

NAMI News

Winter 2026

Letter From The Executive Director

To our community,

2025 was a powerful year of connection, action, and impact. Together, we hosted our second annual Impact Summit, welcomed more than 1,500 walkers to the Boston Common for NAMIWalks, and reached our Annual Appeal fundraising goal. With your voices and advocacy, critical mental health programs were restored in the State FY26 budget, and we sharpened our focus around five key advocacy priorities. We delivered more than 300 educational presentations reaching over 6,000 people, launched four new NAMI on Campus chapters, connected with thousands through the Compass Helpline, and expanded our support and education programs for individuals living with mental health conditions and their families. In a time that feels increasingly uncertain, this community gives me tremendous hope—your compassion, resilience, and commitment are constant reminders of the goodness in the world and of what is possible when we stand together. As we enter 2026, I am deeply grateful and excited to continue this work through partnership, programming, and advocacy.

Warmly,



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "C. T. L." followed by a long, flowing line.

Eliza T. Williamson

Executive Director
NAMI Massachusetts

Program Pulse

NAMI Family-to-Family

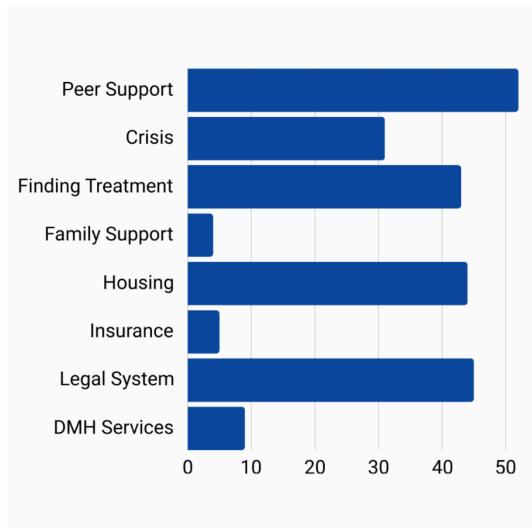
NAMI Family-to-Family is NAMI's flagship education program for family members of people diagnosed with mental health conditions. In this free, 8-week class, family caretakers are equipped with information about available resources, new listening and communication techniques, and other skills related to coping, problem solving, self-care, handling crisis and relapse, and more.

For our program leaders, Family-to-Family is about more than just skill-building. Teresa Cardosi, who leads an ongoing NAMI Cambridge Middlesex group, shared that “most important is the bond with the other class members. It is a relief to be heard, understood, and connected with others without judgment.” Maureen Donovan, another program leader, echoes that feeling: “I was so happy... to meet others like myself who were desperate and struggling about how to help their loved one... I thought I was the only one.”

To join one of our upcoming classes or start one in your Affiliate, visit our website here:

[Join Family-to-Family](#)

Compass Highlights



The Compass Helpline had 1039 interactions between October and December. The graph depicts the distribution of topics that were discussed during these interactions. One additional trend was a high volume of calls and emails from people seeking resources to meet basic needs, especially food-related resources.

Policy Corner

Our Legislative Priorities: Where Are They Now?

The PAC team has been busy advocating for our 2025-26 legislative priorities! Click on the link below to see where our priority bills are in the legislative process:

[Legislative Priorities Chart](#)

NAMI Mass Continues Bridgewater State Hospital Advocacy

On October 14th, 2025, Executive Director Eliza T. Williamson testified in front of two Joint Committees in support of bills that would transfer oversight of Bridgewater State Hospital from the Department of Correction to the Department of Mental Health. NAMI Mass also expressed our strong support for these bills in written testimony submitted to both committees. NAMI Mass staff members Sophia and Josh also joined Eliza on a tour of the facility in November as part of the Bridgewater State Coalition, getting a firsthand look at the facility for the first time. We are excited that each bill was reported favorably out of its committee, and look forward to continuing our advocacy in the new year alongside our partner organizations and community!

DMH Freezes Funding for Rental Subsidy Program

Funding for DMH's Rental Subsidy Program (RSP), a rental voucher program for DMH clients, has been frozen. Under the RSP, individuals receiving a subsidy pay 30% of their adjusted income towards rent, while also receiving services from community providers. This combination of affordable housing and supportive services has been shown to prevent hospitalization and homelessness, save money, and promote recovery.

In July 2025, DMH announced a freeze on new RSP leases, meaning that no additional units will become available to those who need them. DMH also requested that as existing RSP units are vacated, those units are removed from the RSP program.

Along with our community partners, we are advocating for the restoration of funding to the DMH RSP, as well as additional funding to meet the increasing need for supportive, affordable housing.

From The Development Desk

NAMI Do-It-Your-Way Launches

NAMI Mass is officially part of NAMI Do-It-Your-Way, a NAMI National initiative that allows people to fundraise creatively for NAMI Mass. With NAMI Do-It-Your-Way, any idea can be a fundraiser: a bake sale, a memorial for a loved one, an athletic event, or anything else you can imagine. Thank you to Network Building + Consulting for kicking off this initiative with your campaign! For more details about how to get started on your own fundraiser, take a look at the webpage linked below or email Emily Trautwein at etrautwein@namimass.org.

[NAMI Do-It-Your-Way](#)

NAMI Mass Receives Community Foundation for MetroWest Grant

In December, we received word that NAMI Mass received a \$5,000 grant from the Community Foundation for MetroWest to provide general operating support for our work in the MetroWest region. Since 1995, The Community Foundation for MetroWest has improved the quality of life in 30+ MetroWest communities by providing financial and educational resources to local nonprofit organizations, sharing essential data about the region to inform decisions, and partnering with donors to help guide and align their giving with the areas of greatest need in the community. We are so grateful for their support!

NAMIWalks Massachusetts Is Top 10

We received word that the 2025 NAMIWalks Massachusetts kept its spot in the top 10 events in the country (out of more than 200 Walks!) Thank you to everyone who walked!



From Our Partners

PLAN of MA & RI

Each new year brings new resolutions and the chance to make meaningful changes. The new year is the perfect opportunity to review your financial goals, including establishing the right plans to provide security for your loved ones with different abilities. If it's been a while since you last made your plan, or if it's been on your to-do list for too long, PLAN of MA & RI is here to help guide you through the process and help you to start 2026 off on the right path...

Contact PLAN to discuss your unique situation and register for their February webinar below:

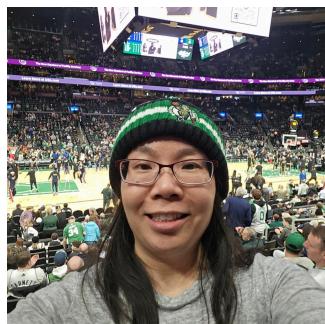
[Schedule A Consultation](#)

[Webinar Registration](#)

Across The Commonwealth



We loved seeing so many members of our community at the celebration of Executive Director Eliza T. Williamson's 10-year anniversary of working at NAMI Mass!



Thanks to our amazing community who answered the call and helped us reach our campaign goal of \$250,000. Congratulations to Wendy, who won the giveaway to attend the Celtics Game!



Our Native American Heritage Spotlight series highlighted Indigenous advocates and practitioners who have made outstanding contributions in the mental health space.



Eliza traveled to Washington, D.C. in December for NAMI's Executive Directors' Leadership Exchange Hill Day, where she met with MA



The 10th annual "Stand Up to Stigma" Scarecrow Contest raised money for NAMI Central Middlesex. The Callagy Family's "Tin



NAMI Mass became a member of the Massachusetts Coalition For Suicide Prevention (MCSP), which strives to prevent suicide through statewide

lawmakers to advocate for mental health legislation.

Man" was voted best scarecrow by the public!

collaboration and advocacy.

Looking Forward

NAMIWalks Massachusetts

Save the date for NAMIWalks 2026: Saturday, May 16th from 9am-1pm at the Boston Common. More information to follow on our website!

NAMI Mass Impact Summit

Save the date for NAMI Mass' Impact Summit: Friday, March 20th from 10am-12pm in Waltham. More details to come!

Advocacy Days

NAMI Mass will be hosting our annual Advocacy Days from Tuesday, April 7th to Thursday, April 9th. During Advocacy Days, NAMI Mass members and supporters learn about advocacy, hear from Massachusetts leaders, and tell our legislators what we care about most. Save the dates to join us in meeting with your state legislators and advocating for essential mental health legislation.

NEXTGEN Youth Summit

The first NAMI Mass NEXTGEN Conference will be held on Saturday, March 28th in Cambridge. The conference is being planned and led by NAMI Mass' NEXTGEN Youth Advisory Council to unite youth mental health advocates. The conference will cover various topics related to the power of story telling and youth voice, including a keynote, breakout sessions, and networking. More details will be available soon!

Exploring New Trends Webinar Series

NAMI Mass is hosting a webinar series designed for families of people with mental health conditions. The sessions will blend personal stories, research insights, and practical tools to help family members support their loved ones. Register here:

[Webinar Series Registration](#)

Division of Insurance Information Sessions

The Division of Insurance is hosting information sessions on a variety of behavioral health-related topics, including behavioral health intermediate care, behavioral health for children and adolescents, and provider manager care processes. Sign up at the link below:

[DOI Information Sessions](#)



Upcoming Celebrations

Follow NAMI Mass on socials to keep up with our spotlight features for Black History Month in February and Women's History Month in March!

More NAMI News

[NAMI National Release Standards Of Excellence Second Draft](#)

After receiving feedback from across the country, NAMI National released a second draft of their proposed Standards of Excellence on December 22nd. Here are some key changes from the new draft:

- The requirement for a full-time executive director to be an incorporated Affiliate has been adjusted: a paid, part-time ED now fulfills the requirement. Additionally, current Model A affiliates that are small or rural, serve underrepresented communities, or function effectively at the local level with modest resources and community-based leadership can apply for exemption from the ED requirement altogether.
- The objectives and standards that must be met are more clearly defined.
- Clarification around the technical assistance role of State Organizations in supporting Affiliates has been provided.

The final draft of the Standards will be approved on January 28th, and we will share more information at that time.

NAMI Mass Welcomes New Board Members

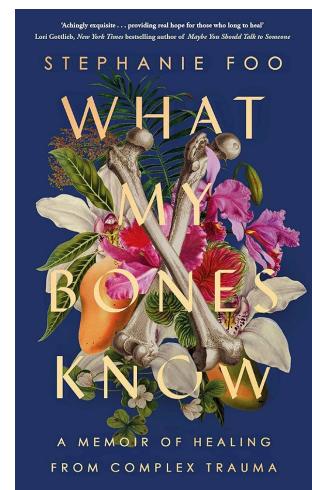
In November, we officially welcomed 5 newly elected Board members: Dayna Altman, Ingrid Lederman, Jack Ross, Ana Valente, and Marie Yang. Additionally, Amy "Tee" Trahan was elected as Board President! Pictured here is the Board after their first meeting:



Staff Picks

What My Bones Know by Stephanie Foo

Stephanie Foo's 2022 memoir on living with complex post-traumatic stress disorder (C-PTSD) tells the story of the author's lifelong journey through understanding and healing from childhood abuse and trauma. An acclaimed journalist, Foo weaves research into parts of her personal narrative and reflects on how trauma shaped her life. Read to learn more about themes including intergenerational trauma, immigrant mental health, C-PTSD, self-discovery, the process of finding appropriate supports, and more.



Did You Know?



Open AI Says Hundreds of Thousands of ChatGPT Users May Show Signs of Manic or Psychotic Crisis Every Week

October 27, 2025

[Article Link](#)

Trump administration rolls back \$2 billion mental health, addiction grant cuts

January 14, 2026

[Article Link](#)



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