

NAMI Meets with President Obama at White House

NAMI Executive Director Michael Fitzpatrick joined a group of 12 representatives from the disability community last week for a historic meeting with President Barack Obama.

The group met prior to an East Room ceremony in honor of the 19th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The landmark law prohibits discrimination against employees with mental or physical disabilities in employment, education, housing, public transportation and other areas.

President Obama announced the Administration's commitment to sign and seek Senate ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which encourages countries world-wide to protect people with disabilities from discrimination.

Among other things, priorities include:

- reducing the waiting time for ADA complaints to be resolved,
- protecting children from the use of seclusion and restraints and
- applying a government-wide strategy to improve the representation of people with significant disabilities among federal employees.

NAMI was proud to be a part of this groundbreaking meeting," said NAMI Executive Director Michael Fitzpatrick. We look forward to working with the Administration and other disability groups to meet the goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act."

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What is NAMI's Family-to-Family Program?

The NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program is a free, 12-week course for family caregivers of individuals with severe mental illnesses.

- The course is taught by trained family members
- All instruction and course materials are free to class participants
- Over 115,000 family members have graduated from this national program

How can I find a course in my area?

Family-to-Family classes are offered in hundreds of communities across the country, in two Canadian provinces, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. Call 1-800-950-NAMI.

"ANOSOGNOSIA"

This is a technical term for an individual who is not aware of his own illness. One study says approximately half of all persons with schizophrenia and 40% of those with bipolar disorder have impaired awareness of their illness.

Evidence links absence of insight with longer duration of untreated psychosis and poorer outcomes. Recent research suggests this lack of insight may be caused by deficits in the prefrontal and parietal lobe functioning of the brain. **"Medication non-compliance is the most common factor leading to emergency room consultations and illness exacerbations."**

(www.schizophreniadigest.com)

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"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalms 119:105

What is NAMI StigmaBusters?

NAMI StigmaBusters is a **network of dedicated advocates across the country and around the world** who seek to fight inaccurate and hurtful representations of mental illness.

Whether these images are found in TV, film, print, or other media, **StigmaBusters speak out and challenge stereotypes. They seek to educate society about the reality of mental illness** and the courageous struggles faced by consumers and families every day.

StigmaBusters' goal is to break down the barriers of ignorance, prejudice, or unfair discrimination by promoting education, understanding, and respect.

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Editor's note: any concerns, suggestions, or mailing changes may be e-mailed to: janecarlson@wowway.com (Please use "LNMI" in subject line or it may not get through.)
For LNMI/BD brochure on Mental Illness,
call: Pastor Lisa Cleaver, Director Disability Ministries:
1-800-638-3522, ext. 2692