In 2017, NAMI South Dakota celebrates its 30th anniversary as the South Dakota Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

Members in NAMI South Dakota’s nine local affiliates will gather throughout 2017 to honor our thirty year journey of providing education, support and advocacy to individuals and families affected by mental illness.

NAMI SD board members and executive director Wendy Giebink will participate in community activities that recognize and support NAMI and our treasured members, friends and volunteers.

Look for NAMI SD 30 Year Anniversary celebrations in a community near you.
Dear Friends of NAMI South Dakota,

As we enter our 30th Anniversary year, it’s appropriate to look back on our history. From 1987 to now, one thing stands out as a constant: the commitment to improving mental health care, community support, and advocacy for South Dakotans affected by mental illness, as shown by the many dedicated leaders and generous donors who contributed to this organization.

We started with a small group of family advocates, a volunteer board, and the will to improve lives. In 1987, the South Dakota Alliance for the Mentally Ill was formed. It was incorporated in February of 1988, the year our first statewide conference was held. From there we progressed to our first Family to Family course, offering education to family members, and the forming of local affiliates across the state. Our name was changed to NAMI South Dakota ten years later, and the legacy of service to adults and children living with mental illness and their families continues to this day.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to those early founders and board members, as well as to the South Dakota Division of Mental Health for their belief and support. Due to the vision and hard work of these individuals, NAMI South Dakota was born. I sometimes wonder if they had any idea how many thousands of people their actions would impact in the future.

It’s truly humbling to realize how many families and individuals have benefitted from the efforts of NAMI South Dakota volunteers and leaders in the last thirty years. I’m honored to be the third director of this organization, following in the footsteps of Donna Yocum and Phyllis Arends. Our growth and success today would not be possible without their contributions and those of the hundreds of people who gave of their time, talents and treasures to build the foundation we stand upon today.

In January of 2017, we have nine local affiliate groups dedicated to improving lives in their communities. In addition, we offer five NAMI Signature Programs in those communities and others around the state. We have 25 Family to Family teachers, 28 Family Support Group leaders, 18 Basics teachers, 24 Connection Recovery Support Group facilitators, and 15 In Our Own Voice presenters. We have state trainers in every program, for a total of nine.

Our Board of Directors continues to provide wisdom and leadership as we develop new ways to fulfill our mission. Our members and member families stand together in advocacy and speak with one voice. Today, NAMI South Dakota reaches into the far corners of the state, providing programs and resources to vulnerable populations and underserved communities. We have much for which to be grateful, but our work goes on.

I’m excited to see what 2017 will bring, and I look forward to working with you to expand and improve NAMI South Dakota. Together, we will continue our 30-year tradition of providing help and hope.

-- Wendy Giebink

**NAMI SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

| Nicole Burger | Priscilla Stevenson |
| Jill Furan   | Tom Silverthorn    |
| Shirley Gross| Steve Lindquist    |
| Scott Stubbe | David Braun        |
| Paula Brown  | Lois Knoke         |
|              | Stacey Tieszen     |
|              | Robert Giebink     |
|              | Chris Sweetwood    |
New Support Groups Begin

NAMI volunteer leaders in Brookings and Watertown have stepped up to lead Connection and Family Support Groups in their communities. Thanks to the dedication of these individuals and their affiliate leaders, many will have the opportunity to receive support and help in the company of peers. NAMI’s Support Groups are unique because they follow a structured model, ensuring everyone has an opportunity to be heard and to get what they need.

- Free of cost to participants
- Designed for adults
- Led by trained peers with similar life experience
- Meet weekly or monthly
- No specific medical therapy or medication is endorsed or recommended
- Confidential

See our website at www.namisouthdakota.org for more information on our support groups and their locations and times. We hope you will take time to check out a group near you.

Member Mixers Bring NAMI Together

In the last week of December, NAMI South Dakota members in Sioux Falls spent an enjoyable evening getting to know one another with treats, hot cider and good conversation. New friendships were formed and old ones renewed as members had a chance to meet NAMI South Dakota leadership and share information. Member mixers continue in 2017 with a gathering in Pierre on February 8 at BH Special Services, 221 S. Central Avenue, from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. Look for member events in your community this year as we celebrate 30 years of NAMI South Dakota.

Volunteer Leaders Training


We are planning upcoming trainings for each of our signature programs: In Our Own Voice, Connection, Family to Family, Basics and Family Support Group.

Find out how you can be trained in these programs:

(605-271-1871) or namisd@midconetwork.com
Announcements

Mental Health Day 2017

Please join us for our annual Mental Health Day at the Legislature on Thursday, February 9 at the Capitol Rotunda in Pierre. Mental health advocates and friends of NAMI will come together to meet legislators and share our concerns from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm.

2017 SD Legislation of Interest to Mental Health Advocates

- HB1099, regarding the death penalty exclusion for persons with serious mental illness at the time of the crime

- HB1100, which allows law enforcement to place a mental health hold on persons committing violence in domestic violence situations.

- HB1183, which contains recommendations from the 2016 Criminal Justice and Mental Health Task Force

You can follow the progress of these bills at [http://www.sdlegislature.gov/](http://www.sdlegislature.gov/)


Membership Matters!

Not a member or want to renew?

Please visit namisouthdakota.org/join or give us a call at (605) 271-1871. Yearly individual memberships start at just $3.00 for Open Door Membership.
NAMI South Dakota Awarded $120,000 Grant From the John T. Vucurevich Foundation

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of South Dakota has been awarded a $120,000 grant from the John T. Vucurevich Foundation. The two-year grant will enhance the mission of NAMI SD to provide education, support and advocacy for individuals and families impacted by mental illness in the Black Hills and West River Reservation communities.

Wendy Giebink, Executive Director for NAMI SD states, "We are excited to continue our work with The John T. Vucurevich Foundation and our local partners in the Black Hills. Our volunteer leaders are receiving training and support which will equip them to deliver evidence-based programs in their communities."

Nicole Burger, NAMI SD Board of Directors President states, "We would like to thank the Foundation for their support of our work in the Black Hills area, and we look forward to bringing peer-led education and help to those who need it."

Save the Date! NAMI Walks is coming!

All team captains are invited to our annual Kick-Off Luncheon on Saturday, March 25 at 11:30 am at Central Baptist Church, 3102 W. Ralph Rogers Road in Sioux Falls. RSVP to John Williams at namiwalksouthdakota.org. If you have never been a team captain before, you won’t want to miss this fun event as we “Go Green for Mental Health”. Everyone around the state is invited to participate—contact John to find out how you can be involved with the Walk no matter where you live!

Who are you walking for this year?
Our annual “party in the park” celebrating recovery will be on Saturday, May 20, 2017 at Sertoma Park in Sioux Falls. Come and join us as we walk for mental health awareness and raise funds for NAMI SD programs all across the state. Bring friends—let’s make this the biggest Walk ever! (Look for more information at www.namiwalks.org/southdakota)
NAMI In Our Own Voice is a presentation for the general public to promote awareness of mental illness and the possibility of recovery. NAMI In Our Own Voice presentations change attitudes, assumptions and stereotypes by describing the reality of living with mental illness. People with mental health conditions share their powerful personal stories in this free, 60- or 90-minute presentation.

NAMI South Dakota currently has 15 active presenters who tell their stories to audiences across the state. Listen to what audience members are saying:

“Their stories were very thought-provoking. I am not going to be so quick to judge someone with a mental illness. It can happen to anyone.”

“I like the idea that mental illness can be overcome, and it’s not unbeatable.”

“What courage! These presenters are inspiring. They are expressive, confident, and in a good position to encourage others.”

“I think after this presentation I will be able to understand people’s situations better when they are struggling.”

“It changed my perspective. Now I want to reach out to my family members with mental illness.”

“The presenters did a great job of sharing their stories and answering any questions that were asked. I would recommend them to anyone!”

“I want to notice and help kids in my school who may be having a ‘dark day.’”

“It’s OK to live with mental illness and I should talk to someone about it.”

“I anticipate making my own mental health more of a priority.”

“It’s amazing to witness these two women who some days have a hard time putting one foot in front of the other, and yet they are the voice of hope because they continue the fight every single day.”

To learn more about In Our Own Voice, visit http://www.nami.org/Find-Support/NAMI-Programs/NAMI-In-Our-Own-Voice. If you would like to schedule a presentation in your church, workplace or community, please contact us at 605-271-1871.
Thank you to those who made donations this quarter. With your help, NAMI South Dakota is able to fulfill its mission of providing support, education and advocacy for families and individuals affected by mental illness. With your donation, you become a partner in the mission.

**Donations 10/16/2016 to 1/15/2017**

- Allen, Randy & Sandra (In Memory of Kevin Harshaw and Lauren Smeins)
- Anderson, Lethe
- Anderson, Marj
- Andre, Della
- Anonymous
- Armitage, Gerald
- Avera Behavioral Health Center
- Benedict, Phillip
- Bliss, Norman & Melanie
- Booze, Opal Joan
- Brechtelsbauer, David & Cathy
- Butterfield, Harold
- Carlson, Teresa
- Charging, Marilyn
- Dominguez, Regina
- Feist, Georgia
- Finck, Mary
- Friesen, Marlyn & Maureen
- Fugleberg, Sarah (In Memory of Jesse Hassler)
- Fuller, William & Gail
- Graves, RW (In Memory of Brad Dafoe)
- Grow, Kathy
- Hanson, Lynn & Beth
- Havens, Karen
- Hauk, Patty
- Holleman, Sandy
- Janssen, Larry & Marcia
- Jergensen, Kevin & Karen
- Kranz, Dian & Nicholas
- Lane, Lois
- Lellelid, Jean
- Lukens Animal Clinic
- Meek, Annette (In Memory of Jared Reisch)
- Moser, Deb
- Network for Good
- New Technology High School
- Nikolas, George
- Oehlke, Karl & Kelly
- Odney, John R. (In Memory of Brad Dafoe)
- Petrocine, Linda Laible (In Memory of Kathleen Laible)
- Ross, Kathaleen (In Memory of Brad Dafoe)
- Schmidt, Allen & Mary
- Shooter, Jennifer
- Sigler, Myrtice
- Smith, Kristi
- Spader, Elaine
- Speirs, Jill
- Staben, Paulene
- Thompson, Marlys
- Weiland, Dr. Todd & Jody
- Wells Fargo Community Support Program
- Wintersteen, Audrey & Glen

*Every effort has been made to recognize recent donors. If you think there has been an error, please contact our office.*

**HOW TO BECOME A DONOR:** Visit the donation page on our website: [www.namisouthdakota.org/donate](http://www.namisouthdakota.org/donate) to make a gift by PayPal or credit card. If you would rather donate by check, please make out your check to NAMI South Dakota and mail it to: NAMI South Dakota, P.O. Box 88808, Sioux Falls, SD 57109

NAMI South Dakota is a 501c3 organization. Donations are tax-deductible. **THANK YOU!**
OUR LOCAL AFFILIATES:

- Rapid City 605-389-6854
- Sioux Falls 605-610-7226
- Pierre 605-280-2882
- Yankton 605-661-2223
- Aberdeen 605-228-5983
- Northern Hills 605-723-6044
- Huron 605-350-9516
- Brookings 605-692-8948
- Watertown 605-882-2254
- Consumer Council 605-238-5766

CONNECT WITH US:

- Website:  [www.namisouthdakota.org](http://www.namisouthdakota.org)
- Email:  namisd@midconetwork.com
- Twitter:  @NAMISouthDakota
- Phone:  (605) 271-1871
- Facebook:  [www.facebook.com/namisodak](http://www.facebook.com/namisodak)
(800) 551-2351 (Toll Free)