

# Project STAR at Carolinas Rehabilitation

## *SUPPORT LINK*

Spring 2008

### Information for Support Group Leaders

Brain Injury Family and Community Support Office at Carolinas Rehabilitation

#### **Project STAR...**

##### **Who we Are and What we Do**

Many in the brain injury community across North Carolina are aware of Project STAR. Over the past several years, Project STAR has become increasingly involved in brain injury awareness, training, community program development, not just in the Charlotte region, but across the state. It recently occurred to us, that while many are familiar with Project STAR, we are often asked, "What does Project STAR do?"

Project STAR is a program at Carolinas Rehabilitation in Charlotte, NC which serves individuals affected by traumatic brain injury (TBI). Project STAR has received funding through the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Resources, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities & Substance Abuse Services since 1993. As part of the Research Department at Carolinas Rehabilitation, Project STAR works closely with the TBI Model Systems. Serving individuals affected by TBI in 11 counties surrounding Charlotte, Project STAR has also been contacted by professionals and individuals with TBI for assistance across the state of North Carolina. Project STAR has been described as a bridge that connects individuals with TBI with their communities..... in a variety of ways. Following are five major focus areas:

**Education...** Project STAR strives to educate people about TBI. This includes providing information and workshops for individuals affected by TBI. Beyond Tomorrow: Planning for the Future is a workshop that was developed and offered through Project STAR for families of individuals with TBI. Project STAR is also passionate about educating those who provide direct services to individuals with TBI in order to improve service provision. Thus, Project STAR and the Brain Injury Association of NC (BIANC) offer a standardized TBI 101 training for Local Management Entities and their contract providers. In addition, Project STAR offers other trainings on specific TBI related issues through Area Health Education Centers (AHEC), schools on sports concussion awareness, and many other agencies. Project STAR houses a TBI information and resource library in which

information is provided to individuals or agencies at their request.

**Resources...** A major focus for Project STAR is linking individuals affected by TBI with existing resources in their communities. Project STAR identifies agencies which serve those with TBI and collects this information in a Resource Directory for the Charlotte and surrounding area.

**Community Collaborations...** Often community resources are not available for individuals with TBI. Thus, Project STAR assists community agencies with developing collaborations to create service opportunities for individuals with brain injuries. Some examples include community college classes for individuals with TBI, life enrichment programs with parks and recreation programs, brain injury support groups, etc.

**Advocacy....** Advocacy is another role Project STAR plays on behalf of the TBI population, to assist them in obtaining the services and support within their communities. Project STAR participates on committees at the local and state level to advocate for services and opportunities for those affected by TBI. Project STAR also works closely with TBI Model Systems to collect data from individuals who have been affected by TBI. This data is used to describe TBI and resulting needs in order to advocate for services in North Carolina.

**Support...** Carolinas Rehabilitation provides the services for the BIANC Family and Community Support Office at Carolinas Rehabilitation through Project STAR. In addition, Project STAR became aware of the need for a communication network and leadership support for brain injury support group facilitators in North Carolina. Thus, the newsletter, SupportLink was created to keep support group leaders aware of TBI related news in North Carolina. Project STAR initiated support group facilitators' trainings to provide education and support to facilitators who so freely volunteer their time and talents as a leader. Project STAR staff serves as the communication liaison for the statewide brain injury support group network through BIANC. In addition to SupportLink, Project STAR publishes CareNotes, a newsletter for family caregivers of persons with brain injury.

# Update from the Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council

By Marilyn Lash, Chair

This is a critical time where everyone needs to speak up to obtain the funds needed for brain injury services in North Carolina. The Division of Mental Health (DMH) has prepared its budget for the next fiscal year which will begin in July 2008. This includes a request for \$3.5 million for brain injury services – a major increase over this and previous years.

Included in this request are funds for the Division to address the needs of veterans, including National Guard and Reserve members as they return from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. They are playing a critical role in the Global War on Terror through Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Brain injury is recognized as the signature wound of these conflicts due to the high numbers of blasts and explosions from improvised explosive devices, commonly called IEDs. Many service members are receiving traumatic brain injuries that range from severely disabling conditions to concussions. There is also a high incidence of post traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) which can have serious consequences for individuals and their families. As our service members return to their families and communities, they will need help, support and education about brain injury and PTSD. The Brain Injury Association of North Carolina is already reaching out to help these veterans, service members and families as they resume their lives, but much more can be done.

The Advisory Council strongly supports the budget request by the Division of Mental Health to expand its brain injury programs to include veterans and service members. The budget request also includes funding to support community based services for persons with traumatic brain injury. This includes residential services, support for families, and community services.

Several weeks ago, Sandra Farmer (BIANC), David Forsythe (Pearson County Group Homes), Carol Ornitz (parent) and I met with Dempsey Benton, Secretary of the Dept. of Health and Human Services to urge his support for the Division's budget request of \$3.5 million for brain injury services. We are glad to report that he was very receptive and included this request in the DMH budget which is now being reviewed by Governor Easley.

Once the DMH budget leaves the Governor's office and goes to the Legislature, it is time for you to speak up. Every legislator we have met with has stressed the importance of advocacy by families and persons with brain injury. Whether it is by letter, email, phone or a personal visit, it makes a difference. Sandra Farmer and Peggy Philbrick will be leading this grass roots advocacy initiative. Please keep in touch with them to learn the details of the final budget request for brain injury funding which is expected to move to the Legislature very soon. Then CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR and ask for their support.

## ***LME recognizes Brain Injury Awareness Month***

### ***Smoky Mountain Center Host Brain Injury Awareness Event***

On Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, The Smoky Mountain Center hosted a **Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Fair**. The event was held at Watauga Hospital Auditorium in Boone and featured displays by service agencies that serve persons with brain injury and their families.

A special highlight of the event was Keynote Speaker, Raheem Allen, a survivor of traumatic brain injury. Raheem, who has been an inspiration to survivors and service providers alike., shared his story from the time of his injury through the present. His speech which emphasized his determination to lead a productive life and to give back by becoming a counselor for others dealing with disability, was humorous, enlightening and inspiring to everyone who attended.

Smoky Mountain Center has created a emphasis on traumatic brain injury that focuses on improving life quality and goal achievement for their brain injury consumers. Person Centered Planning is essential to serving persons with brain injury, and Raheem, along with other clients of the Smoky Mountain Center, reiterate this appropriateness of this approach.

Robin Paige, from the Smokey Mountain Center, hopes that the event will be an annual occurrence and that it will grow each year. We share those hopes.

## BIAUSA focus on Seniors

Although March is the month designated as Brain Injury Awareness Month, brain injury advocates should seize every opportunity to promote brain injury awareness and prevention, not just during March, but year round.

With this in mind, the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) is joining with The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) during the month of May to promote brain injury prevention. The CDC launched the "Help Seniors Live Better, Longer: Prevent Brain Injury" initiative in March and materials are now available for download through the BIAUSA website. May is Senior Adult Month, so it is a good time to educate seniors about brain injury.

BIANC, as a charter member of BIAUSA, plans to participate in this prevention effort. Support Groups can play a large role in educating their communities during this time by reaching out to seniors in their community.

There are several ways to get involved in this initiative:

- Order free fall prevention checklist and brochures from the Centers for Disease Control.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/adultfalls.htm>
- Contact your local council on aging or any other community programs that serve senior adults and arrange to attend one of their meetings and talk about brain injury prevention.
- Set up displays in your community that can help create awareness. You can order free posters from the CDC to use in your community displays.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/pubs/ncipc.aspx>

Brain injury can happen to anyone at any age. Falls account for 28% of all brain injuries in the US, and are the leading cause of brain injury in senior adults and young children.

Please challenge your support group members to take this opportunity to educate the senior adults in your community so they can "Live Better, Longer, by Preventing Brain injury"

## A Note From Down East...

*Darlene Wetzel*

*BJANE Eastern Region Family & Community Support Office*

The Eastern Family & Community Support Office in Greenville started off the New Year with getting the support groups in gear for Brain Injury Awareness Month in March. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Walk and Roll A Thon was held in Greenville at the Colonial Mall on March the 29, 2008.

In February, we were involved with the ECU Adapted Scuba Clinic at the Pitt Memorial Hospital Rehabilitation Pool, and Cultural Arts Day at ViQuest. This an annual event with which we collaborate with the Support Team for Active Recreation. There were a number of activities such as dance, crafts, lunch and music to enjoy.

In Celebration of Brain Injury Awareness Month, a cookbook called, Food for Thought, was published and sold by the UHS Regional Rehabilitation Center Brain Injury Team. All proceeds from this cookbook sale will go to support the Brain Injury Association of NC. The Pediatric Brain Injury Program organized a chili sale and it was a huge success!

On March 29 we will held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Walk and Roll A Thon. We had a special guest, Widgie Kornegy, from the Over the Bridge, Brain Injury and Stroke Support Group, Rocky Mt as our MC. We will also had the Greenville Fire and Rescue with Sparky the Fire Dog and Bunkers the Clown with a Safety/Prevention presentation.

In April, the Annual Active Living Beach Retreat, is co-sponsored by ECU Campus Recreation & Wellness, the Walker Center, STAR and the Brain Injury Association provide the opportunity to experience the outdoors and engage in a variety of campground activities, such as fishing, kite flying, movies, canoeing/kayaking and other games in beautiful surroundings at a fully accessible camp site in Pine Knoll Shores, NC.

We also welcome new employees, Darnell Hooker and Queenie Johns and extend our best wishes to Jennifer Lenoir who is now heading up the new Independent Living office in Greenville.

### **Charlotte Area Brain Injury Association Annual Water Skiing and Picnic**

**Saturday, June 21, 2008**

**11:00**

**Lake Norman YMCA**

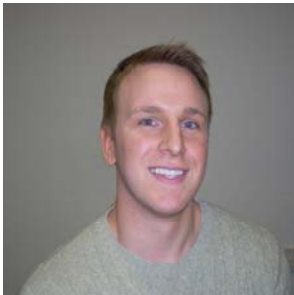
**Come join us for a fun filled day of adaptive water skiing, boating and a cookout hosted by the Charlotte Area Brain Injury Association**

**For additional information, contact Project STAR at Carolinas Rehabilitation at 704-355-1502**

## ***Getting to know you***

**Members of the Board of Directors of the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina  
Profiles prepared and contributed by: Ana King**

**Mark Eagle** was struck by a drunk driver while crossing the street in Greenville, North Carolina On February 19, 2000. As a result of this impact he suffered numerous injuries, the most severe and lasting of which were injuries to his frontal and temporal lobes. The accident occurred while he was in his second year of college. Despite the severity of these injuries, he returned to school the next semester. "This proved to be the most difficult 4 months of my life", Mark says. He dealt with many of the problems that many brain injury survivors deal with on a regular basis. Among these were severe problems with short-term memory, long-term memory, concentration, anxiety, and confusion. Through recognizing these issues and learning to cope with his newfound learning deficits, he was still able to graduate from East Carolina University with the distinction of Outstanding Graduating Senior and a 3.8 GPA.



**Mark Eagle**

Mark now speaks publicly about brain injury recovery and coping strategies. He speaks to brain injury survivors, their families, and the general public.... often at Brain Injury Support meetings in the Charlotte area. He also coordinates monthly luncheons for brain injury survivors and family members offering them an opportunity to socialize in a setting with others who deal with similar issues as a result of their brain injury. He has been told that this has been especially beneficial to higher functioning brain injury survivors whose lives appear normal but have struggles and have a hard time finding a setting in which they can share their concerns. Mark has also advocated for brain injury awareness among college students at UNCC by giving a speech to a class of about 40 students.

Mark previously served as a financial consultant providing assistance with budget management, retirement and long term care planning, education funding, and risk prevention to individuals, families, and business owners. He is now associated with Bank of America's Global Wealth and Investment Management Group, working with financial advisors to develop estate planning and risk management strategies for the Bank's clients.

Although he works full time, Mark is enrolled at Wake Forest University's evening MBA program in Charlotte. "The purposes of my involvement in this program is to challenge my mind, as I have done since my accident, as well as further develop my understanding of organizational structures and most importantly, my ability as a leader."

With expertise in finance, a passion for advocacy, and a determination to excel and challenge others to excel, the BIANC Board of Directors was eager to recruit Mark to serve on the Board. His first term as a director began in January, 2007.

## **Hank Baker**

"We are all like links in a chain. If one of those links is removed, the chain will fall apart. Every individual can make a difference. No one should ever discount his own importance in that chain." This is the philosophy of Hank Baker – company supervisor, BIANC Board member, and parent of an adult son who sustained a brain injury.

This philosophy may well have begun when he was a child growing up in Smithfield, NC where he learned to negotiate his position among three older sisters. But it has also served him well during his 25-year career with Public Service North Carolina (PSNC) where he supervises the Service Department and chairs a committee that focuses on excellence in customer service.

Hank met his wife Susan after moving to Raleigh in 1976. They have two sons – Ricky, age 28 and Joey, age 19. One rainy night in November, 1994, Ricky was struck by a car traveling 45 miles-per-hour while he was crossing a busy road on his bicycle. Fifty percent of the right side of his skull was crushed from the impact and the glass in the windshield of the vehicle which hit him was shattered.

"We were immediately thrust into a crash course in TBI whether we wanted to be or not." We saw things and learned things we would never have chosen to see or learn. But if we were going to take care of and advocate for our son, we had to do it."

Ricky spent the first 6 months following the accident at Wake Medical Center followed by 3 months at Horizons Rehabilitation Center in Durham. Susan, who has a background in accounting, was working for Tant Accounting at that time. "I will never forget the kindness of Susan's employer, Beverly Tant. She told Susan to take the rest of the year off with pay and allowed her to work from home whenever she was ready to work again.



**Hank Baker**

"There is such a paradox in having a family member disabled by TBI. I look at Ricky now and there is this constant reminder of the limits on his life and the things he will never be able to experience. On the other hand, I know how blessed we are that he is as well off as he is."

Ricky now lives in one of the group homes operated by ReNu Life in Goldsboro. Hank is happy that he and his family are able to look beyond Ricky's needs and be involved with the full "community" of survivors. Ricky's accident has brought Hank and Ricky closer together. They participate together in activities sponsored by ReNu Life and by BIANC – such as Camp Carefree and the Walk & Roll-a-thons.

"Camp Carefree is the highlight of the year for our family. It gives Ricky an opportunity to have fun in an environment with other people who understand him." Hank has been on the planning committee for Camp Carefree for the past two years and is heavily involved in the organization, set up and cleanup of the camp. "It requires a lot of work, and I am so tired when I leave. But it is a 'good kind of tired'."

And now Susan and son Joey are also involved. "I am so proud of Joey. He gives freely of his time and he is so good with the survivors." Hank said that Joey has grown up in an environment where he has learned to put the needs of others first. His brother Ricky had lived at home with the family for several years before going to ReNu Life as had Susan's father who suffered from some healthcare issues.

Hank has served on the BIANC Board of Directors for the past three years. "I like serving on the Board. It charges my batteries. And there is so much going on that I don't have time to really get to know and find that I dislike anyone."

When the Board needed someone to serve as Director of Finance a couple of years ago, Hank stepped up to the plate even though his background was not in finance. He believes that when there is a need, there is a responsibility for members to take some risks and step forward to meet the need.

Hank is a self-described "perfectionist" who likes to see things get done...and get done well. He would like to move mountains if he could. But short of moving mountains, he has learned that great things can be accomplished when everyone works together as a team and speak with a collective voice.

He believes that the Board needs the support of the people it is trying to serve. "There is power in a collective voice. It strengthens the Board's effectiveness exponentially."

Hank says that he has also been thinking a lot lately about the power of a collective voice in regard to the troubled Mental Health system. Reorganizing and restoring the credibility of that system is going to take the input of everyone who is connected to the system in any way – whether they work for the system or stand to benefit from it. "Everyone should be contacting their legislators in order to have a voice in how the system is rebuilt."

## *Up-Coming Events*

**2008 National Brain Injury Caregiver's Conference**

**Westin Dallas/Fort Worth, Dallas, TX**

**June 6-8, 2008**

**For more information, please contact Jenny Toth at (703)761-0750 ext 621 or [jtoth@biausa.org](mailto:jtoth@biausa.org)**

**Caregivers Conference**

**Williamsburg, Virginia at the Hospitality House**

**June 7, 2008**

**For additional information, contact Linda Lee at [lee@braininjurysvcs.org](mailto:lee@braininjurysvcs.org) or 704-451-8881**

**From time to time Project STAR asks individuals involved in Brain Injury in North Carolina to contribute articles for publication in SupportLink. The article below was contributed by Ana King, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina, and longtime brain injury advocate. As you will see from the article, Ana has played an important role in improving brain injury awareness and services for persons living with brain injury in North Carolina.**

## **The State of the State – Brain Injury in North Carolina**

### *Looking Back and Looking Forward*

by Ana King, Board Chair

Following about 15 years of experience as a Social Worker with various county government agencies, I was offered a job in 1986 as a Residential Services Specialist with what was then the State Division of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services. The following year, the name was officially changed in statute to the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services as it expanded its mission to include provision of services to persons with all developmental disabilities including Traumatic Brain Injury (regardless of the age of onset of the injury). This was a huge undertaking, and I remember that a lot of training occurred over the next few years to educate state and local government employees about autism, cerebral palsy, brain injury, and a variety of other developmental disabilities for which they had previously had no legal responsibility. Some new funding was appropriated to begin building a service delivery system for the broader population and it was allocated to the local programs on a per capita basis if I remember correctly.

But it was not until 1993 that the Division secured any funding specifically for brain injury and this was due to the legislative advocacy efforts of one passionate parent of a son with a brain injury. She walked the halls of the General Assembly and spoke to anyone who would listen, refusing to take “no” for an answer to her plea for support for her son and others who had sustained brain injuries. I got caught up in the passion of this woman, developed an interest in TBI myself and was ultimately hired into a staff position (TBI Program Specialist) that was created within the Division to manage the newly secured funds and manage the outcry for help that the Division was starting to experience on a daily basis.

TBI Project STAR was born from this initial appropriation. Project STAR was willing to try anything innovative. Staff held a series of “town meetings” throughout the state to learn what survivors and family members had to say about their needs. And then they designed and piloted some projects in their 11-county catchment area designed to meet those identified needs. Eventually Project STAR would become an affiliate of the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina (BIANC).

Over the next 8 years the state appropriation grew in small measures, and there was about \$1.5 million in a line item for brain injury when I retired in 2001. Some of the funding was used for contractual services with Project STAR and BIANC and a few other now defunct projects. Remaining funds were managed out of the state office and allocated on a case-by-case basis. We had some high dollar cases as much of my responsibility focused on locating appropriate services in state for persons with significant behavior issues who were being treated at that time in out-of-state facilities.

It was clear that the state needed a Medicaid waiver or some sort of Medicaid funding stream for persons with brain injury in order to stretch the state dollars and serve more individuals. A waiver was actually written in the early 1990s but was rejected by the Division of Medical Assistance (DMA) because the agency had too many other waivers or “mental health” projects on its plate at that time. Client Behavior Intervention (CBI) was offered in its stead and did serve persons with brain injury well until overspending became a problem with the service across the board and rates were cut and restrictions put on the service.

Eventually the General Assembly mandated that a study of the need for a TBI waiver be conducted, and study results confirmed the need. During the year that I left the agency a small amount of a new appropriation from Coalition 2001 efforts was set aside for Medicaid waiver match. The waiver would have served only 25 people at the most (if set up on a slot basis), but it was at least a beginning. But then there was no one to write the waiver. (The waiver written in the early 1990s was no longer a good reflection of the service needs) In-house Division staff who had the appropriate skills to write a waiver were locked into rewriting the CAP-MR/DD waiver and that was their priority.

I look back on my time with state government with mixed feelings ...often with a great deal of frustration. There was so much to do on a daily basis that I spent most of my time just trying to survive each new crisis instead of being able to focus on systems change. And with the complexity of the mental health system and its myriad of problems and needs, TBI was simply never on the radar screen of the people in the upper echelons of state government who were in a position to bring about needed changes.

Now that I am no longer associated with state government, I can see the big picture. I can see how important it is to educate and form alliances with everyone in state government who is even remotely capable of helping to bring about systems change so that they will catch the same passion about brain injury that I caught from that parent so many years ago. While I was able to develop positive working relationships with BIANC, Project STAR, private service providers, and area programs (as they were called at that time), I operated largely in isolation within state government for a number of years. One or two people operating in isolation in a system as big as the mental health system cannot accomplish change. Enormous support is needed from staff within their own agency as well as from those outside of the agency. Eventually our Community Capacity Building Branch was established and we developed a team approach to our efforts. This was a good beginning to spreading the word about brain injury within our Division.

In spite of all the negative publicity that is currently surrounding the Mental Health system, I'm starting to feel better about the future for people with TBI in NC. Establishing the statewide TBI Advisory Council was one of the smartest moves we have made in recent years. The fact that it is established in statute and appointments to the council are made by top government officials and legislators gives it some teeth. A good partnership has been forged between the leadership of the TBI Advisory Council, BIANC, and the Division. I believe these leaders will **insist** that TBI reaches and stays on the radar screen of top government officials and legislators.

I feel good about BIANC. BIANC has a capable leader in Sandra Farmer and some hard-working staff members. We also have some very sharp members on our Board who have a broad skill set. And I continue to appreciate the efforts of Project STAR. What we need now - and will be working on through our public policy initiatives - is a strong grassroots advocacy network to under gird our efforts and help us drive legislative and policy changes.



### ***Drive and Educate Brain Injury Awareness License Plates***

Help raise awareness and show your support by purchasing a Brain Injury Awareness license plate. A portion of the proceeds will go to BIANC to help continue to offer help, hope, and a voice for people with brain injury and their families.

BIANC would like to sell at least 300 license plates. For the License Plate Application you can call the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina at 800-377-1464 or download the application online at [www.bianc.net](http://www.bianc.net).

BIANC will be taking the orders for regular as well as personalized plates. After 300 of the Brain Injury Awareness plates are received by BIANC, the license plate order will be placed with the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles. The plates will be date numbered and will be printed in the order they are received.

Payment must be made in advance. Please make out your check payable to BIANC and mail it to

BIANC  
PO Box 10912  
Raleigh, NC 27605

The Brain Injury Association of North Carolina has a dedicated Board of Directors who provide leadership for the organization. Below is the Five Year Strategic Plan developed by the Board of Directors. This plan outlines the goals of the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina over the next five years.

Adopted October 6, 2007

### **BIANC Five-Year Strategic Plan**

**Objective I:** BIANC will be a highly visible organization recognized statewide as the central resource for information and support for persons with brain injury and their families.

**Goal 1:** BIANC and its Board of Directors will have a well-defined purpose and identity so that its members and potential corporate sponsors will understand what they are getting for their money.

***Strategies:***

1. Revise the mission statement to better reflect the purpose of the organization. Include the mission statement on all documents originating from BIANC
2. The Board of Directors will demonstrate its role as an active and vital working body by: serving on a committee or performing a specific function that advances the growth of the organization; periodically contributing articles about their activities for BIANC publications to keep the membership well-informed; and, attending BIANC sponsored activities
3. The BIANC website will be kept up-to-date and future activities promoted well in advance of the event.

**Goal 2:** BIANC will develop and advance a Public Policy/Legislative Advocacy Agenda

***Strategies:***

1. The Public Policy Director (of the Board) will establish a committee to look at public policy/legislative priorities and present these to the Board for approval.
2. The Public Policy committee will develop a strategy for mobilizing support groups for grass roots advocacy.
3. The Public Policy committee in concert with other Board members and staff will select and cultivate relationships with legislators and make our agenda their agenda.
4. BIANC staff will create a direct link to legislators via the website.
5. Links to other advocacy organizations will be added to the website.

**Goal 3:** BIANC will have a key role with state agencies, advocacy groups, and professional organizations and councils in the development of policies, programs, and services that benefit persons with brain injury.

***Strategies:***

1. Identify gatekeepers/liasons within each organization or agency
2. Solicit Board members from identified agencies
3. Assure that BIANC has representation on all councils whose activities may benefit persons with brain injury
4. Support the establishment of dedicated state neurobehavioral unit
5. Collaborate with other agencies regarding the development of a TBI Waiver
6. Establish/solidify relationships with brain injury boards in other states

**Goal 4:** BIANC and its Board of Directors will support the growth and development of a statewide network of support groups available to survivors of brain injury and families in all areas of the state.

***Strategies:***

1. Provide staff support to assist with the startup of support groups.
2. Maintain a position on the Board of Directors that serves in a liaison capacity to support groups and assure that all support group leaders are familiar with this person/position and how to contact him.
3. Provide periodic face-to-face support group leader training.

4. Conduct periodic conference calls between support group leaders and select Board members on topics of interest to support group leaders
5. Include Support Group Leaders in circulation of all news-worthy information pertaining to brain injury.
6. Continue publishing and distributing "Support Link" (a newsletter for support group leaders)
7. Develop a web-based process for Support Group Leaders to communicate with each other.

**Goal 5:** Increase the number of family/community support centers throughout North Carolina to be geographically accessible to all people throughout the state.

***Strategies:***

2. Utilize consumer/family input, hospital discharge data, needs assessments, etc. to identify and prioritize geographic areas of the state where community support centers are needed.
3. Establish a plan for the incremental development of the centers
4. Develop a plan to secure startup and ongoing financial support for the centers
5. Collaborate with local healthcare providers, service agencies, professional organizations, families/consumers, private businesses, etc. to garner legislative, political, and financial support for the establishment of new centers.

**Goal 6:** Increase the level of BIANC's involvement in the training and education of professionals who provide/coordinate services to brain injury survivors.

***Strategies:***

1. Provide training to MH/DD/SAS Local Management Entity (LME) staff
2. Host/support 3 regional events providing educational opportunities for the TBI community
3. Initiate partnership with AHEC to conduct statewide conferences in North Carolina.
4. Explore options for online self-study training modules for professionals supported on BIANC's website.
5. Increase the provision of continuing education opportunities for professionals
6. Provide or coordinate training for EMS providers.
7. Utilize current data and develop fact sheets, tip cards, and other training materials to increase knowledge/awareness of brain injury.
8. Collaborate with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to develop a program for Regional Resource Teams to help educators who work with students with brain injuries.
9. Collaborate with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the provision of training to VR counselors and other staff.

**Objective II:** BIANC will be a financially strong organization capable of maintaining and expanding its services to meet the growing demands of persons with brain injury and their families.

**Goal 1:** Expansion and ongoing support of BIANC services and programs will be achieved through the development of diverse funding streams

***Strategies:***

1. Build a 6 month cash reserve
2. Establish a Fundraising Event Chairperson position for the Board the purpose of which will be not only to keep the Board informed about various events but also to stimulate ideas for new fundraising efforts (such as the license plate sale). Increase by 25% each year money generated through fundraising.
3. Support the TBI Advisory Board's efforts to establish a TBI Trust Fund, and ensure that BIANC has a specified role
4. Maintain/expand corporate sponsorships
5. The Director of Program Oversight will assist staff in looking for grant funding opportunities.

The article below was submitted by Susan Fewell of BIANC. The awareness brought to brain injury by these events is a giant step toward educating North Carolinians about brain injury.

## THANKS! YOU MADE OUR WALK & ROLL-ATHONS AND 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL JOGGIN' FOR YOUR NOGGIN'S A HUGE SUCCESS!

### Joggin' for Your Noggin' 5k Run

The Brain Injury Association of North Carolina had a Joggin' for Your Noggin' in Jacksonville and Raleigh this year and participation was awesome!

There were a few bumps along the way at the Jacksonville Run, but overall it went really well for our 1<sup>st</sup> 5k Run ever! Thanks to all the 144 runners and their families and friends who participated! We learned a lot and will definitely have an even better event in the future.

The Raleigh 5k ran very smoothly. The course was pretty difficult, but everyone did a great job! We had 132 registered runners.

Next year we hope to have several more 5k runs across the state. Race results can be found on our website, [www.bianc.net](http://www.bianc.net).



### Your Donations Made a Difference!

Thanks to all of you who collected pledges, gave donations and sponsored our event. You did an amazing job! We raised over \$80,000 in cash and in-kind donations. You also helped raise awareness! More people than ever in North Carolina know a little more about brain injury thanks to you! This year, we had over 1,000 individuals attend one of the Walk or Joggin' events (up from 600 who participated in 2007). You help the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina continue to maintain a presence in the community and offer help, hope and a voice for people with brain injuries and their family.

### Walk & Roll-athon's

There were 5 Walk & Roll-athons across the state and rain or shine, everyone had a great time! We can't wait for next year!

On March 15<sup>th</sup> we had a walk in Fayetteville. The troops came back that weekend, but we still had a great turnout. People walked and



rolled, children played and everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch. There was even a balloon person! Thanks to the 187 folks who participated.



The Asheville, Greenville, and Raleigh Walk & Rollathons were all on March 29<sup>th</sup>.

Asheville doubled its participation this year. Greenville changed its location and had the Walk in a local mall. Greenville also had the Statewide Pledge winner, Widgie Komegay

He raised over \$7,000. The local fire department was there to encourage safety.

Raleigh had a very busy day. It started off with the Joggin' for your Noggin' 5k Run at 8am and the Walk & Roll-athon at 10am. Even with the rain, people said it was the best Raleigh Walk yet. Over 300 individuals joined BIANC at the Lake Crabtree County Park. NCSU's mascot, Mr. Wuf, was there along with bicycle rickshaws, massage therapists, and a bouncy Moonwalk Castle for the kids and lots of food by Biscuitville, Pepsi, and Andy's.

The weather called for rain all day in Winston-Salem on April 5<sup>th</sup> but that didn't dampen anyone's spirits. There were almost 200 people who showed up to participate. The rain stopped just long enough for everyone to walk. Then, everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch provided by the Triad Star #105 motorcycle club. Local support groups across the state helped promote and plan these events.



Thanks to all our Sponsors:



Walk & Roll-athon and Joggin' for Your Noggin' 5k Run Logos created by Itty Bitty Ink

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