

2020 NAMI-NYS Education Conference

***Building Momentum:***



**Coming Together to  
Create Our Future.**

**Agenda for Virtual Education Conference (as of 9/16)**

**Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**9:45am Opening Remarks: *The Importance of Coming Together to Support Each Other and Create Our Future***

Wendy Burch, Executive Director, NAMI-NYS

Ariel Coffman, President, NAMI-NYS

Lynda Regan, Conference Chair, NAMI-NYS

Ann Sullivan, MD, Commissioner, New York State Office of Mental Health

**10-11:30am *First Steps Towards Healing: Addressing and Overcoming the Grief and Trauma of COVID-19, the Economy and Racial Injustice***

This session is designed to help participants begin healing from the traumas of 2020. The session will begin with a discussion with NAMI's Associate Medical Director, Dr. Christine Crawford and Dr. Wilfred Farquharson, who co-chairs the NYS-OMH Multicultural Advisory Committee. The conversation will explore the impact of COVID-19 on our collective mental health, racial injustice, the consequences of mental health disparities and how NAMI can be part of the solution. Both also specialize in pediatric psychiatry and will discuss the psychological impact of 2020 on children as well as overcoming trauma. We will then be joined by Sydney Faith Rose, LMSW, CHHC, ERYT Founder of Relational Thriving, who will explain how to address the grief we are all experiencing from the loss of our sense of normalcy (and for some the loss of a loved one or a job) and detail how to overcome these stressors and start healing; she will conclude by leading us in a meditation exercise.

Christine Crawford, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Associate Director of Psychiatry Medical Student Education  
Boston University School of Medicine

Wilfred Farquharson, Ph.D, Director, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Outpatient Clinic & Psychologist,  
Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University

Sydney Faith Rose, LMSW, CHHC, ERYT, Founder of Relational Thriving

**11:30am-12:15pm-Break**-Visit Exhibitors-Networking Discussions.

**12:15-1:15pm Featured presentation: *Our Path Forward: Understanding and Prevailing Over Our Current Social Determinants of Mental Health***

Dr. Merrill Rotter, Special Assistant to the New York State Office of Mental Health Commissioner, will explain how the COVID-19 outbreak both exposed long-existing negative social determinants of mental health as well as created a series of new ones. He will detail how the New York State Office of Mental Health aims to address these and how NAMI is involved in these efforts.

Dr. Rotter is also an expert on reforming the criminal justice-mental illness interface and will discuss the role of law enforcement in social determinants of mental health. With increased discussions across the country on changing the role of police, Dr. Rotter will detail changes to police procedures that can improve the social determinants of mental health in many communities in New York State.

[Merrill Rotter, M.D., Special Assistant to the Commissioner, New York State Office of Mental Health](#)

**1:15-1:45pm-Break-Visit Exhibitors-Networking Discussions**

**1:45-2:45pm Breakout Sessions-*Education to Action Creating Our Future***

These breakout sessions are designed to empower participants so they can help shape a future where mental wellness initiatives and access to mental health services are available in every community in New York State.

Topics:

- ***Act and Vote for Mental Health:*** 2020 will be one of the most important elections of our lifetime. This session is designed to help advocates ensure that the need for mental health services and key NAMI concerns are included in local, state and federal elections. This session will also explain all the changes to voting in New York State including early voting and voting by mail. We will also provide updates on key issues in New York. Finally we will explain the appropriate ways NAMI affiliates as non-profit organizations can add their voices to the election process in a non-partisan way.

[Ariel Coffman, President, NAMI-NYS, Chair, NAMI-NYS Government Affairs Committee, NAMI-Smarts for Advocacy Trainer](#)

[Matthew Shapiro, Associate Director, Public Affairs, NAMI-NYS, NAMI-Smarts for Advocacy Trainer](#)

- ***How NAMI-NYS and Our Affiliates are Creating the Future:*** This session will detail how NAMI-NYS and our affiliates are helping create a future with increased mental wellness by engaging in innovative projects which are introducing mental health education and support to communities that typically experience mental health disparities. Programs highlighted include NAMI-NYS's collaboration with NAMI-NYC Metro and NAMI Queens/Nassau to bring NAMI Signature Programs to the Queensbridge Public Housing Complex, NAMI-NYC Metro's Black Minds Matter program and NAMI Syracuse's initiative to provide education and support to military families.

[Christina Bradley, NAMI NYC-Metro](#)

[Maggie Bristol, NAMI Syracuse](#)

[Ann Canastra, NAMI Syracuse](#)

Brittany Kennedy, Artest University  
John Johnson, NAMI Queens/Nassau  
Lashawn "Suga Ray" Marston, Queensbridge Community  
Pam Solomon, NAMI-NYC Metro

- ***Thinking Big and Taking Action:*** Often people have big ideas but struggle to put these ideas into action. In this session participants will learn from both people living with mental illness as well as family members to explain the steps they took putting their big ideas into action. Michelle Hammer will detail her work forming *Schizophrenic NYC*. NAMI-NYS board member Dr. Rob Laitman and his family will discuss how they formed Team Daniel Running for Recovery. Finally, NAMI-NYS board member Lucille Ettere and her husband Roy will explain their initiative to honor those lost to suicide as well as support their families through memorial gardens  
Lucille Ettere, Board Member, NAMI-NYS  
Roy Ettere, NAMI Putnam  
Michelle Hammer, Schizophrenic.NYC  
Ann Laitman, MD, NAMI Westchester, Co-founder Team Daniel Running for Recovery  
Daniel Laitman, NAMI Westchester, Co-founder Team Daniel Running for Recovery  
Rob Laitman, MD, Board member, NAMI-NYS, Co-founder Team Daniel Running for Recovery
- ***Using Multimedia to Increase Our Voice:*** One positive thing to come out of 2020 is that it has forced us to learn how to use different media outlets to educate and support one another. This session will explore different ways people are using multimedia platforms to increase their reach and expand awareness. 2020 NAMI-NYS Max Gabriel Veteran's Mental Health Award winner Dr Seth Kastle will detail the children's books he and his wife have written to explain PTSD to children. Filmmaker Bobby Chase we detail the short film, "Jacob" he made about his brother who was lost to suicide. Eric Basek will explain the books he is doing that tell the stories of veterans and law enforcement officers and their mental health. Artist Jacqueline Colello will discuss how art has helped her recovery as well as how it has been a way to raise awareness. Finally, we learn about the new public awareness campaign that our NAMI NYC-Metro affiliate has been involved in. Both films will be available for viewing in the exhibit area and Seth and Eric will also have their books available in the exhibit area.  
Eric Basek, Author  
Bobby Chase, New Evolution Media, Director, Jacob  
Jacqueline Colello, Colello Creations  
Ezra Hirwitz, Filmmaker  
Dr. Seth Kastle, Kastle Books  
Matt Kudish, Executive Director, NAMI NYC-Metro
- ***Casting a Wider Faithnet:*** Establishing relationships with faith-based institutions can have a tremendous impact in introducing NAMI programs to new communities. The session will detail how NAMI affiliates are partnering with faith-based institutions and the benefits of holding NAMI programming in places of worship.  
Rev. Marian Buckman  
Ceceile Mcintosh Green, Board member NAMI-NYS  
Rev.Wanda Hughes  
Ellen Ritz, Board member NAMI-NYS

2:45-4pm The exhibit area will remain open and we encourage you to visit and view our multimedia offerings.

7-8:15pm *Coming Together to Celebrate Resiliency and Hope-Honoring our 2020 Leaders of Mental Health Awareness Honorees and the Spirit NAMI-NYS Members*



This evening of inspiration will celebrate the resiliency of our 2020 Leaders of Mental Health Awareness honorees and NAMI-NYS members as well the hope generated by the unique ways they are telling their stories.

Interspersed with presenting Leaders of Mental Health Awareness Awards to and discussions with **Lily Cornell Silver**, host of Mind Wide Open, **AJ Mendez**, former WWE Women’s Champion, author and NAMI Ambassador and former NBA all-star, champion and 2004 Defensive Player of the year **Metta World Peace**, will be performances from some of the most talented members of the NAMI-NYS family, **Will Foley**, **Megan Moran**, **Caity Gallagher** and **Jocelyn Archer**. There will also be a reflection of hope from **Lashawn “Suga Ray” Marston**. The event will be emceed by award-winning comedian **Greg Aidala** and NAMI-NYS’s **Matthew Shapiro**. This will surely be a celebration you will not want to miss.

## **Saturday October 24th**

**9:30-10am-Annual Business Meeting**

**10-11am 2020 NAMI-NYS Excellence in Research Award Presentation**

NAMI-NYS is thrilled to present our 2020 Excellence in Research Award to Dr. Barbara Cornblatt, Dr. Cornblatt is a professor of psychiatry and molecular medicine at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell. For more than 20 years, she has focused her research on the causes and treatment of serious mental illness.

She also directs the Recognition and Prevention (RAP) program, which she founded in 1998, at Zucker Hillside Hospital. RAP is dedicated to treating early warning signs of mental illness in adolescents and young adults and is one of the longest running centers of its kind in North America. More than 500 young people have participated in both the research and treatment components of this program. Early treatment in the RAP Clinic has been consistently associated with a high rate of clinical improvement.

Dr. Cornblatt has authored or co-authored over 150 scientific articles and book chapters and has given many scientific talks nationally and internationally to a variety of prestigious scientific organizations, hospitals and consumer groups. She is the co-director of the International Prodromal Research Network, which sponsors international collaborations and prevention studies. She is also a member of the North American Prodrome Longitudinal Study (NAPLS) consortium, one of the largest and most successful prevention collaborations worldwide.

[Barbara A. Cornblatt, PhD, MBA, Director, Recognition and Prevention \(RAP\) Program Department of Psychiatry, Zucker Hillside Hospital](#)

[Moderated by Robert Laitman, MD, Research Chair, NAMI-NYS](#)

### **10-11am Young Adult Session 1: *Managing Our New Back to School Stress***

This session will explore how to address both the normal school anxieties as well as the added stressors generated by COVID-19 and the transition to virtual learning. NAMI-NYS board member Pooja Mehta will detail NAMI's *Back to School* initiative and NAMI-NYS Communication Specialist Cassandra Farrugia will detail the partnership between NAMI-NYS and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) to enhance mental health supports on their campus. This session will also introduce the NAMI-NYS Young Adult Advisory council.

### **11-11:15am Break-Visit Exhibitors-Networking**

### **11:15am-12:30pm *Partnering on Research***

Research has always been paramount to NAMI-NYS's mission and as we often say, "research is our hope for the future." This session will explore the crucial question that if research is such a vital conduit to our better future, than why is it not discussed in a more urgent way by most mental health advocates? In answering that question this session will debunk many common misconceptions about those who conduct research and myths about participating in clinical trials. We also ponder what the effect would be if the mental health movement fully incorporated the importance of research into their work and how NAMI-NYS and our affiliates can include research in our programs.

For the second part of the session we have assembled a group of the world's pre-eminent researchers to provide updates from the New York State Office of Mental Health's two world-class research facilities, the NYS Psychiatric Institute and Nathan Kline and from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation and the National Institute of Mental Health.

Our aim is that this session will inspire you to embrace the hope that research holds and how that *hope starts with you.*

[Jeffrey Borenstein, M.D. President and CEO, Brain & Behavior Research Foundation](#)

[Kate DeRiso, LMHC, Primary Clinician, OnTrack Stepdown](#)

[Dwight Dickinson, Ph.D., J.D., Head, Neuropsychology and Cognitive Studies. Clinical and Translational Neuroscience Branch, DIRP National Institute of Mental Health](#)

Donald Goff, MD, Director Nathan Kline Institute  
Luke Kramer, Executive Director, the STARR Coalition  
Jeffrey A. Lieberman, MD, Lawrence C. Kolb Professor and Chairman, Department of Psychiatry, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons; Director, New York State Psychiatric Institute; and Psychiatrist-in-Chief, Columbia University Medical Center of the New York-Presbyterian Hospital  
Matthew Shapiro, Associate Director, Public Affairs, NAMI-NYS

### **11:15am-12:15pm-Young Adult Session 2: *How to Curate a Healthy Social Media Feed***

Social media has always been a double-edged sword in that while it has positively kept people connected, it can also have many negative impacts on our mental health. The events of 2020 as well as the divisive political discourse that surround the 2020 elections are increasing the adverse effects of social media. This session will detail ways to root out the harmful influences and cultivate a healthy social media feed.

### **12:15-1:00pm-Visit Exhibitors-Networking**

#### **1-2pm-Workshop sessions**

1. Addressing Treatment Resistant Schizophrenia  
Tim B. Bigdeli, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Institute for Genomic Health SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University
2. Exploring the Overlap of Depression and Anxiety  
Lisa Prefontaine LMHC, Prefontaine Consultation and Training Services
3. Bipolar Disorder  
Speaker TBA
4. Co-Occurring Disorders  
Karl Shallowhorn, CASAC, President and Founder, Shallowhorn Consulting, LLC
5. Borderline Personality Disorder  
Paula Tusiani-Eng, LMSW, M.Div., Executive Director, Emotions Matter BPD
6. Young Adult 3– Addressing Anxiety (Turning Negative “What Ifs” to Positives).  
For many uncertainties can be a major cause of anxiety. Whether it is worrying about taking tests or contemplating your future, it is easy to be engulfed in negative ideas about these uncertainties. The events of 2020 have exacerbated these feelings for many. This session will guide participants in how to reframe the perspective of negative “what ifs” into positive “what ifs.”

### **2-2:30pm Break-Visit Exhibitors-Networking**

#### **2:30-4pm Workshops Sessions on Increasing Mental Wellness**

1. *Expanding Mental Wellness in the LGBTQI Community*

This session will discuss projects and resources designed to expand mental wellness in the LGBTQI community. We will also look at specific initiatives aimed to help people of color, youth and transsexuals.

[Dr. Shelly L. Bartow, Executive Director, Delaware Opportunities Inc.](#)

[Antoine B. Craigwell, President & CEO DBG, Inc.](#)

[Sarah R. Young, PhD, LMSW Assistant Professor and BSW Program Director Binghamton University Binghamton, New York](#)

2. *Zero Suicide: Recognizing and Addressing Warning signs of Suicide During COVID and Social Isolation*

Preventing suicide is always a paramount concern for NAMI-NYS, and we all play a role in our goal of Zero Suicide. The events of 2020 and social isolation have called on us to be more vigilant in recognizing potential warning signs of suicidal thoughts among our friends and loved ones. This session will identify specific warning signs in three age groups; children and adolescents, adults and seniors. We will also discuss the appropriate steps to take if you perceive evidence of suicidality.

[Pat Breux, RN, Director of School and Youth Initiatives Suicide Prevention Center of New York \(SPC-NY\)](#)

[Lisa Furst, LMSW, MPH, Assistant Vice President, Center for Policy, Advocacy and Education](#)

[Garra Lloyd-Lester, Director, NYS Suicide Prevention Community & Coalition Initiatives, Suicide Prevention Center New York \(SPC-NY\)](#)

3. *Using Communication to Cut Through Cultural Divides and Address Mental Health Disparities*

Members of the NAMI-NYS family who represent various multicultural communities will engage in a conversation to explain how they have used communication to cut through cultural divides around mental health issues and expand mental wellness and mental health literacy in communities who traditionally have not embraced the discussion of mental health issues.

[Phillip Williams-Cooke, CRPA-P, NYCPS-P, Peer Specialist, Fountain House](#)

[Ceceile McIntosh Green, Chair, NAMI-NYS Multicultural Committee](#)

[John Johnson, NAMI Queens/Nassau, Recipient of the 2020 NAMI-NYS Multicultural Award](#)

[More panelist TBA](#)

4. *Young Adult 4-Act and Vote for Mental Health*

Young adult voices are critically needed both in advocating for mental health services during these challenging times as well in the upcoming 2020 elections. This session will provide you with the tools to interject your voice into the important discussions shaping public policy and the elections, as well as how to expand mental wellness in your community. We will also discuss the various voting options, including absentee and early-voting.