



# Documenting Our Presence

## Multicultural Experiences of Mental Illness

Produced by



NAMI NEW JERSEY  
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## The Project

- Produce a short documentary that encapsulates the experiences of the diverse communities served by NAMI NEW JERSEY, to be used as an outreach tool, and a supplement to cultural competence training for providers and educators.



## The People

- The communities involved
- South Asian
- Latino
- Chinese
- African American



## The Prologue

**Obtaining funding:** NAMI Inclusion Grant and NJ Division of Mental Health Services Mini Grant.

**Selecting Omusha Communications** to produce the documentary: A creative, empathetic and flexible team that made a genuine effort to understand mental illness.

**Working with families and consumers** to encourage participation, battling stigma within their communities to step forward.

## The Process



- Finding locations, gaining permission to shoot at churches, offices, universities
- Working with filmmakers to format interviews, providing back stories, providing photos
- Assisting with shooting, ensuring that participants were comfortable revealing personal stories on camera
- Reviewing several drafts to edit and winnow down footage to the details required.

## The End

- Designing cover and packaging
- Duplication and copying
- Creating viewer guide, evaluations
- Arranging premiere



## Epilogue

- Distributing and showing documentary statewide to agencies and community groups.



## Lessons Learned

- ***Everything always takes longer than you expect:***  
The longest part of the whole process was designing cover art and duplication.
- ***Targeting a single audience is easier than targeting a broader, general audience:***  
Students in a psychology class wanted more detail on illnesses; community groups wanted more family perspective.
- ***This intent that went into the making of this documentary has been perceived and appreciated:***
- Audiences have been emotionally moved by the experience.

