



National Alliance on Mental Illness



## Chief Operating Officer Arlington, Virginia (Hybrid)

**DRi Waterstone**  
HUMAN CAPITAL

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# About NAMI

For almost 45 years, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has been a prominent American grassroots organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental health conditions. NAMI offers education, support, community building, and advocacy, striving to raise awareness about mental health issues, reduce stigma, and provide resources for those impacted by mental illnesses. Through its network of local affiliates and chapters across the United States, NAMI offers programs, information, and a platform for individuals to share their experiences, ultimately working to create a more compassionate and understanding society regarding mental health.

NAMI envisions a world where all people affected by mental illness live healthy, fulfilling lives supported by a community that cares. What started as a small group of families gathered around a kitchen table in 1979 has blossomed into the nation's leading voice on mental health. Today, they are an alliance of more than 600 local Affiliates and 49 State Organizations who work in your community to raise awareness and provide support and education that was not previously available to those in need.



Click here to watch: <https://youtu.be/BZNw3Ldtxrg>

# The Impact of NAMI

## You are NOT ALONE



1 in 5 U.S. adults  
experience  
mental illness

Millions of people are affected by mental illness each year. Across the country, many people just like you work, perform, create, compete, laugh, love and inspire every day.

**1 in 20**

1 in 20 U.S. adults  
experience serious  
mental illness

**17%**

of youth (6-17 years)  
experience a mental  
health disorder

NAMI has made a profound impact on individuals, families, and communities through:

- **Raising Awareness:** NAMI has played a pivotal role in increasing awareness about mental health issues, reducing stigma, and promoting open conversations about mental illness.
- **Support Services:** NAMI offers a range of support programs and resources, such as support groups and helplines, which have helped countless individuals and families navigate the challenges of mental illness.
- **Educational Programs and Workshops:** NAMI has empowered people with knowledge about mental health conditions, treatment options, and available resources.
- **Advocacy:** NAMI advocates for policies and legislation that improve mental health care access and quality, resulting in better services for those in need.
- **Community Engagement:** NAMI's community outreach efforts foster a sense of belonging and connection among those affected by mental illness, reducing isolation.
- **Research and Innovation:** NAMI funds research initiatives that advance our understanding of mental health conditions and potential treatments.
- **Crisis Intervention:** NAMI's crisis intervention programs help de-escalate mental health crises and connect individuals to appropriate care.

Overall, NAMI's impact has been transformative, helping to create more compassionate and informed communities that better support individuals living with mental health challenges.

# The Chief Operating Officer (COO) Position

NAMI has experienced a period of rapid growth over the last few years as the nation's recognition of the current mental health crisis has increased demand for their services significantly. As the nation's leading voice on mental health NAMI recognizes they will need to continue to scale and lean into operational efficiencies to meet the growing need for education, advocacy, resources, and support in communities across the country.

It is in this context that NAMI is seeking a strategic Chief Operating Officer (COO) to prepare the organization for its next chapter and build processes and systems to match those ambitions. This is a unique opportunity for an experienced strategic operator to scale and evolve an organization that makes an enormous difference in the lives of those affected by mental illness.

Reporting to the CEO (Daniel H. Gillison, Jr.), the COO will be responsible and accountable for operationalizing and ensuring the execution of NAMI's strategic plan. Responsible for leading efforts to improve and modernize the organization's structure in service of the mission, the COO will:

- Develop and strengthen the organization's effectiveness and ability to execute effectively on the strategic plan with increased transparency and standardized policies and procedures.
- Leverage OKRs, Kaizen, Six Sigma, Design Thinking, Project Management, or Agile methods to define measurable target outcomes and monitor progress in collaboration with senior leadership.
- Coach and develop national leadership to ensure they are delivering against key metrics.
- Look for methods to improve quality, efficiency, and productivity, reduce costs, increase profits, and/or improve control measures.
- Lead the strategic planning evaluation process, measuring progress against the goals of the organization's five-year strategic plan.
- Provide day-to-day leadership presence, building a culture of collaboration and teamwork with clear lines of accountability and transparent communication.
- Assess inquiries directed to the CEO, determine the proper course of action, and delegate to the appropriate individual to manage.
- Work with the National Board of Directors and Advisory Councils.
- Represent NAMI with stakeholders, potential donors, and the Board of Directors.
- Build relationships with the broader NAMI enterprise to maximize innovations for the federated, three-tiered, network and help evolve its operational processes moving forward;
- Serve as the primary liaison to outside legal counsel on governance work to mitigate risks and protect NAMI's interests.
- Foster a success-oriented, accountable environment within the organization.

## The Chief Operating Officer (COO) Position (continued)

Leveraging a combination of deep integrity, passion, innovative futuristic thinking, operational stewardship, and change management principles, the COO will establish and implement a path for success that will advance NAMI's mission and continue to move the organization forward as the nation's leading voice on mental health.

If you are a visionary leader with a passion and an experienced strategic operator, and are eager to be part of an organization dedicated to mental health advocacy, then we invite you to apply.



# The Candidate

NAMI is seeking a proven strategic operating executive with 15 or more years of progressive senior operational leadership experience within a complex, multidimensional non-profit or for-profit organization, and who has been charged with establishing operational excellence during or following a period of rapid growth. The successful candidate does not need to have prior experience in the mental health space; however, they must believe in the core vision of NAMI – a world where all persons affected by mental illness achieve recovery, resiliency, and wellness – and be driven to achieve its mission of education, support, public awareness, and advocacy. Experience operating within, and an understanding of, a federated model is preferred.

The successful candidate will:

- Have a well-rounded operations and technology background, within a nonprofit organization
- Bring a track record of driving operational excellence, with prior experience leveraging OKRs, Kaizen, Six Sigma, Design Thinking, Project Management, or Agile methods to define measurable target outcomes and monitor progress;
- Seamlessly navigate between high-level strategic objectives and tactical execution;
- Be adept and well-versed in change management;
- Be “hands-on” and seek to jump in where necessary to ensure success;
- Be a change agent, constantly looking for ways to improve workflows, streamline communication, and leverage technology to bring teams together and advance the organizational mission;
- Have high organizational EQ and the proven ability to develop and manage a senior leadership team;
- Possess excellent interpersonal and listening skills, high integrity, executive-level communication skills, transparency, trust, active listening, authenticity, persuasiveness, collaboration, self-awareness, and drive;
- Demonstrate a passion for leading social change and share NAMI’s values of trust, respect, and transparency;
- Experience in a federated nonprofit environment.





Applications should be submitted at  
<https://driwaterstonehc.com/position/chief-operating-officer-national-alliance-on-mental-illness-nami/>

#### **Location**

NAMI's national office is in Arlington, Virginia. Relocation to the greater Washington, D.C. area or the ability to serve in a hybrid capacity with 50% of the time spent onsite is required for this position.

DRiWaterstone is managing the search on behalf of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. All first-round interviews for this position will take place via video conference with DRiWaterstone.

#### **Equal Opportunity Employer**

NAMI provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and professional development.

#### **About DRiWaterstone**

DRiWaterstone is a women-founded and led executive search firm recognized by Forbes magazine as one of the leading executive recruiting firms in the U.S. With a focus on purpose and mission-driven organizations, we provide executive search and strategic consulting services to help regional, national, and international clients grow, thrive, and excel.