

INMI 2015 Highlights

Our goal continues to be 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. We have expanded our programming focus to include the general public, knowing it naturally includes people from a wide variety of faiths who might benefit from our mission

Nationwide Events/Activities

As a representative of INMI, Alan Johnson participated in “The Mental Health and Faith Community Partnership,” which was created to foster dialogue between psychiatrists and faith leaders. As a result of this collaboration, “**Mental Health: A Guide for Faith Leaders**” was published in May. (psychiatry.org/faith)

We have actively maintained **two websites**: inmi.us and caringclergyproject.org. These websites offer valuable resources to faith communities nationwide.

Our **four suicide videos** on The Caring Clergy website have been viewed more than 1,200 times since August 2014. Our three videos with guidance for clergy on making referrals to mental health professionals were viewed 176 times in the same time-frame. Our video on starting a spiritual support group was viewed 101 times

Another element of our national outreach has been through **Facebook**. Using Facebook, we keep fans posted on events and articles related to our mission. We currently have 301 “likes” on our Facebook page.

We sent the **INMI Updates newsletter** both locally and nationally six times in 2015 to 626 people with information on programs, resources, workshops, and opportunities related to understanding mental illness and reducing its stigma and the power of spirituality in dealing with mental illness.

We continued to be part of the **Interfaith Disability Action Coalition (IDAC)**. INMI Board Member Leandra Price attended IDAC’s monthly meetings to represent our interests and keep abreast of IDAC’s efforts.

INMI has continued to be a dialogue partner with **Pathways to Promise**, an inter-faith cooperative of faith groups that provides training, technical assistance and other resources for faith groups who want to become supportive, caring communities for people with mental illnesses and their families.

Local Events/Activities

Each year we offer two events, one in May during Mental Health Month and one in October close to mental Illness Awareness Week. In 2015, we offered:

a) **“Perturbed and Passionate Parents Speak Out: Cracks in the Mental Health System and How to Fix Them”** with personal stories by Joanne Kelly, Anne Weiher, and Sue Brightman, parents of family members who live with mental illness. Breakout groups were invited to generate solutions to systemic gaps that exist in the mental health and peripheral systems. Don Mares, executive director, Denver Human Services, City and County of Denver, presented his office’s current priorities, efforts, and ongoing intention to address the shortfall in mental health. As a result of this program, the panel presenters were invited to offer the same presentation to the senior management of Mental Health Partners.

b) Recognizing individuals who support persons living with mental illness/brain disorders, we invited, Megan Carnarius, executive director for Balfour Cherrywood Village, a secure memory care assisted-living residence, to speak on **“The Hidden Gifts of Caregiving.”** This event honored the critical role of professional and personal caregivers of those living with various brain-based diseases or disorders. Megan brought humor, savvy, wisdom, and hope to this difficult topic, and the ideas she shared resonated deeply with the audience.

We continued to offer 30-minute presentations on the role of spirituality in recovery at **Mental Health First Aid** programs.

We financially supported the ongoing leader/chaplain position of the **Safe Harbor program at Chinook Clubhouse.**

We again cosponsored the HOPE Coalition **“Hope Lights the Night”** program.

We have offered leadership (presentations, consulting, resources) at several local faith community forums on mental illness. As a result of our outreach, **three new spiritual support groups** were initiated in Boulder/Broomfield Counties.

Organizational Development

We welcomed two new members to the board of directors, Richard Williams and Molly Ruskay.

We welcomed new INMI members and now have 47 individual members and 7 organizational members, as well as 15-20 program sponsors. We are very appreciative of ongoing financial support by the Deacon’s Fund of the First Presbyterian Church, Boulder.

We encourage our INMI members to assist with our programs and continue to promote these programs throughout our county and invite persons and organizations to join INMI.

We welcome organizations to become financial supporters of the work of INMI as well as offer in-kind support such as marketing assistance, social media promotions and locate potential venues for our programs.

Plans for 2015

We will continue to offer high-quality programs twice a year, focused on increasing the understanding of mental illness, strengthening the systems and caregiving that surrounds it, reducing stigma, encouraging clergy and faith communities to adopt principles of a Mental Health Ministry, and/or build new skills to help family members and therapeutic caregivers.

On Thursday, April 28, 2016, we will welcome William Moyers, son of Bill Moyers. His talk is titled: Broken: My Journey from Addiction to Redemption and Beyond. This program will be offered at C.U. Wolf Law School Courtroom.

We intend to continue offering the 30-minute presentation on “Spirituality as a Resource” at the Mental Health First Aid adult programs.

We will send the INMI Updates newsletter,

focusing on programs and resources that are focused on the intersection of spirituality and mental illness.

We will continue responding to faith communities' requests for presentations and information on starting a mental health ministry, and spiritual support groups and/or to provide resources that will be helpful toward the responsible inclusion of congregants living with mental illness.

We will continue financially supporting the leader/chaplain position of the Safe Harbor program at Chinook Clubhouse.

We plan to be involved in the Pathways to Promise Conference and Training Sessions in September 28-30, 2016 in Illinois.

Each of the cofounders of INMI have chosen to take a different temporary path in 2016.

Due to family health issues, Joanne Kelly will no longer be able to continue her active involvement on INMI's board. Alan Johnson is taking a one-year leave prompted by INMI's bylaws that dictate no more than 6 years of board service without an annual break. Members of the INMI board are deeply indebted to Joanne and Alan, whose untiring efforts formed and have expanded INMI's presence and activities exponentially on behalf of people living with mental illness.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Johnson, chair; Anne Weiher, vice chair; Sue Brightman, secretary; Marc Esenwein, treasurer; Kathy Naman, Jed Shapiro, Diana Hoguet, Leandra Price, Deborah Bronstein, Susan Williams.