



A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT

Dani's Place

Mental health rehabilitation and support services
for individuals with serious and persistent mental
illness.

Help support individuals and families dealing with serious
and persistent mental illness and close a residential
continuum of care service gap to improve and save lives.

Dear Friend,

As a society, we can no longer tolerate the prevailing stigma associated with mental illness. For centuries, we have allowed this stigma to treat this illness with less importance than any other physical illness. The brain is the most complicated organ of the body and we must recognize mental illness for what it is - a biological brain disorder. You now have an opportunity to help us serve 350,000 citizens of northwest Ohio receive the treatment they desperately need.

One in five adults in America experiences a mental illness; three-quarters of all chronic mental illness begins by the age of 24. There are few, if any, Americans that do not know someone with debilitating depression, chronic anxiety, bipolar illness, schizophrenia, or PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

Despite the prevalence of mental illness in our society, treatment options are limited. De-institutionalization in the 1960s closed hospitals and all but ended long-term hospitalization, yet the need for longer-term care still remains. Healthcare reform has resulted in shorter hospital stays. Combined, these two developments of the last several decades have created a crisis in mental health care.

People recovering from heart surgery, people receiving a new hip or knee, or any other major surgery routinely enter a rehabilitation setting before returning to their home. Typically, people recovering from a major mental illness crisis leave the hospital after a stay of 3 - 10 days. We know this does not give adequate time for a person to stabilize. They are sent home alone, dropped at a homeless shelter, or released to a family member ill-equipped to offer the needed rehabilitation services.

Dani's Place in Toledo, Ohio will be an innovative first step to providing the same opportunity afforded to others following a serious hospitalization. This facility would provide a supervised living arrangement with a continued treatment and care program to individuals leaving the hospital before they return to their home.

We can do better. We must do better. Today, as many as 30% of those leaving inpatient care are being released to homeless shelters. People released too early from a hospital setting are 14 times more likely to lose their life to suicide. We are naming this facility Dani's Place to honor a young woman who was released too soon without a rehabilitation center available to care for her.

Today, we are asking you to contribute to the Dani's Place Mental Health Rehabilitation Center project. Every dollar will be used for the facility and will save lives.

Please help us make Dani's Place available to all those who need it in northwest, Ohio.

Sincerely,



Sena Mourad-Friedman, Chair
Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Lucas County



Danielle Leedy

A DREAM FULFILLED FOR SO MANY, FUELED BY THE POWER OF DIVINE INTERVENTION.

After a childhood in a loving, suburban family, Danielle Leedy began to struggle with depression in her mid-teens. Despite being a beautiful young girl and young woman, she nonetheless struggled with body image and self-harm issues -- issues she fought with at times her whole life. Her depression and anxiety were also magnified with stressors in her life. However, there were also times when she seemed and felt "normal" and free of the disease process while other times struggling mightily at least inwardly.

At 15, 20, and, again, at 22, Dani attempted to end her life. At the time of her third attempt, she was living in a larger city, working as a paralegal assistant, and having significant professional successes. Yet, those successes were not enough to quell depressive thoughts and issues she still battled inside.

This third attempt was the most serious to that point. It also showed her family the critical need for and the lack of post-hospitalization mental health rehabilitation options -- just like rehab facilities for heart attacks, strokes or hip replacements. After three (3) short days in the locked-down psychiatric unit, Dani was discharged from that city's level 1 trauma center with no post-hospitalization care plan or referrals for any care at all. Dani's family was completely on their own. They had no help to determine what care was "next" or even what was appropriate and they found themselves trying to navigate completely uncharted and frightening waters all by themselves.

No appropriate services existed either in that major city or near the smaller community where Dani's parents lived. With much time and effort, they eventually were able to locate a place -- several states away - after constant worry and sleepless nights. It was in that scary and dark time that the seed was planted in their minds about the concept that is now Dani's Place.

The care they eventually found literally saved Dani's life and was a significant factor in her being able to both live and succeed 11 more years. With years of ongoing treatment, counseling, medication, self-awareness and Dani's own self-determination, Dani not just survived but she was able to thrive.

Through it all, however, Dani had periodic battles with the dark thoughts inside her mind. She was very skilled at "wearing a mask" to appear fearless and strong on the outside while continuing to struggle on the inside with self-doubt, fears, self-worth issues, body image issues, anxiety, PTSD (from past experiences) and depression. In the very end, despite her tremendous success in the business world, Dani was more fragile and vulnerable to her depression than ever before.

In the early morning hours of February 2019, her depression prevailed, and as a result of a what her parents call a perfect storm, Dani's life here on Earth ended at the age of 33. At the time of her passing Dani was creating a plan to help those struggling with their mental illness. Because her dreams and goals were not finished, Dani's family and friends chose to remain steadfast and not allow suicide be her final legacy.

Instead, one huge dream became that, someday, somehow, there would exist a mental health rehabilitation center called "Dani's Place."

Dani's mom, Donna Heck, joined the NAMI Ohio Board. One morning in the late fall of 2022, Donna was at home and saw a beautiful red cardinal hop up on the roof outside her bedroom window. Since Dani's death, Dani's whole family has routinely felt Dani's presence many ways, including hearing special wind chimes ring on a windless day, seeing the number 33 in all kinds of amazing settings and, of course, seeing cardinals appear. That particular day, as Donna looked out the window, the normally skittish cardinal hopped right up to the edge of her window, stared at her in an apparent attempt to greet her. Less than 10 minutes later, Terry Russell, NAMI Ohio's Executive Director Emeritus, called Donna to tell her that NAMI Ohio's ongoing efforts to help establish a mental health rehabilitation facility in Lucas County was going to be a reality -- and that it was going to be called "Dani's Place."



A Desperately Needed Service

A majority of individuals discharged from an inpatient mental health hospitalization are not given any, or very little, community transitional supports. Oftentimes these individuals end up back in the hospital, in jail or prison, homeless or far too often lose their lives due to their illness and related complications.

We CAN and MUST do better!

People recovering from heart surgery, people receiving a new hip or knee, or any other major surgery routinely enter a rehabilitation setting before returning to their home.

Typically, people recovering from a major mental illness crisis leave the hospital after a stay of on average 3 - 10 days. They are sent home alone, dropped at a homeless shelter or released to a family member ill-equipped to offer the needed rehabilitation services.

Mental health rehabilitation centers offer an innovative first step to providing the same opportunity afforded to others following a serious hospitalization. These facilities provide housing for up to 90 days following discharge and provide clients with a continued treatment and care program to help them succeed in the community. Dani's Place will offer this crucially needed service in Northwest Ohio.

People across Ohio are falling through the cracks and not getting the care they need for debilitating and complex psychiatric diseases. This facility will help to close the gap in services and allow individuals living with mental illness to heal with dignity and support.

Will you help us?

Working Together to Save Lives

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Lucas County and The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Ohio (NAMI Ohio) recognize that there is a significant gap in residential care services for individuals with serious and persistent mental illness. The suicide rate in adults with mental disorders within the first ninety days after discharge from a hospital is over fourteen times higher than the average rate of suicide in the United States (JAMA Psychiatry).

In partnership, these three groups have worked tirelessly to assess the need and develop the plan for Dani's place that will ensure that this crucial life-saving service will be available in Northwest Ohio.



The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) exists to provide statewide leadership of a high-quality mental health and addiction prevention, treatment and recovery system that is effective and valued by all Ohioans.

OhioMHAS strives to end suffering from mental illness, substance use disorders, and problem gambling for Ohioans of all ages, their families, and communities.



The Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Lucas County has a vision of a compassionate community that embraces recovery and mental wellness. It is their mission to cultivate a high-quality network of resources that inspires personal recovery and promotes mental wellness for Lucas County residents.

The Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Lucas County worked in partnership with local NW Ohio regional ADAMH boards to bring this service to NW Ohio.



NAMI Ohio is a grassroots, advocacy organization with a mission "to improve the quality of life, and ensure dignity and respect for persons with serious mental illness."

NAMI Ohio advocates for mental health services and access to care, while also encouraging support of legislative policies and government funding related to mental health issues.

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Your Support

The fact of the matter is that there simply are not enough mental health resources available upon discharge to care for this vulnerable group. Help is needed to build a community resource that will save lives.

All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. 100% of your donation will go directly to the building costs of the center with no administration costs taken out.

How to Donate

Donations can be made online at:

www.namiohio.org/danis-place-funding/

100% of all donations received through this page will be designated for Dani's Place and used solely for this project.

Donations may also be mailed to NAMI Ohio at the address below. ***Please make sure to include "Dani's Place" on the memo line of any checks.***

NAMI Ohio
1225 Dublin Road, Suite 210,
Columbus, OH 43215