



**nami**

National Alliance on Mental Illness

&

**DonorDrive®**



# How NAMI Became the Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Organization of the Year

## ABOUT NAMI

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. More than 650 local affiliates work with 49 state organizations to raise awareness and provide support and education that was not previously available to those in need.

## Challenge & Solution

With more than 100 events scheduled headed into spring 2020, NAMI had to significantly and quickly shift their core fundraising efforts around NAMIWalks to a virtual format. The team rose to the occasion, partnering with their peer-to-peer fundraising platform DonorDrive, listening to their supporters, and investing in new strategies to evolve the way they fundraise.

They completely reinvented their long-standing NAMIWalks events to NAMIWalks Your Way, giving their supporters ways to get involved through virtual and hybrid opportunities. Supporters not only walked, but baked, biked, and found other creative ways to support NAMI. Most importantly, they fundraised like never before. And while overall participation rates were down, with about half of participants returning, NAMI saw the average raised per fundraiser increase from \$95 to \$159.

## Results

NAMI's strategies carried them through 2020 and into a record-breaking year in 2021. NAMIWalks Your Way raised \$13.1 million in 2021 — outpacing their 2019 NAMIWalks total of \$12.5 million, a fundraising feat accomplished by very few leading programs. NAMI was named Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Organization of the Year by the Peer-to-Peer Professional Forum, and for the first time, was included in the Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Top Thirty list ranked as the 28th-largest peer-to-peer fundraising program.



“Our Alliance came together creatively to raise awareness and unprecedented financial support for NAMI’s programs nationwide. NAMI created hybrid and virtual events, allowing participants to choose any activity and join remotely with other NAMIWalks events and hundreds of thousands of mental health advocates across the country. Every step is in the right direction when we all join forces to raise money and awareness for mental illness.”

**Daniel H. Gillison Jr.**  
CEO



- 123** NAMIWalks Your Way events
- 40,264** Participants
- 93,027** Donations
- \$13,142,275** Raised
- No. 28** Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Top 30  
*Peer-to-Peer Professional Forum*



NAMI continues to reinvent their peer-to-peer fundraising strategy with a focus on both virtual and in-person experiences. The Alliance continued their NAMIWalks Your Way events with 45 spring walks and 75 fall walks. Even coming off a record-breaking year, their spring events trended 16% ahead of their 2021 fundraising totals.

# Let's Take a Closer Look at NAMI's 4 Keys to Success:

1. LISTEN TO YOUR SUPPORTERS
2. LEARN FROM YOUR DATA
3. DIVERSIFY YOUR COMMUNICATION
4. FOCUS ON YOUR MISSION

## 4 KEYS TO SUCCESS:

### 1. Listen to Your Supporters

One of NAMI's biggest learnings over the last couple years was to put their fundraisers at the forefront and listen carefully to what they needed to be successful. For NAMI, that meant taking a close look at the resources they were providing to fundraisers and creating simple but effective tools to help them be successful.

They updated their team campaign toolkits and participant guidebooks and created sample emails and social media tools, including social media posts, galleries of photos, and Signs of Hope. The simple Signs of Hope — a flyer with uplifting messages to raise awareness for mental illness that could be printed out and used in a selfie — became hugely successful and turned into one of NAMI's best performing social media ads.



“Listening to our participants was one of our biggest learnings and something we are continuing to prioritize. We’re putting our participants at the forefront and really paying close attention to what they need from us to be successful.”

**Darcey Mamone**

Interim Director, Field Resource Development





Along with learning what participants needed to be successful, NAMI also heard that not everyone was interested in coming back to attend an in-person event once that option was available again. Many of their fundraisers still wanted to support NAMI, but weren't interested in attending a walk event in person yet. NAMI listened to their supporters and continued to offer a virtual option, creating communication journeys tailored to these participants.

To give their supporters even more options to fundraise for NAMI, the Alliance is working to launch a new DIY fundraising program with DonorDrive. From a bake sale to a birthday donation drive, supporters will have even more ways to further the mission they're passionate about.

#### 4 KEYS TO SUCCESS:

## 2. Learn From Your Data

With more than 120 walks, NAMI has a wealth of data to report and digest. They use DonorDrive's robust reporting tools to analyze data across their events and watch for trends. During their spring 2022 events, NAMI saw a huge increase in sponsorship revenue. Local Walk Managers increased their sponsorship through cold calls and LinkedIn posts while NAMI facilitated multi-event partnerships to reach more sponsors.

NAMI also saw participants increase by 80%, but fundraising remained flat. They created a new fundraising challenge to encourage the participants who weren't bringing in donations to raise \$50 in a week to receive a special incentive.



NAMI supporters  
who use Facebook  
Fundraisers raise  
**5x more**



“We can identify gaps and areas of opportunity all through our reporting, create reports on specific participation levels, and easily see who our lapsed participants are. That wouldn’t be possible without the reporting options we have in DonorDrive.”

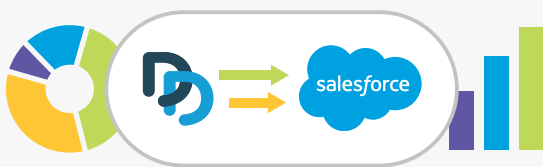
**Leandra Clovis**

Senior Manager, Field Resource Development



## DonorDrive’s Salesforce Nonprofit Success Pack (NPSP) App

With the DonorDrive integration to Salesforce Nonprofit Success Pack, NAMI can pave the way for bigger fundraising revenues and deeper relationships with supporters.



- Sync constituents, donations, events, teams, participants, campaigns, and ticket-holders.
- Easily add custom questions and customize field mappings between DonorDrive and Salesforce.
- Match on existing records, harnessing built-in Salesforce matching and duplicate management functionality.

#### 4 KEYS TO SUCCESS:

### 3. Diversify Your Communication

With DonorDrive Triggered Notifications and Scheduled Messages, NAMI has confidence they have high-quality messaging going out to keep their supporters engaged. They can segment and tailor their communications to virtual or in-person participants, Team Captains, and supporters who might need an additional nudge to reach their fundraising goals.



“DonorDrive gives us the chance to segment our communications easily but extensively, and we’ve really used this feature to get creative with our messaging. We can segment our communications and reach specific participants who haven’t reached \$100 yet or even those who haven’t started fundraising at all.”

**Darcey Mamone**

Interim Director, Field Resource Development

But NAMI doesn’t just rely on email to communicate. They coach Local Walk Managers to pull weekly reports of new teams and call the Team Captains — that’s right, on the phone. Many don’t answer, but they still get valuable information from the transcribed voicemail message that appears on their phones after the call. They also use this strategy to reach lapsed participants — all using easy-to-access DonorDrive reports.



#### **Repetition is GOOD.**

It takes an average of **five emails** for people to act. Reach out to your friends regularly to remind them of the awesome work you’re doing!





#### 4 KEYS TO SUCCESS:

### 4. Focus on Your Mission

NAMI rallied their community at a critical time when mental health became part of the national conversation more than ever before. Every resource kept their mission at the forefront from the Signs of Hope with uplifting messages like “Celebrate a new day for mental health” to encouraging supporters to share their personal stories and customize their fundraising pages in DonorDrive.

One of their most successful efforts was bringing their communities across the country together by creating United Days of Hope, one in May and the other in October. In 2022, 65% of NAMI’s virtual and hybrid events take place on these days, giving the Alliance an opportunity to boost their promotion of the local events nationwide.



**“Now, more than ever, our communities need increased mental health services. NAMI wants everyone to know that they are not alone, and resources are available to help anyone experiencing mental health concerns for themselves or a loved one.”**

**Daniel H. Gillison Jr.**

CEO



Crush your supporter acquisition goals, boost stewardship and engagement, and level up your mission impact with the DonorDrive enterprise fundraising platform. Create meaningful supporter experiences with peer-to-peer fundraising events, tailored Donation Campaigns, native mobile app, Activity Tracking, and Live Stream Fundraising.

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