

Darien Wright, MBA/CPA
Nominated by NAMI Prince George's County (MD)

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.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness provides advocacy, education, support, and public awareness to those affected by mental illness. After digesting the website, it is clear the current Board of Directors has strong and varied backgrounds. My corporate experience and success spans over 25 years with roles across public accounting, management consulting, corporate finance, and operations. I would bring to the Board strengths and expertise primarily in strategic planning and corporate finance as well as the ability to communicate across various stakeholders. I have had the opportunity to build and manage numerous teams in my career. Most recently, this involved leading over 20 associates located in 5 different states and three workforce generations. Therefore, it required dialing up my skill set in leading others who you often do not see in person and across multiple age groups towards one common mission. At the same time, it has taught me how to be a servant leader, become more curious but also add value alongside the team.

As a person of color, I would also bring ethnic diversity and my corporate toolbox includes how to work with diverse individuals and help make decisions among competing agendas all with the goal of helping an organization become more effective at advancing its mission or mandate. I am confident that I can do this as a member of the NAMI Board of Directors if fortunate enough to be elected. Further, the Board would add a member who participates and treats others as people first.

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

I have personally helped advance the NAMI mission in my community by increasing my own awareness of the alliance and communicating its strengths to others. My family had persons who lived with mental illness, and I saw how it impacted them and surrounding loved ones. The pandemic has made this a pivotal time for NAMI. Whether it is Mayim Bialik raising awareness and money on Jeopardy or Naomi Osaka putting her mental health a priority, NAMI needs Board members who will serve as ambassadors. Although I am new to the general membership, it starts with me educating myself.

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

I work well coordinating with other leaders to accomplish goals as evidenced by my nearly ten years of serving as a trustee for two independent schools. We engaged on topics such as debt repayment, setting financial policies, developing strategic plans, selecting a new head of school, capital campaigns, monitoring financial health, and COVID re-opening plans. I have led finance committees and served as Treasurer and Vice Chair during my terms. As a result, I have learned how to listen to differing views, serve in a fiduciary role and ask the tough strategic questions to advance a mission.

NOMINATOR NARRATIVE

Serina Eckwood
President, NAMI Prince George's County (MD)

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Darien Wright is an agile leader with 25+ years of broad experience across diverse companies with the knowledge, skills, expertise, and life experiences that will allow him to contribute to effective leadership for the growth of NAMI.

He has knowledge, skills, and expertise in the areas of private equity, Fortune 200 publicly traded companies, management consulting, and Big Four accounting and has the capacity to help NAMI drive revenue growth.

Mr. Wright has provided board service for several for-profit and nonprofit organizations in leadership roles and understands the complex legal, fiduciary, and generative decisions boards are routinely required to address.

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

Helping to raise awareness of mental illness, and supporting those impacted by mental illness.

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

The breadth of experience he has negotiating complex business transactions.