

Ralph Wade
NAMI Gwinnett**Lawrenceville, Georgia**
Senior Account Manager

I have a long term connection to mental health as the primary caretaker of a spouse who has battled through the ups and downs of mental illness. As a result of attending NAMI support group meetings, taking the Family to Family class and becoming involved in the local affiliation, my life has improved immensely. I feel strongly about the benefits of the programs offered by NAMI and want to increase the availability and participation in these programs. I have good communication skills and understand the process of goal setting and how to attain these goals. I am proud to be part of an organization devoted to improving the lives of individuals affected by mental illness and know from first hand experience all that NAMI has to offer. I feel that I can be a significant asset as we work to provide help to everyone across Georgia who is affected by mental illness.

Patrice Harris, MD, MA
NAMI Atlanta/Auburn Ave.**Atlanta, Ga.**
Medical Director for the Fulton County MHDDAD

I am a graduate of the West Virginia University School of Medicine and completed residency and fellowship training at the Emory University School of Medicine. In addition to my general psychiatry training, I completed fellowships in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Forensic Psychiatry. I am currently the Medical Director for the Fulton County Department of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases and am in private practice. I am also Clinical Associate Professor in the Emory University Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. Since 1988, I have been actively involved in the legislative process on both the state and national levels. In September, I was inducted into the West Virginia University Academy of Distinguished Alumni. I am the youngest graduate to have achieved this honor.

Dan Hagaman
NAMI Cobb**Canton, GA**
Business Consultant- RBC Bank (USA)

Having family members that suffer from mental illness gives me insight and understanding to NAMI's cause. In my line of work, I have worked closely on both the administrative and financial side with the boards of various associations. I am extremely interested in promoting education and awareness of the different types of mental illnesses to help alleviate the negative stigma associated with mental illness. I would also like to see more advocacy for both consumers and the family members who care for them.

Jane Fleming Osborn
NAMI Brooks**Valdosta, GA**
Social Worker and Director, 2-1-1 of South Central Georgia

Working as a social worker in Texas, Florida and Valdosta for the last 30 years, I have seen the effects of mental illness on families in child abuse cases, families with children with special medical needs, families without two parents and more recently, people who are homeless. There has never been enough resources, or understanding, or parity for people who need even the simplest care to be able to live a full life. I have advocated for persons with mental illness through the Lowndes/Valdosta Mental Health Association; annual candidate forums sponsored by multiple organizations; my daily interactions with people seeking help through 2-1-1 of South Central Georgia (a program of the South Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness); in contacts with legislators both local and national; and in the public arena when I can speak or write on behalf of those who have no voice. NAMI is an organization whose voice should be heard in every forum related to mental health until parity is recognized and achieved.

Bill Kissel, MS, CCHP
NAMI Gwinnett**Lilburn, GA**
Correctional Health Care Administration

Bill Kissel joined CorrectHealth in September of 2007, with over twenty years of correctional healthcare experience, nine of those years as Director of Health Services for the Georgia Department of Corrections, the nation's sixth largest state correctional system. Under Bill's direction the system eliminated all health services related class action law suites, reduced mortality rates, implemented a system wide quality assurance program, all while maintaining health care inflation below the national average. In 2005 Bill joined the Georgia MHDDAD and was successful in developing a system wide quality assurance program through a partnership with the Medical College of Georgia for the state hospital system, and was a member of the multi-agency team that successfully implemented a state wide initiative with the law enforcement and mental health community towards the development of the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training program focused on the diversion of persons with mental disorders from jails and prisons. Bill is certified as an instructor by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council, and a member of the faculty at Georgia State University School of Public Health and the West Georgia Police Academy.

Virginia Worley L.C.S.W.**Fayetteville, GA****NAMI Affiliate Fayette****LCSW /Trauma Recovery Program @ Atlanta VA**

I am currently teaching the "PTSD" portion for the CIT training which is co-sponsored by NAMI and GBI as well as using NAMI as a resource in my work at with veterans at the VA. In the past I worked with NAMI in Panama City Florida for approximately 8 or 10 years and at one time served on their board. We were able to provide Christmas presents to patients at the state hospital each year, be involved in providing workshops at a low rate to various mental health providers, and being involved in a variety of ways of watching mental health services grow in that community from spouse abuse shelters, special family homeless shelter, special teams for handling child abuse to free day treatment for brain injured adults. NAMI gives so much to the community in so many ways. I want to be in the heart of being able to help again as I did when I lived in Florida. As a Licensed Clinical Supervisor who has served on various boards, I am exceptional with public speaking and networking. I can put together workshops and speakers, generating funding ideas and in general have a realistic picture of all areas of mental health. I also bring enthusiasm and a willingness to work. Having worked with folks in the Mental Health field, including various diagnosis, pain management and brain injured, I saw the struggles that families have gone through in the past 20 years. NAMI became important to me 20 years ago as they taught me in my early years how important that psycho education is to the public and to NEVER give up on your dream for others. It can be done even if only 2 people share the dream.

Alan McDaniel**Loganville, GA****NAMI Gwinnett****Real Estate Appraiser**

I was diagnosed with depression and bi-polar disorder in 1990. I also have a family member who has seasonal affective disorder. After several years of dealing with my illness, basically on my own and with great family support, I realized that there had, or needed, to be a better way other than just hospitalization, medication and a pat on the back along with a "good luck" statement. In 2006 my wife found out about NAMI through a co-worker. We joined NAMI Gwinnett where I was asked, and agreed, to join the Board of Directors and to become a facilitator. I have been heavily involved in NAMI Gwinnett since joining. I enjoy being able to share my experiences and help other people who deal with brain disorders. I also enjoy learning from those same people. I believe that I can help in a larger capacity as a board member of NAMI Georgia based on my organizational and leadership skills as well as my general "good common sense". All of these skills were honed over 27 years as a member of management with United Parcel Service. I hope to be able to help bring the words "brain disorder" to the point that this phrase not only replaces the words "mental illness" but also becomes a name for the real illnesses that brain disorders are. Only by bringing these illnesses out of the dark and into the light will we be able to overcome many of the problems that have haunted us in the past.

Donna Jones**Douglasville, GA****NAMI Cobb****Attorney**

Donna has served on the NAMI Georgia Board of Directors for at least 6 years. She has been the Chairperson of the Governance Committee, overseeing several major revisions to NAMI Georgia's Bylaws.

Jim Norris**St. Simons Island, GA****NAMI Golden Isles****Retired Mental Health Professional**

My original connection to Mental Health was in serving as a professional in the delivery of human services to groups and individuals. I have experience with family members with dual diagnosis. I became acquainted with NAMI when I witnessed the degradation of the Mental Health System locally. Indeed the study conducted by NAMI spurred me to action. I submitted to news media numbers of letters to outlets across the State. Many were published and I continue these efforts. I have 31 years professional experience in the delivery of human services and in the treatment of mental illness. I earned a Master's Degree in Counseling from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. I was certified by the Georgia Division of Mental Health in Substance Abuse, Child and Adolescent Services, Adult Mental Health, and Developmental Disabilities, a Mental Health Professional. Though retired I remain active. I have been fortunate in linking to local resources and developing relationships with clergy and churches. I am acquainted with professionals and respected citizens. Indeed many are my close friends. I want to expand our NAMI efforts locally and open up a conversation with the community. We want to provide support for those who suffer from Mental Illness and their families.

Larry Branson**Savannah, GA****NAMI Savannah****Captain, Savannah PD**

Capt. Branson has been instrumental in developing and supporting the CIT program in the Savannah/Chatham Co. area. He has been awarded Outstanding Crisis Intervention Coordinator for his work in Georgia's CIT program.