

**Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut  
Annual Report**

**July 1, 2022- June 30, 2023**

**Chief Executive Officer:** Julie Peters, Executive Director

**2022-2023 Board of Directors:**

Kwame Asante, President	James Bergenn
Sarah Raskin, Past President	Jackie Blea
Ginger Mills, Vice President	Stewart Casper
Greg Bubnash, Treasurer	Andrew Groher
Nicole Fortino, Secretary	Maryann McGuire
	Lydia Velez-Herrera

**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.*

<b>Total Income for 22-23:</b>	<b>\$599,479</b>	<b>+24%</b>
<b>Total Program Expense:</b>	<b>\$577,643</b>	<b>+31%</b>
<b>Administrative Expenses:</b>	<b>\$39897</b>	<b>+17%</b>
<b>Fundraising Expenses:</b>	<b>\$26424</b>	<b>-25%</b>
<b>End of Year Net Assets:</b>	<b>\$334242</b>	<b>-12%</b>

**Organizational Overview -**

BIAC's contract with DSS increased by 3% to 185,041

PT BIS was hired in October 2022 and resigned May 2023; new PT BIS was hired in June 2023

Office/Events Manager resigned, and new OEM was hired November 2022

The Pro Bono Partnership provided legal advice in updating BIAC Employee Handbook

**American Recovery and Protection Act (ARPA)**

- BIAC was awarded \$300,000 in ARPA funds to be used for the grant period of January 1, 2023-December 31, 2024. For FY 22-23, BIAC received \$110,000 of the total grant.
- Grant dollars will allow BIAC to:
  - Conduct statewide Public Service Awareness Campaign
  - Conduct outreach activities in Spanish; including hiring a consultant to assist in outreach efforts
  - Enhance BIAC's technology and virtual education and training capability
  - Conduct free workshops in English and Spanish for survivors and family members
  - Increase staff hours to help fulfill objectives of ARPA campaign and provide funding to retain staff

**Helpline**

- BIAC program staff continued to operate the free helpline, and this continues to be one of our main, core services. During the 2022-2023 year, we had 1,350 contacts with individuals requesting information, resources, support, and community linkages. People reached out to us via phone, email, social media and/or in-person visits. Our total contacts via the helpline represent an increase of over 31% compared to the previous fiscal year.

- Program staff once again did a great job in responding to all inquiries with a high level of responsiveness, with 95% of new contacts receiving a response and connecting with a BIS within 1 business day. This is a significant 15% increase in response rates from the previous year.
- **221 new callers/inquiries** reached out to our Helpline throughout the year. This is an increase of 25% compared to new callers from the previous year. Once again, we received a high level of positive feedback from our helpline callers regarding our responsiveness and the great benefit that they had received in connecting with a BIS.

### **Community Education and Outreach**

- BIAC program staff remained available throughout the year to provide a full menu of professional and community outreach programs, with the option of either in-person or virtual platform, depending on the preference of the host organization. During the year, we provided training and educational outreach programs to over 500 professionals and community members throughout the state.
- Our outreach efforts included hosting informational/educational exhibit tables at various community events, including the annual CTAHPERD conference and the Middletown Kids Health & Safety Day. We were also invited to facilitate a book review & informative discussion on memory issues after a TBI at the Windsor Public Library. Other outreach programs included:
  - The Intersection of ABI & Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence
  - Assistive technology for individuals who have sustained ABI
- **BIAC 2023 Annual Professional Conference:**
  - We were delighted to return to a fully in-person event for the first time since 2019.
  - Workshops being recorded for “on-demand” viewing for 3 weeks after the live event. We offered 9 workshops, including a keynote presentation. The conference was highly successful with strong, positive feedback noted in our attendee survey reports. In total, we had over 200 registered attendees for our annual event.
  - 95 attendees received professional CEU certifications in their specific professional credentialed areas, which was an increase from our previous year. Attendees were able to receive as many as 14.5 CEUs for the full conference viewing.
  - Workshop topics included:
    - Keynote Presentation: “Look Closer. My Brain Injury Is Invisible”
    - Domestic and Interpersonal Violence: What Brain Injury Professionals Should Know
    - Is It Time to Switch Our Focus to Quality of Life Instead of “Recovery”
    - Vision: A Crucial Piece for Management of Brain Injury/Concussion
    - Cultural Humility and Brain Injury Outcomes
    - Managing Challenging Behaviors with a Brain Injury
    - Ambiguous Loss and Acquired Brain Injury
    - Brain Injury Resources: Helping Individuals and Families Navigate Their Way
    - Durable Community Living
    - Support for Wounded Warriors Living with Service-Related Traumatic Brain Injury

### **Membership on State-wide Committees**

As in previous years, BIAC program staff continued to remain engaged with various state-wide committees and coalitions on behalf of the brain injury community. Consistent engagement was a challenge this year due to limited staff resources, competing priorities, and vacancies. Committee engagement included: TBI Advisory Board, Cross Disability Lifespan Alliance, Long Term Services & Supports Steering Committee, and the Supported Decision-Making coalition.

## **Website & Social Media Presence**

**Website**— as of the fiscal year end, there were 15,347 users – a 28% decrease from the prior fiscal year. However, the number of pages viewed per session was up 26%, average session duration increased 18%, number of sessions per user increased by 8%, and the bounce rate decreased by 10%. New Visitors: 88% and Returning Visitors: 12%, similar to the prior year.

**Facebook**— Total Followers were maintained, at 2482.

**Instagram** – Total Followers: 700 (62% increase from previous fiscal year).

**Twitter** – BIAC closed its account due to controversy with the platform.

**Constant Contact/Buzz**—6,846 contacts (9% increase from last fiscal year) in Constant Contact and 3,940 Buzz e-newsletter subscribers (+10% last fiscal year). Our average ‘open rate’ for Buzz increased from 25% to 33% (+8 percentage points).

## **American Recovery and Protection Act (ARPA)/ Brain Injury Awareness Month**

BIAC launched a multi-media **Public Awareness Campaign** in March 2022, with ARPA funding, through the end of April. The objective of the campaign was to Increase familiarity with BIAC and our free services so anyone in our state needing assistance knows about BIAC and how to contact us. Public Awareness activity included:

- **Connecticut Public Radio** broadcasting [a collection of BIAC survivor stories that you can listen to here](#), as well as PSAs during the month of March.
- **A series of transit, billboard, and digital ads** delivering broad statewide coverage.
- **WTNH-TV** featuring a [heartwarming story about a brain injury survivor that you can view here](#).
- **NBC-CT** sharing the journey of brain injury survivor, who is also a military veteran, [viewable here](#).
- **The Connecticut Post** [article about BIAC](#) and an interview with Executive Director
- **A Brain Injury Awareness Month social media campaign**, continuing the “Brain Injury A-Z” educational campaign in conjunction with the USBIA.

The campaign resulted in increased traffic to the BIAC website (+140% from the prior months), and stimulated Helpline calls and referrals because of public awareness messaging and news stories/interviews.

## **Support Groups and Social Events -**

- Spring Social was back in person for the first time since 2019. We had over 100 attendees, staff and volunteers. It was an event full of music, dancing, food, and friends!
- BIAC co-sponsored the annual “fun in the sun” social-event picnic with Project Genesis at the fully accessible Camp Harkness Park. With over 100 people in attendance, all reported having a great day of fun, connection, and “community”! It was a day full of games, great barbecue food, beach & and opportunity to socialize
- Support Groups- Total Active Support Groups during the Fiscal Year Jul 1, 2022- Jun 30, 2022: **12 Active Groups, 2 In-Person, 7 Virtual, 2 Hybrid (in person/ virtual) 1 Family Caregiver Support Group, 1 Partner and Spouse Support Group.**
- A new virtual Family Caregiver Support Group began in December 2022 facilitated by Scott Moore and Gino LoRicco.

## **Legislative Advocacy**

- BIAC’s 2023 Legislative Priorities and BIAC’s testimony where appropriate can be found [here](#).

### **Brain Injury Navigator**

- The Navigator service had been put on hold for the last few months of the fiscal year due to staffing issues/vacancies but was able to resume in 2023 serving clients for the second half of the fiscal year.
- Incoming referrals and inquiries/requests for service were responded to by the Senior Brain Injury Specialist as we continue to grow and take on new clients, we will 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.
- This fiscal year, the navigator served a total of 2 unique clients a total of 65 hours of billable service.

### **Fund Development and Marketing**

BIAC hosted two fundraisers and a Conference during the fiscal year:

<b><u>Event</u></b>	<b><u>22-23 Net Revenue: Compare to FY 21-22</u></b>	
Walk for Thought	\$45,072	+28%
Bike for Thought	\$ 7,543	+15%
Conference	\$30,559	+17%
United Steel Golf*	<b>\$71,500</b>	<b>-49%</b>

\*Presenting sponsor for the Golf for Thought (2019-2022) decided to start their own foundation. The decision was made not to try to compete with their tournament and, instead, work with them to present the 2023 United Steel Foundation Golf Tournament. BIAC received \$71,000 in net revenue from the tournament compared to \$139,460 in 2022.

Community Donations totaled **\$4,546**, a 9% decrease from the prior fiscal year's total of \$5,000.

Major Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships included:

<b>United Steel</b>	<b>\$71,500</b>
<b>Casper &amp; de Toledo</b>	<b>\$18,500</b>
<b>NJM Insurance Group</b>	<b>\$11,950</b>
<b>Morelli Law Firm</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>

### **New Legal Partnerships**

BIAC forged new partnerships with over 25 Connecticut law firms, raising \$50,000 in new donations.

Three of these firms joined the 'BIAC Leaders in Law Partners' program, including:

**Casper & de Toledo-Platinum**  
**Carter Mario Law Firm-Silver**  
**The Reardon Law Firm-Bronze**

**Grants – The Werth Family Foundation and Newman's Own Foundation** once again supported BIAC through grants, helping BIAC's grant revenue increase by 20% over previous fiscal year.

### **Website**

The BIAC Resource Directory was reviewed and fully updated in all content areas by our university of CT summer intern. The BIAC Resource Directory provides robust and comprehensive resource information in a variety of key areas for the brain injury community.