

Brain Injury Press

Quarter 3, 2026, Issue 268

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

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The Art of Recovery: An Evening That Celebrates Hope

Some evenings leave an imprint on your heart. The San Diego Brain Injury Foundation's annual Friendraiser is one of those evenings.

Join us on Saturday, September 19, from 6:30–9:00 p.m. at the beautiful Admiral Baker Clubhouse for an unforgettable sunset celebration of resilience, creativity, and the incredible *continued Page 4*



2026 Brain Injury Symposium—Learning, Connection & Gratitude

On June 20, the San Diego Brain Injury Foundation welcomed survivors, family members, caregivers, professionals, and community partners to our Annual Brain Injury Symposium at the Admiral Baker Clubhouse. Centered around this year's theme, "Healthy Connections: Balancing Recovery to Avoid Overwhelm," the Symposium brought together our brain injury community for a day of education, collaboration, and meaningful connection.

We are incredibly grateful to our outstanding speakers for sharing their expertise and inspiring our community. Keynote speaker Cassandra Thorson reminded us that recovery is strongest *continued Page 6*

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In Loving Memory of Howard House Founder Deloris “Dee” R. Smith, 1931 – 2026



Deloris “Dee” R. Smith passed away peacefully in her sleep on June 24, 2026, at the age of 94.

Dee was born on August 28, 1931, on her family’s farm in rural Cortland, Nebraska. One of seven children, she was raised with strong Midwestern values that shaped a lifetime centered on family, kindness, generosity, and quiet strength. While working as a bank teller in Lincoln, Nebraska, she met Ernest W.

“Bill” Smith. They married in 1952 and shared an extraordinary 73 years of marriage until Bill’s passing in 2025. Together, they built a life in Escondido filled with love, friendship, laughter, hard work, and adventure.

As a devoted wife and mother, Dee lovingly raised their family while supporting Bill’s many entrepreneurial ventures. Her encouragement and unwavering dedication helped create a strong foundation for their family’s success.

Through their own family’s journey after their son, Kevin, sustained a brain injury, Dee and Bill developed a deep understanding of the challenges faced by survivors and their loved ones. In 1986, they helped establish Howard House with a vision of creating more than a place to live—a true home where brain injury survivors could rebuild their lives, find acceptance, and become part of a caring community.

Also, together, Bill and Dee helped start the SDBIF Golf Classic to help support Howard House residents and keep services accessible. Their compassion and generosity have left a lasting impact on countless survivors, families, caregivers, and the entire SDBIF community.

Dee will be remembered for her enduring love, loyalty, and the many lives she touched. Her legacy lives on through every resident who calls Howard House home and every person who continues to experience the hope and support she helped create.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to SDIF in Dee’s memory.



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

Greetings Brain Injury Community Friends,

As we move into the third quarter of the year, I find myself reflecting on the incredible momentum we have built together. Every program, event, and partnership reinforces what we have always believed—that recovery is strongest when it is supported by a connected, compassionate community. Thank you for continuing to be part of that community.

Our annual **Brain Injury Symposium** in June was an inspiring success. Bringing together survivors, family members, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and advocates under this year's theme, *Healthy Connections: Balancing Recovery to Avoid Overwhelm*, reminded us how much we can learn from one another. The meaningful conversations, practical education, and new relationships formed throughout the day will continue strengthening brain injury support throughout our region. Thank you to our speakers, sponsors, volunteers, exhibitors, and every attendee who made the Symposium such a memorable event.

In less than two months, I hope you will join us for our **Friendraiser: An Evening of Art, Hope & Community on Saturday, September 19, from 6:30–9:00 p.m.** This special evening will celebrate the creativity and resilience of brain injury survivors through an inspiring gallery of survivor artwork while bringing together friends, supporters, professionals, and community members who believe in the power of recovery.

We are also excited to expand programs that continue to grow in response to our community's needs. Through our partnership with Rehab Without Walls, the monthly **Students Invested in Survivor Reintegration (SISR)** educational workshops are now open to all brain injury survivors. Our **ALT (Assistive Learning Technology) Library** sessions, held on the first three Tuesdays of each month, provide survivors and caregivers with hands-on opportunities to explore assistive technology and build confidence using everyday devices.

The **Brain Injury Collaboration Network (BICN)** also continues to grow as more trusted providers, practitioners, and community organizations join our network. Together, we are making it easier for survivors and families to identify brain injury-informed services and resources throughout San Diego County.

None of this would be possible without you. Whether you are a survivor, family member, caregiver, volunteer, donor, healthcare professional, educator, or community partner, your support strengthens every program we offer and helps us reach more individuals navigating life after brain injury.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for helping us create a community where survivors are empowered, connected, and supported every step of the way.

With gratitude and anticipation,



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





continued from page 1

brain injury community. More than a fundraiser, the Friendraiser is an opportunity to experience The Art of Recovery through the eyes of those who have lived it.

Throughout the evening, you'll be invited into a gallery featuring the inspiring artwork of brain injury survivors. As you meet each artist and hear the personal story behind their work, you'll discover how creativity became a powerful tool for healing, self-expression, and rebuilding confidence after brain injury. Every piece tells a story of perseverance, hope, and their remarkable spirit.

As the sun sets, enjoy beautifully catered hors d'oeuvres, sample a selection of wines, and listen to soft live music while reconnecting with friends

and meeting others who believe in the power of community. You'll also have the opportunity to bid on an incredible collection of silent auction packages, with every dollar raised directly supporting the San Diego Brain Injury Foundation's free programs and services for brain injury survivors and their families. From support groups and educational programs to survivor navigation, social activities, and community reintegration resources, your generosity helps ensure these life-changing services remain available to those who need them most.

Whether you're a survivor, family member, caregiver, healthcare professional, community partner, or someone simply looking for an inspiring evening, you'll quickly discover that the Friendraiser is about much more than art. It's about celebrating resilience, honoring the recovery journey, and





recognizing what we can accomplish when a community comes together with compassion and purpose.

We hope you'll join us for this truly special evening. Together, we'll celebrate the beauty of recovery, support a mission that changes lives every day, and create new memories that will stay with you long after the night is over.

To purchase tickets, go to: SDBIF.org/Fundraiser

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continued from page 1

when survivors, families, healthcare providers, and community professionals work together to build consistent, compassionate support systems. Micaela Connelly shared practical strategies for balancing activity, relationships, and recovery, while Diana Mueller provided valuable tools for recognizing fatigue and creating sustainable habits that support long-term wellness.

The learning extended beyond the presentations. Thoughtful audience discussions and breakout sessions created opportunities for survivors, caregivers, professionals, and family members to learn from one another, share experiences, and strengthen the relationships that make recovery possible.

A special thank you to our exhibitors—NeuroLab 360, Vivistim, GBA Gut-Brain Axis, Collage Rehabilitation Partners, and the San Diego Police Department's Blue Envelope Program—for generously sharing their knowledge, resources, and services with attendees. Their presence helped connect our community with valuable tools and support available throughout San Diego.

Most importantly, thank you to everyone who attended. Your willingness to learn, share your experiences, ask thoughtful questions, and support one another is what makes the Symposium so meaningful each year. Whether you

joined us as a survivor, family member, caregiver, professional, volunteer, sponsor, or community partner, you helped create an atmosphere of hope, encouragement, and belonging.

Brain injury recovery is not a journey anyone should have to navigate alone. Events like the Symposium remind us of what is possible when we come together with compassion, knowledge, and a shared commitment to improving the lives of brain injury survivors and their families.

Thank you for making this year's Symposium such a success. We look forward to welcoming you back on **SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 2027**, as we continue learning, growing, and strengthening our connections for brain injury reintegration.





More photos on page 15

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A Canvas for Connection: SDBIF's Day of Art

Creativity has a unique way of bringing people together, and that spirit was on full display during SDBIF's In-Person Day of Art. This free workshop welcomed brain injury survivors for an afternoon of painting, laughter, and community.

Guided by the wonderful instructor, Lovejoy Creations, participants were led through the painting process, making the experience enjoyable for artists of every skill level. Whether it was someone's first time picking up a paintbrush or they were returning to a favorite hobby, everyone had the opportunity to express themselves in a supportive and encouraging environment.

Beyond the finished paintings, the event offered something even more meaningful: CONNECTION. Survivors spent time with peers who understand the brain injury journey, sharing stories, celebrating accomplishments, and enjoying a few hours focused on creativity rather than challenges. As each canvas came to life, so did conversations, smiles, and new or developing friendships.

SDBIF extends its heartfelt thanks to Lovejoy for sharing her time, talent, and passion to make this special day possible. Her guidance helped participants discover that art is not about perfection: it's about joy.

At SDBIF, we believe healing happens in many forms. Events like Day of Art remind us that creating something beautiful together can strengthen community and celebrate the resilience we at SDBIF see in every brain injury survivor.

Our next Day of Art will be via Zoom on October 16th, from 12-2pm PST. There are only 20 spots available, so register now before spaces run out!

OCTOBER 16—VIA ZOOM

20 spaces available—**Register by October 2**





Oct 16 is a VIRTUAL Day of Art for Brain Injury Survivors

[CLICK HERE](#) to Reserve Your Spot by Oct 2



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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

Sweet Summertime at Howard House



This summer has been filled with meaningful moments, new experiences, and opportunities for our residents to connect with the community.

Over the past few months, we have enjoyed many fun outings, including our Balboa Park and La Jolla Shores outings, where residents had the opportunity to spend time outdoors, enjoy the beautiful surroundings, and create lasting memories. We have also continued our music therapy program every other week, which has been wonderful. Seeing our residents participate, engage, and enjoy the benefits of music has been truly special.

We are so grateful for the many opportunities our residents have had to get out into the community, explore new places, and experience activities that bring joy and connection. We are looking forward to continuing to create more adventures and memorable moments together.

Summer Luau Celebration

We are excited to celebrate summer with our upcoming Howard House Luau! This event will be a fun opportunity for our residents, staff, and loved ones to come together, enjoy good company, and celebrate the wonderful community we have built here at Howard House.

Celebrating Our Residents & Team Birthdays

We would like to wish a very happy birthday to everyone celebrating during these upcoming months:

July Birthdays:

Selena Martinez
Alex Barbosa

August Birthdays:

Vanessa Dominguez
Brianda Munoz

September Birthdays:

Nicole Campbell
Gregory Eoll
Esmeralda Munoz

Help Us With Our Transportation Needs

As we continue increasing community outings and activities, we are currently looking for a minivan donation for Howard House. Having a reliable vehicle would allow us to provide even more opportunities for our residents to participate in outings, appointments, and community experiences.

If you or someone you know would like to donate a minivan or support our search, we would greatly appreciate any assistance. Every contribution helps us continue creating meaningful experiences for our residents.

Thank you to our residents, families, staff, and supporters for making Howard House such a special place. We are grateful for the memories we have created together and look forward to all the wonderful moments still ahead.



SDBIF Program Updates



Updates from SDBIF's Student Invested in Survivor Reintegration (SISR) Program

As always, the **Students** involved work closely with SDBIF staff, SDSU professor Dr. Stephanie Ries, and program advisor/psychiatrist Dr. Dan Gardner.

Our **Summer Session Workshops** (by Rehab Without Walls) will conclude with the following topic:

- August: **Healthy Routines & Daily Structure After TBI** presented by Vickie Everich, OT

Our **Fall Semester Session Workshops** will include the following topics:

- **Getting Back to Driving**
- **Accessibility & ADA Laws/Protections**
- **Home Recreation & Leisure**

To **START** the semester, we'll have a SISR Program orientation for all participating students.

At the **END** of the semester, students and survivors will get to present what they learned during the semester at the session-end celebration!

Survivors that are active participants in the entire program may now be eligible to apply for a direct support stipend that can go towards a necessary cost or bill.

We are looking for brain injury survivors who are interested in participating in the program!

- If interested, reach out to info@sdbif.org or call our office at (619)294-6541
- We can help you fill out the application!

SDBIF Friendraiser
WINE • ART • MUSIC

Experience the Art of Recovery
Saturday, September 19, 2026

[SDBIF.org/Friendraiser](https://sdbif.org/Friendraiser) Get Your Ticket(s) Today!

COMMUNITY NEWS

Upcoming 2026 SDBIF Meetings & Workshops

AUGUST

TUE 4 **SURVIVOR** ALT Library
In-Person Workshop
from **2-4 pm** (PST)
 **POSTPONED**
FOUR (4) spaces available

TUE 11 **CAREGIVER** ALT Library
In-Person Workshop
from **2-4 pm** (PST)
 **POSTPONED**
SIX (6) spaces available

FRI 14 **HYBRID** SISR Workshop
for Survivors & Students
from **10 am-12 pm** (PST)
 15 spaces available

FRI 14 **ZOOM** Family & Friends
Peer Support Group
from **2-3:30 pm** (PST)
15 spaces available

SAT 15 **IN-PERSON** Saturday
Meeting—**GAME DAY!!**
from **10 am-12 pm** (PST)

TUE 18 **OPEN** ALT Library
In-Person Workshop
Survivors—**2-3 pm** (PST)
 Caregivers—**3-4 pm** (PST)
email info@SDBIF.org

FRI 28 **ZOOM** Survivor Peer
Support Group
from **2-3:30 pm** (PST)
15 spaces available

SEPTEMBER

TUE 1 **SURVIVOR** ALT Library
In-Person Workshop
from **2-4 pm** (PST)
 FOUR (4) spaces available

TUE 8 **CAREGIVER** ALT Library
In-Person Workshop
from **2-4 pm** (PST)
 SIX (6) spaces available

FRI 11 **HYBRID** SISR Workshop
for Survivors & Students
from **10 am-12 pm** (PST)
 15 spaces available

FRI 11 **ZOOM** Family & Friends
Peer Support Group
from **2-3:30 pm** (PST)
15 spaces available

TUE 15 **OPEN** ALT Library
In-Person Workshop
Survivors—**2-3 pm** (PST)
 Caregivers—**3-4 pm** (PST)
email info@SDBIF.org

SAT 19 **SDBIF**
Friendraiser
WINE • ART • MUSIC
from **6:30-9 pm** (PST)

Buy Tickets @ SDBIF.org/FR

FRI 28 **ZOOM** Survivor Peer
Support Group
from **2-3:30 pm** (PST)
15 spaces available

OCTOBER

TUE 6 **SURVIVOR** ALT Library
In-Person Workshop
from **2-4 pm** (PST)
 FOUR (4) spaces available

FRI 9 **HYBRID** SISR Workshop
for Survivors & Students
from **10 am-12 pm** (PST)
 15 spaces available

FRI 9 **ZOOM** Family & Friends
Peer Support Group
from **2-3:30 pm** (PST)
15 spaces available

TUE 13 **CAREGIVER** ALT Library
In-Person Workshop
from **2-4 pm** (PST)
 SIX (6) spaces available

FRI 16 **ZOOM** Survivor Day of Art
from **12-2 pm** (PST)
20 spaces available 

SAT 17 **HYBRID** Saturday Mtg—
Narrative Medicine & TBI
from **10 am-12 pm** (PST)

TUE 20 **OPEN** ALT Library
In-Person Workshop
Survivors—**2-3 pm** (PST)
 Caregivers—**3-4 pm** (PST)
email info@SDBIF.org

FRI 30 **ZOOM** Survivor Peer
Support Group
from **2-3:30 pm** (PST)
15 spaces available

To get more information, or to register for these events,
Click on the Event or go to **SDBIF.org/events**

COMMUNITY NEWS

Upcoming FREE Community Events & Programs



MORE INFO: neurolab360.com/free-services
(760) 704-8237

In-Person Adaptive Yoga—**EVERY Wed** @ 12 pm

In-Person CogFit Group—**1st Thurs** @ 2 pm

In-Person Aphasia Group—**2nd & 4th Tues** @ 11 am

In-Person Stroke Support Grp—**2nd Wed** @ 4 pm



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

Online Gentle Fitness—**EVERY Tues** @ 9 am



MORE INFO: Deborah Pimstone, 760-633-6709
pimstone.deborah@scrippshealth.org

In-Person Brain Masters—**EVERY Wed** @ 2:30 pm

HYBRID Stroke & TBI Support Group—**2nd & 4th Tues**
@ 2:30 pm

UC San Diego Health

MORE INFO: mmw002@health.ucsd.edu

In-Person Art Class—**1st & 3rd Wed** @ 2 pm

In-Person Support Group—**1st Fri** @ 11 am

ONLINE Aphasia Class—**3rd Thurs** @ 9 am



MORE INFO: Alicia Bianchi, 619-525-8247

In-Person Picnic & Twilight Concert—**WED, 8/12**
5:00 pm @ the Organ Pavillion (2130 Pan
American Rd W, 92101)

In-Person Balboa Park Tour—**FRI, 9/25**

10:30 pm @ the Balboa Park Visitor's Center (1549
El Prado, 92101)

In-Person Chollas Lake Walk & Picnic—**FRI, 10/30**

10:30 pm @ Chollas Lake (6350 College Grove Dr.,
92115)

If your company provides a **Free-of-Charge Service / Program** and want to be considered for this section of our newsletter, send an email to info@SDBIF.org and one of our team members will reach out for more information!



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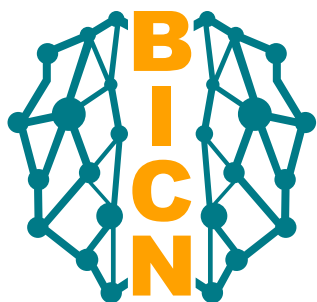


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Brain Injury
Collaboration Network

Latest News on the Brain Injury Collaboration Network (BICN)

Finding trusted professionals within the brain injury community can often feel overwhelming. To solve this, SDBIF has been developing the Brain Injury Collaboration Network (BICN)—a specialized network designed to strengthen connections between brain injury professionals to improve the coordination of care throughout San Diego County.

For Brain Injury Survivors, Caregivers and Families: **Finding Trusted Care**

BICN is here to make finding the right support easier and more reliable.

- **Vetted Providers:** We connect you with trusted, brain injury-informed healthcare providers and community organizations.
- **“Warm Hand-Offs”:** Our coordinated recommendation protocols create seamless transitions between services, reducing barriers to care.
- **Equitable Access:** We prioritize reaching all individuals, especially those who are underinsured or covered by Medi-Cal.

For Brain Injury Professionals: **Join Our Prestigious Network**

We invite qualified professionals to join our dependable, inner-circle of partners.

- **Standardized Application:** All applicants are vetted to ensure a shared commitment to quality and brain injury-informed care.
- **Exclusive Networking:** Members gain access to educational opportunities to foster professional development and shared learning.
- **Building a Better System:** By partnering with us, you help eliminate fragmented care and build a stronger support system.

For more information on how to get recommendations or how to become a BICN service partner, please call the SDBIF office at **(619) 294-6541** or reach out to Juliana Arguelles at **Juliana@SDBIF.org**.



A VAN IS OUR LIFELINE

Your Donation Provides Joy, Dignity
& Independence to our Residents

Howard House is seeking a donation of a dependable, wheelchair-accessible van to:

- Ensure safe transportation to medical appointments, therapy sessions, and community group outings.
- Offer peace of mind to the residents, staff & families.
- Provide joy to individuals whose lives have been fundamentally altered by brain injury.



Honor Howard House Residents with Your Generosity.

Contact us today at **info@SDBIF.org** if you are interested in making this life-changing donation

More Photos from the 2026 SDBIF Brain Injury Symposium





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from the isolation
that some people
actually experience."**

Christina Hardy,
brain injury survivor

SDBIF
Friendraiser
WINE • ART • MUSIC

September 19, 2026
@ Admiral Baker Club House
A Special Night Celebrating
the Art of Brain Injury Recovery

SDBIF.org/Friendraiser



**Come See the Art
of Recovery for
yourself—Buy Your
Tickets & Join Us!**

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Friends of Brain
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