



## First-ever NAMIWalk in Alabama raises \$55,000 to increase awareness of mental illness

2014\_05\_17-(9904)-100---.JPG

Participants wait for the first-ever NAMIWalks Mobile to begin on the campus of Spring Hill College on Saturday morning. (Courtesy NAMI Mobile)

**Michelle Matthews | [mmatthews@al.com](mailto:mmatthews@al.com) By Michelle Matthews | [mmatthews@al.com](mailto:mmatthews@al.com)**

**Email the author | Follow on Twitter**

on May 18, 2014 at 6:53 PM, updated May 18, 2014 at 7:04 PM

**MOBILE, Alabama** – On Saturday morning, approximately 500 walkers gathered at Spring Hill College for a 5K walk to benefit the Mobile affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI, which rhymes with "Mommy").

The event was Alabama's first official NAMIWalk. The NAMIWalks program began 12 years ago, and now there are 87 walks held across the country every year.

Mobile City Council President Gina Gregory served as the honorary chairwoman of the event.

Susan Nelson Pickard, NAMI Mobile local manager, said that the fundraising goal of \$50,000 was surpassed last Wednesday. As of Sunday morning, \$55,000 had been raised.

NAMI will use the money for dental care for indigent consumers, transportation for families to visit loved ones receiving treatment out of town, and scholarships so individuals and family members can attend seminars, conferences and workshops related to mental health.

NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness through improved access to mental health services, treatment, support and research.

NAMI Mobile is comprised of volunteers who work in Mobile County to raise awareness and provide free education, advocacy and support-group programs for individuals and families touched by mental illness.

For more information, visit [www.namiwalks.org/mobile](http://www.namiwalks.org/mobile).

© 2014 AL.com. All rights reserved.