





**Slate of Candidates from the NAMI Georgia Nominating Committee
Candidate Statements – 2010 Board of Directors**

Name	Matt Crouch
Current Hometown	Atlanta
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Dekalb
Occupation	CEO & Regional VP, United Health Services Inc.
	<p>I have been a counselor / LPC in Georgia since 1989. Initially working as a clinician in both inpatient and outpatient settings, I transitioned to being a hospital administrator in 1995. I have been a member of The Georgia Hospital Association Board since 2007 and the MHA Board Association Board since 2009. Also since 2006 I have been the chair of the GHA Psych and Substance Abuse Council.</p> <p>I would like to help provide guidance and support to the Board as well as being an advocate for NAMI's key agenda items. I have been working with NAMI as a participant in the Gray Matters legislative Caucuses, serving as Committee Chair for the Case Management Committee.</p> <p>NAMI is a vital organization helping mental health consumers. I wish to be part of this vital organization and apply my skills as a clinician and administrator.</p>


Name	William R Csuk
Current Hometown	Dawsonville
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI FDL
Occupation	Manager, Mars /Wrigley Manufacturing
	<p>It was a cold day in January 2007 when I traveled to Illinois to see my son, Billy, in college. Here was a very smart young man pursuing his passion, a college degree in physics. I entered his dorm room that day to find a completely different person. He was telling stories about how the FBI was plotting to kill him and his room was bugged. At first I thought he was taking a drug like LSD but, later he was taken to the emergency room and diagnosed with Schizophrenia.</p> <p>My thoughts then were, my god here is a young man with a great future and now his whole life was taken away by mental illness. My family and I were devastated by this diagnosis but, it was not long we researched and found NAMI.</p> <p>From that day forward NAMI has been teaching me through programs like Family to Family, CIT, and the Support Group meetings that there is hope for people with Mental Illness and if we all pull together we can make a difference.</p> <p>It is my mission, if I'm elected to the Board of Directors for NAMI Georgia, to continue to learn and support all of the NAMI programs for the sole purpose of improving the lives of people with Mental Illness.</p>


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Name	Alison Dawson
Current Hometown	Marietta
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Northside
Occupation	Owner, Total Plant & Floral Service, Inc.
	<p>When my daughter was diagnosed with a mental illness in 1996 I educated myself about mental illnesses and eventually found Nami. Nami provided me with the education and support that I desperately needed. I attended affiliate and support group meetings religiously. After taking and graduating from Family to Family and attending a national convention, I became president of my affiliate and facilitated a support group. Prior to becoming affiliate president I was invited to join the Nami Georgia Board of directors. I was a member of the Nami Georgia board for several years and on the executive committee for some time. It has been about four years since I went off the board to focus on my business. I am now able to volunteer to be on the board once again. I wish to serve on the board in order to help eliminate stigma and to open communications among the board and its affiliates. My experience as a business owner demonstrates that I can take projects and make them successful ongoing concerns. It also demonstrates that I am able to look at financial statements and understand to some degree what is going on with the finances of an organization.</p>


Name	Nora Lott Haynes
Current Hometown	Atlanta
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Golden Isles
Occupation	Retired Educator
	<p>Many of my family members and friends have a mental illness and/or substance abuse issues. It is very hard.</p> <p>I have an insatiable passion for devoting my time and efforts toward joining other NAMI GA members in improving conditions for and improving the lives of those of us who are lost or floundering in the dysfunctional maze in our state. NAMI GA and our Affiliates are up to the task of bringing families, communities, churches, law enforcement, businesses, etc. to the table to make recovery possible, and I want to be a part of that success.</p> <p>I will try to bring energy and passion to NAMI GA.</p>


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Name	Reverend Leland LaMar Jones, Sr.
Current Hometown	Atlanta
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Atlanta/Auburn
Occupation	Clergy
	<p>Concerning relevant experience, I must point out that my service as a pastor has afforded me the need to work with advocacy groups by default if not with intention. I can add my personal dealing with depression after returning from serving overseas with the US Army.</p> <p>As an African American Male I can help to bridge the gap between NAMI and the most under-reported group...the Black Male. Having served in the military will also help me to reach out to, and connect with, veterans. Working with medical professionals and community professionals are also strengths that I provide.</p> <p>The following four reasons note why I would like to serve on the NAMI board of Directors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe that I could aid in the discussion and in the implementation of programs to benefit those dealing with mental illness. • I know that I could aid in the dialog to provide direction and assistance to service providers and consumers. • Bringing entities together to collaborate and to find solutions is a personal strength that I possess and I know that such a skill, mixed with tenacity, would advance the cause of NAMI Georgia. • I would evidence that fact that it is better to show your worth than to live behind rhetoric. Action is needed...with passion.


Name	Mimi Marlowe
Current Hometown	Columbus
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Columbus
Occupation	
	<p>Several members of my family have been diagnosed with a serious mental illness. I have been a member of the NAMI Georgia board for two terms and, as chair of the Affiliate Development Committee, am interested in serving a third term to help other affiliates in Georgia as well as my own. I have experience with helping affiliates create an annual plan and would love to work with more affiliates around the state. NAMI National is bringing in Standards of Excellence and NAMI Georgia is committed to helping all its affiliates meet these standards. I bring strong communication skills, as well as experience and expertise in facilitating, training and coaching which I believe help me work effectively with affiliates. I am also interested in working with faith outreach initiatives coming out of NAMI Georgia. I would love to see the faith community become more involved and committed to helping those with a mental illness. NAMI is important to me because I see it helping to remove the stigma surrounding mental illness in addition to helping those with a diagnosis live more fulfilling lives within their community. Without NAMI, we'd still be in the dark ages.</p>


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Name	Jane H. Martin
Current Hometown	Atlanta
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Atlanta/Auburn
Occupation	Retired Associate Director of Children, Families and the Courts, Administrative Office of the Courts of Georgia
	<p>I have been working with NAMI in my professional career with DHR/MHDDAD and the AOC for many years. In my work with the courts over the past 7 years, I have represented the courts on the Partners in Crisis committee, Crisis Intervention Teams meetings and other stakeholder groups. I have provided training on Mental Health Courts to NAMI members and in 2008 I conducted a workshop along with mental health court judges at the National CIT Conference. From 2007-2008, I directed the Chief Justice-Led Task Force to Promote Criminal Justice/Mental Health Collaboration. NAMI was a critical partner on that task force.</p> <p>Georgia's behavioral health system is in crisis. NAMI has a critical role to play in providing programming and leadership to ensure that an improved and fully funded system of care is implemented in Georgia. Now that I have retired after 30 years of working for the state in the behavioral health field, I want to continue to contribute at this critical time. I feel I can be most effective working with NAMI. I am passionate about helping policymakers make wiser, more humane and more cost-effective solutions related to behavioral health services.</p>


Name	Barbara JoAnn McFarland
Current Hometown	Waycross
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Brantley County
Occupation	Volunteer
	<p>I am a facilitator for NAMI Connection Support group and a Mentor for NAMI Peer-to-Peer Education Program. I was team captain for the last two years for the Ware Co. Day Services Team for the NAMI Walk here in Waycross. I also have a mental illness which is controlled by medication and my coping skills which I learned in Peer Support.</p> <p>I want to make a difference in the lives of people with mental illness. By serving on the Board, I feel that I can help others learn more about NAMI and what NAMI has to offer. Sometimes people don't know where to turn. I want to be that person who will stand up and say, "NAMI will help you, let me show you how." I want to reach out to the public and bring more people to NAMI.</p> <p>My skills lie in reaching out to people by setting up booths at health fairs, job fairs and at county fairs. I am creative and like to talk to people about NAMI. I have studied the different types of mental illnesses while pursuing two different Associate Degrees; one in Applied Science and the other in Psychology.</p> <p>I feel as if it is time for me to step up to another level and do more for NAMI. Being on the board will give me that chance. NAMI was there for me when my father died in May 2008 and now I want to be there for NAMI. I enjoy being an advocate for people with mental illnesses not just in my area but all over. That is why it is important for me to be on the NAMI GA Board of Directors.</p>


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Name	Charles Releford
Current Hometown	Atlanta
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Atlanta/Auburn
Occupation	Chief of Staff - Fulton Co Dept of Health and Wellness – Deputy Dir. for Behavioral Health
	<p>Professionally, I have worked in the field of mental health, developmental disabilities and addictive diseases for over 25 years. During this time I have provided direct services to persons who may have been mentally ill in three states including, North Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia. I have provided direct therapeutic care to adults as well as adolescents, and served as an educator in the field through serving as faculty member at Morehouse College and Morehouse School of Medicine. Additionally, I have served on numerous committees charged with increasing access to behavioral health care and reducing the stigma associated with treatment.</p> <p>Community service is one of the most effective ways to give back to the community. Serving as an advocate for the rights of mentally ill persons in the state of Georgia would be an honor.</p> <p>I bring over 25 years experience in the area of mental health and substance abuse research, program development, program management, technical assistance provision and development, academic training, and coalition building and management. I have served as the Director of Planning, Evaluation, and Quality Assurance for the DHR and as the Director of a federally funded community based coalition of service providers of mental health, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS services and fostered the development of numerous non-profits from this venture. I have provided consultative services for various organizations including the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, U.S. Dept of Education and HUD. I have participated in the development of a Faith Based curriculum for training and technical assistance provision to church workers in the area of mental health. I have authored and co-authored numerous grants related to mental health and substance abuse treatment and prevention. Currently, I serve as the Chief of Staff for the Department of Health Services in Fulton County and provide oversight for Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.</p> <p>NAMI is important because many times persons who may be mentally ill don't have a voice. The persons represented by NAMI can collectively speak with one voice through the advocacy and public engagement that NAMI facilitates.</p>

Name	Bill Roberts
Current Hometown	Atlanta
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Northside
Occupation	Retired from IBM
	<p>I have been a member of NAMI for 25 years and served on the board of NAMI Northside Atlanta. I and my family have dealt with mental illness as it has affected my son for over 35 years. This has included dealing with diagnosis, misdiagnosis, drug therapy, noncompliance, doctor' resistance to prescribing drugs, hospitalization(s) (both voluntary and involuntary), housing issues, total hopelessness and times of great relief and joy.</p> <p>I had 25 years of management experience with IBM before retiring. I have served as treasurer in four different civic or neighborhood organizations and can offer both my management and financial experience wherever appropriate.</p> <p>NAMI provided a life line to our family when we needed it most. I have seen major advances in the treatment acceptance and resources available to the mentally ill since our first encounter with it 35 years ago. NAMI has been a catalyst and advocate in many of those changes. There is obviously much more to be done and I would like to contribute to that end in whatever way I can.</p>

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Name	Temple Sellers
Current Hometown	Marietta
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI DeKalb
Occupation	General Counsel and Vice-President Legal Services, Georgia Hospital Association
	<p>I am connected with mental health issues through my professional role as the General Counsel for the Georgia Hospital Association (“GHA”) a trade association that represents all the acute care hospitals in Georgia. GHA also has a Council on Psychiatric & Chemical Dependence Hospitals and I provide ongoing legal/policy support for the Council. In addition to my professional role, I also am connected to mental health issues on a personal basis. I have both friends and family members who live with mental illness. I began working with NAMI during the last legislative session on a psychiatric advance directive bill and continue to participate in meetings and discussions in an attempt to address the interests of both consumers and the provider community.</p> <p>A significant amount of my time working for GHA involves advocacy on behalf of both our member hospitals and the patients they serve. I support our government relations team year-round, through advocacy efforts that include assisting in the development of our legislative agenda, drafting legislation, reviewing proposed legislation, drafting amendments to address identified issues, working with legislators and other interested stakeholders to resolve areas of concerns and testifying before legislative committees as needed. I am an effective communicator and am able to explain complicated legal issues in a way that generally helps promote conflict resolution. I have legal expertise and advocacy experience that would be valuable to NAMI Georgia</p> <p>I am interested in working with the NAMI Board and offering my legal expertise and assist in the furtherance of the NAMI Georgia mission and to find ways to ensure the continued availability of mental health services across the continuum of care.</p> <p>I am particularly interested in efforts to ensure the full range of mental health services needed to meet the needs of consumers are available in Georgia and I believe NAMI is dedicated to this purpose as well.</p>

Name	Valerie West
Current Hometown	LaGrange
Your NAMI Affiliate	NAMI Troup
Occupation	Executive Assistant, Troup County Board of Commissioners
	<p>I became aware of NAMI when my eldest son had his first break at age 20. It was such a devastating event for me and my family I just cannot imagine how we could have gotten through it without the support I was given by Sue Marlowe and NAMI – Columbus. Tammy Rogers and I started support groups for families and consumers in our community of Troup County because we saw first-hand how the education provided and the support of an organization like NAMI can change things. I also became involved with the CIT Program of NAMI because the law enforcement community also needs help in identifying and working with the mentally ill and their families and I feel that by participating I put a human face to their training. I would like to bring more awareness to the plight of consumers and their families and advocate for change. This experience has shown me a way to put all of the experience that I have in local government and my educational background in communications to work to help those who need help the most</p>