HEROES AROUND US

The Biography section of community libraries are filled with books about famous and not-so-famous people.

The Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) needs to look no further than our volunteers and supporters to find countless stories of heroes and individuals who make a difference in the lives of individuals impacted by brain injury. The results of their efforts, courage and selfless giving are appreciated every day by the lives they touch. Each year BIA-MO shines the spotlight on a few supporters and volunteers who make a difference for others.

This year the Courage Award recognizes two individuals who have demonstrated perseverance, determination and hard work following their traumatic brain injury (TBI).

- Centilus Buchanan sustained a TBI at age three. Despite his early struggles, his positive “I-can-do-it” attitude enabled him to graduate high school and he is now studying computer science at University of Missouri – St. Louis.
- Angie Nowak had a successful career in nursing when a car crash brought life to a sudden halt. Returning to a healthcare career and working directly with individuals with brain injury was only possible after nearly two years in the hospital, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, vocational training, and day-after-day courageous determination.

The Bill Buell Memorial Award recognizes vocational counselor Sarah Davis for her outstanding service helping survivors achieve their career goals and rebuild their life after brain injury.

BIA-MO Legislator of the Year Representative Chrissy Sommer works tirelessly on behalf of the brain injury community to improve access to services and explore options to stabilize funding for survivors to have a better quality of life.

The Point of Light Award honors outstanding service to persons with brain injury. This year’s award is for two survivors of brain injury who offer a unique understanding to others survivors.

- Victoria Day is a somatic movement professional educator and BIA-MO Support Group Facilitator for two groups in Columbia.
- Tim Short volunteers at a brain injury rehabilitation unit and shares his own journey as encouragement to others during their rehabilitation.

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THIS ONE WAS THE BEST – SO FAR

The Brain Injury Association of Missouri 14th Annual Statewide Conference was held in October at the Marriott St. Louis West.

Participants provided great feedback with comments such as “Excellent, well organized.” “Sessions were informative and will allow me to implement the information into my job.” “Great day with good speakers.” “Super!” “Good vendors, love all the info we get in the blue bags.” “Love this conference. Always find it relevant.” “The speakers were some of the best I’ve ever heard. This is my third year attending.” “The chocolate cake was delish!!”

While kudos were many, there were also helpful suggestions for improvements. Attendee feedback also included potential topics and presenters for future conferences that suggests the BIA-MO 15th Annual Conference will be even bigger and better.

This annual two-day statewide conference followed by the one-day survivor and family support seminar is the only conference in Missouri dedicated to current trends in innovative therapeutic strategies, cutting-edge and best practice treatment options, and research specifically relating to brain injury. It is considered the premier educational opportunity for healthcare, rehabilitation, vocational, residential and community support professionals in the state.

Mark your calendars and we will see you for the BIA-MO 15th Annual Statewide Conference on October 3 – 5, 2019 in St. Louis.
MAUREEN’S MESSAGE

It is important that elected officials hear the Voice of Brain Injury. There are more than 50 new State Representatives and 10 new State Senators who may not be aware of the effects of brain injury. They need to hear how life changes following brain injury – the challenges and the accomplishments. They need to hear what services are working, or not, and what assistance is not available. Returning and new legislators need to hear from you – a constituent in their district.

Please be part of the Voice of Brain Injury. Share the following brain injury messages with your elected officials through your personal stories of life with brain injury:

Access to Services
Rehabilitation, transitional services and community supports provide opportunities for individuals with brain injury to live, work and play in the community.

Brain Injury Waiver needs to be implemented and funded at the FY19 level or more. This Brain Injury Waiver should be delayed no longer. Sharing your personal story of success from services utilized, and struggles due to limited or no assistance, will highlight why the Brain Injury Waiver is needed - soon.

Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) Adult Brain Injury Program has 76 survivors of traumatic brain injury waiting an average of 243 days for rehabilitation and transitional support services, as of October 15, 2018. These services are needed immediately following a brain injury for best outcomes for the person injured. Increased funding is needed for the DHSS Adult Brain Injury Program.

Prevent Brain Injuries
All-rider motorcycle helmet law must be maintained to prevent brain injuries, save lives and save taxpayer dollars. States that weakened their motorcycle helmet law have had an increase in deaths and brain injuries. It is calculated that the cost to Missouri taxpayers would be an additional $4 million each year if the Missouri all-rider motorcycle helmet law is repealed. Public safety for all drivers and motorcyclists needs to be a priority to prevent brain injuries.

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HEROES AROUND US
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Catherine Vatterott is our Volunteer of the Year. Catherine is a long-time volunteer who furthers the BIA-MO Mission through her gifts of time and commitment to help with in-office duties and whatever is needed.

The Service Excellence Award - Community Service recognize individuals for their exceptional service within the brain injury community.

- Disabled Athlete Sports Association’s (DASA) Training Program is recognized in the area of Community Service. They change the lives of individuals with brain injury, even after therapy ended, through their motto “adapt and achieve.”
- Richard Wessbecher does not let his brain injury keep him from helping others. He volunteers in the BIA-MO office and is ready to help anyone needing encouragement, information, feeling welcome, or just wanting to talk.

In the Service Excellence - Fundraising category, BIA-MO has several longtime and very successful volunteers who raised more than $600,000 each for BIA-MO services.

- Laura Barnes and Kathy Hollo sent an annual personalized letter to family and friends as their fundraising effort on behalf of BIA-MO.
- Joan Vatterott was instrumental in the success of our Golf Tournament as a key organizer and top fundraiser for many years.

Prevention of brain injury is part of the BIA-MO Mission. Kylee Bliss is honored with the Service Excellence Award - Prevention for her outreach of sharing her personal story of undiagnosed and unhealed concussions in high school. Long before “concussion” was a household word, she was educating athletes about concussions and Post-Concussion Syndrome.

Carter Rethwisch, aka the Cardinal Cowboy, is well-known for his efforts and deserving of the Service Excellence Award - Public Relations. His outreach and education to raise awareness about brain injury includes public speaking and encouragement to others.

Courage. Determination. Commitment. Selfless efforts. Helping others. All words to describe BIA-MO award honorees. Congratulations and thank you.
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

When Kathryn Dixon sustained her brain injury in the 1970s she probably did not anticipate the impact she would have on others. She focused on continuing her education and achieving her career goals. Trying to understand changes that were occurring after her brain injury led Kathryn to start a support group in the Kansas City area. With Kathryn as the Facilitator, this group has met each month for more than 35 years. Her impact is profound. Her knowledge and experience are encouraging and supportive. Kathryn’s dedication and love for the support group members are obvious to all who meet her. Now after 30-some years, Kathryn is retiring from month-to-month facilitating. Her service and impact are lasting reminders of the difference one person can have simply because she cares.

EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The Brain Injury Association of Missouri awards educational scholarships annually to survivors of brain injury who are pursuing post-secondary education. These individuals often face challenges but show remarkable courage and determination to create a career path and lead productive lives.

The 2018 awardees are:

Griggs Injury Law Educational Scholarship
- Olivia Fecenko is studying for a Dental Hygienist Associate Degree at St. Louis Community College – Forest Park.
- Claire Perry has an Associate Degree and is currently studying social work at Missouri Western State University.

SSM Health Rehabilitation Educational Scholarships
- Sarah Buffa has a Bachelor of Social Work degree and is pursuing a Masters in Social Work at University of Missouri – St. Louis.
- Brian Underwood is studying for a Physical Therapist Assistant degree at St. Louis Community College - Meramec.

Jim and Lori Winter Scholarships
- Sharita Wade is working towards a Dental Hygienist degree at St. Louis Community College – Forest Park.
- Logan Wise is pursuing a Speech-Language Pathology degree at Missouri State University.

Congratulations to our scholarship honorees.

BIA-MO MISSION

The mission of the Brain Injury Association of Missouri is to reduce the incidence of brain injury, to promote acceptance, independence and productivity of persons with brain injury and to support their families.
IT’S NOT ABOUT NUMBERS OR STATISTICS ...

It’s about people. It’s about you – the people who help through donations. And about survivors and families - the people who are helped because of your generosity.

Throughout the year there are examples of how you make a difference for survivors of brain injury and families. The list of services provided by the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) continues to grow and adapt to the needs of survivors, family members, professionals and the community. At each seminar, conference and support group our volunteers and staff listen and respond with support, information, resources and referrals.

BIA-MO has grown from a small organization making a big difference to a leading resource of information, support, education, recreation and advocacy in the Midwest.

While it’s really not about statistics and numbers, in a way it is. It is about the increasing number of people in both the public and professional sectors that are more aware of the impact of brain injury. It’s about more parents, educators, coaches, and athletes being aware of how to recognize and prevent brain injuries in youth. It’s about the increasing number of our educational seminars, speakers bureau presentations, support groups, and professional networking opportunities. It’s about recreational and camp opportunities for survivors of brain injury as well as respite care for caregivers.

There are only two numbers that really matter at BIA-MO. One involves our donors ... the number of BIA-MO donors is growing. We’re grateful for that and for your continued generosity. Your kindness and donations enable the far more important number to increase ... that’s the number of people we help each day through prevention programs, referral services, or simply being available to listen and understand so individuals struggling because of brain injury know they are not alone ... that it’s not really about numbers so much as it’s about people.
CAMP OFFERS FUN, RELAXATION AND TIME WITH FRIENDS FOR SURVIVORS OF BRAIN INJURY. FREEDOM OF THE ZIPLINE AT CAMP HIGHLIGHTS ADVENTURE AND CHALLENGES OVERCOME BY CAMPERS. $390 OFFERS A FULL SCHOLARSHIP FOR A SURVIVOR TO ATTEND THE DONALD DANFORTH, JR. WILDERNESS CAMP.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORT ARE GAINED BY INDIVIDUALS AT A BIA-MO SURVIVOR & FAMILY SEMINAR. PROFESSIONALS AT THE BIA-MO ANNUAL CONFERENCE RECEIVE UPDATED INFORMATION ABOUT BRAIN INJURY TREATMENTS, RESEARCH AND RESOURCES TO BETTER SERVE SURVIVORS. $750 HELPS PROVIDE SURVIVOR & FAMILY SEMINARS FREE-OF-CHARGE AND UNDERWRITES COSTS OF THE ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE.

BIA-MO REFERRAL SERVICE IS HELP AND HOPE AS SURVIVORS AND FAMILIES SEEK COMMUNITY RESOURCES IN THEIR JOURNEY OF LIFE WITH BRAIN INJURY. $250 KEEPS THE TOLL-FREE INFORMATION & REFERRAL SERVICE AVAILABLE FOR FAMILIES FOR ONE MONTH.

$1000 OR MORE PROVIDES LEADERSHIP SUPPORT FOR BIA-MO PROGRAMS OF SUPPORT, EDUCATION, RECREATION AND ADVOCACY.
IN MY OWN WORDS

The Steps to Recovery - ADAPT

By Tim Landwehr, MAC, PCC
Traumatic Brain Injury Specialist
Guard Rail Recovery
TimLandwehr@GuardRailRecovery.com

The first step to recovery, from anything, is acceptance. You can’t recover from a brain injury until you accept that you’ve had one. Accept it.

Once you’ve accepted it, you need to decide if you want to be disabled or enabled. Decide if your brain injury is going to help you make a life for yourself, or if it’s going to be a hindrance. You need to move past it. If you stay down on yourself because of your brain injury, you will never rise above it. Once you decide not to let your brain injury define you, you need to find out who you are and where you want to be. Decide on a goal.

Figure out what you need to do to get from where you are to where you want to be in life. Talk to your parents, your doctors, and your counselors. Ask your psychologist, your Pastor, and your friends. If you’re experiencing a side effect that you want to understand, ask someone else who has a similar side effect. This is why going to BIA support groups, BIA camp, and BIA Survivor & Family Seminars can be beneficial. For information on any of these, contact the Brain Injury Association’s Main Office. Basically, you need to ask questions about your injury so that you may learn all you can.

After a period of time, once you’ve gotten a lot, if not all, of your questions answered, start making some plans. It’s okay to set a big, long-term goal, but then set some smaller ones that will help you get there. It’s a lot like when you pick a career. Decide what you want to do, find a college or university that has the kind of degree you want, figure out how to pay for your education, go to school-do all your homework, finish school and graduate, get an entry-level job and work your way up the corporate ladder till you get to where you want to be. Like a good boy scout, be prepared and plan ahead.

It’s great to make plans and have plans, but plans are just ideas until you put action to them. Once you decide where you want to be, set some goals, and make some plans, take action and try it.

SAVE THE DATES...

For Sponsorship and registration information regarding these upcoming programs and events, visit www.biamo.org, email info@biamo.org, or call BIA-MO Office at 800-444-6443 or 314-426-4024.

SPORTS CONCUSSIONS: FACTS, FALLACIES AND NEW FRONTIERS SEMINARS
Free educational programs for youth sports and school personnel in St. Louis and Kansas City. Volunteer coaches of community leagues are also encouraged to attend.

Early 2019 – Dates to be determined.

SURVIVOR AND FAMILY SEMINARS
Practical suggestions of life with brain injury for survivors and their families.

Southwest and Western Missouri – Spring 2019 with dates to be determined
Eastern Missouri – October 5, 2019 in St. Louis

NETWORKING COFFEE FOR PROFESSIONALS
Professionals who provide care for persons with brain injury learn about resources and assistance for clients, consumers and patients. We meet from 8:30 am – 10:00 am

St. Louis – Mar 5, Jun 4, Sep 3 and Dec 3, 2019
BIA-MO Office, 2265 Schuetz Road, St. Louis, MO 63146
Springfield – Feb 21, May 16, Aug 15, and Nov 15, 2019
Preferred Family Healthcare, 2626 W College, Springfield, MO 65802

Sign-up for Networking Coffee emails at Alyssa@biamo.org.

BIA-MO DONALD DANFORTH JR. WILDERNESS CAMP
Organized outdoor camp experience for individuals with brain injury.

Sunnyhill Adventure Camp
Sunday, May 26 – Friday, May 31, 2019
Request a Registration Packet at Camp@biamo.org.

BOWLING FOR BRAIN INJURY
Fundraising event to raise awareness about brain injury and support BIA-MO services for individuals and families.

Saturday, Jun 15, 2019     12:00 noon – 2:00 pm
St. Louis and Springfield – locations to be determined.

Join the Planning Committee or start getting your team together! Contact Courtney or Maureen at Bowling@biamo.org.

ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONFERENCE
Professional Development Opportunity for medical, rehabilitation, vocational, agriculture, community supports, independent living and other professionals who provide care for persons with brain injury on a full-time, periodic or seldom basis.

St. Louis – October 3 – 5, 2019
MISSOURI BEGINNING FARMERS – NEW CAREER OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH BRAIN INJURY

Missouri Beginning Farmers program is a pilot project that includes training workshops, educational classes and technical assistance to help individuals be successful in agriculture.

Who: Individuals new to farming and current farmers with 10 or less years of farming experience.

What: Missouri Beginning Farmers Activities:
- ABCs of USDA Programs
- Farmer Learning Circles
- Farm Walk Abouts
- Grow Your Farm eight week course
- Selling Local Foods course
- Apprenticeships

Where: Pilot counties include Franklin, St. Charles, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, St. Louis, Washington and City of St. Louis.

When: Grow Your Farm classes will be held once per week, for eight weeks, beginning in February 2019. Specific dates, times and locations to be determined.

Why: Grow Your Farm to profitability through educational offerings and technical assistance.

How: Register for Grow Your Farm classes contact Debi Kelly with MU Extension – Jefferson County at KellyD@missouri.edu or 636-797-5391. To learn about Missouri Beginning Farmers Program contact Alyssa Grese, BIA-MO Program Associate at Alyssa@biamo.org or 800-444-6443.

Missouri Beginning Farmers Program Partners:

HONORARIUM AND MEMORIAL GIFTS
(August 1 – November 30, 2018)

IN HONOR OF
- Mike Bigogno – Iron Man Competition
- Dorothy Bigogno
- Dan Gabriel
- Patricia Gramling-Babb
- Vince Capriano
- Gwen Brown
- Bob Sargent
- Robert Sargent
- Lori Winter - birthday
- Beverly Rubenste
- Tina Sredojevich

IN MEMORY OF
- Annette Collins
- John Collins
- Bob C. Copeland
- Joyce Copeland
- Samuel Jay Ramsey
- Janice and Leroy Barker
- Patricia and Michael Barnett
- M. Cody Droge
- Sandra and Delmar Feeler
- Lisa and Tommy Furgason
- Kelley and Joseph Good
- Amy and Ronald Holmes Jr.
- Deborah and Carl Matthews
- Kathryn Patterson
- Virginia Ramsey
- Donna and Larry Shutt
- Debbie and Bruce Trammell

MAUREEN’S MESSAGE
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2.

Missouri Youth Sports Brain Injury Prevention Act should be expanded to include youth of all ages who participate in community, recreational and competitive traveling leagues. Most youth recover from a concussion within 10 days of the brain injury, but not everyone. Expanding the coverage of this Missouri Concussion Law reduces the risks of concussions and long-term effects for more youth, who are our children, grandchildren and our future.

Please be part of the Voice of Brain Injury to help educate State Senators and Representatives about these important issues relating to brain injury. If helpful, you may send your personal story to me at MCunningham@biamo.org to share with your elected officials.

The Brain Injury Association of Missouri is on Facebook.

facebook.com/bia.missouri

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LEGACY OF LIFE

Through the generosity of individuals, corporations and foundations, the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO) relies on annual donations to meet current needs of individuals living with brain injury. But, we must also plan and be prepared for the future. Your Legacy of Life for Brain Injury gift helps with future services, stability and growth of the Brain Injury Association of Missouri. Including BIA-MO in your planned estate giving ensures that individuals and families will have support. It also ensures that education and recreation will be available as well as advocacy efforts will continue. Please consider a Legacy of Life for Brain Injury gift that fits your estate plans. Your planning today will strengthen the Brain Injury Association of Missouri in the future.

Memorial Gifts

Inform your family of your wishes for memorial donations to the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO). If possible, include the BIA-MO mailing address of 2265 Schuetz Road, St. Louis, MO 63146 and website of www.biamo.org in the obituary notice. Pre-addressed envelopes can be available at funeral-related services, upon request.

Will Bequest

Include the Brain Injury Association of Missouri in your Will, as a beneficiary. Your donation can be a specific dollar amount, a percentage of your estate, or the remainder of your estate. A bequest is an excellent option to provide for your loved ones as well as make a donation to BIA-MO, since you define the distribution of your estate. To ensure your donation to the Brain Injury Association of Missouri is allocated as intended, include the BIA-MO Employee Identification Number (EIN) of 43-1264556 and our address of 2265 Schuetz Road, St. Louis, MO 63146 in your Will.

Life Insurance Beneficiary

List the Brain Injury Association of Missouri as a beneficiary in an existing or new life insurance policy. This planned giving option can be an affordable way to make a significant gift to BIA-MO since you decide the premium payment amount that fits into your budget. Your donation is received by the Brain Injury Association of Missouri when the policy benefits are paid. Our EIN of 43-1264556 and the address of BIA-MO, 2265 Schuetz Road, St. Louis, MO 63146 should be included in the life insurance policy beneficiary section.

To learn more about estate planned giving options, contact your attorney or Maureen Cunningham, Brain Injury Association of Missouri Executive Director, at 314-426-4024 or MCunningham@biamo.org.