

# Brain Injury Press

Quarter 4, 2025, Issue 265

**OUR MISSION:** to improve the quality of life for brain injury survivors and their families

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 2025 SDBIF Friends of the Foundation Drive Launch
- 1 Recap of the 2025 SDBIF Friendraiser
- 2 Community Standout: San Diego Brain Bee
- 3 Message from SDBIF Executive Director, Dr. Roslyn Knox
- 8 Two Days of Art and More Planned for 2026
- 10 Community News
  - Howard House Updates
  - 2025 SDBIF Holiday Party
  - SDBIF SISR Program Updates
  - Upcoming Saturday Speaker Series Meetings
  - Upcoming 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Events
- 14 SDBIF's Brain Injury Collaboration Network (BICN): Building Strength Through Connection
- 15 More Photos from the 2025 SDBIF Friendraiser



## It's That Time: Make a Life-Changing, Tax-Deductible Donation to the Friends of the Foundation Drive

It's that time of year again — time to show your support for SDBIF and our brain injury community! The Friends of the Foundation Drive is our annual campaign to raise funds so we can continue providing free services to survivors and their families.

As 2025 comes to an end, we reflect on the many lives touched by the work of SDBIF. Through our free support groups, *continued Page 4*



## What a Night! The SDBIF Friendraiser Brings Art and the TBI Community Together

The brain injury community gathered on Saturday evening, September 20th, for our annual Friendraiser. Guests were treated to an inspiring evening featuring fabulous artwork from our talented survivor artists, a wonderful silent auction, delicious food, live entertainment, and a heartfelt welcome from our Honorary Chair, **Kiana Imani**. *continued Page 6*

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## COMMUNITY STANDOUT

### SDBIF Sponsors the 2026 San Diego Brain Bee

The San Diego Brain Injury Foundation is proud to once again serve as a Diamond Sponsor for the 2026 San Diego Brain Bee. This year's event will take place on February 14, 2026, at the UCSD School of Medicine. We are honored to support this inspiring program that encourages students to deepen their understanding of the brain and pursue careers in neuroscience and related fields.

The Brain Bee is part of Brain Awareness Week, which was launched in 1996 by the Society for Neuroscience and the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, with a mission to increase awareness of neuroscience in the general community. The Brain Bee is a not-for-profit neuroscience competition for high school students on the local, national, and international levels. The Brain Bee attempts to motivate students to learn about the brain, to capture their imaginations, and to inspire them to pursue careers in biomedical brain research.

The main objective of the contest is to introduce students to neuroscience. Aims of the Brain Bee include 1) highlighting what the brain does, how it functions and how important it is to who we are as human beings; 2) improving scientific literacy in our community; and 3) providing an opportunity for students to participate in the competition and to challenge all students to consider a career in science, and Neuroscience in particular.

Students will be quizzed about the brain and how it relates to intelligence, memory, emotions, sensations, movement, stress, aging, sleep, and neurological disorders. All questions are derived from "BrainFacts, a primer on the brain and nervous system", published by the Society for Neuroscience.

Here is a quote from last year's San Diego winner:

***"Thank you to San Diego Brain Injury Foundation for sponsoring me to compete in the National Brain Bee Championship. It was a valuable and unforgettable experience for me, and I am grateful to the Foundation for making this opportunity possible for me."***

~ Vidha Ganji

SDBIF is proud to contribute to this event and to support students in their pursuit of expanding their knowledge about the brain.

# A Message from SDBIF's Executive Director, Dr. Roslyn Knox

## Hello Brain Injury Community,

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? We're wrapping up another incredible year together! As 2025 draws to a close, I am truly amazed by the strength, unity, and resilience of our brain injury community. Together, we continue to shine brighter than ever—lifting one another up, creating opportunities for growth, and proving that hope and healing are possible when we stand as one.

On behalf of the entire SDBIF Team, **THANK YOU** to everyone who engaged with us this year—whether by attending events, joining support groups, volunteering, contributing, or simply reaching out for resources and connection. Your participation fuels everything we do, and it's because of you that SDBIF continues to grow and serve more survivors and families than ever before.

This final newsletter of the year celebrates our shared accomplishments and previews what's ahead in 2026. Here's a quick look at some highlights you'll read more about inside:

- **Program Growth & Funding:** Expanded our service capacity through new funding and staff, enabling faster responses and support for more individuals.
- **surviveHEADSTRONG Walk:** Over 650 participants, exhibitors, and sponsors gathered at Mission Bay for a powerful day of unity and empowerment.
- **SISR Launch:** Our new *Students Invested in Survivor Reintegration* partnership with SDSU pairs future clinicians with survivors for one-on-one support.
- **Brain Injury Collaboration Network (BICN):** A new initiative strengthening provider partnerships for seamless referrals and coordinated care.
- **Virtual ALT Library:** The Assisted Learning Technology station at Liberty Station offers walk-in and scheduled sessions to access assistive tech and digital tools for independence.
- **Howard House Renovation:** Updated facilities and a dedicated care team, led by Administrator Brianda Muñoz, are creating a vibrant, compassionate home.
- **Peer Support Groups:** Safe spaces continue to flourish—connecting survivors, families, and caregivers through understanding, encouragement, and community.
- **Friendraiser:** At the Admiral Baker Golf Course Clubhouse, this inspiring evening united practitioners, advocates, and community members to celebrate brain injury artists—featuring music, food, wine, and a lively silent auction.

As we close 2025, we also celebrate our generous Friends of the Foundation donors—your year-end, tax-deductible contributions make it possible to keep our programs and resources free for those who need them most.

And don't forget—our Annual Holiday Celebration is just around the corner! Join us at the Mission Valley Public Library Community Room on Saturday, December 6 from 12-2 pm for an afternoon of joy, music, crafts, and connection.

Looking ahead to 2026, we have exciting plans to expand every program, strengthen partnerships, and continue walking (or rolling!) beside you on your recovery and reintegration journey.

*With gratitude and anticipation,*



Roslyn Knox, Ph.D., MBA,  
Executive Director of SDBIF







*continued from page 1*

Days of Art, Saturday Speaker Series, community events, workshops, our annual Brain Injury Symposium, the Brain Injury Guide for Families, and our helpline, we continue to offer inspiration, connection, and hope to those on their journey to recovery.

This holiday season, please consider joining us as a Friend of Brain Injury Recovery and help us continue to make a difference in the lives of so many.



## Ways You Can Get Involved:

- **Donate:** Every dollar supports our mission to improve the quality of life for brain injury survivors and their families. It is tax deductible and ensures our services remain free and accessible to all who need them.
- **Participate:** Engage in our programs and events to help promote education, awareness, and connection.
- **Educate:** Share information about SDBIF's resources and services with your friends, family, and community.
- **Collaborate:** Partner with SDBIF to expand our reach and impact for survivors and their loved ones.
- **Advocate:** Raise awareness about the ongoing needs and challenges faced by those living with brain injury.
- **Celebrate:** Join us in recognizing every achievement, effort, and act of resilience within our community.







Together, we can continue to provide hope, healing, and support for brain injury survivors and their families.

Please join us this holiday season and become a Friend of the Foundation today!

Go to [SDBIF.org/give](https://SDBIF.org/give) to make a life-changing donation today!



Scan the QR Code to make a life-changing donation to SDBIF

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*continued from page 1*

Most memorable of all was the sense of community—families, friends, survivors, and professionals (including past board members and original founders of SDBIF) coming together to support SDBIF and the brain injury community.

A special thank you to our generous sponsors—the **deRose Foundation, Dan Gardner, M.D., Rehabilitation Care Coordination, and Pedro Leon**. This event would not have been possible without their support. We are also grateful to our new event space, The Admiral Baker Clubhouse, for its beautiful views, wonderful staff, and delicious food and wine.

Live music by Garza and the Strays added the perfect touch to the evening. Our heartfelt thanks go to our incredible survivor artists: **Deborah Consaul, Lora Dunlap, Ryan Olson, Kurt Rotzinger, David Ward, Dan Koziol, Stevie McCarley, and Linda Stamets**. Each artist showcased their own unique style and shared their inspiring stories of recovery and creativity.

Finally, a highlight of the evening was **Kiana Imani's** moving and motivational presentation. As a survivor and Olympic track hopeful, her story of perseverance and hope captivated the entire audience and left us all deeply inspired.







See more photos on Page 15

## THANK YOU SPONSORS!

**SDBIF**  
*Friendraiser*  
WINE • ART • MUSIC

**DE ROSE**  
FOUNDATION

**Dan Gardner, M.D.**  
Rehabilitation Care Coordination  
**Pedro Leon**







## Another Successful Day of Art by Our Survivors & More Planned in 2026

Our October 17 Virtual and November 7 In-Person Days of Art were HUGE successes! We had artists join us from as far away as New Jersey and New York and it was nearly a packed house for the in-person

class too. Thanks to our wonderful art instructor, Lovejoy, survivors were able to come together and use their creativity through painting as an outlet for recovery.



We are so thankful to be able to offer these free classes for our survivors—a little bit of art therapy. But as it turns out, it's more than just art therapy—it's also a day of connection, community, and joy, all from the comfort of home.

We know there are more artists out there, and we'd love for you to join us in 2026—share these dates with your friends in the brain injury community!

In 2026, we'll be offering:

**TWO In-Person Days of Art—**  
February 17 and July 17

**TWO Virtual Days of Art—**  
April 17 and October 16

And don't worry if you've never painted before! As Lovejoy always says, anyone can paint!





### Here is a statement by one of our artists:

*"Thank you for a new, fun learning experience, Ms. Lovejoy's Day of Art sponsored by SDBIF. Attached is my first acrylic painting, titled "Simple Beach Palm". The art materials is a generous package of paints, a good selection of brushes, art boards and an easel. Thank you for your many years of dedicated service to SDBIF and the individuals served by your staff and organization."*

Keep an eye out for our emails in 2026 so you can register and join us!



## **San Diego Disability Law Group, APC**

*Helping brain injury survivors and their families for over 35 years*

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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 them, you need to speak SSA language. 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 toll-free (877) 700-3994**

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Finishing the Year Strong at Howard House



As we wrap up another wonderful year at Howard House, we want to take a moment to celebrate the memories, milestones, and moments of joy we've shared together these past few months.

### October Highlights

Our Halloween Party was a beautiful success! Residents, staff, and families came together for an afternoon full of fun, laughter, and creativity. We were thrilled to welcome a few family members who joined in on the festivities; it truly made the event even more special. We also took a trip to the pumpkin patch and had lots of fall-themed baking projects!

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to Ronda, our amazing Recreational Therapist, who is retiring. Ronda has been such a bright light in our community, and we will forever carry her warmth and dedication in our hearts.

As we say goodbye, we're excited to welcome Becca, our new Recreational Therapist! Join us in wishing her the best as she steps into this role. We're confident she'll bring fresh energy and creativity to her work with the residents.

### November Plans

November is all about gratitude and giving back! We're looking forward to our annual Thanksgiving Dinner, where residents come together to share a warm meal and heartfelt appreciation for one another.



We also have a few exciting outings planned this month, including a visit to The Wolf Center where we hope to spend some time volunteering, and a trip to the Planetarium for some star-filled learning and fun!

Of course, our kitchen will continue to be filled with the sweet smells of holiday baking, one of our residents' favorite traditions.

### December Celebrations

The holiday season is a special time here at Howard House! Our Annual Christmas Party is right around the corner, and residents are already buzzing with excitement. It's a joyful day full of music, decorations, and cheer as we celebrate the season together.

We want to thank all our families, staff, and residents for the love, support, and teamwork that make Howard House feel like home.

From all of us at Howard House, we wish you a warm, safe, and joyful holiday season. Here's to a new year filled with connection, laughter, and new memories!

### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS:

**OCTOBER:** Jennifer

**AUGUST:** Jose, Cristina, Justin

**DECEMBER:** Raul



## The SDBIF Holiday Party—Smiles All Around

The holiday season is here, and we celebrated in style at our annual SDBIF Holiday Celebration on Saturday December, 6! **We want to extend a BIG thank you to Clair & Sunghee Jones for sponsoring this year's event!**

This year, it was a little earlier than usual, but there was still a fantastic turnout at the Mission Valley Library. Garza and the Strays played beautiful, festive music to set the tone while we all shared stories, connected with friends old and new, and celebrated together as a community.

Additionally, we had a survey about the SDBIF program and service offerings...if you didn't fill it out yet, please scan the QR code. We want to



serve your needs to the best of our abilities.

To all that came out—thank you for joining us—we appreciate each and every one of you. See you in 2026!!!



## Partnering with SDSU Students to Produce the Next Generation of Brain Injury Professionals

The Students Invested in Survivor Reintegration (SISR) Program is a collaborative partnership between SDBIF and San Diego State University's Center for Clinical and Cognitive Neurosciences. The program supports individuals recovering from traumatic brain injuries (TBI) by pairing junior and senior undergraduates with survivors as they work toward rehabilitation and independent community living.

Guided by Dr. Stephanie Reis and Dr. Dan Gardner, student advocates receive specialized training and meet weekly with their paired survivor to provide one-on-one support. Together, they focus on daily living and communication skills, community navigation, personal goal setting, and building technological confidence.

SISR also includes monthly neurorehabilitation workshops led by Rehab Without Walls, offering survivors practical skills and expert insights.

Running each academic semester, the program uses standardized assessments to track progress and fosters mutual growth—empowering survivors while preparing future professionals.

For more information or to join the interest list for future cohorts, email [info@sdbif.org](mailto:info@sdbif.org) or call **(619) 294-6541**.



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Upcoming 2026 Saturday Speaker Series Meetings

**SATURDAY,  
JAN 17, 2026**

***In-Person & Zoom***

*Reconnecting: Navigating Your  
Community and Support Systems*

**IN-PERSON LOCATION**

SD Writer's Ink, Liberty Station  
2730 Historic Decatur Rd #204,  
San Diego, CA 92106

**SATURDAY,  
FEB 21, 2026**

***In-Person & Zoom***

*TOPIC TBD*

**IN-PERSON LOCATION**

SD Writer's Ink, Liberty Station  
2730 Historic Decatur Rd #204,  
San Diego, CA 92106

**SATURDAY,  
APR 21, 2026**

***In-Person & Zoom***

*Reclaim Your Life from  
Headaches & Dizziness*

**IN-PERSON LOCATION**

Admiral Baker Club House  
2400 Admiral Baker Rd, San  
Diego, CA 92124



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## SDBIF & Community Upcoming Events

### SDBIF EVENTS

[sdbif.org/events](https://sdbif.org/events)

#### **DEC ZOOM** Family & Friends Support Group

**Friday, Dec 12, 2025** from 2-3:30 pm (PST)

Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **DEC ZOOM** Survivor Peer Support Group

**Friday, Dec 19, 2025** from 2-3:30 pm (PST)

Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **JAN ZOOM** Family & Friends Support Group

**Friday, Jan 9, 2026** from 2-3:30 pm (PST)

Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **JAN ZOOM** Survivor Peer Support Group

**Friday, Jan 30, 2026** from 2-3:30 pm (PST)

Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **FEB ZOOM** Family & Friends Support Group

**Friday, Feb 13, 2026** from 2-3:30 pm (PST)

Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **FEB IN-PERSON** Day of Art

**Tuesday, Feb 17, 2026** from 12-2 pm (PST)

Only 15 spaces are available—**Registration Opens in January**

#### **FEB ZOOM** Survivor Peer Support Group

**Friday, Feb 27, 2026** from 2-3:30 pm (PST)

Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

### 3<sup>RD</sup>-PARTY PARTNER EVENTS

#### NEUROLAB 360

**MORE INFO:** [neurolab360.com/free-services](https://neurolab360.com/free-services)  
(760) 704-8237

In-Person CogFit Group—Wed, 12/3 @ 10:45 am

In-Person Adaptive Yoga—Wed, 12/3 & 17 @ 12 pm

In-Person Stroke Support Grp—Wed, 12/10 @ 4 pm

HYBRID Aphasia Group—Fri, 12/12 @ 11 am

#### UCSD PALS MEETINGS

**MORE INFO:** [mmw002@health.ucsd.edu](mailto:mmw002@health.ucsd.edu)

In-Person Art Class—Wed, 12/3 & 17 @ 2 pm

ONLINE Aphasia Class—Thur, 12/18 @ 9 am

In-Person Support Group—Fri, 12/5 @ 11 am

#### SCRIPPS STROKE & BRAIN INJURY

**MORE INFO:** Deborah Pimstone, 760-633-6709  
[pimstone.deborah@scrippshealth.org](mailto:pimstone.deborah@scrippshealth.org)

In-Person Brain Masters—Wed, 12/3, 10, 17, 24, 31 @ 2:30-3:30 pm

HYBRID Stroke & TBI Support Group—Tue, 12/9 & 23 @ 2:30-3:45 pm

#### SHARP EVENTS

**MORE INFO:** Grace Latimer or Jim Lizardo,  
619-740-4683

Online Gentle Fitness—Tue, 12/2, 9, 16, 23, 30 @ 9 am



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## SDBIF's Brain Injury Collaboration Network (BICN): Building Strength Through Connection

The SDBIF Brain Injury Collaboration Network, or BICN, was created with one goal in mind: to bring people together

for the greater good of the brain injury community. I've seen firsthand how difficult recovery can be, not just for survivors, but also for families, caregivers, and providers. Everyone is trying their best, but often in separate lanes. The BICN was built to change that to create one space where professionals and organizations can collaborate, share resources, and build stronger pathways of support.

The "who" behind the BICN includes a growing group of passionate individuals physical therapists, social workers, behavioral health specialists, nonprofit leaders, and other dedicated professionals all working together to ensure no one faces this journey alone. We come from different fields but share a common mission: improving quality of life and access to care for those impacted by brain injury.

The "what" is simple but powerful. Through monthly meetings, information sharing, and cross-

agency collaboration, BICN provides a platform where ideas become action. Whether it's helping a survivor connect with housing resources, finding a rehabilitation program, or supporting caregivers who feel overwhelmed, our network bridges the gap between need and help.

As for the "why" it's personal. We've worked closely with survivors who've felt forgotten after leaving the hospital, unsure where to turn next. Many just need someone to listen, to guide them toward the right services, or to remind them they still have a purpose. That's what this network stands for: restoring hope, dignity, and connection.

The BICN matters because collaboration saves time, builds trust, and strengthens community impact. When we work together, we're able to reach more people, advocate for better systems of care, and remind survivors that they are seen, valued, and supported.

At the end of the day, the BICN isn't just a network, it's a movement toward unity and healing. It's a reminder that recovery is not a solo journey, and that by working together, we can make San Diego's brain injury community stronger than ever.

### Are you a Brain Injury Professional interested in being a part of the SDBIF BICN?

1

Scan this QR code to fill out the online application form



2

Once received, your application will be reviewed and someone from SDBIF will contact you.

3

Upon acceptance your company will be added to the the BICN referral database

4

Every quarter, SDBIF will hold a BICN meeting to confirm the status of all BICN members



## More Photos from the 2025 SDBIF Friendraiser













# SDBIF Friendraiser

WINE • ART • MUSIC

Thank you for making the  
2025 Friendraiser so special!









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**ADVOCATE \$15**

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**CHAMPION \$25**

Allows our book "Journey to Recovery—A Brain Injury Guide for Families", to be given away to those in need **FREE-OF-CHARGE!**



**HERO \$50**

Pays for 1 hour of personalized resource consultation assessment and service for brain injury survivors.



**LEGEND \$100**

Funds the SDBIF community programs: Saturday Meetings, Support Groups, Community Forums, Day of Art and much more!

