

Cedric Dante Leonard
Nominated by NAMI Alabama

Nominator Narrative

Kelly Emerson
Executive Director, NAMI Alabama

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.

Cedric is a man of color who resides in Alabama. He obtained his undergraduate degree from Alabama State University, a HBCU. He is very involved in his community, his fraternity (Omega Psi Phi), and his church (Maggie Street Missionary Baptist Church). Cedric has 23 years of law enforcement experience and is employed by the University of Montevallo Police Department. He has been instrumental in criminal justice advocacy efforts, particularly CIT. He currently serves as a member of the All Rise board of directors.

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.

In addition to being a longtime member of law enforcement, Cedric also has a Master's degree in Counseling and is pursuing a Doctoral degree in Psychology with a focus on Crisis and Trauma from Liberty University. Additionally, he is an accomplished speaker and trainer.

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

Cedric has been a very effective advocate at the state level for CIT's crisis services, and access to treatment. Cedric has a wide circle of influence and has helped his affiliate and NAMI Alabama make connections with lawmakers, law enforcement, community leaders, and business leaders that have opened many doors.

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

As mentioned, Cedric is a board member of All Rise (formerly NADCP), board member of the Alabama Association of Drug Court Professionals, former board member of NAMI Alabama, member of the AL Dept of Mental Health State Prevention Advisory Board, the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council, a CIT instructor/coach/cirriculum author, a Mental Health First Aid instructor, and member of the Shelby County Children's Policy.