



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Montgomery County

SUMMER 2018 EDITION

NAMI MC Turns 40

NAMI Montgomery County is excited to be celebrating 40 years as an integral mental health nonprofit in Montgomery County, Maryland.

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► NAMI MC board members, staff and supporters at the 2017 10,000 Step Challenge Finish Line Event.

During her five year tenure as Executive Director, Stephanie Rosen has witnessed and spearheaded many changes to the organization. When looking back at the 40 year history of NAMI MC, she says "I'm always proud to see how much effort the organization has made in its 40 year history to adapt to the needs of the community. I believe this quality has enabled the organization to remain such a dependable resource for Montgomery County."

► Continued on page 6.

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Heroes
Celebration
2018

Save The Date
NOV. 16, at 6^{PM}

NAMI MC Program list

For General Public Awareness:

- StigmaFree Workplace - presentation/class
- In Our Own Voice - presentation
- NAMI AIR - social network app
- Helpline - 301.949.5852 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

For Family Members of Individuals

Living with Mental Illness:

- Family-to-Family - 12 session class
- Family Support Groups

For Individuals Living with Mental Illness:

- Peer-to-Peer - 8 session class
- Connection Recovery Support Groups

For Parents & Teachers of Children & Adolescents:

- NAMI Basics - 6 session class
- Parents and Teachers as Allies - presentation

For Adolescents:

- Ending the Silence - presentation
- Sources of Strength - in-school support program

For Young Adults:

- Young Adult Connection Recovery Support Group

For Family & Caregivers of Veterans or Service Members:

- NAMI Homefront - 6 session class

For Police:

- Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training - presentation

For Spanish Speaking Communities:

- Helpline - 301.949.5852 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

For African American communities:

- Sharing Hope - presentation

For Faith-Based Communities:

- Sharing Hope - presentation

Advocacy:

- Smarts for Advocacy - workshop

Letter from NAMI MC Executive Director



Dear Friends of NAMI MC,

Although summer tends to be a slow time for many organizations, the staff at NAMI MC have been very busy these summer months. We are all excited to have welcomed two new staff members—Administrative Director, Elle Leech-Black, and Youth Programs Coordinator, Briana Lockhart—to our team. Elle will be overseeing our day-to-day operations, while Briana will be working with local schools through the Sources of Strength program, having recently become a certified regional Sources of Strength trainer. Our Officer Manager Stephanie Del Cid, who has been with NAMI MC for over two years, will be taking on a new position of Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator for the organization as well.

As these exciting transitions have been taking place, we've also begun planning our upcoming Heroes Celebration, which will be taking place Friday, November 16, 2018 at the Bethesda Marriott. We will be honoring former Washington Redskins Quarterback and Super Bowl XXVI MVP Mark Rypien for publicly sharing his personal experience of living with mental illness and encouraging those who are struggling to seek help. At the Heroes Celebration, we will also be celebrating 40 years of NAMI MC. Check out sponsorship opportunities and buy your tickets on our website: www.namimc.org/heroes.

I'm also excited to announce some personal news. This October, my husband Jared and I will be welcoming our very first child. Jared and I are so thrilled to start this next chapter of our lives and become first-time parents! Following the birth of our daughter, I will be on maternity leave for three months, expecting to return to the office in January 2019. With support from our dedicated Board of Directors and hard-work from our talented staff, all operations will continue as normal at NAMI MC during my absence.

Best wishes for an enjoyable remainder of your summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Rosen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephanie Rosen
Executive Director

For more information about NAMI MC programs, visit www.namimc.org or email nicole@namimc.org.

Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September 2018						1 10:30 am • Family Support Group @ the NAMI MC Office
					2	3
9	10 7:00 pm • Connection Recovery Support Group @ Olney MedStar Montgomery Medical Center	11 7:00 pm • Connection Recovery Support Group @ NAMI MC Office	12 2:30 pm • Family Support Group @ Rockville Unitarian Universalist Church	13 7:00 pm • Family Support Group @ Boyds Open Door Metropolitan Community Church	14	15
16	17 7:00 pm • Connection Recovery Support Group @ Olney MedStar Montgomery Medical Center	18 7:00 pm • Connection Recovery Support Group @ NAMI MC Office	19 7:00 pm • Young Adult Connection Recover Support Group @ Silver Spring Saint Luke Lutheran Church	20 7:00 pm • Connection Recovery Support Group @ Wheaton MC Department of Health and Human Services 7:00 pm • Parent Family Support Group @ Silver Spring St. Andrew Lutheran Church	21 7:00 pm • Spouse Support Group @ NAMI MC Office	22 3:00 pm • Connection Recovery Support Group @ Silver Spring Wellness and Recovery Center
23	24 7:00 pm • Connection Recovery Support Group @ Olney MedStar Montgomery Medical Center	25 7:00 pm • Connection Recovery Support Group @ NAMI MC Office	26 7:30 pm • Family Support Group @ NAMI MC Office	27	28	29
30	<p>The NAMI Peer-to-Peer class will begin at the NAMI MC office on Sept 13th from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm and run for eight weeks. Pre-registration is required.</p> <p>➤ Visit www.namimc.org to register.</p>					



► NAMI MC's Executive Director Stephanie Rosen presenting to MCPL Management staff.

New Partnership with MCPL

NAMI MC is proud to be partnering with the Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) on an important initiative which will train 400 MCPL staff on how to interact with library customers experiencing mental illness. MCPL has found that it is important for their staff to understand how to effectively interact with customers affected by mental illness, especially those who may be exhibiting symptoms while at the library.

In March and April 2018, NAMI MC's Executive Director, Stephanie Rosen, and Program Director, Nicole Lucas, led three workshops for MCPL assistant supervisors and branch managers. During these trainings, MCPL management staff learned about the various types of mental illnesses and also symptoms that those living with mental illness experience. The workshops included empathy training, as well as a presentation from an individual who shared his personal story of what it's like to live with a mental health condition.

The workshops offered to the MCPL staff are a part of NAMI MC's StigmaFree Workplace initiative. With support from resources from NAMI National, NAMI MC has recently launched the Stigma-

Free Workplace program in order to help staff at companies and organizations like MCPL better understand what it's like to live with a mental health condition or be a caregiver for a loved one living with a mental illness. During the workshops, individuals learn communication skills so that they can better serve customers who are experiencing severe mental illness.

Stephanie and Nicole both expressed their gratitude to MCPL for taking the initiative to ensure that staff are better equipped to have empathy for those living with mental illness. According to Nicole, "this knowledge and general awareness will enable them to better communicate with those customers who are living with a serious mental health condition."

The workshops with MCPL assistant supervisors and branch managers were so well-received that MCPL asked NAMI MC to hold similar workshops for front-line staff members who also have more frequent interaction with library patrons. Throughout May and June, Stephanie and Nicole held these additional workshops, training a total of 400 MCPL staff members by the end of June.

If you think your company could benefit from a StigmaFree Workplace training, please contact Nicole Lucas at nicole@namimc.org. 🌐

NAMI MC Welcomes New Staff

NAMI MC is excited to have recently added two new staff members to our growing team. **Briana Lockhart** is NAMI MC's new Youth Program Coordinator and will be our Certified Regional Sources of Strength Trainer, working with schools throughout the county to implement the evidence-based suicide prevention program. She has extensive experience in health and wellness promotion, peer education, and mental health.



► *Briana Lockhart, NAMI MC's new Youth Program Coordinator*

Briana recently graduated from the University of Maryland with a B.S. in Community Health and a minor in Global Poverty. She has experience in health and wellness promotion, as well as peer education. In her spare time, Briana enjoys travelling, trying new foods, watching movies, exercising, and spending time with friends and family.

In regards to joining the team, Briana says, "I am super excited to be part of NAMI MC. I can't wait to start working with the middle and high schoolers through the Sources of Strength (SOS) program. I'm passionate about mental health promotion and look



► *Elspeth "Elle" Leech-Black, NAMI MC's new Administrative Director*

forward to spreading the SOS mission through my work with the schools in our local community."

NAMI MC is also thrilled to welcome **Elspeth "Elle" Leech-Black**, who is NAMI MC's new Administrative Director. In this role, Elle will plan, organize and direct the day-to-day operations of NAMI MC.

Elle recently completed nine years as the Executive Coordinator of Administration for MedStar National Rehabilitation Network (MNRN). She was the "right hand" to the MNRN President, and has extensive experience in all departments of running a healthcare organization.

Elle says she was inspired to join the NAMI MC team because "I was attracted to NAMI MC for the passion of the staff and volunteers to fulfill its mission and serve the community, just as I had felt at my previous job. I was able to see how my administrative tasks at MNRN ultimately benefited our patients, and I'm confident I'll feel the same way helping Montgomery County residents in my new role."

Elle shares that the work of NAMI MC "is deeply personal to me. I lost an immediate family member to suicide four and a half years ago. I'm grateful for any activity I can do in her memory." Outside of work, you'll find Elle hiking, swimming, meditating, and more. She loves ALL music, American history, and healthy cooking. 🍴

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NAMI MC Turns 40 ...

► *Continued from page 1.*

While it is often a surprise to many, NAMI MC actually predates the national NAMI! NAMI MC started as a small support group in 1978 for family members and loved ones of those living with mental illness. Not too long after convening regularly at a church in Kensington, the support group grew and the founding members decided to establish a Maryland 501(c)(3) nonprofit called Threshold-Families and Friends of the Adult Mentally Ill, Inc., offering self-help and support services.

In 1979, founding members of Threshold attended a three-day convention in Madison, Wisconsin with individuals all over the country impacted by mental illness. There, the Alliance for the Mentally Ill (AMI) was formed. In order to join other organizations across the country, Threshold changed its name to AMI Montgomery County. AMI MC would eventually change its name to NAMI MC in 2004 .

During the following year, in order to raise money for AMI MC and its initiatives to support those in the community affected by mental illness, the organization rented a house on Knowles Avenue. This became AMI MC's first Thrift Shop, run by dedicated volunteers. The Thrift Shop would eventually be moved to its Connecticut Avenue location in 1999.



► *The Threshold Thrift Shop on Knowles Avenue in 1984.*

While AMI MC offered a Helpline program and monthly educational meetings on topics related to mental illness during the 1980s, it wasn't until the 1990s and 2000s that the organization began to adopt some of its core programming. The Family-to-Family course was adopted and offered by AMI MC beginning in 1997. This free, educational course is for loved ones of those living with mental illness is still one of NAMI MC's most popular programs to this day.

By the early 2000's, the organization introduced the In Our Own Voice Program (IOOV), for which individuals living with mental health conditions shared their experience of living with mental illness and their journey to recovery throughout the community. The Peer-to-Peer program was launched at this time as well, teaching individuals living with mental health conditions about their illness and helping them prevent relapse. Both IOOV and Peer-to-Peer are programs currently offered by NAMI MC.

NAMI MC and the Thrift Shop moved from Connecticut Avenue to its current home on Parklawn Drive in 2009. While the Thrift Shop was a significant source of program revenue for NAMI MC in the early years of the organization, it unfortunately began operating at a loss of revenue a couple of years after the move to Parklawn Drive. In order to ensure the sustainability of NAMI MC programs and the organization's future as-a-whole, the tough decision was made to close the Thrift Shop in the spring of 2016.

Although the Thrift Shop closure was a loss to NAMI MC and the community, the organization didn't allow this difficult decision to stand in the way of growing the organization's programming and working towards supporting more individuals and families impacted by mental illness in the community. Specifically, the organization's efforts to reach the youth in Montgomery County, an initiative that began in 2015, greatly increased.

With a Youth Program Coordinator in-place, NAMI MC partnered with schools throughout the county to offer its Ending the Silence presentation, which helps middle and high schoolers learn about the warning signs of mental health conditions and what steps to take if you or a loved one are showing symptoms of a mental illness. Additionally, NAMI MC began offering the Sources of Strength suicide prevention programs to schools throughout the county. Today, NAMI MC currently has partnered with nearly 15 schools in the community to educate students about resiliency factors in their lives to rely on during difficult times and to promote help-seeking behaviors.

Les Ulanow, a member of NAMI MC's Board of Directors since 2008 and current Treasurer for the organization, says that on top of the addition of youth programming, some of most significant changes at NAMI MC over his ten year tenure, include "an increased number of trained program volunteers and an improved use of the organization's financial resources."

While NAMI MC has undergone many changes over its 40 year history, its core mission has remained the same to this day—supporting individuals in the community affected by mental health conditions. "We have continued to do this day-in and day-out," says Rosen. "I anticipate that NAMI MC will continue to grow and expand its programming in order to meet the needs of Montgomery County residents impacted by mental illness." 🌱

Staff Attend Sources of Strength Training

During the month of July, NAMI MC's Director of Programs, Nicole Lucas, and Youth Program Coordinator, Briana Lockhart, traveled to Denver Colorado to become regional trainers in the evidence-based suicide prevention program Sources of Strength (SOS). NAMI MC currently works with 15 schools throughout Montgomery County to implement and continue the SOS program.



► Nicole Lucas and Briana Lockhart at the SOS training along with Nancy and Maddie Averill.

Nicole and Briana joined 70 people from around the country to be trained by SOS founder and Executive Director Mark LoMurray and his renowned staff. During the training, Nicole and Briana learned the skills and practices that will enable them to successfully implement the SOS program at schools. For example, in order to ensure that students are engaged during SOS programming, the SOS trainers advised that each meeting with students should include games, sharing and planning campaign projects that will help promote the program to the entire school.

An important lesson Briana and Nicole took away from the program was the importance of safe messaging when it comes to implementing the suicide prevention program. Nicole says, "it's important to focus on hope, help and strength messaging

when educating students and young adults about getting through difficult times."

Following the week-long training in Denver, Nicole and Briana are required to complete follow-up assignments, including working with a current regional trainer to practice the SOS trainings they will be conducting for students and staff at the schools. 🌍

Did you know you can support NAMI MC through United Way and the Combined Federal Campaign?

CFC Campaign Season begins September 10th, 2018, and runs through January 11th, 2019. Select NAMI MC as your charity to support throughout the year. Your United Way and CFC contributions will fund NAMI MC's programs, including our free support groups and classes as well as the evidence-based suicide prevention program, Sources of Strength.



United Way #8687 and CFC #27615.



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

NAMI MC is seeking outreach volunteers to staff our table at community events and educate the public about our programs. Dates and times vary and you have the opportunity to accept events that work with your schedule.

Call or email Stephanie Del Cid for further details
(301) 949-5852, volunteers@namimc.org



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Montgomery County

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Staff

- Stephanie Rosen**, *Executive Director*
- Nicole Lucas**, *Director of Programs*
- Sara Hourwitz**, *Director of Development*
- Elle Leech-Black**, *Administrative Director*
- Briana Lockhart**, *Youth Program Coordinator*
- Stephanie Del Cid**, *Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator*

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