MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This is a brief report on the current “health” of NAMI Texas. Since the change in NAMI office leadership in December 2012, all NAMI Texas staff were retained, pre-existing and new vacancies at Via Hope were filled, and seven new employee and contract positions were added to meet the requirements of a 2013 Texas Veterans Commission grant (Operation Resilient Families). In addition to maintaining a high level of productivity in existing grants, applications were filed to extend two important grants which directly assist people living with mental illness in moving forward with their recovery, and concepts were developed to seek funding for critical work to equip parents and schools for implementing tools to aid in early detection and treatment of mental illness in children.

The NAMI Texas staff continues to do excellent work under the direction of Interim Executive Director, Patti Haynes, who drives from Dallas weekly to be in the office Monday – Thursday. Board and staff collaborated to simplify, standardize, and streamline accounting and work processes for greater efficiency and effectiveness. Board Treasurer, John Tatum, with the assistance of Andrea Hazlitt, Patti Haynes, and selected staff recently completed a Business Plan that incorporates elements of an updated Strategic or Master Plan, a Market Assessment and Marketing Plan, a Fund Development Plan, and a Regional Assessment of affiliate needs by the agreed deadline. This major planning effort was supported by a generous grant from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health.

(Continued on page 2)
The full complement of the talented people required to produce grant deliverables are in place. Activities funded by grants include:

- strengthening public policy and legislative advocacy (Greg Hansch and Board Public Policy Committee chair, Sharon DeBlanc)
- providing leadership and advocacy training for people living with mental illness (Maurice Whitfield and Board volunteer, Rose McCorkle)
- extending Operation Resilient Families to military veterans and families across Texas via a network of coordinators led by Lynne Tucker
- building infrastructure and capacity to better support affiliates to grow and become stronger (Stacy Hollingsworth, Patti Haynes, and Board Affiliate Outreach Committee chair, Ed Dickey)

We’re pleased to report that the national search for a NAMI Texas Executive Director produced 86 applicants. The search committee, consisting of seven Directors and two non-Board affiliate leaders chaired by Vice President Ed Dickey, carefully evaluated and progressively narrowed the list over a period of six weeks. The Board is currently conducting interviews in Austin with the most highly qualified candidates.

After hiring a new Executive Director, the next critical area for Board focus is financial management and sustainability. Converting to the more robust, accounting standards compliant Sage 100 software and bringing the payroll function in house will result in a significant annual savings in cost and time. For increased sustainability, we must find ways to raise more unrestricted funds. We’ll let you know how you can help! While grants provide important support for moving the NAMI Texas mission forward in some major segments of the population, the small amount of unrestricted funds available (currently about 10% of the budget) inhibits our ability to reach out to other populations, for example, those who are unaware of NAMI Texas and how it might help them, their families, and friends. Of the 26 million people in Texas, about 4.3% experience serious and persistent symptoms of mental illness, which the DSM-IV-TR defines as symptoms which severely impair a person’s ability to function. The SPMI segment is estimated as more than one million people in Texas! NAMI Texas has fewer than 2000 members who are current in their dues. If we deploy resources to be more effective in communicating the facts about mental illness across the state, we anticipate that stigma would be reduced, people would be encouraged to get the help they need, NAMI Texas membership would increase, and community and state leaders would be more pro-active in supporting the needs of people living with mental illness.

Thank you for your steadfast support and stay tuned for more opportunities to contribute to the success of NAMI Texas in “improving the quality of life for all individuals living with mental illness and their families”!

Best regards,

**Andrea Hazlitt**

President, NAMI Texas Board of Directors

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**Please Register Today for Spring and Fall NAMIWalks at [www.namiwalks.org](http://www.namiwalks.org).**

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Capitol Day Rally: Band Together for Mental Health
By Greg Hansch, NAMI Texas Public Policy Coordinator

On February 28th, we hosted a rally and advocacy training at the Texas State Capitol in partnership with Mental Health America of Texas and the Federation of Texas Psychiatry. To all who were in attendance, thank you for coming to Austin to voice your views on the state of mental health care system in Texas; our lawmakers needed to hear from you and you delivered!

Over 360 people pre-registered for Capitol Day and a number of others registered on-site. After the advocacy training got under way with a welcome from the leaders of the three hosting organizations (including Patti Haynes of NAMI Texas), State Rep. Cindy Burkett (District 113) shared a touching personal story about family members of hers affected by mental illness. Her powerful words did a great job of setting the tone for the rest of the day.

Rally attendees were then briefed on the policy perspective of our coalition, providing talking points for the legislative visits that would occur in the afternoon. Greg Hansch from NAMI Texas, Clayton Travis from Texans Care for Children, and Gyl Switzer from Mental Health America of Texas spoke during this portion. Topics included Department of State Health Services funding requests, Medicaid expansion, and policy recommendations in the areas of schools, prevention and early intervention, workforce capacity, access to services, and the criminal justice system. Eric Woomer from the Federation of Texas Psychiatry and Joe Lovelace from the Texas Council of Community Centers conducted an effective legislative advocacy training involving a role-playing scenario between a lawmaker and a constituent.

After lunch and sign-making, we headed over to the south steps of the Capitol to start the rally. Sharon DeBlanc of NAMI Texas helped to get the crowd excited for the speakers and legislative visits to follow. We then heard several very inspiring, energetic speeches from various state legislators (including some surprise guests): Sen. Whitmire, Rep. Naishtat, Sen. Schwertner, Rep. Riddle, Rep. Burkett, Rep. Naomi Gonzalez, Rep. Mary Gonzales, and Rep. Gene Wu. It is clear that there are lawmakers at the Capitol who are passionate about advocating for our cause. Herb Cotner then spoke to the rally attendees about his experience working as Mental Health Liaison for the Dallas Police Department, making the case for increased funding for mental health care and housing. Closing out the rally was Amy Pierce of Bluebonnet Trails Community Center. Her story of recovery was on everyone’s minds as we moved into the Capitol to meet with our legislators. The summaries that rally attendees filled out about their legislative visits indicate that there is significant legislative interest in our cause but that we still have a long way to go.

We finished the day by meeting for a reception, where people shared their experiences with the legislative visits from earlier in the afternoon. Our rally was covered by the Associated Press, KUT Austin, and various other media outlets. Thank you to everyone who helped make the Mental Health Capitol Day Rally a successful event!

Thank You to our Mental Health Capitol Day Rally Supporters!
Mental Health Capitol Day: February 28, 2013

NAMI Tarrant County gearing up for the advocacy training.

The Federation of Texas Psychiatry’s advocacy roll play.

NAMI Texas’ Interim Director, Patti Haynes

The crowd of advocates gather on the Capitol steps.

NAMI Texas’ Public Policy Chair, Sharon DeBlanc

Representative Cindy Burkett
Mental Health Capitol Day: February 28, 2013

State Sen. John Whitmire

Members of St. Joseph’s clubhouse at the rally.

State Sen. Charles Schwertner

State Rep. Mary Gonzalez

Bluebonnet Trails Advocate

State Rep. Elliot Naishtat

Senior Corporal Herb Cotner of the Dallas Police Department

ATCIC Advocate

Amy Pierce of Texas Catalyst for Empowerment
NAMI Texas Welcomes our New Lobbyist, Keith Hampton

For the 83rd Session of the Texas Legislature, NAMI Texas has selected Keith Hampton as its lobbyist. Upon receiving his J.D. from St. Mary’s University School of Law, San Antonio, Texas, Hampton went on to become board certified in criminal law. Hampton entered private practice and has had an active career distinguished by numerous publications, published opinions and 40 published cases. His dedicated defense of his clients’ rights have brought him before the Supreme Court of the United States, and earned him numerous awards as well as national and local press recognition. Hampton has served as NAMI Texas’ lobbyist in the past, most recently for the 82nd Session of the Texas Legislature in 2011.

SAMHSA Consumer Network Grant:
Effecting Change through a Peer Learning Community

By Maurice Whitfield, NAMI Texas Advocacy Coordinator

In 2012, NAMI Texas was proud to be one of the many outstanding organizations to be awarded the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Consumer Network Grant. NAMI Texas is also the only organization in the State of Texas to be a part of the 2012 cohort.

The purpose of the NAMI Texas project, which is titled “Effecting Change through a Peer Learning Community”, is to strengthen and build the voice of individuals in recovery statewide, and support their involvement in the development and implementation of mental health policy. NAMI Texas will provide training and educational opportunities for individuals in recovery, and strengthen their knowledge base so that they are more effective leaders and advocates on policy issues. Participants in the Peer Learning Community will be placed on boards, committees and advisory councils that are involved with making mental health-care policy decisions. In these positions, they can effectively and regularly advocate for improvement of services for individuals with a mental illness and or substance use problems.

Maurice Whitfield, the NAMI Texas Advocacy Coordinator, is the Project Coordinator for this grant. He is very excited about this opportunity and with the support of SAMHSA, NAMI Texas Partners, Statewide Family and Consumer Networks Technical Assistance Center, and the 2012 grantee cohort, we will truly make a change. If you are interested in joining, please contact Maurice at mwhitfield@namitexas.org.
NAMI Family-to-Family Webinar Trainings: Family-to-Family State Trainers and Teachers Mark your Calendars!

NAMI is getting ready to roll out the 5th edition of Family-to-Family in March 2013. All F2F Teachers using the current edition will need to be recertified by September 1, 2013 in order to continue to teach the F2F curriculum. The good news is that the recertification will be done through webinars. See below for the webinar schedule for current state trainers and teachers. Those who miss the webinar will have an opportunity to go to the website and listen to it on their own. New teacher manuals will need to replace the ones that are currently being used.

NAMI Texas is here to support you during this transition. Please feel free to contact Patti Haynes at phaynes@namitexas.org if you have any questions or concerns.

NAMI Family-to-Family State Trainer Orientation Webinars
March 26 (3:00 p.m. EST) & April 4 (11:00 a.m. EST)
- State Trainers are required to participate in one orientation webinar, and can choose one of the following options:
  - Participate in the live webinar (either of the times listed above)
  - Listen to a recorded webinar
- The recorded webinar will be posted on the NAMI Education Help Desk within two days of the first live webinar. (March 28)
- The completion of a knowledge assessment will be required to be considered oriented to the program revisions.
- By December 2013, all state trainers should have completed orientation.
- Education Directors will follow online and track when orientation is completed online.

NAMI Family-to-Family Teacher Orientation Webinars
March 26 (11:00 a.m. EST) & April 4 (3:00 p.m. EST)
- Teachers are required to participate in one orientation webinar, and can choose one of the following options:
  - Participate in the live webinar (either of the times listed above)
  - Listen to a recorded webinar
- The recorded webinar will be posted on the NAMI Education Help Desk within two days of the first live webinar. (March 28)
- The completion of a knowledge assessment will be required to be considered oriented to the program revisions.
- Teachers may continue to teach the course using the 2012 materials until they have had the orientation.
- By September 1, 2013 all new classes should use new materials.
- Education Director will follow online and track when orientation is completed.

De Familia-a-Familia Teacher Orientation Webinars
March 28 (11:00 a.m. EST) & April 2 (3:00 p.m. EST)
Since the horrific school shooting in Connecticut, the phone in Angelina Brown Hudson's office seems to be ringing constantly.

Of the two dozen calls she alone has answered, most are from parents desperate to talk to someone about their children, some of whom have been self-mutilating or acting out violently toward others.

She understands, on so many levels. Not only is Hudson the education and training coordinator for the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Metropolitan Houston, commonly known as NAMI, the 43-year-old is also the mother of three children, one of whom is autistic and two of whom have been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, known as ADHD.

Hudson herself "walked in the dark" for many years after her children's diagnoses, almost losing her marriage, before she went to her first education class for parents of children with mental illness. She didn't know there was help in dealing with her son's autism, or her daughter's ADHD, and in the meantime, she was being eaten alive by the "stigma, shame and guilt" that often accompany such diagnoses.

"You just go home with your diagnosis and your bottle of pills and you don't talk to anybody. And that's not good. That's going to grow a fungus. And it did," Hudson said, suggesting that's what may have happened in the case of Connecticut shooter Adam Lanza.

Hudson finally learned about NAMI through an official at her son's school. She volunteered there for years while staying home to care for her autistic son, and now she makes a living counseling and talking to groups about mental illness.

"Prior to taking the class, I didn't have any confidence my marriage was going to make it," Hudson told me, explaining that she didn't understand at the time her husband's aloof non-response to the children's diagnoses was his own way of grieving. "I oscillated between wanting to run for the hills and checking my own self into a hospital," she said. "I didn't feel I could raise the children I'd given birth to. I didn't know what to do."

In time, she would learn the statistics that would help her realize how common her challenges really were: One in four Americans has a mental health disorder. About 88 percent of marriages where there's a mental illness on board end in divorce. About 70 percent of children diagnosed with ADHD go on to have a secondary mental illness.

Texas is ranked last in the nation for funding mental health services, investing only $38 per person, compared with the national average of $123 per person. There's more help for children than for adults, who are in dire need for more supportive housing and employment programs that can get them back on track to independent lives.

But sometimes, even when care is accessible, people will avoid it because of stigma, Hudson said: "Children would rather say, 'I'm a drug addict, or HIV positive, I have cancer, I'm a felon' - anything - before they say, 'I have mental illness.' Anything. Because they don't want people to say they're crazy."

Hudson says mental illness is still "modern-day leprosy." We've failed to normalize it the way we've somewhat normalized HIV, she says, perhaps because we can't see it the way we can physically see someone dropping 80 pounds due to illness.

As a society, she says, we wait until a problem is so large that it affects our everyday lives. Sandy Hook was like that. It's 1,700 miles from Houston, but we're all feeling its impact - especially the parents whose children have exhibited severe behavioral problems.

To parents who call for help, Hudson urges them to find a support network, and most of all, to get educated. She says a program called Mental Health First Aid, from the National Council on Disability, is one of the best resources out there for the lay person. For those specifically calling about a child under 18, Hudson recommends a class called NAMI Basics. If it's a family member over 18, she recommends a NAMI class called Family to Family. All of our classes are free. And it's the best-kept secret in Houston," Hudson says. "No one else does what we do. When a parent calls, we listen. We don't say, Hold on, let me get you a number and send you somewhere else. We say, OK, tell me. Tell me about it." And Hudson is pretty good at understanding, too. After all, she's been there.
NAMI Hearts and Minds Program
Incorporating Wellness into One’s Recovery

The NAMI Hearts & Minds program is an online, interactive, educational initiative promoting the idea of wellness in both mind and body. Wellness is an ongoing process of learning how to make choices that support a more successful, healthy life.

Engaging in a wellness effort can make a huge difference in the quality of your life. One study, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, showed that taking the wellness approach can result in a 17 percent decline in total medical visits and a 35 percent decline in medical visits for minor illnesses.

Wellness is about the individual; you can decide what parts of your life you would like to change and you can determine your own success.

**Increased Heart Disease Risk for People with Mental Illness:** People living with mental illness are often at higher risk for heart disease and much of that risk is preventable.

People living with mental illness are more likely to have classic heart-risk factors, such as cigarette smoking, obesity, diabetes, elevated cholesterol and hypertension (high blood pressure), some of which can be compounded by some antipsychotic medications.

**Metabolic Syndrome and Type 2 Diabetes:** America is having an epidemic of diabetes according to the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Unfortunately, the risk is greater for people living with mental illness, especially those taking second-generation atypical antipsychotic medications (SGAs). Another issue to be aware of is metabolic syndrome, a condition that can be a precursor to diabetes.

**Questions?** If you need more information on any of the wellness topics or have any questions, please send an e-mail to heartsandminds@nami.org.

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**NAMI National Annual Convention comes to San Antonio this year!**

In place of the annual NAMI Texas Conference, the NAMI Texas Board will host a NAMI Texas special event during the NAMI Convention in San Antonio on Friday afternoon, June 28 during the state caucus sessions preceding the evening presentation, “I’m Not Sick, I Don’t Need Help”, Understanding Anosognosia, by Xavier Amador, Ph.D.

To register for the convention, go to [www.nami.org/convention](http://www.nami.org/convention).
Do You "Like" NAMI Texas? Please Follow Us on Facebook and Twitter!

Want to stay in the know when it comes to the latest in mental health news? Or, would you like to receive periodic updates on NAMI events?

Then, "Like" our NAMI Texas Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/namitexas](http://www.facebook.com/namitexas), and follow us on Twitter at [https://twitter.com/NAMITexas](https://twitter.com/NAMITexas).

Thanks to all of our fans! We’ve nearly hit our goal for the year and appreciate you sharing our info with your family, friends and colleagues.

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Thank you to our NAMI Texas Corporate Partners!
NAMI Texas Mission:
NAMI Texas is dedicated to improving the quality of life of all individuals living with mental illness and their families.

Memberships:
To become a member of NAMI, please contact your local affiliate at www.nami.org/local.

Donations:
To make donations to NAMI Texas, please visit www.namitexas.org/donate, or call us at 1-800-633-3760.

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Julia Wilson, Assistant to Executive Director
Kelly Jeschke, Membership Coordinator & Office Manager
Kathleen Burnside, Grant Writer
Alexis Wadsworth, Communications Director
Stacy Hollingsworth, SOE Affiliate Coordinator
Maurice Whitfield, Advocacy Coordinator
Lynne Tucker, ORF Program Coordinator
Greg Hansch, Public Policy Coordinator

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