
NAMI Scott County

Community voice on mental illness
Empowering people toward recovery

October/November 2007

Monday, November 19, 7 pm, Bettendorf Library:

Empowerment and family support for mental illness

Katie Van Blair, Ph.d, MSW, St. Ambrose University

Supporting family members who are living with mental health issues can sometimes be difficult.

At times you may think that you are helping, but that is not how it feels to your family member.

At other times, they seem to want your help, but you are not sure what to do. This session will take

an empowerment perspective to help families best support each other when mental illness

touches their lives. The discussion will focus on ways to collaborate with individuals

before their symptoms become more severe so that you can best

meet their needs if that is to occur.

Moe Armstrong's message: each one reach one, teach one

"I want to give back to the mental health system," is a phrase Moe Armstrong often hears from people he meets. Moe is a consumer himself who has joined forces with the people who helped him get well. He is now a mental health advocate, peer supporter, and mental health worker. Moe realizes that medications are good and effective to a degree, but recognizes that a powerful ingredient in the healing process is people helping people. Peer support is vital in diffusing anxiety. He hopes that the mental health system of the future will recruit consumers to be the next generation of care-givers. Mental health consumers have so much to teach each other regarding how to stay "sane, stable, sober, and safe."

Workers in shelters and prisons often lack skills to deal with people who have mental illness, suggests Moe. And those are places of great need. While Peer Support is a growing movement, the concept is still lacking in acceptance and respect. It takes people with vision to help recruit, develop and

train consumers with readiness to become mental health workers, to give them a chance to make a contribution back.

Moe claims that giving back is one way for consumers to find redemption, or a sense of value. He highly recommends using every opportunity for education. For instance, when consumers gather, read a poem, or article together. Let the discussion build on strength. And developing art, theatre, and ways of celebrating the experiences of mental illness is also greatly needed. The mental health community will strengthen when we embrace what Moe often quoted, "each one reach one, teach one."

Janet Darmour-Paul



Connie Williams, Moe Armstrong and Greg Paulline at the Candlelight Celebration October 3.

New movie: Canvas

An independent movie called Canvas has been released, the story of a family's struggle with schizophrenia, starring Emmy Award-winner Joe Pantoliano and Academy Award-winner Marcia Gay Harden.



Moe Armstrong with some of the October 4 Davenport workshop participants

Support for families

NAMI Scott County has a **Family Support Group** for family members of people with mental illness. It meets the fourth Monday of every month at 7 to 8:30 pm at the Unitarian Church, Kimberly and Eastern, Davenport. Call Christine Urish for more information, at 333-6281.

Thanks to Janet Darmour-Paul for leading *In Our Own Voice*

In November of 2005 NAMI Scott County began its *In Our Own Voice* (IOOV) Program. We arranged to have a national trainer come to Davenport to train consumers to provide the IOOV Program. At the same time we interviewed and then invited Janet Darmour-Paul to be the IOOV Coordinator. We were very fortunate that she agreed to take on this commitment and has continued in this position to the present. We were very lucky and Janet has done a wonderful job with the IOOV Program.

When the IOOV Program began, 14 presenters were trained. Two of the presenters were from Iowa City and they have continued to present independently from our program. One consumer came from Clinton for training and one came from the Illinois side of the Quad Cities. Ten consumers were trained from our community. These ten people have continued to be involved and present

their stories through IOOV for the entire two years. NAMI Scott County has presented *In Our Own Voice* over 40 times to more than 1000 people. NAMI Scott County has been very well represented by Janet and her team of presenters.

Recently, Janet has decided that she can no longer fulfill the IOOV Coordinator role and she will be leaving it in December 2007. She will continue to be involved in NAMI and will continue to serve in other ways. The NAMI Scott County Board would like to give their very heartfelt "Thanks" to Janet for serving as coordinator for the past two years.

New IOOV Coordinator

As Janet leaves this role we will begin to look for her replacement. The IOOV Program Coordinator can be anyone with an interest in mental health and a willingness to serve.

The Coordinator is not required to be a current IOOV Presenter and is not required to be a consumer.

The IOOV Coordinator's primary role is to organize the IOOV Program, schedule presenters with speaking requests, seek out additional opportunities to present, record keeping and maintaining communication with the NAMI National IOOV Program Coordinator. The IOOV Coordinator will receive a monetary stipend for their service.

The NAMI Scott County board has appointed Anna Goodwin and Greg Paulline to be involved in recruiting and interviewing anyone interested in applying for this position. Please contact Greg or Anna if you are interested in being considered for the IOOV Coordinator. The final approval will be made by the NAMI Scott County Board.

Again we thank Janet for her commitment.

Greg Paulline, 563-322-5276

ghpaulline@mchsi.com

Anna Goodwin, 563-322-5454

algmps2@gmail.com

(please put IOOV coordinator in the subject line)

Candlelight 2007

The Candlelight Celebration 2007 was held on October 3, 2007, at the Northgate Place. It was a very nice, very successful evening. There were 210 people in attendance for the pasta buffet and the Candlelight Celebration presentation.

Moe Armstrong, Mental Health Peer Educator, was the keynote speaker and did a wonderful job entertaining and educating the audience. The evening began with John Freshley providing the invocation. As usual we had 2 local people speaking about their mental health recovery, Theresa Timmer, from Davenport and Janet Davison from Rock Island. Lance Baker shared a poem as Teresa and Janet lit the Unity Candle. Jim Purcell organized the annual Art show and we had many works of art on display by our local consumer artists. The evening

ended as it does each year with a song by Wendy Kendall. Jay Kidwell, WHBF TV, was our Emcee.

On Thursday, October 4, Moe presented a provider workshop to 25 people at the Northgate Place. It was also very well received. Moe then traveled on to Iowa City where he participated in a workshop for veterans and provided training in the Vet to Vet Program.

The Candlelight Committee would like to thank anyone who was involved in organizing this year's event and everyone who attended. If you have not had the opportunity to attend a Candlelight Dinner please come next time. The Candlelight Celebration 2008 will be held on October 8, 2008.

NAMI Scott County

Anne Corbi, President, 322-6554

Connie Williams, Secretary, 322-6247, ex. 224

Tom Engelmann, Treasurer, 323-3568

Local Voicemail: 1-888-491-9267

NAMI Scott Address: P.O. Box 3803, Davenport IA 52808

Family Support Group: 4th Monday each month, 7 pm, Unitarian Church, 3707 Eastern Ave., Davenport

NAMI Connection Recovery

Support Group, 2-3:30 pm every Sunday, Vera French Manor Community Room, 215 W. 37th St., Davenport

Generations of Hope Support

Group for parents and caregivers of children and adolescents with mental illness: 6-7:30 pm, 2nd Monday of the month at Trinity Robert Young Center, 2200 3rd Ave., Rock Island. Includes meal and babysitting; rsvp Mary Anselmi at (309)779-3216.