iNAPS would like to recognize some of our Japanese Colleagues:

6th National Peer Staff Conference held in Japan

See article on Page 6
From the Executive Director

It has been both with pleasure and with a great sense of needing to get to work to move our association forward, that I have assumed the role of Executive Director. It is great to know that this will be a combined effort with our wonderful members, our experienced and expert board of directors and our partner organizations around the globe.

Peer Support, as a profession, has made great advancement over the years. It is available in many countries and in every state in the United States. Nevertheless, we have much work to do. We desire to see progression, not regression. We want peer support to be of high quality and available to anyone who wants to have a peer support relationship.

Peer Support is like other helping professions in that it is based on relationship. The primary difference is in the nature of the relationship; it is a mutual one. Both individuals contribute and learn from each other. The individual is the expert on himself and directs or guides the services received. They have the responsibility to inform their peer supporter what works best for them. There is no pronounced power differential.

This mutuality is what has helped so many individuals through peer support and why it is recommended by many other healthcare professionals. It is not just a sharing of pain or “having been there” but a creative designing of pathways to recovery and wellness.

Carl Rogers, a renowned therapist of the 20th century came to recognize the value of relationships in helping others. “In my early professional years, I was asking the question: How can I treat, or cure, or change this person? Now I would phrase the question in this way: How can I provide a relationship which this person may use for his own personal growth.” Peer Supporters come from the place of equality and respect for their fellow human being. We provide emotional environments where people can recover and live in wellness.

Being a peer supporter begins with our own recovery and having “high regard for ourselves”. This means being capable of accepting ourselves whether experiencing success or failure, receiving the love of important people or not and having confidence that we can move forward. It does not negate the important trait of humility which means we have a modest view of ourselves. It doesn’t mean that we lack in confidence. We see others as equals to ourselves. We can remember the three
“musts” that Albert Ellis said hold us back from having high regard for ourselves, “I must do well, you must treat me well, and the world must be easy.”

I encourage you to hold yourself in high regard today and to act in humility as you provide peer support, manage peer support or work in another capacity. Let’s have high expectations of ourselves and others. “The problem is not that we have high expectations and others fail to meet them, but that we have low expectations and they do.”

I look forward to growing this important organization in membership, in finances, in capabilities and in the regard that the greater community sees it as the “guild” or association that represents peer support!

I will end with a quote from Goethe from many hundreds of years ago. I am convinced he would be a part of our movement today. He said, “Treat people as they are what they ought to be and help them become what they are capable of being.”

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Conference 2018 Call for Proposals is Live!

Reinforcing Our Roots: Designing Our Future

Orlando, FL

December 3-5, 2018

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotels at the Entrance to Universal Studios

The International Association of Peer Supporters is seeking proposals from presenters for the 12th annual international peer support conference. Reinforcing our Roots: Designing Our Future is the theme of this year's conference, which promises to be an exciting and inspiring event.

Your contributions toward the conference program are valued and appreciated. We will be looking ideally for proposals on advanced level approaches to peer support and innovative programming. We are always seeking diverse experiences and fresh ideas. "Repeat" workshops on the same or similar topics given by the same individual(s) from previous years are not likely to be selected. If you have presented before, we welcome your offering of something new.

Workshops will be offered using a 20 minute PEP (TED like talk), 90 minute, or caucus (facilitated group discussion). All proposals must relate to the National Practice Guidelines. (https://inaps.memberclicks.net/assets/docs/nationalguidelines1.pdf)
While not exhaustive, suggested areas of interest include: philosophical challenges for the peer support provider and employing entity, supervision, inclusion/diversity, ethics, innovative programming, research, starting a new peer program, using the arts, and expanding venues for peer support.

All contact with proposal applicants will be with the individual listed as the "primary presenter." If you are submitting more than one proposal, use a separate form for each proposal.

It is highly recommended that you create and keep a draft of your proposal before submitting online.

Presenters are responsible for their own conference expenses (e.g. registration, travel, hotel, meals).

The deadline for submissions is August 10th, 2018. Please visit our website, www.inaops.org or submit your proposal here: https://form.jotform.com/80817949784173

Over the next several months we will be highlighting the National Practice Guidelines through articles by our members.

Peer Support is Person-Driven

National Practice Guideline #12

By Lisa St. George, iNAPS Board President

Knowing and understanding the Ethical Guidelines and Practice Guidelines about each individual’s right to self-directedness in their life is one of the most vital aspects of peer support practice. When we work with people, it is easy to slip into ways of being that mirror some of the things we have experienced during our “treatment.”

Many of us encountered “care” which included having our treatment plans made for us. These plans often included not just a prescription for our care, but for our life.

One of the most devastating moments of my treatment occurred when my doctor made the
sweeping statement, “You can never work again.” At the moment, I heard these words I lost all hope for regaining the productive life that I had known. Patricia Deegan tells us that sometimes “spirit-breaking” occurs as a means of seeing to it that we are compliant. She also tells us that when we are told what to do, where to go, what our goals are, and how to do what is needed in our lives at every turn…we learn to be helpless. We lose touch with our self-assurance and may begin to view ourselves as unable to make good decisions or choices.

As peer supporters, we can cheer people on while they change that hopeless helpless trajectory. Sometimes, when we know the way to do something, and as we watch someone struggle to learn how to do it, it can be difficult to hold ourselves back from jumping in and saying, “Here, let me show you I know how it’s done.” It is at these moments that we peer supporters must stop ourselves. We must hold back from giving advice and telling people what to do. Part of the journey of life is to build our understanding of who we are, what we can do, and to master the skill of self-direction.

When we step in and do things, or makes decisions for people, we are taking the joy of hard won success away from the individual who is trusting in us to support their independence, their self-direction.

As peer supporters we know first-hand that we survived mistakes, misfortunes, and sometimes it hurt. However, when we found ourselves successful after a long struggle, dealt with our misfortunes, and overcame sorrows, walked through them and found ourselves successful, the joy and self-confidence that came along with those triumphs bolstered our courage to try other things. Every time we tried something new, we increased our belief in our strong center core, our true self.

We do not let people walk over a cliff, so to speak, but we do not step in unless we know there is serious danger ahead. We offer suggestions at that point, and leave the choosing of direction to the person. Every time we, as people, try something new we begin to further define who we are, and what is important to us.

We can believe in the resiliency and abilities of the individuals we serve. How do I know? I am the evidence that recovery is real.
6th National Peer Staff Conference Held in Japan
by Ayako Aikawa, iNAPS Board Member

December 9-10, 2017, the 6th National Peer staff Conference was held at Seigakuin University in Saitama Prefecture, Japan. Approximately 200 people participated including peer staff, other professionals who work with peer staff, and others interested in peer support from all over the country. We aim to transform the culture, to create an environment where peer staff can exercise the power as a peer staff, and to consider ourselves the future of Japanese peer staff and to raise our voices colleagues to cultivate our sharpness.

On the first day we enjoyed a keynote speech by Mr. Shigeyuki Isoda, Chairman of the Japan Peer Staff Association, and a symposium organized by professionals with experience working with peer staff.
On the second day, there was a group meeting with 10 themes. There was a hot discussion being done for each theme.
In closing, people who could not enter the hall gathered together and watched the closing at the standpoint. Among them, a warm and encouraging message from iNAPS was introduced, and we got a lot of encouragement and cheers from our colleagues across the ocean.

Upcoming Webinar, Co-Sponsors:

Reconnecting with the Earth for Personal and Global Healing
Date: Friday June 8, 2018  
Time: 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT

Description:
We are at a pivotal time in human history. Please join the National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery (NCMHR) and the International Association of Peer Supporters (iNAPS) in the first in a series of webinars where we explore the relationship between ecology, how we relate to one another and the earth, and healing from crisis. We have gathered experts from around the globe, including indigenous peoples, to speak to this topic, share best practices, and propose some solutions to the very complex problems we face.

[Click here to register](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7085353375598940162)

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Speakers:

Rangi is a Maori Chief who lives and works in Tauranga, New Zealand and brings an indigenous perspective. Rangi has been recognized for his transformative work with youth for a Maori organization called Te Tuinga Whanau.

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Jode has worked in the human services field for over 30 years. Her career has focused on mental health services in rural areas of Minnesota. Jode founded Minnesota’s statewide consumer-run mental health organization, Wellness in the Woods, Inc. in March 2013. She has served on the Rural Health and Primary Care Advisory Council, and presently serves on the State Mental Health Advisory Council. Jode was recognized for her work last year when she was named the Rural Health Hero of 2017 by the Minnesota Department of Rural Health and Primary Care.
Join iNAPS!

There are several benefits of staying involved with the International Association of Peer Supporters. Many of us have become close friends and we have a great time when we get together. Of course, we also have a common interest, and we hope to further our cause. The more of us there are, the stronger our voice when advocating for peer specialists.

iNAPS is a thriving community that publishes regular newsletters, develops and shares access to recovery and peer support information, conducts surveys, and reports on the current status and trends in the peer workforce.

The INAPS Conference is the longest running internationally attended conference devoted completely to peer support practices. The conference brings together members of the peer support movement to share ideas, strategies, and innovative programs and ideas. Members receive a significant discount on conference registration.

This series of webinars is made possible through the generous technology and technical support of Optum. This health management organization has been a long-standing supporter of the peer and recovery support movement. Webinars are available to all, but only members may receive certificates of attendance.

Join Today!

http://www.inaops.org