

NAMI Illinois

2022 Nomination of Hugh Brady

Rona and Ken Purdy Award for Distinguished Service

This award honors an individual or organization who has raised public awareness, reduced stigma and advanced our mission to build better lives for people with mental illness and their families.

The Board of NAMI Illinois enthusiastically recommends Hugh Brady for this NAMI Award based upon his significant work and results in Illinois, but also in his willingness to share ideas and mentor others as they proceed with solving similar problems.

Background

Hugh Brady lives with his wife Renee' in Inverness, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago Illinois. He has been involved with NAMI in multiple ways for sixteen years. He has a family member living with schizophrenia. He helped found the affiliate NAMI Barrington Area in 2006, was president for three years and has remained on the board of directors ever since. In 2010 he joined the board of directors of NAMI Illinois, and has served as board president for five years. His board membership at NAMI Illinois continues – he served one year as an ex-officio member due to term limits, but was re-elected as soon as he was eligible. As described below he is a key member of many mental-health-related organizations. His career was spent teaching history and civics, a great foundation for the work he has done since retiring. He has a collegial style – not seeking personal recognition, but focusing everyone on the cause-at-hand and ensuring progress is made. His use of the term “NAMIans” when referring to his colleagues on a mission is his brand.

Public Awareness, Reduced Stigma and Building Better Lives

Hugh has a system perspective of what is needed and steps in where there are shortcomings. The list is long where he saw a need for change. His strength is in articulating issues needing attention, interesting others in joining him to do something about it, and mentoring those carrying through on the initiative. He started locally, but then found interest in his ideas state-wide, and is now actively working with NAMI National to transfer knowledge to others so they can solve similar problems in their State.

To provide some feeling for his impact, we are giving examples of his work in four areas:

- Advocacy
- Housing
- Criminal Justice
- NAMI State and Local Affiliate Role Evolution

Following is the first example – “Advocacy”.

Example 1: Advocacy

He recognized the power of legislation in improving the treatment and outcomes for those living with a mental illness. Everything from funding treatment capabilities, Medicaid and other insurance rules and obligations, changing old legislation passed at a time of high stigma, all are examples of his focus. He chairs the NAMI Illinois Legislative Committee, is active with the Mental Health and substance Abuse Advocates (a group) and the Mental Health Summit (a statewide organization that tracks all Illinois

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House and Senate mental health bills and provides prioritization and education to legislators regarding these bills). Through this activity he is well known and respected throughout the legislative process, including with the Governor's staff. This allows NAMI to have access and participation in the process, allowing us to make sure legislators or the Governor's staff are aware of the need for action. He has organized a process where when key legislative committee meetings are scheduled, NAMI affiliates in the state in coordinated fashion all each "slip" NAMI's interest in a bill under consideration and whether we are proponents or not – this has been enormously important since the legislators know NAMI looks out for the families and the persons living with a mental illness. NAMI, Hugh in particular, has been asked by the legislators to help mediate when various other parties disagree, and the disagreement is holding up progress. The list of bills passed during Hugh's involvement is truly remarkable: here are five:

1. Establishment of a Mental Health Executive reporting to the Governor, overseeing all of the various State departments and activities, and empowered to close gaps, resolve conflicts and set priorities.
2. A model law requiring insurance companies and providers to follow medical established treatment guidelines.
3. Improvements in parity legislation to the point where Illinois' parity laws are among the strongest in the nation.
4. Improvements in mental health services at Illinois' public colleges and universities.
5. A statewide pilot program to provide supportive housing coupled with wraparound services for the heaviest users of mental health and substance abuse services.

Example 2: Housing

The need for persons living with a mental illness to live independently with the right support systems is critical for both the family and the person living with a mental illness. Twelve years ago Hugh and a few others who saw the need created the North/Northwest Suburban Task Force on Supportive housing for individuals living with a mental illness. Stigma was holding up development of this housing. They created a 501c3 non-profit made up of representatives from several area NAMI local affiliates (the NAMLIans) and work with local developers to create permanent supportive housing apartment buildings for people living with mental illnesses and other disabilities. So far they have been the catalyst behind the creation of four completed Permanent Supportive Housing apartment buildings, containing 147 apartments, and are working on two more. The process involves significant community awareness, education on items causing stigma, and in one situation required prevailing in a lawsuit against a city government to be able to proceed. The model of this Housing Task Force has been shared with others tackling the same issue. Hugh has presented the Housing Task Force approach at several NAMI Conventions.

Hugh is on the Board of the Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County, the HUD mandated continuum of care for suburban Cook County for the past 8 years, and serves on the Governance and Advocacy Committees.

Example 3: Criminal Justice

Hugh is on the Board of the Illinois Association of Problem-Solving Courts, an umbrella group of people from specialty courts – mental health courts, drug courts, etc. He is the unofficial NAMI representative. The other people on the Board are connected with the specialty courts, probation officers, judges, court clerks & administrators, public defenders, prosecutors, police officers, etc. The group has an annual

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state-wide conference, and Hugh has done breakout sessions on mental-health-related matters several times. Hugh heads up legislative activities for this group.

Example 4: NAMI State and Local Affiliate Role Evolution

He saw the power potential of NAMI to create broad awareness from the perspective of families and persons living with a mental illness. When he first became involved with NAMI, the focus of the local affiliate was primarily that of offering Family to Family and Support Groups. Over time he realized that much more was possible if NAMI got more involved in the power structure that decided on what resources and services would be available to those living with a mental illness. As we move forward with national programs such as *988, it is clear that attention to work force capacity is needed, that there is a need for tracking those in the system to make sure they don't get off the track and fall into an abyss. You will find Hugh at the center of these issues. Local affiliates are being educated and involved to participate in this broader NAMI mission, and you often find Hugh behind the scenes and directly pushing this agenda forward. Hugh is also part of the Interfaith Mental Health Coalition, where he represents what NAMI can offer and helps bring mental health knowledge into the group. At the same time he runs the NAMI Illinois Annual Appeal, writes three columns a month for the Barrington affiliate newsletter (circ. 1,600), and is a frequent speaker at Family-to-Family class 11 around the area.

Nomination

NAMI Illinois' Board of Directors enthusiastically recommends Hugh Brady for the honor of the receiving the **2022 Rona and Ken Purdy Award for Distinguished Service.**



Each year at the NAMI National Convention, we honor individuals and organizations for their outstanding work in furthering the goals of our movement. Included below are our awards winners.

The **Rona and Ken Purdy Award to End Discrimination** recognizes the sustained contributions of an individual or organization to raise public awareness, reduce stigma and advance our mission to build better lives for people with mental illness and their families.

2021	D. Brian Hufford, J.D.
2020	Joshua A. Gordon, M.D., Ph.D.
2020	Linda Brady, Ph.D.
2019	Taraji P. Henson
2018	Sue Abderholden
2017	Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority
2016	Shannon Jaccard
2015	NAMI New York City Metro
2014	Wil Wheaton
2013	The Vancouver Canucks of the National Hockey League (NHL)
2012	Ron Barber
2011	Doris Buffet
2010	Glenn Close
2009	Nathaniel Ayers
2008	Jane Pauley
2007	Jonathan Charles Alder
2006	The Honorable Richard Cody
2005	Jamie Blyth
2004	Jean Singleton Liechty
2003	Laura Lawless
2002	Sally Moorman
2001	Carrie Fisher
2000	Ken Steele