



nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Newsletter—Winter 2015

NAMI-LORAIN COUNTY CHAPTER

Special points of interest:

- * This issue is all about how YOU can get involved with NAMI-Lorain County in 2015!
- * Come out and take a course
- * Join one of our support groups
- * Become an advocate
- * Get educated about mental illness
- * Become a member of NAMI-LC and get involved!

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YOUR Voice of Mental Illness and Support in Lorain County: Join a Group!

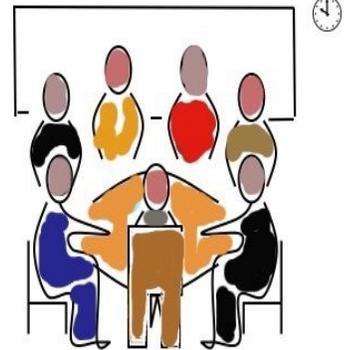
There are so many exciting new NAMI-Lorain County (NAMI-LC) educational classes and support groups coming up in 2015 that we just can't wait to share all this information with you in this quarter's newsletter!

Whether you are suffering from a mental illness (MI), are a primary or secondary caregiver of a person living with mental illness, want to gain more experience or coping skills in any area of mental illness, or become a public advocate for those who live with the devastating effects of a mental illness, you have come to the right place!

Instead of staying inside all winter,

why not consider venturing out into the crisp northern air and joining a group of people of who share some of the same struggles that you are going through?

You never know when you will hear that little bit of encouragement you need, that tip or coping skill you've needed for a while, or maybe even find a lifelong friend for the journey! The best part about joining one of our NAMI-LC groups might be knowing that there are other people, here in Lorain County, with a story similar to YOURS, and they might need you as much as you might need them. Come check out one of our groups!



This month's newsletter is all about discovering how you can get "plugged in" to a support group or a class that will help you meet other people who share your struggle with mental illness, whether it is for yourself or a loved one.

Please Help Us Welcome Our New Office Coordinator

The office of NAMI-LC would like to welcome our new Office Coordinator, Christine, Groomes-Alarcon.

When asked why she applied for this position, Christine replied with her impression of how Lorain Countians

"really take care of one another." For instance, she pointed out that the levy for mental health care has never failed in Lorain County, which speaks volumes about how community members care for the mentally ill.

When she herself served on the Board of Mental Health in the early 2000s, Christine remembers being impressed with the amount of resources available for the homeless in Lorain County. As for the future of mental health in

Story continues on next page...

New Office Coordinator (Continued...)

Lorain County, Christine is looking forward to working with NAMI-LC and the 18 other mental health organizations to ensure that the mentally ill receive the very best care and advocacy possible.

In addition to having worked with the Lorain County Board of Mental Health, Christine has worked for the Lorain County Prosecutor's Office and the LC Coroner's Office. She has also volunteered with the LC Community Foundation and for rape crisis victims.

She has a plethora of office and medi-

cal office background experience, including The Ohio State University Hospital and worked many years with her late husband, Dr. Luis Alarcon.

When she is not working, Christine says she likes to spend time with her children and grandchildren. They enjoy spending time outdoors together.

When we asked her what her perfect world looked like, Christine instantly responded that "there would be equality for everyone...women, the mentally ill, and everyone else." Please help us this month in welcoming Christine to

NAMI-LC and congratulating her on her new position!



Christine Groomes-Alarcon, new NAMI-LC Office Coordinator

NAMI-LC works hard to provide a voice for the mentally ill in Lorain County, along with 18 other mental health agencies.

Meet the NAMI-LC Board Member...Secretary Jill Fehr!

This quarter's featured Board Member is Jill Fehr! Here's what Jill has to say about her experience with NAMI-LC:

"I joined...to learn about mental illness. As a former city prosecutor and an attorney, I feel that much of the public is uneducated about mental illness. I also think that this is one of the most underserved populations. By the very nature of the illness, the mentally ill

often cannot care for themselves."

Jill is proud to say she has met some great people who struggle with mental illness, but who still persevere with extraordinary intelligence and courage to help educate others. That is part of the reason that Jill serves on the Board: to help change the negative stigma associated with mental illness by educating the general public.

When Jill is not busy serving on the Board, she can often be found cheering for Ohio State or watching her nieces and nephews in high school and college sports. A new member of the family is her rescued Siamese tabby, who brings her daily joy! Jill also enjoys reading and collecting beach glass on the Lake Erie shores.

Check out Jill's new Family to Family class on Feb. 19th at the Nord Center!

Thank You to the Lorain County Board of Mental Health!

Holly Cundiff, staff member of the LCBMH, put on a wonderful seminar in December, called "Coping with the Holidays."

Holly and her staff at the LC Board of Mental Health would remind us to take good care of ourselves mentally year-round; not just during the holidays. Here are some tips Holly shared to keep us

healthy, even into the new year:

- * Eat well, exercise, and rest. Don't get too tired. Do everything in moderation.
- * Be kind to yourself and to others.
- * Plan some fun and relaxing activities. Include people you enjoy hanging around.
- * Think positive thoughts about yourself and your situation.

* Count your blessings; learn to live more with less.

Thank you, LCBMH, for sharing these great and practical tips! Happy New Year!!



New and Upcoming NAMI-LC Classes

NAMI-LC offers educational opportunities for caregivers of those who are living with mental illness. Please feel free to attend one of our upcoming course series:

- **BASICS**—an 8-week educational course for caregivers of children and adolescents living with serious mental illness. Class will meet at the Nord Center, Administrative Conference Room, Third Floor, from 6:30–9:00 p.m., beginning Thursday, February 5th, 2015, and concluding March 26th, 2015.

Pre-enrollment for the BASICS course is required by February 2nd, 2015.

- **FAMILY-TO-FAMILY LORAIN**—this course is designed for family and other caregivers of those living with serious mental illness in Lorain County. It will meet at the Nord Center Bass Conference Room, Third Floor, from 6:30-9:00 p.m., every Thursday, from February 19th, 2015, through May 7th, 2015. Pre-enrollment for this free course is required no later than February 16th, 2015.

- **FAMILY-TO-FAMILY OBERLIN**—this course will run on Mondays, starting March 2nd, 2015, to May 18th, 2015, from 6:30-9:00 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, 310 W. Lorain St. in Oberlin, OH. Call Bob Izold for more information at (440) 965-2002.

Trained instructors will be facilitating these free courses. Those interested should contact the NAMI-LC office at (440) 204-4391, Monday-Friday, from 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m., or please ask for Dr. Malcolm Peel for more information.

NAMI-LC New and Ongoing Support Groups

Come check out one of our open support groups in Lorain County!

- **FAMILY-TO-FAMILY OBERLIN**—a new Oberlin support group that meets the 1st and 3rd Thursdays from 7:00–8:30 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church at 310 W. Lorain Street in Oberlin, Ohio. Call Bob Izold for more information at (440) 965-2002.

- **FAMILY-TO-FAMILY LORAIN**—meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the Nord Center’s Administrative Conference Room’s 3rd Floor. Contact Renie at (440) 238-6925 for more info.
- **CONNECTIONS**—an ongoing peer-to-peer support group for individuals coping with mental ill-

ness issues. Meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 1:00-2:30 p.m. in the Community Room at Midway Mall.

These support groups are free and open to the public. If you have any questions about these support groups, please contact the NAMI-LC office at (440) 204-4391. We hope to see you there in the new year!

Look for all of our events and educational & support groups online at: www.loraincounty.com/calendar/

Did You Know?



Major depression is a mood state that goes well beyond temporarily feeling sad or blue. It is a serious medical illness that affects one’s thoughts, feelings, behavior, mood and physical health. Depression is a life-long condi-

tion in which periods of wellness alternate with recurrences of illness.

Each year depression affects 5-8% of adults in the United States. This means that about 25 million Americans will have an episode of major depression this year alone, but *only one-half receive treatment.*

Without treatment, the frequency and severity of these symptoms tend to

increase over time. All age, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups can experience depression.

Depression does not discriminate. If you are suffering from depression, talk to your doctor about possible treatment options.

If you ever feel that your life is in danger, call 9-1-1, or immediately go to your nearest emergency room.



National Alliance on Mental Illness

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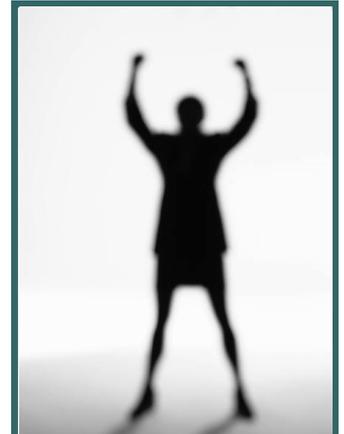
**You are NOT alone. We are here
to help! Contact us today for
mental illness support!**

NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI advocates for access to services, treatment, supports and research and is steadfast in its commitment to raise awareness and build a community for hope for all of those in need.

NAMI is the foundation for hundreds of NAMI State Organizations, NAMI Affiliates and volunteer leaders who work in local communities across the country to raise awareness and provide essential and free education, advocacy and support group programs. The NAMI-Lorain County Chapter is here to help...please contact our offices during business hours to connect with the support you and your family needs!

**We are now located
at the Nord Center!**

Become a Member of NAMI-Lorain County (Contact us for more info)!



Don't forget that February is the perfect time to come and check out one of our new or ongoing classes or support groups! See you there!