

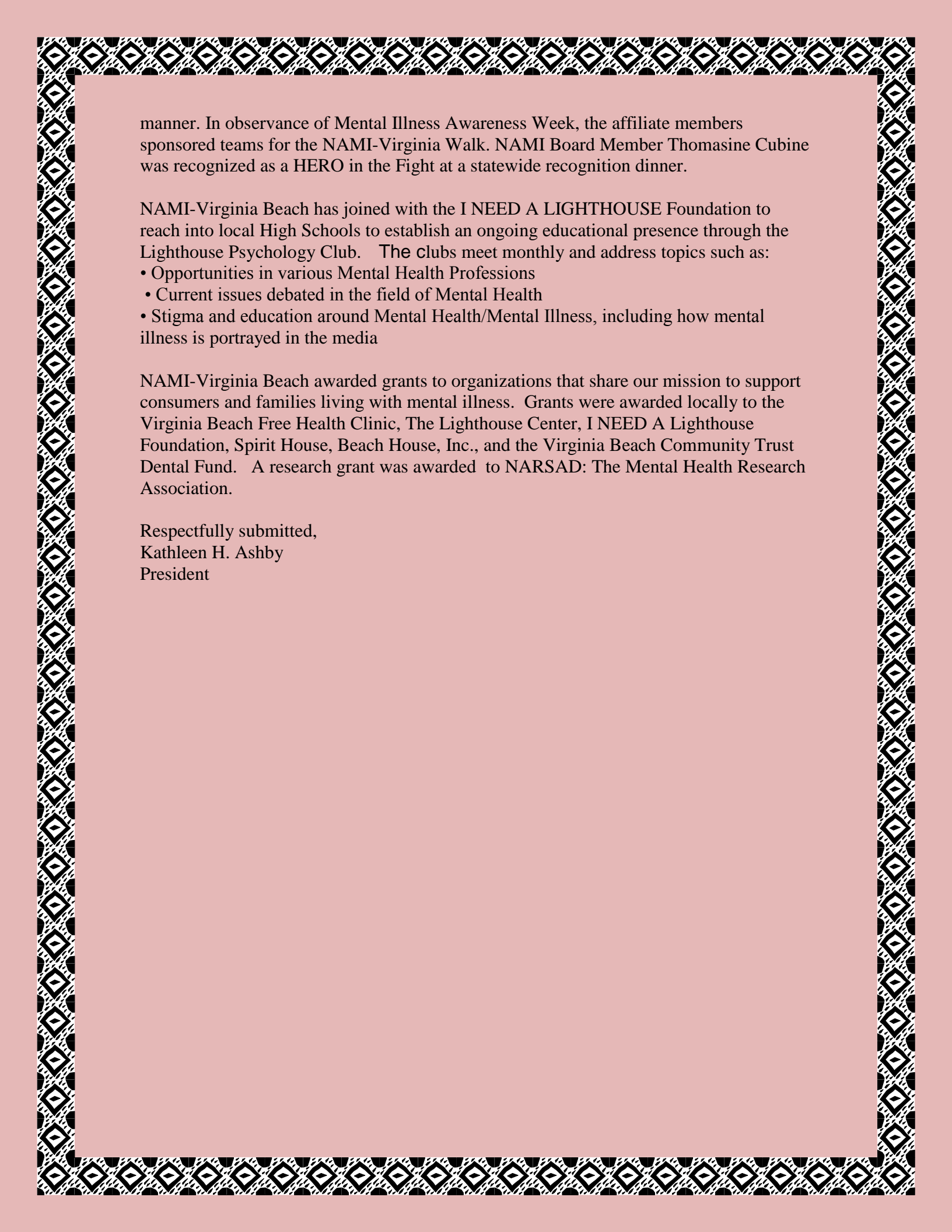
## 2009 Annual Report

NAMI-Virginia Beach is a grassroots volunteer organization working to bring together people with the common goal of improving the quality of life for those affected by mental illness. NAMI-Virginia Beach is a 501 C (3) charitable non-profit corporation governed by a board of directors elected by the membership. Board members serve without compensation and are from various professional and business backgrounds. We are an affiliate of NAMI-Virginia, which maintains an office in Richmond and the national NAMI organization headquartered in Arlington, Virginia.

NAMI-Virginia Beach provides support groups for families and consumers, education and advocacy programs, and a quarterly newsletter. Volunteers staff the office between fifteen and thirty hours a week. A volunteer is available by phone after hours. The phone call volume continues to increase. In addition to calls received during office hours, a number of calls were received after hours, including several from out of state. The majority of callers are inquiring about community mental health services. An increasing number of contacts are made by e-mail from our website. The website continues to provide information about mental illnesses and contact information.

Support groups have grown in attendance and scope for 2009. *Care and Share* – the support group for friends and families of individuals affected by a mental illness and/or substance use meets twice a month. A NAMI member trained to lead a support group facilitates *Care and Share*. In November, a new family member received this training. *Peer to Peer*, a unique, experiential learning program for people with any serious mental illness who are interested in establishing and maintaining their wellness and recovery, was offered for this first time this year. In addition, two NAMI members received training to facilitate NAMI Basics. This course is aimed at the parent or other caregivers of individuals who developed the symptoms of mental illness prior to the age of 13 years. The first class will begin in February 2010.

Advocacy efforts and educational programs were well attended. NAMI members advocated locally before the State House Appropriations Committee and joined the Coalition for Virginians With Mental Disabilities for the annual Rally Day in Richmond on January 21. NAMI members advocated locally before City Council at Citizen's Budget hearings in support of mental health support services. NAMI members also spoke to the Virginia Congressional delegation concerning mental health coverage in any new legislation. NAMI members spoke to individual state senators and legislators in their home offices. Education programs included a presentation about the new Crisis Intervention Teams, another on advances in the field of psychiatry and a presentation by noted author John Koehler on his work with children with brain disorders. Several NAMI Virginia Beach board members participate in the training of new CIT team members. The forty hour CIT program teaches police officers how to recognize psychiatric symptoms and to de-escalate potentially dangerous situations so that people in psychological distress can be diverted to facilities or services in a safe and appropriate



manner. In observance of Mental Illness Awareness Week, the affiliate members sponsored teams for the NAMI-Virginia Walk. NAMI Board Member Thomasine Cubine was recognized as a HERO in the Fight at a statewide recognition dinner.

NAMI-Virginia Beach has joined with the I NEED A LIGHTHOUSE Foundation to reach into local High Schools to establish an ongoing educational presence through the Lighthouse Psychology Club. The clubs meet monthly and address topics such as:

- Opportunities in various Mental Health Professions
- Current issues debated in the field of Mental Health
- Stigma and education around Mental Health/Mental Illness, including how mental illness is portrayed in the media

NAMI-Virginia Beach awarded grants to organizations that share our mission to support consumers and families living with mental illness. Grants were awarded locally to the Virginia Beach Free Health Clinic, The Lighthouse Center, I NEED A Lighthouse Foundation, Spirit House, Beach House, Inc., and the Virginia Beach Community Trust Dental Fund. A research grant was awarded to NARSAD: The Mental Health Research Association.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathleen H. Ashby  
President