



A Tribute to Major Sam Cochran  
April 23, 2008

It is literally impossible to put into words what Major Sam Cochran means to NAMI and our members throughout the country. Since Memphis created the first CIT program 20 years ago, Sam has been a tireless crusader for CIT and for law enforcement and mental health to collaborate to respond compassionately rather than punitively to people with serious mental illnesses in crisis. From Wyoming to Louisiana, from Australia to Canada, Sam has traveled to all corners of the world to “preach the gospel” of CIT. His motivation in working so tirelessly on CIT is not personal fame or recognition. It comes rather from Sam’s deep and abiding sense of decency and kindness. Sam’s commitment to CIT and improving the lives of people with serious mental illness comes from deep within his heart. As Sam approaches retirement from the Memphis Police Department, our hearts are heavy because we know that he will be literally impossible to replace – people like Sam don’t come along very often. But, we are heartened because we know that he is will not stop advocating for CIT. Rather, he will now be truly able to devote himself to working on CIT at a national level. Sam, NAMI will never be able to adequately express our gratitude to you and your wonderful wife Dixie for all you have done and continue to do to make the world a better place for people with mental illnesses. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Michael J. Fitzpatrick, M.S.W.  
Executive Director  
NAMI-National