

NAMI North Central Florida
an affiliate of
NAMI and NAMI Florida
P.O. Box 90114
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For Your Information

2004 NAMI NCF Officers

Joan & Bruce StevensCo-Presidents
 Susan CaryVice President
 Lora BebeeSecretary
 Pat WarnockTreasurer

2004 NAMI NCF Committee Chairmen

Mental Illness Awareness CommitteeAl & Barbara Bluhm
 Support Groups CommitteeGloria Curry
 Telephone CommitteeDorothy Davenport
 Public Policy CommitteeSusan Cary
 Public RelationsOpen
 NewsletterDianne Walsh
 Liaison to Shands at VistaMarianne Debolt
 Liaison to FACT TeamBernice Best
 Liaison to Meridian Behavioral HealthcareChuck Debolt
 Liaison to NFESHLillian Cason

We need persons who are willing to work with the chairperson to help us achieve our mission. Please let us know if you are willing to work on any of the above committees or if you have suggestions for new committees.

NAMI North Central Florida Membership Application

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Email Address _____

Mail to Pat Warnock, 5424 SW 91st Terrace,
 Gainesville, FL 32608. Checks should be made
 payable to NAMI North Central Florida.

Membership (Voting)

___ Individual or Family (\$35)

Membership (Non-Voting)

___ Organizations (\$50 or more)



National Alliance on Mental Illnesses

NAMI

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA

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Disability Task Force Testimony

On April 27, a group of eleven NAMI N.C.F. affiliate members met and presented testimonies at the Governor's Consumer Task Force public hearing in Gainesville.. The full name of this partisan task force is The Governor's Working Group on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADAWG) Real Choice Partnership Project's Consumer Task Force. The purpose of the hearing was to hear community testimony, experiences, and suggestions in order to identify support needs, service needs and to eliminate barriers for persons with disabilities and long term illnesses. Predictably, various disability advocates also attended the meeting (impaired hearing, vision, etc). In order to put mental illnesses on the radar to get attention as a bona fide disability, NAMI

Co-presidents Bruce and Joan Stevens made the case that people with a mental illness make up the single largest disability group in our county (among survivors of a disease or disorder). NAMI members then told the hearing committee of their experiences with/without community resources for family members with a mental illness. We presented the Task Force with a prioritized "wish list" covering:

(1) housing issues; (2) need for a drop-in center; and (3) funding for community awareness anti-stigma programs. The hearing committee was open and receptive to our comments and requests, and the proceedings were transcribed by a stenographer. They responded to us by providing contact information and educating us on how to further seek our wish list items

June Meeting

Our next NAMI NCF meeting will be Monday, June 13th. Attorney Kevin Daly will be our speaker. He's a Gainesville attorney who specializes in wills and trusts, including special needs trusts, as well as Medicaid planning. He will speak about the special concerns of persons planning for the long-term care of disabled children and answer general questions as time permits.

We will meet at Shands at Vista Medical Park off of NW 39th Avenue at 7:15. The address is 4101 NW 89th Blvd. The receptionist will direct you to the correct meeting room.

via various government agencies. The hearing committee pointed out to us that Governor Bush's health care policy calls for individual communities to solve these problems ourselves using local resources and local talents.

In addition to our NAMI members, Markus Dietrich of Shands/Vista also attended the hearing.

Chromium Control of Atypical Depression and Sweet Cravings

Many medical studies have shown a relationship between certain types of depression, insulin resistance, and type 2 diabetes. One of the major depressive disorders, called "Atypical Depression", is characterized by a distinct combination of symptoms: intense carbohydrate cravings, mood swings, weight gain, interpersonal rejection sensitivity, and lethargy. Studies at Duke University have revealed that daily supplementation



with chromium picolinate reduced key symptoms of atypical depression. People with high levels of carbohydrate cravings experience a significant decrease in their carbohydrate cravings and reduction in depression in response to chromium picolinate. The study results showed that people with the highest levels of carbohydrate cravings had the most significant reduction in depressive symptoms, mood swings, fatigue and weight gain perception.

Chromium is an essential trace mineral needed by the body for normal functioning.

The estimated safe and adequate daily dietary intake of chromium for adults is 50 to 200 micrograms. Excessively high intake of chromium can interfere with iron metabolism, or cause liver or kidney damage. The Duke studies were based on chromium picolinate doses between 400 to 600 micrograms daily, with no apparent side effects seen. Chromium's role in increasing the body's ability to utilize insulin may be the link between carbohydrate cravings and atypical depression. It is thought

that supplementation with chromium, in the form of chromium picolinate, helps improve insulin insensitivity and therefore type 2 diabetes.

Chromium picolinate is a supplement commonly found in health food stores. It is not known whether chromium interferes with antipsychotic medications, or if it interacts with oral medications for diabetes. The above information is not intended to replace the advice of your healthcare professional.

...researched by Dr. Bruce Stevens

"Clubhouse" Drop-in Center Model is Presented at DCF Forum

On May 31, 2005, a one-day forum entitled "The Employment Path to Recovery" was held at the Hilton in Gainesville. This was sponsored by the Department of Children and Families Mental Health Program Office, Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, FACT, NAMI, and several other agencies. The theme of the forum was to inform consumers and community mental health providers in our area about possible ways to transform the recovery process in the mental health system of Florida. Several hundred people, including many consumers from our local Meridian and FACT programs, heard speakers describe the way in which immediate employment (not simply getting ready for employment) is an essential ingredient in recovery-based services. No longer is "recovery" an abstract word that applies to only a few select individuals in the mental health system. Working is the first step away from a life of poverty marred by inadequate food, housing, and medical care. A job, a decent place to live, and meaningful friendships are needed by everyone. It is the difference in meeting new friends and

identifying yourself by name and what you do rather than giving your name and diagnosis of a severe and persistent mental illnesses.

One particularly interesting workshop was presented by the originators of the Vincent House Clubhouse project in Pinellas Park, Florida. This is a certified "international center for clubhouse development" drop-in center that serves as a transitional employment center. The Vincent House project is currently the only one in Florida, although several more are set to open soon in Florida. There are 225 such centers in the US. The basic principles of the Clubhouse model are that they focus on wellness and recovery from mental illnesses, work of the clubhouse provides the core healing process, relationships build self esteem and confidence, members and staff work side by side, and members have a right to return as much as they wish. The Clubhouse was founded by Elliott and Dianne Steele two years ago, and they currently train members for different types of jobs within the Clubhouse. The skills members learn can be transferred into a real

work setting. The Vincent House then recruits employers in the community who are willing to offer entry-level positions to members of the Clubhouse for a period of six to nine months. During this time, the individual can determine if they like their jobs.

Such a Clubhouse is obviously needed in the Gainesville area. It may be possible to obtain start up funds from DCF. Launching and sustaining a Clubhouse will require dedicated volunteer advocates and family members. Our NAMI membership is an obvious source of both leadership and helpers. If anyone would like to initiate or work on such a project our area, please contact Bruce or Joan Stevens:

info@naminorthcentralflorida.org

