

Pooja S. Mehta, MPH
Nominated by NAMI North Carolina

Nominator Narrative

Garry Crites

Executive Director, NAMI North Carolina

Strengths and attributes the NAMI Board has identified as high priority needs for the 2022-2023 NAMI Board of Directors; any strengths/attributes identified by the nominator 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
- Legal and risk management
- Criminal Justice

In 250 words or less, please explain how the candidate will use their skills in the areas identified here and in the Open Letter 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 that the candidate possesses that the NAMI Board of Directors should consider when making their recommendations to the membership.

Pooja Mehta not only brings to the table a passion for diversity, equity and inclusion, but she voices the concerns of communities of which she is a part. She is a well-respected advocate for South Asian Mental Health whose work has been featured in a variety of media outlets, including NPR, ABC, and TEDx—a remarkable accomplishment for one relatively early in her career. Spurred on by her brother losing his life to suicide, she is an advocate for suicide awareness and prevention, nuancing the stigmas found in her community. As the past Development and Events Manager of NAMI North Carolina, she also has experience in developing philanthropic relationships and events, bringing in well over a quarter of a million dollars during her tenure.

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

Beyond her employment, Pooja has volunteered in public policy, researching critical issues facing the North Carolina legislature, and helping me to strategize ways that we can reach legislators on both sides of the aisle more effectively. She has helped me to crystallize my thinking, examine my presuppositions, and become a more effective advocate. She has also been an active volunteer in our Walk, our Annual Conference, and other events.

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

Pooja serves as a legislative fellow for Representative Doris Matsui on Capitol Hill, working to move healthcare bills through committee and onto the floor. In NAMI, she has served as advisor to me and my

policy director to craft plans for advocacy, collaborated with partner organizations on Advocacy Day and other matters, and serves on the Policy Committee.