

NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania

2002-2003 Annual Report

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NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania

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An affiliate of NAMI
Pennsylvania and The
National Alliance for the
Mentally Ill.

Dear Friends,

Every day one in five people face the challenges of coping and sustaining hope in the face of a serious mental illness. NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania provides the critical peer support, education, and advocacy on behalf of individuals and families affected by these often devastating disorders. We hope that you will take a moment to read this annual report to learn more about our impact in the community.

For too many, the stigma of mental illness leads to isolation. NAMI offers information, personal connections, and hope to those desperately in need of assistance. It is gratifying to hear from parents, spouses, and siblings with comments such as "Connecting to NAMI saved my life", "NAMI gave me hope", "NAMI was there when there was no else."

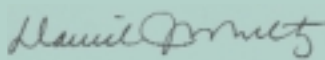
Although we know that over 37,000 people in the region are affected by serious mental illness, either personally or through experience with a family member, too few people know about NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania. We count on each of you to help us break down the stigma of serious mental illness. We urge you to:

- ✓ Join NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania. As an advocacy organization we are only as strong as our membership.
- ✓ Spread the word about NAMI. Make sure that your employer, your faith community, and your friends know that NAMI is there to help them.
- ✓ Visit the website, www.namiswpa.org, or call the office at (412) 366-3788 to learn more.
- ✓ Give us your feedback. Tell us how we can help.

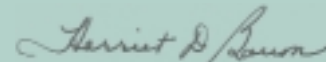
Finally, and most importantly, let your voice be heard. Local, state, and national budgets are now being developed and often cut funding areas vital to necessary supports and services. This is an important election year. Contact your legislators, congressional, and community leaders to let them know that they must not forget the needs of some of our most vulnerable citizens. Our website or office can help you to identify and link to those who represent you politically.

With your help and support, NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania can make a difference. Together we must insist that the stigma of mental illness be eradicated, that people can recover and become active members of their communities, and that there can be a future filled with hope.

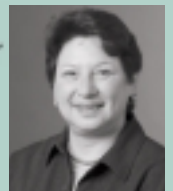
Sincerely,



Daniel J. McNulty, Esq.
President



Harriet D. Baum, M.Ed.
Executive Director



Support:

Fostering Self Help

NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania provides information, referral, and support to a 10 county region representing a diversity of services. From rural areas with few mental health providers to a city rich in resources, NAMI's mission to foster self-help is met through:

Regional Support Groups:

- ✓ Twenty active Support Groups serve families of adults diagnosed with a serious mental illness, consumers of mental health services, and families of children with emotional disorders.

Staff and Volunteer Assistance:

- ✓ Responded to more than 1,270 phone calls and 87,900 requests for information, referral, and support service through e-mail and our website.
- ✓ Provided ongoing technical assistance and facilitated collaborations between affiliate groups and professionals throughout the region.

Education:

Eliminating Stigma & Discrimination

"What will alleviate stigma is the willingness of each of us to educate ourselves and others about mental health and mental illness and thus to confront the attitudes, fears, and misunderstandings that remain as barriers before us."

-U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher

Education Programs:

Family-to-Family Education Program - This nationally acclaimed twelve-week program educates families about how to cope with the day-to-day struggles of mental illness. It includes discussions on the clinical treatment of illnesses and provides the knowledge and skills that family members need to cope more effectively. The course was taught in eleven locations with 135 individuals completing the program.

Hand-to-Hand Parent Education Program: A free eight-week education and support course for parents and guardians of children and adolescents with mental, behavioral, and emotional difficulties.

Hopes and Challenges: Children and Families Discuss Mental Illness- This educational workshop included a panel of families who shared their experiences. It was presented to over 400 teachers, guidance counselors, and mental health professionals.

"Until I took the course I was completely overwhelmed. I would say it is a must for anyone with a mentally ill relative."

- Family-to-Family Participant

"This was one of the best in-services we have had. Its usefulness was unparalleled!"

- Teacher attending Hopes and Challenges Workshop

Workshops and Conferences:

NAMI works to increase awareness and promote understanding of mental illness through speaking engagements, seminars, and workshops. Our programs were attended by more than 2500 individuals representing family members, consumers, community organizations, universities, hospitals, mental health program staff, regional behavioral health organizations, the faith community, and others.

- ✓ NAMI's Third Regional Conference, *Step Up to the Plate: Going to Bat for Mental Illness Education*, was attended by 300 families, consumers, and professionals.

Allegheny County Coalition for Recovery:

NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania is a founding member of the Allegheny County Coalition for Recovery. The coalition promotes the principles of recovery among all stakeholders in all levels of care throughout all systems.

Newsletter:

Our quarterly newsletter, *The Voice*, educates and informs the mental health community through in-depth articles covering timely topics with regular features such as The Children's Corner, News Around the Region, and Ask the Expert.

Anti-Stigma Campaign:

In Our Own Voice - New in 2003 was this interactive workshop. Participants hear from consumers who have struggled with disorders such as depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and other serious mental illnesses. The presentation combats stigma and raises awareness about the recovery process by presenting the real face of mental illness.

Faces of Recovery: Mental Illnesses Affect Everyday People - NAMI's anti-stigma toolkit can be downloaded online via our website, www.swpa.nami.org, or by calling our office.

Advocacy:

Improving the Quality of Care

Ad~vo~ca~cy - n. public support for a particular cause or policy.

Defending the rights of individuals with mental illness is a critical cause being pursued by NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania. Staying informed about key political issues, organizing support, and lobbying for mental health topics is a constant challenge that must be met on many levels.

Advocacy Initiatives:

NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania launched major advocacy efforts targeting: open medication access in Medicaid, managed care quality, expanded insurance coverage and parity, enhanced planning and quality standards for mental health services, and increased funding for mental illness.

Political Action:

New in 2003 were monthly legislative action alerts distributed to 150 individuals along with call for action and sample letters.

CART:

Consumer Action and Response Team

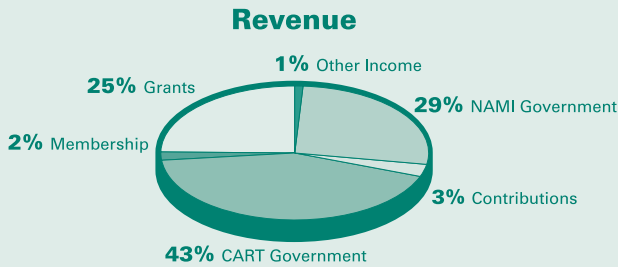
NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania takes a crucial step beyond support, education, and advocacy through the Consumer Action and Response Team. CART helps consumers of behavioral health services obtain the highest level of care possible by providing a way to communicate their experiences back to their service providers and improve the overall service quality in Allegheny County.

CART interviewed over 2,665 people about their satisfaction with behavioral health and drug and alcohol services. It then facilitated system improvement by providing written feedback to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services and Community Care Behavioral Health.

CART publishes a separate annual report to the community. It can be obtained by calling their office at 412-281-7333.

Audited Statements of Operations

July 1, 2002 - June 30, 2003

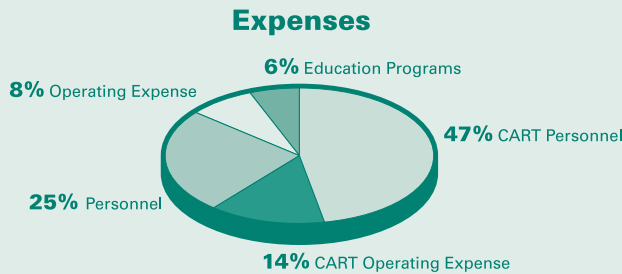


Revenue

NAMI-Government	\$241,477
Contributions	\$22,729
CART-Government	\$393,582
Membership	\$15,779
Grants	\$229,971
Other Income	\$4,936

Total \$908,474

* This figure includes revenue designated for future year expenses.



Expenses

CART Personnel	\$404,515
CART Operating Expense	\$122,230
NAMI Personnel	\$217,041
NAMI Operating Expense	\$72,440
NAMI Program	\$52,835

Total \$869,061

Our Mission

NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania is dedicated to improving the quality of life for adults, children and adolescents and their families who are affected by serious mental illness through the provision of support, education and advocacy.

- ✓ Providing support and education to persons with mental illness, their families and caregivers.
- ✓ Educating the general public, legislators and policymakers.
- ✓ Advocating for sufficient funds, services, research, legislation, and policies.
- ✓ Establishing liaison and collaboration with state, national and other stakeholders.

Staff

NAMI

- Harriet D. Baum, *Executive Director*
- Sharon A. Miller, *Director of Education and Outreach*
- Sandra Hein, *Director of Administrative Services*
- Linda Pacella, *Children's Coordinator*
- Susan Harrington, *Secretary*
- Lynn Brown, *Secretary*

CART

- Paul Freund, *Project Director*
- Allan Corn, *Team Supervisor*
- Barbara Reith, *Secretary*
- Carol Wivell, *CHIPP Liaison*
- Skip Alberts, *Special Projects Coordinator*
- Michelle Castriota, *Clerical Support & Interviewer*
- Carly Jandla, *Site Coordinator & Interviewer*
- Evelyn Stafford, *Interviewer*
- Minnie Benjamin, *Interviewer*
- Charles Apt, Jr., *Interviewer*
- Victoria Ethridge, *Interviewer*
- Donald Russell, *Interviewer*
- Gari Pannell, *Interviewer*
- Karen Fishell, *Interviewer*
- Allison McElfresh, *Interviewer*

Additional copies of this Annual Report may be obtained by contacting NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania at 412-366-3788.

Copies of the CART Annual Report may be obtained by calling 412-281-7333.

Donations to NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania are tax-deductible. Official registration and financial information of NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania may be obtained by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania: 1-800-732-0999.