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Message From AHIF Executive Director

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff of Alabama Head Injury Foundation, I want to thank you for making 2019 another wonderful year. At AHIF, we strive to never lose sight of what actually constitutes a good year.

If we can honestly state that the nearly 3,000 traumatic brain injury (TBI) survivors that we serve statewide, and the countless additional caregivers who play a role in their day to day lives, have been positively impacted by the programs and services we deliver, then it has indeed been a good year. It is our sincere belief that this was most definitely the case in 2019.

Through the financial support we receive each year, AHIF was able to provide direct services to 832 TBI survivors in 2019. Of these, AHIF saw a record 238 new clients in 2019, due in part to our efforts to promote ongoing relationships with referral sources across the state. AHIF also provided 196 support group meetings across Alabama with 3,244 total attendees.

AHIF was able, through the extreme generosity of Encompass Healthcare, to again offer its week-long camp at Camp ASCCA, and we were able to expand our Bright Ideas TBI Camp model to three universities across the state. AHIF was able to introduce a pilot program providing mental health counseling vouchers to help address the many mental health related issues that can arise following a brain injury both with the survivor and also with their caregiver. AHIF was able to continue offering respite care vouchers, allowing 62 families to receive a grand total of more than 4,100 hours of free respite care as they care for a TBI survivor.

Most importantly, AHIF was able to support its network of seven Resource Coordinators across the state who work in local communities to identify TBI survivors following their injury, meet with them and their family to establish short and long-term goals as part of their recovery, and connect them to local programs and services as well as provide AHIF’s own programs and services to aid in this recovery process. The strength of our organization is built upon the dedication, compassion and resourcefulness of our small but passionate staff.

I am excited about what 2020 will bring for our clients and caregivers, and appreciate the generous support of so many across our state who make the work that we do each and every day possible.

Thank you!

Scott Powell
AHIF Executive Director
Mission

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for survivors of traumatic brain injury and for their families.

Programs

Resource Coordination

AHIF uses a network of seven Resource Coordinators, located across the state, to work in local communities to identify TBI survivors as soon as possible, and then work to identify, connect to, and provide all available resources to aid with their continued recovery, transition from a medical facility home, and short-term and long-term goals for their recovery. In most cases, TBI survivors continue working with our Resource Coordinators for life.

Respite Care

AHIF establishes partnerships across the state with home health agencies to provide respite care to caregivers of TBI survivors, in the form of vouchers, for up to 75 hours annually of free respite care giving them a much needed break from their role as a 24/7 caregiver.

Recreational Support Groups

The most common complaint of TBI survivors is the social isolation that so often accompanies their injury. AHIF provides socialization opportunities through its network of 15 recreational support groups across the state, providing survivors and caregivers the opportunity to share with one another, build relationships, and reinforce that they are not alone in this journey.
Recreational Camps

AHIF provided a week-long recreational camp at beautiful Camp ASCCA each year. Campers and a buddy spent the week with activities that included zip-lines, tubing, archery, a petting zoo, arts & crafts and more!

Therapy Camps

In 2019, AHIF partnered with The University of Alabama, with Samford University, and with The University of South Alabama to hold three therapy camps where students from a range of disciplines worked with survivors and caregivers to develop new strategies and ideas for compensating with the long-term consequences of their injury.

Mental Health Counseling

In late 2019, AHIF introduced a pilot mental health counseling voucher program where survivors and/or caregivers were offered free mental health counseling to work through the many emotional and mental health issues that so often accompany TBI and caring for a TBI survivor.

Vision

We envision a state where traumatic brain injury is prevented when possible, and fully understood and supported where not.
Three years ago, AHIF began utilizing an assessment tool called the MPAI-4 to establish a baseline for our TBI survivors in the three areas of Abilities, Adjustment and Participation. These measures allow us to see where our survivors are in terms of cognitive ability, their adjustment to their new normal following the injury, and the degree to which they are re-integrating into society. We then conduct a six month and one year follow-up. With this assessment, lower numbers represent the highest functioning. The results are summarized below:

AHIF’s MPAI-4 data for the 419 new clients it has applied this assessment tool

AHIF strives to identify TBI survivors as close to their injury date as possible. This allows us to be a proactive support in the transition process from a healthcare facility into a more permanent living situation, and to actively work with the client and their caregiver(s) during the first year, which medical research shows holds the greatest opportunity for continued recovery. To accomplish this, AHIF recently became a Social Work CEU and Nursing CE provider to help open doors to share our programs and services with potential referral sources.
The Road To Independence

For the majority of the TBI survivors we work with, one of the hardest realities to accept is the loss of independence. Individuals who had thrived and prospered in life are now living under the care of a loving family member, and although they deeply appreciate the caregiver for serving in this vital role, their primary goal is to be independent again.

Meet Darius

Darius was injured in a motor vehicle accident along the Alabama/Mississippi border in 2015. Following his accident, Darius was left in a wheelchair, with substantial physical and cognitive effects from his accident. Darius’ mom and his girlfriend are his primary caregivers, and have been with him throughout this recovery.

Darius and his family found AHIF in 2016, and since that time we have been able to work with Darius and his family to find ways for him to increase his socialization opportunities and to not give up on his recovery. Although he is now several years removed from his injury, if you ask Darius what his primary goal is, he will tell you it is to walk again without assistance.

Darius attended AHIF’s week-long camp at Camp ASCCA in Jackson’s Gap, AL. He also attends the newly formed AHIF Shelby County Support Group that meets at Helena United Methodist Church. These activities not only give him somewhere to go and something to do, but also motivate him to continue fighting each day to improve and not give up. Darius’ mother also received a respite care voucher from AHIF, providing her 75 hours of free respite care in her role as caregiver.

Darius was also able to attend AHIF’s 2nd Annual Bright Ideas TBI Camp at Samford University. There he was able to work with Samford students and faculty in areas that include speech therapy, physical therapy, nutrition, social work and with an occupational therapist to identify additional strategies and ideas for recovery and adjustments to challenges he continues to face. One Samford speech student recommended that AHIF purchase Darius an Amazon Echo Dot that could serve as a personal reminder to help with his memory issues. Two months later, that same Samford student accompanied AHIF staff to deliver and set up Darius’s Echo Dot. He is now using it to help him remember to take his medications, and to remind him to read his Bible each day.

AHIF’s support groups, recreational camps, therapy camps, respite care, and devices like the Echo Dot are only made possible through the generous support of donors throughout the year. Thank you!
The Road To Recovery Is Not Always a Short One

One characteristic that differentiates AHIF from so many other service providers is the fact that our relationship with our clients is often life-long. We work with our clients and their family to accept and adjust to their “new normal” following an injury, but also share in their belief that recovery can continue throughout their life, and even the smallest gains can be celebrated in their road to recovery.

Meet Tara

Tara sustained her TBI in 1998, more than 20 years ago. Her recovery continues today, and her support system of family, friends and her AHIF Resource Coordinator continue looking for ways to challenge Tara to continue on her road to recovery.

Tara and her mom are frequent attendees of the Etowah County Support Group, and Tara was able to attend the Samford Bright Ideas TBI Camp. Tara is also a frequent attendee of AHIF’s TBI Camp at Camp ASCCA.

Tara’s family keeps seeking ways to support Tara’s recovery, and has a personal trainer who works with her each week, as well as taking part in all AHIF programs and activities to keep informed on opportunities that are available, and provide the social opportunities that are so valuable in continuing to adjust to the long-term effects of a TBI.

AHIF is deeply thankful that donors and supporters make it possible to sustain these long-term relationships with our clients and caregivers, providing ongoing resources and opportunities throughout their life. For so many of our clients, even the smallest improvement that we might otherwise take for granted every can be a life-changing development worthy of celebration.

Tara with Samford PT students at Bright Ideas TBI Camp

Tara and her mother talk with AHIF staff member Pat Motley

Tara and her mom at AHIF’s Rodeo Roundup Camp
Resources & Financial Management

AHIF is a careful steward of the resources entrusted to us to accomplish our mission. We are proud to report a 9.6% administrative rate, meaning that only the smallest fraction of funds we receive are used to fund the operations of AHIF.

The majority of AHIF’s financial resources are used to support local programs and services in the communities where we operate. AHIF is proud to serve the entire state, and has active clients in all 67 Alabama counties.

Revenues and Expenses

The charts below represent the sources of revenue for AHIF in FY’19 and the use of expenses by AHIF in FY’19.

Sources of Revenue

AHIF receives funding from the Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund (AHSCITF), a fund created by the Alabama State Legislature and funded through a $100 fine for each DUI conviction in the state. AHIF was also proud to receive a $125,000 line-item appropriation in 2019 in support of its programs and services across the state.

AHIF is also a proud partner agency of the United Way of Central Alabama, United Way of West Alabama, United Way of Lee County, United Way of Marshall County, and the United Way of Etowah County. We are deeply thankful to these United Ways for the work they do in supporting agencies across the state, and for connecting generous donors in our state with worthy causes.
Looking Ahead into 2020

The Alabama Department of Public Health’s TBI Registry showed 4,297 new injuries occurring in 2018. Our growing caseload means demand for more services. To meet these needs, AHIF will be offering the following services in 2020.

Central Alabama Resource Coordinator

AHIF is pleased to announce that Jenn O’Dell will be joining AHIF as the new Central Alabama Resource Coordinator. AHIF has created a new territory, and new staff position, covering Jefferson and Walker Counties. Jenn O’Dell served two semesters as a Master’s level intern with AHIF through the University of Kentucky. She is a Field Medic with the United States Army and recently completed her Masters in Rehab Counseling. We look forward to the services she will provide our clients in the Central Alabama region.

Northeast Alabama Resource Coordinator

AHIF is pleased to welcome back Briana Reed as the new AHIF Northeast Alabama Resource Coordinator. Briana worked in this capacity for AHIF in 2016, moved out of state, but has returned to our state and to this position. Briana has a Masters of Social Work, and a true heart for working with TBI survivors. We are excited to welcome her back in this important role.

Enhanced Camp Opportunities

AHIF is expanding both its recreational and therapy-based camp opportunities in 2020, adding an additional Bright Ideas Camp location and adding two weekend recreational camps.

March 13-15 – Camp ASCCA Weekend TBI Camp
June 2-4 – University of Alabama Bright Ideas TBI Camp
June 23-25 – Auburn University Bright Ideas TBI Camp
July 7-9 – University of South Alabama Bright Ideas TBI Camp
July 15-17 – Samford University Bright Ideas TBI Camp
August 9-14 – Camp ASCCA Week-long TBI Camp
November 6-8 – Camp McDowell Weekend TBI Camp

For more information, please call the AHIF Office at 800-433-8002, visit our website at www.ahif.org.
AHIF 2019 Board of Directors

None of the work that AHIF accomplished in 2019 would have been possible without the leadership and support of its Board of Directors. Every AHIF Board member made a personal financial commitment to AHIF, as well as connecting prospective donors to AHIF and promoting awareness of AHIF and its programs in communities across the state.

Mike Andrews – Board Chair
Karen Hislop – Board Vice-Chair
Sharlotte Rogers – Board Secretary/Treasurer
Mark Andrews
Ty Brown
Jason Early

“I am proud to be serving on the AHIF Board. This Board gives me the opportunity to utilize my family experiences as a caregiver for my adult daughter living with a TBI and my professional experience as a social work educator to advocate for programs in our state that serve the needs of survivors and their families through AHIF.”

-Jack Sellers, AHIF Board

I was thrilled to be invited to join the AHIF Board as I began a new journey with a TBI in my family. My son’s injury has led me to many new friends, resources and experts. Every day in my family is different still than it was before his accident. I appreciate how fortunate we were/are and through AHIF I see so many with much greater challenges and different outcomes. If there is any way for me to help tell their stories, pray for them, enlist help from expected sources, and raise awareness about head injuries in general, then I want to help.

-Bowden Sarrett, AHIF Board

Dawn Matson
Jimmy Robinson
Bowden Sarrett
Jack Sellers
Bree Sison
Vikki Vandiver
Kim Vice
Cam Ward
Brittney Ziemba

Emeritus Board Members: Keith Belt, Drew Davis, Kim Hooks, Anne Horne, Tom Novack, and Melissa Slater
AHIF Regional Boards

AHIF is grateful to have Regional Boards in the Birmingham, Montgomery and Dothan communities. These Regional Boards spread awareness about TBI, and encourage support for AHIF. Each Regional Board also holds a unique special event to raise funds in support of AHIF.

**Birmingham Regional Board**

Brandy Robertson – President  
Candice Adams-Mitchell  
John Anderson  
Katie Beaugez  
Devan Byrd  
Bryan Congleton  
Emilie Gibbons  
George Heinemann  
Anna Jones  
Danielle Laws  
Erica Lopez  
Taylor Mann  
Dylan Marsh  
Ben McManus  
Meagen O’Brien

The AHIF Birmingham Regional Board held its 5th Annual Beer, Band & BBQ in 2019. Since it began, the event has raised more than $42,000 in support of AHIF.

Regional Board Members Erica Lopez, Devan Byrd and Dylan Marsh read a book about brain injuries to students.
Wiregrass Regional Board
Carol Andrews
Jessica Givens
John Givens
Ryan Hendrix
Davis McLaughlin
Kim Rogers
Rachel Donneli
Abby Rogers
Zach Rogers
Whitney Sherling

The Wiregrass Regional Board held its first Heads & Tails Low Country Boil, raising more than $300 for programs and services to TBI survivors in the Wiregrass area.

Montgomery Regional Board
Evan Allen
Michael Bird
Haleigh Cushen
Kimberly Davis
Christian Harrell
Stephanie Monplaisir
Victoria Russo
Andrea Solomon

The Montgomery Regional Board held its 5th Annual AHIF in the Alley event in 2019. The event has raised more than $23,000 for our River Region services throughout its history.

AHIF is actively recruiting members for newly forming Regional Boards in the Huntsville, Tuscaloosa, Mobile and Gadsden areas. If you are interested in volunteering with us, please contact AHIF at info@ahif.org.
AHIF Resource Coordinator Territories and Support Group Locations

AHIF provides its supportive services across the state through a network of eight Resource Coordinators, each with specific territories they are responsible for.

If you have any questions about which territory you belong to, or about one of our support groups, please call the AHIF Office at 800-433-8002, visit our website at www.ahif.org, or e-mail us at info@ahif.org.
Volunteer and Donate

AHIF never charges for any of the services it provides, and thus relies on the generosity of individuals, businesses and foundations to provide the array of support services it does. We are deeply grateful for this support. If you would like to support AHIF, please consider the following ways you can help:

Help Us Do More With 84

Consider the impact that a gift of $84 can have to the clients AHIF serves.

- It can provide 5 hours of respite care to a caregiver in desperate need of a break.
- It can provide 4 hours of mental health counseling to a TBI survivor or a caregiver who needs to work through some issues
- It can provide the food for one of our 200 support group meetings we hold across the state each year.

Please consider joining our Brain Trust, a group of annual supporters giving at least $84 to AHIF. You can go to www.ahif.org, and click on the “Help Us Do More with 84” tab on the homepage to set up a recurring monthly contribution of $7 or more, and make possible one or more of the programs mentioned above. You can also mail your gift to the following address:

Alabama Head Injury Foundation  
500 Chase Park South Suite 130  
Hoover, AL 35244

There are other, easy ways that you can help AHIF. Please consider using AmazonSmile when you shop online at Amazon, and Amazon will donate 0.5% of what is spent to AHIF when you select AHIF as your charity of choice. This can also be done with a variety of other online sites if you choose to use iGive as well.

You can also use your Facebook page to hold a fundraiser for AHIF, perhaps as part of your birthday celebration. For more information about this, or other ways you can support AHIF, please call our office at (205) 823-3818 or e-mail us at info@ahif.org.

Volunteer and Help Make a Difference

Please visit our website at www.ahif.org and fill out the volunteer form if you would like to volunteer at an AHIF support group, camp or with AHIF in some other way.