

With more than 230,000 members, NAMI is America's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness.



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Georgia Crisis & Access Line
Single Point of Entry to access mental health, addictive disease and crisis services 24/7
1-800-715-4225

What Is An Ombudsman?

Monday, June 21, 2010
Education Meeting 6:00 PM
CONTACT Training Building – 1520 22nd Street

Wikipedia defines an **ombudsman** as a person who acts as a trusted intermediary between an organization and some internal or external constituency while representing the broad scope of constituent interests. So what does that mean to us and for us? Need more information? So do I. To find out more, come to this month's education meeting and meet Jewel Norman, our Georgia Mental Health Ombudsman.

The 2008 General Assembly revamped the ombudsman's office it created in 2000 (but never funded until now) to oversee the quality of services delivered in the state's seven psychiatric hospitals and community mental health system. The mental health ombudsman is a five year appointment. On July 16, 2009, our Governor appointed Jewel Norman as the State Disability Services Ombudsman to represent citizens and families dealing with mental illness and developmental disabilities.

Jewel Norman has served as Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive Officer of a large private for profit residential treatment facility. She has also served as a regional vice president of a psychiatric hospital corporation and served as interim CEO for a number of larger comprehensive psychiatric hospitals. Ms. Norman received her undergraduate degree from the University of Mary Washington and master's degree from the University of Virginia.

Consumers and family members/caregivers need to advocate often until our mental health system provides all that is needed to help people get into and stay in recovery. Knowing how to advocate and to whom is key knowledge that we all need to have in order to be effective. Knowing what an ombudsman does and what we need to do to utilize this resource is critical. **Don't miss this opportunity to find out how to advocate through the ombudsman's office.**

Our membership and the general public are encouraged to attend Jewel Norman's presentation and applaud her efforts on our behalf. She is a member of our NAMI organization and we need to welcome her and show our appreciation and support for all she is doing for us.

~ *Mimi Marlowe*



Message from Mimi

I usually look towards the future when writing this message. However, this month I want to take a look back and reflect on our last education meeting.

On May 17, we introduced the NAMI Georgia Faith Outreach initiative to a room full of people who had a lot of excitement and curiosity about this program. I want to give special thanks to our guest speaker from Atlanta, Dr. Branko Radulovacki. He is so passionate about NAMI connecting with the faith communities and everyone in the room could feel that energy. He wants NAMI to do what we do best...provide awareness, education and support to those who need it. In order to do that to a larger group of people, we need the clergy and lay leaders to help us and that means they need more awareness about the services we offer.

I also want to thank some very special guests who attended: Rev. Matt Avera, Rev. Zeph Baker, Rev. Ivelisse Quinones, Rev. Alonza Whittaker, Rev. Tony Bankhead and Rev. John Adams from the Pastoral Institute. There were other faith community friends of NAMI Columbus who wanted to attend but had a prior commitment. We already have strong supporters in our faith communities in Columbus. Now it's time to widen the circle.

You'll be hearing more about this after the Faith Outreach roadmap is unveiled at NAMI Georgia's Leadership Seminar on June 19 in Atlanta. Susie Kyle, president of NAMI Northside, and I will be co-presenting the Faith Outreach roadmap. My sister, Sue Marlowe, will be presenting the Programs roadmap. If Faith Outreach is to be successful, NAMI affiliates need to have programs in place. We already have them here in Columbus thanks to Sue's leadership as president. Now we're trying to reach other affiliates and help them. I'll share more information in our July newsletter.

In the meantime, start talking about NAMI Columbus at your place of worship. We want NAMI to become a household name so we can help the families in those households find a place to get education and support when they need it. NAMI Columbus is here...we just need to make sure people know about us!

~ Mimi Marlowe, President



2010:
Year of the Volunteer

July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

Throughout the month of July, NAMI state and affiliate organizations are encouraged to join efforts across the country to increase public awareness of mental illness among diverse communities. Minority Mental Health Awareness Month was established by the U.S. House of Representatives in 2008 in honor of Bebe Moore Campbell, distinguished author and NAMI advocate of mental health education and support.

If NAMI Columbus wants to support this, we need to start planning now! Just as Mental Illness Awareness Week in October offers NAMI an opportunity to increase public awareness of mental illness, NAMI can create powerful collective awareness of mental illness, treatment, and research in diverse communities in July by hosting special events and partnering with local businesses and organizations. The NAMI Multicultural Action Center has developed a helpful list of suggested activities for July to help get us started in our planning.

Let's see what we can do make Minority Mental Health Awareness Month something special in Columbus by:

1. Visiting www.nami.org for a list of suggested activities and for more information on Bebe Moore Campbell Minority Mental Health Awareness Month.
2. Contacting the NAMI Columbus office (706-320-3755) or email us (info@namicolos.org) with your ideas.

NAMI Georgia Walk 2010

This is the #1 way for NAMI Columbus to raise awareness about mental illness and, by the way, also raise funds to help us with our support, education and advocacy efforts in our community.

This year we are planning a NAMIWalk Kickoff Luncheon in July. We'll be sending out a separate announcement with the day/date, time and location. **Please give us suggestions for invitees.** We want representatives from organizations who will build a team and help us make 2010 the most successful year ever.

THE



TO RECOVERY

NAMI Columbus C.A.R.E.S.

Consumers Achieving Recovery thru Education & Support

Meds & You

In every issue of *bp*, psychiatrist **Steven Weisblatt, MD**, helps our readers become educated consumers of psychiatric services. The goal: getting the best possible outcome from treatment. In our [Spring issue](#), he covered some common questions about medication treatment—and explained why sticking with meds is so important

A recent study on “poor pharmacologic adherence” (or noncompliance) in people with bipolar, published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* in March, found that patients who were not good about keeping up with their medication in the first three months of treatment had less improvement in functioning after a year. Understanding the misconceptions that contribute to skipping or dropping meds could lead to better compliance—and thus, a better life with bipolar.



Some insights from Dr. Weisblatt:

- **Hang in there!** Meds often give some relief from symptoms within weeks, but full remission can take months or even years of active treatment.
- **Compare the prospective risks of taking medications to the proven risks of not taking medication**—not only the increased likelihood of suicide, but also losing jobs, friends and family relationships because of uncontrolled symptoms.
- **It's tempting to stop taking a med when symptoms disappear**, but it's not so easy to just start up again when the need arises. As Dr. Weisblatt points out, “in bipolar disorders a medication that was previously effective may no longer work.”

This article came from *bp* magazine and you can subscribe and receive a hard copy or subscribe online for a small cost. *bp* is NAMI National and DBSA approved and often has very intriguing articles.

<http://www.bphope.com/SubscriptionChoice.aspx>



Key Points about Recovery

- Recovery involves accepting that one has a mental illness.
- Recovery is an attitude that makes it possible for one to believe that he or she can regain from losses caused by mental illness.
- Although recovery involves individual choices, attitudes and efforts, it also involves participation with others.
- Recovery is taking responsibility for understanding one's illness and for working on one's quality of life.
- Recovery requires on-going commitment to overcome setbacks and to continue trying to make life more productive and fun.
- Recovery includes grieving one's losses to the illness and refusing to stay stuck in “what might have been.”
- Recovery means seeing one's self as a person, not just an illness or diagnosis, and redefining roles and relationships.

For additional information about recovery, visit the National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse at

<http://www.mhselfhelp.org/>

Advocacy News

Caregivers Bill Signed Into Law

Surrounded by members of the House and Senate Veterans Committees and members of several veterans organizations, President Obama on Wednesday, May 5, 2010, signed Senate Bill 1963, The Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act.

The bill creates a caregiver support program, improves health care services for America's women veterans, and expands the mental health services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), among other things.

Highlights of the bill include:

Provides Caregiver Support

Immediate support for veteran caregivers by creating a program to offer caregiver training, access to mental health counseling, and 24-hour respite care in the veteran's home. This allows caregivers temporary relief without having to leave the veteran at a medical facility. Veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) are eligible to select a caregiver to receive a financial stipend along with travel and lodging expenses that are associated with the veteran's care.

Welcomes Home Women Veterans

Expands and improves VA services for the 1.8 million women veterans currently receiving VA health care – AND goes one step further by anticipating the expected increase of women warriors over the next five years. This bill seeks to build a VA health care system respectful of the unique medical needs of women veterans. For the first time, VA will be authorized to provide health care for newborn infants of women veterans.

Veteran Homelessness

Expands the number of places where homeless veterans may receive supportive services. For veterans struggling without a roof over their heads, this small change in the law will make a very big difference in their lives.

Rural Health Care

Improves the health care provided to our rural veterans by authorizing stronger partnerships with community providers and the Department of Health and Human Services. These collaborations will allow VA to offer health care options to service members living far from

the nearest VA medical facility. S. 1963 also requires the VA to establish a grant program for veteran service organizations to provide transportation options to veterans living in highly rural areas.

Increases Mental Health Care Access

Addresses the troubling reality of post-traumatic stress and troubling incidents of suicide among the veteran population. This bill requires a much-needed and long-awaited study on veterans' suicide and requires the VA to provide counseling referrals for members of the Armed Forces who are not otherwise eligible for readjustment counseling.

Go to the National Association for Uniformed Services website for more information on this Act:

http://naus.informz.net/naus/archives/archive_800535.html



Open Doors To Recovery Project Moves Forward

We recently received the following announcement from Eric Spencer, Executive Director of NAMI Georgia:

“Please join with me in congratulating Nora Haynes, Diane Reeder, John Richards, Julie Spores, and the many other individuals that worked so hard to create the Region 5 Summit Report and develop the Open Doors To Recovery Project that emerged from Committee #4 – Case Management.

The Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation has informed us that they will be awarding the two-year grant to us as requested. **This is fantastic news!**

We can now move forward with planning and development of the project. Our work has only just begun, but let's take just a moment to pause and thank those folks who have done so much to pull this off.”

Year 1 Goal: Open Doors to Recovery (ODR) is a pilot research project designed to promote recovery and reduce recidivism by 20% of adults with serious mental illness who have recycled more than once in a year in a ‘deep end;’ specifically a jail, prison, state hospital, or homelessness. Year One will focus on data collection, systems development and amalgamation, and on specially trained case managers and those selected to participate in the study with them. The adults with serious mental illness have met criteria and are being discharged from Savannah Regional Hospital.

Upcoming NAMI Events

June 2010	July 2010 <i>Minority MH Awareness Month</i>
1-3 National CIT Conference, San Antonio	No Monthly Education Meeting
14-18 Muscogee County Sheriff's Office CIT	TBA NAMI GA Walk Kickoff Luncheon
17 Peer-to-Peer Course – Week 1 (Ends 8-19)	1-3 NAMI National Convention, Wash. DC
21 Monthly Education Meeting	12-16 Columbus Police Dept. CIT
28 Mental Health Court Graduation, Govt. Center (rescheduled from May 10)	16-18 NAMI GA Facilitator Training, Atlanta (NAMI Connection and Family Support Group)
29 NAMI National Convention, Wash. DC	
August 2010	September 2010
9 Mental Health Court Graduation	9 Family-to-Family – Week 1 (Ends 11-18)
16 Monthly Education Program	18 NAMI Georgia Walk 2010 (Atlanta)
23-27 Muscogee County Sheriff's Office CIT	19 Peer-to-Peer – Week 1 (Ends 11-21)
	20 Monthly Education Program

Support Groups

Every Monday night, 6-7:30 pm Family/Friend and NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups
Every Saturday 1-2:30 pm NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group

Meeting Location:

- NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups meets at The Bradley Center's Multipurpose Room (use 22nd Street Parking Lot)
- Family/Friend Support Group meets at the CONTACT Training Building, 1520 22nd Street

What's coming up that we want to highlight...

Change in Date:

- **Mental Health Court graduation**, originally scheduled for May 10, has been changed to **Monday, June 28**. We only had a few ready to graduate recently but a lot of people will be graduating in May and June. We want a big celebration of this outstanding achievement. Please mark **June 28** in your calendar and come join us.
- **NAMI Georgia Walk 2010**, was originally advertised to be held on October 2. However, logistical problems means we will now walk on **Saturday, September 18**. There will be lots of information in this newsletter, as well as in July, August and September. But make a calendar change right now so you can walk with us.

Peer Support "Warm Line" at 1-888-945-1414 (toll-free)

The Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network operates a state-funded, consumer-directed "warm line" for anyone struggling with mental health issues, 24 hours a day.

Possibilities



We're working diligently on matching NAMI Columbus needs to the interests of our volunteers. If you're looking for new opportunities, come to this page each month. Think about it! What are you passionate about? What are you interested in? How can you connect to NAMI Columbus? What opportunities does NAMI Columbus have that would fulfill your need to give back to the organization that helped you in your time of crisis? If you see something that interests you, please contact us (706-320-3755 or news@NAMICols.org).

NAMI Columbus Volunteer Opportunities

We're looking for a few good men, or women, to help us in the following areas:

Mental Health Court NAMI representative: NAMI Columbus has supported the MHC since its inception. One way we do this is by having two NAMI representatives attend each court session to talk with people in the program and their family members about our support groups and education programs.

- Each court session lasts approximately two hours (1:00-3:00pm) on the first and third Friday of the month.
- The major responsibility of a rep is to talk to people about NAMI and encourage them to attend a support group meeting (NAMI Connection for consumers or the family support group). A flyer is available to hand out.
- Someone experienced will go with you at the beginning so you can see what this is all about.
- **All we need is YOU!**

NAMI Columbus Greeter: We want people to have a good experience when they come to a NAMI education meeting. Do you like people and want to make them comfortable when they come to our monthly meetings? The NAMI Columbus Hospitality Committee could use you as a **Greeter**. You would be one of two people and your responsibilities would include:

- Warmly greeting people as they arrive (wearing one of those famous NAMI smiles).
- Asking each person to sign in.
- Providing a name tag for each person to wear (even long-time members should have a name tag to help newcomers feel more comfortable by knowing our name).
- Taking a new person (new to NAMI) into the main room and introducing them to someone who is familiar with NAMI Columbus. Ask them to be a welcome buddy to a newcomer. The other greeter stays at the door.

SPECIAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Two of NAMI's signature programs are the NAMI Connection and NAMI Family Support groups. Many of our newest members come to us as a result of these well-facilitated groups. We have some facilitators who have generously volunteered their time for several years. Now it's time to bring in some new people and let others have a little rest.

As a facilitator, you'll be well-trained and follow a model that makes it easy (most of the time) to facilitate a support group. A training class for both the family and NAMI Connection group is scheduled for July 16-18. **NAMI Georgia will pay for your hotel and food.** If you have an interest in helping NAMI Columbus and think this might be something you would like to do, please contact the office (706-320-3755) and we can discuss it in further detail.

THIS AND THAT

Keep On...

- **Using Goodsearch.com as your search engine.** I tell people that I'm going to Goodsearch something, rather than Google. A lot of people ask what Goodsearch is and I tell them what it is and why we want to use it. It helps us make money for our affiliate every time someone uses this search engine. And you can buy things online with a percentage of the money coming back to NAMI Columbus. Help us make money the easy way.
- **Letting NAMI Columbus know about items you want to donate to the October 2010 yard sale.** If you have unwanted items and can't keep them until October (particularly furniture) please, call the NAMI Columbus office (706-320-3755) to make arrangements.

Did you know?

On May 25, 2010, NAMI honored 22 doctors as "Exemplary Psychiatrists" at the American Psychiatric Association (APA) annual conference in New Orleans.

- Three of the psychiatrists, Michael T. Compton, M.D., M.P.H. – Atlanta, Branko Radulovacki, M.D. - Atlanta and Mary Lynn Tyson, M.D. – Augusta were nominated by NAMI Georgia affiliates. Way to go!!!!
- "We are proud to honor these psychiatrists for their exceptional dedication to people living with mental illness," said NAMI Executive Director Michael J. Fitzpatrick.
- NAMI's "Exemplary Psychiatrists Awards" honor psychiatrists who have "gone the extra mile" in their commitment to excellent care, reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness and working closely with NAMI members in their communities on public education and advocacy.

NAMI Membership and Dues

- Thank you if you have already renewed your dues for NAMI Columbus. Our national database system conversion had real problems in 2009 and is finally up and running. But during the downtime, we didn't send out requests for renewals. So be looking in your email inbox as we'll be sending our renewal notices soon.
- If you haven't joined NAMI yet, you can easily go online to www.nami.org/join and become a member. It is really easy and helps Columbus because NAMI National does not keep any portion of the dues. It all goes to our local affiliate and NAMI Georgia. **Just make sure you sign up for NAMI Columbus.**
- If you have any questions about your membership status, please email us (www.info@namicols.org).



It's time to start planning the 2010 NAMI Walks Kick-off Luncheon. It will be in July here in Columbus. So we're looking for people who are willing to give us some of their thoughts/ideas about how we can make this luncheon a success. The invitees will be people in our community who can support us by forming teams and helping us raise awareness (and money) about mental illness and recovery.

You can be as involved as you want to be. Our first big push is an initial planning meeting next week. If you like to plan and like parties, call Mimi Marlowe, 706-320-3755, and get more information.

Thank You!

- Rev. Tony Bankhead for stepping up and volunteering to be our NAMI Columbus Faith Outreach Coordinator. before we even launched the program. Tony is the first in the state to volunteer for this position.
- David Johnson, Tony Bankhead, and Jonathan Greene for teaching the FaithNet Family-to-Family course that began on May 25. It is volunteers like you who help those coming after you find the information and support they need.
- To all our members who volunteer to facilitate the weekly family support group and semi-weekly NAMI Connection meetings each week. They help so many people and we're getting a lot of new people.

Have You Heard...



- That we'll have two Columbus High School seniors helping us this summer at the NAMI office. Steve Scott set all of this in motion and he and I met with our new volunteers, Katie and Anthony, on June 1. This will count as their senior community service project.
- About the retirement celebration held for Perry Alexander last month. I didn't do an actual headcount but it looked like over 100 people were there to give Perry our best wishes. Our own Sue Marlowe was one of the invited speakers. Perry's last day at the office was Friday, May 28. But he's not leaving us. He still plans to be active with NAMI for which we're very grateful.



Columbus

The Area's Voice on Mental Illness

P.O. Box 8581, Columbus, GA 31908, (706) 320-3755

I want to support NAMI Columbus and NAMI's mission.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Phone Numbers (do not enter a number if you do not want to be listed in the Membership Directory (members only).)

E-Mail (Please include so we can be green and email you our monthly newsletter.)

Please check type of membership desired:

- Individual Membership \$30 Dues
- Professional Membership \$50 Dues
(Individual and Professional Dues are for one year and are tax deductible.)
- \$3 Open Door Membership (low income)
- I am not joining at this time, but I would like to make a contribution of \$ _____. (Thank you!!!)

✂ Please Cut and Mail ✂

NAMI National, NAMI Georgia and NAMI Columbus are dedicated to eradicating stigma and improving the lives of persons with mental illnesses thereby also benefiting their friends, family and community. Catch the wave and be a part of change.

NAMI Columbus is the largest affiliate in Georgia. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization. Dues and donations are tax deductible. Membership includes a subscription to our monthly newsletter, membership directory, (501((3) and access to immediate news on advocacy, treatment and support issues from our national, state and local organizations.

Please make checks payable to:

NAMI Columbus
P.O. Box 8581
Columbus, Georgia 31908

You can also join safely online at www.nami.org/join (\$35.00 by credit card).