



January 7, 2016

Affiliate Leadership,

This is the second letter to update you on happenings at NAMI Illinois [the first, dated December 12, is available from the office should you have missed it].

Suzanne (Sue) Spears, Board VP, is now Interim Executive Director. She heads the Organization Development Committee of the Board, and is doing this job on a pro-bono basis until a permanent Executive Director is hired. She can be reached at (309) 360-1143, and sspears@mtco.com. Sue is generally in the office Tuesdays and Wednesdays, but works at home (near Peoria) Monday and Friday (and probably Saturday and Sunday).

Holly McCaffrey works for Sue and is focused on a significant improvement in our training offerings, which includes:

1. Providing a schedule through 2016 and beyond and publicizing it
2. Communicating with Affiliates about current and emerging needs
3. Increasing capacity

You might be interested to know that even though NAMI Illinois went through a staff reduction as a result of budget cuts from the State, we have increased the time by 60% going into the management of the training program. We are hopeful that within the foreseeable future you will find this program meeting your needs.

Lora Thomas, who has been our Executive Director for the past 12 years, has taken a position at the State. Her last day as an employee will be January 8. She has described her new role as: Training Coordinator - CCBHC Planning Grant (more on that at the end of this letter). Sue Spears is working with Lora and Holly regarding transition of duties, which we expect to accomplish without you seeing an impact on the priorities you have expressed to us.

Website: www.namiillinois.com is being replaced with a much more comprehensive and up-to-date website. We anticipate it being available within a matter of weeks, and it will continue to be improved over time so that it meets the needs of all of our stakeholders.

This is a people business, and here are some of our needs:

1. Board Members: we have a strong and diverse Board, but need more talent. Our priorities are:
 1. a. Fundraising and networking skills
 2. b. Organization Development skills
2. Executive Director: we have a job description available. In short we are looking for an Organization Builder.

3. Development Director: we have a job description available.

We are looking for someone who can raise money for NAMI Illinois and coordinate with Affiliates so the resources for all NAMI entities in the State grows substantially. From time-to-time we are approached with opportunities to participate in various mental-health-related activities. Some of these opportunities go on without our involvement, but these can be opportunities lost. In these letters we will bring up opportunities and if you have someone in your Affiliate with an interest in one of them - let us know. The window is often short. Here is an example of one opportunity:

1. Abbvie: partners working on implications of medication switching. Need for NAMI coordinator to bring NAMI resources to bear during the study.

From Lora Thomas regarding her new position: *When Congress enacted the Excellence in Mental Health Act demonstration last year, it was the largest federal investment in mental health and addiction care in generations.*

Illinois is poised to work very hard over the next several months to move toward Certified Behavioral Health Care Entities (CCBHCs). CCBHCs will be required to provide - either directly or through formal agreements with other providers - a comprehensive set of behavioral health services including: crisis services, screening, assessment and diagnosis, treatment planning, outpatient mental health and substance use services, targeted case management, psychiatric rehabilitation services, peer and family supports, and community-based mental health care for members of the armed forces and veterans.

This is truly an exciting opportunity to transform access to mental health care throughout Illinois. My position will be Statewide Training Coordinator for the CCBHC Planning Grant; I'll help develop capacity and capability of all stakeholders, including individuals and families who want to be part of this movement. In doing so, I look forward to working with NAMI Illinois and NAMI Affiliates!

Thank you for your interest and support of NAMI Illinois during this time of transition.

Yours truly,
VIA eMail
John Schladweiler
Board President - NAMI Illinois
