

Hello NAMI Wichita. The NAMI Wichita BOD (Board of Directors) has made the decision to open all of our meetings to in-person meetings. What does this mean for everyone? Well, it means that for our regular meetings we will be meeting at 1010 N. Main St, 67203 (Also known as the Breakthrough Club and Episcopal Social Services) on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) and third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Tuesdays of each month from now on. As always, our board meetings will be held before our Education meetings on the first Tuesday. Board meetings start at 5:30 pm, and Education meetings start at 7:00 pm. The third Tuesday starts with the Ask the Doctor Hour which starts at 6:00 pm. Our Support groups (NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group & NAMI Family Support Group) will start at 7:00 pm after some brief announcements. The NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group is exclusively for people 18 years of age or older who have a lived experience of mental health issues. The NAMI Family Support Group is for all family members and friends of those with a lived experience of mental health issues. The fourth Tuesday of the month is reserved for the SHARE & CARE Group which is a combined support group of both people with a lived experience of mental illness and family members and friends of people with a lived experience. This group starts at 6:30 pm and is held in the parlor of the College Hill United Methodist Church (2930 1<sup>st</sup> St N, 67214). If you have been enjoying the ZOOM meetings we have been having during the pandemic and you want to continue participating by way of ZOOM, don't worry because we are going to hold all of our meetings as Hybrid meetings. This means that we will have an in-person component to the meetings and a virtual or online component to the meetings. You can participate in whatever way you feel best doing so. Please follow the links and directions for virtual activities posted elsewhere in this publication.

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**First TUESDAY NAMI EDUCATION PROGRAMS OFFERED AT 7:00 PM.**

**Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>:** Talking about Advocacy Day

**Tuesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> :** We will be talk about and learning about everything NAMI Walks. Treva Lichti will be sharing with us the best ways to reach out to out family, friends, and community to help our one major fundraiser be the best it can be. We currently have two teams, but if anyone wants to become a team captain all they need do is say the word and we can help them along.

**FOR ALL HYBRID MEETINGS AND SUPPORT GROUPS LINKS BELOW:** INSTRUCTIONS: If you have not participated thus far but wish to join the groups, please contact David Larson either through email ([D.LARSON@NAMIWICHITA.ORG](mailto:D.LARSON@NAMIWICHITA.ORG)) or phone (316-461-5755), at least a couple of days before the meeting so he will know you will be on-line that night. Otherwise, he may not be able to authorize your joining the meeting. If you wish to attend the Education and/or Ask the Dr & Support Groups in person, you will need to come to 1010 N. Main St, 67203 (Northeast corner of Main & 9<sup>th</sup>) on the 1<sup>st</sup> and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7 pm for the education meeting and 6 pm for the Ask the Dr Hour.

Sign-in will go much more smoothly if you download ZOOM beforehand onto your computer or phone, for whichever device you are going to use to join the meeting. It can be downloaded from the app store on your phone or by going to <https://zoom.us> on your computer. Also, register with Zoom for a free ZOOM account. Keep a record of the username (email address)

and password you selected. Contact David with questions. We send emails with sign-on information several days before each meeting.

How the ZOOM Support Group meetings work: Because these meetings are for authorized attendees only, you will need to sign in using your email address and the password you chose earlier when you installed ZOOM. You will find the dates and links for the meetings below. The links are encoded in the words. Please click or tap on the hyperlink below to join the meeting.

7 PM, Mar 5, Education Meeting		7 PM, Apr 2, Education Meeting
<a href="#">NAMI Wichita Education</a>		<a href="#">NAMI Wichita Education</a>
6 PM, Mar 19, Ask the Doctor Hour and Support Groups		6 PM, Apr 16, Ask the Doctor Hour and Support Groups
<a href="#">Ask the Dr / Support Groups</a>		<a href="#">Ask the Dr / Support Groups</a>

The evening of each meeting, David will convene both support group meetings at the same time for general announcements and instructions, and we'll then separate into the specific Connections and Family Support sections. Vicki Shook, Valerie Morley and Gerry Lichti will facilitate the Family Support Group, while David and Eli Hess will do the same for Connections.

**SHARE AND CARE SUPPORT GROUP:** The Share and Care Support Group is a combined experience for both family members and adults living with mental illness. Because NAMI does not have a structure program for our Share & Care Support, we follow our own developed model for this group. We benefit greatly from learning to know each other better. If you are wanting to attend the Share & Care meeting in person, please come to College Hill United Methodist Church, 2930 E. 1<sup>st</sup> N., 67214 (North side of 1<sup>st</sup> street between Erie Ave & Chautauqua Ave)

6:30 PM, Mar 26, Share & Care.		6:30 PM, Apr 23, Share & Care.
<a href="#">Share &amp; Care</a>		<a href="#">Share &amp; Care</a>

**NAMI WICHITA IS MOVING AWAY FROM HYBRID GROUPS:** We have had a great run with our hybrid groups and we have been able to touch so many lives and help so many people but there are many who want to move completely to in-person groups. We are not sure what this means for those who cannot join us in person. But we are working to develop ways to help and support as many people as we can. To this end, the virtual meeting links will stop being published after the March/April Newsletter. If you would like to continue in participating with a virtual group of some kind, we will be seeking ways to do this in the days ahead. We ask that you all keep us informed in what methods work best for you. – [d.larson@namiwichita.org](mailto:d.larson@namiwichita.org)

**A NEW YEAR, NEW PEOPLE, AND NEW POSITIONS.**

2024 begins a new chapter for NAMI Wichita and a new chapter in the life of NAMI Wichita volunteer, Tara Gwynn. Timothy and Tara Gwynn moved back to Wichita in August of 2022 from El Paso, Texas where they spent Timothy's last five years of active-duty service with the U.S. Army and Tara served with NAMI El Paso since 2018, ending her

time as NAMI El Paso's Volunteer of the Year for 2021. As with many other NAMI members, the Gwynns wanted to join the local NAMI Affiliate to volunteer and share what they could. Tara had already made a name for herself at the state level by working with the Family Programs and the Peer Programs and at the national level working on both the NAMI Homefront and Family-to-Family education programs and promoting family support groups and various programs within the Veterans'

Administration. She received the NAMI Peer Program Leader of the year at the NAMI Kansas Conference in October 2023. Enter our past NAMI Wichita BOD President, James Hook. He asked, why can't we ask Tara to become Volunteer Programs Coordinator for NAMI Wichita? And so, in January of this year, Tara stepped onto the stage as the NAMI Wichita Programs Director. What does this mean? It means that Tara is helping to maintain and guide the future of programs provided by NAMI Wichita. Per the Board's directive, her first and primary focus is our Signature Programs. She is working diligently to bring us all up to date on our program trainings as well as being sure that all volunteers who wish to maintain their standing as leaders of the many programs also maintain their memberships. Did you know that when anyone signs up to be a program leader, they first have to become a member of NAMI? Did you also know that when we sign the registration form for taking our state trainings, we agree to renew our trainings according to NAMI Kansas guidelines? Her second directive and focus is in line with the Board's focus this year: to change NAMI Wichita from the best kept secret in Wichita to the worst kept secret in Wichita! To help accomplish this directive, she is also responsible for tabling events and the needed volunteers for such events, as well as scheduling presentations to organizations to promote mental health awareness and NAMI Wichita's mission. These are just some of the many issues that Tara is helping to iron out and keep us in-line with fidelity to NAMI. So, if you have received an email from Tara Gwynn - [t.gwynn@namiwichita.org](mailto:t.gwynn@namiwichita.org) - asking for your leadership credentials or to attend program leader meetings, this is the reason why. Please give Tara the respect that is needed for her position. Please feel free to reach out to her if you are interested in volunteering for tabling events or being trained to be a Signature Program leader! Of course, that isn't the only change that has happened with the new year. Our New President of the Board of Directors is Laura Rosenbaum. Our Vice President is Jason Platter, Our Secretary for his last year on the board is David E Larson. Our Treasurer is Teresa Carter. Following are the new members at large and their various positions. Jamaal Jones (Model A Affiliate Committee Member), Joe Klingenberg, Bernestine Williams is filling the last year of Dr. Brittany Harmes, Esther Granados is also serving her last year. Timothy Gwynn and Trish Klingenberg sit on the board as NAMI Kansas

PLC Liaison representatives. Tony Nutz continues to be the SMVF Liaison representative. And we are still seeking a person to fill Rommy Vargas' position from two years ago.

## **NAMI WICHITA SYNAPSE**

A Publication for Family and Client Support, Advocacy Education and Research for Major Brain Disorders.

National Alliance on Mental Illness, Wichita Affiliate

NAMI Wichita

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NAMI Wichita, KS, Inc. is a non-profit organization with 501 (c) 3 status, an affiliate of NAMI and NAMI Kansas

## **Officers, Board of Directors, and non-elected liaison members:**

(\*)President: Laura Rosenbaum

(\*)Vice President: Jason Platter

(\*)Secretary: David E Larson

(\*)Treasurer: Teresa Carter

Members at Large: (\*)Esther Granados, Tara Gwynn (Signature Programs & Tabling Director), Tim Gwynn (NAMI KS PLC Liaison), Jamaal Jones, Joe Klingenberg, Trish Klingenberg (NAMI KS PLC Liaison), Tony Nutz (SMVF Liaison Representative), (\*)Bernestine Williams, (\*) - denotes elected members of BOD

## **Other Volunteer Positions:**

(The Volunteer positions have been removed from this newsletter only, while we seek to update the information. Please check out the NAMI Wichita website where this information is being updated.)

## **Website Managers: Nicole Cox, Darla Carra-Denton and David Larson**

Views published in the [NAMI Wichita Synapse](#) are those of individual contributors and do not reflect local, state, or national NAMI positions.

## **NAMI Wichita also publishes a Resource Guidebook funded by an anonymous donor.**

We support the activities of law enforcement agencies, hospitals, COMCARE, the medical community, other non-profit organizations, families, caretakers, friends and clients of mental health services directed towards improving the lives of persons living with mental illnesses. Membership in NAMI Wichita includes persons

living with mental illnesses, their family members, community friends, behavioral health professionals and students.

Newsletter Mailing List Guidelines: This newsletter is sent by email to any NAMI Wichita members/contacts for whom we have an active email address. Print copies are sent only to those members who have no email service.

Community Leaders and Behavioral Health Professionals receive complimentary newsletters and are invited to support NAMI Wichita's programs and activities by becoming members.

Dues include membership in local, state and national levels and receipt of the *Advocate*, a magazine published three times annually by NAMI. **PLEASE SEE MEMBERSHIP FORM ON LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER.**

**NEWLY REVISED COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDEBOOK NOW AVAILABLE:** The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of NAMI Wichita's *Community Resource Guidebook* is now available on the website or by print copy. Check out a considerably expanded edition on our website at [www.namiwichita.org](http://www.namiwichita.org). A huge "Thank You" to Nicole Cox for spearheading this revision!

### **Mental Health and Substance Use Programming.**

1. State Mental Health/Psychiatric Hospital in Sedgwick Co to serve South Central KS. Lead agencies are KDADS (KS Dept of Aging & Disability Services) and Sedgwick County for planning and funding.

The new 50-bed state and regional mental health hospital will be designed to more effectively meet the intensive treatment needs of this part of the state.

Also, part of this facility's role will be competency assessment of persons facing trial (25 of the 50 beds); hospital to be designed with the potential for expansion to 100 beds.

Four (4) sites have been selected for consideration. On December 20, the Sedgwick County Commission will finalize selection of the site, review architectural and engineering proposals to bring on a contractor in January.

Construction to begin in mid-2024 with completion by end of 2025.

2. Expanded COMCARE CRISIS CENTER (funding supported by Sedgwick Co): Location has been acquired - a building located at 235 S Topeka (Topeka and English) will be remodeled to house the crisis services which are currently housed at separate locations - the Walk-in Crisis Center; 23-hour Observation Unit; Crisis Stabilization Unit; Substance Use services- sobering unit and detox unit, plus a new 10-bed medical detox unit.

This location will be close to the Bio-Medical School being planned to house WSU and WSU Tech's health professions programs as well as KU School of Medicine-Wichita and KU Pharmacy that will expand their programs, improve patient outcomes and engage new clinical trials. This location will enable collaboration with the health professions programs, so the Crisis Center can have the advantage of the student, intern and resident learners/practitioners.

Timeline for both the Bio-Medical School and the Expanded Crisis Center: Construction to begin in mid-2024 with completion by the end of 2026.

### **Affordable Housing and Homeless Shelter**

3. City of Wichita HOME-ARP Projects: working with community and providers to identify site options for an effective service area for a navigation center, non-congregate housing and affordable housing, to be co-located with a 24/7/365 emergency shelter based on national best practices. The Market Study for the top 3 sites has been ordered. VISION is for the City's Multi-Agency Campus (MAC).

Homelessness Task Force: Leadership provided by the Public Policy and Management Center, WSU. The Taskforce has identified 5 focus planning areas: Housing, Provider Coordination/Gap Analysis, Emergency Services (shelters), Community Engagement and Funding. These sub-groups (with the exception of Funding) have defined goals for 6-month action/ implementation plans and timelines for priority in 2024 along with developing next steps and goals for the long-term plan. The funding sub-group is exploring grant opportunities at State level for finances for the VISION of the City's Multi-Agency Campus (MAC).

Planning for all of these services are a coordinated effort among governmental entities, service providers and community representatives. Focus on mental health WORKFORCE development is also HIGH priority locally, state-wide and nationally.

**NAMI Kansas Peer Newsletter:** Did you know that NAMI Kansas is publishing a bi-monthly (every two months) newsletter exclusively by and for peers? Do you have a story to tell about coping skills and strategies that have worked for you? Do you want to share a story about how you rose above a difficulty in life? Do you have questions about living with mental health conditions? If you answer yes to any of those, then the NAMI Kansas Peer Newsletter is for you. You can access it at <https://namikansas.org/nami-kansas-newsletters/>. You can also download it and print it out to share with a family member or a friend! An alternative link to grab archived issues of the NAMI Kansas Peer Newsletter is here: <https://tinyurl.com/NAMIKSPEER>.

Also, did you know that this newsletter that you are currently reading can be accessed online at the NAMI Wichita website ( <https://www.namiwichita.org/> ). And you can also download it and print a copy to share with a family member or a friend! In both cases it is great reading material with lots of interesting information for one and all. If you wish to share information for the NAMI Wichita Newsletter, please email David E Larson at [D.LARSON@NAMIWICHITA.ORG](mailto:D.LARSON@NAMIWICHITA.ORG). If you wish to share information for the NAMI Kansas Peer Newsletter, please email Kathy Pennell at [KATHYP@NAMIKANSAS.ORG](mailto:KATHYP@NAMIKANSAS.ORG).

### **NAMI Wichita Education Classes for 2024:**

Please check [www.namiwichita.org](http://www.namiwichita.org) and click on the various "Programs" for further details on each class and for instructions to register. **ALL CLASSES ARE FREE FOR PARTICIPANTS**

**NAMI Basics** is offered for parents or caregivers of children and adolescents who experience mental health and behavioral disorders. This series of 6 weekly classes is offered in a two-and-a-half-hour format. To learn more about upcoming classes, contact Laura at [lauros@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lauros@sbcglobal.net).

**Family-to-Family** (English language) is offered for family members, caretakers of or support persons for adults with the lived experience of mental illness. This class is offered as 8 weekly classes. Classes last two and half each. Please contact Tara Gwynn at [t.gwynn@namiwichita.org](mailto:t.gwynn@namiwichita.org) or 316-712-4933 or check [namiwichita.org](http://namiwichita.org) for details.

**Peer-to-Peer** is offered for adults living with mental illness. This series of 8 weekly classes focuses on helping persons understand their illness and gain skills to help establish and maintain wellness. Classes last two hours each. **For information, you may email [peer2peer@namiwichita.org](mailto:peer2peer@namiwichita.org) or call NAMI Wichita at 316-686-1373. Check [namiwichita.org](http://namiwichita.org) for details.**

**HOMEFRONT EDUCATION PROGRAM:** A series of six classes helps family members, partners and significant others understand and support military service members and veterans living with mental health conditions while maintaining their own wellbeing. Some aspects of the class are managed on-line. Registration for these classes is required by calling Tony at 316-558-1888 or Eli at 316-207-5136.

**Family-to-Family Spanish Language Class:** Class description is the same as for the English language class above. To express interest and for additional information, contact Rommy Vargas at 316-250-7231 or [rommyvargasb@yahoo.com](mailto:rommyvargasb@yahoo.com) or Alejandra Prendes at 316-299-8728 or [Tatiana\\_prendes@hotmail.com](mailto:Tatiana_prendes@hotmail.com).



### **JOIN NAMI TODAY**

The NAMI Wichita mission is to provide education and support for persons living with mental illness and their families; to provide support for research on brain disorders; and to provide public education and advocacy to promote mental health systems change with the hope that persons with mental illness may achieve the highest possible quality of life.

<input type="checkbox"/> HOUSEHOLD	\$60	Annual dues include membership at the local, state and national levels.
<input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL	\$40	
<input type="checkbox"/> OPEN DOOR DUES*	\$ 5	<b>Make checks payable to NAMI Wichita.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> GIFT/DONATION = _____		All dues and donations are tax deductible.

(Please complete **ALL** requested information.)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_  
9-DIGIT ZIPCODE \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO:  
NAMI Wichita, KS  
P.O. Box 2435  
Wichita, KS 67201-2435

New Membership       Renewal Membership

I have served in the military.       An immediate family member has served in the military.

*\*No one will be denied membership for their inability to pay the full fee. The minimum suggestion is \$5.*