

Phill Gunning – Bio

Phill Gunning is the Executive Director of NAMI Lexington, a local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Phill directs a small staff of 3 full-time and 10 part-time employees that depends on a large group of volunteers to carry forward the mission of NAMI Lexington to provide advocacy, education, outreach and support for persons affected by serious mental illness.

Phill's experience with serious and persistent mental illness began in 2002 when one of his sons attempted suicide while incurring a complete psychotic break. His son was subsequently diagnosed with Paranoid Schizophrenia leading Phill to NAMI through Family to Family – a NAMI Signature educational program. This life-changing program inspired him to volunteer for NAMI, becoming trained to teach the Family to Family class and then to become a teacher trainer.

Phill has become a relentless advocate dedicated to transforming the mental health system and reducing the stigma associated with mental illness. He has served on the NAMI Lexington Board of Directors, is a past president of the NAMI KY Board of Directors, and has participated in successful campaigns for recovery programming, statewide implementation of CIT (Crisis Intervention Training for first responders), and the replacement of the 186 year old mental health facility in Lexington, KY. He continues to develop partnerships and collaborations and to promote a “one-voice” approach to advocacy, education, outreach and support.

Phill lives in Lexington, Kentucky with his wife, Kelly, and is the proud father of four sons and “Papa” to five grandchildren.