



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Northern Nevada

Annual Report

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2025

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An Introduction from Our Executive Director

As we reflect on 2025, it is clear that this past year marked a defining season for NAMI Northern Nevada—one characterized by massive growth, intentional capacity building, and thoughtful diversification of our funding streams. This progress did not happen by chance. It was the result of deliberate peer-centered programming, deepened community connections, and an ongoing commitment to strengthening our internal team.

Throughout 2025, we invested in what matters most: people. Through the expansion of intentional peer programming, meaningful partnerships across our region, and focused team development, we built a stronger, more resilient organization—one better equipped to meet the evolving mental health needs of Northern Nevada.

We are proud to share that the momentum established in 2025 will carry forward into 2026 with sustainability at the forefront. This means the continuation of our PRSS Internship Program, our forensic jail-based peer support program, NAMIWalks Northern Nevada, and the Frame of Mind: Capturing Mental Health Photo Contest. These initiatives reflect our commitment to access, education, advocacy, and community healing—and we are confident in their continued impact.

Were there moments of uncertainty?

Absolutely. But within those moments, we found balance—between forward momentum and intentional pause. This balance was especially vital for our team, who show up each day with dedication, grit, and an unwavering belief in NAMI's mission. We recognize that to serve our community effectively, we must also care for ourselves and one another. The well-being of our team is not separate from our mission—it is foundational to it.

I am incredibly proud of the team at NAMI Northern Nevada and deeply grateful for the community partnerships and mentorships that have supported our professional growth, strengthened our problem-solving efforts, and guided our strategic planning. None of this work happens in isolation, and we are better because of the collaboration and trust we share with our partners.

As we close this chapter, we are already looking ahead—toward 2027 and beyond—with intention and confidence. Our focus now turns to long-term sustainability and ensuring that this affiliate continues to thrive without the constant concern of funding instability. With the foundation laid in 2025, we move forward prepared, grounded, and hopeful.



With gratitude,
Nichole Schembre, Executive Director, NAMI Northern Nevada

About NAMI Northern Nevada

The mission of **NAMI Northern Nevada (NAMI NNV)** is to advocate for a life of quality and dignity by providing education, resources, and emotional support to families and those affected by mental illness. We strive to end discrimination and stigma for all persons affected by these illnesses through broader education and collaboration with the whole community. Our support groups, staff, and volunteers are all trauma-informed and peer support specialists that are able to offer comprehensive and culturally competent care and resources to all demographics, identities, and age groups. NAMI is a nonprofit, grassroots, self-help, support and advocacy organization of individuals with mental illness and their families and friends. **NAMI Northern Nevada** conducts outreach, education, support, fundraising, and other activities. Our rapid population growth and severe shortage of mental health services, means that the need for NAMI's grassroots, peer-led programming is greater than ever, and only likely to grow.

Through our **NAMI Signature Programs**, we provide evidence-based support groups and education courses to those living with a mental health condition and their loved ones. In addition to providing our critically needed support groups and education courses, our approach will be two-fold, addressing the severe lack of mental health services within our healthcare and criminal justice systems, and offering community-based support to people with mental health conditions who struggle to access the professional help they need, whether that be due to shortage of providers, or to their own limited capacity. We also operate a "helpline" which individuals can call into to seek community services that are available as well as our support groups and education courses.



We are proud to serve Washoe County, our state's second most populated County in Nevada. Together, along with NAMI Western Nevada, NAMI Northeast Nevada, and NAMI Southern Nevada, our affiliate helps ensure that Nevadans all across our state have access to our NAMI Signature Programs.

A Letter From the President

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Community Partners,

As I reflect on the past year at NAMI Northern Nevada, I am filled with gratitude and pride for what we have accomplished together. This year has been one of growth, connection, and deepened impact across our region. Every step forward has been made possible because of the compassion and commitment of this community.

Whether you have been part of our organization since its earliest days or joined us more recently, thank you for standing with us in our mission to provide support, education, and advocacy for individuals and families affected by mental health conditions. Your belief in this work strengthens our ability to make a meaningful difference across Northern Nevada.

NAMI Northern Nevada began with a small group of determined advocates who refused to let stigma stand in the way of connection and care. Leaders like Sandy Stamates and Robin Reedy, along with early support from Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, laid the foundation for a community-driven organization rooted in peer support, education, and hope. Their vision continues to guide us today.

Since receiving our first funding in 2018, our growth has reflected both the need in our community and the dedication of those who serve it. We have expanded from four monthly support groups to fifteen, each offering a safe and welcoming space for individuals and families navigating mental health challenges. Our Criminal Justice Peer Program now connects individuals in crisis and within the justice system to compassionate, peer-based support, ensuring that people are met with understanding rather than judgment.

We are especially proud to have implemented the Youth Peer Support Specialist Internship Program, modeled after NAMI Western Nevada's nationally recognized initiative. This program empowers young people to lead, support one another, and help shape the future of mental health care in our schools and communities. Their leadership gives us tremendous hope for the next generation.

This year also brought our community together through two powerful events that raised awareness, built connection, and celebrated hope. Our NAMIWalks event at Reed High School united individuals, families, and partners in a visible demonstration that no one walks their mental health journey alone. Later in the year, our annual gala, Frame of Mind: Capturing Mental Health, offered an evening of reflection, storytelling, and shared commitment to strengthening mental health support in our region. Both events highlighted the strength and compassion that define Northern Nevada.

A Letter From the President

Our progress has been strengthened through collaboration. We are deeply grateful to NAMI Nevada and NAMI Western Nevada for their mentorship, partnership, and funding support. Their guidance has helped us grow from a grassroots team into an organization with five full-time staff members, six interns, and more than thirty-three dedicated volunteers. This growth reflects the power of working together toward a shared purpose.

At the heart of everything we do is the community of Washoe County. Every family member who attends a support group, every individual who shares their lived experience, and every volunteer who gives their time reminds us why this work matters. Their stories are a testament to resilience, courage, and hope.

Our board has grown alongside the organization, welcoming members who bring diverse perspectives, lived experience, and a deep commitment to mental health equity. As we look ahead, our focus remains on sustainability, expanding peer-led programming, and strengthening the partnerships that allow us to create lasting impact. For me personally, mental health has always been more than a cause, it is a calling. I have seen the difference that understanding can make in someone's life: the shift that happens when a person receives compassion instead of judgment, and support instead of silence. Those moments remind me why this mission is so important and why I am honored to serve NAMI Northern Nevada.

The future of our organization is filled with possibility. We are committed to expanding our reach, building new collaborations, and empowering emerging peer leaders. We will continue advocating for accessible, equitable mental health support and fostering conversations that reduce stigma and build connection.

Thank you to our sponsors, partners, volunteers, and supporters who make this work possible. Your generosity, time, and belief in our mission allow NAMI Northern Nevada to grow and serve more individuals and families each year.

Together, we are building hope, strengthening resilience, and creating a more compassionate community for all.

**Thank you for an incredible year,
Dr. Sarah Hartzell
Board President
NAMI Northern Nevada**



Our Board of Directors



Dr. Sarah Hartzel
Board President



James Gibson
Board Vice President



Jose Gomez
Board Secretary



Brian Crane
Board Member



April Lang-Barroga
Board Member



Ravyn Smith
Board Member

Our Staff



Nichole Schembre, RYT500, PRSS, PRSS-S, CHW-I, CEP
Executive Director



Amanda Carter, MSW, PRSS-I, PRSS-S
Program Manager



Ashley Lunt, PRSS, PRSS-S, CHW-I
Forensic Peer Program and Volunteer Coordinator

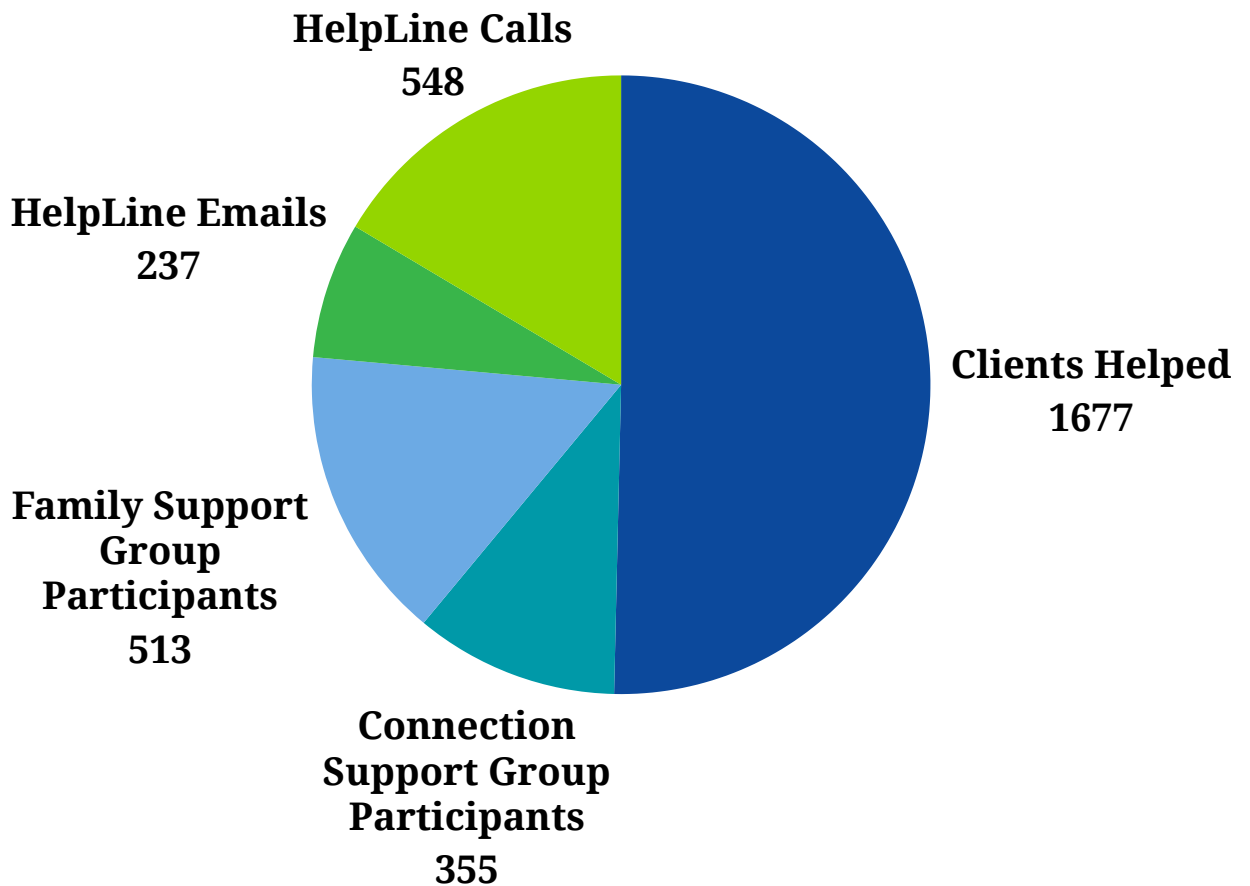


America Davis, CHW-I
Community Impact Specialist

Our Best Year Yet

The year of 2025 marked a period of remarkable growth and transformation for NAMI Northern Nevada. Building on the intentional reflection and groundwork laid in the previous year, the organization expanded its reach, strengthened its internal operations, and elevated the impact of its programs across Washoe County and throughout the state.

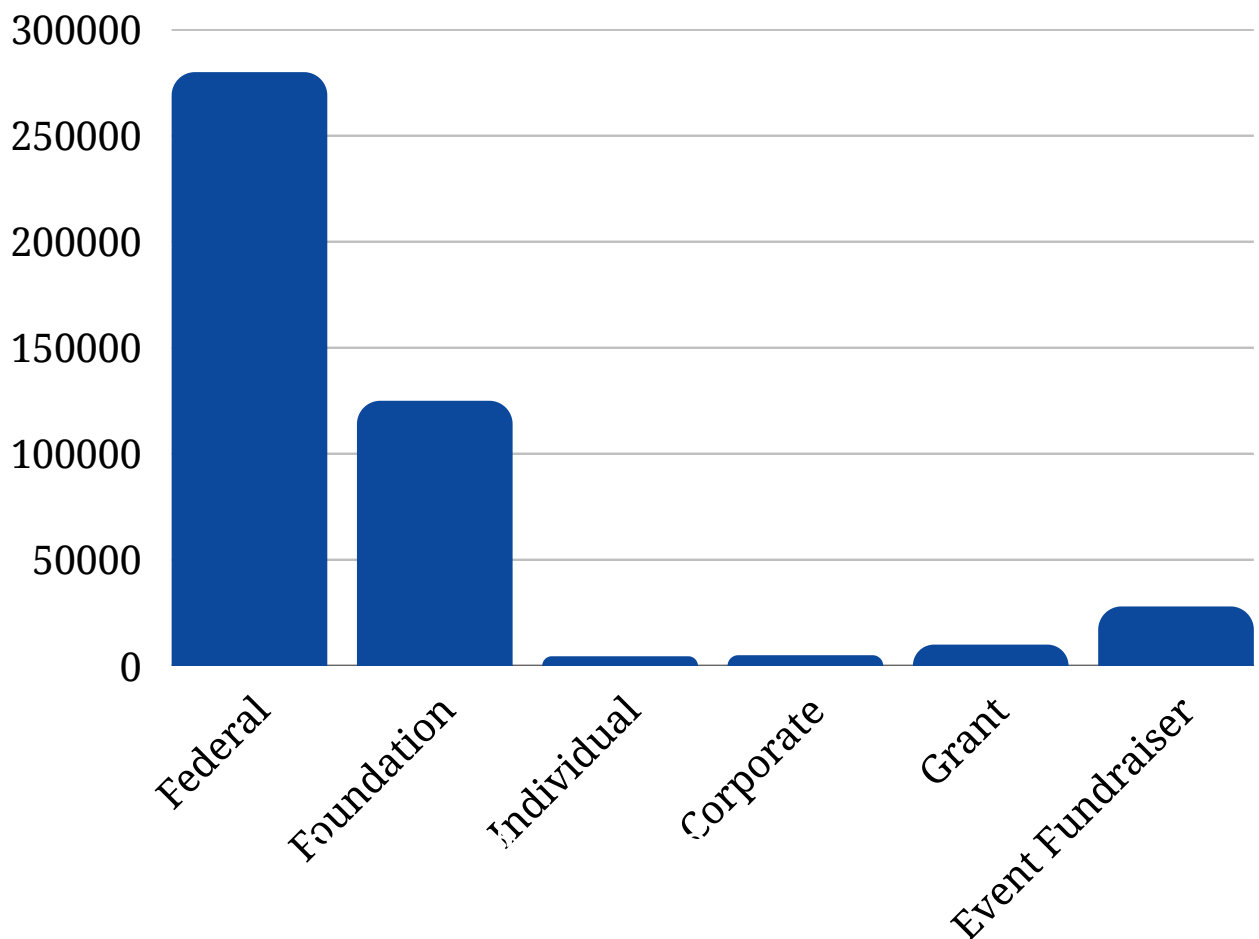
With a clear focus on community awareness and collaboration, NAMI Northern Nevada saw a substantial increase in engagement from individuals, family members, and community partners. This growth not only amplified the organization’s visibility, but also reinforced its role as a trusted leader in mental health advocacy and peer support. As the team continued to refine roles and align strengths, each member contributed to a more dynamic, responsive, and mission-driven organization—positioned to meet the evolving needs of the community with greater capacity and care.



Financials 2025

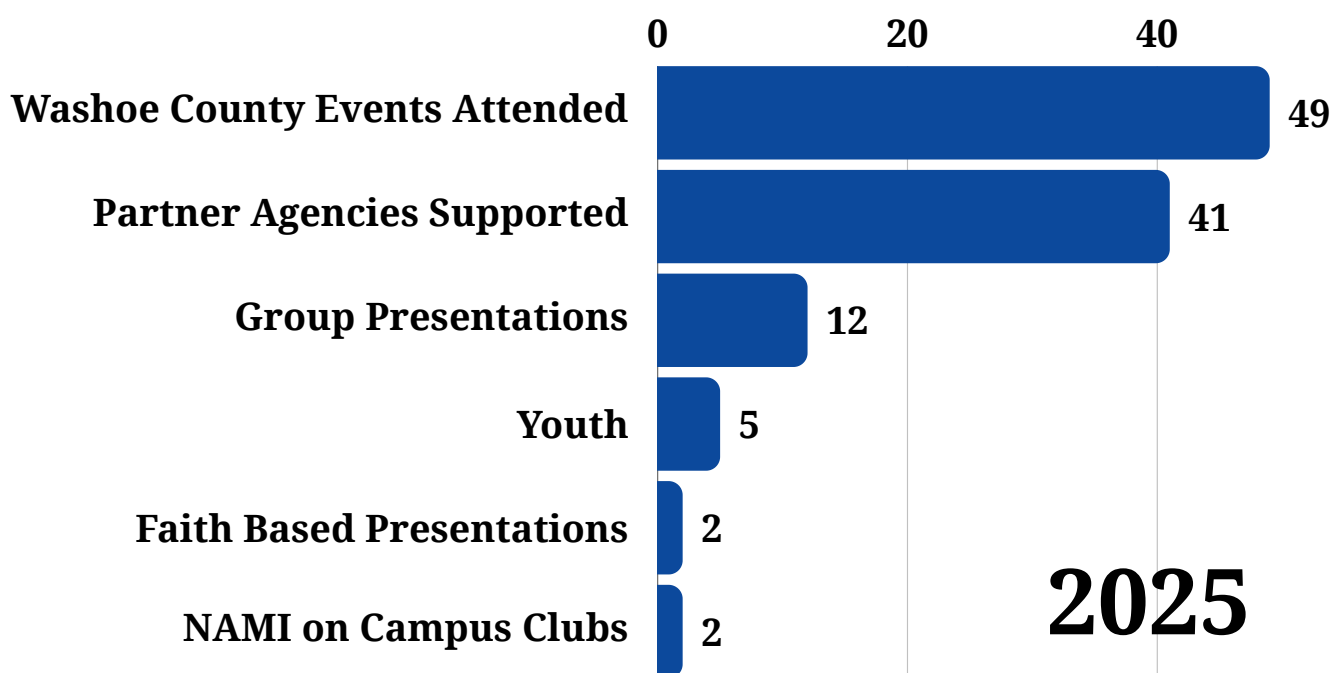
The year of 2025 marked a pivotal shift in how NAMI Northern Nevada approached sustainability and growth, with a strong emphasis on diversifying funding streams. Through expanded efforts in substance use awareness, peer support workforce development, and deepened collaboration across NAMI affiliates, the organization broadened both its impact and its base of support.

These strategic focus areas not only strengthened programming, but also opened new pathways for investment and partnership, positioning the organization for more resilient, long-term funding. While our first annual gala was not a significant revenue driver, it was warmly received by community partners and supporters alike—serving as a meaningful opportunity to build connection, increase visibility, and lay the groundwork for a stronger and more successful second year.



Community Impact

Our organization worked diligently to partner and support the work of various organizations, coalitions, and nonprofits in Washoe County. Throughout the year, we participated in **49 events**, which included resource fairs, cultural celebrations, and awareness events. Providing outreach at these events allows us to share information about our programming but most importantly, provide a safe space for attendees to seek resources for mental health. In 2025, NAMI Northern Nevada made over **10,800 touch-points at events**. Additionally, we hosted **12 community presentations** to service organizations, churches, and coalitions. These presentations served as an opportunity to connect with professionals around mental health.



Program Roundup



NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group is a free, peer-led support group for any adult who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition.

In 2025, NAMI Northern Nevada experienced a significant increase in demand for NAMI Connection, reflecting a growing need for accessible, community-based mental health support. As barriers to traditional services persist, the importance of no-cost, peer-led spaces became even more evident. In response, the organization expanded its capacity by increasing facilitator recruitment and training, at one point offering up to 14 support groups per month to meet the rising need.

This growth in access and availability was mirrored in participation. During the year, a total of 171 individuals attended NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups. Of those, 65 participants (38%) were first-time attendees, demonstrating continued outreach into the community, while 17 participants (10%) identified as veterans. NAMI Northern Nevada remains committed to ensuring that anyone seeking support can access these groups free of cost, in a safe and understanding environment.



Program Roundup



NAMI Family Support Group is a peer-led support group for any adult with a loved one who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition.

NAMI Family Support Group continues to have a meaningful and growing impact on the community. In 2025, participation increased significantly, with attendance reaching up to **40 participants per month** across both virtual and in-person offerings. This expansion allowed NAMI Northern Nevada to better meet families where they are, ensuring accessible and flexible support options.

Beyond attendance, the level of engagement within these groups has been especially notable. Many participants have expressed a strong desire to deepen their involvement with the organization—particularly through becoming trained Family Support Group facilitators. This growing interest reflects not only the value of the program, but also the powerful sense of connection and purpose it fosters among family members who are eager to support others navigating similar experiences.

Over the course of the year, there were a total of **385 participants, with 44 individuals (11%) attending for the first time and 17 participants (4%) identifying as veterans.** NAMI Northern Nevada remains committed to cultivating this engaged community and supporting participants in their journey from receiving support to becoming leaders within it.



Program Roundup



NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 8-session educational program for family, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions.

Continuing to prove as the organizations most sought after educational course for family members and caretakers, there were a **total of 42 participants enrolled into our NAMI Family-to-Family education course with 28 participants (60%)** who completed the course.

988 Initiative

NAMI Northern Nevada is proud to partner with NAMI Nevada, affiliates, and other behavioral health stakeholders to support the Nevada 988 Crisis Response Coalition. The Nevada 988 Crisis Response Coalition is a statewide network of people and organizations working to provide all Nevadans with 24/7/365 access to compassionate, high-quality behavioral health crisis care through the 988 Lifeline and an effective network of crisis response and support services.

Our organization is working hard to raise awareness about crisis services in our community and we look forward to expanding our role in the coalition in the coming year!



Program Roundup



Forensic Peer Support Program

In 2025, NAMI Northern Nevada strengthened its partnership with NAMI Western Nevada through funding provided by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to develop a jail-based peer support program focused on supporting individuals during incarceration and throughout reentry.

Throughout the year, NAMI Northern Nevada worked closely with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO), as well as the Reno and Sparks Mobile Outreach Safety Teams (MOST), to design and implement peer support pathways that extend beyond the jail setting. Together, these partnerships helped curate diversion-focused strategies aimed at keeping individuals out of the jail system whenever possible, while also strengthening continuity of care upon release. This integrated approach reflects a growing commitment across agencies to prioritize recovery, stability, and long-term community connection.

Peer Recovery Support Specialist Internship Program

In 2025, the program built on its early success as a statewide model by prioritizing retention, engagement, and meaningful connection for interns. Recognizing the need for deeper support among young adults with lived experience, the program expanded mentorship and reduced isolation through more intentional structure. Interns are now encouraged to design their own community offerings while gaining hands-on experience through 1:1 peer support, group facilitation, event planning, and opportunities aligned with their individual strengths and interests—resulting in stronger participation and overall program impact.

This evolution also fostered a greater sense of ownership and confidence among interns, strengthening their readiness to enter the peer support workforce. By creating flexible, interest-driven pathways, the program not only improved retention but also cultivated a more resilient, connected, and purpose-driven cohort.



An Eventful Year



NAMIWalks Northern Nevada 5K

NAMI Northern Nevada hosted NAMIWalks Northern Nevada on September 14, 2025 at the beautiful Reed High School campus in Sparks, Nevada. **Our affiliate was proud to work closely with our NAMIONcampus club at Reed High School to ensure that youth voices were at the forefront of this inspiring event.** We kicked the day off alongside community partners and volunteers with a meditation session hosted by our Executive Director Nichole Schembre.

Participants enjoyed an engaging warm up hosted by OrangeTheory Fitness Sparks, music from a local DJ, and treats from local food trucks. Over 25 organizations and businesses joined us for our Community Vendor Fair. **We had 250 walkers and runners join us as we raised awareness around mental health.** We cannot wait until next year!

1st Annual Frame of Mind: Capturing Mental Health

Our organization was proud to host our very first gala dinner - with a twist! **Our Frame of Mind: Capturing Mental Health** gala featured a photo contest. We asked our community to document the importance of mental health in their lives. **We had over 20 thoughtful and captivating submissions and awarded three winners a \$500 prize.**

We were honored to feature City of Sparks Councilmember Dian VanderWell as our keynote speaker. We also had the opportunity to celebrate our first Annual Recognition Awards. **We recognized the hard work of our Board Member of the Year (Dr. Sarah Hartzell), Volunteer of the Year (Sandy Stamates), and Advocate of the Year (Roni Green).**



Thank you to our 2025 Community Partners



Access to Healthcare Network /Nevada Care Connection/Medicare Assistance Program
 American Foundation of Suicide Prevention (AFSP)
 Anywhere Clinic
 Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows
 Connect Therapy
 CSSNV
 Damonte Ranch High School
 DCFS - Wraparound in Nevada
 Department of Health and Human Services - DWSS
 Department of Public and Behavioral Health
 DOULA CO-OP
 Eddy House
 Elements Counseling & Wellness, LLC
 Estelle J Kelsey Foundation
 First Help
 Gerry Shear
 Good Shepherd Endowment Grant
 Grounded Roots Therapy
 High Sierra AHEC
 Hope Means Nevada
 Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada
 James Cecilia Tse Ying Foundation
 Join Together Northern Nevada
 Mind and Body Counseling Associates
 Molina Healthcare
 NAMI Macy's Grant - Ending the Silence (Youth)
 NAMI Nevada
 NAMI Northeastern Nevada
 NAMI Southern Nevada
 NAMI Western Nevada
 Natural Grocers
 Nevada - Bureau of Behavioral Health Wellness and Prevention 988 Program and Office of Suicide Prevention
 Nevada Care Connection at Access to Healthcare Network
 Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities (NCED)
 Nevada Psychiatric Association
 Nevada Urban Indians
 Newton Care Collaborative
 Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services
 Northern NV Black Cultural Awareness Society
 Northern Nevada HOPES
 North Valleys High School
 Note-able Music Therapy Services
 Office of Suicide Prevention
 Our Center, Inc
 Raiders Foundation
 Reno DBSA
 Renown Health
 Reno High School
 Reno Housing Authority
 Reno Running Company
 Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
 Reno-Tahoe Young Professionals Network
 Safe Embra
 Saint Mary's Health Network
 Sandy Statmates Trust Fund
 Sara B Dancin
 Seattle Foundation
 Sierra Arts Foundation
 Sierra Health and Wellness Centers
 Sierra Sunrise Wellness Group
 Smart and Final Charitable Foundation
 Sparks National Night Out
 United Way of Northern Nevada - EAF Grant
 University of Nevada, Reno
 Urology Nevada
 The Children's Cabinet
 The M25 Initiative
 Truckee Meadows Community College
 Vitality Unlimited
 Wake Up Nevada (Narcan)
 Washoe County Sheriff's Office
 Wavedance Fund
 Willow Springs
 YogaPod Reno

Highlights from 2025



You are not alone.



*Our Executive Staff at
NAMIWalks Northern Nevada.*



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