

Ray Charles Lay
Nominated by NAMI Indiana

Nominator Narrative

Laurie M. Taylor
Board President, NAMI Indiana

NAMI Board service demands experience, knowledge, commitment, and time to help others. Board members must be passionate about NAMI's goals, values, and beliefs. This year, the NAMI Board is highlighting specific skills that they are seeking in candidates to strengthen the current skill sets on the board. You can review the [2024 Open Letter](#) from the NAMI Board President for more information on the call for candidates.

Please list the skill areas identified in the Open Letter in which this candidate excels.

As a nationally recognized expert and advocate in mental health circles, Ray will continue to contribute to the NAMI Board of Directors as an exemplary voice to support and spread NAMI's vision of mental health for all through the lenses of his lived experience as a person with serious MH/SUDs, a formerly incarcerated and formerly homeless individual, a veteran, and a person of color. He is familiar with various levels of board governance as he serves or has served on local, state, and national boards and commissions.

Explain any additional skill areas in which this candidate excels not identified in the Open Letter that you believe would be an asset to the NAMI Board.

Ray is a sought-after voice of those who have stories of living with MH/SUDs, serving as a Marine before receiving his diagnosis, navigating homelessness - all within the context of being a Black male. Interviews in the last few years include a National Institute of Mental Health feature story, and NAMI media including video for the National Criminal Justice Month *Overlooked* campaign, an interview in *NAMI Voice* with NAMI board president Joyce Campbell, and of course, inclusion in *You Are Not Alone* by Dr. Duckworth.

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

Ray Lay has helped advance the NAMI mission in multiple communities by serving in roles in addition to his service on the NAMI and NAMI Indiana boards of directors. He is a Certified Recovery Specialist and a member of the Mental Health Intensive Case Management team at the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center; and, trains and educates others through In Our Voice presentations, orientation sessions for the Indiana Department of Corrections, and numerous national and statewide conferences and seminars, most recently, the National Institutes of Health All of Us Research Program conference.

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

Ray Lay works well in coordination with other leaders to accomplish goals as evidenced by his service and collaboration on many boards, committees, and commissions. On the NAMI Board, he is a member of the Peer Support Committee and Criminal Justice Workforce work group, and serves as the Service

Members, Veterans, and Families (SMVF) Council liaison to the Board President. He has previously served on two state commissions (Indiana Disability Rights and Indiana Behavioral Health commissions).