

HEAD LINES

IMPROVING LIFE AFTER TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Spring 2014



Thank You, Charles Priest

Charlie Priest Retires after 24 years as Executive Director of AHIF

When one thinks of the Alabama Head Injury Foundation (AHIF) one also thinks of Charles Priest. Hired as the first Executive Director of the newly formed advocacy organization in 1989, Charlie worked with families and survivors of traumatic brain injury (TBI) to identify needs and develop programs to deliver them. His dedication and passion have never diminished.

In the last 24 years, traumatic brain injury has increased dramatically. In the late 1980's, it was a relatively rare and unknown condition. Today, we are often made aware of sports related brain injury as well as injuries sustained during military service.

Charlie anticipated this and emphasized in a 2007 interview, *"We must do everything we can to stimulate the development of neuro-behavioral services across Alabama."*

Under Charlie's direction, AHIF established milestones such as: statewide local service coordination; a respite care program; recreational opportunities; and accessible housing. AHIF was the first such organization in the country to provide statewide services and was also the first with a board president who had sustained a TBI.

Indeed, he is responsible for most, if not all, of the vital services that AHIF provides to survivors of TBI and their families.

Charlie's achievements include:

Over \$20 million spent in direct support to more than 20,000 individuals in Alabama who have sustained a traumatic brain injury

Partnered with Accessible Space, Inc. to secure over \$5 million to develop supported housing in Hoover, Florence and Mobile

More than \$1.1 million spent to provide respite care to the caregivers of people with traumatic brain injury

Supported numerous legislative initiatives which have positively impacted TBI survivors and their families such as: the Alabama Impaired Drivers Trust Fund Laws, Americans with Disabilities Act, Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Registry Act and the Sports Concussion Bill

More than 13,000 free infant car seats provided to help prevent brain injuries to young children

Alabama TBI State Implementation Partnership Grant Update

The Alabama TBI System, through funding of the TBI State Implementation Partnership Grant, is collaborating with the Oregon Center on Brain Injury Research and Training, the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado TBI Program to create *In the Classroom Series: TBI Professional Development Modules for School Staff*. Frequently educators do not have adequate training in managing the unique needs of these students in the school setting. The goal of the *In the Classroom Series* is to improve

AHIF Names Scott Powell New Executive Director



The Alabama Head Injury Foundation (AHIF) is pleased to welcome Scott Powell as its new Executive Director. Scott joins AHIF after spending the last nine years working for St. Vincent's Foundation, most recently as Administrative Director. Before St. Vincent's, Scott served as Executive Director of the Challenger Learning Center in Woodstock, IL where he and his staff guided students and adults on simulated space missions.

A native of Alabama, Scott received his undergraduate degree from The University of Alabama and secured his MBA from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management. He and his wife, Anna, live in Hoover and have three children.

Scott remarks, *"I am excited to build upon the tremendous success that AHIF has had for so many years. I am also thankful to Charlie Priest for his commitment to the organization."*

I look forward to working with the staff, who passionately pursue AHIF's mission and with the Board of Directors, whose vision continues to keep AHIF one of the most respected and efficient nonprofits in the state."

Partnership Grant Update

Continued from page 1

school outcomes for students with brain injury by improving knowledge and skills of the educators that support and interact with these students. Initially a series of 5 training modules focusing on key instructional strategies will be developed. These interactive training modules can be accessed online. Partners in this collaborative project are Colorado, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Alabama. The Alabama TBI State Implementation Partnership Grant is funded by the Health Resources Services Administration. It is a partnership among the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Alabama Head Injury Foundation and other collaborators.

For additional information contact Maria Crowley at maria.crowley@rehab.alabama.gov.

AHIF Announces New Board Members

Melissa R. Slater

Melissa began volunteering with AHIF in 2001 after her son sustained a traumatic brain injury. A lifelong resident of Mobile, she retired from the University of South Alabama after 26 years of service.



Melissa was a member of the Alabama Citizen Advocacy Institute-Traumatic Brain Injury Leadership Class of 2012 and received the 2013 Federal TBI Program Award for Individual with Brain Injury/Family Participation for her role as Ombudsman for grant related activities.

Melissa is also on the Board of Directors of NAMI Mobile (National Alliance on Mental Illness) advocating for individuals who have survived a TBI and are living with mental illness.

Mike Andrews



Mike graduated cum laude from Thomas Goode Jones Law School where he received the West Publishing Corpus Juris Secundum Award for academic excellence.

Mike deals with product liability cases involving serious injury or death. Currently, Mike's primary focus is on Mesothelioma lawsuits. He enjoys highly technical cases and has a particular passion for working on behalf of injured children.

"Planes, Trains, Automobiles and Escalators" is one of the various publications Mike has authored. In it he discussed the alarming frequency of childhood injuries caused by escalators. Having spoken on the dangers of 15-passenger vans, he was recently invited to be a featured speaker at the annual Alabama Trial Lawyers convention.

Mike currently serves on the UAB Transportation Safety Advisory Board and the Board of Directors for Houston County Girls, Inc., as well as the Board of Directors for the Alabama Head Injury Foundation.

Mike and his wife, Carol, are both from Dothan, Alabama. They have three children: Shelby, David Michael II, and Jack. Mike is also an award winning photographer.

AHIF Resource Coordinators Across Alabama

Local support for people with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) is provided by professional coordinators trained in identifying and accessing community resources.

Resource Coordination also provides assistance coping with the issues of living with a Traumatic Brain Injury or Spinal Cord Injury, and helps transition back into family life, school and community.

Shoals/Northwest AL

Debi Dean

Email: ahifshoals@aol.com

Counties Served: Colbert, Fayette, Franklin, Greene, Lamar, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Marion, Pickens, Tuscaloosa, Walker, Winston

Birmingham/Anniston/Gadsden/North Central AL

Pat Motley

Email: patmotley@windstream.com

Counties Served: Bibb, Calhoun, Chilton, Clay, Cleburne, Etowah, Jefferson, Randolph, St. Clair, Shelby, Talladega

Mobile/Southwest AL

Teresa Roberts

Email: teresaroberts@att.net

Counties Served: Baldwin, Clarke, Choctaw, Escambia, Marengo, Mobile, Monroe, Sumter, Washington



Huntsville/Northeast AL

Sandy Kiplinger

Email: sandykip@juno.com

Counties Served: Blount, Cherokee, Cullman, Dekalb, Jackson, Limestone, Madison, Marshall, Morgan

Auburn/Montgomery/Selma/South Central AL

Holli Driver

Email: ahif_montgomery_auburn@yahoo.com

Counties Served: Autauga, Bullock, Chambers, Coosa, Dallas, Elmore, Hale, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Perry, Russell, Tallapoosa, Wilcox

Dothan/Southeast AL

Terrie Causey

Email: tcahif@aol.com

Counties Served: Barbour, Butler, Coffee, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Pike

Mission

To improve the quality of life for people who have survived traumatic brain injuries and for their families.

Board of Directors

Keith T. Belt, Jr., *President*
Kim F. Hooks, *Vice President*
Jack Sellers, *Secretary*
Joe Ackerson, *Treasurer*

Mike Andrews
Linda F. Coleman
Drew Davis
Ann S. Horne

Thomas A. Novack
J. Heath Phillips
Melissa Slater



Annual Report FY 2013

REVENUE & EXPENSES

Support and Revenue	
Grants	837,210
Contributions	52,990
Fundraising	42,588
United Way(s)	171,690
Interest, Other	8,107
Net assets released from restrictions	119,945
Total	1,232,530
Expenses	
Programs Services	1,035,996
General & Administrative	245,984
Fundraising	11,468
Total Expenses	1,293,448
Net Assets At End of Year	\$296,533

Programs & Services

During fiscal year 2013, AHIF continued to address the needs of its constituency through a variety of programs and services.

Resource Coordination: was provided to 887 people throughout the state, with 164 newly injured.

Financial Aid: A total of \$318,779 was secured for clientele in donated goods and services.

Housing: Three accessible, affordable apartments in Florence, Hoover and Mobile served 57 residents.

Information and Referral: During the year, 531 people requested information on a variety of topics. 92 presentations were delivered by staff to 5,490 people.

Respite Care: Through contracts with Home Health Agencies across the state, 55 caregivers were able to enjoy breaks from the constant duty of round-the-clock care valued at \$58,960.

Recreation: During the past year, the Small Places recreation programs served 59 people in Birmingham, Anniston, Jasper, Huntsville, Cullman, Tuscaloosa, Florence, Gadsden, Montgomery, and Baldwin County.

Recreation Support Groups: held 151 meetings across the state with 2,797 in attendance.

Volunteers: 138 volunteers provided many hours of incredible service to AHIF.

Camp: Held on Lake Martin in August serving 37 campers.

Safety/Prevention: AHIF's "Car Seats for Kids" Program provided 2,191 free seats.

Grant Activity: AHIF and its partner, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, continued work toward increasing access to neurobehavioral treatment funded by the U.S. Maternal & Child Health Bureau, as well as providing training on brain injury and helping to promote sports concussion prevention and awareness.

Neurobehavior Clinic: 11 clients and their families received help from AHIF's Clinic and its collaborative partners: UAB, United Cerebral Palsy and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.

Staff Development: Staff members of AHIF continued to maintain national certification as Brain Injury Specialists by the American Academy of Certified Brain Injury Specialists – AACBIS.

Funding: These services were funded in whole or in part by the Alabama Impaired Drivers Trust Fund, United Ways of Central and West Alabama, Community Charities of Alabama, the Alabama Child Passenger Restraint Act, and generous donors like you!

Contributions Make It All Possible

A Grateful Family Gives Back

At the age of 26, Bryan sustained a traumatic brain injury in a motor vehicle crash. For the next 23 years, he would live with and be cared for by his parents in the Huntsville area. Bryan utilized a walker at home and a wheelchair in the community, had short-term memory loss, tinnitus, poor vision and initially stayed at home.

Then, he and his parents began attending an AHIF Support Group.



Over the next several years, AHIF was able to provide much needed resources to Bryan including a wheelchair, social and recreational opportunities, and assistance with Medicaid. Unfortunately, during this same time period both of Bryan's aging parents passed away. Bryan lived several years in an Assisted Living Facility, but sadly passed away at the age of 62.

Following Bryan's passing, the staff of Alabama Head Injury Foundation were humbled to learn that, in appreciation of the care and support provided by AHIF to Bryan and his family, AHIF was listed as a beneficiary in the estate of the family.

The gift received from this grateful family allows AHIF to provide similar services to additional individuals who rely on AHIF for support, resources and encouragement.

Do You Wish to Support AHIF?

The Alabama Head Injury Foundation is truly appreciative to this family and all members of the community who support AHIF through an outright contribution or as an inclusion in their estate planning. Because AHIF is a 501(c)3, all gifts are fully deductible. If you would like to discuss such an opportunity, please contact the AHIF office at (205) 823-3818.

A Sorority Supports Their Sister & AHIF

On November 12, 2013, Auburn University's service sorority, Omega Phi Alpha, hosted "Southern Swing: a night of dancing, sweet tea and Southern hospitality." This was the sorority's second Southern Swing event which focused on raising funds and awareness for the Alabama Head Injury Foundation. Omega Phi Alpha raised \$600.

Omega Phi Alpha was introduced to AHIF after sorority sister, Audrey Bellah, sustained a traumatic brain injury. Over the years, she had received multiple sports related concussions while playing soccer. Audrey sustained her last TBI in March 2012.

Audrey describes, in her own words, the impact of her injury and one very unique way she is coping with her new normal, *"March 8, 2012 was the day my life completely changed; it was the day I suffered a traumatic brain injury. From the moment I awoke in the ER, each day was filled with immense pain, heart-ache, and loneliness. I couldn't speak well, retain anything people said, or even walk without feeling immediately dizzy. I was confused by simple tasks and also went many days in a row without being able to sleep."*



Throughout my traumatic brain injury recovery, I have been working on a photography series that focuses on life with TBI. My camera lens helped me focus on accomplishing a task and express the emotional roller coaster I have been through."

Thank you, Omega Phi Alpha, for helping raise awareness of TBI and the services offered by AHIF.

Alabama Head Injury Foundation

AHIF

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Charles Priest Retires

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Charlie was diligent about the numbers, funding was a daily priority, however, he never forgot who we serve and why. He knew many of the consumers and their families personally. He applauded their courage and inspired them to push onward. Local fundraising events and social activities followed spurred on by consumers' family and friends.

In another interview, Charlie stated, *"I feel blessed to be making a living doing what I would volunteer for anyway. I've always been in the disabilities movement in one way or another...The Alabama Head Injury Foundation is my home."*

Charlie announced his retirement as Executive Director of Alabama Head Injury Foundation in

February 2014. With his commitment to helping those in need, his innovation in creating new programs and initiatives, his passion for educating people about TBI and AHIF and his insightful leadership, a lasting legacy has been created that will forever link his name with AHIF.

On behalf of the board, the staff and the thousands of individuals who have benefitted from his tireless work at Alabama Head Injury Foundation, we say

Thank You Charlie!

Many have asked us if they can send a note of appreciation to Charlie Priest and/or make a gift in his honor to AHIF. If you would like to honor Charlie in this special way, please send your note/donation to:

Alabama Head Injury Foundation
 3100 Lorna Road, Suite 200
 Birmingham, AL 35216