



Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut
Annual Report
July 1, 2020- June 30, 2021

Chief Executive Officer: Julie Peters, Executive Director

2020-2021 Board of Directors:

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Mission Statement *The mission of the Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut is to be Connecticut's partner in brain injury prevention and resource in recovery.*

Total Income for 20-21:	\$644,419	+24%
Total Program Expense:	\$492,531	+11%
Administrative Expenses:	\$ 35,693	+16%
Fundraising Expenses:	\$ 20,944	+20%
Total End of Year Net Assets:	\$446,221	+27%

Organizational Overview -

- BIAC's contract with DSS decreased slightly from \$176,184 for FY 19/20 to \$175,067.
- Partially because of COVID, the new Brain Injury Navigator fee-for-service struggled and did not meet budget projections.
- Joy Morse, Fund Development Director resigned for health reasons in September 2020 and was replaced by Lori Shield in November 2020.
- The Office and Events Manager resigned in March 2021 and Sarah Moore was hired as the replacement in April.
- Rene Carfi, Senior Brain Injury Specialist resigned her position in April 2021. The decision was made not to replace her.
- Total staff hours decreased to 186.5 hours/week with 3 FT and 3 PT staff.

Helpline

- We were very fortunate to be able to continue normal program & service operations throughout the pandemic, including the free helpline service. Certainly one of our core components of our services, people continued to reach out to our helpline for information, education, resources, and support.
 - Brain Injury Specialists (BIS) responded to 620 calls and emails via the Helpline throughout the 2020-2021 year. We are again proud to report that we were able to respond to callers in a highly timely manner, with 90% of new inquiries receiving a response and connecting with a BIS live or within 1 business day of contact. Of the 620 contacts, 161 were new callers/inquiries reaching out to our Helpline service (26%). We are proud of our ability to maintain our level of high responsiveness with helpline inquiries given the ongoing pandemic and remote work as well as staff downsizing for our program/services area.

Community Presentations/Outreach

- **BIAC Annual Professional Conference:** We made a decision to offer the conference with a pre-recorded online virtual platform because of the ongoing pandemic and need for social distancing. The conference was very successful, with highly positive feedback from all attendees. We were able to offer 9 workshops, including a keynote presentation, which were all offered throughout the month of April via "on demand" viewing. We had over 200 attendees, 3 conference sponsors, and 9 conference exhibitors. In addition, 100 attendees received professional CEU certifications in their specific professional credentialed areas, with as much as 13.5 CEUs offered for the full conference viewing. The rest of the attendees were able to receive General Certificates of Attendance by request.

Workshop topics included:

- Keynote Presentation: Can You See Me, Can You Hear Me? - A personal story of lived-experience with brain injury
- Aging with Brain Injury
- Covid Related Brain Injury? From the ICU to Rehabilitation
- Mindfulness-Based Approaches to Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation
- Managing Dysphagia in Patients with Traumatic Brain Injury
- Brain Injury Resources: Helping Individuals and Families Navigate Their Way
- Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) for Individuals with Brain Injury
- Lifespan Traumatic Brain Injury Practice From a Cultural Humility and Social Justice Framework
- Use of Telehealth in Patients with Traumatic Brain Injury

● **Outreach**

Outreach efforts on all levels were significantly impacted by the ongoing pandemic. Several previously scheduled events and educational trainings were canceled and suspended as per request of the requesting organization. Although BIAC Program staff remained fully available to offer and conduct all educational outreach activities remotely (or in person with safe precautions and social distancing), there were very minimal requests in this regard.

Program staff offered 2 outreach educational activities during the year, both for the Speech & Hearing graduate class at UConn University. Topic focus was an Introduction to Brain Injury Including Consequences Across Functional Domains.

● **Social Media Presence**

- Website— as of the fiscal year end, there were 17,732 unique visitors – a 53% increase from last year. New Visitors: 87% and Returning Visitors: 13%.
- Facebook— as of the fiscal year end, Total Likes increased from 2197 to 2227 (1.4% increase from last year); Total Followers increased from 2165 to 2200 (1.6% increase from previous year).
- Twitter – as of the fiscal year end, Total Followers: 111 (16% increase from last year).
- Constant Contact/Buzz—as of the fiscal year end, 6,341 Contacts (6% increase from last year) in Constant Contact and 3,795 Buzz subscribers (2% decrease from last year).

● **Brain Injury Awareness Month**

As in years past, BIAC continued to recognize and promote this national awareness month during the month of March. The theme for this year's campaign was "Celebrating Resiliency".

BIAC promoted Brain Injury Awareness Month with the following campaigns and outreach programs:

- Brain Injury: My Story was continued for the 5th year, sharing personalized stories of individuals living with brain injury on Facebook throughout March to raise awareness about brain injury. Stories had a focus on the theme of resiliency and recognizing the people who made this possible. Many of the stories also included related information and statistics about brain injury.
- BIAC Brain Injury Awareness Month materials were created and posted on our website, and also shared with provider council members, support group leaders, through BUZZ and on Facebook.

● **Membership on state-wide Committees**

BIAC staff continued to serve on a number of committees, coalitions, and Boards, including: TBI Advisory Board; Medicaid Long Term Services and Supports Steering Committee; and the state-wide coalition for Supported Decision Making. We were also invited to join the Ad Hoc Child Welfare Task Force, addressing specific needs of children and adolescents.

Support Groups and Social Events -

- In 2020-2021, BIAC continued to provide support efforts to our Support Group Facilitators to continuing sessions via Zoom due to the pandemic, as well as advocating In-Person meetings when safety and resources became available.

- Helpline services and content were readily available to assist with relevant content to group facilitators that requested content as well as provide resources for participants.
- By spring of 2021, we increased the number of Virtual Support Groups from 7 Virtual and 1 Teleconference, to 9 Virtual, 1 Hybrid Virtual/In-Person, 1 In-Person, and 1 Teleconference.
- Participation has been steadily increasing in these groups.
- Monthly check-ins performed with facilitators for wellness, content, attendance, and any logistical changes.
- BIAC is progressively monitoring State and CDC COVID-19 statistics and will continue to advocate for best practices when it comes to the format of our support groups to ensure safety and accessibility.
- Total Active Support Groups at end of Fiscal Year Jul 1, 2020- Jun 30, 2021: 12 groups collectively from-(*virtual, teleconference, hybrid virtual/in-person, In-person*)

Brain Injury Navigator -

- It was a year of growth and development for our fee-based Navigator service! With COVID still heavily present, we worked to continuously market, promote and operate the Navigator service throughout the community.
- The Brain Injury Navigator served 12 clients in 20/21.
- The Navigator service is in full operation, and we have successfully been able to offer all Navigator services in a manner which meets strict state guidelines around the ongoing pandemic and national health crisis.
- As we continue to grow and take on new clients, we continue our aggressive marketing and promotional activities throughout the state of CT with a goal of reaching and supporting as many brain injury survivors and their families as possible.

Fund Development and Marketing

- Eight of twelve Board Members donated to the Annual Appeal. Contributions were down 27% from 19-20 and did not meet the projected budget.
- BIAC hosted three fundraisers during the fiscal year: **Held virtually because of COVID*

<u>Event</u>	<u>20-21 Net Revenue:</u>	<u>Compare to FY 19-20</u>
Walk for Thought *	\$20,120	-49%
Bike for Thought*	\$9,717	-3%
Golf for Thought	\$110,747	+25%

- Community Donations totaled \$10,504, a 10% decrease
- Major Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships included:

United Steel	\$12,000
Morelli Law Firm	\$10,000
Infra-Metals	\$10,000
Gottfried & Somberg Wealth Management	\$ 7,500
Robinson & Cole	\$ 7,500

- BIAC received a total of \$20,750 in grants from public and private foundations
- BIAC cemented a new partnership with NJM Insurance Group who entered the Connecticut market last year. They are a sponsor of our e-newsletter, Buzz, for 12 months; were a Session sponsor for the Annual Professional Conference; sponsor of our Driver Safety Page and Brain Injury Toolkit on our website. They will be assisting with some updated content on the Driver Safety Page, and actively engage with us on a quarterly basis for BIAC information and news. BIAC was also introduced to Impact Teen Drivers, a non-profit supported by NJM, who has a new foothold in Connecticut. We actively engage with and share relevant social media campaigns with them, and they in turn engage with ours.

Legislative Advocacy

Legislative advocacy efforts & activities throughout the year have been limited throughout the year because of a restricted state legislation session in response to the pandemic.