2018 advocacy and public policy focus

NAMI St. Louis is an affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, a grassroots organization dedicated to building better lives for individuals and families affected by mental illness. Our public policy focus outlines key objectives and policy positions that support our goal of ensuring that people living with mental illness receive the treatment and supports necessary to lead full and satisfying lives as valued members of the community.

1. Increase availability of integrative models of pediatric behavior healthcare
2. Ensure open access to all psychotropic medications in insurance and Medicaid
3. Enforce mental health insurance parity
4. Provide stable and adequate Medicaid funding

1) Health insurers are denying mental health care at nearly 2 times the rate of other medical care—often with no explanation—according to a 2015 NAMI survey. Missouri’s parity law requires health plans to provide equivalent coverage for mental health and medical care, but without appropriate enforcement, insurance companies do not comply. This leaves people unable to get the mental health care they need and are entitled to under their insurance. Also, Missouri’s parity law does not include substance use disorders, such as addictions to opioids—which have reached an epidemic level in Missouri. NAMI St. Louis supports new legislation that will enhance enforcement in Missouri and expand parity to all substance use disorders.

2) The right medications are key to recovery for many children and adults with mental health conditions. People need choices because individuals react differently to different medications.

3) Medicaid provides vital community-based, behavioral health services for low-income children and adults who live with mental illness substance use disorders. Medicaid helps people stabilize and recover, reducing reliance on hospitalization and other public services. NAMI St. Louis opposes any changes to the current system—such as block grants and global waivers—this will hurt people with behavioral health issues!

4) Although 1 in 5 youth live with a mental health condition, less than half receive needed services. Undiagnosed, untreated, or inadequately treated mental health conditions can affect a youth’s ability to learn, grow, and develop. Because there is a severe shortage of child psychiatrists in Missouri, many children with behavioral health issues are treated by primary care providers who have little or no formal education in this area. NAMI St. Louis supports funding for a Child Psychiatry Access Project that addresses this issue in Missouri.

Missouri has a severe shortage of practicing child & adolescent psychiatrists. Most counties do not even have 1 practicing psychiatrist for pediatric behavioral health care.

Gateway to Mental Health Recovery
Dear NAMI St. Louis Family, Friends, and Supporters:

As we enter the last quarter of 2017, I want to update you on some exciting news.

NAMI St. Louis is honored to be awarded a Mercy Caritas grant to work with family members, caregivers and loved ones of someone with suicidal thoughts and/or actions. The title of the project is *Finding Help and Hope: Supporting Loves Ones Fighting Suicide*. This is one of the first projects in the nation to focus on the importance of family involvement with this population. As part of this project and in partnership with Mercy and Dr. Bart Andrews of Behavioral Health Response, we are designing two educational workshops and a new type of support group focusing on family members with a loved one fighting suicide. There will be an educational workshop and a support group meeting each month at Mercy St. Louis (2nd and 4th Thursdays) and Mercy Jefferson (1st and 3rd weekday of the month, day TBD). The first educational workshop will be *Question, Persuade, and Refer* (QPR) training on October 12th from 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM in the behavioral health cafeteria. The first support group will start on October 27th from 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM in the behavioral health cafeteria at Mercy St. Louis. Please contact me at (314) 962.4670 or cpatterson@namistl.org for more information. We are honored to work in partnership with Mercy and Behavioral Health Response in providing this new service for our community.

At the NAMI St. Louis Annual Meeting on September 18, 2017, Kevin Miller was selected as the new Board President. Kevin is Chief Development Officer for Great Rivers Greenway. WELCOME Kevin! A special thank you to Al Schopp, Jr., who Kevin has succeed as Board President. Al served on the NAMI St. Louis Board for over ten years, 3 of which he served as Board President. We also elected two new board members, James Jones, VP Human Resources & Chief Ethics Officer at Emerson Electric, Inc. and Steven Curran, Community Advocate and owner of Shakers Dog Wash.

We have a new intern, Georgia Endicott. Georgia is pursuing a Bachelors in Psychology from Maryville University. She has only been with us for a few weeks, but she is absolutely amazing.

Finally, in an effort to go green, we will be transitioning the newsletter into an electronic format. Instead of mailing the newsletter, we are going to email it and post it on our website. For those of you who wish to still receive a paper version of our newsletter, we are happy to continue this service. Just opt in to receive a paper copy by contacting Sharon Lyons at (314) 962.4670 or at sharon@namistl.org.

If you haven’t already had the opportunity to stop by our new offices, please do so. We would love to see you. Please contact me if you have any suggestions, comments or concerns.

Christine Patterson, Ph.D.
Executive Director
My son, John Stefan Gaal, Jr., was a smart, good-looking, strong, funny, and kind person. He was the second oldest of four children who dearly loved his mother (Mary) and siblings (two sisters: Dana and Leah, and one brother: Jake). Mom served as his sounding board, Dana as his compass, Jake as his best friend, and Leah as his partner in practical jokes. To me, he was everything I never was as a young man. John grew-up loving the outdoors and sports. Although winning was fun, he cherished every opportunity to take the field...win or lose...be it baseball, soccer, football, or frolf. On and off the field, John truly led by example. He played by the rules, believed in helping the underdog, and, equally important, despised cheaters. One of the main reasons John left SLUH after his sophomore year was to obtain more playing time on the football field. Much to his delight, he was cleared early-on to play football and soccer—in the same season—during his junior and senior years. In John’s junior year, his high school boys soccer team finished third in the state. One year later, he scored the only goal of his high school career...the only one that mattered as it sent his team again to the final four. Afterwards, John was honored by being named as a Missouri Second Team All-State Soccer Player.

As a proud papa, I looked forward to watching John and his little brother play soccer and football each and every weekend. Unfortunately, to the best of my knowledge, John sustained four concussions over the course of those two years in high school. Having played both ways in football and nearly the entire soccer game exposed my son to dangers most parents were not aware of back in 2009.

It appears that John Jr. suffered from traumatic brain injuries (TBI) which we believe lead to anxiety, depression, and eventually him taking his life on March 24, 2017. Upon his death, we donated his brain to Dr. Ann McKee at Boston University. She is one of the nation’s foremost experts on CTE (chronic traumatic encephalopathy). For those of you who have not seen the movie “Concussion” (with Will Smith) I urge you to do so immediately...especially if you have children and/or grandchildren involved in contact sports (i.e., football, soccer, ice hockey, etc.).

My son was a giver. John, Jr. worked with the mentally ill and often served food to the homeless in the Columbia, MO region. He cared dearly about those who did not have the supportive and loving family he was surrounded by. One of his final wishes was to not merely feed the homeless but bring shower facilities to them. As of the end of May 2017, on every Tuesday from 10a to 3p, the Shower to the People organization has set up their showers outside of St. Vincent de Paul Church (Soulard) in my son’s memory.

John Jr. loved to cook with and for his friends and family. He was known for his backyard slip-and-slide parties and often held fire-pit sessions until wee hours of the morning. Although I wish my John Jr. was still physically in my presence, I know that his caring spirit lives on through his family and friends far and wide. As his proud papa, I promise to do my best to honor his legacy by stopping the stigma associated with Mental Illness and Suicide.

Make no mistake, my son was a good boy!!!
take me out to the ballpark

Thanks to all of you that supported NAMI St. Louis’ Night at the Ballpark! What an amazing sight it was to see 375 NAMI St. Louis supporters relaxing and enjoying the St. Louis Cardinals. We are hoping to secure the same awesome, shaded seats next year, and possibly give one of our supporters the chance to participate in the opening ceremony and throw out the first pitch! Because of your continued love and support, NAMI St. Louis can continue with its mission to improve the quality of life of persons with severe and persistent mental illness and their families, and promote and provide community support, education, advocacy and understanding. A special thank you to Steve Powell and Jennifer Radman who orchestrated this special event. We look forward to seeing you at Busch Stadium in 2018.

Christine Patterson, Executive Director, Steve Curran, Board Member, Kyle Dooley, Director of CIT Community Policing Programs and Suzie Strong, Board Member

let us introduce you to...

Cassandra Cooke has joined NAMI St. Louis as Director of Development. Prior to coming to NAMI St. Louis Cassandra worked in the nonprofit field focusing on homelessness and children for nearly 15 years. Originally from St. Louis, Cassandra grew up in New Hampshire. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Marketing and Business Administration and a Masters in NonProfit Management. Cassandra is the proud aunt of Joaquin and Luci.

Did you know that you can view our quarterly newsletter online?

Just go to www.namistl.org/newsletters/nami-st-louis-newsletter/

Let us know...

If you would like to continue to receive our newsletter in the mail or via email by going to www.namistl.org/sign-up-for-our-newsletter/

going green
Did you know NAMI St. Louis helps support four Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Councils that serve seven Missouri counties?

The Crisis Intervention Team Program is a law enforcement program done in collaboration with the mental health treatment community that began in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1988. It recruits, trains and supports law enforcement to respond effectively to incidents involving individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. As a result, those individuals will not be unnecessarily jailed because of behavior resulting from their illness but will instead gain access to emergency, inpatient and community-based mental health treatment services.

In 2003, NAMI St. Louis assisted the St. Louis County CIT Council with its first training course. Since then, NAMI St. Louis has been instrumental in helping to set up three other CIT councils; St. Charles County, Lincoln County and Warren County in 2007, Jefferson County in 2010 and Franklin County in 2011. Since 2003, NAMI St. Louis has helped in the delivery of a total of 123 forty-hour CIT Training Courses to a total enrollment of 4,802 police officers and others participating in the program.

For more information on the CIT Council in Missouri go to www.missouricit.org

If you have any questions about the CIT Program, feel free to contact Kyle Dooley, NAMI St. Louis Director of CIT Community Policing Programs at 636-262-0043 or at kdooley@namistl.org.

peer advisory committee

OPENING THE DOORS TO SPIRITUALITY

Interfaith conversation about mental illness

October 22, 2017

2:00 - 4:00 pm

Central Reform Congregation

5020 Waterman

St. Louis, MO 63108

Speakers, Music & Light Refreshments

RSVP by October 9, 2017

Sharon Lyons, sharon@namistl.org

314.962-4670

NAMI ST LOUIS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Enclosed is my membership payment for NAMI St. Louis. Securely make your payment online at www.namistl.org/general-donations.

☐ $5*  ☐ $40*  ☐ $60**

*Please enroll me as a member of NAMI St. Louis. **Please enroll my household as a member of NAMI St. Louis.

(New membership rates are effective July 2017. Membership automatically renews/enrolls your membership with NAMI National and NAMI Missouri.)

Please note that your membership dues defray the expense of membership publications. As a member of NAMI, you may receive requests to support NAMI initiatives and/or state initiatives which are separately funded from our local NAMI St. Louis programs.

Please charge my membership fee of $____________ to:  ☐ Mastercard  ☐ Visa  ☐ Discover

Credit Card No. ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ Exp. Date ___________ Signature______________________________

Name________________________________ Address______________________________ City___________________ State_____ Zip_______

NAMI ST. LOUIS, 1810 Craig Road, Suite 124, St. Louis, MO 63146. Phone: 314-962-4670. Website: www.namistl.org
memorials & tributes

outreach partner program

NAMI St. Louis is proud to have been an NIMH Outreach Partner since 2015. As an Outreach Partner, we receive and distribute high quality science based information on mental illness to educate our community. A NAMI St. Louis representative attends the Annual Partnership meeting each year to learn about the latest advances in treatment and recovery.

There are 55 Outreach Partner organizations representing all states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Outreach Partners disseminate NIMH research findings and educational materials to the public throughout their states and local communities, including families and individuals affected mental illness, healthcare professionals, under-served populations and other constituencies such as schools, social service agencies and faith-based organizations. Outreach Partners also conduct outreach activities to address the needs of populations that experience mental health disparities as defined by race or ethnicity, age, education or income, disability status, geographic location, risk status related to sex and gender, and among other populations identified to be at-risk for health disparities such as immigrants, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI). In addition, Outreach Partners promote volunteer participation in NIMH and NIH clinical trials and often collaborate with researchers to advance the research process. Learn more about Outreach Partners Activities in their states.

Visit our Outreach Partnership website at www.namistl.org/information/nimh-resources.

Create your Lifetime Legacy. Remember NAMI St. Louis in your will or estate plans.

Gateway to Mental Health Recovery
October 12, 2017

NOT, what you THINK - an introduction to the healing power of hypnosis and meditation
Speaker: Kevin Herbert, LPC, CH

Like prayer, hypnosis and meditation are controversial topics for the general public. However, research in medicine, neuroscience and psychology have demonstrated the unique effects of these activities upon the brain and behavior. Understanding how the body and brain process information is key to understanding the power of these ancient approaches to treatment.

November 9, 2017

Addressing Hoarding Issues in Housing
Speaker: Debbie Kricensky, Resource Coordinator for St. Louis County, Problem Properties Unit

Debbie will explain hoarding, how to speak to someone who hoards, examples of violations and how to assist the individual.

December 14, 2017

Your Dependent with Special Needs: Building a Letter of Intent Workshop
Speaker: Michael Chiodini, Investment Advisor Representative of SII, Chiodini Financial Group, LLC

No one else knows your child as well as you do, and no one ever could. You are an expert on your child’s medical history and habits, you are an advocate for their experiences and their wishes, and you share their hopes and aspirations.

What would happen if you suddenly became unable to provide your child with the necessary supports he/she needs? Without you, your child would become dependent on others. The Building a Letter of Intent Workshop will walk you through the steps necessary to plan for disruptions that will occur when you become unable to care for your child during your lifetime.

January 11, 2018

Journey To Recovery Through Al-Anon and the Twelve Steps
Speaker: Diane R., 2-year Member of Al-Anon, Al-Anon Public Outreach Co-Chairperson

Al-Anon is a free Twelve Step Recovery Program for families and friends of alcoholics. Diane will share how she benefits from the program in her own recovery from the effects of growing up in a family with mental illness.

Points addressed: Life Then and Now, Use of Twelve Steps and other “tools” of this Twelve Step Program.

Every Second Thursday
October 12, November 9, December 14, January 11,
Noon - 1:00 pm

At the Heights
8001 Dale Avenue, Richmond Heights, MO 63117
The Heights is located at Dale Avenue and Hanley Road. From Hwy. 40/64 take Hanley Road South, go east at first light on to Dale. Bus line located nearby.

RSVP, Please!
Bring your own lunch and we will provide beverages and cookies with RSVP (314) 962-4670.

SAVE THE DATE for the 16th Annual Walk scheduled for Saturday, May 5th at Central Park Chesterfield Amphitheatre.

Join our Walk planning committee and share your ideas! Contact Cassandra Cooke at (314) 962-4670 x 302 or email ccooke@namistl.org.
Celebrating Beautiful Minds
Saturday, November 18, 2017
6 pm to 10 pm

We are pleased to announce the 2017 Gala Honorary Chairperson, Patricia Morrow, Regional Executive Director Behavioral Health Services of Mercy St. Louis and long-time supporter of NAMI St. Louis. The Annual Gala features an exciting evening of cocktails, dinner, shopping and celebrating!

This year’s gala theme is “Monte Carlo.” Try your luck with games of chance including blackjack, poker, roulette and craps. Your silent auction shopping experience at the Gala will include themed baskets filled with treasures and unique items collected from many friends of NAMI St. Louis and businesses from all over St. Louis. Remember to bring your cell phone or tablet for mobile bidding – concierge bidders will also be available to assist you!

For more information about this event, contact Cassandra Cooke at phone 314-962-4670 or email ccooke@namistl.org.

Thank you to our presenting sponsors

we moved!
our new address is:
1810 Craig Rd., Suite 124
St. Louis, MO 63146
314-962-4670
www.namistl.org