



## **Report on 2006 Activities, Accomplishments, and Finances**

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**NAMI-Finger Lakes, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization organized as  
a not-for-profit New York State corporation.**

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## 1. Introduction

NAMI-Finger Lakes, Inc. is a 66-member Ithaca, NY support, education, and advocacy group for families with relatives suffering from major mental illnesses. We are run by unpaid volunteers - all of whom have mentally ill relatives.

Our organization serves to:

- Provide support for families, relatives, and friends with a mentally ill family member
- Educate them and the public about serious mental illnesses
- Advocate for the families as well as their mentally ill family members.

NAMI-Finger Lakes is one of 71 affiliates of [NAMI-NYS](#) (NAMI-New York State) and one of more than 1,090 nationally affiliated [NAMI](#) groups.

Our organization began in 1986 as an independent local organization called FLAMI (Finger Lakes Alliance for the Mentally Ill), and incorporated in 2006 as a not-for-profit charitable organization organized as a New York State not-for-profit corporation with IRS 501(c)(3) status.

Our Board of Directors for 2006 consisted of:

- Carol Booth
- Bruce McKee
- Abby Eller

Our Officers for 2006

- Co-Presidents - Carol Booth and Bruce McKee
- Vice-President - Abby Eller
- Treasurer - Joanne Dennison
- Recording Secretary - Staci Oster
- Corresponding Secretary - Sue Larkin

### Our Goals:

- Provide a self-help group for parents, spouses, siblings, children and friends of people with mental illness.
- Educate ourselves and the public about the truth concerning the major mental illnesses, and seek to change stereotypes and overcome stigma.
- Advocate for the best possible delivery of services for seriously mentally ill people.
- Support research for improved medications and treatments for people with mental illnesses today, and to find the causes of mental illnesses now and for the future.

## 2. Summary of NAMI-Finger Lake's Accomplishments for 2006

NAMI-Finger Lake's mission is support, education, and advocacy for those diagnosed with major mental illnesses as well as their families. These services are provided to anyone who asks for help, and one does not have to be a NAMI-Finger Lakes member to receive these services.

During 2006 NAMI-Finger Lakes worked hard to both help families with mentally ill relatives, and educated a significant number of people about major mental illness. The highlights of our support, education, and advocacy activities are listed below:

### **Support:**

- Fielded calls from 325 people seeking help and advice
- Ran a monthly support group with a total attendance of 115 people over twelve month.
- Individually counseled 19 families at the NAMI-Finger Lakes offices.
- Established the first NAMI-Finger Lakes web site with help from Ithaca College student Kjersti Aastad, and filled the web site with pointers to local, regional, and national sources of help and information. We like to thank Lightlink - an Ithaca Internet Service Providers - for donating free e-mail account and web space for NAMI-Finger Lakes.

### **Education**

- Using the NAMI "Breaking the Silence" mental illness education program, gave presentations to an estimated 600 elementary, middle-school, and high school students and 150 BOCES and community leaders about mental illness - and that mental illnesses are treatable "no-fault" brain disorders.
- Gave a talk to 100 students in a Cornell sociology class about the impact of major mental illness on families
- Conducted a free twelve-week "Family-to-Family" class that educated 22 family members about mental illness and how to support their ill relatives while maintaining their own well being.
- Organized a Fall program that sought to educate the public about the internal experience of major mental illness - and that was attended by 169 people from the general public and eight social service agencies.

### **Advocacy:**

- Wrote guest columns and a letter to the editor on issues related to mental illness support, health care, and empathy for those diagnosed with major mental illnesses.

In addition to these accomplishments, in 2006 NAMI-Finger Lakes incorporated as a New York State not-for-profit charitable organization with IRS 501(c)(3) status. This important milestone will give us greater stature in the community, and will help fundraising efforts that will improve the range and quality of our support, education, and advocacy programs.

### 3. Details of 2006 Support, Education, Advocacy, and Outreach Activities

#### 3.1 Support Activities

NAMI Finger Lakes provides free support and advice to Finger Lakes families through:

- A telephone hot-line (607-273-2462) and e-mail address ([namifl@lightlink.com](mailto:namifl@lightlink.com)) where families can contact us for help and advice.
- A support group that meets monthly at NAMI-Finger Lakes office
- Confidential one-on-one meetings with families
- An informational web site ([www.namifingerlakes.org](http://www.namifingerlakes.org)) that contains links to information about mental illness and local treatment facilities.

Our support activity coordinator for 2006 was Mrs. Jean Walters, who fielded all telephone calls, organized the monthly support group, and met with many of the families who wished to discuss their situation confidentially.

The rotating facilitators for the 2006 support group meetings were Jean Walters, Abby Eller, Bruce McKee, and Susan Larkin.

Members who met confidentially with families included Jean Walters, Carol Booth, Susan Larkin, Ann Carter, and Joanne Dennison.

<i>Month</i>	<i># of Telephone calls from families seeking help</i>	<i># of people attending the Monthly support group</i>	<i># of people who came to the NAMI-Finger Lakes offices for confidential consultation</i>
January	31	8	9
February	38	14	4
March	27	17	1
April	30	5	0
May	32	6	0
June	21	10	1
July	19	10	1
August	36	8	2
September	38	14	0
October	22	9	1
November	15	6	0
December	16	8	0
<b>Totals ➔</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>19</b>

**Table 1: Monthly Figures for Finger Lakes families contacting NAMI-Finger Lakes for Help**

### 3.2 Education Activities

#### 3.2.1 Education for School-Age Children: Breaking the Silence

We feel that it is very important to teach children that mental illness is a no-fault brain disorder. To this end, NAMI Finger Lakes will come into any classroom - upper elementary, middle school, and high school - and present the "Breaking The Silence" Program.

"Breaking the Silence: Teaching the Next Generation About Mental Illness" (BTS) is an educational package designed to teach students on three grade levels, upper elementary, middle school, and high school about serious mental illness. It was created in 1999 by the NAMI-Queens/Nassau Education Committee with funding from NAMI's Campaign to End Discrimination and the support of NAMI-NYS.

"Breaking the Silence" uses stories to humanize serious mental illness and teach that these illnesses are no-fault brain disorders. Students also examine the role the media plays in perpetuating stigma. Quoting Peter Fitzpatrick, Middle School Health Teacher, Hicksville, NY

*"One of the biggest pluses of 'Breaking the Silence' is that the kids now view and talk about mental illness with the same ease and sensitivity as cancer or heart disease."*

NAMI-Finger Lakes Co-President Carol Booth presented the NAMI [Breaking The Silence](#) education program to an estimated 600 students in 35 local elementary, middle, and high school classes in 2006 (see **Table 2** for details). Carol reports that all the teachers seemed enthusiastic and wanted to repeat the experience next year, and the students were inquisitive and interested -- always lots of questions and comments

Carol also traveled to Amsterdam, NY to give a presentation about "Breaking the Silence" to 150 BOCES and Community Leaders.

<i>School</i>	<i># of Classes that experienced "Breaking the Silence"</i>
Cayuga Heights Elementary	2
Dryden Elementary	7
Fall Creek Elementary	2
Northeast Elementary	3
Dewitt Middle School	8
Newfield Middle School & High School	4
Lansing High School	1
Trumansburg High School	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>35</b>

**Table 2: Regional Elementary, Middle School, and High School Classes that sponsored a NAMI-Finger Lakes presentation of "Breaking the Silence"**

### 3.2.2 Education for College Students

On April 26, 2006 NAMI Co-President Bruce McKee gave a talk on "[Mental Illness as a Family Stressor](#)" to one hundred undergraduate students of Cornell's "Families and the Life Course" (Human Development/Sociology 250). This presentation discussed how major mental illness affects families, and how families are forcing change onto the US mental health care system.

Course instructor [Dr. Kristi Lekies](#) invited the talk because the course textbook did not contain any information on how mental illness impacts families. Dr. Lekies was pleased with the presentation, and sent NAMI-Finger Lakes the following note:

*"I wanted to thank you again for coming to speak to my class this spring. The semester is now over, and a number of students commented on their evaluations how interesting your presentation was. I learned a great deal and have a much greater appreciation for the challenges faced by families dealing with mental illness. You were realistic, but also hopeful"*

### 3.2.3 Education for Families with Ill Relatives: the Family-to-Family Course

NAMI-Finger Lakes completed its fifth Family-to-Family Education Course. The course - taught by Carol Booth, Ann Carter, and Joanne Dennison - ran from March 1 through May 17th, 2006 and had a record 22 students from the greater Finger Lakes region.

The Family-to-Family Education Program is for family members who have close relatives suffering from:

- Bipolar Disorder - Also Called Manic Depression
- Major Depression
- Borderline Personality Disorder
- Schizophrenia and Schizoaffective Disorder

This free series of twelve weekly classes helped family members understand and support their ill relatives while maintaining their own well being. The class size was kept small so that everyone can share their thoughts and emotions about their own family situations, and all information was kept confidential.

Course participants received extensive handouts on mental illness symptoms, diagnosis, and medications; caretaker "self-care"; and strategies for helping and communicating with their ill relatives.

Classes were held Wednesday evenings starting March 1st, 6:30-9:00PM, Suite 103 in the Henry St. John Building, corner of West Clinton and South Geneva Street Ithaca, NY.



### 3.2.4 Education for Local Social Service and Professional Organizations

NAMI-Finger Lakes was invited to speak to local social service organizations about mental illness and how it affects families. Organizations that invited NAMI-Finger Lakes included:

- Suicide Prevention - Bruce McKee talked with Suicide Prevention counselors about mental illness and how it affects families. Apparently half the calls to Suicide Prevention come from mentally ill individuals in crisis, and they also field calls from relatives of such individuals.
- Loaves & Fishes - Carol Booth and Jean Walters showed the film "Out of the Shadow" - a movie about a family's struggle to care for their ill mother. Following the movie, Carol and Jean answered questions from the audience.
- Green Street/Unity House - Carol Booth and Jean Walters showed "Out of the Shadow" and answered questions about mental illness.
- Cornell Nanoscale Facility - members of the Nanoscale Facility staff invited Bruce McKee to talk about mental illness and how it affects families.

### 3.2.5 Education for the Community

NAMI Finger Lakes organized a major community education program in the Fall of 2006.

Running from September 18 through October 19<sup>th</sup>, the program's theme was "Empathy - What Is It Like To Live with a Mental Illness"?

Our goal was to educate ourselves and the Ithaca public about how mental illness impacts the lives of our loved ones; the challenges they face in living a normal life; *and to recognize their courage in persevering in the face of personal pain and societal stigma.*

#### Fall Event #1: Information Table at the Tompkins County Public Library

The education program began on September 18 with an information table at the Tompkins County Public Library, organized by Joanne Dennison. The table will contains books, pamphlets, and information about mental illness - including autobiographies of people suffering from depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.

The information table was intended to reduce stigma by showing that major mental illness is a common affliction (like cancer & diabetes), and that with proper treatment and support many individuals can lead productive and fulfilling lives.

The table was in the Library's main corridor from September 18<sup>th</sup> through September 29<sup>th</sup>. Joanne reported that she had to regularly restock brochures on the information table, indicating that many families took advantage of the free information.

#### Fall Event #2: "In Our Own Voice: Living With Mental Illness" - a talk by Ms. Rachel Greco

On September 19th Ms. Rachel Greco gave a talk on "Living with Mental Illness", Ms. Greco is the Program/Outreach Manager for NAMI New York State, and she talked about how Bipolar Disorder has impacted her life, and the challenges she faces in managing her illness while maintaining a successful personal and professional life.

Ms. Greco gave her talk as part of NAMI's "In Our Own Voice: Living With Mental Illness" program, an education program that encourages mental health consumers to become actively involved in education about severe mental illnesses.

Rachel's talk was held Tuesday, September 19th at the Borg Warner Room East, Tompkins County Public Library in Ithaca, NY. Event organizer Carol Booth reported that 75 people attended the talk, and almost everyone stayed to ask Rachel questions after she concluded her formal presentation. Many of these same people also took home free information from the NAMI-Finger Lakes information table set up in the lecture hall.

#### Fall Event #3: Showing of the Schizophrenia Symptom Simulator

Empathy is defined as "feeling concern and understanding for another person's situation and feelings." However, it can be difficult to empathize with mentally ill relatives because we would have to have their mental illness to truly "walk a mile in their shoes". However, with one major mental illness - schizophrenia - computer technology can give us a hint of the unquiet and disturbing world of untreated schizophrenia.


On October 17-19 NAMI-Finger Lakes sponsored showings of Janssen Pharmaceutica's Schizophrenia Symptom Simulator to the general public, families, and mental health and social workers. (See **Figure 1** for a poster announcing the showings and **Figure 3** for pictures from the Simulator Showing).

The Simulator is a virtual reality machine that uses a computer, video goggles and headphones (see picture below) to simulate the frightening delusions and auditory and visual hallucinations associated with untreated schizophrenia.

Janssen originally developed the simulator to help doctors appreciate the difficult "inner world" of their schizophrenic patients. The simulator was developed in close consultation with individuals suffering from schizophrenic illness, and it simulates the paranoia and visual/auditory hallucinations that they experienced before treatments brought their symptoms under control.

By showing this to Ithaca residents and officials, we hoped that this would build understanding for the challenges facing those diagnosed with schizophrenia - and admiration for their bravery.

We feel that we succeeded in these goals - ninety-three people - including many from local agencies working with mentally ill clients - came to view the simulator. Many participants commented that they better appreciated the challenges facing their relatives and clients suffering from schizophrenia. **Table 3** summarizes the attendance by group, affiliation, and their connection with major mental illness.



# Schizophrenia

## *What does it feel like?*

See the world through the eyes and ears of a person with schizophrenia, a brain disorder that creates delusions, hallucinations, and disordered thinking & speech. NAMI Fingerlakes will present a virtual-reality simulation developed by Janssen Pharmaceutica. Wearing goggles and earphones, you will see and hear a simulation of the types of hallucinations that are typical of untreated schizophrenia. We hope that this simulation will build empathy for the challenges facing those diagnosed with schizophrenia —and admiration for their bravery.

## October 17, 18, 19

Because only one person can use the simulator at a time, we ask that you **make a reservation.**

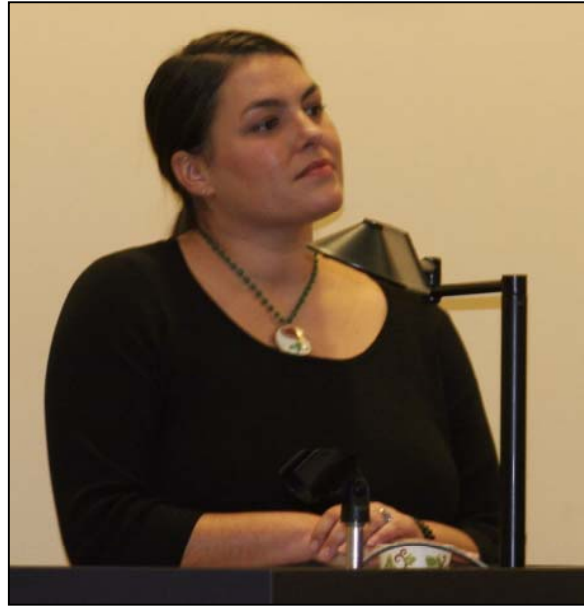
Contact Bruce McKee at 257-7662 or *[bwmckee@twcny.rr.com](mailto:bwmckee@twcny.rr.com)*.

For more information about our other Fall Mental Illness Awareness Programs call 273-2462, e-mail *[namifl@lightlink.com](mailto:namifl@lightlink.com)*, or visit *[www.namifingerlakes.org](http://www.namifingerlakes.org)*.

Art by Louis Wain

**Figure 1: Poster Announcing Schizophrenia Simulator**

(Timothy Larkin designed this poster)



**Figure 2: Fall Education Program - Speaker Rachel Greco (NAMI-NYS Program/Outreach Director) listens to a question from the audience**



**Figure 3: Fall Education Program - John Ward (Director of the Red Cross Emergency Shelter) holds the headset for the Schizophrenia Symptom Simulator**

Date, Time, and Location	Organization Attending	Reason for Attending	# people
Tuesday, October 17, 2006 6PM-9PM 104 East Lewis Street Ithaca, NY 14850	NAMI-Finger Lakes Members & General Public <a href="http://www.namifingerlakes.org">www.namifingerlakes.org</a>	Family members suffering from schizophrenia	14
Wednesday, October 17, 2006 10:30AM-9:00PM Tompkins County Public Library 101 E. Green Street Ithaca, New York 14850 607-272-4557 <a href="http://www.tcpl.org/">http://www.tcpl.org/</a>	Challenge Industries <a href="http://www.aboutchallenge.org/">http://www.aboutchallenge.org/</a>	40% of their clients are in recovery from major mental illnesses	15
	Red Cross Homeless Shelter <a href="http://www.tompkins-redcross.org/vol_homeless.htm">http://www.tompkins-redcross.org/vol_homeless.htm</a>	A significant number of their clients are mentally ill	2
	Lakeview (Canandaigua Office) <a href="http://www.lakeviewmhs.org/home.html">http://www.lakeviewmhs.org/home.html</a>	Provides transitional housing for those in recovery from mental illness.	5
	Loaves & Fishes <a href="http://www.loaves.org/">http://www.loaves.org/</a>	A quarter of the people attending their free meals are mentally ill	1
	Suicide Prevention <a href="http://www.suicidepreventionandcrisiservice.org/">http://www.suicidepreventionandcrisiservice.org/</a>	half their calls come from mentally ill people in distress	2
	The Ithacan (Ithaca College Student Newspaper) <a href="http://www.ithaca.edu/ithacan/#">http://www.ithaca.edu/ithacan/#</a>	News Story	1
	General Public	Family members with schizophrenia, suicide prevention volunteers, social workers	26
Thursday, October 19, 2006 10:30AM-3:30PM Tompkins County Mental Health 201 East Green Street Ithaca, NY 14850 607-274-6200	Tompkins County Mental Health <a href="http://www.co.tompkins.ny.us/departments/detail.aspx?DeptID=28">http://www.co.tompkins.ny.us/departments/detail.aspx?DeptID=28</a>  Lakeview Mental Health (Ithaca Office) <a href="http://www.lakeviewmhs.org/home.html">http://www.lakeviewmhs.org/home.html</a>	Better understand their clients	28
<b>Total Attendance over Three Days →</b>			<b>94</b>

Table 3: Groups Attending the Ithaca Showings of the Janssen Schizophrenia Symptom Simulator

## **4. Advocacy and Outreach Activities**

In addition to our support and education activities, NAMI-Finger Lakes was active in reaching out to the public and to other organizations concerned with mental health.

### **4.1 Outreach**

For example, NAMI-Finger Lakes organized information tables at local health fairs, which included:

- Lakeside Health Fair
- The Family and Children's Health Fair

We estimate that we contacted at least 200 people through the information tables.

NAMI-Finger Lakes members also participated as panelists in programs organized by Cornell University's "Minds Matter" Cornell University's only student run mental health awareness and advocacy organization. As a result of such contacts, NAMI-Finger Lakes will be helping out "Minds Matter" with their planned 2007 lecture by Kay Redfield Jamison, a noted author and psychiatrist who suffers from bipolar disorder.

### **4.2 Advocacy**

Our co-president Carol Booth has been very active in both local and state Mental Health Boards.

At the local level she serves on the Tompkins County Mental Health Board, and Chairs the Mental Retardation/Developmental Disability Subcommittee. Carol's representation is that of a family member, and while she works on many issues, her one priority was helping individuals struggling with mental illness and developmental disabilities.

At the State level, Carol is the Secretary of the New York State Mental Health Board, and has been working on such issues as:

- Housing
- Timothy's Law
- Boot the SHU
- Sexual Predators and Civil Commitment
- Research,
- Children's Issues,
- Medicaid/Medicare



### 4.3 Ithaca Journal Guest Columns and Letters to The Editor

Our co-presidents Carol Booth and Bruce McKee both contributed guest columns to the Ithaca Journal on mental health issues (the need for mental health housing reform + the bravery of those suffering from a mental illness).

In addition, Carol Booth also wrote a letter to the editor on coverage of a mentally ill man who was killed by Binghamton police.

Figure 4 through Figure 6 show copies of these documents.

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# Opinion

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## Mental health housing reform must be Spitzer priority

Carol Booth / Guest Column



"Given the fact that one out of five people will experience a mental illness in his or her lifetime and that one out of every two New Yorkers with mental illness is currently struggling to find community-based housing with services, Gov. Eliot Spitzer must make mental health housing reform a top priority for his administration."

The progressive, upstate community of Ithaca hosted the first governor's debate in September. Unfortunately, the two questions and one back-up question that The Ithaca Journal had selected to ask the candidates were rejected by the New York 1 News Media group in New York City, the organizers of this debate. My question, related to the desperate need for supportive mental health housing with services, was one of the two rejected for the following reason: this question is too narrow to be of state-wide interest.

Given the fact that one out of five people will experience a mental illness in his or her lifetime and that one out of every two New Yorkers with mental illness is currently struggling to find community-based housing with services, Gov. Eliot Spitzer must make mental health housing reform a top priority for his administration. More than 200,000 New Yorkers are struggling with a serious mental illness right now — from Buffalo to Ithaca to Long Island.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness represents families and friends of individuals struggling with mental illnesses — major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and anxiety disorders — among others. The shortage of affordable housing and services is the number one issue facing NAMI-NYS members. Thousands of people with major mental illnesses are living with their family members, but as they get older, family members are no longer able to provide the level of care that their loved ones need. Others

are homeless, aging out of foster homes and shuffled in and out of adult homes, hospitals and jails. Safe, affordable housing with supportive services such as case management, job training, counseling and social activities all increase the chances of recovery for people with mental illnesses. A house, a friend and a job — that's what is needed.

People with serious mental illnesses have a chance of recovery and can live more independently if they have appropriate housing in the community. However, in New York the demand for such housing is seriously outpacing the supply. The cost of leaving people homeless and relying on emergency interventions is far more expensive than reinvesting funds in supportive, community housing. The cost of jails and state and community hospitals, for example, can be upwards of \$300,000 per year. Even the most expensive type of supportive housing, which provides the highest level of services to its residents, is only about \$40,000 per year. In addition, there are many types of mental health housing, particularly upstate, supported housing apartments in Central New York State, which cost only \$8,000 per year.

It's time New York approached mental health housing in a smarter, more effective and humane way.

The New York State Campaign for Mental Health Housing (NAMI-NYS is one of many members) is working to increase access to affordable housing for people with mental illnesses: Reforming existing models and programs to meet the complex needs of the residents being served; preserving approximately 30,000 existing units of supportive and licensed housing; developing approximately 35,000 units of mental health housing statewide over the next 10 years; passing a mental health housing waiting list law to accurately assess the unmet need for housing in New York state and provide a tool for the state to ensure wise investment.

We must redirect funds from costly institutional settings and emergency interventions to the development of more community housing units and to the preservation and reform of existing supportive housing to meet the challenges of caring for people struggling with mental illnesses. A mental health housing waiting list would provide information to state policymakers and would ensure that state dollars are spent more wisely on housing that makes a difference, rather than on emergency services like shelters and hospital rooms.

The time for change is now. Spitzer should embrace efforts to help people with mental illnesses lead more independent, fulfilling lives and should redirect state funding away from expensive emergency services and toward housing (with services) that really makes a difference.

Carol Booth lives in Ithaca. She is co-president of NAMI-FL (National Alliance on Mental Illness of the Finger Lakes) and a Board Member/Secretary of NAMI-New York State.

### ON THE NET

- ▶ NAMI of the Finger Lakes  
[www.namifingerlakes.org](http://www.namifingerlakes.org)
- ▶ NYS Campaign for Mental Health Housing  
[www.campaign4housing.org](http://www.campaign4housing.org)

Figure 4: Guest Column on Mental Health Housing Reform

Column written by NAMI Co-President Carol Booth & Published in the November 30, 2006 edition of the Ithaca Journal



theithacajournal.com | Monday, September 18, 2006

# Opinion

Opinion Editor: John Carberry | 274-9213 | jcarberry@ithacajournal.com

## Saluting the bravest people in the world

Bruce McKee / Guest Columnist

The next time you do your Saturday grocery shopping at Wegmans or Tops, take a minute to look at your fellow shoppers. You'll see the usual range of young, old, rich, and poor walking through the aisles. Nothing out of the ordinary, really. Except that some of these people are mentally ill — and are the bravest people you'll ever meet.

As you walk the aisles, you'll be a bit puzzled by the calm — you probably won't see anyone talking to themselves, staring at you, or yelling incoherently. That's because most mentally ill people act and dress like you and me.

Even if you strike up a conversation with a mentally ill shopper, you probably won't notice anything out of the ordinary — and at the moment they won't strike you as doing anything particularly courageous.

Appearances are deceiving. For example, the man at the bakery is showing incredible, silent courage in buying rolls despite the chorus of voices in his head screaming that the baker is trying to poison him.

And that smiling lady in bulk foods is bravely appearing in public despite her husband's departure due to the chaos caused by her cycle of depressive lows and manic highs.

Finally, that quiet teenager in the produce section is secretly fighting for his life, desperately resisting suicidal impulses because depression has crushed the joy and meaning from his existence.

These Ithaca shoppers suffer from different forms of mental



Why should you care? Major mental illness affects an estimated 20 percent of Ithaca families, and 7 percent of the Ithaca high school senior class will develop a major mental illness in their lifetime.

illness — schizophrenia, manic depression, and clinical depression. These illnesses are caused by biochemical imbalances in their brain — conditions that typically begin during or before early adulthood and will last through each person's life.

The impact of these imbalances is devastating — without treatment, many of these people will be unable to hold jobs or maintain meaningful relationships with their loved ones. Many end up homeless/incarcerated, and a distressing percentage commit suicide. Yet many persevere silently, living diminished lives because of the intense societal stigma about major mental illness.

We feel that this stigma should be broken, and that their bravery should be recognized.

Why should you care? Major mental illness affects an estimated 20 percent of Ithaca families, and 7 percent of the Ithaca high school senior class will develop a major mental illness in their lifetime. But with modern treatments and medicine, many of these young people can successfully manage their illnesses and

lead productive and fulfilling lives.

To celebrate this possibility, NAMI Finger Lakes — an Ithaca-based support, education, and advocacy organization for families dealing with mental illness — is sponsoring a Fall education program in observance of National Mental Illness Awareness Week (Oct. 1-7).

Our program theme is "Empathy: What is it like to live with a Mental Illness?" Our goal is to show how mental illness impacts the lives of our loved ones; the challenges they face in living a normal life; and to recognize their courage in persevering in the face of personal pain and societal stigma.

The first program runs from today through Sept. 29, with an information table at the Tompkins County Public Library. The table features books and pamphlets on all major mental illnesses, along with biographies and autobiographies of famous people who suffered from mental illness — such as Abraham Lincoln (major depression).

The second program is at 6:45

p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 19 at the Tompkins County Public Library. Rachel Greco will talk about how her Bipolar Disorder has affected her life, and how she manages her illness while pursuing a fulfilling personal and professional life.

The third program is Oct. 17-19, and will show you the inner world of schizophrenia — a brain disorder that creates delusions, hallucinations, and disordered thinking and speech.

NAMI-Finger Lakes will sponsor showings of the Janssen Pharmaceutica "Schizophrenia Symptom Simulator" — a virtual reality machine that uses a computer, video goggles and headphones to simulate the frightening delusions and auditory and visual hallucinations associated with untreated schizophrenia. Those viewing the simulator will know that people diagnosed with schizophrenia are truly the bravest of the brave.

In summary, we encourage you to attend our events (details are at [www.namifingerlakes.org](http://www.namifingerlakes.org)) and learn how major mental illness impact friends, families, and your community — and that with proper treatment and support many people can lead good lives.

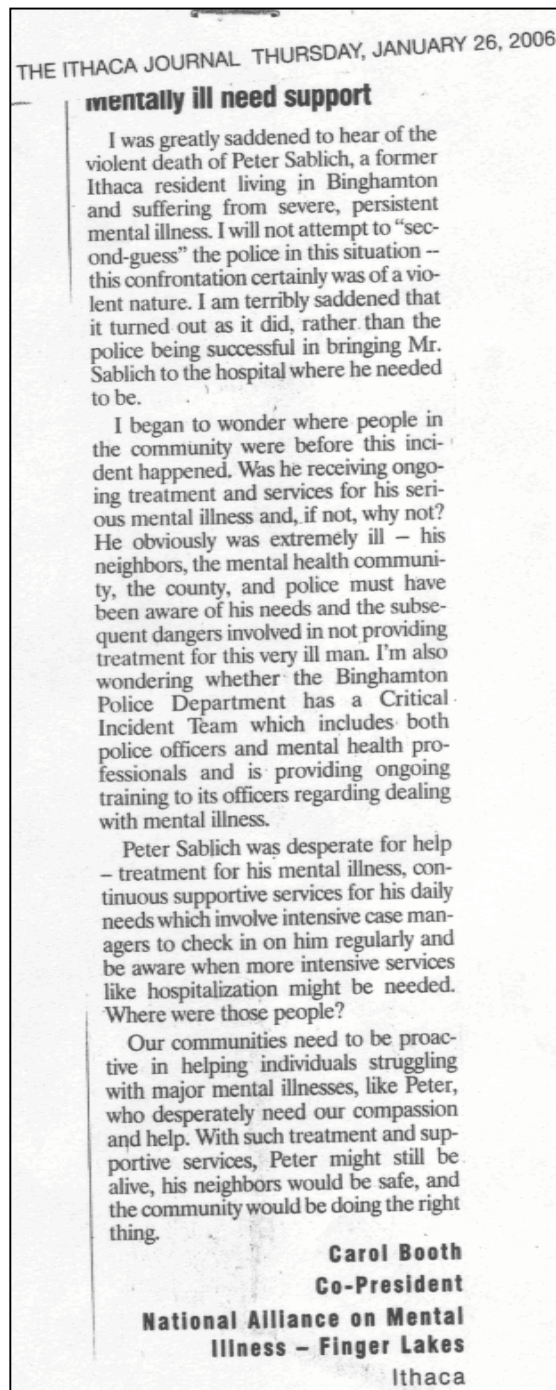
And afterwards, when you are at the supermarket, please consider silently applauding those fellow shoppers as they bravely struggle — and often triumph — with their mental illness.

*Bruce McKee is co-president, NAMI-Finger Lakes, the local chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.*

**Figure 5: Guest Column Discussing the Bravery of Those Suffering from Mental Illness + Announcement of the Fall Education Program**

Column written by NAMI Co-President Bruce McKee & Published in the September 18, 2006 edition of the Ithaca Journal





**Figure 6: Letter to the Editor commenting on Ithaca Journal coverage of a mentally ill man killed by Binghamton police**

Letter written by NAMI-Finger Lakes Co-President Carol Booth and published in the January 26, 2006 edition of the Ithaca Journal

## 5. Financial Report for NAMI-Finger Lakes

### 5.1 NAMI-Finger Lakes expenses and income for 2002-2006 + Anticipated 2007 Expenses

**Table 4** and **Table 5** show the expenses and income for NAMI-Finger Lakes for fiscal years 2002 through 2006, along with the project expenses and income for fiscal year 2007. **Table 4** shows the percentage of expenses going to our support, education, and advocacy programs, while **Table 7** shows a detailed breakdown of NAMI-Finger Lakes 2006 expenses.

These tables show that the biggest expenses for NAMI-Finger Lakes are:

- rent for our office at 104 East Lewis Street, Ithaca, NY;
- renting rooms for our Family-to-Family Course and our Fall Public Education Programs
- Copying materials and handouts for our courses and educational programs

These tables also show that most of NAMI-Finger Lakes operating funds come from Cornell's Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity, which holds a Fall sweater sale on Cornell campus and donates the profits to NAMI-Finger Lakes.

Finally, NAMI-Finger Lakes office rent will be increasing in 2007. The NAMI Finger Lakes office is currently in the home of NAMI-Finger Lakes member Mrs. Jean Walters. Specifically:

- Her kitchen is used for family meetings.
- Her dining room contains the NAMI-Finger Lakes telephone, computer, xerox machine, filing cabinet & lending library
- Her living room is used for support group meetings

Since 1986 Mrs. Walters has provided all this for free. Unfortunately, her husband died in 2005, and with increasing property taxes she asked NAMI-Finger Lakes members for some financial help to keep the house going.

In 2005 the NAMI-Finger Lakes membership voted to provide \$100/month rent to Mrs. Walters until further notice. The membership felt that this sum was extremely reasonable, given that comparable Ithaca-area commercial office space would run at least \$400-\$500/month for rent and utilities.

In December 2006 the Board of Directors and the Officers voted to increase the rent paid to Mrs. Walters to \$500/month starting December 2006 and continuing through May 2006. The reason for the increase is that Mrs. Walters needs to pay the property tax bill, and without additional funds she would be forced to sell the house and NAMI-Finger Lakes would lose its office.

The Board will revisit this issue in 2007 and will determine whether NAMI-Finger Lakes can afford to stay at its current location, or whether we must find a less expensive office elsewhere in Ithaca.

Expense Categories	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Projected for 2007
AOL	\$239.00	\$324.74	\$397.56	\$164.99	\$121.50	\$0.00
Books and Brochures	\$757.40	\$30.63	\$178.00	\$95.44	\$526.37	\$300.00
Copying (not related to courses or programs)	\$212.97	\$17.32	\$63.32	\$0.00	\$51.85	\$70.00
Donations to Other Charities	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Family-to-Family Course Expenses	\$0.00	\$1,921.72	\$1,331.48	\$600.00	\$1,107.00	\$1,100.00
Local Phone Service	\$424.99	\$482.55	\$441.19	\$355.60	\$483.90	\$500.00
Long-Distance Phone Service	\$64.52	\$103.75	\$147.70	\$111.10	\$6.80	\$10.00
Misc Expenses	\$87.59	\$276.83	\$181.26	\$191.85	\$226.81	\$200.00
NAMI National Share of membership dues (\$10 of each family/individual membership))	\$273.00	\$320.00	\$390.00	\$480.00	\$620.00	\$700.00
NAMI New York State share of membership dues (\$3 of each single & family membership)	\$119.00	\$127.00	\$142.00	\$141.00	\$196.00	\$210.00
Office Supplies	\$153.17	\$57.75	\$136.86	\$0.00	\$273.06	\$125.00
Public Education Projects	\$3,916.30	\$0.00	\$2,051.30	\$100.00	\$882.88	\$1,000.00
Office Rent	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,100.00	\$2,200.00	\$6,000.00
Stamps, Postage, & Envelopes	\$192.56	\$148.00	\$111.00	\$74.00	\$245.84	\$150.00
Education Materials - Nothing to Hide Program	\$132.90	\$0.00	\$77.50	\$0.00	\$218.03	\$100.00
<b>Yearly Expenses ==&gt;</b>	<b>\$6,573.40</b>	<b>\$3,810.29</b>	<b>\$5,699.17</b>	<b>\$3,413.98</b>	<b>\$7,160.04</b>	<b>\$10,465.00</b>

**Table 4: NAMI-Finger Lakes 2002-2006 Expenditures + 2007 Projections (2002-2006 Numbers based on checks written during each fiscal year -note that some checks were never cashed).**

Income Categories	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Projected for 2007
Memberships	\$760.00	\$850.00	\$1,035.00	\$1,270.00	\$1,825.00	\$1,900.00
NAMI-NYS Grants	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Conference Registration Fees (2002 only - 75 people @ \$15/person)	\$1,125.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NAMI-NYS Reimbursement for Family-to-Family Expenses	\$0.00	\$1,921.72	\$1,331.48	\$980.00	\$1,107.00	\$1,100.00
Chris Cannon/Lambda Chi Alpha	\$1,231.00	\$1,557.30	\$0.00	\$3,140.00	\$6,999.60	\$2,585.58
Other Donations	\$1,591.00	\$288.24	\$147.34	\$1,884.59	\$165.00	\$815.23
Misc.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$35.00	\$0.00
<b>Yearly Income</b>	<b>\$4,707.00</b>	<b>\$4,617.26</b>	<b>\$3,513.82</b>	<b>\$8,274.59</b>	<b>\$11,131.60</b>	<b>\$7,400.81</b>

**Table 5: NAMI-Finger Lakes 2002-2006 Income + 2007 Projections**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Projected for 2007
<b>Office Expenses - Rent, Phone, Internet, Office Supplies), Copying, Stamps, Postage, and Envelopes unrelated to programs, Misc.)</b>	\$1,374.80	\$1,410.94	\$1,478.89	\$1,997.54	\$3,609.76	\$7,055.00
<b>Money Spent on Programs</b>	\$5,198.60	\$2,399.35	\$4,220.28	\$1,416.44	\$3,550.28	\$3,410.00
<b>% of Expenses that go to Support, Education, Advocacy Programs</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>63.0</b>	<b>74.1</b>	<b>41.5</b>	<b>49.6</b>	<b>32.6</b>

**Table 6: Percent of NAMI-Finger Lakes Expenses going to Programs - 2002 through 2006 + 2007 Projections**

<b>Expense Category</b>	<b><i>Amount</i></b>
Rent at 104 East Lewis Street	2200.00
Copying (for office use and for all support, education, advocacy programs)	806.97
Room Rental for Family-to-Family Course and Fall Education Programs	791.00
NAMI National Portion of Membership Dues	620.00
Local Phone Service & Phone Cards for Long Distance Calls	490.70
Printing new NAMI-Finger Lakes Brochures	380.00
Refreshments for Family-to-Family & other Public Education Programs	346.26
Office Supplies	273.06
Stamps & Postage	245.84
Educational Materials (Breaking the Silence)	218.03
NAMI-NYS Portion of Membership Dues	196.00
Fees to Federal Government for 501(c)(3) application	150.00
Books for NAMI-Finger Lakes Library	146.37
AOL E-mail service	121.50
Flower arrangement for Fall Education Events at the Tompkins County Library	60.00
Family-to-Family Guest Speaker Travel Reimbursement	37.50
New Checks	23.11
Misc	53.70
<b>\$7,160.04</b>	<b>\$7,160.04</b>

**Table 7: Breakdown of 2006 expenses for NAMI-Finger Lakes (Based on checks written during 2006)**

## 5.2 Assets

NAMI-Finger Lakes owns no buildings or real estate. Our assets consist of our checking account balance, our office equipment (computer, telephone/answering machine, copier) and our lending library of books, CDs, and videos.

Our checking account balance as of 12/31/2006 was: \$10,733.75

### 5.3 Financial Controls

NAMI-Finger Lakes By-Laws mandate the following financial controls:

- All checks must be co-signed by both the President and Treasurer.
- The Treasurer must make an annual financial report to the membership, which must then be made available to the general public.
- The Treasurer must make all financial records available to any NAMI-Finger Lakes member who requests this information.

In addition to these controls, the By-Laws require an annual analysis of expenditures and deposits (By-Laws Section 8.3):

*When the Corporation's annual expenditures are under \$25,000, the Board of Directors will appoint two NAMI-Finger Lakes members to review the checking account records and receipts and issue a signed report to the Board documenting their findings. The members chosen for this function cannot be the officers authorized to co-sign checks for the corporation.*

*When the Corporation's annual expenditures are \$25,000 or greater, then the board will choose a CPA (Certified Public Accountant) to perform a full audit. The Board of Directors is responsible for selecting the CPA who conducts this annual audit, but CPA cannot be an officer, board member or employee of the Corporation. Furthermore, the CPA cannot have any financial or family ties to any Director, officer, or employee of the Corporation.*

## 6. Planned Support, Education, and Advocacy Projects for 2007

### 6.1 Support

NAMI-Finger Lakes will continue to offer the following support services in 2007.

- Telephone and e-mail hotline for individuals and families seeking help and information on mental illness and the affect it has on families.
- Monthly support group meetings at NAMI-Finger Lakes office (104 East Lewis Street, Ithaca, NY). Meetings will be held 7:00PM, first Tuesday of each month.
- One-on-one counseling for individuals and families that would like to confidentially discuss their situations.
- The NAMI-Finger Lakes website ([www.namifingerlakes.org](http://www.namifingerlakes.org)) will be updated to include a special page devoted to "What is it like to have a mental illness". We hope that this information will generate understanding and empathy for family members diagnosed with major mental illnesses - and admiration for their bravery.
- The Website will also be updated with a complete list of our lending library books, CDs, and DVDs, along with links into the Finger Lakes Library System, the Cornell Library, and Amazon.com. We've noticed that few of the "best books" on mental illness are in the local library system, and this electronic catalog will let people quickly locate copies if they choose not to use the NAMI-Finger Lakes lending library.

NAMI-Finger Lakes members coordinating these activities will be Jean Walters (phone & e-mail inquiries, one-on-one counseling and support group meetings), and Bruce McKee (web site), and Jean Poland (library catalog & links).

In addition to NAMI-Finger Lakes projects, several members will be helping out with the new Compos Mentis therapeutic health farm starting up in 2007.

Compos Mentis was co-founded by NAMI-Finger Lakes members Abby Eller as a separate not-for-profit corporation. Compos Mentis is dedicated to helping young people diagnosed with major mental illnesses get back into life and society. (For more information see [www.composmentisithaca.org](http://www.composmentisithaca.org)).

While this is not a NAMI-Finger Lakes sponsored project, we anticipate that a number of NAMI-Finger Lakes members will be helping Compos Mentis throughout 2007.

## 6.2 Education

NAMI-Finger Lakes will offer the following educational programs in 2007:

1. "Breaking the Silence" - which teaches school-age children about major mental illness
2. Family-to-Family Education Program - which teaches families about major mental illness, and how to best help their ill relatives while maintaining their own well being.
3. Providing helping hands and community advertising for a major Cornell lecture sponsored by the Cornell "Minds Matter" (a student group devoted to mental health issues). "Minds Matter" has arranged a Spring talk by author Dr. Kay Redfield Jamieson, a psychiatrist who has written critically acclaimed books on suicide and on bipolar disorders - who herself suffers from bipolar disorder.
4. A Fall public education program to coincide with National Mental Illness Awareness Week (first week of October). The program will consist one or more public lectures on major mental illness plus an information table at the Tompkins County Library. The goal is to raise mental illness awareness and provide education to eliminate stigma and discrimination against persons with mental illness and emotional disorders

In addition, individual NAMI-Finger Lakes members are working on these new education programs:

- *A program for Cornell Cooperative Extension mental illness and it's impact in/on the workplace.* NAMI-Finger Lakes member Deborah Grantham is working with people in the Employment & Disability group of the Cornell ILR (Industrial-Labor Relations School) to develop a two-hour presentation for Cornell Cooperative Extension Administration administrative assistants, human resources, finance, state specialists, associate directors and the director of Extension (all campus based). The initial presentation will then revised for use with the CCE system (56 associations across the state, 1700 employees).
- *A program to educate nurses and emergency personnel about major mental illness and its impact on families.* A common Support Group complaint is that many emergency medical people (nurses, doctors, EMTs, and paramedics) have not been trained on major mental illnesses, resulting in inappropriate care and unfortunate incidents. NAMI-Finger Lakes member Stacia Oster will develop a program to contact local medical personnel and talk with them about major mental illness and how it affects interactions with medical personnel.
- *Radio Public Service Announcements that educate the public about major mental illness.* NAMI Finger Lakes member and former DJ Susan Weitz is developing stigma-free radio public service announcements that we hope to run on local radio stations.

Finally, NAMI-Finger Lakes is prepared to give invited talks to any school, social services organization, or professional organization.

### 6.3 Advocacy and Outreach

We have scheduled two major advocacy and outreach programs for 2007:

1. In Spring 2007 NAMI-Finger Lakes will be holding its 1<sup>st</sup> annual walk NAMI Walk, intended to raise the awareness about major mental illness, and to reduce the stigma associated with these treatable brain disorders. Participants will walk five kilometers (3.2 miles), and pledges will be used for support, education, and advocacy both locally and at the state and national levels.
2. Having NAMI-Finger Lakes volunteers attend hospital visiting hours at Cayuga Medical's Behavioral Sciences Unit. Working with Department Chair Dr. Robert Dean, a rotating group of volunteers would be present during evening visiting hours on selected days of the week. These volunteers would meet with families visiting their loved ones who are in the unit, and would answer family questions and concerns about mental illness and the hospitalization process.

Through such meetings we hope to:

- Provide support at a time of great emotional stress
- Reduce stigma by helping families realize that mental illness is a "no-fault" medical condition.
- Improve their relative's long-term prognosis by helping families understand the health care system and what they can do to make the system work for them.

In addition to these activities, our members will continue to write Guest Columns and Letters to the Editor in support of better treatment, understanding, and care of individuals diagnosed with major mental illnesses.

## 7. Acknowledgement of our Volunteer's Contributions

NAMI-Finger Lakes is run by unpaid volunteers, and could not function without the generous time and effort donated by these men and women. **Table 8** on the next page lists our 2006 volunteers and their contributions throughout a very busy 2006.

Well Done, Everyone!



Volunteer	Projects and Activities
Carol Booth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-President</li> <li>• Organizer and Lecturer for "Breaking the Silence" Program</li> <li>• Family-to-Family Course Instructor</li> <li>• Wrote an Ithaca Journal guest column and letter to the editor</li> <li>• Organized the Fall education lecture by Rachel Greco</li> <li>• Gave numerous presentations at local organizations, and organized mental health information tables at local health fairs.</li> <li>• Officer with local and state-level mental health advisory groups and commissions</li> </ul>
Ann Carter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of the New NAMI-Finger Lakes Logo</li> <li>• Design of the New NAMI-Finger Lakes Brochure</li> <li>• Teacher for the Spring Family-to-Family Course</li> </ul>
Joanne Dennison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasurer</li> <li>• Assistant for the Spring Family-to-Family Course</li> <li>• Organized the mental health information table at the Tompkins County Library</li> <li>• Helped with the Fall lectures and presentations at the Tompkins County Library</li> </ul>
Abby Eller	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vice-President</li> <li>• Support Group Facilitator</li> <li>• Starting Compos Mentis (a therapeutic mental health recovery farm)</li> </ul>
Deb Grantham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-organizer for Fall Schizophrenia Symptom Simulator Showings</li> <li>• Arranged for art exhibit at Fall Schizophrenia Simulator Showing.</li> </ul>
Susan Larkin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corresponding Secretary</li> <li>• Support Group Facilitator</li> <li>• Arranged a Met-Life Presentation on Special Needs Wills and Trusts</li> <li>• Newsletter designer and editor</li> </ul>
Timothy Larkin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designed poster announcing the Schizophrenia Symptom Simulator</li> <li>• Helped the Janssen representative get the Simulator computer going &amp; talked with people at the first showing</li> </ul>
Bruce McKee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-President</li> <li>• Support Group Facilitator</li> <li>• Webmaster &amp; Tech Support person for NAMI-Finger Lakes</li> <li>• Co-organizer for the Schizophrenia Symptom Simulator Showing</li> <li>• Gave talks to a Cornell sociology class and a Cornell department on mental illness</li> <li>• Wrote Ithaca Journal guest column</li> <li>• Prepared all paperwork for NY-State incorporation, IRS 501(c)(3) filing, and NY-State state sales tax exemption, and registration of NAMI-Finger Lakes as a NY charitable organization.</li> <li>• Wrote 2006 Report on NAMI-Finger Lakes activities</li> </ul>
Stacia Oster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recording Secretary</li> <li>• Arranged for Flower Arrangements and Food for the Fall Education Events at the Library</li> <li>• Helped with the Fall lectures and presentations at the Tompkins County Library</li> </ul>
Jean Walters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Group Coordinator</li> <li>• Responded to all telephone calls and e-mails from families seeking information and advice.</li> <li>• Counselor for families needing confidential advice</li> <li>• Hosting the NAMI-Finger Lakes office and library in her house.</li> </ul>
David Zimet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiated with Lightlink for a free NAMI-Finger Lakes e-mail account and web page.</li> </ul>

**Table 8: List of NAMI-Finger Lakes 2006 Volunteers and how they helped out**