

## AHIF Conducts Brain Freeze Challenge

Last August, AHIF conducted its first Brain Freeze Challenge to raise awareness of traumatic brain injury and support for AHIF services across our state. Over the course of the month, AHIF partnered with a number of businesses to hold more than 30 separate Brain Freeze Challenges, and saw more than 1,000 people take the challenge itself.

AHIF is grateful to BlueBell Creameries, who donated ice cream for all of the challenges in the Birmingham and Gadsden areas. AHIF also appreciates the support of Dothan Ice Cream who partnered with AHIF in the Wiregrass area challenges.



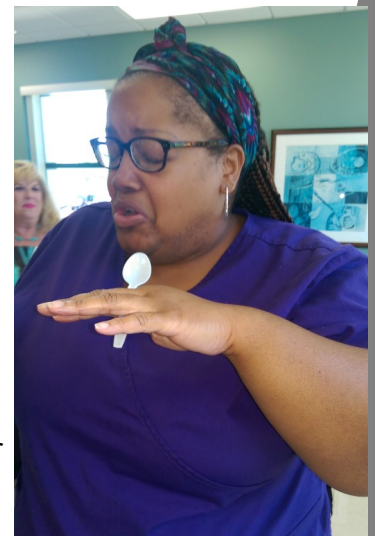
The concept of the Brain Freeze Challenge is a simple one. Participants used ice cream to give themselves a brain freeze, and we documented it with a picture. The headache originating from a brain freeze simulates the constant headache often described by those who have survived a traumatic brain injury.

AHIF was proud to partner with a number of businesses and venues across the state as part of this effort. The following list represents those entities who held a Brain Freeze

Challenge event:

- \* HealthSouth Rehab Montgomery
- \* HealthSouth Rehab Lakeshore
- \* HealthSouth Rehab Dothan
- \* HealthSouth Rehab Huntsville
- \* HealthSouth Rehab Gadsden
- \* Birmingham Barons Baseball
- \* AAA Alabama
- \* Hare Wynn Law Firm
- \* Beasley Allen Law Firm
- \* Salon U Midtown
- \* Aldridge Bordon CPA
- \* Till Hester CPA
- \* Ackerson & Associates
- \* Carney Dye Law Firm
- \* Cogito Mental Health Services
- \* City of Auburn
- \* Flowers Hospital

AHIF will conduct the Brain Freeze Challenge again in August 2017. For more information, please contact us at 205-823-3818.





## A Note from our Executive Director

As we begin a new year, AHIF is looking ahead to how we can best serve individuals across our state living after sustaining a traumatic brain injury. For many years, AHIF worked to “be all things to all people,” and I fear that this might not have been the best strategy. AHIF will always exist to provide support services to any TBI survivor or family member who needs our help, but at the same time we are seeking to focus our attention with those for whom we can affect the greatest change, most often being those with recent injuries.

AHIF recently implemented an assessment tool, the MPAL-4, which will help us identify if we are making a difference in our clients’ lives, and hopefully to identify what, specifically, we are doing to make these improvements so that we can learn and apply successful strategies to all our clients.

Additionally, AHIF is seeking a renewed focus on caregivers, recognizing the tremendous and never-ending struggle they are enduring in caring for their loved one.

To accomplish these goals, AHIF has included in its current strategic plan the expansion of its respite care program to more hours to more families. Additionally, AHIF will add new support groups and seek to increase attendance at its existing groups. AHIF will offer specialized programs to caregivers, and seeks a return of the week-long TBI Camp at Camp ASCCA.

If you would like to volunteer to help one of these initiatives, or if you could financially support one of these efforts, please contact the AHIF office at 205-823-3818.

## Wiregrass Regional Board holds a dove shoot fundraiser

The AHIF Wiregrass Regional Board held a dove shoot on January 14th to raise money for AHIF. They also held a silent auction to raise money to support the family of Blake Wood, who recently passed away from a traumatic brain injury. AHIF is thankful to Zach Rogers and McDavid Flowers for organizing what we hope will be an annual event.



## AHIF Birmingham and Montgomery Regional Boards announce third year of special events

AHIF’s Birmingham Regional Board will hold its 3rd Annual Beer, Band and BBQ on Saturday, March 25th at Avondale Brewery. AHIF’s Montgomery Regional Board will hold its 3rd Annual Silent Auction on Thursday, March 30th at Alley Station. For more information on these event, visit our website at [www.ahif.org](http://www.ahif.org) or call 205-823-3818.



## **Your Contributions Make It All Possible...Thank you!**

### **AHIF Board Member conducts CE Fundraiser for AHIF**

AHIF Board member Sharlotte Rogers, with HealthSouth Rehab Hospital of Montgomery, held a continuing education (CE) seminar on traumatic brain injury where proceeds from the seminar went directly to AHIF. The event raised more than \$1,300 for AHIF!

### **Brownell Travel supports AHIF through honorary gift**

Brownell Travel generously gave a gift in honor of one of its staff members, who has a son who sustained a traumatic brain injury years ago. We are extremely thankful for their support in making this very special gift.

## **AHIF brings two TBI survivors together into a possible lifelong friendship**

Kearria was age 20 and attending college in Huntsville. On 3/28/15, she was at a social gathering in Panama City and a male on drugs began to shoot into the crowd and shot Kearria in her head. Kearria received inpatient rehab but returned home bed and wheelchair bound. Kearria and her mother approached AHIF in November 2015. Now over a year later, Kearria is looking into college classes and, with other in-home resources, her mom has returned to work.

Chanteal was age 17 and had just finished her junior year in high school when on 3/22/15 she was in a car accident and sustained a SCI leaving her with paralysis from the chest down. AHIF first spoke to Chantel in May 2015. She was home from rehab and found herself also bed and wheelchair bound. She has struggled with her life changes, but she returned to school and her success has partly been in graduating with her class and now checking out college classes for 2017.

The lives of both of these girls were changed drastically and, in October 2015, AHIF Resource Coordinator Teresa Roberts spoke with the mothers of these girls to explore the possibility of these two communicating by phone or social media. The girls agreed they would like to do this and thus the exchange began with calls, text and facetime chats. This went on for a year and, on September 27th, they met for the first time for a movie and dinner and Kearria's mom emailed AHIF with a picture to let us know they will probably be lifelong friends!



## AHIF introduces its new Program Director

AHIF is fortunate to have hired Amy Lamb-Eng as its new Program Director. In this role, Amy will supervise AHIF's seven Resource Coordinators across Alabama and work in the assessment and development of programs/services for TBI survivors across our state. Amy comes to AHIF with fifteen years of experience working in healthcare with a passion for neuro-rehabilitation. She has been a practicing speech-language pathologist all of that time and most recently served as a Director of Quality for an inpatient rehabilitation hospital.

Amy earned her B.A.s for Speech and Hearing Sciences and Psychology, and her M.A. for Speech-Language Pathology from Indiana University in her home state. She has worked in acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health, outpatient, with the majority of her time spent in an inpatient rehabilitation hospital setting. Amy has been a program chair for a Disease Specific program accredited by the Joint Commission, and helped to establish educational opportunities for patients, families, and other healthcare providers related to brain injury.



Amy has lived and worked in the Montgomery, Alabama area for the past ten years, and served on the Montgomery Regional Board for two years. She is passionate about increasing TBI awareness and prevention, and knows the benefit that continued services and support can contribute to recovery.

## AHIF introduces its new Northeast Alabama Resource Coordinator

AHIF is proud to announce the arrival of Dianne Pierson as the new Resource Coordinator for the northeast Alabama area. Dianne will provide support to brain injury survivors in Madison, Marshall, Jackson and DeKalb counties.

Dianne has been involved in healthcare and helping

people since the age of sixteen. She went on to graduate with a B.S. in Physical Therapy from Maryville College-St. Louis, and a M.Ed in health care education from North Carolina State University. She has worked in many different aspects of healthcare and in many

areas including her home state of Texas, and also Illinois, Missouri, North Carolina, Maryland, and now here in Alabama for the past 7 years.

Dianne loves to get in front of people and teach whether in a classroom setting or educating people in their homes. She has worked with caregivers and their loved ones in finding needed resources, Medicare/insurance needs, and home safety.

*"If we can make a difference in just one person's life each day, then we have made a difference in our own lives as well." - Dianne Pierson*



## Alabama Head Injury Foundation 2016 Annual Report

**Our Mission:** To improve the quality of life for survivors of traumatic brain injury and for their families

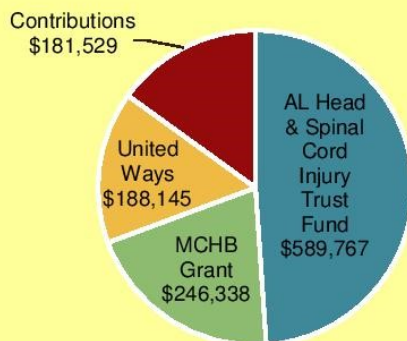


### Financial Report

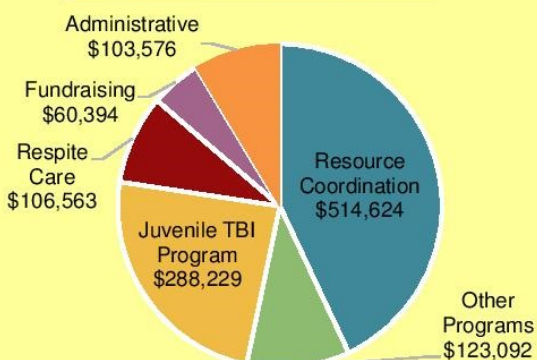
#### 2016 Financial Highlights

- Birmingham and Montgomery Regional Board special events had a 21% increase in revenue
- Generated a net income of \$20,098, concluding a third consecutive year of positive net income
- Held expenses 1% below budget, and met targeted income goal at 101% of budget

**Income Total - \$1,216,576**



**Expense Total - \$1,196,478**



AHIF is committed to fiscal responsibility and maintains a 13.7% administrative cost, meaning 86% of all contributions go directly to programs and services.

### 2016 Accomplishments



Pictures from our first ever Brain Freeze Challenge awareness initiative

#### SUPPORT for survivors and caregivers

- 183 support group meetings held in 13 different locations statewide
- 3,800 total support group attendees (10% increase)
- 64 families provided with 4,490 hours of respite care

#### Providing essential financial ADVOCACY

- AHIF's seven local Resource Coordinators secured \$1,369,829 in direct assistance for our consumers. Some specific items include:
  - \$25,000 for wheelchairs and home modifications
  - \$661,995 in medical bills written off
  - \$513,601 in personal needs and medication

#### Providing DIRECT services to consumers

- AHIF utilized its referral systems to reach 156 new consumers in FY'16 (a 20% increase from FY'15)
- Provided direct support services to 884 consumers in FY'16

#### Increase the FOOTPRINT of AHIF statewide

- AHIF now has 15 Board members representing seven cities statewide
- Created a new UAB Student Board
- Created additional Regional Board Chapters in Huntsville, Mobile and Gadsden
- Created new partnerships with HealthSouth Phenix City and with Horseshoe Farms in Greensboro

### Help AHIF continue to grow!

- Tell **five** people about AHIF in 2017
- Send us a **story** of how involvement with AHIF has touched your life
- Consider a first-time financial **gift**, continue your existing giving, or increase your annual gift in 2017



**AHiF**  
Alabama Head Injury Foundation



For more information, please visit our website at [www.ahif.org](http://www.ahif.org)



3100 Lorna Road Suite 203  
Hoover, AL 35216  
Phone: (205) 823-3818

**Our Mission:** *To improve the quality of life for survivors of traumatic brain injury and for their families*

**Our Vision:** *We envision a state where traumatic brain injury is prevented where possible and fully understood and supported where not.*

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

BIRMINGHAM, AL  
PERMIT NO. 3246

**AHIF is a proud partner of:**

United Ways of Central Alabama,  
Lee County, Etowah County,  
Marshall County, and West  
Alabama



## Graci Pennington's crowning achievement

In January 2012, Graci Pennington was practicing cheerleading as she had so many times before, serving as a flyer on a stunt. Moments later, she was falling to the floor and

knocked unconscious. Although the ER told her she was okay, Graci still felt something was wrong two weeks later, and found her way to Dr.

Joe Ackerson, who worked with her for four months as Graci returned to school and eventually to cheerleading. Even now, five years later, Graci knows her injury still affects her learning.

However, Graci is not one to let struggles keep her down and was recently crowned Miss Teen St. Clair County. Her platform, of course, is traumatic brain injury. Graci has partnered with AHIF to help bring awareness about brain injuries, and safety in cheerleading. We are thankful to Graci for her support and the hope and inspiration she provides to so many.



## Brain Injury Awareness Month

**Join AHIF as we recognize Brain Injury Awareness Month throughout March 2017. For a list of events and activities, please visit our website at [www.ahif.org](http://www.ahif.org).**