



## NAMI Nevada

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**NAMI Nevada**  
c/o Community Health Alliance  
680 S. Rock Blvd  
Reno, NV 89502  
Phone: 775-336-3090



National Alliance on Mental Illness

*Building Hope for Recovery through Education,  
Support and Advocacy*

*January—March 2016*

Welcome to the first issue of *Spotlight*—NAMI Nevada’s quarterly electronic newsletter. This newsletter provides a vehicle to share information on upcoming events and trainings that are happening throughout the state, as well as feature guest columnists, Affiliate updates, book reviews, legislative news and much more! I welcome your feedback, ideas and suggestions.

Since coming onboard a little over six months ago, I have seen firsthand how fortunate we are to have such a dedicated group of NAMI volunteers throughout the state. From teaching classes, coordinating meetings and trainings, providing support to members and their families, taking phone calls from desperate family members or consumers, reaching out to our rural, tribal and Latino communities, and by keeping watch on our legislature and elected officials—NAMI volunteers keep the wheels moving. If you would like to know more about any of our NAMI signature education programs, or are interested in volunteer opportunities, please contact me or your local NAMI Affiliate.

As most of you know, Nevada ranks near the bottom of all the states in mental health funding and services. The telephone calls we get each day in the NAMI Nevada office confirms this statistic. NAMI is truly a vital resource to all Nevadans! Your membership and continued support of NAMI are crucial to expanding our educational programs throughout the state and helping to end the stigma of mental illness.

It’s not too early to begin thinking about the 2016 NAMI National Convention that will be held in Denver Colorado on July 6 - 9. The national convention is a unique opportunity to learn more about the science of mental illness, medication and treatment methodologies, and to hear inspiring stories of recovery. To get the best “*First-on-Board*” member rate of **\$195**, you must register no later than **January 31, 2016**. Prices rise as the convention date nears. Please go to [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org) to register or for more information.

It is a great pleasure to be a part of such an amazing organization and I look forward to working with all of you. Wishing you and yours a very healthy, happy and prosperous New Year!

*Ginger Paulsen*

*Executive Director*

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# Courts, Mental illness and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.



By  
**Kelly Ranasinghe**  
Senior Program Attorney, NCJFCJ

Court can be a frightening place for people with mental illness. Unlike courts on television, courtrooms in real life are small and crowded. Court calendars (called “dockets”) move quickly, with a great deal of noise and commotion. All of the shouting, movement and rules can make it easy for people with impaired processing to become over stimulated. In addition, the numerous rules for courtroom behavior can be overwhelming, and court procedures such as checking-in and finding your particular court can be intimidating and confusing. Listening for long periods of time can tax cognitive resources, and most of all, the idea of a black-robed and unsympathetic judge can cause severe anxiety.

The good news is most judges know that going to court is extremely challenging for people with mental illness, and hundreds of local justice systems around the country are making efforts to work with people with mental health needs. Along with other organizations, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) is also working to help courts and judges be more responsive to mental illness.

NCJFCJ is headquartered in Reno, Nevada and is the largest judicial organization in the United States. Through training, education, and assistance, NCJFCJ works with judges around the country to make courtrooms more sensitive, accessible and effective. In addition to conducting training in domestic violence, custody, and juvenile justice, NCJFCJ also provides judicial training in trauma and mental illness, as well as individualized support (called ‘technical assistance’) to judges and courts. NCJFCJ works closely with the National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice (NCMHJJ), and the US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to support courts that are trying to work more effectively with youth and family court parties with mental illness and trauma.

What sort of things does NCJFCJ do? Here’s a quick list of just some of the ways NCJFCJ work to make courts more responsive to mental illness:

- NCJFCJ published “Judicial Leadership to Address Adolescent Mental Health Needs” a step-by-step guide which helps juvenile judges understand how to work with community mental health systems, and understand mental health evaluations for adolescents.

- NCJFCJ published “New Directions to Effectively Address Co-Occurring Mental Disorders,” a policy brief to help juvenile drug treatment courts understand how mental illness and substance abuse interact.
- Staff conducted “Trauma Audits” to help court systems see where local court procedures can re-traumatize youth and victims of domestic violence, and inhibit a judge’s ability to interact and speak with them in court. Including training court personnel on the effects of trauma.
- NCJFCJ worked with NCTSN to support states as they develop their own projects to help connect victims with critical assistance, including treatment for mental health and mental illness. Trained judges in the cross-over between youth with mental illness and trafficking and sexual exploitation, as well as the mental health effects of victimization by domestic violence.

But do judges *really* understand the needs of the mentally ill? While many judges would say we still have a long way to go, there have been profound changes in sensitivity of the court to mental health needs. In fact, many judges are actively involved with their local mental health system. Judge Calvin Johnson, the former Chief Judge of New Orleans Parish Criminal District Court, created the first mental health court in the entire state of Louisiana. (Judge Johnson is incidentally, also a board member of NAMI New Orleans). Judge Kevin Fitzwater was recognized by NAMI in 2009 for establishing the first mental health court in New Mexico. Judge Steve Leifman, the creator of Florida’s 11th Circuit Mental Health Project, pioneered diversion of non-violent mentally ill defendants from jail. Just this August, Judge Leifman received the nation’s highest judicial honor, the “William Rehnquist Award.” Describing Judge Leifman, the Chief Judge of Florida said “...*Troubled by people with mental illnesses cycling through his Miami courtroom, Judge Leifman decided to take action. His unwavering commitment and compassion in the years since that moment have brought astounding results, changing and saving lives, bringing families back together. He has made our courts more just and our society more humane.*”

Continued on next page

**Courts, Mental Illness and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges—Continued from page 2**

In many ways, Judges act as the confluence of systems which work with the mentally ill. It is no surprise that criminal courts interact with the mentally ill on a daily basis, but Judges in Conservatorship and Probate also address questions about capacity in the context of mental illness. Juvenile judges may work with children affected by trauma and depression, and have to be very familiar with the lexicon of psychotropic medication. Family court judges are frequently called upon to look at the mental health dynamics in intimate relationships, and assess parenting concerns with young children who have mental illness. In many instances, a Judge’s identification of mental illness may be the first time a litigant has been referred to an agency who can help them.

Today, there are more than 300 standing mental health courts nationwide. Beyond these courts, there are hundreds of other judges that apply mental illness sensitivity to their own unique dockets involving veterans, the homeless, addicts, teens,

and courts for victims of trafficking and domestic violence. Throughout the country, judges are becoming more adept at recognizing the telltale signs of undiagnosed mental illness and making efforts to connect litigants with resources in their community. Many courts also realize that they function as the confluence of local and state assistance programs and are in a unique position to help people identify state agencies and community partners which can assist them.

For more information on how the NCJFCJ works with courts on mental illness, you can visit: <http://www.ncjfcj.org/our-work/mental-health>

The views expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not reflect the policy or viewpoint of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.



Much has been happening with NAMI across the State, as you can see when you read the articles in this newsletter. Last year was a year of growth in our programs and our outreach to the community. 2016 will continue this trend. We continue to concentrate on building our infrastructure by training more teachers, facilitators and presenters. We are holding a NAMI Connection Support Group facilitator training on the weekend of January 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, in Reno. NAMI Connection is the support group for individuals with mental illness. We will hold another NAMI Connection facilitator training in Las Vegas in the spring. We will also hold a NAMI Family Support Group facilitator training in the coming months. A Family-to-Family teacher training will be held in Las Vegas during the first half of the year. These trainings are needed to increase the number of teachers and facilitators to provide more programs. We are especially happy that we have been able to expand our programs to Elko.

You will read an article by Kelly Ranasinghe. Kelly was recently appointed to the NAMI of Northern Nevada Board of Directors. We welcome Kelly and thank him for stepping forward to volunteer. Our base of volunteers is growing and we welcome everyone. Even if you don’t have time to volunteer, you can support NAMI Nevada. By becoming a NAMI member you provide valuable support. Joining is easy: join online through [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org); join by writing a check to NAMI Nevada for \$35, or if that is a hardship, you can join NAMI Nevada’s “Open Door” membership for only \$3 (“Open Door” memberships cannot be processed online, cash/check only). When you join, either online or by sending in a check, you automatically belong to all three levels of NAMI – national, state and local Affiliate. You can also donate to NAMI Nevada by sending a check to our office. One more opportunity is to support NAMI Nevada on Nevada’s Big Give Day on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Here is a Web site that explains this opportunity: [https://nvbiggive.razoo.com/giving\\_events/nv16/home](https://nvbiggive.razoo.com/giving_events/nv16/home). Your donation will help us keep our organization going, answering calls, supporting our Affiliates and growing our programs. As a member or donor you add your support as we advocate for access to care, parity in coverage of mental health services, and not institutionalizing individuals in jails.

**Sandy Stamates, President  
NAMI Nevada**



National Alliance on Mental Illness

# NAMI Northern Nevada

## Greetings from NAMI Northern Nevada!

Over the last couple of years, NAMI in Nevada has made great strides. We have welcomed our sister affiliate, NAMI Western Nevada onto the scene along with a number of talented and capable people into our ranks. NAMI Northern Nevada, with help from NAMI Nevada is building foundations for more growth and change.

NAMI Northern Nevada plans to hold its yearly fundraiser, the Walk-and-Talk, in early May of 2016 in Idlewild Park at the Snowflake Pavilion. The event will feature live music performances, free food and refreshments, a face-painting clown and guest speakers discussing the greater mental health issues going on in Nevada. There will also be a silent auction and a raffle for prizes. Fun will be had for all. NAMI Northern Nevada continues to hold its Educational Dinners, usually held the last Thursday of each month at The Bridge Baptist Church in Reno located at 1330 Foster Dr., nearby Reno High School. Dinner begins at 6:00 pm and a speaker addresses the audience on mental health issues, innovations in mental health treatment, new mental health services being made available and testimonials from individuals in recovery from mental illness.

Hopes are high that in the next year, NAMI will come to be recognized on the UNR campus and beyond. Efforts are being made to find audiences for IOOV presentations and student inclusion in the soon to be held NAMI Connection Support Group training in Northern Nevada this month, January.

Thank you NAMI members in Nevada for everything that you do!

**Gerald O'Brien, President**  
**NAMI Northern Nevada**



National Alliance on Mental Illness

# NAMI Southern Nevada

## Welcomes New Board Members!

NAMI Southern Nevada would like to recognize our newly appointed board members. After a long and careful selection process, we feel that our new board members represent diversity and have the dedication to helping families and individuals with mental illness.

- **Denna Atkinson**—Executive Director of the Foundation for Recovery
- **Ron Bloecker**—Interim President NAMI Southern Nevada
- **Sharde' Edwards**—Director of Community development at Montevista Hospital
- **Kiara Estill**—Psychosocial Rehabilitation Specialist
- **Michelle Giddings**—DNP, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, Grand Desert Psychiatric Services
- **Kimberly Gilbert**—Service Coordinator, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services-Mesquite
- **James Jobin**—MFT, Pastor, Clinical Program Manager, Las Vegas Recovery Center
- **Lorna Lizotte**—MA, Care Management Specialist, Beacon/Value Health Options
- **Brent Longtin**—Regional Vice President, HCA Behavioral Health Services

NAMI Southern Nevada will hold their first board meeting on January 28, 2016 at which time they will elect officers and select committee chairs. NAMI Nevada will also be conducting a NAMI Board Member Training on January 30, 2016 to help all incoming board members get started with a better understanding of NAMI overall and how to build a strong organization. **Welcome aboard!**



# Western Nevada

## Happy New Year!

NAMI Western Nevada (NAMI WNV) is anticipating an extraordinary year of growing our NAMI community throughout the rural areas of northern Nevada in 2016.

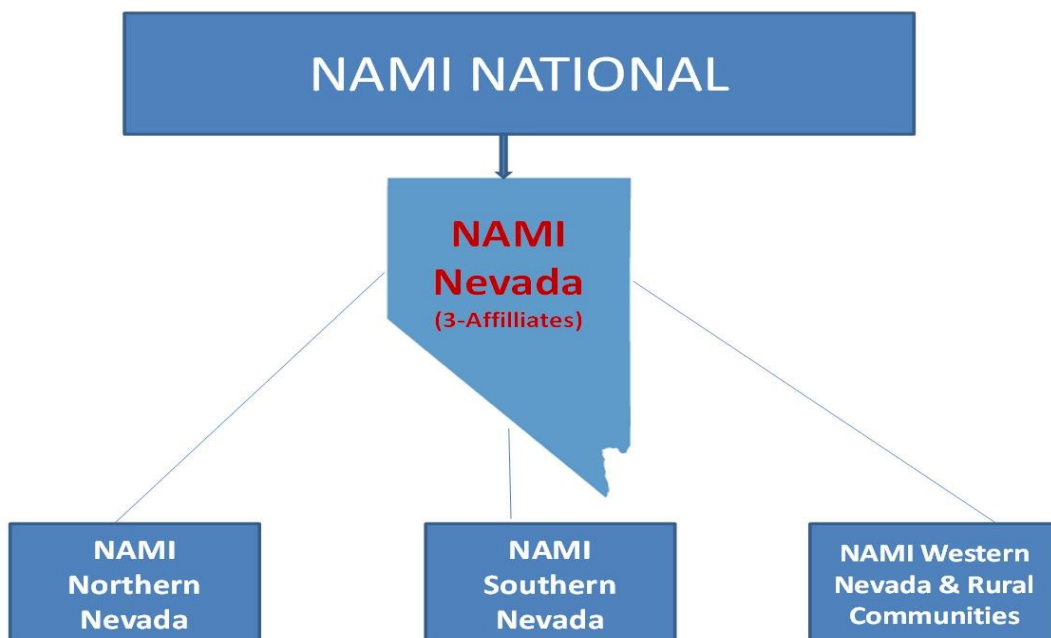
We are about to launch a January-March Carson/Douglas Latino outreach program which includes En Nuestra Propria Voz , Familia a Familia and Bases y Fundamentos. St. Gall parish in Gardnerville is helping us reach Spanish speaking neighbors who need our family and peer supportive programs.

We are nurturing a new NAMI community in Elko and will be offering NAMI Family to Family at Great Basin College starting in February. After our January Reno Connection training, Elko will have two of these recovery support groups. Go Elko!

Soon we will be scheduling monthly Recovery Dinners again. This spring we will offer a free Mental Health Legal Forum for all individuals and families who want to learn more about NV Mental Health Law and local Jail Diversion programs. All this will be in addition to our regular schedule of peer and family programs. We are keeping both NAMI WNV peers and families very busy - and we are honored to do this work with so many committed volunteers and partners! Thank you!

**Sarah Adler, President  
NAMI Western Nevada**

## NAMI Organizational Structure in Nevada



# 2016 NAMI National Convention Denver, CO July 6 – 9, 2016



2016 Pre-convention Full Registration Rates (includes the closing night banquet).  
Please go to [WWW.NAMI.org/Convention](http://WWW.NAMI.org/Convention) and register now!

## Registration Type:

### Member

**First-on-Board \$195 Before 1/31/16**

Super Saver \$215

Early Bird \$240

Consumer Early Bird \$160

Young Adult Early Bird \$160

### Non-Member Deadline

\$260 01/31/16

\$285 03/31/16

\$325 Before 5/31/16

\$220 Before 5/31/16

\$220 Before 5/31/16

## NAMI Convention Headquarters:

### Sheraton Denver Downtown

**2016 Convention Rate is \$149 per night (plus 14.85% tax)**

## NAMI READING RECOMMENDATIONS



PATRICK J.  
KENNEDY  
AND STEPHEN FRIED

A COMMON  
STRUGGLE

A PERSONAL JOURNEY THROUGH THE PAST AND  
FUTURE OF MENTAL ILLNESS AND ADDICTION

Published—October 15, 2015  
A *New York Times* Bestseller

Patrick J. Kennedy, the former congressman and youngest child of Senator Ted Kennedy, details his personal and political battle with mental illness and addiction, exploring mental health care's history, in the country alongside his and every family's private struggles.

On May 5, 2006, the *New York Times* ran two stories, "Patrick Kennedy Crashes Car into Capitol Barrier" and then, several hours later, "Patrick Kennedy Says He'll Seek Help for Addiction." It was the first time that the popular Rhode Island congressman had publicly disclosed his addiction to prescription painkillers, the true extent of his struggle with bipolar disorder and his plan to immediately seek treatment. That could have been the end of his career, but instead it was the beginning.

Beyond his own story, Kennedy creates a roadmap for equality in the mental health community, and outlines a bold plan for the future of mental health policy. Written with award-winning healthcare journalist and best-selling author Stephen Fried, *A Common Struggle* is both a cry for empathy and a call to action.

## WHAT IS NAMI HOMEFRONT?

NAMI Homefront is a FREE, 6-session educational program specifically for families, caregivers and friends of military Service Members and Veterans who experience symptoms of a mental health condition. Based on the nationally recognized NAMI Family-to-Family program, NAMI Homefront is designed to address the unique needs of family, caregivers and friends of those who have served or are currently serving our country. The program is taught by trained family members of service members/veterans living with mental health conditions.

You will experience compassion and reinforcement from people who relate to your experiences. Through your participation, you have the opportunity to help others grow. NAMI Homefront teaches you how to:

- Manage crises, solve problems and communicate effectively
- Learn to care for yourself, including managing your stress
- Develop the confidence and stamina to support your family member with compassion
- Identify and access federal, state and local services
- Stay informed on the latest research and information on mental health, including post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse
- Understand current treatments, including evidence-based therapies, medications and side effects
- Navigate the challenges and impact of mental health conditions on the entire family

Currently NAMI Homefront is only available in northern Nevada. As we grow and train more teachers, we will offer this class in more locations throughout the state. For more information, please contact the NAMI Nevada office at 775-336-3090.



While Congress lets mental health reform legislation languish on the sidelines, millions of Americans struggle daily to get the mental health care they need. Congress should play like America's team and champion bipartisan mental health reform (HR 2646 and S 1945) now.

How will mental health reform legislation help? Mental health reform will help people living with mental health conditions by:

1. **Improving the availability of quality mental health care**
2. **Promoting early identification and intervention**
3. **Reducing criminalization**
4. **Enforcing insurance parity**

Please tweet and email your U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative and **urge them** to pass mental health reform (HR 2646 and S 1945) now. [Email Now!](#) [Tweet Now!](#) **Thank you for your advocacy!**

# Information You Can Use

## Support Groups

### NAMI Northern Nevada (Reno/Sparks/Verdi)

#### **Weekly Family Support Group and NAMI Connections Support Group**

**When:** Monday evenings, 6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

**Where:** Renown Regional Medical Center, 1155 Mill Street, Reno, NV 89502

Both support groups meet on the first floor near the Education & Simulation Center on the ground floor of the Sierra Tower, close to the Pediatric Emergency Room. Both meetings meet at the same time in different rooms. Call 775-336-3090 for more information.

### NAMI Southern Nevada (Las Vegas//Henderson/Paradise/Spring Valley/Boulder City)

#### **Weekly Family Support Group and NAMI Connections Support Group**

**When:** Tuesday evenings, 6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

**Where:** On the campus of the Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, 6161 W. Charleston Blvd., Building 2, Las Vegas, NV 89146. Both support groups meet at the same time in different rooms.

### NAMI Western Nevada (Carson City/Dayton/Silver Springs/Gardnerville/Minden)

#### **NAMI Recovery Connection**

**When:** Meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month, 4:30 p.m.—5:30 p.m.

**Where:** At Carson Counseling and Supportive Services, 1665 Old Hot Springs Road, Suite 150, Carson City, NV 89706. Call NAMI Western Nevada at 775-440-1626 for more information.

#### **NAMI Family Support Group**

**When:** Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, 6:00—7:30 p.m.

**Where:** Compass Behavioral Health, 224 E. Winnie Lane, Suite 212, Carson City, NV 89706  
Call NAMI Western Nevada at 775-440-1626 for more information.

## Nevada Medicaid

Nevada has two managed care organizations—**Health Plan of Nevada** and **Amerigroup**. You are required to select from either of these two managed care providers when you sign-up for Medicaid. Information regarding eligibility call toll free **1-800-992-0900**.

### Health Plan of Nevada Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services

- Inpatient Mental Health Services
- Covered for members under age 21 or age 65 and older
- Alcohol/substance abuse & treatment services
- Rehabilitative services
- Outpatient counseling (Psychiatric and Psychological Services)
- Psychological testing and/or evaluation prescribed by a physician
- Crisis intervention therapy
- Case management services for some illnesses
- Chemical therapy services
- Psych

If you have Nevada Medicaid and selected **Health Plan of Nevada** (Smart Choice/Northern Choice) and are in need of behavioral health services, please contact Behavioral Healthcare Options toll free at **1-800-873-2246**.

### Amerigroup Behavioral Health Care

**Amerigroup** has a large network of doctors, therapists and counselors. They can help you or a family member with your mental, behavioral and substance use problems. All behavioral health services are private. You do not need a referral from your Primary Care Provider (PCP) to access these services.

If you have Nevada Medicaid and selected **Amerigroup** and have questions regarding behavioral health services, please call **1-800-600-4441**.



