

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...



Every year in our annual report, we present data regarding programs offered and individuals served over the past year. But numbers can tell only so much of the story. It is the faces and souls behind those numbers that bring meaning to the work we do. The unique stories of the strong, resilient individuals who walk through our doors show the power of NAMI Fox Valley's mission in action.

One of those stories belongs to Gary, a retired male who lives with depression. Gary came to NAMI Fox Valley feeling lost and looking for support. He was quiet, insecure, and feeling overwhelmed by mental health and personal challenges. Seeking to reduce isolation and feel a sense of purpose, Gary volunteered to assist with office work. Soon, he began to participate in peer support groups and also enrolled in NAMI's signature Peer-to-Peer mental health education course. As he worked toward mental health recovery, Gary's wonderful, charismatic personality began to shine.

Gary now volunteers in almost every aspect of NAMI Fox Valley's work, including as a support group facilitator, Peer-to-Peer instructor, and community educator. He brings joy to all those who have the privilege of working with him. Gary frequently credits NAMI Fox Valley with saving his life. In reality, however, it was Gary who did the work. NAMI Fox Valley simply was here to provide tools and support to help him navigate his journey to wellness.

Gary is just one of thousands of people whose lives have been impacted by the power of NAMI Fox Valley's programs over the past year. We are grateful to the incredible support of volunteers, donors, and friends who make those programs possible.



Maren H. Peterson
NAMI Fox Valley Executive Director

NAMI Fox Valley works to support and empower everyone touched by mental illness. We commit to eliminate stigma and nurture recovery through education, support, advocacy and outreach.

5,646
volunteer hours
326 volunteers
\$139,399
economic impact.




3,159
middle and high school
students attended **140**
classroom mental health
presentations.

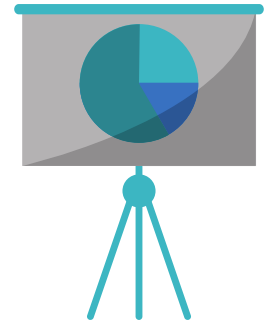


910
elementary school
students attended
43 classroom mental
health presentations.




of teenagers attending
NAMI Fox Valley's 5
weekly teen support
groups reported feeling
better overall when
they left the meeting.
80%

7,188
attendees at 224
community
mental health
presentations
and trainings.



58 graduates from 6 twelve-week-long
Family-to-Family classes.


23 graduates from 3
Honest, Open, Proud Trainings.

22 graduates from 3 ten-week-long
Peer-to-Peer classes.

364
unique participants attended **38**
monthly support group meetings.

4,632
calls to our Iris Place
warm line.



 **156** Iris Place guests were
welcomed and stayed an
average of 5.75 nights.



VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR



Outreach Volunteer: Kay Hieptas

Kay has been a volunteer with NAMI Fox Valley since fall of 2017 and has gone above and beyond for the Education and Outreach program this past year. She has gone out to countless schools with the Ending the Silence program, shared her story at numerous events, and also has represented NAMI at school resource fairs. She is one of the busiest people we know, yet she never hesitates to help out whenever she can. Her energy is infectious and her passion for breaking the stigma around mental illness is truly inspiring. In the wise words of a student who listened to one of Kay's youth presentations, "You are amazing. Thank you. People need to know about mental health. Keep doing what you do, because it helps." Thanks, Kay!

Office Volunteer: Richard Rhode

Since becoming a volunteer with NAMI Fox Valley in 2017, Rich has immersed himself in the organization. Rich volunteers religiously in the office, open and willing to complete any task with a smile. In addition, he helps out with support programs, outreach events, and fundraising events. He has not only become an asset to the organization, he continuously builds up NAMI FV's staff, volunteers, visitors, and participants. When Rich is covering the reception desk, we've had multiple visitors tell us how "warm and welcoming" he is—and that is exactly how we want to be known to the community. Thanks, Rich!

Event Volunteer: Dave Erickson

Dave has been a volunteer with NAMI Fox Valley since 2016, and helps every year by serving as the chef for our annual Spaghetti Dinners. This past year, he donated his talent for our Talent Show dinner as well. He is an Appleton East High School teacher and, regardless of his busy schedule, he is always very generous with his volunteer time. Dave is always fun to work with, knowledgeable, and ready with a smile. He also continues to impress event attendees with his delicious cooking! Thanks, Dave!

Facilitator/Mentor (Peer) Volunteer: Dawn Lepsch

Dawn has been involved with NAMI Fox Valley since 2014. She started facilitating New Hope support groups in 2015 and became a Peer-to-Peer mentor in March 2016. Dawn also completed her State Certified Peer Specialist training in 2018. Currently, Dawn presents NAMI 101 at Thedacare six times a year, shares her story with the NAMITalks Speakers Bureau, assists at resource fairs on NAMI FV's behalf, and co-facilitates two of NAMI FV's peer support groups. Dawn has, additionally, gone above and beyond to offer up her services for peer support groups or Peer-to-Peer when a substitute is needed. She is known to be a bubbly individual with a lot of spirit to lend to individuals in need of peer support. Thanks, Dawn!

Facilitator/Mentor (Family) Volunteer: Steve Hirby

Steve was instrumental in the creation of the NAMI Fox Valley's faith-based-support group several years ago. Steve realized that there was a need for mental health support in faith communities, and then completed NAMI Fox Valley facilitator training to ultimately aid in starting the new group. Steve also is active in the Mental Health Ministry Initiative (a collaboration program of NAMI Fox Valley and Samaritan Counseling Center). Steve is known as a gentle and empathic facilitator who practices active listening, all while being well-read and informed on mental health issues. Group participants often state how empowered Steve has made them feel. He also often goes the extra mile in talking with individuals on a one-on-one basis to discuss issues related to the mental health of their loved ones. Thanks, Steve!

NAMI Fox Valley is grateful for our 300+ active volunteers who help to carry out our mission throughout the community.