



Lake County
Illinois



Honoring the History of Mental Health & NAMI 1953 - 2024



in Lake County Illinois- Honoring the Family Movement

Created by John Fallon – NAMI Illinois Board Member

NAMI Signature Programs





Victory Hospital – Architect's drawings from 1923

Now known as Vista Health Systems in its current location.



The Saint Therese Hospital in Waukegan – Operating 1929 – 2000 – picture from the 1940's

Built initially to serve the indigent – It included a psychiatric inpatient unit starting in 1967 (considered revolutionary), as well as a department for social workers to help with the homeless and chemically dependent.

In 2020, the hospital was purchased, and replaced by a new dedicated inpatient psychiatric hospital, Lakes Behavioral Health. In 2024, the original hospital is being demolished and is expected to be the site of new affordable & supportive LIHTC housing in the next 5 years.



Today we will honor several people who have helped to create the mental health system we have today.

Today we honor Paul W Kaiser and Ellen Zagoras as two of the many families who helped give a voice to people once trapped in mental health institutions. We also will take the time to honor our current volunteers who deliver the evidence-based NAMI Signature Programs support throughout the year. (part of 22 NAMI Affiliates statewide)

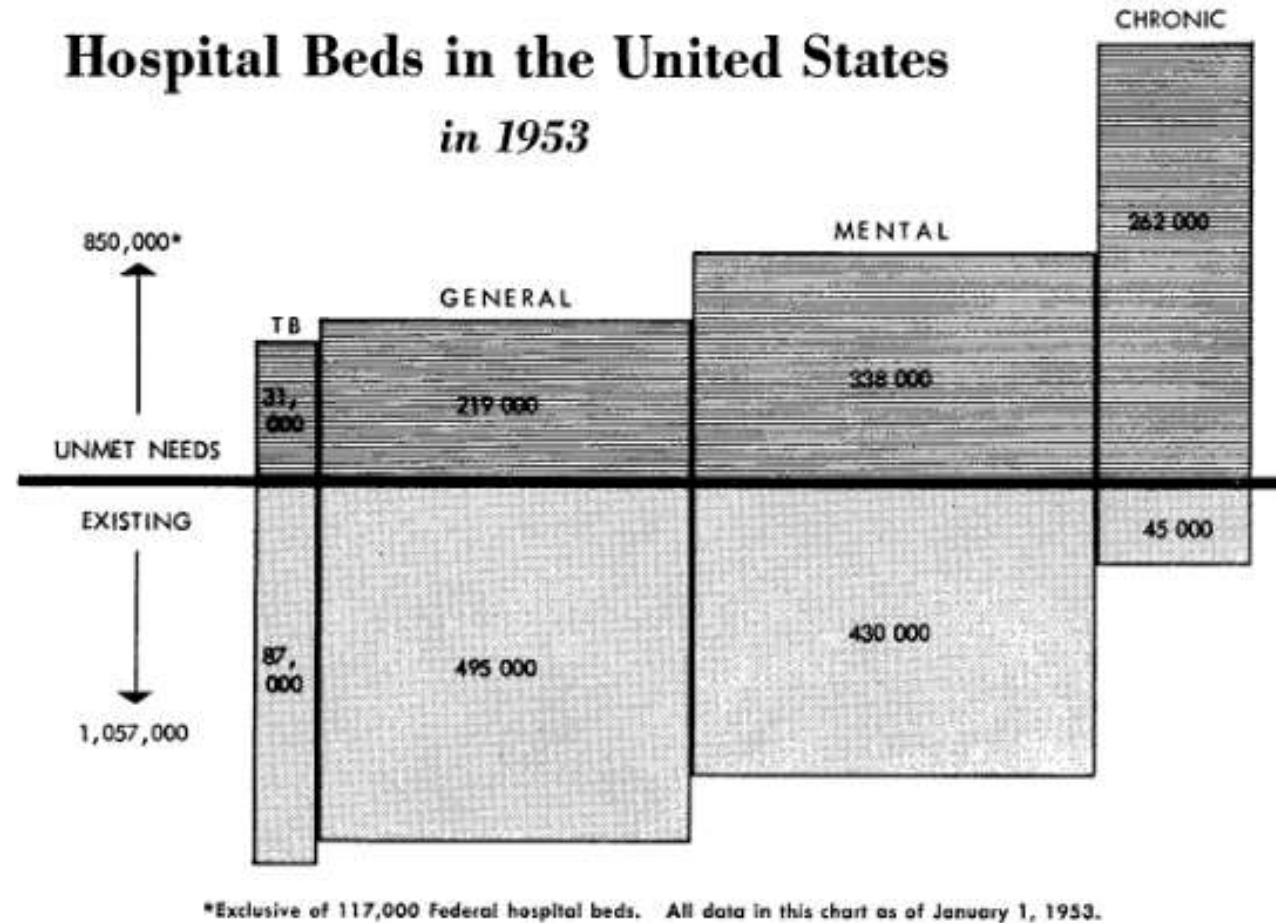
They are our first two NAMI Lake County Hall of Fame Inductees.

They have been discovered in my research from these files and more as I looked through hundreds of pounds of NAMI records since 1976 from Vi Orr and her family. I also want to thank the Waukegan Historical Society, NAMI Wisconsin, and NAMI National for their help.

With a voice, now those same individuals can speak for themselves in pursuit of recovery and a discovery of their own individual strengths.



In the 1950's, people with mental illness and other diseases generally went away to specialized Sanitariums away from the local communities.



The US had 450,000 State and County psychiatric beds in 1953. 33,225 in 2018.

The State of Illinois had 33,000 State Psychiatric Beds in the 1950's.

The State of Illinois today (Feb 2024) now has 1,200 beds in 7 facilities:

Madden, Chicago-Read, Elgin, McFarland, Chester, Alton, and Choate.

Most state beds are now used for forensic patients (400 NGRI and 340 UST). Only 400 people are in state civil beds.

Private psychiatric beds have not increased and have very short stays. Treatment is now community-based.

1. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4588438> -National Number
2. <https://mentalhealthsummit.wordpress.com/summit-policy-positions/medicaid-medication-access/> - Illinois Numbers

D*irectory*

Mental Health Resources in Illinois 1953

mh

ILLINOIS SOCIETY FOR MENTAL HEALTH

302 WEST MARION STREET CHICAGO 60611

In 1953, here is a statewide directory of services for persons with “psychiatric difficulties, mental retardation, feeble-mindedness, emotionally disturbed, and mongoloids”

This is an official statewide directory published by the Illinois Society of Mental Health that was shared widely.

About a third of the private programs explicitly list that they only serve white children. This includes a program in Lake Forest and Evanston.

Hospitals are referred to as Sanitariums. The full document is here: <https://1drv.ms/b/s!Ak-Tm-HRiMh4hKIBJwUbt1gvsDXGCg?e=6b40x8>

E. A. BOOS SCHOOL FOR EDUCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT

128 East Street, North
Plano, Illinois
Plano 8-6411
E. A. Boos, *Superintendent*
Staff: 2 teachers; 3 aides

Non-sectarian residential school, with a capacity of 32, offering educational services to white boys from age 5, regardless of residence, who are mentally retarded or deficient. Mongoloids will be accepted. The following types of cases cannot be accommodated: cardiac, cretin, epileptic, spastic paralysis, hydrocephalic, microcephalic, and chronically ill. The grounds cover 8 acres, and include picnic and recreational facilities. Academic, social, and recreational programs are provided. Monthly rate \$125; additional costs for books, clothing, personal allowance, etc. Monthly fees are payable in advance. Students are accepted by the year, and it is preferred that enrollment be made in August. For admission apply to Mr. Boos.

**Sample Listings from
1953 Directory**



ILLINOIS CHILDREN'S HOME AND AID SOCIETY

1122 North Dearborn Street
Chicago 10, Illinois
WHitehall 4-3313
Lois Wildy, *Executive Director*

Evanston Home

Eugene Klemm, *Resident Director*
Mrs. Helen Johnson, *Supervisor of Intake*

A unit of the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society, the Home offers psychiatric treatment for 20 white boys and girls, 6 to 12 years of age, who are residents of the state. Its services are designed primarily for emotionally disturbed children who are wards of the Society. A limited number of children may be admitted for observation and clarification of diagnostic findings. Mentally deficient, brain and neurologically damaged, psychotic, and physically handicapped children are not eligible. Usual fees are determined upon the family's ability to pay and upon agency reimbursement plans for services. For further information, contact Supervisor of Intake.

In 1953, The Lake County Mental Health Society

- Originally a group of volunteers interested in improving mental health in our area...
- The Lake County Mental Health Society was formed under the guidance of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Lake County Welfare Council, and the Citizens Mental Health Committee.
- They incorporated as a Not for Profit and formed a Speakers Bureau.
- They did extensive surveys of the local community about the need for mental health services and sought publicity to make sure the community knew about those needs.

The Lake County Mental Health Society

- The North Lake County Mental Health Society (LCMHS) surveyed the community for a need for a local- mental health services and they incorporated as a 501c3 in 1953. In 1955, they published "A Study of Mental Health Resources, Problems, Attitudes and Needs of North Lake County, IL. This group, the Citizen's Mental Health Committee, and the Lake County Welfare Council recommended additional mental health facilities in the area.
- Prior to that, Highland Park had Lake County's only mental health services.
- After having established the need, they raised money and formed a Clinic Board of Management. They were ready to develop an agency!

The Lake County Mental Health Society

Waukegan's Municipally-Owned Emergency Hospital



Waukegan's Jane Dowst Emergency hospital, shown above, was deeded to the city by the Dowst family, early Waukegan residents, in 1931, along with a trust fund of about \$63,000 for the operation of the institution. Staff-

Waukegan News-Sun photo
ed by three nurses, the hospital is available for emergency treatment of accident victims in Waukegan. The hospital, originally the Dowst family home, was remodeled and equipped by the city at a cost of about \$15,000.

- Acting upon the recommendation of the report, the LCMHS raised money for and established the North Lake County Mental Health Clinic at the nurse's home of Victory Memorial Hospital in Waukegan in 1957.
- In 1959, the clinic relocated at 32 N Utica Street (now Martin Luther King Dr) in the Dowst Building. This was the original public hospital located in downtown which had closed several years previously. This location is now the site of the current Waukegan City Hall.

In 1957, The Lake County Mental Mental Health Society

Established the

Lake County Mental Health Clinic



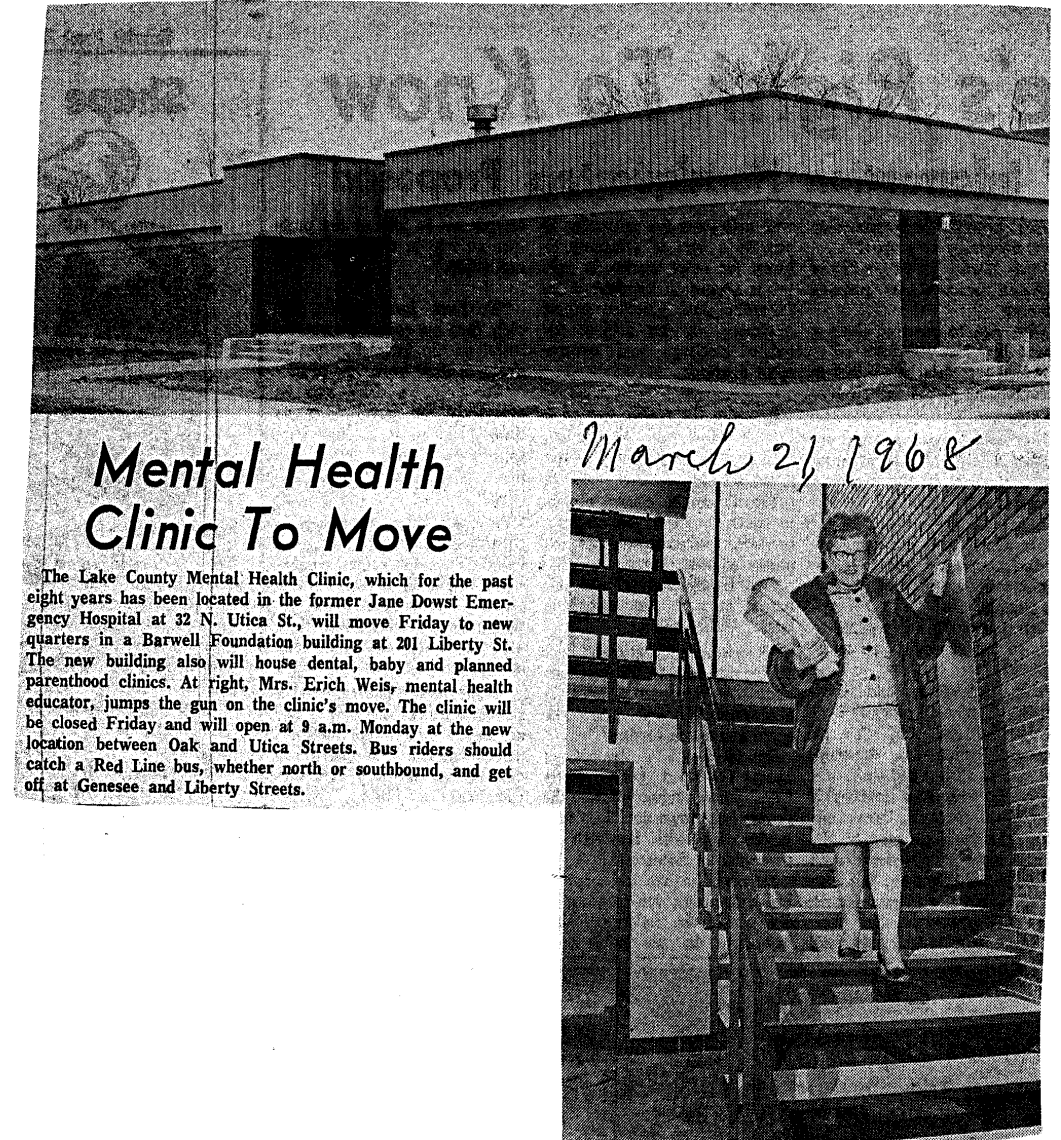
- It was started with an annual budget of \$34,000 with 2.5 staff. Its mission was to deliver diagnostic services and treatment services irrespective of the ability to pay.
- It began initially in the Nurse's residence of Victory Hospital while petitioning for the use of the Dowst Building.
- In 1960, the Mental Health Clinic moved to the City of Waukegan's Dowst Building.
- By 1963, the budget was \$106,285 with 7.2 staff.



In March of 1968, The Lake County Mental Health Clinic

Moved to
The Barlow Building
201 Liberty Street, Waukegan

- This would be a larger space, and the building would also house dental services along with a planned parenthood clinic.
- This location is now Bedrosian Park in Waukegan.
- In 1966, it became a separate unit of Lake County Govt.
- In December of 1970, the management of the Clinic was transferred to the Lake County Department of Health where it remains today.



Since December of 1970, The Lake County Health Department



Behavioral Health Services

Staff provide treatment, training and support services to persons experiencing problems related to emotional and mental illness, or drug and alcohol addiction. Our many services use various forms of evidenced-based treatment in both inpatient and outpatient settings. Individual and group therapy, case management, housing counseling, psychiatric medication, and emotional/cognitive skill building methods of treatment are used.

The Lake County Mental Health Society

- Paul W. Kaiser writes a summary in 1971 as President of the LCMHS. Having turned over management of the Clinic, they created a Speaker's Bureau and continued to advocate for mental health issues. They relocated from Waukegan to 607 ½ Milwaukee Avenue, Libertyville to be central in the county.
- In 1971, they made plans to focus on:
 - Children and Teacher Education in schools
 - Creating a Speaker's Bureau
 - Creating a Telephone Crisis Line
 - Creating an Aftercare and Rehabilitation Program for those being discharged from the hospital

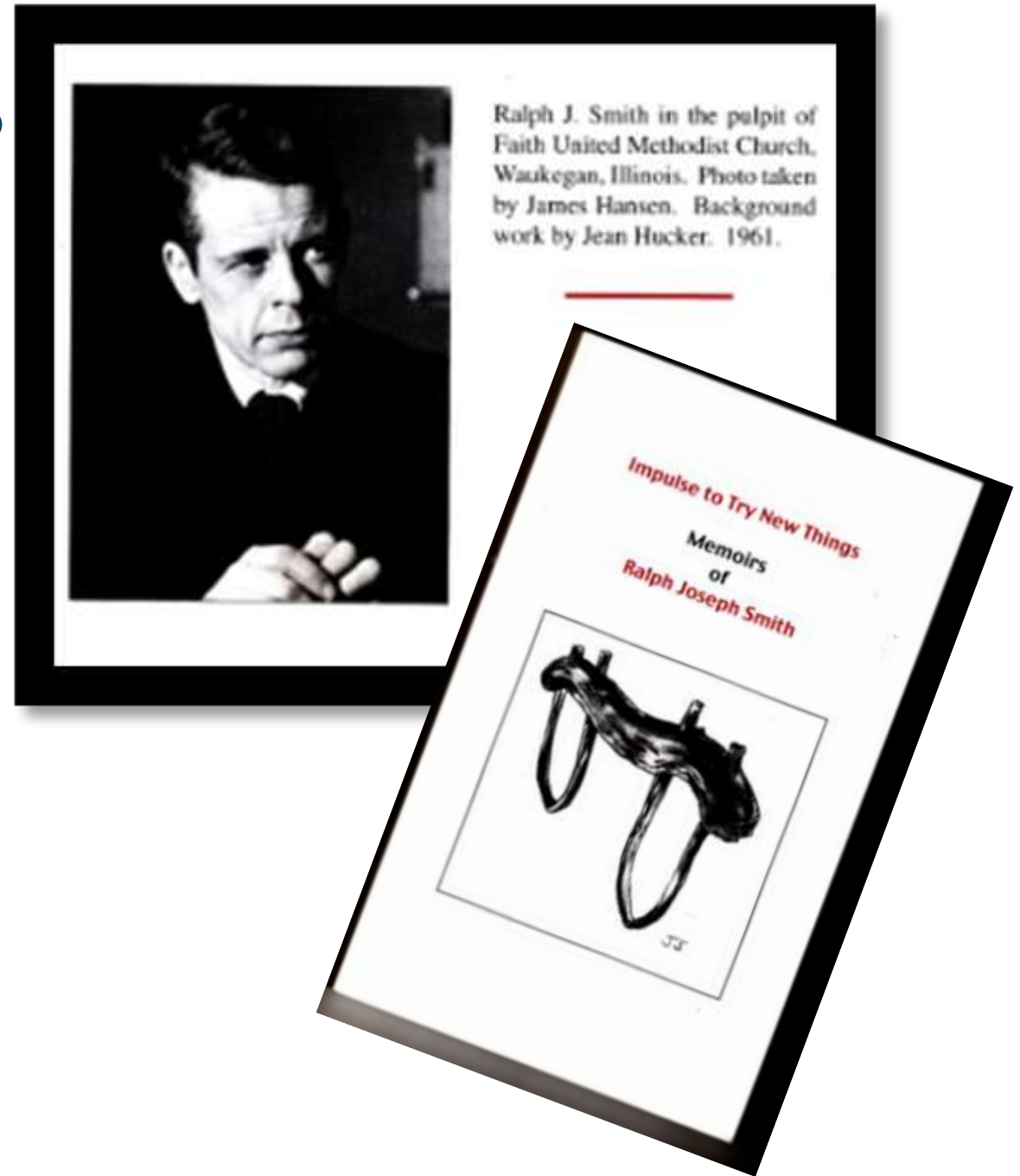
Who is Paul W. Kaiser? A Leader

- Paul W. Kaiser was the final Board President of the Lake County Mental Health Society and the Founding Member of our affiliate.
- The Lake County Mental Health Society would become AMI of Lake County and eventually NAMI Lake County Illinois.
- He also worked as an Assistant States Attorney, an Assistant Public Defender for Lake County, and was in private practice.
- He was a strategic advocate interested in advocating for justice and equity.



Who is Paul W. Kaiser?

- According to those that knew Paul from the First United Methodist Church in Waukegan, Paul W. Kaiser developed a friendship with the Lake County Chaplain, Ralph Joseph Smith. The two of them worked closely to implement numerous endeavors.



Who is Paul W. Kaiser? Justice Advocate

- **Paul W. Kaiser was the driving force behind the creation of Rebound**, a program for people leaving jail, that began on Bluff Street in North Chicago. Later, it was housed in a frame house on St. James Place just north of Washington Street. It burned down and the program relocated to a brand-new school and residence behind the McDonald's on Lewis Avenue. The program continues today and is run by Kids Hope United.



Who is Paul W. Kaiser? Parent, Spouse, & Father

- He was a lawyer and his wife, Mary, was a beloved teacher in Waukegan Public Schools. He had three children: Sue, Steve, and Bill.
- Bill, the youngest, was diagnosed at age 16 with schizophrenia.
- When their son needed treatment, he was still in a public school. To avoid long-term hospitalization, Bill went to McClean Hospital in Belmont, MA.
- To remain in the program, Paul and Betty were required to visit at least monthly to Boston and the entire family spent several Christmases in Boston. It became a part of their life for those years.
- Bill remains in the community, having lived in housing supported by Thresholds for much of that time as an adult.



The Lake County Mental Health Society and Paul W. Kaiser and the Development of NAMI

- The Lake County Mental Health Society was one of multiple groups nationally supporting, educating, and advocating for families impacted by Mental Illness.
- Paul W. Kaiser signed the original sign-up form to start a statewide coalition (AMI Illinois) at the third national AMI conference in St Louis in 1981.
- Paul W. Kaiser was a part of the NAMI Illinois Board (AMI Illinois State Coalition) representing AMI of Lake County in 1984.
- Paul Kaiser served on the NAMI Illinois Board as Vice President.

Who is Paul Kaiser? Community Supporter

Paul Kaiser was instrumental in creating the 24-hour Lake County Mental Health Crisis line

"My strongest recollection is of CONTACT Crisis Hotline because I participated in it. Dad worked with Dr. Ronald Forgas, a professor of psychology at Lake Forest College, to establish CONTACT. Dr. Forgas developed and taught the curriculum to volunteer crisis counselors. I believe Rev. Ralph Smith was also involved.. The training was held at Gurnee Community Church over several weeks/months. I took the training with Dad. I was in my late teens or early 20's so this would have been in the mid 1970's. I remember the hotline was housed in a room at St. Therese Hospital. It was a 24-hour hotline and I recall having to stay overnight once or twice. There was a day bed in the room."

Sue Kaiser - 2024

Who is Paul Kaiser? - The Lawyer

- **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for Students With Disabilities: Requirements Under Section 504 of The *Rehabilitation Act of 1973***
- **Paul Kaiser worked closely with Sen Geo Karis of Zion in creating funding for a free special education through age 23 for persons with mental illness in Illinois.** Previous education law only covered people with developmental disabilities and not those with mental illness. (Karis - House of Rep -1973- 1979, Sen 1978 - 2003). This is likely the implementation bill mandated by Sec 504 of the Federal Govt. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/edlite-FAPE504.html>

As a Leader,
a Parent,
Spouse, Father, and Dad,
an Advocate for Justice,
a Lawyer and a Legislative Advocate
NAMI Lake County would like to welcome you as the first Inductee to

The NAMI Lake County Hall of Fame

Thank You Paul W. Kaiser!

NAMI Lake County Illinois

wishes to welcome

Paul W. Kaiser

As the First Member of the

*NAMI Lake County
Hall of Fame*

*For his dedication and support to all of Waukegan
and Lake County and people with mental illness:*

President of the Lake County Mental Health Society

Founder of AMI Lake County

Vice President AMI Illinois Board

Founder of Rebound Inc

Founder of the 24-Hour Lake County Crisis Line

*Proud husband and parent of three children, Assistant State Attorney,
Assistant Public Defender, MH Legislative Champion*

Who is Paul Kaiser? – The Referral

- **Paul W Kaiser's Family did one more thing to advance our system.**



Who is Ellen Zagoras?

Please hear why we have selected Ellen Zagoras for our second NAMI Lake County Hall of Fame Selection.

For that, I turn it over to her talented and musical family



Mora, Louie, and Peter



NAMI Lake County Illinois

wishes to welcome

Ellen Zagoras

As the Second Member of the

*NAMI Lake County
Hall of Fame*

*For her dedication and support to all of Lake County
and people with mental illness:*

NAMI Lake County President

Founder of Independence Center

*Proud wife and proud parent of 3 musicians. A family that now carries
on a multi-generational legacy of continuing mental health advocacy.*

*Without her tireless and fearless fundraising, the Independence Center
would not exist. Ellen worked to create a safe space in Lake County for
persons with mental illness to grow, live, and work in our local
community.*

Who is Miriam Smith?

- Founder of Spanish Language Services -NAMI Lake County IL
- Chair of the Lake County Health Department Governing Council
- President of the Lake County Suicide Prevention
- Proud Entrepreneur and MH Peer Advocate

NAMI Lake County Future Hall of Famer!

NAMI Lake County Illinois

wishes to welcome

Miriam Smith

As a Future Member of the

*NAMI Lake County
Hall of Fame*

*For her dedication, support, and ability to always
“Share Hope” with all of Lake County.*

*Founder of Spanish Language Services -NAMI Lake
Chair of the Lake County Health Department Governing Council
President of the Lake County Suicide Prevention
Proud Entrepreneur and MH Peer Advocate*

Thank You
Miriam Smith!

Thank You All Persons Impacted by Mental Illness for Your Role in Changing the System



Thank You All NAMI Lake County Illinois
Volunteers

