

Kerry Graves

Nominated by NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore (MD)

Nominator Narrative

Toyja E. Kelley, Sr.

Board President, NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore (MD)

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 [2025 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 Executive Director of NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore, Kerry has extensive experience in peer support service delivery, ensuring quality programs that empower individuals with lived experience. Her expertise in communications strategy has helped amplify NAMI's mission, engaging diverse audiences through storytelling, media outreach, and strategic messaging. And finally, Kerry rigorously works to engage the Baltimore faith community in NAMI's work, understanding the complexities of addressing the mental health needs of congregants while also prioritizing self-care as a leader. She works collaboratively with her team at NAMI Metro to plan a powerful and informative annual mental health conference for faith leaders.

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 the skills outlined above, Kerry excels in coalition building, stakeholder engagement, and program innovation. Her ability to foster cross-sector collaborations has strengthened NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore's reach and impact. She brings a deep understanding of community-based mental health solutions, ensuring that NAMI's programs remain responsive to diverse needs. Her expertise in nonprofit capacity-building, including board development, leadership coaching, and operational sustainability, particularly as it pertains to understanding and navigating a variety of non-profit structures, has helped organizations grow and thrive. Her strategic approach to partnerships and securing long-term funding makes her a valuable asset to the NAMI Board.

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

This individual has helped advance the NAMI mission in my community by recognizing that Baltimore is a city of neighborhoods with unique needs and proactively responding with NAMI programs tailored to meet those needs. Through strategic partnerships, innovative programming, and strong community engagement, she has increased NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore's reach two-fold in the last five years. Her leadership in capacity-building, fundraising, and DEI initiatives has strengthened the organization's impact, making mental health resources more accessible and inclusive. By fostering collaboration with local leaders, companies, healthcare systems, and faith communities, she has positioned NAMI as a trusted resource and advocate.

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

This individual works well in coordination with other leaders to accomplish goals as evidenced by her success in building strong partnerships across sectors, including government, corporate and grassroots organizations. Kerry serves on several local government Boards, where her active engagement is respected and trusted. She is often called upon by local coalitions and advisory groups to impart her knowledge and skills. She has a proven ability to engage board members, staff, and volunteers in strategic initiatives, ensuring alignment with NAMI's mission. Her ability to navigate complex challenges, bring diverse perspectives together, and drive collective action makes her an effective leader.