

With more than 1,200 affiliates, NAMI is America's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of all individuals affected by mental illness.

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NAMI Columbus

P.O. Box 8581
Columbus, GA 31908
(706) 320-3755 (leave a message)
Website: namicolumbusga.org
E-mail: info@namicolumbusga.org

New

Board of Directors:

Shelley Reed, Ph.D	President
Molly Jones	Vice President
Tristen Hyatt	Treasurer
Stephen Akinduro	
Doris Keene	
Sue Marlowe	
Phil Tirado	

Newsletter Editor:

Teri Owens

Georgia Crisis & Access Line

Single Point of Entry to access mental health, addictive disease and crisis services 24/7/365
Adults, Children & Adolescents
1-800-715-4225

Peer Support "Warm Line"

1-888-945-1414 (toll-free)
The Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network operates a state-funded, consumer-directed "warm line" for anyone struggling with mental health issues, 24 hours a day

Columbus ACT Team

AmericanWork, Inc.
706-641-9663

No Monthly Education Meetings in June/July.

Monthly Education Meetings will Resume in August.

We will take a "summer break" from our monthly education meetings in June and July. The education meetings will resume beginning in August. More details on the August education meeting to come in the next newsletter.

During June and July, the Family/Friend and NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups will meet in place of the Education Meeting.

This is a great time to reconnect with fellow NAMI members. Come join us at a support group!



In Memoriam Larry Washington

We are sad to announce the loss of one of our dear NAMI Columbus members, Larry Washington: September 22, 1948 - May 10, 2019. Larry was well-known and appreciated by our members, having shared his extensive knowledge and counselling experience to help many of us. He would often stay after Connection meetings to assist and encourage a member in need. He even made a presentation that he composed on "Anxiety Disorders" at one of our Monthly Education Meetings. Larry was such an impressive, knowledgeable, and caring man.

We send our thoughts and prayers to his wife, Rabbi Beth Schwartz, and to others in his family, along with each of you who are grieving his loss.

If you would like to read more details about Larry and his varied educational background and dedicated work, you can view his obituary and leave a message at this link:
<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/columbus-ga/lawrence-washington-8709800>

Upcoming Events

(Below are chances for you to get involved)

June 2019

June 17 – Monthly Education Program will be replaced by our regular Monday night Support Group meetings

July/Aug 2019

- July 13-14 – NAMI Connection Support Group Facilitator Training – Carrollton, GA*
- July 15 – Monthly Education Program will be replaced by our regular Monday night Support Group meetings
- July 27-28 – NAMI Family Support Group Facilitator Training – Atlanta, GA*
- Aug 3 – NAMI In Our Own Voice Presenter Training – Atlanta, GA*

**If you are interested in attending a training session, a letter of recommendation from a member of the NAMI Columbus Board of Directors is required. Please secure this recommendation prior to submitting the application for the training.*

“Open” Support Groups:

Every Monday night, 6-7:30 pm
Family/Friend and NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups
Both groups meet at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 4700 Armour Rd.

Every Saturday, 1-2:30 pm
NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group
**Meets at The Bradley Center’s Multipurpose Room
(Use 22nd St. Parking Lot for easier access)**

Every Thursday night, 6:30-8 pm
NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group
Meets at Pierce Chapel United Methodist Church, 5122 Pierce Chapel Rd.



Upcoming Family-to-Family & Peer-to-Peer Classes

Family-to-Family is a free, 11-session educational program, which is for family members, friends and caregivers of people living with mental illness. The course is designed to help all family members understand and support their loved one living with mental illness, while maintaining their own well-being. **Sessions begin Sunday, August 25th.**

Peer-to-Peer is a free, 10-session educational program for adults who are looking to better understand their condition and journey toward recovery. Taught by a trained team of people who’ve been there, the program includes presentations, discussions and interactive exercises. Everything is confidential and NAMI never recommends a specific medical therapy or treatment approach. **Start date to be determined.**

Comprehensive free course materials will be provided for each participant.

Pre-registration is required by calling 706-320-3755 (leave a message) or by sending an e-mail to info@namicolumbusga.org.

Both courses will be held on Sundays, 2:30 p.m.-5 p.m. at Columbus Hospice Community Room, 7020 Moon Road.

We hope you’ll take part in these valuable NAMI training sessions!

Cars & Coffee Rally- a ROARING Success!



The Cars & Coffee Rally for Mental Health Awareness was held on May 18th at PTAP on Veteran's Pkwy, and it was a huge success. Rare classic, exotic, and muscle cars were on display for car lovers to view. We are thrilled that this event was one of the most successful 1-day NAMI fundraisers ever held in Columbus!

Chris Hubbard of the Cleveland Browns initiated having this event in Columbus, and he was on hand as the special host of the event. Chris is from Columbus and he led Carver High School to the Georgia Class AAA state championship in 2007.

Stephen Akinduro and Molly Jones were on hand to represent NAMI Columbus. This was a fun event that allowed Chris, Stephen, and Molly to network with local people and increase awareness & interest for those who want to get involved with NAMI. Chris' family has asked us to speak at their church, to continue building awareness and education. We are very grateful to Chris Hubbard and his management team along with Rachel Robins at NAMI national for coordinating this event with NAMI Columbus.

Below are some pictures from the event.



See related blog by Chris Hubbard about his struggles with anxiety and depression on next page.

You Can Be Strong and Still Seek Help

By Chris Hubbard | May. 17, 2019



As a kid, I vividly remember sitting around my grandmother's house thinking, "I want to be an NFL player and have a big NFL contract one day." Looking back, I never dreamed that I would be where I am now, having just finished my first season with the Cleveland Browns.

However, it wasn't an easy road. In addition to all of the physical demands of becoming a professional athlete, I have also battled with depression and anxiety.

The challenges started when I was a student: dealing with demanding transitions, bullying and balancing my schoolwork with athletics. I could see that others around me were going through similar issues, but I didn't feel the need to speak to a school counselor. Along the way, I taught myself to brush off my symptoms and I would try to shift my focus to elsewhere.

During my time at the University of Alabama Birmingham (UAB), balancing my schoolwork and football began to feel like a daily struggle. On top of that, the high expectations of the NFL draft started to take a toll on me. When you make the transition from college to pro-level sports, no one really talks about the pressure that comes with it.

That kind of pressure can wear on your body immensely and cause anxiety to really sink in. The anxiety felt like a constant voice in my head telling me, "I'm not good enough." Thankfully, I had support from UAB counselors, who were able to help me with the stress and the transition. This is when I learned how important it is to seek out help, and not to be ashamed of it.

These lessons really helped me after I was undrafted in 2013 and went through a very tough time emotionally. I experienced a lot of self-doubt and questioned whether this journey was right for me. And with support from my wife, I realized that it was. She was by my side throughout the whole process—from my lowest points to when I finally got the call from the Pittsburgh Steelers.

This was a time of joy in my life, but I still felt an immense amount of pressure: moving to an unfamiliar city, needing to perform well on the field, wanting to make my family and hometown proud. And then, four seasons later, when I was picked up by the Cleveland Browns, I went through that whole process and all of the anxiety again.

Even when you sign the contract of a lifetime, your anxiety doesn't just fade away. You are still playing a high intensity game that wears on you every day, beating you down physically and emotionally. But there's always a way to get help. What worked for me was reaching out to someone close to me. It's not always easy, but finding the courage to express yourself is better than bottling everything in.

More and more, we see professional athletes using their voice and platform for good, and that is exactly what I am hoping to accomplish. For [Mental Health Month](#), I am hosting the Cars & Coffee Rally for Mental Health Awareness on May 18 at PTAP (839 Veterans Parkway) in Columbus, Georgia.

Bringing attention to this event and my hometown means the world to me. It is not just one month of the year, but every day that I want to help spread mental health awareness. I want my community to know that their voices are being heard. I want them to know that it's okay to ask for help.

Chris Hubbard is a [NAMI Ambassador](#) and an offensive lineman for the Cleveland Browns of the National Football League (NFL). In 2018, Hubbard started in all 16 games and played every offensive snap as well as contributing on field goal protection. Hubbard was born in Columbus, GA and enjoys spending time with his wife and son.

Behavioral Health Innovation Commission Established

NAMI Georgia was on hand recently as Governor Brian Kemp signed HB514. This bill establishes the Behavioral Health Innovation Commission to examine and work toward better mental health and substance abuse outcomes in Georgia.

This new commission was highlighted with pride at the NAMIGA Leadership and Recovery Symposium in Macon on May 18.

Pictures below show the signing of the bill, including some NAMI GA staff who worked to get this bill passed.



Why these companies are giving employees a mental health break

By [Sara Ashley O'Brien, CNN Business](#)

Updated 8:37 AM ET, Wed May 15, 2019

Tech companies may be known for their hustle culture, in which working around the clock is the norm. But on Wednesday, more than 60 companies including Lyft and Rent The Runway plan to give their employees some "me time" during work hours.

It's part of a one-day campaign called ["National Mental Health Break,"](#) which was launched by Shine — a [startup best known](#) for its daily text-message service designed to address negative thought patterns. The company wants to raise awareness about mental health in the workplace and encourage more companies to have ongoing dialogues with employees about mental health days so they aren't viewed as taboo.

On May 15, participating employers will have a mental health break for staff at 3 p.m. local time, or allow employees to take time to themselves at any point throughout the day.

Some companies have organized group meditations while other firms will allow workers to go home several hours early. Some have agreed to review their mental-health day policies as part of the effort. The hope is to begin to normalize taking a mental health break from work, at a time when it's easier than ever to stay in constant contact with colleagues via Slack, email and text.

Shine has recruited a host of companies and organizations including GIF-search engine firm Giphy, dog food delivery startup Ollie and HR services startup Justworks to participate in the campaign.

"How can we create a moment where companies are encouraging conversations around mental health?" Shine cofounder Marah Lidey told CNN Business. "Everyone is talking about self-care, but no one is talking about mental health at work." Lidey and cofounder Naomi Hirabayashi said they recently conducted a survey of more than 1,770 Shine users. The pair said they found that while most participants reported they had thought about taking a mental health day at work, just a portion of them felt comfortable asking for that time off.

The duo said few companies actually have policies for taking mental health days.

This is the first big campaign Shine has done around mental health awareness, and it takes place during Mental Health Awareness Month. The company, which launched about three years ago and has raised \$8 million in funding, has about 4 million users around the world. Shine sends users daily texts offering affirmation, inspiration and motivation in a conversational tone. The company launched an app last year that offers more personalized content such as audio meditations.

"The cost of not doing anything is so much greater. Why is mental health so sticky and uncomfortable?" said Hirabayashi, who added that needing a mental health break "is the most universal and human thing."



Columbus

P.O. Box 8581
Columbus, GA 31908
(706) 320-3755
Our Area's Voice on Mental Illness



Many people find their way to our classes by first attending a support group. If you are a NAMI Columbus "long timer" (we don't want to call you old), please attend either of the two weekly NAMI Connection support groups or the weekly Family support group. Newcomers can use your wisdom and hard-earned experience. Sharing a message of recovery gives the hope they are searching for. Many people tell us that the NAMI motto "**You Are Not Alone**" is the initial feeling they realize at their first meeting. If you are willing to train to be a support group facilitator, let us know!

I want to support NAMI Columbus and NAMI's mission.

Name

Address

CityStateZip

Phone Numbers (do not enter a number if you do not want to be listed in the Membership Directory (members only).

E-Mail (Please include so we can be green and email you our monthly newsletter.)

Please check type of membership desired:

- ☐ Individual Membership - \$40 Dues
- ☐ Household Membership - \$60 Dues
- ☒ **\$5 Open Door Membership (financial hardship)**
(All dues are for 1 year and are tax-deductible.)

All memberships include NAMI National, NAMI Georgia, and NAMI Columbus membership.

- ☐ I am not joining at this time, but I would like to make a contribution of \$ _____. (Thank you!!!)

✂ Please Cut and Mail ✂

NAMI National, NAMI Georgia and NAMI Columbus are dedicated to eradicating stigma and improving the lives of persons with mental illnesses thereby also benefiting their friends, family and community. Catch the wave and be a part of change.

NAMI Columbus is an affiliate of NAMI Georgia, which is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization. Dues and donations are tax deductible. Membership includes a subscription to our monthly newsletter and access to immediate news on advocacy, treatment and support issues from our national, state and local organizations.

Please make checks payable to:
NAMI Georgia & enter "**NAMI Columbus membership**" in the memo field.

Mail your check and membership form to:
NAMI Columbus
P.O. Box 8581
Columbus, Georgia 31908

You can also join safely online at www.nami.org/join .