

INMI 2013 Highlights

Nationwide Events/Activities

One of our cofounders, Joanne Kelly, represented INMI at the White House Conference on Mental Health last June. It was quite an honor to be invited to participate. Each conference participant was asked to commit to an activity that furthered the national conversation about mental health. INMI's contribution was to develop an on-line Interfaith Directory for organizations that are working at the intersection between mental health and spirituality/faith so these organizations can collaborate and share best practices and so that people in recovery can find faith communities that welcome, support and value them. We launched the directory in November and are currently receiving registrations from faith communities and mental health organizations from across the country. (Faith communities are invited to register in the directory at www.inmi.us)

We joined the Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition, the faith-community outreach arm of the American Association of People with Disabilities, which is presently collaborating with the American Psychiatric Association on ways for mental health professionals and faith community leaders to work together effectively.

We published a “how-to” guide to help congregations develop spiritual support groups for mental health and wellness. On our Caring Clergy Project website at <http://www.caringclergyproject.org>, in 2013 we updated our resources for clergy and published 22 blog posts dealing with the intersection of faith/spirituality and mental health.

On our INMI website, www.inmi.us, we expanded our “What’s New” listing to include nationwide events and resources in addition to regularly updating our list of local events.

On our INMI Facebook page, we engaged regularly with followers and facilitated conversations with others about faith/spirituality and mental health.

Local Events/Activities

We traditionally hold two annual gatherings, one highlighting Mental Health Month (May) and one in October during Mental Illness Awareness Week. In May 2013 we hosted Pete Earley, author of *Crazy: A Father's Search through America's Mental Health Madness*, with over 300 people in attendance at the C.U. Law School.

Our October program featured a one-woman play by Diana Hoguet, "How I Learned to Talk." It had the highest percentage of clergy in attendance of any of our programs.

This past year INMI was invited to offer a 30-minute presentation at the beginning of every Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) program sponsored by the Mental Health Partners. This national Mental Health First Aid program has been used around the country to teach people how to be first responders to someone in a mental health crisis. The INMI presentation addresses "Spirituality as a Resource in Recovery."

We enabled the "Safe Harbor" support group at Chinook Clubhouse, Boulder, by funding a person to facilitate the monthly program. It is among the most-attended programs of the Clubhouse.

We sent the INMI Updates via email at least once a month to more than 350 people to announce programs, resources, groups and classes dealing with mental health challenges.

We cosponsored the "Hope Lights the Night" event to provide support and sacred remembrances of those who have died by suicide.

Three INMI board members were invited to be on a panel at the Denver Mental Health Center's program "Living Lives Well."

Organizational Development

An organizational development professional offered her services for several months as we envisioned our future work. As a result, we now have a strategic plan organized around three teams:

Communications/Outreach,
Education/Training and Membership.

Four new members joined our board in 2013.

Plans for 2014

As we move into the new year, we have challenges and opportunities ahead of us.

- We are determined to have well-qualified and recognized presenters for our annual programs.
- We will develop several videos for our Caring Clergy Project on suicide prevention
- We will promote the Interfaith Directory nationwide
- We will move to a more efficient platform for emailing our INMI Updates and invite people outside our local area to subscribe
- We will strengthen our outreach via social media
- We will expand our reach with MHFA into faith communities

We are very grateful for the financial support from the INMI members and donors. We hope that we will continue to receive such support as well as expand our membership base. Our goal is to increase awareness and understanding of mental illness among clergy, staff, lay leaders and members of faith communities and help them more effectively develop and nurture supportive environments for persons dealing with mental illness and their families and friends.



The Rev. Alan Johnson
Chair, INMI Board of Directors