

Message From AHIF Executive Director



Scott Powell
AHIF Executive Director

Dear Friends,

When FY'20 began on October 1, 2019, AHIF had significant plans in place to expand on the excellent 2019 you had just helped us complete. Never could we, nor anyone, know the dramatic turn that 2020 would take. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the thousands of families impacted by COVID-19. I freely recognize that the struggles, and successes, of one nonprofit pale in comparison to these life-altering events. However, as part of this Annual Report, I wanted to share with you where we are as an organization.

Perhaps the most shocking, and eye-opening, result of this COVID-impacted year was the lack of impact it had on new clients. In fact, AHIF saw a record number of **242** new clients in 2020, the largest such number in its 36 year history. It is reflective of the reality that, even in a time of social isolation with more people staying at home, the very nature of traumatic brain injuries are that they can happen anytime and anywhere. We are deeply thankful to our network of dedicated referral sources across the state who, in a time of so much chaos and uncertainty for those essential hero healthcare workers, continued referring TBI and/or SCI survivors to AHIF so we could provide support even in this time of a global pandemic.

As you might expect in a chaotic time like 2020, AHIF saw an increase in demand for services across its caseload, and provided services to **1,351** TBI survivors in Alabama in 2020, compared with 832 in 2019, an increase of **62%**. At the same time, AHIF saw many of its programs affected, as "in-person" support groups were stopped, our recreational TBI Camps and our Bright Ideas TBI Camps were also canceled. Thankfully, we were able to continue providing respite care, reaching more than **49** families with more than **2,700** hours of free respite care. We also were able to continue providing mental health counseling services, primarily using video conferencing, as we embraced the use of technology as a service delivery method to reach more than **30** clients with hundreds of hours of free mental health counseling.

AHIF was also able to shift its support group model to using Zoom. In March of 2020, I had never heard of Zoom, but now we use it to provide a minimum of two support groups each week and we have provided more than **65** such support groups since March, providing a much needed outlet for social interaction during a time when little was available.

I am deeply thankful to the AHIF staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, Regional Boards, community supporters and most of all our clients and caregivers who have shown so much flexibility in this uncertain time to allow us to still thrive and grow as we seek to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Powell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.