

**2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

BRIDGING THE





**NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore  
improves the lives of individuals  
living with mental health conditions,  
their families, and communities through  
education, support, and advocacy.**

**We envision a world where  
all people affected by mental illness  
live healthy, fulfilling lives  
supported by a community that cares.**





## BRIDGING THE GAP

**This is how it began:** Frances Lentz began to notice the signs of mental illness in her youngest son when he turned 20 years old. Despite her training as a social worker, she felt helpless and unsure of where to turn for help. She found there was little support for loved ones who wanted to effectively advocate for their family members. So, she took it upon herself to make connections. To gather together families all across our community. They shared their fears and their hopes and started building a foundation to support them and carry them from one step to the next. They grew – outgrowing kitchen tables and filling up church basements—and then in 1983, the group learned of AMI – the Alliance for the Mentally Ill, which later became the NAMI we know today. They recognized their own story in this emerging national organization and came together to create the NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore affiliate.

This year marks forty years of providing mental health support, education and advocacy to people living with mental health conditions and the people who love them. The extraordinary volunteers and dedicated staff at NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore delivered a record 18,300 touchpoints this year. We are incredibly proud of that number, but we're even more proud of the way we got there.

**We got there by getting out there.  
We came to you. We listened. We advocated.**

We joined committees and led groups that helped to identify the cracks in Baltimore's mental health landscape and then we created a plan that worked to bridge those gaps. We needed to focus on our youth, on our underserved and under-resourced neighborhoods, on eliminating financial barriers and doing everything we can to connect our friends, family and neighbors to the resources that exist in all the pockets of our community. So that's what we did.

Because at the end of the day, it boils down to this: we believe in our work and our ability to create change in our community. We believe in you and the power of your story. With your support and your voice we'll continue to eradicate stigma and break down barriers. So if you're a person who needs to take that first wobbly step onto the bridge, we are here to hold it steady. The other side isn't always as far as you may think.



**KERRY GRAVES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



**In fiscal year 2023, NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore provided 18,300 touchpoints to community members affected by mental health conditions.**

**The average delay between onset of mental illness symptoms and treatment is 11 years.**

**The #1 barrier to accessing care is stigma.**

**Many people experience more than one mental illness at any given time**



**An estimated 26% of Americans ages 18 and older—about 1 in 4 adults suffers from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year.**



## THROUGH REPRESENTATION

If you've called our HelpLine, attended a support group, joined a class, stepped up to advocate, popped into our office, or come across NAMI in your neighborhood, then you've been lucky enough to come face to face with NAMI Metro's most valuable resource: our volunteers.

We're proud to have a network of volunteers with unique backgrounds and diverse ideas. Forty six percent identify as Black, 44% Caucasian, 4% Asian, and 2% Latinx. One hundred and ninety five volunteers come from all over Baltimore City and County. Representation matters and at NAMI Metro Baltimore we understand the importance of feeling seen. Our volunteer base mirrors the community we serve—helping to eliminate barriers by stepping onto common ground.

Through presentations, workshops, community events and more, our brave and vulnerable volunteers share their personal story in the hopes of creating safe spaces for people to talk about mental health.



In total, 975 people attended NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore's free classes and support groups for peers and families.

**+21%**

Our Community Education Programs served 21% more participants in FY23.

**+1,000 HOURS**

3,451 hours were donated by 195 incredible volunteers to lead our support groups, classes, presentations, and other programs—an increase of 1,000 hours over FY22.



**"I really appreciate the opportunity to volunteer with NAMI because it reminds me that none of us are ever completely alone. Whether it's tabling events for awareness, or facilitating support groups, volunteering with NAMI gives me an opportunity to speak on what I'm passionate about and to actively work towards reducing the stigma around mental illness."**

**MELANIE SCARFF**

NAMI PEER-TO-PEER TEACHER AND  
NAMI CONNECTION SUPPORT GROUP FACILITATOR



## Creating a more mentally healthy and supportive environment here in Baltimore starts with youth.

It's critical that we work on connecting our youth to the resources they need. Here at NAMI Metro Baltimore, we're doing all that we can do to ensure young people in our community grow up without stigma, and know where they can turn for help and support.

In FY23, we brought on a new staff member solely dedicated to grow programs for youth and young adults in greater Baltimore: to expand NAMI Ending the Silence for middle schools and high schools, support #IWILLLISTEN at college campuses, bolster our Young Adult Support Group, and work with organizations across Baltimore to identify gaps and create new programming for youth behavioral health.



Our fastest growing program, NAMI Ending the Silence, saw a 74% increase in reach over FY22.

That's nearly 3,000 students right here in Baltimore learning how to support their friends, family members, and themselves. It's also teachers and parents and guardians learning how to initiate conversations with their kids, and understanding how to foster a culture that's supportive of students struggling with their mental health.



AGE  
**24**

50% of all lifetime  
mental illness begins by age 14,  
and 75% by age 24.



In 2020, there was a 24 percent  
increase in emergency room visits  
for mental health reasons for children  
ages 5 through 11, and a more than a  
30% increase in visits for those  
between 12 and 17 years old.

**70%**

More than 70% of  
students living with a mental  
health condition experience a  
crisis on campus.



NAMI Metro's #IWILLLISTEN Program, a week-long  
anti-stigma campaign, took place on 14 college  
campuses in FY23, reaching 4,460 students.



“

**"NAMI Ending the Silence made a huge difference for our class today.  
We had a really thoughtful conversation with students and I  
could tell something had changed. Thank you so very much for  
what you did today! The volunteers were incredible.  
So powerful and with real impact"**

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER



## THROUGH ADVOCACY

Advocating for advancements in mental health is a core tenant in NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore's work. We are proud to have been part of the effort to advocate for increased funding for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. We worked closely with The Central Maryland Crisis System, formerly known as GBRICS, to bridge the gap for people in crisis by creating a cohesive system that expands the capacity of mobile crisis teams and community-based providers to reduce police interaction and over-reliance on emergency departments.

Each year, advocates from across Maryland gather to speak about bills critical to supporting community members with mental health conditions. This Advocacy Day, 113 volunteers from Baltimore City and County shared their personal mental health journeys with elected officials across Maryland.

Locally, NAMI Metro Baltimore continued to partner with the Baltimore City Police Department and Baltimore County Police Department to provide empathy training to cadets and officers through the following workshops: Virtual Voices, Working With Families in Crisis and NAMI In Our Own Voice.



**2 in 5 people who are incarcerated live with a mental health condition.**



**Suicidal ideation calls account for about 10% of the 13,000 behavioral health-related calls in Baltimore City.**

**“I don't think I would be here without 988**

**and I would honestly recommend that everyone saves this number on their phone because a crisis can happen anywhere and 988 has amazing de-escalation skills.”**

MARY LAWAL • NAMI METROPOLITAN BALTIMORE VOLUNTEER



**“Meeting with Governor Wes Moore and the US Secretary Health and Human Services was an extraordinary experience. I feel grateful to have been able to share my story and push for funding for 988 as it is a vital lifeline that continues to save lives everyday”**

GUS HUGHES • NAMI METROPOLITAN BALTIMORE VOLUNTEER

## IN THE COMMUNITY

A major part of bridging the gap for the community is literally being there for the community we're trying to serve. Which is why in FY22, we expanded to include a neighborhood specific staff member dedicated to bringing programs, education and support to the under-resourced neighborhood of West Baltimore. In FY23, we replicated this outreach in East Baltimore – establishing a hub location at Morgan CARES.

This is a pivotal step towards addressing the critical mental health needs of this community. East Baltimore has long faced systemic disparities in access to mental health resources, resulting in a pressing need for dedicated services. This hub will offer accessible and culturally sensitive mental health support to local residents.



1,556

In FY23, NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore delivered 1,556 touchpoints to East and West Baltimore residents through classes, support groups, community presentations, NAMI Ending the Silence and workshops for faith leaders.

MAY REDUCE LIFE EXPECTANCY  
BY **20**  
YEARS

Adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood. Experiencing six or more ACEs may reduce life expectancy by 20 years.

In Baltimore, 42% of adults have experienced three or more ACEs, compared to 24% Statewide.

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**“In serving as a Metro Baltimore Hub for NAMI, an organization at the forefront of mental health awareness and service accessibility in underserved areas, Morgan CARES amplifies its commitment to unite community and academia. By fostering trust and leveraging the power of research, we not only generate impactful insights but also galvanize community participation. Together, we are advancing mental health outcomes and making strides toward equity.”**

PAYAM SHEIKHATTARI, M.D.  
DIRECTOR, MORGAN CARES



## In 2023, we got even louder about listening.

Our second annual LOUDER event honored Monica Mitchell, Senior Vice President of The Wells Fargo Foundation and Michael Hankin, President & CEO of Brown Advisory. More than 200 guests joined NAMI Metro for an evening that celebrated these Baltimore leaders and their work in elevating the conversation about mental health in our corporate community.

NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore is dedicated to eradicating stigma in all pockets of Baltimore, and that includes helping corporations bridge the gap for their employees – providing free resources, support and education to get people talking about mental health and complement clinical behavioral healthcare. In FY23, NAMI Metro offered twelve presentations including new options: Understanding Suicide, Men’s Mental Health, Mental Health at Home, Burnout and Building Resilience and Understanding Substance Use Disorder.



**84% of employees think it's important that a prospective employer offer robust comprehensive mental health benefits.**



**Only 11% of employees report that their employer has people on site who have received mental health training.**



**“Mental illness is personal to me and my family. I am so grateful for this opportunity to join NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore; to let our friends, family, and neighbors know that if you are struggling, there is a community who cares.**

**NAMI is doing important work in our community—meeting people where they are, breaking down stigma, and connecting them to critical resources.**

**I’m honored to lend my voice to their mission.”**

**MONICA MITCHELL**

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, WELLS FARGO FOUNDATION

# 1,000

In FY23, NAMI Metro reached over 1,000 people through anti-stigma workplace presentations.



# 80%

80% of employees with a mental health condition report shame and stigma keep them from seeking treatment.



**“I am deeply passionate about conducting workplace mental health presentations because I genuinely enjoy positively impacting people's lives.**

**My motivation stems from a desire to see others succeed and thrive professionally and personally.**

**I've always believed that by helping others navigate their mental health challenges, I contribute to their well-being and find fulfillment and purpose in my own journey. One particularly poignant memory that stands out is when a police officer, moved by one of my sessions, approached me and shared a heartfelt hug. It was a testament to the profound impact that open conversations about mental health can have, and moments like these drive me to continue my advocacy.”**

**RYAN WILLIAMS**

2023 RECIPIENT OF THE NAMI METROPOLITAN BALTIMORE ROYAL RIDDICK AWARD



## COMPARTIENDO ESPERANZA

NAMI Metro Baltimore's launch of the Compartiendo Esperanza program is a crucial step towards addressing the pressing mental health needs within Baltimore's Hispanic/Latinx community.

Statistics reveal a stark reality: Hispanic and Latinx people in Maryland face significant mental health disparities. According to a 2021 study, over 25% of Hispanic/Latinx adults in Maryland reported experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety, or other mental health disorders. Yet, access to culturally competent mental health services remains limited with language barriers and stigma acting as formidable obstacles, resulting in Hispanic/Latinx adults being 50% less likely to receive the mental health care they need.

With the Latinx population in Maryland steadily increasing, it is imperative to initiate conversations about mental health and create a supportive environment. Compartiendo Esperanza is a program by the Hispanic/Latinx Community, for the Hispanic/Latinx Community. It seeks to bridge the gaps in care by fostering open dialogues about mental health, reducing stigma, and increasing awareness of available resources. By addressing the unique cultural and linguistic needs of Baltimore's Hispanic/Latinx community, this program aims to empower individuals to seek help when needed and ultimately improve mental health outcomes.

In a diverse city like Baltimore, embracing the mental health needs of the Hispanic/Latinx community through programs like Compartiendo Esperanza represents a critical step towards

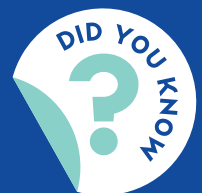
**building a more inclusive, supportive, and mentally healthy city for all its residents.**



**“I came to NAMI for Compartiendo Esperanza because it’s taught me that mental health isn’t talked about enough in the Latinx community. NAMI is there to provide important information and guidance for those who need the help.”**

**HILLARY TORRES**

NAMI METRO BALTIMORE VOLUNTEER



**Hispanic/Latin American adults are**

**50%**

**LESS LIKELY**

**to receive mental health treatment**

**compared to non-Hispanic white adults.**



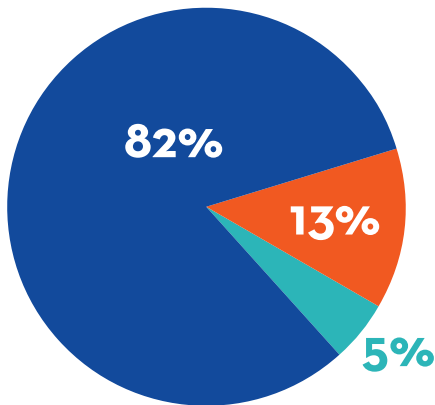
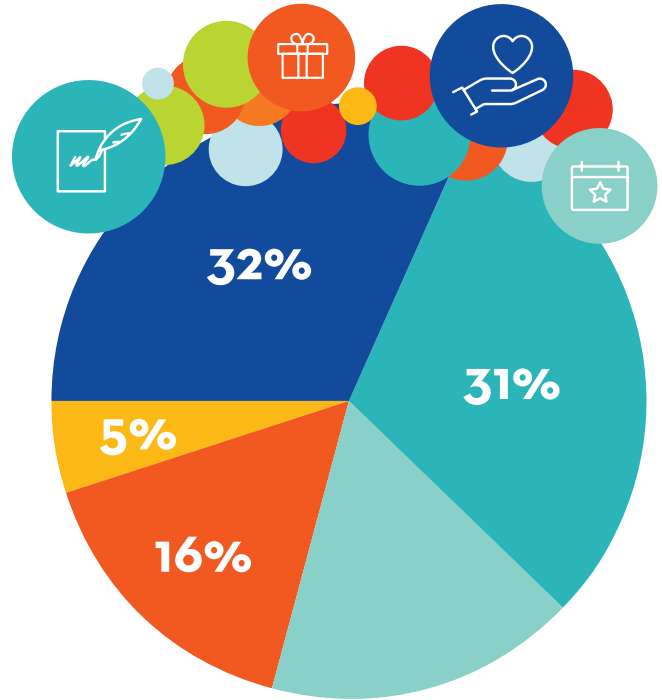
## FINANCIALS & CORE GIVING

### Thank you

to the Foundations and individual donors who understand that despite a less than ideal economy, this is no time to back off mental health funding.

#### Income

● Grants.....	\$275,843
● Program Contracts.....	\$260,299
● Events.....	\$143,736
● Contributions and Gifts .....	\$132,336
● Other .....	\$41,076
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$853,290</b>



#### Expenses

● Programs and Services .....	\$674,502
● General and Administrative.....	\$106,933
● Fundraising and Development .....	\$41,128
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$822,563</b>

Financial statements for the 2023 fiscal year are presented prior to audit review. Adjustments are anticipated. For additional financial information, please visit [www.namibaltimore.org](http://www.namibaltimore.org).

FY23, marked the second year of NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore's Core Giving Society. This elite group of donors pledge to donate a substantial amount for five consecutive years.

**These donations strengthen and grow our volunteer core, allowing NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore to create transformational change in our community.**

Thank you to our members: Larry & Barbara Conn, Faith Dickerson, Phil & Janie Grantham, Amanda Latimore, Carole Miller, Gina Richmond, Steve & Laurie Spurrier, Michael Teitelbaum, Ken Thakkar, Andy & Lauren Wayne



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