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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

NAMI Connecticut Receives Grant from the Community Foundation of Northwest CT

(Hartford, Connecticut) April 7, 2016. The National Alliance on Mental Illness Connecticut (NAMI Connecticut) is pleased to announce that they are the recipient of a \$14,300 grant from the Marion Wm. and Alice Edwards Fund, a fund managed by the Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut.

The grant will be used in support of two new bilingual mental health programs, specifically NAMI Basics and Parents and Teachers as Allies.

NAMI Basics is a no-cost, six-session program designed for parents and other family caregivers of children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral difficulties. It is taught by trained bi-lingual community mental health workers who themselves are parents/caregivers of children or adolescents with mental health conditions. This lived experience adds to the credibility of the program.

NAMI Parents and Teachers as Allies is a no-cost, two-hour in-service for school professionals to help them better understand the signs and symptoms of emotional and mental health challenges that may be early warning signs of mental illnesses in children and adolescents. A panel of individuals who have personal experience with mental health concerns in the school environment, including a parent, a young adult and an educator, provide much of the content of the in-service, once again bringing the voice of lived experience into the conversation.

Kate Mattias, Executive Director of NAMI Connecticut noted, **“We are thrilled that the Foundation and specifically the Marion Wm. and Alice Edwards Fund** grant will allow us to bring these important programs to an under-served area of the state. In tandem, these programs have the capacity to provide meaningful tools to both parents and educators.”

The mission of the Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut is to enrich the quality of life for residents of their 20 town service area in Connecticut's northwest corner through the generosity of fundholders. They seek to enrich the quality of life for residents of northwest Connecticut by inspiring local philanthropy, convening stakeholders in community welfare, strengthening the regional nonprofits network and fostering collaborative funding partnerships.

NAMI Connecticut has been operating in the state for over 30 years, and by engaging in support, education and advocacy, seeks to improve the lives of all individuals and families affected by mental health conditions. It offers no-cost education programs for a variety of audiences, including educators and parents, and operates over 40 support groups throughout the state. Its advocacy initiative works with legislators and others to ensure the rights and responsibilities of individuals and families impacted by mental health conditions.

Information on NAMI Connecticut can be found at <http://www.namict.org>; including information about the NAMI Connecticut Walk, as well as information on the organization's support, education and advocacy initiatives. Anyone interested in becoming a sponsor can call 860-882-0236.

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