

Brain Injury Press

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

Summer-Fall 2021, Issue 252 Serving brain injury survivors and their families since 1983

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Message from the Executive Director

Greetings SDBIF Supporters,
Survivors and Community Partners:

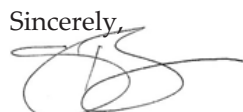
I know we all likely held out hope that life would return to something resembling normal this year, but it is looking like 2021 will continue to be filled with uncertainty due to the ongoing pandemic. We certainly miss being able to see our community in person at groups and events, but we have all done our best to stay connected virtually and in other ways. Our virtual speaker groups, support group meetings, events, game days and Day of Art gatherings have been very well attended and have presented great opportunities to continue to engage with each other and share experiences as well as helpful information. Thanks to everyone who has continued to make the effort to stay connected during this past year – you keep us inspired and motivated to continue on through these trying times.



This is one of my favorite times of year at SDBIF as I have the honor and privilege of being able to present scholarship checks to survivors seeking higher education. This year we were able to award 4 scholarships. Survivors submitted essays that were reviewed by our Scholarship Committee, which chose awardees based on their stories and educational goals. The individuals receiving scholarships this year each have a different and unique story with one thing in common – they are all incredibly inspirational and moving. It is our hope that awardees' stories provide inspiration to others going through seemingly insurmountable challenges. Please see page 2 for information about these incredible individuals.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, we have decided to once again cancel our annual Friendraiser event this year. This decision was not made lightly as the Friendraiser is one of our most important fundraising events of the year. SDBIF needs your support now more than ever. Our delivery of free services to the brain injury community depends upon support from our donors. Just like we did in 2020, we have created a Friends of the Foundation fundraising drive that goes from now through October 31, 2021. Our Friends of the Foundation drive is intended to provide an opportunity and call to action for our community to support SDBIF's programs and services. Please consider supporting SDBIF by being a Friend of the Foundation. See page 5 for more information.

Finally, please remember to save the date for our 15th annual surviveHEADSTRONG event which will be held on March 19, 2022! We are hoping that 2022 will be a time for celebration and gathering in person once again!

Sincerely,

Kurt Buske, MSW

Save the Date
15TH Annual



SATURDAY
MARCH 19, 2022

MISSION BAY PARK–DE ANZA COVE

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

FOUNDATION NEWS:

SDBIF AWARDS FOUR SCHOLARSHIPS

The San Diego Brain Injury Foundation is pleased to announce that we have awarded four \$500 scholarships to individuals who have survived brain injuries and are pursuing their higher education. Thanks to our generous donors for enabling us to honor a record four deserving survivors this year.



In 2006, at the age of 20 years old, **MILES BROTHERS** was walking with two friends when they were shot at during a drive by shooting. One of Miles' friends died as a result of this incident and Miles suffered a severe traumatic brain injury after being shot in the head. Miles also lost the ability to walk due to his injuries. Miles ended up spending five months in the hospital bed-ridden. Going from completely independent to completely dependent on others was very difficult for Miles and he says that the initial stages of his recovery were very challenging for him emotionally. Miles felt like he was all alone in his situation and that he had no reason to live. Miles ended up surpassing his feelings of "self-pity" by coming to the realization that he could possibly inspire others through hard work and dedication to his rehabilitation. Miles came to realize good can be found in all things, even in a traumatic situation like he went through. Miles offers his realization that being physically and/or cognitively challenged can be detrimental only if one allows it to be. Miles wants others to know that one's capabilities don't define a person or their worth and perspective is everything. Today, Miles chooses to define his disability as opposed to allowing it to define him.

Miles recently earned an Associate's degree in Business Administration from Mira Costa College and is now enrolled at Cal State San Marcos to pursue a Bachelor's degree with an emphasis in Marketing. Miles is an incredible person with a mindset that is nothing short of inspirational.



JULIETTE JONES suffered a brain injury after a bout with meningitis. Juliette developed a "stubborn refusal to quit" during her recovery from meningitis and this drive has stayed with her to the present day. Juliette acknowledges that her meningitis and brain injury experience helped her develop this never give up attitude and strength that she might not have otherwise had. Even through Juliette says that she has about 50% of the energy that many of her high school peers have, she has learned how to manage her energy so she can do and accomplish all of the things she sets her mind to. Juliette resisted engaging with supportive services such as the brain injury specialist at her school because she didn't want to be treated differently from others. Ultimately, Juliette mustered the confidence to engage with supportive services at her school and ended up learning a lot and being able to develop strategies that helped her succeed. She also learned how to advocate for herself. Today, Juliette believes that there is nothing she can't accomplish. Juliette just graduated from high school, where she received special awards for Excellence and Distinction, and she is now planning on pursuing her college education. Juliette hopes her experience and story will inspire others to stay determined in the face of challenges and to never give up.

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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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In 2016, **MARIO SANDERS** suffered a traumatic brain injury as a passenger in a head on motor vehicle accident. After being in a coma for ten days, Mario lost the ability to walk, speak, eat, and suffered from partial paralysis to the left side of his body. Mario also suffered from cognitive challenges that included short-term memory loss, word-finding difficulty, and amplified emotions, where there is no filter between his happiness, sadness, or anger. Mario ended up going through five months of rehabilitation that he describes as a “long and gruesome” experience. Mario didn't want to be a “patient” forever so he pushed himself. He went from a wheelchair to a walker to standing on his own in only a few months. Using an analogy for the life mindset he has today, Mario says he would fall time and time again, but always forced himself to get back up. Mario offers that he has learned that “...falling is a part of life; it is adversity, and it is going to happen in our lives in some form or another. What matters is how you get back up and where you find the courage to stay up.” Mario says that his adversity came in the form of a brain injury, but the mindset he acquired from serving in the United States Marine Corps for five years helped him through the hardships encountered throughout his recovery. Mario says that he did not give up during his rehabilitation and he will not give up now.

Although Mario feels that life with a TBI is more difficult than anyone can imagine, it is not impossible, and it will certainly not stop him from achieving his goals. Mario offers the following words of wisdom – “There was a chance I would not have woken up from my coma, but I did. I felt as if I was reborn. I was given a second chance to fulfill my purpose and this “accident” has given me a new perspective on life. Things that I never valued before; I now consider extremely important to me. I no longer take for granted the promise of another day. The value of life is much more important to me now than living for the moment.” Today, Mario is pursuing his higher education with the goal of becoming a physical therapist so he can help other brain injury survivors receive the same care and encouragement that his therapists gave him. Mario hopes others will be inspired by his story to know that anything is possible, even in the face of significant adversity.



When she was 3 years old, **CAMILLE TYREE** was diagnosed with a benign brain tumor. She had surgery to remove the tumor, but surgeons were not able to remove all of the bad cells. Camille ended up having recurring seizures and being on numerous medications after her surgery. As Camille's seizures ended up getting out of control and she was on the maximum dose for most of her medications, she had to undergo another brain surgery in 2019.

As a result of her situation, Camille was left with a brain injury and related challenges, including some paralysis on her left side. Camille ended up going through a year of physical therapy to regain function lost after her last brain surgery, something she embraced and put hard work into. Fast forward to today and Camille is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Childhood and Adolescent Development at Cal State University San Marcos. Camille plans on working as a teacher with her Bachelor's degree, with the goal of eventually pursuing a Master's degree. Camille says that for twenty years of her life she wished for things she did not think were possible, but through her effort and perseverance she has been getting closer to her dreams. Camille says that she doesn't let negative things affect her and she truly believes that her brain injury can never stop her from achieving her goals in life.

We wish Miles, Juliette, Mario and Camille the best and are happy to be able to award each of them with a scholarship!

To read our scholarship recipients' essays and learn more about their stories, visit:

<https://sdbif.org/sdbif-scholarship-winners/>

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

<https://www.classy.org/give/189328/#!/donation/checkout>

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 a virtual Day of Art event on July 16, 2021. We partnered up with Veltz Fine Art and Lovejoy Creations to bring our Day of Art event to the community virtually! We mailed art kits out to registered participants that they were able to use during the event. Through Lovejoy's incredible facilitation, participants were able to produce awesome paintings during this two-hour event that was fun, relaxing and inspiring to all who attended. Thanks to the NTC Foundation for supporting this incredible event!



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/>

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You shop. Amazon gives.

By simply shopping through smile.amazon.com and selecting San Diego Brain Injury Foundation as your charity Amazon will donate .5% of your purchase price to SDBIF!

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Here are the steps to setting up your Amazon Smile

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Go to [SMILE.AMAZON.COM](https://smile.amazon.com) and either sign into your Amazon account or create an Amazon account

**Step
2**

Go down to the area where you type in the charity and type in "**San Diego Brain Injury Foundation**", click the "**Search**" button, then select the first option listed.

**Step
3**

Check off the box that says, "Yes, I understand I must always start at smile.amazon.com to support SDBIF" ...then **START SHOPPING!!!**

Always make sure that you start your Amazon shopping by going to smile.amazon.com so your purchases will support SDBIF.

Thank you for your support by just doing what you already were going to do!



SDBIF.ORG/FFD

**CELEBRATE • ADVOCATE
EDUCATE • COLLABORATE**

Since we have made the difficult decision to cancel our annual Friendraiser event again in 2021 due to continuing uncertainty and safety concerns, we are holding our Friends of the Foundation Drive this year in place of our usual in-person fall fundraising activities. We were overwhelmed with the support of our community during last year's Friends of the Foundation Drive and are hoping this year's call for support will be just as successful. Not being able to hold our Friendraiser event for two years in a row presents a significant fundraising shortfall for SDBIF and we need your support to bridge this gap by participating in our Friends of the Foundation Drive. SDBIF depends on the donations and support of individuals like you to enable us to continue providing services to the brain injury community. Outside of Howard House, our services are completely free of charge and totally dependent upon support in the form of donations 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 **October 31st**.

To donate to the Friends of the Foundation Drive online, please visit www.sdbif.org/ffd or <https://www.classy.org/campaign/2021-friends-of-the-foundation-drive/c343088>

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. All of our 2021 speaker group meetings have been recorded and archives can be found on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/thesdbif>

2021 Speaker Meeting Schedule – August-December, 2021

August 21, 2021: *Change in Positive Emotion and Recovery of Functional Status Post Brain Injury, Gary S. Seale, PhD.* Dr. Seale is the Regional Director of Clinical Services for the Centre for Neuro Skills. Topic: Dr. Seale will talk about the relationship between experiencing positive emotions and health/well-being. This presentation will provide some simple strategies to boost positive emotion.

October 16, 2021: **Matthew Audia, PT, DPT, CMP.**
Dr. Audia is a Physical Therapist and the Founder of Audia Physical Therapy.

November 20, 2021: topic and speaker TBA

December 18, 2021: HOLIDAY PARTY (location TBA)

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.

FRIENDS OF SDBIF THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION!

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14TH ANNUAL SURVIVEHEADSTRONG RECAP

Our 14th annual surviveHEADSTRONG event was held virtually again this year. We mailed and distributed participant shirts and goodie bags prior to our official March 20th event date. Teams and individual participants were able to have their own private walks at the place and time of their own choosing. We gathered together for a virtual celebration on March 20th where we shared a video compilation of the private walks/gatherings, heard words from our sponsors and had a raffle for great prizes. All in all we hope everyone who participated in this year's event had a fun time knowing that your involvement supports San Diego's brain injury community and adds strength to our awareness and advocacy efforts. Together, we raised over \$37,000 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 is our largest fundraising event of the year! Remember to save the date for next year's walk, which we are fully planning on being held live and in-person on **Saturday, March 19, 2022** at Mission Bay Park – De Anza Cove.

A heartfelt THANKS to all of our event donors –
YOU helped make this year's event a huge success!

A Celebration of Brain Injury Recovery



#sH2021



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WELSH-OSGA



FRAN
KENNEDY



the **SMOLIN**
FAMILY

BRIAN VAN
VECHTEN

ANDREW
HEIBERG

CATHY
YOUNG

Thanks to the teams participating this year – we couldn't do this without you!

Comebackers Neuro Club

Hidden Valley Ranch Rehabilitation Services

Hiking Vikings

RaiseUp

ReganRehab Care Coordination

TEAM ABI

Team Brain Camp

Team Dubin

Team M&M - For Mariah

TEAM RUSTY

Walk STRONG with Megan!





Resources for the journey towards recovery

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surviveHEADSTRONG**
Saturday, March 19, 2022

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Helping brain injury survivors and their families for over 35 years

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
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How to Become A Friend of SDBIF

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Amount: \$ _____

E-mail: _____

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	\$9,999
Champions	\$2,500	\$4,999
Olympians	\$1,000	\$2,499
Heroes	\$250	\$999
Angels	\$20	\$249

Your contribution is tax deductible as allowed by the law. The Foundation is a 501c3 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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