

LOCAL AFFILIATES FOUNDED BETWEEN 1966 - 1975

Before 1976, there were a few widely scattered family groups that eventually became leaders in the NAMI movement. From those affiliates that returned histories of their groups, the three earliest groups were all affiliated with the American Schizophrenia Association.

ALAMEDA COUNTY CHAPTER, ASA-AMI

In 1966, the Alameda County group started meeting in a private home in Oakland, CA. Six persons came to the first meeting, and as the group expanded it moved to larger quarters at the Oakland Children's Hospital. In 1980 the affiliate moved to the Sumitomo Bank in downtown Oakland. Meetings are held every other month on the fourth Wednesday. Alameda chapter now has a small office in the University Christian Church staffed by volunteers. There are 85 members and a mailing list of 430.

SCHIZOPHRENIA ASSOCIATION OF GREATER WASHINGTON-AMI

A year later, an ASA group was started at the Silver Spring, MD, home of Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Irving. The number of original members is believed to be 20. Today there is a mailing list of 2,300. On June 26, 1968, the Greater Washington group was incorporated under the laws of the state of Maryland. It became a division of the Huxley Institute for Biosocial Research, and later affiliated with NAMI. John Stegmaier, chair of the Board of Trustees, was present at the NAMI founding meeting in 1979 in Madison, WI. The affiliate maintains an office in Wheaton, MD.

RICHMOND AREA SCHIZOPHRENIA FOUNDATION-AMI

Twelve persons founded the Schizophrenia Foundation of Virginia on March 31, 1968, in Richmond. Mrs. Sam (Gene) Ferrell, Jr., has been president of SF-AMI from the beginning and other volunteers who played active roles are Cecil Ferguson, David and Lynn Hyde, and Jane Rossell. The affiliate has four public education meetings a year. SF-AMI's advocacy in Virginia Beach has resulted in more housing for the mentally ill and the beginning of Project Engage (support) groups.

ATLANTIC COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

In the early 1970s, this affiliate, formerly called the Mental Education and Development Group, was founded for families connected with the Children's Seashore House, Atlantic City, NJ. The group has a roster of approximately 30 members. Mary Lou Kaufman, R.N., has been leader and organizer and heads the new unit installed at the Mainland Division of the Atlantic City Medical Center. Except during the summer, the affiliate meets every other week.

FEDERATION OF ORGANIZATIONS FOR NEW YORK STATE MENTALLY DISABLED

This affiliate was founded during the winter of 1971 at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, W. 168th Street, New York City. Dr. Lawrence Kolb, then director of the institute, originated the idea of starting a parents group for the institute and also suggested the need for a federation of parents for all of the state psychiatric centers. Max Schneier undertook the work of establishing the federation by sending 200 notices to individuals and groups. At the organizational meeting, 150 persons showed interest and 30 groups expressed interest in joining. Max Schneier was elected president.

Founding groups still active are the Rockland Hospital Guild (Mr. and Mrs. Irving Berkowitz, Mr. and Mrs. Heitner, and Mr. and Mrs. Robbins); Friends of the Psychiatric Institute (Mr. and Mrs. Max Schneier, Mr. and Mrs. Lou Friedman, and Rear Admiral and Mrs. Ben Scott Custer). Groups that joined later include Concerned Citizens for Creedmoor (Jerry Rosenblitt, Mrs. Mary Karry, Mr. and Mrs. Mike Halpert, and Frank McCune); Concerned Citizens for Pilgrim State (Mike Kaplan, Nat Goldberg, Mrs. Pauline Altman, and Mrs. Clara Davis); Kings Park Psychiatric Center (Lenny Goldberg); Long Island Regional Council of Federation (Mrs. Alex Braile); Bronx State Psychiatric Center (Mrs. Blanche Sanchez and Mrs. Pauline Magnatti); and South Beach Psychiatric Center (Nat Goldberg).

After Mr. Schneier left for California some of the momentum evaporated, some hospitals were closed, and several family groups disbanded. The Federation can look back on its most dramatic hour: the march on Willowbrook Hospital. Max Schneier organized the march in which family members participated. Publicity ensuing from the incident disclosed the dreadful conditions, and a subsequent lawsuit resulted in a landmark decision for treatment of mentally retarded in state institutions. Another achievement of the Federation has been the success of the Foster Grandparent Program for

the Mentally Ill. Paid project director is Beverly Weil, recently named executive director of the Federation. Additionally, some of the members have established transitional living programs. Irving Berkowitz and Clara Davis were members of the NAMI Board of Directors.

AMI-MARIN

The family advocacy program in Marin County, California, began in August 1971 when Margaret Greene and Evelyn and Arnold Linane called a meeting of interested parents at the office of the local Mental Health Association, Dorothy Hughes, director. Frequent meetings followed to share problems and to find direction. In May 1972, the parents organized as Marin Parents for Mental Recovery with a goal of establishing a therapeutic residential treatment facility for mentally disturbed young adults "including 24-hour supervision, room and board, supervised medication, and a program of rehabilitation." Educational efforts and support for each other were additional purposes. Parents on the first board of directors were Arnold Linane (president), Evelyn Linane, June Boicourt, Margaret Greene, Erica Hansell, Virginia Loon (secretary), John Loon, Libby Robbins, and Cliff Sturgeon (treasurer).

At that time no licensed facility existed in the county for seriously disturbed young adults. One board and care home was operating, and Murray and Harriet Richards (one of the NAMI founders) operated a halfway house for persons sufficiently recovered to be out in programs. The parents group successfully petitioned the county supervisors for \$10,000, assessed themselves \$1,000, and raised \$50,000 in foundation grants by mid-1973. About two dozen families worked to lease a house named Marin Lodge, a residence on Mission Street in San Rafael for 12 persons. Both Linanes made sterling contributions to the group and the lodge before moving to Sonoma County, where they helped found an AMI group there in 1981. By 1975 Marin Parents for Mental Recovery became exclusively involved with residential and service projects, except for a hotline started by Phoebe True in 1978.

In August 1978, 16 families began meeting under leadership of Margaret Greene as a separate mutual support and advocacy group. They organized as Marin Parent Advocates in January 1979 and incorporated a year later. It became AMI-Marin in 1984 and in 1985 had 126 members with 31 associate and agency members. The presidents have been: Margaret Greene, 1978-82; Dee Laurich, 1982-84; and Nona Kaufmann, 1984-86. Housing has remained the chief goal of AMI-Marin as it was for MPMR, and the AMI affiliate has

played a key role in broadening the spectrum of housing for the chronically mentally ill. The number of client spaces has risen from 35 to 130. An AMI-Marine committee has been formed to push for quality board and care homes.

FRIENDS OF THE PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE

During the winter of 1971, between 30 and 40 parents founded Friends & Relatives of New York State Psychiatric Institute, shortened to its present name several years ago. Dr. Lawrence Kolb, director of the institute, provided the impetus for organizing by calling a meeting of relatives of patients to discuss possible action in the event of a strike by state workers. Max Schneier was elected president. Of the original group, only Mr. and Mrs. Lou Friedman and Rear Admiral and Mrs. Ben Scott Custer are still active. Others who contributed to the affiliate but are no longer members are Dr. and Mrs. Irving Abelow, Mr. and Mrs. Ira Flaggberg, Mr. and Mrs. Allen Glass, Mr. and Mrs. Ross, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Newnam, and Mrs. Max Schneier.

When the young adult ward at the institute was functioning, the affiliate helped provide transitional living arrangements for former inpatients. Members also contributed to the recreational and occupational therapy departments, provided tickets for sports events, concerts, and plays. Since the beginning, however, the greatest accomplishment of the group has been advocating for mental illness research funding. Friends of the Psychiatric Institute contributed \$500 for a Young Scientist Research Award at the 1985 State Educational Conference.

RECLAMATION INC.

The first NAMI patients group, Reclamation Inc., was chartered by the State of Texas May 7, 1974. Eight former mental patients organized it at the office of the Mental Health Association in San Antonio. Don Culwell, executive director of Reclamation, was elected to a three-year term on the NAMI Board of Directors at the 1986 meeting of the newly established Clients Council held during the Boston convention. Operating as a mini-Fountain House, Reclamation has 22 members at present. It publishes a quarterly newsletter.

AMI OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

The oldest prototype of present AMI affiliates is the California group, AMI of San Mateo County, formerly Parents

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of Adult Schizophrenics. It started with a postcard from Eve Oliphant sent to several families whose names she had received from the San Francisco Schizophrenia Association. Ten persons came to that first meeting in 1974; within a year the group had 115 members. Gradually the affiliate moved from support for each other into advocacy for better services. In 1975 a housing committee was formed and incorporated as Mateo Lodge. A year later, a house was purchased and the program was on its way. AMI-San Mateo organized a family support group at Namp State Hospital, and assisted in formation of family groups in ten other counties. Seven Bay Area County affiliates formed California Association, Families of Mentally Disabled, largely through the efforts of this group, as recounted in the narrative portion of the NAMI history.

Several members from AMI-San Mateo attended the NAMI founding meeting in Madison, with Eve Oliphant elected to the first board, and Tony Hoffman to the board at the Chicago convention in 1980. Eve Oliphant served as president of the affiliate from 1974 to 1980, when she was succeeded by Kay Lasine. Fran and Tony Hoffman were selected as legislative representatives to advocate in Sacramento for the California state AMI association. Fran had also served for almost nine years as editor of the local newsletter. In the history that she compiled on the tenth anniversary of its founding, she stated that the most important accomplishment of the affiliate has been "to come out of the closet." There are now two residential care homes, Mateo Lodge and Dexter House, and the affiliate sponsored the establishment of Eucalyptus House and Cornerstone.

This motherlode of the AMI movement has contributed statewide and nationally in many ways: writing articles for newspapers and magazines, showing the way for others in the art of lobbying, helping start other AMI groups, and providing leaders.

SCHIZOPHRENIA ASSOCIATION OF WEST SUBURBAN CHICAGO

This AMI affiliate is the oldest mental health self-help group for families in Illinois. Organized in April 1975, the affiliate began at Argonne National Laboratory as a group called Concerned Argonne Scientists met at luncheons to discuss a variety of topics. At these meetings people with mental illness in the family were drawn together and formed SAWSC in Downers Grove. The affiliate has monthly meetings featuring speakers, although two meetings a year are designated as "rap" sessions at which time members discuss personal issues. The monthly newsletter is sent to 220 members and organizations.

The group meets at the Downers Grove Public Library, with between 30-70 persons in attendance. About half of the members live in DuPage County and half in Cook and surrounding counties.

OASIS FELLOWSHIP INC.

In the spring of 1975, 12 persons met at the Ingham Community Mental Health Center in Lansing, Michigan, to found Oasis Fellowship. The affiliate purchased a halfway house for clients in Maslett that they named Oasis. After it was ready for occupancy, the group turned it over to the Mental Health Center. Support groups meet once a month and from time to time, dinner meetings have been held for clients, family members, and professionals. Members of Oasis helped found NAMI and the state group. In 1979, Oasis received one of the two state awards given by NIMH for its housing project.

PARENTS AMI OF SANTA CLARA

Marie Hibler was elected coordinator of this early AMI group at its first meeting on April 5, 1975. Twelve persons met with John Murphy, director of a student advocacy program for ex-patients living in the campus area of San Jose State University. The first board meeting was held on May 21, and 25 members attended the first business meeting on June 14, 1975. PAMI opened and staffed an office and started publishing a monthly newsletter. One of its main accomplishments has been encouragement to other prospective family groups, mainly through the efforts of Marie Hibler, who went around the country as a speaker and founder. In 1979 the organization received a special award at the Hospital & Community Psychiatric meeting in New Orleans, the only parent-consumer award out of 73 applications. PAMI participated in research to find a genetic marker for schizophrenia.

The group was instrumental in establishing Mission Valley House, a clubhouse for consumers of mental health services. Corrdinator Marie Hibler is one of the founders of NAMI and was on the opening panel of speakers.

AMI OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Originally named Pathways to Independence, this affiliate was founded in January 1975 at the Social Center in Falls Church, VA. Leaders were Ed Brazill, Ed Weary, Andy Iaderosa, and John Carlton. From the original 13 members,

the group has grown to 275 families, meeting regularly in seven local support groups. In addition to the founders, Russ Langelle and Bill Snavely have been instrumental in influencing the growth and progress of this important family group.

Several members participated in the founding of NAMI, and led in founding of the Virginia AMI in 1984. The affiliate participated in establishing Pathway Homes, Inc., a private nonprofit organization providing housing and helped found Merrifield Industries, Inc., a support network for employment. It was cohost of the 1982 NAMI convention in Washington. AMI-No. VA publishes an 8 to 10-page monthly newsletter considered one of the most informative in the NAMI movement. Other accomplishments include founding Planned Lifetime Assistance Network, with the Association for Retarded Citizens, and leadership in blocking proposed legislation that would impose additional obstacles in the Virginia commitment process.