

Brain Injury Press

Our Mission is to improve the quality of life for brain injury survivors and their families living in San Diego County.

Winter 2020, Issue 250 Serving brain injury survivors and their families since 1983

In This Issue

Message from the Ex. Director	1
Foundation News	2
SDBIF Group Meetings	4
surviveHEADSTRONG 2021	5
Friends of SDBIF	6
surviveHEADSTRONG 2020 Recap	7

Message from the Executive Director

Greetings SDBIF Supporters, Survivors and Community Partners:

I am continually impressed and inspired by the strength of our brain injury survivors. I was speaking with someone in our community recently about the COVID-19 situation. This survivor said that, yes, COVID-19 restrictions have been difficult, but also present an opportunity. An opportunity to consider how we spend our time. An opportunity to consider what is really, truly important in our lives. An opportunity to learn new things. A time where we either become frustrated by circumstances beyond our control or adapt to our current reality, willing to change and grow. The resilience of our community is incredible.



Save The Date



14th Annual surviveHEADSTRONG

Saturday, March 20, 2021

Mission Bay Park,

DeAnza Cove

Build a Team

Register on-line!

<http://www.sdbif.org/sh2021>

See page 5 for details

SDBIF has certainly been challenged during this unprecedented year. We have had to create new ways of connecting with and serving our community. We have had to be creative and flexible. Our ability to hold the usual fundraising events and provide opportunities for donors to support our efforts has been dramatically changed. We have definitely had to be open minded during these times! Interestingly enough, through virtual groups and programming, we have actually connected with and served more individuals in our community than we would during a typical year. Our virtual programs have presented an opportunity for individuals who normally would not be able to attend in-person functions the opportunity to engage with us. We have met many new folks during this past year and for that we are grateful!

This year we have launched our invitation only, private online network for survivors, family members and professionals to connect with SDBIF and each other (see page 3 for more information). We have carried out our speaker meetings via Zoom and have been able to record these presentations for inclusion in our resource library. These recordings are available on our website and YouTube channel (thesdbif). We have launched a monthly peer support group to provide survivors with a venue to share experiences, challenges and ideas and get feedback from others in a similar situation. We have had two virtual Day of Art events and will have one more prior to the end of this year (see page 4 for more information). Finally, we have launched a partnership with the Triton Brain Injury Network (TBIN), a group of UCSD students who are organizing and facilitating social connections and recreational activities with survivors (i.e. virtual game hangouts – see page 4). Of course, we continue to miss seeing everyone in person and hold hope that 2021 will present opportunities to gather together.

SDBIF needs your support now more than ever. Our delivery of free services to the brain injury community depends upon support from our donors. We have therefore created a Friends of the Foundation fundraising drive that goes from now through December 31, 2020. Please consider supporting SDBIF during these challenging times. See page 3 for more information. We are also going to be holding surviveHEADSTRONG on March 20, 2021. We will have live and revamped virtual options for next year's event, depending upon this pandemic's course and recommended safety protocols. See page 5 for more information and page 7 for a recap of this year's modified event.

We hope everyone is staying safe and well and want you to know that we continue to be available to support the brain injury community with information and assistance, resource connection and group meetings during these challenging times.

Sincerely,



Kurt Buske, MSW

In San Diego County alone,
over 30,000
people suffer
a traumatic brain injury
every year

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The Brain Injury Press

A publication that reports on what's going on in San Diego and around the country in support of brain injury survivors and their families. We welcome suggestions and articles by readers.

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FOUNDATION NEWS:

SDBIF AWARDS THREE SCHOLARSHIPS



The San Diego Brain Injury Foundation is pleased to announce that we have awarded three \$500 scholarships to individuals who have survived brain injuries and are pursuing their higher education.

In 2016, **CHAD BARTLE** suffered a severe traumatic brain injury in a near fatal motorcycle accident. Chad learned numerous helpful strategies from the ABI program and over time has developed a network of people and resources that have helped him on his road to recovery. Fast forward to today and Chad is a semester away from meeting all of his prerequisites for Mesa College's physical therapist assistant program and is 18 units shy of obtaining his Associates degree. Chad has been able to transition his volunteer role at Sharp Hospital into a per diem position while he pursues his degree and licensing. Chad wants to continue to grow his professional network within the rehab and medical industries so that he can continue to learn professional skills and build resources to help steer his education.



After dealing with significant cognitive and mood difficulties at a young age including suffering from seizures, when she was in 9th grade doctors discovered A lesion in **MADLINE GARRETT'S** brain due to an undiagnosed TBI.

After learning the source of her challenges, Madeline felt like a weight was lifted from her shoulders and she started to proactively improve her social and scholastic functioning. Fast forward to today and Madeline is seizure free, learning to drive, has a job and has completed a year of college. Madeline plans to continue her education and hopes to use her experience to help educate others and raise awareness about brain injury.



In 2017, when **RUBY MELCHIOR** was about to start her sophomore year of high school, an arteriovenous malformation (AVM) ruptured in her brain causing a brain injury. Recovering from this injury took up most of her sophomore year of high school. Ruby continues with various therapies to improve her cognitive and physical functioning. Ruby's current goals include attending Miramar Community College, transferring to a four-year university, obtaining a job in a field she is interested in, living in a city with convenient access to transportation and medical services, and hopefully making friends and colleagues along the way by continuing to improve her goal of social interaction. Like many survivors, Ruby has found that her injury has challenged her pre-existing friendships, but she remains determined to chart her own path in life, advocate for herself and prove that she is still capable of achieving her goals. Ruby is an incredibly inspiring person and we know she will be successful in her future endeavors!

We wish Chad, Madeline and Ruby the best and are happy to be able to award each of them with a scholarship!

If you would like to contribute to the Scholarship Fund, go to:

give.classy.org/sdbif-scholarship-fund

OR call our office at 619-294-6541

SDBIF RECEIVES NTC FOUNDATION ARTS DISTRICT COLLABORATIVE GRANT

SDBIF received an Arts District Collaborative Grant from the NTC Foundation to hold 2 virtual Day of Art events. We have partnered up with Veltz Fine Art and Lovejoy Creations to bring our Day of Art events to the community virtually! Our first event was held on November 13th and the second will be held on December 11th from 10am to 12pm. Advance registration is required and space is limited. We will mail registered participants an art kit with everything you need to participate. To register for the December 11th event, simply email us your name and address to info@sdbif.org.



SDBIF's MIGHTY NETWORK

Have you joined our growing, private, online network yet? This community was created on the Mighty Networks platform for brain injury survivors, family members and professionals to share information, discuss topics relevant to brain injury, ask questions and stay connected. Members are able to connect with each other, ask questions and share interesting information. We also post upcoming events in this network, including the new peer support group we have launched. We currently have over 300 members in this network and we encourage you to connect if you haven't already. You can email us at info@sdbif.org or go to this link to request an invitation to this great and growing online community - <https://san-diego-brain-injury-foundation.mn.co/>

Friends OF THE FOUNDATION Drive

Since we were unable to hold our Fundraiser event this year and we always invite folks to support our community via end of year donations, we have created the Friends of the Foundation Drive this year in place of our usual fall and winter fundraising activities. SDBIF depends on the donations and support of individuals like you to continue to deliver services to the brain injury community. Outside of Howard House, our services are completely free of charge and totally dependent upon donation support from our community. The Friends of the Foundation Drive represents an opportunity for our friends to make tax-deductible donations to SDBIF so that together we can continue to support and provide resources to the brain injury community.

Whether you choose to give monthly or a one-time donation, your pledge to SDBIF provides the San Diego brain injury community with valuable resources including:

- Telephone Helpline
- Brain Injury Guide
- Educational Speaker Series
- Case Management
- Educational Scholarships
- Online Network
- Support Groups
- Day of Art Events

>>> and SOOO much more!

Our biggest hope and request is that, as a Friend of the Foundation, you share this opportunity with your family and friends to get them involved in our fundraising drive. Your involvement is critical to our success to keep providing resources to this community. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation today. Time is of the essence as our Friends of the Foundation Drive ends on **December 31st**.

To donate to the Friends of the Foundation Drive online, please visit www.sdbif.org/ffd or <https://www.classy.org/campaign/friends-of-the-foundation-drive/c300169>

You can also call us at (619) 294-6541 or email us at info@sdbif.org.

Thank you for helping us support the brain injury community!

SDBIF Group Meetings

All group meetings are still being held via Zoom until things are safe and we are able to use our community rooms again. We are still lining up our speakers for 2021, but the dates below are when speaker meetings will be held. Additional information will be posted on our website at www.sdbif.org and our online network as soon as it is available.

Speaker Group Meetings

- January 16, 2021 – topic and speaker TBA
- February 20, 2021 – topic and speaker TBA
- April 17, 2021 – topic and speaker TBA
- May 15, 2021 – topic and speaker TBA
- June 19, 2021 – topic and speaker TBA
- July 17, 2021 – topic and speaker TBA
- August 21, 2021 – topic and speaker TBA
- October 16, 2021 – topic and speaker TBA
- November 20, 2021 – topic and speaker TBA
- December 18, 2021 – HOLIDAY PARTY

Zoom link for online speaker group meetings is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5019416338>

SDBIF Peer Support Group

Last Friday of every month
from 2pm to 3:30pm

This peer support group is limited
to 15 survivors and requires
advance registration for each meeting.

Email us at info@sdbif.org
for registration information
or register through the Events section
in our online Mighty Network
if you are a member.

COUPLES GROUP FOR BRAIN INJURY SURVIVORS

Connect with Others.
The Couples Group will be meeting
on the following dates: *TBA*

Watch your e-mails for details.
If you are interested in joining the
group, call 619-294-6541 or
e-mail us at stephanie@sdbif.org.

Bilingual (English/Spanish) South Bay Support Group

Due to COVID-19 this group is not currently meeting.
It will reconvene once we beat this pandemic. Stay safe.

Virtual Game Hangout

Join our fun, virtual game hangout on **Saturday, November 21, 2020 from 3pm to 5pm**. This purely recreational connection is organized and facilitated for our survivor community by the Triton Brain Injury Network, our wonderful group of UCSD student volunteers. To register for this event, visit our Mighty Network or website (www.sdbif.org) for more information and registration link or email your interest to info@sdbif.org.

Day of Art

Join our virtual Day of Art event made possible by an Arts District Collaborative Grant from NTC Foundation. Event will be held on **Friday, December 11, 2020 from 10am to 12pm**. Space is limited to 15 participants so register as soon as you can as this event will fill up! Advance registration is required as we will be mailing out an art kit with everything you need to participate. Register by emailing your name and mailing address to info@sdbif.org or calling us at (619) 294-6541.

Join the Celebration!

survive HEADSTRONG 2021

sdbif.org/sh2021

(619) 294-6541

March 20, 2021

CELEBRATING BRAIN INJURY RECOVERY
HEAD the SMOLIN FAMILY SDBIF

HONORARY COMMITTEE: Dan Gardner, M.D., Carl Miller, U.S., FLMH, Walter Senniger, M.D., Barbara Walsh-Drye, Ph.D., Kevin Fox, M.S., Mark McDonough, Ph.D., Joanne Szwedynski, M.D.

Our 14th annual surviveHEADSTRONG event will be held on Saturday, March 20th, from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm at Mission Bay Park – De Anza Cove. This is the largest gathering of the San Diego brain injury community at any event throughout the year. Survivors, family, friends, caregivers, professionals and other groups all join together during Brain Injury Awareness Month to honor the strength, effort and courage it takes to overcome the challenges of brain injury as well as to inspire those who are on their journey towards recovery.

We are ready and hoping to be able to celebrate together again – as long as it is safe! In 2020, we learned the importance of community and keeping each other safe. Many of the practices we utilized during our 2020 event will be continued and available as necessary to keep everyone as safe as possible. We also understand how important it is to be able to celebrate the achievements of survivors and their family and friends, while raising awareness of and support for brain injury. In fact, surviveHEADSTRONG is the only time such a large portion of our brain injury community is able to gather together in a strong showing of support. Depending upon the state of things in the spring of 2021, we will either have only a live event OR both a live AND virtual option. We will be refining our virtual option based on lessons learned in 2020 to provide an engaging experience for everyone who wants to participate. Stay tuned for more information to be released soon!

We encourage you to participate in this exceptional event. Register to attend, walk, roll, watch, support, donate – get involved however you wish, knowing that your participation will contribute to supporting individuals and families coping with brain injury right here in San Diego.

The registration fee for adults is \$25 or \$15 for adults with a brain injury. You can register as an individual, register with a team or create a team. To register for the event, sponsor the event and/or be an exhibitor at the event, go to www.sdbif.org/sh2021. You can even design your own fundraising page and send it out to all of your friends, family and supporters. You can also register by calling our office at (619) 294-6541.

Get involved now by visiting our website and registering, joining a team or creating a team today!

FRIENDS OF SDBIF THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION!

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Personal Injury

If you or a loved one has suffered a traumatic brain injury, you may have legal remedies available to you. These can include money for medical expenses, long-term medical care and rehabilitation, lost wages, pain, suffering and emotional distress. Brain injuries are often difficult to prove, and require the experience and expertise of a qualified brain injury attorney.

Social Security Disability

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is governed by complicated rules and regulations. To understand these rules and regulations, you need to speak the language of the SSA. In California and across the country, the SSA denies more than half (about 65%) of all initial applications for disability benefits. We understand how important it is to present a claim correctly from the outset, and your chances of obtaining benefits improve with the help of an experienced disability attorney.

To receive a free case review from an experienced attorney, please call:
(619) 338-9000 or (877) 700-3994 toll free

1901 First Ave., Ste 104, San Diego, CA 92101
www.sandiegodisabilitylaw.com

13TH ANNUAL SURVIVEHEADSTRONG RECAP



Our 13th annual surviveHEADSTRONG event was definitely different this year! Normally, we would be providing an event recap in our summer newsletter, but as most of you know we had to reschedule this year's event twice due to COVID-19 concerns. After much scrambling due to the unknown nature of how things would unfold with this pandemic, we did finally hold surviveHEADSTRONG on Sunday, September 20th. We had a highly modified "live" event at Mission Bay DeAnza Cove where we connected with approximately 80 participants. Those who showed up to the live portion of this event were able to grab their goodie bag and walk at their own pace. We did not have on-site exhibitors, a group start or group events this year. We also connected with many more participants prior to the live event to distribute shirts and goodie bags to folks who preferred to walk on their own or with their own small group when and where they were comfortable. We had a raffle that was shown on Facebook live the following week and several participants won some awesome prizes! Above all, we hope everyone participating had a fun time knowing your participation supports San Diego's brain injury community. Together, we raised over \$45,000 for SDBIF. Since SDBIF relies almost completely on donations to keep our vital services going, this event is critical to our ability to accomplish our mission and it is our largest fundraising event of the year! Remember to save the date for next year's walk – Saturday, March 20, 2021.

A HUGE thank you to all of our event sponsors!

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Name: _____
Company: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone: _____ Amount: \$ _____
E-mail: _____
Membership: Brain Injury Survivor first year is free. Family/Friend/Student:
\$30. Professional: \$50. Organization: \$100.

LEVELS OF GIVING

Miracle Workers	\$10,000 plus
Stars	\$5,000
Champions	\$2,500
Olympians	\$1,000
Heroes	\$250
Angels	\$20

Your contribution is tax deductible as allowed by the law. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our federal tax ID number is 33-0072774. Please send your check to: SDBIF, PO Box 84601, San Diego, CA 92138-4601. You may also contribute online by visiting www.sdbif.org. Thank you!

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