**Message from the President**

NAMI Texas is evolving in a changing environment and is entering an era rich with opportunities and challenges which will require a higher level of performance from us all. The NAMI Texas Board of Directors has proactively embarked on an ambitious master planning process to focus our collective efforts on maximizing our capacity for moving the organization forward, better prepared to fulfill our mission of “improving the quality of life of all individuals living with mental illness and their families.”

As facilitated by NAMI Texas Region 5 Director, Dr. Miles Kechter, the process includes identifying opportunities and challenges, as well as strengths and weaknesses, and developing strategies within each Board committee to capitalize on these factors as we proactively assess future trends and their likely impact on NAMI Texas’ ability to fulfill its mission. By thoughtfully applying the fertilizer of proactive, creative dedication with enhanced communications and hard work, we anticipate being better positioned to support the potential of luxuriant growth for NAMI Texas that is possible when our roots have been well nourished.

About those roots … For example, we anticipate increased and enhanced Affiliate and Member interaction with the NAMI Texas Board and among affiliates as we strive to implement the NAMI Standards of Excellence and meet the needs of neophyte groups seeking to initiate support groups and education classes in their communities. Sprouting from reinvigorated roots may emerge new programs leveraged from other states, such as “Red Flags” from Ohio and “Breaking the Silence” from New York, which both foster awareness and early intervention among young people at risk for mental illness. **(Continued on page 2)**
Message from the President: Continued from page 1

A renewed emphasis in Texas on the Copeland Center’s WRAP (Wellness and Recovery Action Plan) program, and an initiative to increase peer education and mentoring for veterans and their families, are among other emerging opportunities for NAMI Texas.

As the holiday season approaches and you plan your year-end donations, please remember to fertilize NAMI Texas with your gifts. Thank you and Happy Holidays!

Andrea Hazlitt
President, NAMI Texas Board of Directors

2012 NAMI Texas Annual Conference: A Special Thanks

We appreciate the 220 people who attended the 2012 NAMI TX Annual Conference “Partnering for Change, Building the Future” and thank the many talented people who contributed to its success, especially Patti Haynes, Ed Dickey, Rose McCorkle, Robin Peyson, and David Gibson who worked with chair Andrea Hazlitt to plan the event and recruit the following:

- **24 Sponsors and Partners:** Otsuka, AstraZeneca, We Work For Health Texas, Lilly Regional, Sunovian, Austin State Hospital, Laurel Ridge Treatment Center, Johnson & Johnson/Janssen, Karen Garber, Lilly National, Pfizer, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Green Oaks Hospitals, Texas Council of Community MHMR Centers, Inc., Ed and Jackie Dickey, NAMI Metro Houston, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas O’Toole/Communities Foundation, Tri-County Services, Value Options, Wood Group and NAMI Gulf Coast.


- **Promotional Materials Sale:** Jody Schultz and Patti Haynes.

- **6 Keynote Speakers:** Dr. Penny Frese, Dr. Nancy Kehoe, Dallas Police Department panel members – Sr Corporal Paul Farr, David Whitley, Officer Justin Roberts, Officer Kyle Tholl

- **43 Workshop speakers:** Names and affiliations listed in the conference program on namitexas.org.

- **On-site event coordinator:** Karen Pena, Global Account Executive with ConferenceDirect.

- **Awards Committee:** Carolyn Hamilton (chair), Sindi Elorreaga, Paula Hendrix and Bryan Moffitt.

- **Election Judges:** Karen Garber (election supervisor), John Tatum and Paula Hendrix (vote counter), Carolyn Karbowski, Vivian Renfro, Carolyn Hamilton, Kathy Busby, Emma Brown, Emma Glenn, Clarence Ewing, Berne Rudch

- **29 Moderators and Assistant Moderators:** Jackie Dickey, Carolyn Hamilton, Sherry Cusumano, Jerry Fulenwider, John Tatum, Robin Peyson, Cathy Weaver, Patti Haynes, Paula Hendrix, Cliff McGlotten, Sharon DeBlanc, Ed Dickey, Joe Powell, Karen Garber, Jinnie Dyson, Rose McCorkle, Jan Melis, Maria Kechter, Miles Kechter, Doug Beach, Angelina Hudson, Aleta Fairchild, Shirley Rowland, Bryan Rowland, Eliza Parks, Margo Williams, Gisele Schaefer, Adrienne Kennedy, Barbara Touey and Carmen Jones.

- **NAMI Texas staff:** Robin Peyson, Kelly Jeschke, Julia Wilson, Patti Haynes, Alexis Wadsworth, Greg Hansch, Stacy Hollingsworth, Maurice Whitfield and Michelle Cape.

- **Photographers:** Alexis Wadsworth and Kathy Busby.

- **Board Committees:** Affiliate Outreach Chair, Patti Haynes; Public Policy Chair, Sharon DeBlanc; NAMI Texas Consumer Council Chair, Rose McCorkle; and Education Chair, Paula Hendrix.

- And the very helpful additional staff and volunteers who stepped forward to fill in gaps due to people’s changes in schedule – you know who you are even if we don’t have your name on a list – thank you!

We also appreciate the volunteers elected to lead NAMI Texas in 2013 as Directors and Officers:

- **Four New Directors** elected: David Gibson, Region 1; Sindi Elorreaga, Region 3; Andrea Hazlitt, Region 8; and Rose McCorkle, At-Large.

- **2013 Executive Committee elected:** Andrea Hazlitt, President; Ed Dickey, Vice-President; John Tatum, Treasurer; Miles Kechter, Secretary; Paula Hendrix, At-Large; and Sindi Elorreaga, At-Large.
A Look Back at the 2012 NAMI Texas Conference
Thursday, November 1 - Saturday, November 3
Austin, Texas

Robin Peyson, NAMI Texas Executive Director, and members of the Dallas Police Department at the NAMI Connections Lunch Panel.

Mental Health Professional of the Year Award presented to Dianne T. Robinson, Ph.D.

NAMI Gulf Coast receiving the Affiliate of the Year Award from NAMI Texas Board President, Andrea Hazlitt.

Bluebonnet Trails Community Services receiving the Above and Beyond Award from NAMI Texas Executive Director, Robin Peyson.

Ed Dickey, NAMI San Antonio, introducing Keynote Speaker, Sister Nancy Kehoe.

Mark Korenek Consumer Quality of Life Award presented to Denise Baldarrama.

Statewide NAMI Texas Membership Drive Award Presented to NAMI El Paso.
NAMI Texas Public Policy Platform for the 83rd Legislative Session
By Greg Hansch, NAMI Texas Public Policy Coordinator

The NAMI Texas Board approved the following Public Policy Platform issues for the 2013 Texas legislative session. We appreciate the assistance of our Affiliates throughout the state in providing grassroots feedback for the NAMI Texas Public Policy Platform as we strive to speak with one voice on behalf of all members.

- **Funding** — This perennial concern of advocates for better mental health services in Texas will undoubtedly be the leading issue again in the 2013 session. In the previous session, the aim of most stakeholders was to see that funding was not reduced, as there appeared to be no chance of enhanced funding with the budget constraints faced by the state. However, there seem to be advocates within the legislature for the long-held NAMI position that failing to adequately fund is penny-wise and pound-foolish. Senators Uresti and Huffman issued an op-ed piece that expressed the need to increase funding in order to prevent further erosion of the safety net and greatly increased costs in other areas such as criminal justice. Therefore, NAMI Texas endorses advocating for increased funding, which includes advocating for Medicaid Expansion and enforcement of both state and federal Mental Health Parity laws by the Texas Department of Insurance.

- **Assisted Outpatient Treatment** — NAMI Texas has been following this issue through the Mental Health Code rewriting process. We fully support a strong, clear statute in the Code that will allow for civil commitments to outpatient treatment for persons who are treatment resistant and have a history of repeated hospitalizations due to failure to continue with treatment voluntarily.

- **Mental Health Code Rewrite** — NAMI Texas supports the language in the Texas Appleseed report, “Recommendations for Updating the Texas Mental Health Code.”

- **Housing and Supported Housing Funding** — NAMI Texas believes that additional support for housing and supported housing services is a critical need throughout the state. In particular, there should be funding for continuing supported housing services to persons who improve in symptoms and functioning so that they no longer qualify for the Resiliency and Disease Management (RDM) Levels of Care or “packages” 3 or 4.

- **Use of Local Hospitals in Lieu of Expanding State Hospital (SH) Capacity** — NAMI Texas supports earmarking funding for contracts with local hospitals rather than expanding SH capacity. Several of the SH facilities have passed the century mark and all are aging and very expensive to rehab and maintain. In addition, it is difficult for the SHs located in rural areas to obtain the professional staff needed to expand bed capacity. Utilizing local hospitals is both a cheaper and more consumer friendly alternative. Families will be better able to work with the treatment teams and participate in treatment when their loved ones are hospitalized in their communities.

- **Immediate Restoration of Suspended Medicaid Benefits for Persons Jailed or in Free-Standing State Hospitals (including State Hospitals)** — NAMI Texas supports legislation to ensure that Medicaid benefits are immediately reinstated upon the release of an inmate or person who has been hospitalized. This is so that follow-up treatment in the community is not jeopardized due to lack of payer source and/or lack of ability to access stable housing and to meet basic needs.

- **Confidentiality Laws Implemented in Ways That Interfere With Family Friendly Services** — NAMI Texas will monitor any legislation that is filed in this area to ensure that it does not interfere with the ability of providers to maintain compliance with the law while still providing family friendly services.

For more information on the NAMI Texas Public Policy Platform, and to stay up-to-date on advocacy opportunities, please visit the NAMI Texas Policy Blog, at [http://namitexaspolicy.wordpress.com](http://namitexaspolicy.wordpress.com).
Join Us for Mental Health Capitol Day Rally 2013

What: A rally to call for reform in our public mental health system.

When: Thursday, February 28th, 2013 (10 a.m.-4 p.m.)

Where: Great Hall, Family Life Center, First University Methodist Church. Northwest Corner of 13th and Lavaca Street (1201 Lavaca), Austin, TX, 78701

Why: Texas ranks 50th out of 50 states and the District of Columbia in public mental health spending - isn't it time we change that?

How: For more information, contact Greg Hansch, NAMI Texas Public Policy Coordinator, at ghansch@namitexas.org.

Do You "Like" NAMI Texas? Please Follow Us on Facebook and Twitter!

Want to stay in the know when it comes to the latest in mental health news? Or, would you like to receive periodic updates on NAMI events?

Then, "Like" our NAMI Texas Facebook page at www.facebook.com/namitexas, and follow us on Twitter at https://twitter.com/NAMITexas.

Thanks to all of our fans! We’ve nearly hit our goal for the year and appreciate you sharing our info with your family, friends and colleagues.
Audra Shugart is a living testament to the healing power of books. As early as age four, Audra began showing symptoms of mental illness and soon her emotional landscape was complicated by the fear and confusion of living with her disorder, as well as the sometimes thoughtlessness and cruelty of others. During her adolescence, Audra was hospitalized multiple times, and after each one, she struggled to regain the ground she lost due to her extended absences from school. In fact, upon one re-enrollment, her evaluation results were so poor that school officials did not believe she could meet the requirements for graduation.

Instead of giving up, Audra turned to books to strengthen her cognitive abilities and rebuild her lost academic skills. In high school, Audra was placed in self-contained classrooms and eventually learned material for her courses independently by reading the assigned textbooks. Although she still had periods of absence from school, Audra eventually proved to everyone what she was capable and graduated with a regular high school diploma. She counts this as one of the most gratifying achievements of her young life.

Over a year ago Audra happened across an article about an organization that donated books and literacy materials to the Gardner Betts Juvenile Detention Center in Austin. “Kids Need To Read” (KNTR), a national nonprofit foundation, promotes childhood literacy by providing books to schools, libraries, and literacy programs that serve disadvantaged children. After doing more research, she contacted the foundation and asked if they would be willing to provide reading materials to patients in state hospitals in Texas. After their initial positive response, Audra worked to establish a partnership with Austin State Hospital and facilitate the contacts and paperwork necessary to obtain a gift of over 350 books and games for the child and adolescent unit there.

Audra wishes to thank KNRF for their incredible generosity and the Volunteer Services Council at ASH for their continuing assistance throughout this process. We applaud her for taking the initiative to reach out in a way that will make such a difference to so many children.

Audra’s story is proof that books are more than just paper and ink. Sometimes they are the best medicine of all.

Audra Shugart is a NAMI Austin volunteer, a state trainer in Peer-to-Peer, an IOOV speaker, and a key speaker in Parents and Teachers as Allies. She lives and works in Austin, Texas. For more information on KNTR, go to www.kidsneedtoread.org/.

“*The great therapeutic power of literature - it doesn't just echo our own experience, it takes us places we hadn't imagined but which, once seen, we never forget. When literature is working...it offers an orderliness which can shore up readers against the disorder, or lack of control, that afflicts them.*”

Stress, Depression and the Holidays: Tips for coping

The holiday season often brings unwelcome guests — stress and depression. And it's no wonder. The holidays present a dizzying array of demands — parties, shopping, baking, cleaning and entertaining, to name just a few. But with some practical tips, you can minimize the stress that accompanies the holidays. You may even end up enjoying the holidays more than you thought you would. When stress is at its peak, it's hard to stop and regroup. Try to prevent stress and depression in the first place, especially if the holidays have taken an emotional toll on you in the past.

- **Acknowledge your feelings.** If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief. It's OK to take time to cry or express your feelings. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holiday season.

- **Reach out.** If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship. Volunteering your time to help others also is a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships.

- **Be realistic.** The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to, and be open to creating new ones. For example, if your adult children can't come to your house, find new ways to celebrate together, such as sharing pictures, emails or videos.

- **Set aside differences.** Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion. And be understanding if others get upset or distressed when something goes awry. Chances are they're feeling the effects of holiday stress and depression, too.

- **Stick to a budget.** Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts. Try these alternatives: Donate to a charity in someone's name, give homemade gifts or start a family gift exchange.

- **Plan ahead.** Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities. Plan your menus and then make your shopping list. That'll help prevent last-minute scrambling to buy forgotten ingredients. And make sure to line up help for party prep and cleanup.

- **Learn to say no.** Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or activity. If it's not possible to say no when your boss asks you to work overtime, try to remove something else from your agenda to make up for the lost time.

- **Don't abandon healthy habits.** Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt. Have a healthy snack before holiday parties so that you don't go overboard on sweets, cheese or drinks. Continue to get plenty of sleep and physical activity.

- **Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Take a walk at night and stargaze. Listen to soothing music. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm.

- **Seek professional help if you need it.** Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious, plagued by physical complaints, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless, and unable to face routine chores. If these feelings last for a while, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.

Take control of the holidays!

Don't let the holidays become something you dread. Instead, take steps to prevent the stress and depression that can descend during the holidays. Learn to recognize your holiday triggers, such as financial pressures or personal demands, so you can combat them before they lead to a meltdown. With a little planning and some positive thinking, you can find peace and joy during the holidays.
A Look Back at the Fall 2012 NAMI Texas WALKS

NAMI Austin: October 6, 2012
- Total Raised: $258,338
- Top Fundraisers: Samuel Donaldson ($3,300); Lisa Carchedi ($3,250); Lulu Savino ($3,106)

NAMI Tarrant County: October 6, 2012
- Total Raised: $84,571
- Top Fundraisers: Carolyn Apodaca ($3,300); Sarah Davenport ($2,850); Basnot Phillips-Williams ($2,265)

NAMI San Antonio: October 6, 2012
- Total Raised: $51,473
- Top Fundraisers: Anonymous ($25,500); Debra Titzman ($4,511); Jerry Fulenwider ($2,215)
Mental Illness Awareness Week 2012
NAMI Lubbock Sets a Shining Example

By Beth Glass, Co-Chair, NAMI Lubbock Mental Illness Awareness Week

*Arts and Mental Illness*, an exhibition on October 5th in the Christine Devitt Icehouse Gallery, kicked off Lubbock’s 2012 Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) by showcasing the talents of local artists with mental illness. The exhibit was held on the campus of the Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts in conjunction with First Friday Art Trail, during which an estimated 1,000 people walked through to view the artwork and mingle with the featured artists.

Cookies and fruit donated by United Market Street and Carillon Senior Living Community attracted browsers to an attractive center display where they picked up *Education Improving Lives* and their choice of brochures on schizophrenia, bipolar illness, suicide, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mental illnesses. Also displayed was an MIAW proclamation issued by Lubbock Mayor Glen Robertson at the September City Council meeting.

“Our Mental Health Community,” a public forum, was held October 10th at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. Steven Berk, Dean of the TTU School of Medicine, sponsored a free luncheon from Jason’s Deli, and Bryce McGregor, Assistant Dean for Administration, facilitated the forum. Again, there was a table with NAMI program brochures, mental illness flyers and membership blanks, giving attendees an opportunity to join NAMI.

Approximately 200 were in attendance, including students, faculty, representatives of all mental health agencies in town, and members of the NAMI Board. Without a designated speaker, everyone present was free to share personal stories, and celebrate the breakthroughs being made in understanding mental illness. The dialogue focused on scientific research and the more effective treatments that allow individuals living with mental illness a better potential to reclaim full and productive lives.

Special television coverage Wednesday evening included a Channel 11 interview of Dr. Tom McGovern, Texas Tech Professor of Psychiatry, who had moderated the forum. In other coverage, Beth Lawson, the associate CEO of StarCare Specialty Health System, said, "What we know is that mental illness is a brain disease. It is a scientific, no fault brain disease. It is not a social disorder. It is not a disorder of laziness. It is not a disorder of choice. It is a brain disease."

On Thursday, October 11, 72 attendees enjoyed a dinner honoring local service providers, along with the NAMI Board and office staff. The event was held at the University Medical Center and was hosted by NAMI Lubbock, the Dean’s Office and the Center for Ethics, Humanities, and Spirituality of the Texas Tech University Medical School. Tables were donated by Community Health Center of Lubbock, Covenant Hospital, StarCare, the Department of Psychiatry, TTUHSC, and Dr. McGovern, resulting in a profit of over $2,000 for the fundraiser.

Inspired by the success of the week’s events, the NAMI Lubbock Board already is planning for Mental Illness Awareness Week 2013.

*The Lion Laying with the Lamb* from NAMI Lubbock’s *The Arts and Mental Illness* Exhibit.
Education Update: NAMI Basics Training

**What:** NAMI Basics is a free 6-week education program specifically for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents who have either been diagnosed with a serious mental illness/serious emotional disturbance, or who are experiencing symptoms but have not yet been diagnosed. The NAMI Basics course is taught by trained teachers who are the parent or caregiver of individuals who developed the symptoms of mental illness prior to the age of 13 years.

**When and Where:** The training was held July 27 – 29, 2012 in San Antonio.

**Who:** Ed and Jackie Dickey (Trainers) and Patti Haynes (Education Director and Resource Person); 17 participants were trained.

**Feedback:** "It was my pleasure to take the training for the NAMI Basics course. This is exactly the kind of program that my family needed when my daughter was diagnosed with Bipolar six years ago. Although at that time I was grateful for the Family-to-Family course, it was still lacking specific elements to help our family navigate the school system for help. Basics is the step-by-step help that parents need to build a firm foundation for their child, because mental illness does not go away. Having this help in the early years will enable children to develop a better system to manage their illness throughout their lives.” — Cynthia Cunningham, NAMI Waco

Thank you to our NAMI Texas Corporate Partners!
NAMI Texas Mission:

NAMI Texas is dedicated to improving the quality of life of all individuals living with mental illness and their families.

Memberships:
To become a member of NAMI, please contact your local affiliate at www.nami.org/local.

Donations:
To make donations to NAMI Texas, please visit www.namitexas.org, or call us at 1-800-633-3760.

Patti Haynes, Interim Executive Director & Education Director
Julia Wilson, Assistant to Executive Director
Kelly Jeschke, Membership Coordinator & Office Manager
Aeren Martinez, Development Director
Kathleen Burnside, Grant Writer
Alexis Wadsworth, Communications Director
Stacy Hollingsworth, SOE Affiliate Coordinator
Maurice Whitfield, Advocacy Coordinator
Greg Hansch, Public Policy Coordinator

For ViaHope employees, please visit www.viahope.org.

SAVE THE DATE
Training of Trainers

NEW Date & Location!
March 15-17, 2013
Washington, DC
Metro Area

NAMI Basics
NAMI Connection
De Familia a Familia de NAMI
NAMI Family-to-Family
NAMI Family Support Group
NAMI In Our Own Voice
NAMI Parents & Teachers as Allies
NAMI Peer-to-Peer

STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS ON HOW TO REGISTER!
edutraininginfo@nami.org