



NAMI O'AHU NEWS

NAMI O'ahu is an Affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness



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NAMI O'AHU NEWSLETTER

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An Aloha United Way
Partner Agency and a
Combined Federal
Campaign Member

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HAWAII IS POISED TO BE THE MOST IMPROVED STATE ON MENTAL ILLNESS CARE IN THE NATION

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has released its 2006 "Report on America's Health Care System for Serious Mental Illness". The report is the first comprehensive public sector survey and grading of systems in 15 years.

Nationally, the system is in trouble with its grade no better than a "D". Only five states received a "B"; Connecticut, Maine, Ohio, South Carolina, and Wisconsin. Eight states failed. Hawaii, with a "C", is among only fifteen states graded "C" and above. The report states that Hawaii is potentially poised to be applauded as the most improved of any state in the nation. State Director of Health, Dr. Chiyome Fukino, in a recent Star Bulletin article stated "we are actually pleased with the report."

The full report is available via a link on our new website at www.namioahu.net.
Check it Out!

ENTERPRISING COMMITTEE BRINGS IN GRANTS

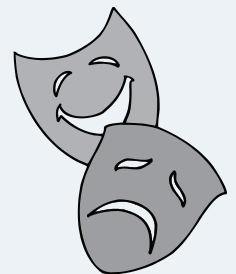
NAMI O'ahu's Grant Committee, formed in 2004 under attorney Marjorie Au's leadership, has successfully developed opportunities from a wide range of grants for the organization. Grants from the Atherton Foundation cover office technology hardware and software. A grant from The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii provided for new bookcases and improvements to the library's collection of books, audiovisual equipment, and a new audio collection. There is also an ongoing effort to target government sponsored grants to study stigma and mental illness.

Serving on the committee with NAMI member Au are Marion Poirier, Executive Director; board members Ann Emura, Robbi Dotson; President Mike Durant; and volunteers Mike Wylie and Sheri Hester. The committee, which meets monthly, welcomes volunteers who may have suggestions for grant opportunities. Just call Executive Director Poirier.

2006 FUNDRAISER THEME: "UNMASKING MENTAL ILLNESS"

Mark your calendar
now for Sunday,
October 22, 2006.

Nami O'ahu is adopting a new format for its sixth annual fundraiser, entitled "Unmasking Mental Illness". This year our guests will gather at the Pacific Club for a festive, early evening pa'ina. Featured will be the delectable club cuisine, special musical entertainment and enticing live and silent auctions. Our seasoned event chair, Donna Howard, and her committee members are orchestrating plans for a memorable evening in support of NAMI O'ahu and its mission. Donations of auction items are now being accepted and service contributions are also welcome. If you are interested, in volunteering for a committee, please call Marion Poirier at the NAMI O'ahu office.





CAPITOL CAPERS

By Marion Poirier

I "scamper about" the state capitol on a daily basis at this time of the year. Approximately 100 bills are monitored and 50 testimonies provided. Systemic changes are important, and NAMI O'ahu takes its advocacy program seriously.

As of April 19, 2006, outcomes look good for the adult mental health emergency appropriations, dental care monies, supportive housing attention, and access to needed medications. These subjects encompass dozens of bills, and will likely be synthesized during the conferences committees. Conference committees occur when the senate and house have different versions of a bill/s. The conference committees are essentially negotiation meetings.

Hawaii has 80 percent of needed private sector mental health parity in Hawaii. The Mental Health Alliance, which I co-chair with Lydia Hemmings (Executive Director of Hawaii Psychiatric Medical Association), was looking at a different law, similar to Vermont's full parity law. More discussion is needed for consideration in 2007.

For the record, we strongly opposed H.B. 2589 Relating to Psychologist Prescribing Medications. We were thankful that Senator Ron Menor held the bill in his Consumer Protection and Housing Committee. If you would like more information on this matter, or other subjects, please contact me. If you want general information, the state capitol website is www.capitol.hawaii.gov. Adjournment Sine Die is scheduled for May 4, 2006.

I Vote, I Count is an important NAMI Program. After May 4, 2006, expect political campaigns to take center stage. Being a NAMI person means engagement in these upcoming elections. We don't tell you who to vote for, but we do tell you that government decisions go on "with or without you". One in five families deals with mental illnesses. Your vote counts. Know your legislators. Visit with them. Tell them what you want. Educate them about mental illness. And, yes, VOTE. Don't let Hawaii have the lowest voter turnout in the nation once again!

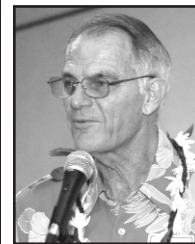
It is important to pay attention to healthcare topics such as "single payer system" or the Massachusetts version, which is getting a lot of national attention as a hybrid version. We have approximately 10 percent of our Hawaii citizenry without health insurance or government assistance. This is not acceptable.

Alert: The Federal Government could take over Hawaii's Community Mental Health System. The State would likely appeal that decision. Stayed tuned!

Rita Gorospe, stellar mental health advocate, died recently. I attended her memorial service, which celebrated her life. We at NAMI O'AHU note that her challenging life, only intensified her advocacy efforts on behalf of persons affected by mental illness. Let us continue "to shine the light" on mental illness, as she would have wanted us to do.

REMEMBERING JEANNE AND CHARLES ROBERTSON

Our dear friends and patrons, Charles and Jeanne Robertson, passed away on November 9, 2005 and November 15, 2005 respectively. The Robertsons had been important supporters of NAMI O'ahu for nearly a decade. Jeanne served on the Board of Directors and played an active role in fundraising. Her distinctive art work and personal treasures were featured in all of our silent auctions. Jeanne and Charlie were named honorary chairs for our fifth annual benefit luncheon, held on October 23, 2005. In spite of health challenges, this endearing couple attended the event with family and friends. Their personal commitment to NAMI O'ahu has significantly contributed to its mission.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thanks to the hard work of our board of directors, staff and volunteers, NAMI O'ahu has made great strides in strengthening its fiscal position. Our exceptional benefit luncheon in October, chaired by Margie Durant, was our most successful ever, bringing in \$35,000. A donation of \$3,000 in common stock from the Jean Robertson estate enabled us to open an investment account at Charles Schwab. Our grants committee, chaired by volunteer Marjorie Au, has been very productive as indicated in her report. As a partner member agency of Aloha United Way, NAMI O'ahu continues to receive their essential funding. We are grateful to members and friends for their generous monetary contributions as well. Increased financial security has allowed us to advance the valuable services we provide to people affected by serious mental illness.

We are fortunate to have the outstanding services of Marion Poirier, now in her ninth year as Executive Director. She is not only a psychiatric-mental health registered nurse with a graduate degree in management and healthcare administration, but also has a strong advocacy background. Part time office assistants Karen Kightlinger and Toni Tengan, join volunteers such as Suzanne Shedletsy, to provide valuable assistance to Marion. With the effective leadership of the board, its executive director and the important support of staff, volunteers and contributors, NAMI O'ahu has a winning team.



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Marion Poirier, MA, RN

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Karen Kightlinger
Toni Tengan

A SALUTE TO OUR 2005 EVENT DONORS

A BIG mahalo to all those listed below who contributed to the tremendous success of our 5th Annual Benefit Luncheon held on October 23, 2005 at the Renaissance Ilikai Waikiki.

Event Sponsors:

Marion Durant
Eli Lilly and Company
HMAA

Table Sponsors

Hank & Helen Chapin
Diamond Head Clubhouse
Mike & Margie Durant
Emura Family
Hawaii Clinical Research Center
NAMI Hawai'i
Eleanor Pence
The Late Jeanne & Charles Robertson

Donated Services

Mark Bell, Postcard CD
Dan Boylan, UH, West O'ahu
Denby Fawcett, KITV-4 News
Hawaii Clinical Research Center
Hawaii Pacific University
Darin Miyashiro, Musician
Jeff Peterson, Musician

In-Kind Donations

Tiare Finney
Hawaii Opera Theatre
Owen Ho
Liz Keller

Planning Committee

Chair – Margie Durant
Auction Chair – Merrill Johnston
Super Hero – Mike Durant

Hank Chapin
Helen Chapin
Jeffrey Emerson
Karen Kightlinger
Marion Poirier
Meymo Rego
Henry Roman
Toni Tengan

Event Volunteers

Jane Anderson
Dale Bachman
Bill Doherty
Penny Dupin
Ann Emura
Grace Kashiwa
Louis Johnson
Drudi Johnston
Shannon Maresca
Judi Moore
Nancy Slain
Diane Stowell
Conne Sutherland
Candy Taylor
Betty Tsukiyama

And last, but not least, we want to express our deep appreciation to our generous auction donors-too numerous to list here and to all those who supported us with monetary contributions.

We also want to acknowledge important additional support from the Rev. A. Akaka Ministries Fdn., the Atherton Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Movie Museum.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Pacific Club was the beautiful setting for NAMI O'ahu's Annual Meeting, held on December 7, 2005. Approximately 100 members and guests enjoyed a delicious array of pupu and lovely Christmas music by Pianist Richard Poirier, the talented husband of executive director Marion Poirier. A number of awards were presented to members who made significant contributions to the organization in 2005. During the business meeting, 2006 board members were officially elected.

As our keynote speaker, Denis Mee-Lee, M.D., director of Hawaii Clinical Research Center, challenged the attendees with various historical questions pertaining to mental illness. The realities and perceptions were telling. The December event, sponsored by Janssen Pharmaceutica, Inc. and chaired by Diane Fujio, provided a great opportunity for NAMI O'ahu folk to join together during the holidays.

JOIN NAMI O'AHU TODAY!

NAME: Mr. Mrs. Ms. _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ CELL: _____ FAX: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Payment

Check (made payable to NAMI O'ahu) VISA MasterCard

Account # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Membership Level

- Individual/Family Member . . . \$25.00
- Professional Member \$50.00
- Contributions Member \$100.00
- Sponsoring Member \$250.00
- Benefactor Member \$1,000.00
- Scholarship Sponsor \$3.00
- Other Donations \$ _____

Detach form and mail in an envelope to:
NAMI O'ahu
770 Kapiolani Boulevard #613
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

**Your donations are deductible to the limit allowed by law*

2005 BENEFIT: "BY THE LIGHT OF THE LANTERNS"

NAMI O'ahu's 5th Annual Benefit Luncheon was a tremendous success thanks to the hard work of volunteers and the generosity of countless donors. Event chair Margie Durant and auction chair Merrill Johnston chose an Asian theme for the fundraiser, held on October 23 at the Renaissance Ilikai Hotel. Featured was live entertainment by koto player Darin Miyamoto and grammy award winning slack key guitarist Jeff Peterson as well as an awesome silent auction. Nearly 200 guests, including members of the local mental health community, enjoyed a moving presentation by Denby Fawcett, political reporter for KITV-4 News. In discussing her mother's bi-polar illness, Denby said she wishes NAMI had been established earlier to help her realize that "the diseases of the mind are like all other illnesses, treatable and nothing to be ashamed of." The Jean Butler Chapin Award for Support, Education and Advocacy was presented to Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland (D-13), in recognition of her passionate support for people affected with serious mental illness. Funds raised at this stigma busting, fun-filled gathering will support NAMI O'ahu's important mission.



1. Denby Fawcett 2. Amy Blagriff, Helen Chapin, Doug Blagriff 3. Hank Chapin & Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland 4. Tom Hester, Francine Lawrence, Ellen Awai, Randy Hack 5. Margie Durant, Donna Howard & Merrill Johnston 6. Charlotte Boyd, Audrey Chandler and Lyn Rowland

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SUPPORT/EDUCATION

Check Out New Office Library!

Meetings:

Manoa Family Support Group
Monthly on 2nd Tues.-7 P.M.

Office Support Groups:
Monthly on 3rd Wed.-11:30 A.M.
Monthly on 4th Fri.-5:30 P.M.

Family 2 Family
Office, Windward, & Central-
Leeward Sites

New: NAMI on CAMPUS
Student offerings at colleges

For details, contact us at
808.591.1297 or namioahu@hawaiiantel.net

**MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS MONTH**

