



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

3/23/16

Contact: Pat Sine

Email: pat.sine@namirochester.org

Phone: 585-423-1593

NAMI Rochester Wins Prestigious National Alliance on Mental Illness Outstanding NAMI Affiliate Award

(Rochester, NY) NAMI Rochester has been selected as the 2016 National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Outstanding NAMI Affiliate awardee. NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI has chapters in every state and more than a thousand local affiliates in communities across the country. Each year, NAMI bestows upon a local affiliate the distinction of being the Outstanding NAMI Affiliate of the Year. The award acknowledges exceptional work conducted by a local affiliate in progressing the NAMI mission of providing education and support to individuals living with a mental illness and their families as well as raising awareness of mental health issues to the public at large.

NAMI Rochester was selected as the 2016 honoree in recognition of their tremendous work including offering the full slate of NAMI Signature programs which provide education, support and awareness to both individuals and families impacted by mental illness. NAMI Rochester also presents two educational programs designed to increase awareness of mental health issues in schools such as *Ending the Silence* and *Parents and Teachers as Allies*. NAMI Rochester has offered these in-school presentations to middle schools and high schools in Monroe, Ontario, Wayne and Genesee counties. The affiliate also organizes a successful NAMI Walks designed to increase mental health awareness. Each year, NAMI Rochester touches the lives of thousands of people through its educational programs, support groups, community awareness presentations, and Annual Walk. NAMI Educational Programs and Support Groups are offered at *no charge* to the participants.

The affiliate also projects a powerful advocacy voice, especially on criminal justice issues where they work to divert people with mental illnesses away from jails and into programs to advance their recovery. They also partner with local law enforcement to expand *Crisis Intervention Trainings* designed to generate positive outcomes when police respond to incidents involving someone in a mental health crisis.

(CONTINUED)

Speaking of the distinction, NAMI Rochester Executive Director Pat Sine comments- *“NAMI Rochester is honored to be receiving this truly special award that represents almost thirty five years of dedication and commitment from individuals, families, volunteers and staff who work together to fulfill the mission of NAMI. NAMI Rochester has made a positive difference in the lives of thousands over the years from their humble beginning with a few mothers and a pastor who started a support group in their church to a strong and respected advocacy organization that collaborates with and receives support and recognition from their community partners.”*

NAMI Rochester Board President Stephen Dvorin, MD comments- *“We are thrilled and honored to be selected the NAMI Affiliate of the Year. Under the leadership of Executive Director Pat Sine and with the support of an industrious staff, a talented Board, many amazing volunteers, and our entire membership, NAMI-Rochester proudly provides NAMI National Signature Programs to our community.*

We are also grateful to NAMI-NYS for its help and encouragement.

NAMI Rochester looks forward to even greater accomplishments in the future and we congratulate all affiliates that work so hard to fulfill the mission of NAMI.”

This is not the first time NAMI Rochester has been awarded for their work. They received the 2014 NAMI-NYS Affiliate of the Year Award also in 2014, the New York State Office of Mental Health presented them with a *What’s Great In Our State Award* for their work to increase awareness of children’s mental health issues.

The award will be presented at the 2016 NAMI National Convention *Act, Advocate, Achieve* taking place in Denver Colorado July 6-9th.

###