

Harvest of Hope at home: a new format for our fall wellness conference

Although we cannot safely experience Harvest of Hope (HoH) side-by-side as in the past, please join us online at our 12th annual wellness conference during Mental Illness Awareness Week (October 4-10, 2020). Our mission for this year's virtual event remains the same as before: to provide an educational, inspirational, and communal experience for families and friends affected by mental illness.

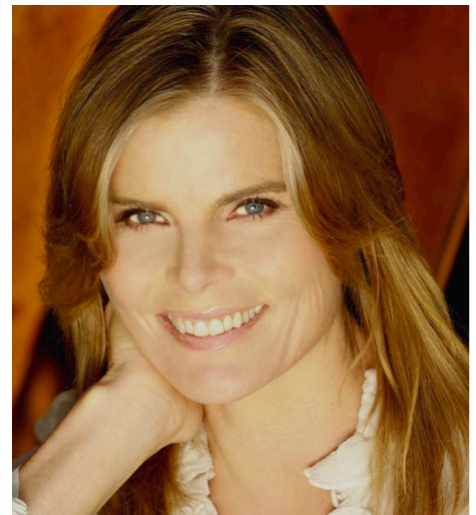
NAMI Mercer is fortunate to have received funding from Mercer County to co-sponsor the keynote. We are especially excited to welcome **Mariel Hemingway** as our keynote speaker. With seven suicides in her family — including those of her world-renowned grandfather Ernest and her supermodel sister Margaux — the famous actress has spent the last several years speaking as a mental health and wellness advocate.

"I was drawn to being able to tell a story so that other people don't feel alone, so they don't feel isolated inside the darkness because there is so much darkness when you don't speak about it, and there's so much hope and light in recovery if you're able to tell your story," said Mariel in an interview for *The Miami Herald*.

Our keynote speaker in 2013, **Dr. Mark Komrad**, will return for the eighth successive year to lead two "Ask the Doctor" sessions. A distinguished NAMI National Exemplary Psychiatrist, medical ethicist, and former syndicated talk radio host, Dr. Komrad always draws a "sell-out" audience.

We also are fortunate to have **Susan McElroy, MD**, as one of our workshop presenters this October. She will update us on new and upcoming medical treatments for several psychiatric disorders. As chief research officer at the Lindner Center of HOPE and professor of psychiatry and neuroscience at the Cincinnati College of Medicine, Dr. McElroy is internationally known for her research in bipolar disorder, eating disorders, obesity, impulse control disorders, and pharmacology. She is the author of over 500 scientific papers in leading medical journals and has been the 8th most cited scientist in the world published in the fields of psychiatry and psychology since 1996. She has also authored over 130 reviews and chapters in major psychiatric textbooks, edited four scientific books, and serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*.

Diane Mintz also joins our esteemed



Mariel Hemingway

Harvest of Hope faculty this year. Her presentation, "Living with and Loving Someone with Mental Illness," reflects her personal journey with bipolar disorder while married to a man with schizoaffective disorder.

"Our lives were wild and very dangerous before we met," explains Mintz.

"Ups and downs, psychiatric hospitals and battling additions."

Diane considers it a miracle that she

Continued on Page 10



2015



2020



2017

Executive Director's Message

A tribute to our better nature

I recently listened to an interview with Rutger Bregman, a Dutch historian and author, whose book *Humankind: A Hopeful History* has become an instant New York Times bestseller. He offers a fresh perspective on the past 200,000 years of human history, suggesting we are hard-wired for kindness and geared more toward cooperation than competition. Bergman makes the bold assertion that these innate characteristics actually enable humans to thrive in a crisis. The last few months have provided us with plenty of crisis points and quite honestly, I have been inspired by the creativity and communal spirit I've seen/experienced at NAMI Mercer. We are definitely a resilient lot!

Our Family-to-Family teachers, support group facilitators, Just Friends leaders, Helpline and office volunteers – everyone has worked together with staff to move our programs and services online. If there is any silver lining to gathering virtually instead of in-person, it is that some of our members/friends who had moved away have been able to reconnect with us for education and support utilizing digital platforms. There is no question that our lives have been seriously disrupted, but it is heartening, nonetheless, to know that we don't sit back or give up. We adapt and innovate.

To be expected, the pandemic has increased needs for funding and made funding streams for nonprofits like ours more precarious. NAMI Mercer is fortunate to have received a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan/grant through Investor's Bank and the Small Business Administration, enabling us to keep our management team working at full capacity. Through the kindness of community partners, we also received a grant from the COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Fund, managed by the Princeton Area Community Foundation, and another grant from the Law-

rence Township Community Foundation. For NAMIWalks Your Way Mercer County, hundreds of our friends and supporters got very creative, uploading photos and videos to document their participation, reaching out to friends and family on social media. Our community raised as much money for this our first-ever virtual Walk as we have for in-person Walk events in our not-too-distant past. Funding will continue to be a challenge for the foreseeable future, but our mission is clear, the need for our service is great, and we are part of a caring, generous community.

Looking ahead, we are slowly moving to re-open our office more fully with protective measures in place and realistic expectations that things will be different for some time to come. We are planning for some key events to go virtual in the fall, including our Annual Meeting, Harvest of Hope, and Night Out with NAMI. We can't predict the future, but resilient groups and individuals are prepared to make whatever changes will be needed to meet it. While we navigate this "new normal," I want to join Bregman in paying tribute to our better nature – as human beings, we are at our core "peaceful, hopeful, and kind," and I see this in abundance in our NAMI Mercer community!



Janet Haag

IMAGINE

By John Lennon (adapted by NAMI Mercer)

Imagine there's no stigma
It's easy if you try
Nothing to fear or hide from
Kind support to get us by.

You may say that I'm a dreamer
But it's NAMI's vision too
I hope someday you'll join us
For the change depends on you.

Imagine all the people
Building better lives (ey ey ey)

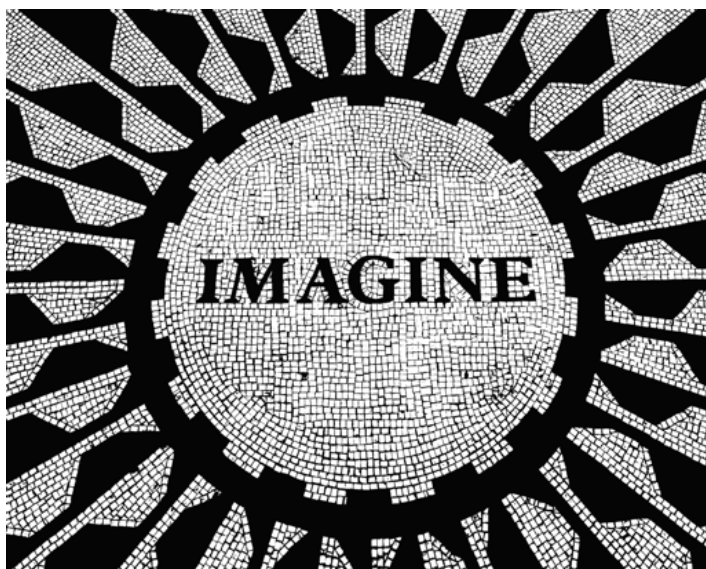
Imagine true compassion
I wonder if you can
No need for isolation
Many friends to hold your hand.

Imagine there's no anguish
It isn't hard to do
No depression or delusions
And no injustice, too.

Imagine all the people
Enjoying peace of mind

Imagine all the people
Living healthy lives.

You may say that I'm a dreamer
But it's NAMI's vision too
I hope someday you'll join us
For the change depends on you.



These are times that try our souls



Tom Pyle

First let me thank all in our NAMI constituency, especially our staff members and volunteers, in this very difficult time. Thanks to their outstanding leadership, execution, and support, NAMI Mercer is weathering the storm very well.

"These are times that try men's souls." Tom Paine penned these immortal words in 1776 about the grave crisis during Washington's Great Retreat across New Jersey. The Americans were on the run. The British thought they would soon put us down. Our nascent

nation hung in the balance.

That urgent lament of old also, sadly, speaks to the state of our nation today. We are contending with two grave crises—a pernicious global contagion and a tumultuous domestic upheaval. Crisis is nothing new to NAMI families and loved ones. Every day, navigating the ceaseless maelstrom of mental illness, we already know a lot about crisis management. Still, let us reflect on this perilous moment.

COVID struck us hard. It spread like wildfire. It killed many, especially elders. Panic arose from initially projected death rates and hospital capacity shortfalls. "Flatten the curve!" became our national rallying cry. Then government officials acted. They banned inbound air travel, ordered lockdowns, mandated masks, shuttered "non-essential" businesses, and even arrested edict violators.

What followed were enormous and unprecedented disruptions to American life and livelihoods. Cash flows evaporated. Businesses collapsed. Millions of jobs were lost. Wealth was decimated. American freedoms were also battered. Freedom of assembly, speech, and religion—even a quiet walk in a public park—have been dramatically restricted, hopefully only temporarily. Suddenly, anxiety and uncertainty about health, finances, our way of life, and the future swamped us.

Just as we seemed to be getting on top of COVID, there came the shocking killing of George Floyd. Whatever the circumstances or the backgrounds of the individuals

involved, we all witnessed the death of a black man in the custody of a white police officer. The nation erupted. Thousands of citizens gathered in public to protest injustice. Unfortunately, along with peaceful protestors demanding social justice, hundreds of vandals took to the streets, committing countless acts of mayhem. No large American city was left unscathed. The economic anxiety and uncertainty brought by COVID coupled with social instability are leaving the poor, disadvantaged, and disabled even more vulnerable.

How will we get through all this? This question seems very hard to answer right now. But we in the family mental health movement know one thing: we must not lose hope. Recovery is always possible, now for our country as always for our loved ones. The future may look different and not be all we wish or expect, but we must press on. Our loved ones, and now our fellow countrymen, need us with authentic lived experience in crisis and recovery management to press on. Hope is the key.

At this critical time, I am pleased and proud that NAMI Mercer is pressing on. We still tirelessly bear hope's torch. Our support groups are meeting via Zoom. Our Helpline is remotely taking calls and solving problems. Our financial supporters are funding our work. Our volunteers are reaching out. We continue at our local level to help our families and loved ones stabilize, cope, adjust, recover, and advocate. We remain steadfast to our mission: "NAMI Mercer listens, leads, educates, and advocates, empowering families and individuals affected by mental illness to build lives of quality and respect, free of stigma and discrimination."

As for all the critical moments we daily experience in our own families, so at this critical national moment with so much stress and strife, we resolutely reaffirm: Whatever one's race, class, identity, religion, ethnicity, or condition, whatever one's state or station in life, and at whatever time, NAMI Mercer is here to serve all families and loved ones navigating the maelstrom of mental illness. Together we can, must, and will persevere.

NAMI Mercer Board Elections

In preparation for our annual meeting and elections, we are seeking highly qualified nominees for the NAMI Mercer Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for articulating our organization's vision for growth, as well as driving and managing revenue to maximize our impact in the community. Like all non-profits, we are looking for candidates with a passion for our mission and specific skills, in-

cluding fundraising and donor cultivation, financial knowledge, marketing experience, and legal expertise. Board members are expected to attend Board meetings and the annual Board retreat, serve on working committees, support NAMI Mercer events, and complete a personal plan to donate/raise \$2,500 annually. More specific information about nominations will be circulated in coming weeks.

Re-opening of the NAMI Mercer Office in Hamilton

The NAMI Mercer Office closed in mid-March as mandated by the State to limit the spread of COVID-19. When New Jersey eased restrictions in Stage 2 of its strategic restart plan, NAMI Mercer executed a “soft” re-opening of its office on Monday, July 6, when access was limited to the management team.

As the crisis abates, NAMI Mercer will implement modified schedules for staff and volunteers and host on-site group meetings with a limited number of participants to reduce the risk of exposure.

Health is a priority at NAMI Mercer, and together we will monitor developments in the coronavirus outbreak and follow guidelines to protect every-

one’s health and well-being.

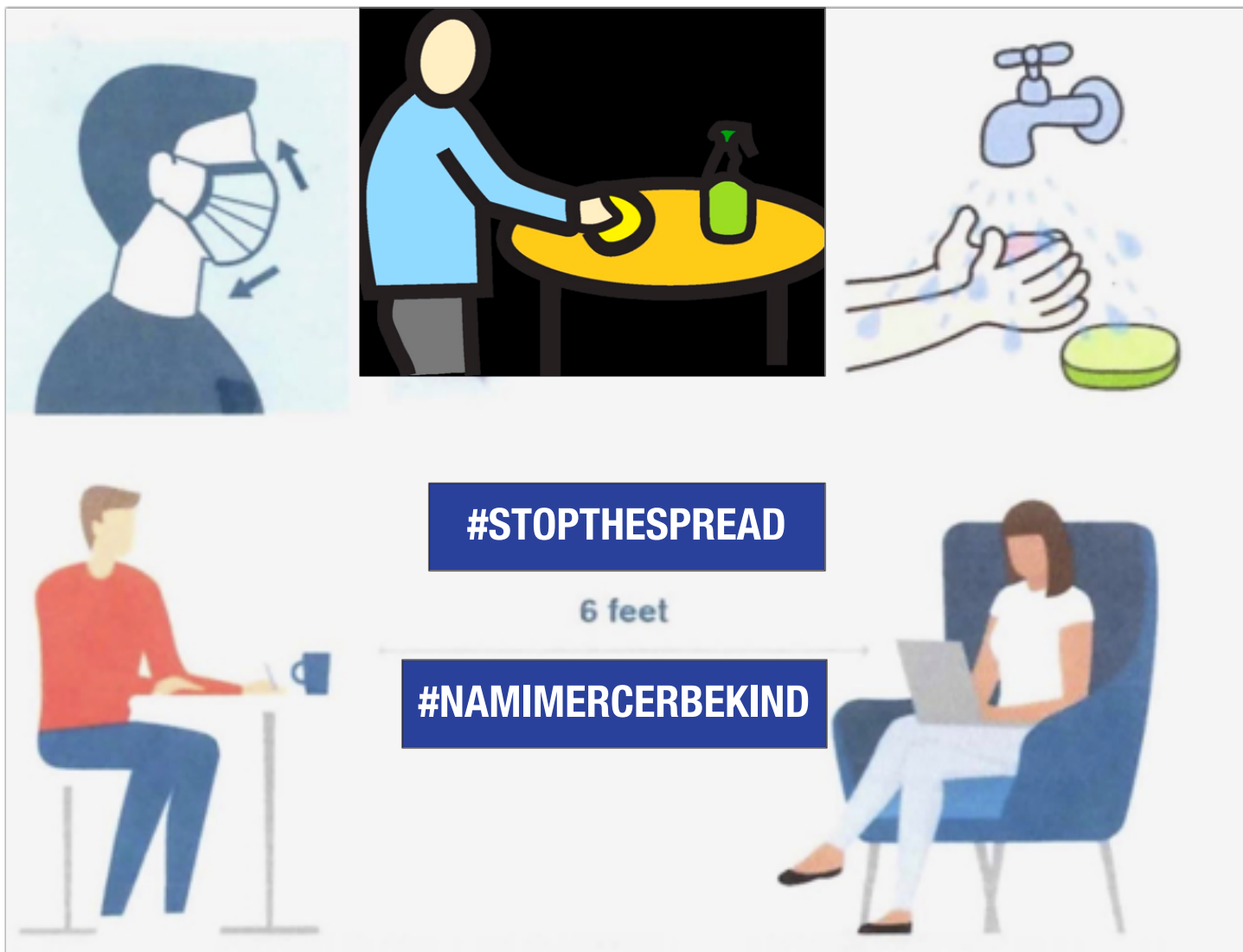
NAMI Mercer has taken the following measures to create a safer environment:

- Reliant Cleaning performed a “deep cleaning” of the office prior to the re-opening on July 6. This company will do an extra cleaning following any group meeting.
- A no-contact thermometer is available at the front desk.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers and disinfectant supplies are available throughout the office.
- Cotton face coverings are available in the entry way.

• Signs have been posted as reminders to “spread kindness not the virus.”

• Plexiglass barriers have been placed at the front desk, between the two Helpline desks, and elsewhere as needed.

Let’s work together to act responsibly by taking the precautions below. Let’s turn the disruptions we are facing into transformational opportunities through our creativity, communication, and commitment to building community. We are a resilient lot and will get through this together!



Observing Mental Health Awareness Month with Creativity

By Matt Heisler

On May 31, in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI Mercer and Pro Musicis co-hosted “We Sing, We Heal,” a live concert on YouTube, with performances by professional singer Solange Merdinian and guitarist Federico Diaz. The concert featured classical, folk, and popular songs from around the world.

Merdinian said, “In these difficult times . . . music can bring . . . a caress to the body, mind, and soul.” She emphasized the healing power of thankfulness as she introduced the song “Gracias a la Vida” (Thanks to Life) by Violeta Parra.

An American-Argentinean mezzo-soprano, Merdinian has received international attention for her work as a recitalist, chamber musician, and opera singer. She earned a Master’s Degree in Voice and Vocal Performance from Bard College Conservatory and a Bachelor of Music degree from The Juilliard School. The 2019 winner of the Pro Musicis Competition, she recently released her debut solo album entitled “Composing Roots” with guitarist Federico Diaz and pianist Pablo Zinger.



Guitarist Federico Diaz and singer Solange Merdinian.

Federico Diaz is an accomplished and versatile musician with a multi-faceted career as a performing artist, arranger, and composer in the classical and Argentinian music worlds. Currently, he is finishing a doctoral degree in performance at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York under the guidance of Frederic Hand.

To watch a recording of the concert, go the NAMI Mercer NJ YouTube channel.



Whaling in the Night Sky (above) and Egg (above right) by Linda Barton



The Reflecting Pool, photo by Jason Redd

You Inspire Me

By Ayesha Karim

What inspires me?

A song lyric

A brave, determined person

A gifted child

An innovator who is the first to do something

And by the way

O, Mother

You inspire me (most of all).

A Retrospective of Our Virtual Walk on May 30



Thank You from Our Director of Development

By Dawn Dannenbrink

Dear Friends,

I want to express my personal gratitude to our Walk Chair Jerilyn Angotti and this year's 69 team captains, registered walkers, and all donors for their generous support of our first virtual NAMI-Walks Mercer County on May 30. Your willingness to "walk your own way" at home and around the County demonstrates your resilience, leadership, and commitment to #MentalHealthForAll. YOU showed our local community and people throughout the nation that they are #NotAlone even during the Coronavirus pandemic and that we truly are #StrongerTogether.



Dawn Dannenbrink

In January 2020, prior to the emergence of COVID-19, we projected our NAMIWalks fundraising goal to be an ambitious \$160K. Admittedly, as the health crisis unfolded, we became doubtful of reaching even \$50K. However, slowly, but surely, more and more of YOU signed up for the virtual walk, garnered the support of many others, and sent us generous donations. Soon the fundraising numbers began to rise. We made it to \$50,000, then \$75,000, and finally, on the day of our Walk, we topped \$100,000!

As of mid-July, the total reached \$108,376!

YOU signed up, gave your time, your talent, and your money, and you encouraged others to do the same. You became ambassadors, sharing the information with family and friends through email, Facebook, and Twitter. YOU were creative with your own "Virtual Walks Your Way" on May 30.

Your efforts will help #NAMIMercer ride out the crisis and keep the doors open to help more families affected by mental illness.

I will leave you with this quote from Andrew Carnegie, "Teamwork is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

Congratulations to you!



Jacki Chadwick and Nelson await their walk with Monheits on a Mission.

Fundraising Leaders

TOP TEAMS

Janssen	\$6,628
The Amazing Team	5,825
Angels in the Outfield	5,345
Otsuka Cares	4,260
Compassion for	4,058
ALL Our Neighbors	

TOP FUNDRAISERS

Jason Redd	\$5,775
Carol and John Marsland	3,152
Madeline Monheit	2,943
Patricia Demers	2,810

TOP WALKER ON A TEAM

Elise Wilmot	\$2,148
(Just Friends)	

TOP VIRTUAL TEAM CAPTAIN

Lulu Huber (Janssen)	\$2,845
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TOP VIRTUAL WALKER

Leslie Handler	\$1,780
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Challenge Winners

#1	First 5 members of the same team to raise \$100 each
Captain	Jerilyn Angotti
Team	Angels in the Outfield
#2	First team to raise \$5,000
Captain	Jason Redd
Team	The Amazing Team
#3	Best photo of a training activity
Captain	Stephanee Kammer
Team	Kammers Hammers
#4	Most team-member Walk Facebook pages
Captain	Jerilyn Angotti
Team	Angels in the Outfield
#5	Random drawing of a walk photo
Captain	John and Carol Marsland
Team	Team Chela

Top Creative Teams



Team Kammers Hammers

Team Kammers Hammers was the first to film a live Walk on Facebook for the public to watch online. Led by five-time Captain Stephanie Kammer, the team carried signs and wore their best NAMI gear. Throughout the hour-long walk on May 30, Stephanie spoke from the heart, sharing her personal story to reduce stigma and talking about #MentalHealthForAll. Thank you, Stephanie, for taking us “live” to the entire world!



The Amazing Team

The Amazing Team, led by Captain Jay Redd, tried a novel approach this year. On May 3, he took everyone on a tour of Washington DC, walking 7 miles while making stops at 11 historical sites along the way. Jay not only posted a selfie at each site, he also shared historical documentation about the mental health of some of our

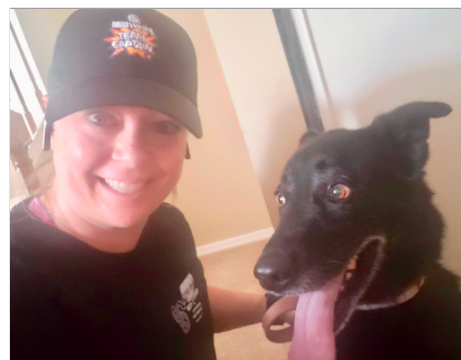
founding fathers! Jay even wore new red, white, and blue shoes for the day. Thank you, Jay, for giving us a history lesson while sharing the message that you are #NotAlone.



The Studio Hillier Team

The Studio Hillier Team was new to #NAMIWalksMercer, and they fundraised an incredible \$3000 their first time around. They decided to take us on a tour of 29 historical buildings in the Princeton Area during May. Not only did they take photos of their team at these sites, they also shot videos with music in the background, which they aired on the Hillier YouTube channel and allowed us to share on NAMI Mercer social

media. Thank you, Studio Hillier, for being our first team to create a video to promote our Walk!



Team Angels in the Outfield

Angels in the Outfield, led by Jerilyn Angotti, chose to take 30 walks in 30 days throughout the month of May. Talk about commitment, rain or shine, Jerilyn and her dog Zoey walked around parks, neighborhoods, and towns. Some days, they were joined by members of Team Angels in the Outfield. Jerilyn and her loyal friend Zoey wore their #NAMIMercer gear, letting people know that we are #StrongerTogether as a community. Thank you Jerilyn, for taking us on 30 walks and sharing Zoey with us!

Thank you to our sponsors, especially our top sponsor, Otsuka



NAMI Mercer Teams with High Focus Centers

COVID-19 has turned our lives upside down, closing many doors but opening others. NAMI Mercer has enjoyed a positive relationship with High Focus Centers for several years, and the pandemic prompted us to join forces to offer a webinar together in April: Connection & Coping: Essential Strategies for On-the-Go (or Shelter in Place).

Jaimie Farkas of the High Focus clinical team was the presenter. She talked not only about strategies but engaged participants in practicing them. You can view a recording of the 50-minute webinar on the NAMI Mercer NJ YouTube channel.

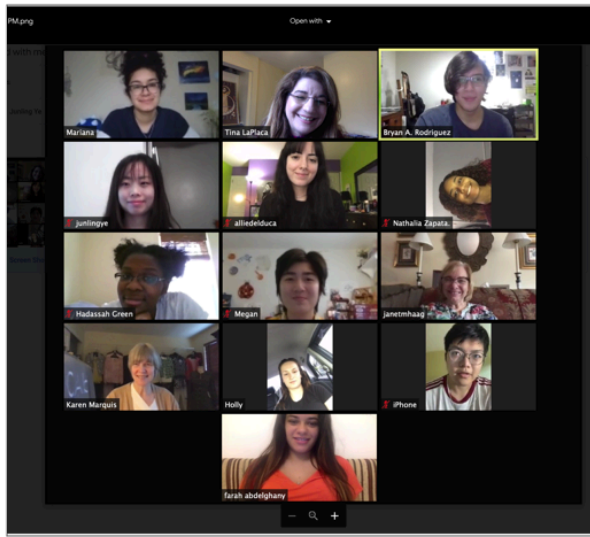
High Focus Centers provide outpatient treatment programs for drug and alcohol addiction, mental health, and eating disorders at seven locations in New Jersey, including



- Maintain focus on mental/physical/emotional health
- Avoid any mood altering substances or addictive behaviors
- Work to strengthen the mind and body
- Connect to others
- Time management
- Stress relieving activities
- Balanced sleep/appetite
- Engaging in activities that empower you

Lawrenceville. Thank you to Lindsay Wheeler, executive director of the Lawrenceville center, for being such a wonderful community partner.

MCCC Students Create Ad Campaign for NAMI Mercer



Professor Tina LaPlaca of the Mercer County Community College (MCCC) Advertising and Graphic Design Department came up with an innovative plan to give the students in her marketing class an opportunity to gain valuable experience by creating an ad campaign for a local nonprofit.

This year, NAMI Mercer was selected as the recipient organization. Students created web banners, post cards, and posters that can be used to promote specific mental health hallmarks throughout the year such as Mental Health Month and Mental Illness Awareness Week.

On April 30, Executive Director Janet Haag and Board Secretary Karen Marquis attended a Zoom meeting to review the top three student campaign materials and select “winners” based on creativity and messaging. It was actually a difficult choice! NAMI Mercer is fortunate to have received the end products of the students’ artistic ideas. You may see some of their work in the coming months. Thank you, Tina and all the talented students who participated in this project.

Villanova Graduate Students Assist NAMI Mercer

One connection often leads to another! Emily Antenucci, an employee of Janssen Pharmaceutical, was this year’s “NAMIWalks Your Way” Mercer County Team Captain. She is also currently completing her MBA at Villanova University in Pennsylvania.

Graduation requirements include a social enterprise consulting practicum with a nonprofit organization, and Emily’s team of talented young professionals selected NAMI Mercer. Throughout the 14-week project, MBA students will partner with us to help detect problem areas, such as branding, funding, logistics, or membership retention, and to identify possible solutions.

We have engaged in several Zoom Meetings with the students and look forward to the recommendations and tools they will create for us as they apply what they have learned in the classroom to real-world challenges.



Finding Comfort in a Pandemic

Excerpts from "Finding Comfort in a Pandemic: Crucial Life Lessons of Mental Health."

By Michael Patanella

Some of the best lessons regarding my own mental health have developed as a result of this current coronavirus pandemic that is engulfing the world. When the entire story began to develop and warnings began to be issued, I experienced a feeling of panic and worry inside.

It was frightening to wonder how someone like me, with such a complex mental health history, would be able to survive through some of the most challenging life changes that were about to happen. I later discovered that I was rather mistaken in these assumptions. I came to realize that I was somehow quite prepared for something as major as COVID-19.

A personal philosophy began to unfold. Over time, I recognized that those of us with a history of things like mental illness, addiction, depression, and anxiety have become equipped to handle life changes of the current magnitude.

I had already been forced to feel stuck in my own skin, with me, myself, and I.

Most people who haven't dealt with the lessons of mental illness or addiction have been living their lives in total distraction. Busy for 50, 60, 70 hours a week with every single waking minute in "hustle and bustle mode" leaves no spare time for introspection. Late to bed, early to rise, with no rest in between masks thoughts of oneself. These people don't take the time to reflect on their inner soul to know the good and the bad within. Unfortunately, with this new life in quarantine, they do not feel comfortable in their own skin.

It wasn't nearly as much of a struggle for me. As I journeyed in my life over the past couple of years through my mental health treatment for depression and anxiety, as well as inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation for drug addiction, I didn't realize what these experiences had taught me.

In recent days, I had something of an awakening as I came to realize that all the lessons I learned during recovery have greatly prepared me to enter this world of quarantine. In getting well, I learned about mindfulness, and how to love myself, and be comfortable in my own skin.

Just as I found release from being

a prisoner in my own mind, I was able to learn how to avoid being a prisoner of COVID 19. Mindfulness and self-acceptance have been blessings from God, survival tools for this time in which we live.

I have learned to steer away from self-loathing, to forgive myself, and to find solace in spirituality and faith.

My days are usually not perfect, and like anything else, I must take the good with the bad. If there is one statement I can make about all of this, it is that even my worst days are manageable. If I make this statement my truth each day, I know I can succeed in this pandemic and remain happy with who I am.

I'll live mindfully and confidently and won't let panic take over.

Michael Patanella is a NAMI Mercer volunteer, author, publisher, columnist, editor, advocate, and recovering addict, covering topics of mental health, addiction, sobriety, mindfulness, self-help, faith, spirituality, and other related subjects. His writing is geared towards being a voice for the voiceless, hoping to reach others who are struggling.

Learn to tame the COVID-19 stress monster

Last October, Carol Rickard felt as if she were hit with a tidal wave when she received a diagnosis of uterine cancer. With more than 27 years of experience in the field of behavioral health as a social worker, trainer, and facilitator, Carol was determined to put into personal practice the stress-relieving techniques that she had taught others for so long.

All through the course of her chemotherapy treatment, Carol posted videos on Facebook to keep her friends apprised of her progress and to share helpful tips for coping during stressful times. Carol's advice is especially timely since everyone is living under the cloud of the pandemic.

Just before her last treatment, Carol created a 90-minute video about her "Stressometry" method. She shared this video—How to Tame the COVID Stress

Monster—with the NAMI Mercer community on May 7. It is now available for viewing on the NAMI Mercer NJ YouTube channel. One of Carol's most important lessons is how to avoid getting lost in "What If Alley" by becoming anchored in the present. She recommends painting the word "NOW" on a stone and carrying it everywhere. Another way to stay grounded is to consciously focus on "feeling one's feet."

Carol Rickard, LCSW, is an award-winning author and speaker who has published 29 books on the subject of stress and wellness. She has appeared as a guest on the Dr. Oz Show and is the creator and host of The WELL YOU Show, a nationally syndicated TV program.



Good Luck to Jeremy Mann



L to r: Former President Pat Demers, unnamed volunteer, Madeline Monheit, former Executive Director Jerry Lindauer, and 2007 Walk Chair Jeremy Mann.

We bid a fond farewell to long-time Board member Jeremy Mann as he moves to San Francisco to assume a new position at Actelion, a rare disease company acquired by Johnson & Johnson.

Jeremy served on the Board from 2006-2016 and again from 2018 to the present. He will be best remembered for the ground-breaking work he did as the chair of the first NAMI Walks Mercer County in 2007. He continued to play a major role for many years.

In his good-bye letter, Jeremy wrote: "NAMI Mercer means so much to so many, and I applaud the valuable work you all do on behalf of individuals and family members impacted by mental illness."

Welcome to Jared Oberweis

We are pleased to announce that Jared Oberweis has joined the Board to complete Jeremy Mann's term of office. Jared is an attorney in the Lawrenceville practice of Hinkle Prior & Fischer. A loyal supporter of NAMI Mercer, this law firm has more than 70 years of experience providing specialized legal services to families of children and adults with a wide range of disabilities, including mental illness.

Jared earned his Juris Doctor degree from the Duquesne University School of Law, where he was senior editor of the Law Review. He received a BS in Economics from the University of Pittsburgh. Prior to his position at Hinkle Prior & Fischer, he practiced at Turp, Coates, Driggers & White in Hightstown.

When asked for his favorite quote, Jared chose this one by hockey Hall of Famer Wayne Gretzky: "You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take." With this philosophy of exercising initiative and taking action, Jared promises to be a valuable addition to the Board.



Jared Oberweis

Harvest of Hope

continued from Page 1

and her husband survived. Today, they own a thriving business, have two amazing children, and are very active in their church and community. In 2013, Diane wrote "In Sickness and in Mental Health," to give people hope by sharing her experiences and insights.

An enthusiastic advocate for people affected by mental illness, Diane donates 100% of the profits from her book to NAMI Sacramento where she serves as volunteer and president of the Board.

On a lighter note, the improvisational comedy group, Dreamcatchers Repertory Theater, will perform on the opening night of the conference.

Changes to the conference format

- ♦ The conference will take place during Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) from Sunday, Oct. 4 to Thursday, Oct. 8.
- ♦ At least one live-streamed presentation will premiere each evening at 7:00 pm.
- ♦ All presentations will be recorded and remain available for viewing through Oct. 8
- ♦ The conference registration fee is \$10. Access to presentations will be restricted to registrants.
- ♦ All registrants will be able to view all presentations.

NAMI Mercer will also provide an opportunity for participants to learn about other local health and wellness non-profit organizations that exhibit their programs and services on the HoH conference website.

For more information about becoming an exhibitor, contact Director of Development Dawn Dannenbrink at (609) 799-8994 ext. 13.

More detailed HoH information will be coming soon. Conference registration will begin in mid-August.

NAMI Mercer

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NAMI MERCER PROGRAMS

NAMI Mercer NJ Programs & Services

Offered online during the Coronavirus outbreak. Information can be found on the NAMI Mercer website at namimercer.org. Program sliders on homepage are hyperlinked to the meeting platforms.

The NAMI Mercer Helpline

(A warm-line for compassionate listening, information, and resources) remains "open" for responding to inquiries. **609.799.8994 x17** or email helpline@namimercer.org

The Family Support Groups

For caregivers of adults (over age 18), offered in partnership with IFSS (Intensive Family Support Services) of Oaks Integrated Care. Meetings on Mondays and Tuesdays, 5:15-6:45 pm via Zoom.

The Parent Support Network

For parents/caregivers of youth (under age 24.) The Hamilton and Hightstown groups, offered in partnership with the Youth Mental Health Project (YMH), are meeting virtually each month as scheduled. There is also a nationwide virtual group led by YMH.

Family to Family

Will not meet in the fall.

Family and Friends

A short seminar intended to help those who have loved ones with a mental illness understand how best to support them, will be offered online, with the possibility of an additional series of webinars.

All NAMI Mercer support groups, workshops and classes are offered at no cost to participants. Registration is required for education classes, Family to Family, and the Overcoming Social Anxiety Workshop.

Connection Recovery Support Group

Meetings for individuals living with mental health conditions are being offered as scheduled via video or audio conferencing.

Just Friends

Members are meeting weekly via audio or video call.

Chats With Carol

A video/audio gathering held on Mondays between 3-4 pm as an opportunity for people to connect, encourage, and support one another while navigating the challenges around the COVID-19 pandemic.

Harvest of Hope Wellness Conference

Will be held online during Mental Illness Awareness Week, Oct. 4-8, to include an exciting keynote presentation and an engaging lineup of workshops and activities.

Community Education Webinars

Tear Yourself Away (Torn-Paper Therapy): Remembering Laughter

Leader: Lisa Brown

Date: Wed., Aug. 5, 7:00 pm

Supplies: Colored paper, magazines, glue stick

Resilience

Co-hosted by the RWJ Fitness and Wellness Center

Presenter: **Dr. Aubrey Daniels, LPC**

Date: Thurs., Nov. 12, 6:30 pm

**The NAMI Center
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Hamilton Township, NJ 08619
(609) 799-8994
<https://namimercer.org>



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TRENTON NJ

Keynote Presenter: *Mariel Hemingway*

*actress, author, mental health advocate,
and an unstoppable voice in the ever-
changing conversation about living a
healthier, more meaningful life*



SAVE THE DATES:
OCTOBER 4-8, 2020
SUNDAY TO THURSDAY

