate for ourselves as well as others who are affected by mental illness.

Many people have expressed to me that they don't feel comfortable with advocacy for a variety of reasons. In this article, I'd like to show that advocacy is simply a skill that can be learned and that can take various forms. Advocacy is not restricted only to people who understand everything about an issue or those who enjoy making public speeches. The important thing, as I learned at the convention, is to start with step 1 and move forward.

The Step-by-Step Method to Advocacy

1. **Think of one time or event where you asked for something you wanted, or a time when you said you wanted something to change.** At that point you were an advocate, even if it was something as simple as when I ask for individual help in my knitting lessons. In those situations, I do not tell myself "Lynne, you are going to have to advocate for yourself. Think through the best wording and consider how the teacher will react to my request." I just ask. These situations are, in fact, being an advocate.
2. For one day or even one week, be aware of things you need or want to change. Did you find something you wanted to ask someone to do for you, or something you thought was wrong or unfair? In step 2, you **decide what you are going to do about the situation.**
3. In this step you start to **prepare for being able to advocate about situations in your life** that are more important or daunting. Trying to shape the treatment for mental illness is more important than asking for silverware in a restaurant (which would be a step 2 example); this increased importance can cause increased anxiety. Putting aside thoughts of how to actually follow through can help you focus on Step 3, which is all about practicing and getting prepared. Start by writing down the necessary information that you will eventually share. First, introduce yourself (first and last name) and your role (you live in their district, you are their client). Second, share why you are writing or talking. The third sentence tells more specifically what you need and how the reader can help. One example from my experience five years ago went like this: "I want to be sure you know that if you do not change your mind and continue to accept my insurance, I will believe you are cruel and are breaking your code of ethics. I hope you will listen to me and seriously consider my point of view."
4. In the final step, in as few words as possible, **let the person know how doing what you are asking will help.** Finish with a Thank You and you are done.

Although advocating on any level isn't easy, I believe that everyone touched by mental illness has an important story to tell. Educating about mental illness is a big job, one that requires all of us to participate, and advocating is an important way to educate and remind people in a way they will remember that what they do is noticed, important, and affects your quality of life. Particularly now, in the months leading up to the 2012 election, we can all identify areas of needed change and share them with current and prospective elected officials.

For more specific information about legislation and advocacy issues, check out p.3 of the newsletter or the Resources tab on the NAMI-CI website (<http://namiofci.org/resources.html>).





Iowa Mental Health and Disability System Redesign

Workgroups have been meeting throughout the state and have submitted a preliminary recommendations report to the Legislative Interim Committee for review. See the full report here:

http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/docs/Iowa_Redesign_Interim_Report_Final.pdf

As the recommendations are considered, DHS is reaching out to consumers, family members and advocates across the state to gain input into the proposed core services, those services that would be available statewide. We would like to better understand how these services may benefit Iowans as well as identify what services you believe should be priorities as we transition to an improved mental health care and intellectual and developmental disability system that helps all Iowans achieve the quality of life they desire. **All surveys need to be completed online no later than December 5, 2011.**

You may complete the survey online here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/IARedesignSurvey>

Find more information:

<http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/Partners/MHDSRedesign.html>

Send in your comments or other input: DHS-MHSRedesign@dhs.state.ia.us

Internet Resources for Advocacy Information and Support

(follow up to "Learning to Advocate" article)

Iowa Legislature home page: Find committee members, email your legislators:

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Legislation.html>

Advocacy messages and talking points:

http://www.nami.org/Content/NavigationMenu/State_Advocacy/Tools_for_Leaders/State_Advocacy_2010_Key_Messages_and_Talking_Points.htm

Iowa Department of Human Services home page: Find resources, education events, send your comments:

<http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/>

Summary of 2011 SF 525 IA DHS Disability services redesign interim purpose and process:

<http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/docs/MHSummarySF525Workgroups.pdf>

Bill tracker via InfoNET:

<http://www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTrackerClientView/tabid/89/Default.aspx?cid=infoNET>

Bill Tracker/ search and summary:

<http://www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTrackerClientView/tabid/89/ctl/Detail/mid/387/xmid/978/xmfid/5/Default.aspx>

News and Events, December 2011



Family to Family will be offered at the Boone DMACC campus on Monday evenings beginning February 20 from 7:00-9:30 p.m. Carpooling will be arranged from Ames. Call the office at [515-292-9400](tel:515-292-9400) for more information or to register.

Volunteers Needed

In order to do the work of NAMI Central Iowa more efficiently, the board is asking for volunteers to serve on several new committees. Each committee will be chaired by a member of the board. Volunteers should expect to give at most 1-2 hours of time each month.

The committees and their chairs are:

Program committee – Deb Niehof
Fund raising – Willow McLaughlin Hill
Public relations – Mike Gluesing
Finance committee – Jim Peake
Membership – Wendie Cooper.

Please contact the office if you are willing to help in one of these crucial areas.

Support NAMI-CI This Holiday Season

Sunday, December 4

1-4PM: Shop the unique selection of crafts, food items, and gifts of all kinds from around the world at Worldly Goods at 223 Main Street in Ames.

15-20% of the profits will go to NAMI-CI.

Saturday & Sunday, December 3-4

1-5PM: Altrusa Holiday Home Tour

Tour some beautiful homes in Ames for holiday decorating inspiration. Tickets may be purchased at Mary Kay's Flowers, Everts, Coe's and at the Ames/ISU Information Booth on University Blvd. (\$10 in advance, \$12 at the door.) A portion of ticket sales will go to NAMI-CI.

Note Date Change: Family Support Group will meet on Thursday, December 29 at 7PM at Trinity Church (3626 Ontario St.) this month.

January Educational Meeting

17: Schizophrenia and Schizoaffective

Disorder: Shellane Albaugh from the

Richmond Center; 7PM at Collegiate

Presbyterian Church at 159 N. Sheldon Ave.



NAMI Iowa Walks October 1, 2011

It was a beautiful day and a successful fundraiser: Stepping out of the Shadows, the NAMI-CI team, had 20 walkers sporting bright pink shirts who raised over \$5,000! The funds will support our state NAMI office as well the Mental Health Wellness Center here in Ames. A big thank you to all supporters, volunteers, and walkers.



NAMI Central Iowa Gives Annual Awards

NAMI Central Iowa gave out its annual awards at its educational meeting on November 15. Royce Ann Stockton (left) received the Outstanding Volunteer award for her many hours of volunteering at the Mental Health Wellness Center and for facilitating the NAMI Connection support groups. Jean Kresse (right) accepted the Stick Your Neck Out award on behalf of United Way of Story County, which has provided funding for many NAMI Central Iowa programs as well as the Mental Health Wellness Center pilot project.



Board Member Profile

Wendie Cooper, Board President

- Raised on a dairy farm east of Exira, Iowa and came to Ames in the 1970s to go to college at ISU
- Married to husband Kevin for 37 years
- Has three grown children and three grandchildren, two of which she enjoys caring for regularly
- Connected to NAMI through the Family to Family program, which gave them support, care, and information about how to help their family member
- Enjoys volunteering with the peer art programs as well as creating a variety of art herself
- Particularly excited this year about the new Wellness Center: “The dream many of us have had of a wellness center is happening right before our eyes. It’s been amazing to feel the support of our community through this process and we are so thankful for the grants that we have received to make it happen.”

Thanks, Wendie, for your service on the NAMI-CI board!



NAMI CI Members’ Art Displayed at the College of Design:

These 11 pieces of art, created by 9 members of the Creative Arts and Art Therapy groups, were displayed at the Iowa State College of Design for a month. The display promoted the annual United Way campaign by giving a beautiful example of a great program that is partially funded through United Way dollars. Congratulations to our local artists!



December 2011

**Mental Health Wellness Center
3626 Ontario Street, Ames**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1	2
	Call 292-9400 for more information about the Wellness Center.		1:30 Meet with Deb Niehof 2-3:30 Connection Group	1-3 Book Club Stephen King's <i>Full Darkness No Stars</i> 1-4 Whole Health stress reducing activities
5	6	7	8	9
1-2:30 Redesign of MH system update with Teresa Bomhoff of NAMI Des Moines	CENTER CLOSED except for 1-2 Chair Yoga 3-5 Writing group	1-2:30 Whole Health 3-4 Journaling Styles	10:30-12:30 Photography at Reiman Gardens 1:00 Conversation 2-3:30 Connection Group	Making cards and journals Seasonal Music
12	13	14	15	16
1-4 Crafts, Conversation and Cookie Baking.	1-2 Chair yoga with Marie Edwards 3-5 Writing group	1-2:30 Whole Health	1:00 Conversation 2-3:30 Connection Group	2-3:30 Art Activity with Wendie
19	20	21	22	23
1-4 Gift Wrapping with seasonal music and more cookie and candy making	1 Conversation and beverages 2-4 Writing group	1-2:30 Whole Health	1:00 Conversation 2-3:30 Connection Group	Movie and snacks
26	27	28	29	30
Center Closed for Christmas	1-2 Gratitude	1-2:30 Whole Health	1:00 Conversation 2-3:30 Connection Group	Early New Years Eve Party Bring a snack to share

Conversation, crafts and beverages are available every day the center is open. Scheduled activities are subject to change. The Thursday group is the peer-led NAMI Connection Support Group. Suggestions for activities and presentations are appreciated.



NAMI Central Iowa
 130 S. Sheldon, Room 306
 Ames, IA 50014

December 2011 Newsletter

The NAMI-CI newsletter is published six times a year by NAMI Central Iowa ([NAMI-CI](#)). NAMI-CI is dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. Our mission is to provide them with [support](#), [education](#), and [advocacy](#).

NAMI-CI is a [United Way](#) partner agency and is an affiliate of [NAMI Iowa](#) and of NAMI, the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#).



To make changes to your contact information, to receive your newsletter by email, or if you no longer wish to receive the NAMI-CI newsletter, email or phone the NAMI-CI office at namiofci@gmail.com or 515-292-9400.

Becoming a member of NAMI-CI is easy. Just complete this form and mail with appropriate dues to:

NAMI-CI
 130 S. Sheldon #306
 Ames, IA 50014

Membership Dues

<input type="checkbox"/> Family/Individual	\$ 35.00*
<input type="checkbox"/> Limited Income	\$ 2.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra donation	\$ _____

*Includes \$15 Local/\$10 State/\$10 National

Member Information

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Check here to receive newsletter by email