

**Ray C. Lay, CHWCRS-SA Veteran/Forensic Peer Support Specialist  
Nominated by NAMI Indiana**

**CANDIDATE NARRATIVE**

**Strengths and attributes the NAMI Board has identified as high priority needs for the 2021-2022 board; any strengths/attributes identified by the candidate are starred and in bold:**

- **Diversity of age, race, ethnicity, language, experience and national geography\*\***
- Knowledge of the philanthropic community and track record with donor cultivation
- Experience with a variety of revenue models and financial oversight and management
- Human capital management including professional experience in human resources and personnel development & management
- Legal and risk management
- **Criminal Justice experience, professional and/or lived\*\***

**In 250 words or less, please explain how you will use your skills in the above areas to move the mission of the NAMI Board forward. If you do not have any experience in these areas, please explain what qualities you possess that the NAMI Board of Directors should consider when making their recommendations to the membership.**

I will try and use my own skills to advance that NAMI is an inclusive organization that has its members' best interest at heart. NAMI Indiana has helped me to help train correctional officers and police on mental health issues and CIT. Recovery with a dual diagnosis is challenging but doable and I wish to show others that persons do Recover. I will show that even though NAMI does not offer treatment, being a member of NAMI can be treatment.

Despite over 6 years in prison, I carry no bitterness but only a desire to better myself and others living with mental health conditions. We did not ask for our conditions but life gets better when our conditions are addressed by us.

One of the best ways to address stigma is to show that Recovery is possible and courageously share my story. I am a member of the NAMI National IOOV Hall of Fame.

**I have personally helped advance the NAMI mission in my community by...**

Being a NAMI In Our Own Voice presenter since 2014 and illustrating that recovery is possible. Training both correctional officers and police and showing that Recovery is possible.

**I work well in coordination with other leaders to accomplish goals as evidenced by...**

I was a member of our VAMC mental health intensive case management team for about 5 years as a volunteer. The team consisted of a psychiatrist, NP, RN and 4 LCSW. We were able to keep the majority of our caseload in the community instead of being hospitalized.

## **NOMINATOR NARRATIVE**

**Linh Preston**  
**President, NAMI Indiana**

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- Legal and risk management
- **Criminal Justice experience, professional and/or lived\*\***

**In 250 words or less, please explain how the candidate will use their skills in these areas to move the mission of the NAMI Board forward. If the candidate does not have any experience in these areas, please explain what qualities you feel the candidate possesses that the NAMI Board of Directors should consider when making their recommendations to the membership.**

As an already nationally recognized speaker in mental health circles, Ray Lay will contribute to the NAMI Board of Directors as an exemplary voice to support and spread NAMI's vision of mental health for all, particularly through the lenses of his experiences as a person living with a dual diagnosis of schizophrenia and substance abuse disorder, a formerly incarcerated and formerly homeless individual, a US Marine Corps veteran, and a person of color. Yet, Ray does far more than checking off boxes of inclusion and representation – he is tirelessly passionate about his advocacy, grateful in his opportunities, and committed to do more than what he has already accomplished. He strives to inform and empower others in their own recovery, education, and understanding of mental health and the systems that affect the mental health infrastructure in our country. He has been recognized as a leader and role model in recovery, receiving NAMI Indiana's Patricia Wheaton Award for exemplary courage in recovery, education, and advocacy (2015) and the Coalition for Homelessness Intervention and Prevention's Diamond Service Award as a formerly homeless individual who has overcome homelessness and is giving back to individuals or the community in a meaningful way (2017). Ray is a prolific public speaker and embodies NAMI's mission with everyone he encounters.

**This individual has helped advance the NAMI mission in my community by...**

...sharing his expertise and experiences through current appointments to two state commissions (Indiana Disability Rights and Indiana Behavioral Health commissions); serving as a Certified Recovery Specialist as well as a member of the Mental Health Intensive Case Management team at the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center; and, training and educating others through NAMI In Our Own Voice presentations, orientation sessions for the Indiana Department of Corrections, and numerous national and statewide conferences and seminars, including this year's SAMHSA's Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families Technical Assistance Center Presents: Best Practices and Systems of Support for Justice-Involved Veterans (1/27/2021).

**This individual works well in coordination with other leaders to accomplish goals as evidenced by...**

...working with state legislators and peers through involvement with aforementioned state commissions as well as with fellow board members from the nonprofits he serves. Ray is both humble and self-assured in his servant leadership. He is open and honest in sharing the mental health and addiction challenges he's met and overcome, and in doing so, he invites others in to share their own stories of recovery and hope so that all people may advocate for positive change in the ways our communities, legislators, law enforcement agencies, and practitioners and health care providers support those with mental health conditions.