



Southland Recovery Coalition ROSC Council Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: 2/26/2025 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM

LOCATION: Zoom

PRESENTER(S): Angelia F. Smith, Meeting Facilitator

TOPIC: Navigating Mental Health Resources & Reducing Stigmas

ATTENDEES		AFFILIATION	ATTENDEES		AFFILIATION
1	Angelia F. Smith	Cornerstone Lead Fiscal Agency	16	Christine Cornacchia	Together We Cope
2	Yvonne M. Orr-Blake	ICSC, Partner Agency	17	Latrina Silas	IL Family Resource Center
3	Kathryn Straniero	Together We Cope, Partner	18	Denise Jones	Tender Touch, Executive Dir
4	Kamil Walton	Cornerstone, Deputy Director	19	Yasmeen Hismeh	Together We Cope
5	April Haymond	HHI, Network Coord	20	Marianne Bithos	NAMI South Suburbs
6	Leonard Noble	Cornerstone, Workforce Dev Dir	21	Kenneth Brown	Proactive Community Services
7	Capucine Walls	Cornerstone, Workforce Coor	22	Kenneth W. Bell	Region 1 TA
8	Bridgett Carter	Carter & Carter, Consultant	23	Jordan Steward	ICSC; Cornerstone Comm Navigator
9	Felicia Houston	Mental Health/Wellness Consultant	24	Bahiyah Talilala	Comm Outreach Coord, Statewide ROSC
10	May Salman	Together We Cope	25	Latrina Silas	IL Family Resource Center
11	Maya Hardy	United Way of Metro Chicago	26	Denise Jones	Tender Touch, Executive Dir
12	Souheir Rahman	Together We Cope	27	Yasmeen Hismeh	Together We Cope
13	Neesha Stringfellow	HLM Recovery Will Grundy ROSC	28	Marianne Bithos	NAMI South Suburbs
14	Andrea Coletta	Together We Cope	29		
15	Lori Dill	SSCA	30		

MEETING SUMMARY: Southland Recovery Coalition ROSC Council Meeting

The Southland Recovery Coalition held a monthly meeting with introductions from various attendees representing different organizations, and Kathy introduced Marianne Bithos, the current president of NAMI in the south suburbs of Chicago. Marianne discussed her experiences supporting her daughter with schizophrenia, emphasized the importance of de-escalation techniques in mental health situations, and shared information about training programs and resources available for mental health support. The meeting also covered updates on the play, *Beyond the Door*, which was adapted from the book "Who Said it Couldn't Be Done" written by Denise Jones; upcoming events such as a Food Day event; and SRC's recovery awareness conference, and the distribution of a community survey and asset mapping.

Southland Recovery Coalition Meeting Recap

The monthly meeting of the Southland Recovery Coalition begins with introductions from attendees representing various organizations, including Cornerstone, Together We Cope, and Indigenous Community Service Center. Angela Smith, the executive director of Cornerstone, leads the introductions and congratulates Yvonne on her recent wedding. Kathy Straniero introduces the guest speaker, Marianne Bithos, who is the current president of NAMI in the south suburbs of Chicago and the parent of an adult child living with schizophrenia.

Supporting Mental Health and Crisis Handling

In this meeting, Kathy and Marianne from NAMI discussed their experiences and efforts in supporting individuals and families dealing with mental health issues. Marianne shared her journey of supporting her daughter,



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emphasizing the importance of understanding mental health and providing support. She advised attendees on how to handle a person in crisis, suggesting remaining calm, reaching out to trained crisis officers, and utilizing resources like the Envision Living Room. Kathy highlighted Marianne's dedication and role as a facilitator in Nami. The discussion also touched on the upcoming family class in March, aiming to teach participants how to interact with people with mental health issues. Yvonne asked about staff assistance in onsite incidents, which Marianne responded to by emphasizing the importance of compassion and open communication.

Mental Health Crisis De-Escalation Techniques

Marianne discussed the importance of de-escalation techniques in mental health situations, emphasizing the need for calm communication. She also mentioned that Sertoma Star offers free classes on de-escalation and mental health first aid. Yvonne asked about the training of law enforcement officers in crisis intervention, to which Marianne responded that some officers are trained, but the communication between them and the police departments is unclear. Marianne also mentioned that she offers free mental health first aid programs to the community and police departments. Kathy shared that Marianne has an office in Berman Township. Lastly, Marianne was thanked for her presentation and asked to provide a recap of a family and friends event that took place on February 15th.

Family to Family Class Discussion

Marianne discussed the Family-to-Family class, a mini 90-minute course covering topics from an 8-week class. She emphasized the importance of learning about mental health, effective communication strategies, and crisis preparation. Marianne also highlighted the need for people living with mental illness to understand their condition and take responsibility for their treatment. She mentioned a new program, Peer to Peer, aimed at educating individuals with mental health issues. Angelia expressed her appreciation for the information and the flyer for the training sessions, emphasizing the importance of sharing this knowledge with families in need. Marianne shared her personal experience of how the Family to Family class had saved her and her daughter's life.

South Suburban Community Survey & Assets

In the meeting, Marianne shared a list of living rooms in the south suburbs, which Yvonne agreed to distribute. Yvonne then discussed the community survey and asset mapping, encouraging everyone to complete the survey and share resources for the asset mapping. She emphasized the importance of including various community resources, such as schools with grief counseling and churches with recovery ministries. Yvonne also mentioned that the list of resources is a growing and evolving one. Lastly, Angelia introduced two new attendees, Nisha from HLM Recovery ROSC Council and Denise from Tender Touch, Inc., and welcomed them to the meeting.

Adapted Play's Success and Future Plans – written & produced by SRC's first Recovery Champion, Denise Jones

Angelia and Denise discussed the success of a play they had been involved in, which was an adaptation of Denise's book "Who Said It Couldn't Be Done". The play, which was about overcoming obstacles and redemption, was well received and sold out for three nights. Denise expressed her gratitude for the support from Cornerstone and Kathy's organization, Together We Cope. The play is set to be brought back next year with some alterations to make it even more powerful. Denise also shared her personal connection to the story, as it was based on her own experiences. The team also acknowledged the awards the play received from Broadway World, Chicago.





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April Food Day Event Announcement

In the meeting, Maya announced the upcoming April Food Day event on April 23rd at the Tinley Park Convention Center, aiming to address food insecurity in the south suburban region. She mentioned that St. Irenaeus was replaced by Free Indeed in Dalton due to the former's late notice of closure. The event will recognize Meridian Healthcare, United Auto Workers, Local 551, and Reverend Larry Jackson as honorees. Maya also mentioned that CBS 2 and Power 92.3 will be covering the event. Angelia expressed her intention to attend the event to congratulate Reverend Dr. Jackson, who has been a significant supporter of United Way.

Black Cultural Connection Event Update

Angelia led the meeting, discussing updates and announcements. Yvonne announced the upcoming Black Cultural Connection event, featuring Dr. Fred Hampton Jr., Felicia Houston, and Myron Graham, focusing on mental health and social injustice. Bahiyah shared that the event would be held again next week, and Yvonne suggested sending the information to the entire group. Kenneth reminded the team about the Cook County Region 1 ROSC Councils meeting next Friday. Yvonne also mentioned the planning stages for a recovery awareness conference in May were underway, and it was time for suggestions from members to be inviting guest speakers and vendors. The team was encouraged to contribute swag items for the event.

Next steps

- All attendees to scan QR code and complete community survey if not already done.
- Yvonne to email community survey form to all attendees.
- All attendees to share information on local resources for asset mapping with Yvonne or Angela.
- Yvonne to send out list of living rooms in south suburbs to attendees.
- All attendees to consider attending and registering for the Black Cultural Connection event.
- Interested organizations to contact Yvonne about having a table at the May Recovery Awareness conference.
- Organizations to provide items for swag bags (60-75 count) for the May Recovery Awareness conference.
- Attendees to suggest guest speakers for the May Recovery Awareness conference to Yvonne.
- Southland Recovery Coalition representatives to attend the Cook County ROSC Councils meeting next Friday at 2pm.

Meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

Next meeting> March 26, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

In Person at Cornerstone Community Development Corporation



ROSC COUNCIL

(Recovery Oriented Systems of Care)

Virtual Standing Monthly Meeting

FYI: SRC ROSC Council Meetings take place monthly on the last Wednesday via Zoom unless noted in the schedule.

Mtg ID: 836 3638 1377 | Passcode: 746782



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2025 | 9:30 A.M. TO 10:30 A.M.

Guest Speaker: Marianne Bithos

Navigating Mental Health Resources & Reducing Stigmas

- How families can support someone in Crisis
- How to interact with clinical staff when attempting to check someone into a psych evaluation
- How to interact with law enforcement

Learn



Changing Communities...Restoring Lives!
Always Teaching. Always Learning. Sharing the Experience.

CONTACT SOUTHLAND RECOVERY COALITION
943 EAST LINCOLN HWY • FORD HEIGHTS, IL 60411
708.758.2565 | WWW.SOUTHLANDRECOVERY.ORG

SRC ROSC COUNCIL PARTNER AGENCIES
Cornerstone Community Development Corporation, NFP (Lead Fiscal Agent)
Indigenous Community Service Center • Together We Cope (Partner Agencies)



Funded in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery



ROSC COUNCIL

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Standing Monthly Meeting

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AGENDA – FEBRUARY 26, 2025

9:30 A.M. TO 10:30 A.M.

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Welcome & Introductions | Angelia F. Smith

Brief Introduction of New Attendees: Name & Organization
Introduction of Partner Agencies

Introducing Guest Speaker | Kathryn Straniero

Guest Speaker: Marianne Bithos, NAMI South Suburbs of Chicago
Navigating Mental Health Resources & Reducing Stigmas



Getting Out There | Yvonne M. Orr-Blake

- Community Surveys
- Asset Mapping

Updates and Announcements | All

March 26th> *Black Cultural Connections* hosted by Cornerstone CDC, SRC, Together We Cope, ICSC, and Higher Heights Initiative

Closing Remarks | Angelia F. Smith

SRC ROSC Council Meeting Schedule

July 31, 2024	October 23, 2024	January 29, 2025	April 30, 2025
August 28, 2024	November 20, 2024	February 26, 2025	*May 28, 2025 (Recovery Conference)
*September 25, 2024	*December 18, 2024	*March 26, 2025	June 25, 2025

INDICATES: **upcoming meeting** * in-person meeting

To be added to the SRC ROSC Council as a member, please email afsmith@cornerstone-cdc.org or yorr@cornerstone-cdc.org

SOUTHLAND RECOVERY COALITION
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2024 BroadwayWorld Chicago Awards

BEYOND THE DOOR WINS BIG!!!

BEST PLAY

BEST DIRECTOR

BEST COSTUME DESIGN

THE
Award Winning
STAGE PLAY



Chicago BroadwayWorld Awards Announced
<https://bit.ly/BeyondTheDoorWINS>

- Best Play - at Beverly Arts Center
Written & produced by *Denise Jones*
- Best Director of a Play - E Faye Butler
- Best Costume Design of a Play or Musical - Alexis Roston

"Beyond the Door", the groundbreaking stage play that captivated audiences at the Beverly Arts Center, was nominated for five prestigious BroadwayWorld Chicago Awards and won in three categories! The nominations celebrate the exceptional artistry and transformational storytelling that has defined this production, which continues to resonate deeply with theatergoers and critics alike. The play's raw authenticity and depth of emotion have earned it widespread acclaim and a loyal following.

Congratulations!



NAMI: Family and Friends

Saturday, February 15, 2025. 10:00 am-12:00 pm

Bremen Township Senior Complex
15350 Oak Park Ave., Oak Forest, IL. 60452

➤ What is NAMI: Family and Friends?

NAMI Family and Friends is a 90 minute seminar that informs people who have loved ones with a mental health condition or experiencing difficulty with mental health how best to support them. It is also an opportunity to meet other people in similar situations and gain community support.

➤ What You Will Learn:

The seminar is led by trained people with lived experience of supporting a family member or friend with a mental health condition. They will walk you through the following topics:

- Understanding diagnoses, treatment and recovery
- Effective communication strategies
- The importance of self-care
- Crisis preparation strategies
- NAMI and community resources

➤ What People Are Saying:

"Hearing personal experiences and how relatable my experiences are to them was very helpful...."

"Learning that the illness is what can cause 'cruelty' and poor decisions rather than the person...."

➤ How to Register:

- **NAMISouthsuburbsofchicago@gmail.com**
- **708-852-9126**



South Suburbs
of Chicago

NAMI Family to Family

March 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27
Tuesday and Thursday
6:00-8:30 p.m.

Bremen Township Senior Complex
15350 Oak Park Ave, Oak Forest, IL 60452



NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 8 sessions, educational class for family, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions to learn there is hope and there is recovery.

NAMI Family-to-Family is taught by NAMI-trained family members who have been there, and includes presentations, discussions and interactive exercises. It is a designated, evidenced-based program. This means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition.

What You'll Gain - NAMI Family-to-Family not only provides information and strategies for taking care of the person you love, but you'll also find out that you're not alone. The group setting of NAMI Family-to-Family provides mutual support and shared positive impact—experience compassion and reinforcement from people who understand your situation. Sharing your own experience may help others in your class. In the program, you'll learn about:

- Up-to-date information on mental health conditions and how they affect the brain
- How to handle a crisis
- Current treatments and therapies
- How to solve problems and communicate effectively
- Taking care of yourself and managing your stress
- Supporting your loved one with compassion
- Finding and using local supports and services

Registration is required. Contact Marianne Bithos (708) 385-9126 or email namisouthsuburbsofchicago@gmail.com