NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference 2020

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2020
VOL. 37 | ISSUE 1

The Iris

NAMI Homefront & NAMI Basics Classes
Now Online

NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference 2020
NAMI Wisconsin is seeking skilled, compassionate volunteers in the Madison area to help operate the support line and help peers and families navigate the mental health system by providing information, community referrals, and support.

A full job description and questions can be directed to Crystal Hester: (608) 268-6000 support@namiwisconsin.org

NAMI Wisconsin
Seeks Support Line
Team Members

Mark Your Calendars!
NAMI Wisconsin
2020 Notable Dates

April 17 – 18
NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference

May 7
Action on the Square

October 3
Healing Art Show

October 4 – 10
Mental Illness Awareness Week

November 7
Leadership Summit

NAMI Wisconsin
2020 Affiliate Leaders Training Calendar Now Available

One important way to grow your affiliate is through the NAMI signature programs.

Please visit our website for the information and registration forms to get members of your affiliates trained:
https://namiwisconsin.org/affiliate-leaders-landing/affiliate-leaders-state-trainings/

Questions? Contact Megan
(608) 268-6000
megan@namiwisconsin.org

Our Mission
The mission of NAMI Wisconsin is to improve the quality of life of people affected by mental illness and to promote recovery.
Hello. Welcome to the New Year. Did you ever notice that after the music, bright lights, and tinsel are gone and the confusion, rushing, distractions, hub-bub, and drama of the holidays are over — you wonder what’s left? What do we do now? It’s easy to feel deflated, disconnected, and isolated. It may be part of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) or it could just be January Blues.

The tips for avoiding or beating the ‘January’ or ‘Winter Blues’ aren’t new — they start with taking care of ourselves: getting back to our physical activities like walking, yoga classes, running; eating better without all the holiday temptations; having a sleep routine. I guess that’s where all the New Year’s resolutions get their start — getting back on track or starting a new track that pays more attention to our health and the future, at least for the next few weeks!

The challenge is to find simple things we can do that will support us through the next few weeks and uplift our senses. People talk about practicing mindfulness and being in the moment — and a lot of people will attest to the fact that it does actually make a difference and help, but I often wondered how that could work when we feel the most depressed, anxious, or isolated.

I have a coffee cup that sits on my desk. It says ‘Life isn’t about finding yourself, it’s about creating yourself.’ In the past, when I thought about that from my more depressed state, I ended up feeling more depressed because it reminded me that I didn’t have people to do things with and appreciate, I didn’t have the energy to do it or I got too anxious to even think of creating new connections. One day, I decided that maybe it could apply to me — that it wasn’t about ‘finding great things to be grateful for — out there’, it was about finding or creating that moment of hope inside me, finding joy and value in the things that were right in front of me, where I am. Let me explain how that applies to the other suggestions for beating the blues.

Other suggestions for dealing with the Winter Blues are to change what you’re aiming for. Consider simple goals for the day or week, example — you’re going to practice one random act of kindness or journal five things you’re grateful for each day. Random acts of kindness can create a major boost because it triggers the release of feel-good neurotransmitters in our brains. Pick one thing that might seem little, example, let someone go in front of you in line at a store. The things to be grateful for can be big or very small — like the cat’s nudge to remind you to be in the present moment and pet him. Journaling gratitude for things that happened that day helps with sleep, increases happiness, strengthens our immune system to help us fight off colds and other infections, and reduces depression.

Another suggestion is to practice a ‘4-minute rule.’ This means being your ‘best self’ for the first four minutes after you get up, or the first four minutes when you get to work or get to the grocery store, or in a meeting or appointment, or when you’re home with family/friends. It gets easier and easier each time you do it plus, your attitude could be contagious to others.

Others suggest that it helps to find something to look forward to — or create it. This is where our NAMI connections can help, by bringing us together to share and support each other. We can expand on that by participating in social events or creating them; asking one person to go for coffee, or get together to watch a movie, or go bowling or play darts.

We can work on shifting to think of January as a time for relaxation, rest, and rejuvenation; a time to celebrate the past year. It’s a time to remind ourselves we’re already strong, cherished, and lovable and fabulous. We don’t need to change because it’s a new year. We just want to build on it.

You may be ok with all of this, but if you know someone who might be interested, please share. Let us know how your January/February go. Share your experiences so we can share them with others! I look forward to hearing from you. Until we talk again!
From Our Executive Director’s Desk

Mary Kay Battaglia, Executive Director

The new year brings new beginnings, new goals, and NAMI Wisconsin is looking forward to 2020. We had a lot of changes last year with new staff, new board members, new computer membership system, and NAMI Wisconsin is ready to take on the new year stronger than ever. We have an amazing staff excited for what lies ahead. Megan looks forward to the revised NAMI Family-to-Family program, which will be released in January and a new calendar of trainings and youth programs. Ellie is preparing for a great NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference April 17 – 18 at the Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake and the Healing Art Show in Madison on October 3. Crystal has started planning Action on the Square, which will occur May 7, and she has been quite busy with legislative bills and events at the capitol.

Our office also has the Leadership Summit in Madison November 7 and lots of program and CIT/CIP trainings and conference presentations in between. And thank goodness for Gina, who has been working so hard on memberships and keeping our office organized through our many recent updates and changes. While change can be hard, we are feeling good about new opportunities and a year filled with great collaborations with other organizations with the same mission as NAMI Wisconsin. Join us in our mission of making this year one of recovery, education, support, and advocacy. We look forward to a busy year, and we look forward to all our members joining us for any and all events.

Save the Date

NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference 2020

NAMI Wisconsin’s Annual Conference 2020 is a two-day event for leaders of the mental health world. This year’s conference will be held April 17 and 18 at the Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, WI.

The purpose of the NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference 2020 is to bring over 400 mental health advocates under one roof while spotlighting topics relevant to mental health and wellness. This year’s conference theme, Growing Stronger Together, will focus on the strength of NAMI as a grassroots organization. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to celebrate the many unique connections grassroots organizations can create, while also learning how to use these connections to make the mental health system more collaborative. The event will once again host a large variety of audiences, including mental health providers, leaders, social workers, clinicians, government officials, criminal justice partners, consumers, and family members. Mental health advocates from all over the state are welcome to attend.

ACT EARLY! EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION IS OPEN UNTIL FEBRUARY 21!
REGISTER TODAY! namiwisconsin.org/nami-wisconsin-events/annual-conference/
NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference 2020 Registration Form
Register by February 21, 2020 to receive the early bird rate!

**PLEASE SEND A SEPARATE REGISTRATION FORM FOR EACH PERSON REGISTERING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>NAMI Affiliate:</th>
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<td>Organization or Business:</td>
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<td>Home Address:</td>
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► Circle the conference day(s) you plan to attend (Required): Friday, April 17   Saturday, April 18

► Circle meal preference: Regular       Vegetarian       Other Meal Restrictions:

► Special Accommodation Needs:

► Please check all that apply to you:
  - First time attendee
  - Affiliate leader
  - Professional (specify:___________________________)
  - Consumer
  - State program trainer
  - Other  ________________
  - Family member
  - Program leader

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<th>X Conference Attendees</th>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Members</td>
<td>$135</td>
<td>$220</td>
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*Early Bird Discount if received by February 21, 2020  
(-$5)  (-$15)

**Subtotal**

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<th>X Support the NAMI Wisconsin Scholarship Fund</th>
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<td>Donate to the NAMI Wisconsin Scholarship Fund</td>
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**Total**

**REGISTRATIONS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED WITHOUT PAYMENT:**

Enclosed is my check for $______________, payable to NAMI Wisconsin.

Please bill my credit card for $______________

Visa  MasterCard  American Express

Acct# ________________________________  Exp. Date _________/

Print name as it appears on card: __________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________________________

Mail this form with payment to NAMI Wisconsin, 4233 W. Beltline Hwy, Madison, WI 53711  
Or FAX to (608) 268-6004 (Payment by credit card required for FAX registrations)
NAMI Wisconsin Supports Legislation to Shore Up Seclusion and Restraint Law

This month, the Senate Committee on Education held a public hearing on SB 527 related to the seclusion and physical restraint of pupils, authored by Senator Luther Olsen. This bill would update current law on the use of these practices while streamlining communication between parents and schools. More specifically this bill would:

- Require that restraint and seclusion data be reported to DPI as well as school boards (under current law, only school boards receive the data)
- Require schools to convey a written incident report to parents, including the names and titles of covered individuals and law enforcement officers present (current law only requires that parents be notified that the report exists, and does not require law enforcement officer’s names to be included)
- Remove the requirement that IEP teams decide whether restraint/seclusion is likely to be used a second time
- Require that the principal meet with the staff who participated in the incident to discuss the sequence of events and strategies to prevent future incidents
- Explicitly prohibit prone restraint
- Clarifies the use of supportive equipment and seat belts in their intended manner do not constitute mechanical restraint
- Clarify that incidents involving law enforcement officers must be reported in a district’s data, even though law enforcement officers are not defined as “covered individuals” in the restraint/seclusion statute
- Specify that the restraint and seclusion law applies also to students who are district-placed into private schools
- Clarify the definition of “incident” for data reporting purposes
- Update the training requirements for an increased focus on de-escalation and remove the requirement (but not prohibit) the teaching of “hands-on” techniques.

In addition, check out the following history compiled by some of our closest advocacy partners:

“In February 2016, Wisconsin Family Ties (WFT), Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) and WI FACETS produced a report called Miles to Go detailing the distressingly high data on restraint and seclusion since the enactment of Act 125 in 2012. Restraint and seclusion were used over 20,000 times statewide in 2013/14; nearly 80% of the students involved were students with disabilities. Our report included recommendations for how to improve state statute to reduce inappropriate use of these practices. We are pleased to recommend the resulting bill, incorporating months of work by a substantial group of education and disability stakeholders.”

ADVOCACY ASK:
If you are someone who has been impacted by this issue, consider contacting your legislators and letting them know. Here’s some sample language you can use:

“Hi Senator/Representative ___________. My name is ___________. I am a NAMI member and a constituent of yours from ___________. I’m contacting you to ask you to ask for your support of SB 527/AB 585 related to seclusion and physical restraint on pupils. I know that children with disabilities, including those with social, emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges experience seclusion and restraint at higher rates than their peers. This bill shores up the legislation and would help my child in the following ways (list a few bullet points above, if you have a personal story considering sharing). In essence, this bill would make schools safer and healthier for all. Can I get your support?”
If they are opposed, don’t argue but offer to be a resource for mental health issues in the future. Thank them for listening and ask if you can follow up with them via e-mail or in district over coffee. Remember, legislators are voted in by YOU which means they work for YOU. It’s important to get to know them and contact them frequently.

You can find who represents you by typing your address into the search bar here: http://legis.wisconsin.gov/

NAMI Wisconsin Takes Position on Bill that Would Ban Conversion Therapy on Minors

Earlier this month, our Public Policy & Advocacy Director met with leaders of the Senate Health & Human Service Committee, urging them to hold a public hearing on SB 107 which would ban conversion therapy with minors.

Conversion therapy is a practice which seeks to change someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity and “convert” them to straight or cisgender through various different means. Conversion therapy is not an evidence-based form of therapy and has actually been shown to cause harm in LGBTQ+ youth who undergo it. Not affirming one’s sexual orientation or gender identity can have lasting traumatic effects on mental health through adulthood and even puts youth at higher risks of suicide, according to the CDC.

Information and talking points on LGBTQ+ youth and adult suicides:
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual youth are 4x more likely to attempt suicide than straight youth
- 75% of people who die by suicide are male
- Transgender adults are nearly 12x more likely to attempt suicide than the general population
- Annual prevalence of serious thoughts of suicide, by U.S. demographic group:
  - 4.3% of all adults
  - 11.0% of young adults aged 18-25
  - 7.2% of high school students
  - 47.7% of lesbian, gay, and bisexual high school students

Read the full stat sheet at NAMI.org: https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers

ADVOCACY ASK:
If you or someone you know has been affected by conversion therapy, consider contacting your legislator. You can use the template above to craft your own message, including personal stories and facts, to urge your legislator to support the bill.

For additional help, talking points, etc. contact Crystal Hester at support@namiwisconsin.org or (608) 268-6000. Thanks for your advocacy!

Action on the Square is a mental health advocacy day sponsored by NAMI Wisconsin where leaders from across our state come together in Madison to discuss important policy issues. With so many changes in our political environment, it is more important than ever that your voice is heard!

What to expect at Action on the Square:

9 AM – 10 AM Registration, Networking & Brunch Meet and mingle with peers, family members, and community leaders from around the state who share your passion for mental health advocacy!

10 AM – 12 PM Welcome Address & Issue Briefing Learn what’s most important to the Wisconsin mental health community and legislators and practice telling your story!

12 PM – 1 PM Rally on the Capitol Steps Make some noise and hear from incredible speakers who inspire us to act, raise awareness, promote recovery, and advocate for mental health!

1 PM – 3 PM Meetings with Your Legislators Share your story or attend and share your support by listening. Either way you can make a difference!

Pre-registration is required for this event. Cost is $15 and includes your brunch. Register by April 10 at www.NAMIWisconsin.org/Action-on-the-Square
If you’re a family member or friend of a veteran or active military, or a parent of a child experiencing behavioral challenges (or you know someone who is) – these NAMI classes may be just what you’re looking for.

NAMI Homefront and NAMI Basics have been developed as online versions to fill in when there aren’t local classes available or they don’t start for months and you need something now!!! They’re built on the face-to-face classes and adapted to be sure they work online. All participants need is a phone, a computer screen, and a keyboard! We teach the rest.

I have to admit I was a skeptic. As a teacher of these programs and others face-to-face, I know one of the most incredible shifts that happen is that moment when each person feels connected to the others who share similar experiences – that ‘aha’ moment realizing “I’m not alone.” I was sure that wouldn’t be there with an online version. But – I was wrong. I’ve been a co-teacher for four of the NAMI Homefront online classes so far and I’ve seen it in every class. The participants get to know each other and create bonds: they experience that “I’m not alone feeling.”

NAMI Homefront is not just a class where you sit and listen to lectures/talking. There is talking and sharing information, but we also interact as a group in ways you may not have realized are possible using a mouse and a keyboard. We explore our common experiences through clicks, chatting, typing, and talking. We break up into groups to discuss topics and then come back to share with the whole group. We use videos and role playing just like the face-to-face classes. From the first class to the last, participants end with a chat – ‘thank you for being there’, ‘I’ve learned so much’, ‘I didn’t realize others felt this way too.’ Then, they ask about how to find NAMI classes and supports in their local area.

So – until you have a NAMI Homefront class locally, please share information about this class with others. It’s worth the time! This past year, I’ve only seen a couple of people from Wisconsin in any of the class sessions. Let’s see if we can change that this year starting with the January class. (If not that one, there’s a class that starts every quarter!) I’ll been co-teaching the Central Time zone class again in January. I’ll be on the look-out for fellow Wisconsinites in my class – or in the other sessions.

NAMI Basics Online is a different type of class. It’s done all online – and offers the parent the chance to do the class when it fits in their schedule. It’s a way to get information and support at the tip of your fingers when you need it, and can do it around children, school, work, and life’s schedules. Participants can start and stop. There’s a forum built in to connect with other parents. It also provides a link for many parents to the local NAMI affiliate and their support groups and other classes.

As a trainer for NAMI Basics in the state, we’re interested in how we can do more to support parents in Wisconsin. This online class is one way to provide classes – and then link parents to our local affiliates. Perhaps you have ideas about what else we could do to connect and support parents? Please share.

OUTSTANDING AFFILIATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

What are the accomplishments NAMI Manitowoc is most proud of for 2019?

“Offering the NAMI signature program Family-to-Family to people in our community was a highlight of 2019. We co-sponsored a talk at City Hall by the Brown County Mental Health Court judge in which he encouraged such a court in Manitowoc and explained the benefits. We’re also proud of our Mental Illness Awareness Week events: a candlelight vigil at which Dr. Kohler spoke about anxiety and OCD, the Clipper City Chordsmen Quartet provided music, and both local public libraries had weeklong book displays related to mental health.”
NAMI Wisconsin’s 2019 Warm Winter Wishes campaign has been very successful. We have been able to distribute warm winter items to more than 600 individuals in need. We were able to meet our goal of doubling the impact of the 2018 Warm Winter Wishes campaign.

NAMI Wisconsin was proud to partner with RSVP of Dane County for the 2019 Warm Winter Wishes Campaign. The talented volunteers at RSVP of Dane County donated their time to create beautiful handmade winter items. New winter items were also donated through individuals and several retailers in the Madison area. All items were tagged with NAMI Wisconsin contact information and distributed to several non-profit organizations that work with people experiencing homelessness and those affected by mental illness in the Madison area. The organizations that NAMI Wisconsin partnered with for distribution of the items collected for Warm Winter Wishes items include Tellurian, Inc. Detoxification Center, Porchlight, CAC (Community Action Coalition), DAIS (Domestic Abuse Intervention Services), YWCA, The Beacon, Middleton Outreach Ministry, Lakeview Lutheran Church Food Pantry, and Luke House Community Meal Program.

The Warm Winter Wishes campaign will continue through January 2020. If you are interested in donating items to this program, please contact Gina at gina@namiwisconsin.org.
1) What does your affiliate do to engage with and include your community? We belong to and serve on a number of coalitions and advisory committees including the Mental Health Advisory Committee, Housing Action Coalition, Child and Family Services Advisory Committee, Waukesha County Suicide Prevention Initiative, CIT/CIP Community Collaborative and Criminal Justice Collaborating Committee. By participating in these ongoing committees/coalitions, we have found that we are able to share the “NAMI Voice” as we work to improve services in our community and engage with other service systems.

2) How do you increase and maintain your membership? We offer membership to everyone who attends NAMI signature programming through NAMI Waukesha. For those who don’t sign up as members, we provide one year of NAMI Waukesha newsletters for free and at the one year mark, we send them an invitation to become a NAMI member. We send out annual reminders for membership to all members whose memberships are expiring.

3) What are some of the unique programs and services your affiliate offers?
- Projects in Assistance for Transition from Homelessness (PATH)
- SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR)
- Certified Peer Specialist phone and in-person support
- CIT/CIP Training for law enforcement and other first responders
- Youth Outreach Services
- Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Education
- Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) Education

How did you start them and why? Each of the non NAMI signature programs that NAMI Waukesha started was because of a need that was unfulfilled in our community. These opportunities were available to us due to partnerships within the community and our willingness to work toward meeting the unmet needs for people affected by mental illness as well increase knowledge and decrease stigma through training opportunities.

4) What is the project your affiliate is MOST excited about for 2020? Our affiliate is most excited about the opportunities to expand CIT and CIP training and work collaboratively with NAMI Greater Milwaukee to meet the crisis training needs in both of our communities.

5) What are the biggest events that your affiliate hosts throughout the year? NAMIWalks Waukesha is our biggest fundraising and awareness event with more than 500 people in attendance. Blue Jean Bingo is a close second with close to 500 people in attendance.

6) What are the strengths of your affiliate? We have a very robust community education program. We have expanded our education programming within the past four years to include Ending the Silence and QPR in local high schools and for faith communities. Our affiliate also has a blend of family members who provide support for families looking for services and certified peer specialists who provide peer-based services. We have a management team infrastructure that helps to lead our teams of employees and volunteers in providing our programs and services. We are able to offer diverse programming that meets the needs of the community because we have diverse funding that does not rely on any one contract or fundraising event for the majority of our income.

7) Tell us a little more about the people behind all of the incredible things your affiliate is doing: We have such an incredible group of staff and volunteers that are extremely passionate about our mission and helping people find the right resources and services. We have 15 staff and more than 100 volunteers and interns that all help us meet the mental health needs in our community and work every day to instill hope in those we serve.
“I can’t talk to you”…

Ugghhh! How many times, as a family member of someone with a serious mental illness, have we heard, “I can’t talk with you” from health care professionals who are taking care of our loved ones. Let’s break down how this confidentiality issue has evolved over the past few decades.

In 1996 the Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) was signed into law to help a person to keep their health care insurance benefits, and this evolved into the HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules (2003), which were designed to help keep a person’s health care information confidential (PHI = Protected Health Information). These laws have significantly improved health care and an individual’s rights to keep their personal health information private. I have been a physician during the time that these rules were being implemented, and I can tell you first hand, a lot of people in the health care industry became terrified of violating HIPAA and are very reactive to it. This is a nice way of saying a lot of people freaked out and this resulted in the evolution of some very strange medical practices that have kept families out of the loop when their loved ones are ill.

First of all, there are markedly few situations where a medical provider is justified in saying, “I can’t talk to you” to a family member of someone with mental illness. Even in situations where a person is psychiatrically hospitalized, and they have strictly forbidden family members to be given any information, the health care provider can politely tell the concerned family member who is calling, “I am sorry but I cannot give you any information about the person you are talking about, but I can listen to your concerns and if there is any way I can address them, I will.” This response makes sense, is not violating any HIPAA rules, is comforting to the caller, and most importantly may provide critical information that will help in the care of the person who is ill. Some of us family members just happen to know a lot about the psychiatric history, the “do’s and don’ts,” of our loved ones with mental illness.

So after hearing, “I can’t talk with you”, step number one is to take a deep breath, calm yourself down, and respond with something like this: “Please, I understand you can’t tell me anything about Jeanne (my sister), but I would like to provide you with some important information about Jeanne and you are allowed to listen.” Sometimes this educative approach works and the provider will take in the important information you share. I also always make sure they have my contact information, so that if a release of information (ROI) is signed, they can get a hold of me easily.

Unfortunately sometimes the provider will be a barrier themselves, and if there is no signed ROI, you will hear, “there is nothing we can do, we are bound by confidentiality (HIPAA).” So step number two, after hearing, “There is nothing we can do,” is to completely cover the phone and swear a little bit, then calmly uncover the phone and say, “Well, I understand you feel your hands are tied, but please try and remind Jeanne that I love her, and I want to help her, and please encourage her to sign the release of information form so that I can help her and coordinate with you, her providers, during this critical time of her illness. Maybe offer her some food so that she will feel comforted while you are asking her, or try and catch her when she is processing information a little better.”

Following the steps I have outlined above will work in a minority of circumstances with health care providers. While many providers are well-intentioned, they are using HIPAA in a way that creates barriers to sharing information. This is detrimental to the very patients they are trying to protect.
Help NAMI Wisconsin bring vital education programs to people affected by mental illness.

Yes, I’d like to join NAMI: □ $5 Open Door Membership □ $40 Regular Membership □ $60 Household Membership

Yes, I’d like to renew my membership: □ $5 Open Door Membership □ $40 Regular Membership □ $60 Household Membership

Yes, I want to support NAMI Wisconsin with the following gift:

□ $250 □ $100 □ $50 □ $25 □ Other $________

Name ____________________________

Address ____________________________

City ____________________________ State ______ Zip __________

Phone: Home ____________________________ Cell ____________________________ Email ____________________________

Please charge $__________ to my: □ Visa □ MasterCard

Acct # ____________________________ Exp. Date ______/______

Name on Card ____________________________ Signature ____________________________

Is your donation being made in memory or in honor of someone special? If so, please complete the following:

□ In memory of: ____________________________

□ In honor of: ____________________________

Address to which we should send recognition of honoree: ____________________________

Donors may be publicly acknowledged. □ Please check here if you prefer your gift to remain anonymous.

Help NAMI Wisconsin bring vital education programs to people affected by mental illness.

Be part of the movement that helps families find help and find hope.

88 cents of every dollar you give to NAMI Wisconsin goes directly to program expenses that support Wisconsin residents. Please consider making a gift to NAMI Wisconsin. Your support is tax-deductible and touches the lives of hundreds of families throughout Wisconsin.

Please consider making a generous gift today.