**Grand Rapids NAMI Education Meeting**

**January 19, 2016**

**6:30 PM at Grand Rapids Library**

The meeting was convened. Lucas Thompson, Assistant Administrator for the Itasca County Jail, was invited to share with us what has been going on with Crisis Intervention Training for law enforcement and RAP (Rapid Advance Planning) and talk about ongoing mental health issues that face law enforcement.

Megan Gerak, Reentry Specialist for the RAP Program, was also present to talk to us about the Program. In December 2014, the Itasca County Sheriff’s Department in partnership with Northland Counseling Center, received a two-year grant to implement the RAP Team. Megan explained that the RAP team is made up of county and community service providers representing corrections, tribal, health and human services, law enforcement, ministerial, homeless shelter, crisis services, employment and housing. Available Community Resources are available for mental health, housing, benefits and entitlements, transportation, employment, chemical dependency, crisis, food, shelter, clothing/furniture and veterans and victim services. The RAP program works with inmates to prepare them for reentry into the community. To get the process started, an intake form is completed while in jail.

Scott Johnson was not able to attend tonight’s meeting. An informative email about the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) was available for the audience. Lucas explained that, from a generous grant from Blandin Foundation, and $2,000 from the Grand Rapids Police Department, training was made available for the Grand Rapids Police Department and law enforcement agencies in Itasca County and Hill City. They received 40 hours of training including classroom and role playing. Half of the police force attended this course along with other law enforcement officers in Itasca County. The curriculum for the training is designed to “see the person as a person and not the behavior.” The CIT was put on through the Barbara Schneider Foundation whose mission is the “eliminate the criminalization and abusive treatment of people with mental illness by improving public safety and mental health systems through proactive training and public education.”

Mr. Thompson explained that Minnesota police officers receive no training in college or skills as to how they interact with those who are mentally ill or in crisis. Frequently, the criminal justice system is the first call for help. The system is not designed for this response and doesn’t have the resources in the long term. The county jail is not the place for those suffering with a mental illness, but seems to be the only option as a last resort. This is an ongoing and overwhelming concern.

There was time for questions and comments. Thanks to our guests for their presentations this evening.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Loudon, Secretary

Grand Rapids NAMI