



News from the States

Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona



On May 17, 2019, the BIAAZ invited brain injury survivors and their families from all over the state to attend its free annual Rays of Hope Conference at the Desert Willow Conference Center in Phoenix. The 300 attendees were treated to a wide array of helpful vendors, as well as incredible speakers like Shannon Malone, the Clinical Initiatives Project Manager of the Arizona Health Cost Care Containment System (AHCCCS), who kicked off the morning session by speaking on the effects of the state's ongoing opioid epidemic. She was followed by motivational speaker and native Texan Courtney Clark, whose frank discussion on handling life's detours earned her enthusiastic applause.

The lunch program speaker was author of the book, *I'll Be Ok, It's Just a Hole in my Head*, and budding comedian Mimi Hayes, whose presentation on her blind date-ruining ruptured aneurism had the crowd laughing out loud. Her takeaway message focused on finding humor and healing amidst life's "traumadies." The break-out sessions were tailored to fit a wide range of needs. Here is just a sampling:

- the recently formed BIAAZ men's discussion group, The Brain Cave
- a Q&A with Dr. Sean Southland called Ask the Neuroplastician
- Author, advocate, and survivor Amy Zellmer provided guidance in navigating social relationships post-injury with her session, *Oops, I lost my Friends!*

- Other topics of interest included reconnecting and moving forward as a couple post-brain injury, legal concerns involving the ADA, a class on breathing and relaxation techniques, and many more.

On display in the main conference hall were the 300 masks submitted to BIAAZ by brain injury survivors and caregivers for the Unmasking Brain Injury Project, many of which belonged to conference attendees. The Unmasking Project Director Laura Johnson had mask-making tables available throughout the day for anyone to create and contribute a mask to the project.

BIAAZ will now shift its focus to preparing for Camp Can Do 2019, which provides a fun, adaptable camp experience for brain injury survivors 18 and older. This year's camp will run the 8-11th of August at the Whispering Hope Ranch in Payson, Arizona. To register for camp, contact Camp Director Barbara Correll at camp@biaaz.org.

Finally, BIAAZ has TWO new support groups. In Phoenix, join us for The Brain Cave, a discussion group for men age 18+ on life after brain injury. In Tucson check out our Northwest Tucson support group for survivors of all types of brain injury. For more information, contact BIA at info@biaaz.org or call 888.500.9165.

Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado

Legislative Update



House Bill 1147 passed the Colorado state legislature, a big deal for the Colorado BI community. The bill does the following:

- Revises the definition of brain injury to include non-traumatic brain injury, allowing individuals with a non-traumatic brain injury to be treated at the same level as TBI survivors.
- Increases speeding and DUI fines by \$5 to \$20 and \$25, respectively. The anticipated additional revenue is estimated to be approximately \$500,000.
- Adds \$450,000 for MINDSOURCE in the state budget
- Removes the fee collected by municipalities for speeding traffic offenses.

We are grateful to Representative Snyder and Senator Lee who sponsored the bill as well as our lobbyist who guided the bill through the process. We also had amazing survivors testifying in support of the bill.

Recreation Programs

We are proud of our multi-day and one-

Continued on next page

day recreation programs as well as the social events we organize. Participants will experience the best of Colorado with caring, professional and highly experienced staff. The activities include hiking, climbing, a ropes course, cycling, and rafting, and a Fall “Road Trip” to exciting spots in the Rocky Mountains. Winter activities include skiing, snowboarding, tubing, and ice fishing. Survivors of all levels of recovery from anywhere in the US are welcome to attend.

The Pikes Peak Challenge

The Pikes Peak Challenge has a summit for everyone! Whether you’re racing the sun up to the summit of Pikes Peak, lacing up your boots for the 13-mile round trip hike to Barr Camp, readying your wheels and sneakers for the 2-mile Manitou Springs Walk, or participating in the Virtual Challenge.

The Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado offers a fun-filled, inclusive event to inspire every participant and challenge every ability while raising money to support those living with an injury to the brain.

For more information or to register, [click here](#).

Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut



The 33rd Annual Golf for Thought was held on Monday, June 3rd, 2019 at Wintonbury Hills Golf Course in Bloomfield. This year, we were thrilled to welcome our new Presenting Sponsor, United Steel!

Community Bag Program at Big Y

BIAC is thrilled to have been selected to receive a donation through the Community Bag Program at Big Y. During the month of June, every \$2.50 Community Bag sold at the East Windsor, CT Big Y (67 Prospect Hill Rd) generated a \$1 donation for BIAC. Every dollar raised helps support BIAC in our mission to provide critical resources and support to brain injury survivors, their families and caregivers while educating individuals throughout Connecticut about brain injury awareness and prevention.

Don’t live close to the Big Y in East Windsor? You can go to any Stop and Shop store at any time throughout the year, purchase a \$2.50 Community Bag and direct a \$1 donation to BIAC within 7 days of your purchase. You can find the Community Bag with the Giving Tag on the reusable bag rack at the store.

“Fun in the Sun” Picnic

Each year, Project Genesis, in collaboration with the Brain Injury Alliance of CT, hosts a wonderful outdoor, fun event! This is a free summer picnic for brain injury survivors, family, friends and caregivers, at Camp Harkness—an accessible, oceanfront facility in Waterford, CT. Food and entertainment is always provided; just bring your bathing suit and towel and you’re welcome to join us for some fun in the sun. The picnic was held Thursday, June 27, 2019 at Camp Harkness, 301 Great Neck Road, Waterford, CT.

UpCycle Helmet Art Show

The UpCycle Helmet Art Show was created in 2017 by Jim LoPresti. It is a group art show that utilizes vintage motorcycle helmets as its support medium. The helmets are distributed to artists from all over who are encouraged to create art on them with no limitations. Not only is it one of the East Coast’s most unique art shows, it has become a source of fundraising, by way of raffles, to make donations to various charities that are personally important to Jim. We are honored that this year Jim has chosen to donate the proceeds to the Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut. The art show took

USBIA Webinar Series: Neuroscience and Pain

Join USBIA for our next webinar featuring psychiatrist Dr. Erika Lauer. Dr. Lauer will discuss the current understanding of pain neuroscience, the different physiology between acute and chronic pain, the use of proven self-care methods for calming a sensitized and reactive nervous system, and the role of opioids in the treatment of chronic pain.

Dr. Lauer is an Integrative Psychiatrist. She takes a comprehensive, multisystem approach to the evaluation and treatment of mental health concerns. She strives to honor the dignity and power of every person she works with and believes that deep listening is the seat of true healing. She also believes that the body and brain are interconnected and that the health of one depends on the other. She specializes in the treatment of anxiety and depression, mental health concerns during pregnancy and postpartum, the treatment of mental health concerns in the context of chronic medical and pain conditions, and the treatment of mental health concerns without the use of conventional psychiatric medications.

For more information and how to register, [click here](#).



place on Sunday, June 23 from 12pm-5pm at Lucky Soul Tattoo in Woodbridge, CT.

Smart Home on Wheels (SHOW)

Smart technology can be an invaluable resource to individuals with disabilities. This technology can help people live independently in their own homes more than ever before. The NEAT Center at Oak Hill in Hartford is showcasing smart technology in action. They hosted a Smart Home on Wheels (SHOW) mobile demonstration center on Friday, June 28. This was a free 2-hour event, open to the public.

10th Annual Bike for Thought - Thank You!

We had a glorious day full of sunshine and mild temperatures to celebrate Joe Damon and our 10th Annual Bike for Thought "Tour of Lights!" We had a record number of on-site registrants and those combined with pre-registered riders gave us the greatest number of participants for this ride in many years.

Music for Thought - Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who came out to the 2019 Music for Thought at the Connecticut Science Center. Also, thank you to BIAC Board President, Sarah Raskin, for all of the hard work she put into coordinating this annual event. Congratulations to our honorees this

year, including Joanne Berger-Sweeney, Trinity College; Kate Callahan, Singer/Songwriter; Joe Damon; Jillian Gilchrest, State Representative; Lilly Herrera, Lilly Without Barriers; Tyrek Marquez, Connecticut Victims Against Violence; Greg Shimer and Connecticut Brain Tumor Alliance; Paul Siciliano, Heads First Connecticut; and Chion Wolf, Connecticut Public Radio.

Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance



The Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance enjoyed a successful spring quarter with its annual conference and new developments in its Unmasking Brain Injury in Minnesota project.

In April, the Alliance held its annual Conference for Professionals in Brain Injury with yet another incredible turnout. Members of the brain injury community converged in the Earle Brown Heritage Center in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota to share their expertise and learn from each other's experience. This year was particularly notable as it marked the tenth anniversary of our CEO, David King. David was surprised onstage with an emotional recognition of the incredible work he's done. Colleagues and coworkers shared their stories of

David's contributions to the heart, health and success of the Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance as he's helped build a nationally respected organization over the last decade.

This quarter also marked the expansion of our Unmasking Brain Injury in Minnesota project as we installed a month-long exhibit at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis in collaboration with the Basilica Disability Awareness Ministry. Masks from throughout the project's years-long run were on display throughout May along with their accompanying stories. In addition to the mask exhibit, several associated events took place including an afternoon reception and a showing of Jed Schlegelmilch's Unmasking documentary. Information on Unmasking can be found at our new website unmaskingmn.org.

The 2019 Walk for Thought will take place on Saturday, September 21 at three locations in Minnesota: Duluth, Saint Cloud and New Brighton in the Twin Cities. Teams are already being formed and captains are already soliciting donations. More information on the Walk will be posted at braininjurymn.org/events.

Galveston Traumatic Brain Injury Conference

In May, Geoffrey Lauer, USBIA Chair-Elect and Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa CEO represented USBIA with his participation in the Galveston Brain Injury Conference. The Galveston Brain Injury Conference was a two-day workshop focused on pediatric TBI. Attendees, and their organizations focused on acceleration knowledge translation and uptake around three key areas: Recognition, Monitoring and Care of Pediatric TBI. USBIA plans to co-host a series of national webinars later this year.

Brain Injury Alliance of Nebraska



Brain Injury Alliance of Nebraska (BIA-NE) ended the Nebraska legislative session with a huge win! For the first time ever, Nebraska's legislature approved a Brain Injury Trust Fund. \$500,000 will be appropriated from the Health Care Cash Fund (Tobacco Settlement Fund) each year. The funds will be used to pay for contracts with organizations specializing in statewide community supports for assistance of individuals with a brain injury starting in the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

To ensure that the funds are used to serve the state and lifespan, the bill created a 12-member Brain Injury Oversight Committee, which will do the following:

1. Provide financial oversight and direction to UNMC in the management of the trust fund;
2. Develop criteria for expenditures from the trust fund;
3. Represent the interests of individuals with a brain injury and their families through advocacy, education, training, rehabilitation, research, and prevention.

BIA-NE is very grateful for the amazing advocates which made their voices heard and for the wonderful senators who took the time to listen. It was truly a teamwork effort. We look forward to what lies ahead!

Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey



The 37th Annual Seminar for Professionals, *Moving Forward in Brain Injury: Evidence in Action* was held on May 14th. The keynote speaker, Daniel P. Perl, MD presented *The Long-Term Effects of Military TBI: Is it Like Playing NFL Football, or is it Something Else?* Dr. Perl is the Director of the Center for Neuroscience and Regenerative Medicine and Neuropathology Care at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. A sampling of the workshops at the conference included: Executive Function in Pediatric Traumatic Brain Injury; Interdisciplinary Rehabilitation; Craniosacral Therapy; Sex and Intimacy; and Neurotoxicity.

BIANJ has launched a free online youth coaches concussion course in partnership with the Rutgers University Youth Sports Research Council. The course is available at any time at bianj.org/youth-coaches-course.

In the Spring, two locations hosted free Health and Human Services Trainings. The topic, Domestic Violence and Brain Injury, proved to be beneficial to the health and human service professionals in the state of New Jersey. Representatives from the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence, PINK Concussions, and the New Jersey Division of Disability Services presented. These trainings helped to

strengthen the relationship between the Alliance and domestic violence organizations across the state and foster future collaborative educational efforts.

The Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey's teen safe driving program, Champion Schools, hosted its 9th Annual Champion Schools Showcase in May at Six Flags Great Adventure. (See photo below). Student groups from 64 high schools spent the school year organizing peer-to-peer safe driving campaigns, and three grand prize winners were announced at the showcase: Burlington City High School, Columbia High School, and West Orange High School. Each school was awarded a driving simulator from Platinum Sponsor, NJM Insurance Group. The remaining schools spent the day enjoying the amusement park as a reward for their advocacy. For more information, to apply to become a Champion School for the 2019-2020 school year, and to see the winning projects, visit JerseyDrives.com.

BIANJ is looking forward to our two 5K Run/Walk for Brain Injury Awareness events coming up in October.

Brain Injury Alliance of Utah



The BIAU is celebrating its 35th year of service to the brain injury community in Utah! April 2019 saw our highest number of intakes since late 2015, and our numbers and impact continue to grow. In May we enjoyed our 25th annual "Run, Walk & Roll" 5K, and we are busy planning our 30th annual Family & Professionals Conference, to be held in October.

We are pleased to report that we are experiencing significant growth within several major brain injury constituencies. These include our veterans, victims of



domestic violence, and representatives of the criminal justice system. Thus far in 2019, we have been asked to speak at three domestic violence conferences. In April, we were asked to present to the Federal Behavioral Health Court in Salt Lake City, helping to educate federal judges and other federal court staff on the differences and linkages between brain injury and mental health conditions. Additionally, at their request, we have visited local prisons (meeting with both inmates and staff) in an ongoing effort to help those living with both TBI and ABI.

These requests speak to the payoff from the “seeds that have been planted” in recent years. More and more frequently, organizations are reaching out to the BIAU to come to them and provide TBI education. Since early 2016, over 200 TBI/BIAU presentations have been made statewide, including many in rural Utah communities.

Brain Injury Alliance of Washington



A major highlight for our Summer here in Washington State is the 2019 Brain Injury Art Show. This is our 11th Annual Art Show and we are exhibiting for 7 weeks at Seattle Art Museum. We were so honored to be invited by the Seattle Art Museum to share the artistic talents of over 60 survivors of Brain Injury in the Community Gallery of this highly prestigious and heavily trafficked museum in Downtown Seattle.

The Opening Reception on June 6th proved that the community was excited, as nearly 350 survivors, friends and family, and professionals in the Brain Injury community attended. For us, this is an event that provides an opportunity for survivors to connect with each other as artists, but it also provides an opportunity

for BIAWA to educate our community and build awareness of Brain Injury.

Brain Injury Alliance of Wyoming



BIAW moved 3 times in 2018 and is looking forward to staying put in 2019! Our brain injury prevention activities, including helmet giveaways and the Durable Medical Equipment Loan Closet, are generating lots of publicity and interest. The moves hurt the loan closet, but people are so grateful for free access to needed equipment after surgery or injury to help prevent falls, that their frustration in trying to find us is short lived. We are currently located in a repurposed school with another non-profit, a pottery studio and a thrift store that specializes in building supplies.

Our big annual fundraiser is in its 3rd year and we are looking forward to our biggest event ever. The Smoke & Soul Fest will be Saturday, 9/14/2019 and is a Kansas City BBQ Society and Rocky Mountain BBQ Association sanctioned competition. It is a community event that includes live music, a BBQ competition and a Kids Alley. In addition to the sanctioned BBQ Competition, we have a Kids-Q competition and a People’s Choice Tasting tent. The Science Zone sponsors our Kids Alley and coordinates with several local museums to have interactive family activities throughout the day. There is a children’s sports helmet giveaway including bike, skateboard and equestrian helmets. Our goal with this event is to raise awareness for brain injury prevention, host a unique annual community event and raise money. BBQ competitors, the KSBS representatives and judges who come to this event are passionate about BBQ while being fun, generous and supportive. We really enjoy hosting them in Casper.

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OUR MISSION

The mission of the United States Brain Injury Alliance is to engage the community in preventing brain injuries and improving lives. We will accomplish this through awareness, prevention, advocacy, support, research, and community engagement.

www.usbia.org

