



**NAMI**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

# Polk County

## News & Views

A Monthly Publication of NAMI Polk County, Inc.

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**Supported by:**

- Publix Super Markets Charities
- Dept. of Children and Families
- The City of Lakeland
- NAMI Polk Members
- And



United Way  
of Central Florida

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**NAMI Polk Represented in San Francisco**

The NAMI National Convention was held in San Francisco, CA July 6-9 and Polk County Florida was well represented there. Three Polk County representatives made presentations at the convention. They were **Judge Robert Williams, Dr. Risdon Slate** and **Cathy Hatch**. Judge Williams and Ms. Hatch were co-presenters at the NAMI Education, Training and Peer Support Center Institute where they were introduced by **Dr. Joyce Burland**, National Director NAMI Education, Training and Peer Support Center. Their presentation described the collaboration that NAMI Polk has with Mental Health Court and their use of the Peer to Peer program within the court system. The Williams/Hatch presentation was well received by over 150 institute attendees.



Dr. Slate was part of a workshop which presented on the topic, Stakeholder Perspectives on Tasers and Less Lethal Weapons. Dr. Slate and Major Sam Cochran of the University of Memphis were co-presenters and Ron Honberg was the moderator. Dr. Slate recently co-wrote and published a book titled *The Criminalization of Mental Illness*.

**Other news from the convention**

NAMI Florida was chosen to receive the Consumer Council Exemplary State Award, a recognition for exceptional commitment to promoting participation in the NAMI movement by fostering partnerships with consumers, providing consumer leadership opportunities and promoting recovery, independence and choice. **Susan Lang** and **Mike Mathes** accepted the award on behalf of NAMI Florida. Also receiving an award at the convention was **Rose Delaney** who is on staff at NAMI Florida. Rose received the Peer-to-Peer Distinguished Service Award.

Other items worth noting was a special viewing of the "The Soloist" a movie based on the true story of LA Times reporter Steve Lopez' relationship with a homeless musician, Nathaniel Ayers. The stars of the movie are Jaime Fox and Robert Downey, Jr., but the night of the viewing the stars were the real **Nathaniel Ayers** and **Steve Lopez** who made a surprise visit to the convention. Mr. Ayers gave a concert for NAMI friends which lasted until 1:30am!

The FOX-TV series "HOUSE" received the NAMI Friends of the Family Award at the closing banquet. Actor **Peter Jacobson** received the award on behalf of the show and **Peter Laurie** (House) addressed the banqueters via a pre-recorded video message. "HOUSE" supported NAMI over the past year by market t-shirts as a fundraising effort for NAMI National programs and for their responsible portrayal of mental illness.



Cathy Hatch, Judge Williams & Sarah O'Brien meet prior to the presentation

Conference attendees want to know more

**FAMILY Support Groups**

**Lakeland Family Group**  
 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 7pm  
 St. David's Episcopal Church  
 Media Room  
 145 E. Edgewood Dr.

**Lake Wales Group**  
 New leadership needed  
 To volunteer call the NAMI office

**Young Families Parent Group**  
 First Tuesday Each Month, 7pm  
 USF- Lakeland Campus  
 LTB Building, Room 1104

**CONSUMER Groups:**

**Kids Support Group**  
 First Tuesday Each Month, 7pm  
 USF- Lakeland Campus  
 LTB Building, Room 1120

**Winter Haven Group**  
 Thursday nights  
 7-8:30 PM Sweet Center Green  
 Room. 1201 First Street S.  
 Winter Haven  
 Leaders: Joyce and Randall

**Lakeland**  
 The three Support Groups listed below meet at the Jeanene Brown Drop-In-Center. 2326 Edgewood Drive:

1. Panic & Anxiety Mon. 3pm
2. NAMI Connections -Cancelled (NAMI Connections is looking for a new leader)
3. Depression & Bipolar Support (DBSA) Tue. 7pm & Sat. 12 noon

For more info call  
 Drop In Center  
 (863) 413-2788

Female Survivors of Sexual Abuse  
 1st & 3rd Wed. 6-7:30pm  
 Peace River Center's Rape Recovery Resource Center  
 (863) 413-2708  
 Childcare provided.

**NAMI Polk County Board of Directors**

Lt. Brian Garrett, Pres.  
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 Margaret Parry  
 John Ruffin  
 Norman Small  
 Ann Tyson, M.D.  
 John F. Wendel

**Staff**  
 Cathy Hatch, Ex. Dir.  
 Jeanene Hammac, Sec.

**NAMI Polk Receives Grant for Upcoming Social Security Benefits Training**

NAMI Polk has received a grant from the City of Lakeland to offer a special one day training on the application process for filing the application for Social Security benefits. The free training will be held on September 14 for individuals who think they may qualify for Social Security Income and/or Social Security Disability Income. The target audience for this training is individuals who have a disabling mental illness such as depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or any other severe mental illness that is medically diagnosable. Those eligible to attend the training must live within the city limits of Lakeland and may bring a friend or relative to assist them. There is also an income requirement that must be met and proof of income is required.

Participants will receive a detailed book and personal instruction on the Social Security application process. This application method routinely produces faster results with a high approval rate for applicants, without the need of consulting an attorney. The training will last all day, Sept. 14 and will be held at a location on Edgewood Drive. Participants will not complete the application process during the training, but will learn how to gather the documents and answer the questions needed to complete the application. The class is limited to 20 participants. To register or for more information on eligibility call NAMI Polk County at 863-533-4411.

The training is offered by NAMI Polk in collaboration with Peace River Center, Lue Richardson, trainer.

**NAMI Highlands County Now Forming**

A group in Highlands County is now beginning to organize their own local NAMI. Mr. Mark Medick is the contact person for this undertaking. Adam O'Connor is also assisting with the formation of the new organization. The contact information for Mr. Medick is:  
 Mark Medick  
 Daybreak Behavioral Health  
 4023 Sun 'n Lake Blvd.  
 Sebring, FL 33872  
 office phone (863) 314-4357  
 email: [medick.mark@ahss.org](mailto:medick.mark@ahss.org)

**FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP RE-ESTABLISHED**

New leadership for the Family Support Group has been found ! We welcome **Ruth Meinke, Mary Jo Raci, and Kathleen Barber** who are helping with the leadership of the group.

The Family Support Group is open to anyone who is the family or friend of a person with mental illness. The group meets twice a month on the first and third Thursday night at 7pm in the Media Room of St. David's Episcopal Church located on Edgewood Drive in Lakeland.  
 Upcoming meetings are Aug.6 and Aug.20.

**PARENT & KIDS SUPPORT GROUPS, AUGUST 4**

Two separate support groups for parents of children with mental illness and for kids with mental illness continue to meet at PCC/USF-Polytechnic Lakeland campus in Building LTB at 7pm. On August 4, the meetings will be held in LTB rooms 1120 and 1121. Mental health professionals Joni Smithson and Melissa Brown lead the two groups. Kids are led by Melissa and play games that focus on social skills building. Joni facilitates the parent group as they share experiences and seek group wisdom. Joining the groups as guest speakers this fall will be Dr. Richard Marshall, child psychologist and other local professionals.

**Local Genetic Study Seeks Volunteers**

Dr. Richard Marshall, NAMI Polk Board member and teaching professor at USF Polytechnic has recently been approved to conduct a genetic study of children with bipolar disorder. The goal of the study is to determine whether BPD can be distinguished from ADHD on the basis of genetic differences in the brain's dopamine system.

The study is seeking volunteers between the ages of 8 - 18 years who have a diagnosis of ADHD and/or bipolar disorder. The study procedures are harmless and painless and all volunteers will remain anonymous. Families interested in volunteering should email their contact information to [namipolk@juno.com](mailto:namipolk@juno.com) include in subject line "BPD STUDY".

**Criminal Justice, Substance Abuse, & Mental Health Reinvestment**

The Reinvestment Conference, held in Orlando July 23-24 focused on *Meeting the Challenges Ahead*. Speakers at the conference included **Judge Steve Leifman, Judge Martha Lott, Judge Mark Speiser, Robert Neri**, Chief Clinical Officer for WestCare Foundation, **Barbara Margolis**, Executive Director of the Fred Friendly Seminars, **Sergeant Ken Leach**, Fr Myers Police Dept., **Dr. Fred Frese**, psychologist and member of the Board of Trustees of NAMI National, **Bill Janes**, Director of Florida Office of Drug Control, **Clint Rayner**, Chief of the Office of Consumer & Family Affairs, DCF and many other outstanding speakers.

NAMI Polk County representatives were **Cathy Hatch** and **Adam O'Connor**. **Judge Beth Harlan, Anita Sullivan, Anne Weeks** and **Julie Nelson** represented Polk County Mental Health Court. **Claire Rice** and **Kirk Fasshauer** attended as representatives of Peace River Center.



Anita Sullivan, Adam O'Connor, Cathy Hatch & Julie Nelson attend Criminal Justice Reinvestment Conference / Orlando

The conference purpose was to showcase projects funded by the Reinvestment grant & discuss innovative programs for future program success.

**Professional Members Join NAMI Polk**

Led by Board Member, **Dr. Anne Tyson**, NAMI Polk County has developed a unique membership for mental health professionals. Professional members can be listed on the NAMI Polk website and may order NAMI brochures for their office waiting rooms among other membership incentives.

**NAMI Polk County Welcomes New Member**

**Mark Helm, M.D.**

Other new professional members include:

**Curtis W. Cassidy, MD, PA**  
**Anthony H. Conti, MA, LMHC**  
**Glenda Morgan, MA, NCC, LMHC**  
**Jeffrey Reddout, PhD**

To learn more about professional memberships, please contact Cathy Hatch, 863-533-4411 and ask for a professional membership packet. (Annual fee \$75.00)

**NAMI Basics Begins Sept.21**

**Education Class for Parents of Children with MI**

NAMI Basics is a 6-week course for the caregivers of underage children diagnosed with mental illness or who display behavior problems. NAMI Polk County now has six *Basics* teachers: **Diana Arthur, Janina Davis, Nancy Egbert, Duana Dodd, Loretta Freeman** and **Carolyn Palmer**.

Beginning September 21, **Nancy Egbert** and **Loretta Freeman** will lead the next *Basics* class which will be held on six consecutive Monday nights from 6pm -8:30pm at the Family Fundamentals building in Lakeland (also known as the Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine Building).

Parents will learn how to better manage behavior and how to work with the school and juvenile justice systems. Parents will also learn about the importance of record keeping and will learn how to better communicate with doctors and mental health providers.

Registration is free, but space is limited. This class is sponsored by the **Community Foundation of Greater Lakeland**. Call the NAMI office at (863) 533-4411 to register.

**DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THESE RESOURCES IN WINTER HAVEN?**

**SWEET CENTER WALK -IN CLINIC BEGINS**

The Behavioral Health Division of Winter Haven Hospital has opened a new walk-in clinic located at the Sweet Center, 1201 First Street, South. Clients who are uninsured can now access services without an appointment by going to the STAR program which stands for Supportive Treatment for Active Recovery. Contact the S.T.A.R. program for more information (863) 291-5978.

**THE HALEY CENTER**

The Haley Center, a ministry of First Baptist Church located at 122 West Central Avenue serves the community with free primary health care for those who qualify. Clients must be from a household whose income is 200% above the Federal Poverty Level or below and they must have no other medical insurance. An interview process is required to determine eligibility. The phone number for the Haley Center is (863) 299-6562.

**Mental Health Court Peer to Peer Class Begins**

NAMI Polk will offer the 4th Peer to Peer class in collaboration with Mental Health Court. Peer to Peer is a relapse prevention course designed to help individuals with mental illness learn the signs of an impending relapse so that it can be avoided. They also learn coping skills & increase understanding of their illness.

The next class will begin on August 19 and will meet in the Old Courthouse in Bartow. Helping to provide lunch for the nine week course is attorney **Julia Williamson** of the Polk County Criminal Defense Lawyers Association.

The funding for the classroom expenses for this session of Peer to Peer is associated with the Reinvestment Grant funds received by Polk County for jail diversion programs.

**Florida Alcohol & Drug Abuse Association Conference**

The 2009 **FADAA Annual Conference** will be held August 12-14 in Orlando at the Hilton in Walt Disney World Resort and will be full of workshops to assist professionals who work with clients. The conference will also benefit consumers and family members. Details can be found at <http://conference.fadaa.org> CEU's are available.

**New Community Counseling Center Coming Soon**

By Richard Marshall, Ph.D.

The Counselor Education faculty in the Division of Education at USF Polytechnic has proposed the development of a Community Counseling Center on the PCC/USFP campus in Lakeland. The Counseling Center will serve children and families in Polk and surrounding counties who do not qualify for mental health services through existing programs and agencies, including individuals who are uninsured and underinsured. The proposal has been approved at the campus level and is now working its way through University channels. We are anticipating a fall 2009 start date.

**MINDS**

on the **EDGE**

Is a new TV documentary produced by Fred Friendly Seminars. It is scheduled to air on PBS stations in October. This program connects the dots between personal dilemmas facing individuals and families who are living with mental illness, medical practices that can be obstacles to treatment and public policies that all too often fall short in providing support that could make a positive difference.



Dr. Fred Frese & Cathy Hatch at the Reinvestment Conference

**Dr. Fred Frese** is one of the guest panelist appearing on the program. He served for 15 years as Director of Psychology at Western Reserve Psychiatric Hospital in Ohio and has 40 years experience working with persons with serious mental illness. Dr. Frese, a mental health consumer himself diagnosed with schizophrenia, makes an impassioned plea for change in the system. Also appearing on the distinguished panel are Floridians, **Pete Early** and **Judge Steve Liefman**.

NAMI Polk County has a copy of this documentary film and is looking for sponsors and venues who would like to help provide a local viewing of the film. Interested parties should contact Cathy Hatch at the NAMI office. **This is a must see film!**

Current Resident or

National Alliance on Mental Illness—Polk County

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National Alliance on Mental Illness

# NAMI Polk County

Please enroll me as a member of NAMI

Fee includes membership to NAMI National, NAMI Florida and NAMI Polk and is valid for one year from enrollment date.

Membership fee enclosed:  \$50 Member (Family or Friend)  \$5 Consumer  \$75 Professional Membership

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

NAMI is a non-profit organization. Your tax deductible contributions help ensure the continuation of the vital services NAMI provides to the community. Gifts of all sizes are welcome !

Professional members will receive an additional membership form which requests detailed professional information.

**Please make checks payable to: NAMI Polk County, Inc. and mail to : NAMI Polk, 1090 US Hwy 17 South, Bartow, FL 33830-6026**