



Brain Injury Alliance of Washington

MINDMATTERS

PREVENTION ■ SUPPORT ■ EDUCATION ■ ADVOCACY

March 2022

MindMatters is a publication of BIAWA



Brain Injury Alliance WASHINGTON

OUR MISSION: To increase public awareness, support, and hope for those affected by Brain Injury through education, assistance, and advocacy.

WHAT'S NEW

Message from the BIAWA Board

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Scott Slater as our Interim Executive Director.

“Scott is extremely driven and excels at building relationship both inside and outside the organization,” stated Board President Becky Minaglia. “His skills and experience were a natural fit to help BIAWA support our mission which is to increase public awareness, support, and hope for those affected by Brain Injury.”

Allison Mollner, BIAWA Board’s Past President added: “Scott’s extensive financial background and nonprofit management experience bring a rare combination of leadership in both the nonprofit and for-profit worlds to provide service and advocacy for Brain Injury survivors.”

Board member Sabrina Bonaparte, who chairs BIAWA’s Diversity, Equity & Inclusion committee stated that the Board was particularly impressed by Scott's innovative thinking and his ability to successfully pivot an organization's capabilities during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic as Acting Executive Director at Full Life. Bonaparte added that Slater is committed to working with underserved populations and developing stronger community partnerships.

Read more about Scott on page 12



Brain Health & Wellness is staying virtual for Spring 2022. (See page 9)

Do you need help making a COVID-19 vaccination appointment?

Please call the BIAWA Resource Line at 877-982-4292.

Connect with Us!

We utilize the following social media platforms to share information on upcoming opportunities, resources, and fun photos from our community! Visit us to stay up to date on what BIAWA is doing in your community.



@BrainInjuryWA



@braininjurywa



YouTube @BrainInjuryWA

Message from Deborah Crawley



The Time Has Come ,Deborah Said, to Talk of Many Things

I've often used this line from one of my favorite poems, albeit not the happiest of poems as a humorous way to bring up an important conversation. Gets people's attention.

So this is a very important conversation for me with the all of you, the Community of the Brain Injury Alliance of Washington.

At our November 2021 Gala I announced that it would be my last time on stage as Executive Director. I chose the where, the when and the how for notifying staff, Board and some of our community. That was important to me. I also said it wasn't happening the next day, week or month. I wanted to give the Board and Staff of BIAWA the time they needed to organize and find a replacement to lead and care for this organization, which they recently did. My last day as Executive Director was 2/28/22 and through April, I will continue to officially be part of BIAWA as an Executive Consultant. Please welcome Scott Slater, the Interim Executive Director whenever you have a chance.

For the past 12 years, this has been one of my most rewarding job and personal opportunities – to lead this organization as Executive Director. And did we go through a lot together, building a great community and strong organization. It was with and through all of you that this occurred. Especially those of you who have suffered a brain injury and your amazing family, friends, partners. People often said they were so happy I remembered their name, remembered them. Please know that I truly did. Connecting with community members is what brought me the most joy, allowed me to get through the hard times (yes, there were hard times here as anywhere) and the motivation to always be thinking what more can we do as an organization and what more could I do as an individual. Each of your stories was meaningful to me, your willingness to share has been a gift to me. I call many of you "friends" now and that will continue.

There are many things I am proud of during my tenure. Moving the Lystedt Law throughout the country, which influenced how we as a nation work to prevent and then also diagnose and treat Brain Injuries, was a pivotal moment for this organization. We established new programs and expanded others, from the Art Show, March Awareness Dinner/Concert, Brain Health & Wellness, Social Outings, Brain Injury Today Podcasts and even those we tried and didn't work like our Peer Helpers program. When I started this was a very small organization with a strong commitment from a small community. We now are a strong, stable national model for other states. I've been fortunate in my career to always have pretty great jobs, many of those with national and internationally respected leaders in cancer research, K-12 prevention education, serving the homeless and here at BIAWA. All of what we have accomplished, we have done together, with you the community, our professional colleagues, our Board and in particular a great staff, that may have changed through the years, but who are always a dedicated group working together to improve the quality of life for those we serve. That's our tag line – I'm going to stick with it.

I will be around at all the Fun events, so don't be surprised to see my face at the Walk, Gala, Concert. I look forward to seeing all of you and seeing what the future will bring to BIAWA.

If you'd like to keep in touch email me at BIAWA and we can connect. Deborachc@biawa.org until the end of April and my direct line is 206-467-4801.

Thank you all!!

Helpful Information & Resources

File Your Taxes for FREE!

Did you know that you can get help AND file your taxes for free through the United Way? This is NOT a typo!

[MyFreeTaxes](#) is easy, secure, and 100% free. [Learn more now.](#)



Looking for Resources?

Check out BIAWA's brain specific [Resource Locator Map!](#)

We'd love your feedback on the map! Please send feedback to info@biawa.org



Locate Ongoing Support Groups

Find a [virtual Support Group](#) Now!

You are not alone!

The Washington Brain Injury Resource Line is available Monday-Friday, 9:00 am– 5:00 pm.

1-877-982-4292

Help from a Resource Line Specialist is a phone call away!

BRITE UPDATE

From Sara Fey-Hinkley, UW

In the April 2021 BIAWA Newsletter, our brain injury community was introduced to the **BRITE Study** (**B**rain injury **R**ehabilitation: **I**mproving the **T**ransition **E**xperience a **P**atient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)-funded study at the University of Washington. At the time of that publication, the study was entering its final year of participant-recruitment, while at the same time the world was immersed in the second year of the global COVID-crisis. Efforts to conduct a patient-centered research study that follows how individuals manage the ‘recovery process’ following a traumatic brain injury (TBI), were uniquely complicated by the ripple effects of COVID on all systems – personal, national, and global. The challenges of our participants, as they recover from a TBI, echoed the challenges faced by individuals with TBI all around the world, as COVID wreaked havoc on the predictability, normalcy, and reliability of how people access and utilize medical and social services.



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY
MODEL SYSTEM

PATIENT CARE • RESEARCH • EDUCATION & TRAINING

BRITE Study Refresher

As a ‘refresher’ to the intent of the BRITE Study, the study was designed for people who have experienced a moderate to severe TBI and receive inpatient rehabilitation from six TBI Model System centers across the US (University of Washington, Indiana University, Ohio State University, Mount Sinai Hospital, Moss Rehabilitation, and Baylor Institute for Rehabilitation). Initially, the BRITE study investigators collaborated with a group of 13 patient and family members who experienced a TBI in their lives. BRITE stakeholders helped design the study and continued to provide their feedback and advice throughout the duration of the project. The BRITE study was intended to improve the transition from rehabilitation to home by using trained **TBI Care Managers (TCMs)** to support the process. The unprecedented COVID crisis and its impact on the BRITE study and the world of brain injury recovery, in general, became the topic of discussion at the annual stakeholder’s meeting, conducted virtually, this last December. TCMs shared how flexibility, patience, and partnership with organizations like the BIAWA, allowed for ongoing recovery from TBI despite the COVID-specific challenges our participants encountered.

In a 2021 study printed in the Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Morrow, et.al. suggested that while providers should continue to take the needs of each individual with TBI into consideration when providing pandemic-related support, this type of recommendation may be difficult to implement in our current medical model for TBI: “Service delivery is often front-loaded to acute care and rehabilitation settings despite the fact that TBI is a chronic disability in which individuals would benefit from a range of services, intermittently, across the lifespan.”¹ The BRITE study was in a unique position to help bridge this service gap, as the support is offered by telephone, or a virtual platform, and helps individuals transition from rehabilitation to home, for approximately six months.

COVID's Impact

During the BRITE annual stakeholders' meeting, TCMs drew into focus the fact that individuals with disability in general, and those with TBI in particular, are often overlooked when considering population-level preparedness for large-scale disasters, like the COVID-pandemic. Many of you are familiar with this image of the socio-ecological model (LEFT). The basic premise of this design is that each individual is impacted by their environment and the laws that govern their various systems. Many of the specific challenges of TBI were exacerbated by this crisis, as survivors encountered barriers in all of their systems – and all systems impacted their ongoing health and recovery.



For example, the TCMs of the BRITE study reported numerous COVID-specific barriers in each system of their socio-ecological world. In the **Individual system**, these barriers looked like a lack of knowledge about COVID, as it was a novel (or new) virus and information was frequently updated or in a state of flux, which made understanding how best to protect one's self a challenge. Some individuals felt anger, frustration, lack of hope, anxiety, as a result of COVID-related changes to their lives and their efforts to recover from TBI.

Barriers in the **Interpersonal system** included, on occasion, tension between family members with different beliefs about COVID, including skepticism to recommended safety-protocols. Isolation from family and social networks contributed to feelings of loneliness, and loss of participation in activities that had previously offered enjoyment. While others felt they could never access privacy in their own homes, or get 'alone time'. Participants often had to attend medical appointments alone, as COVID protocols limited visitors.

Organizational system barriers often looked like rapidly changing hospital and clinic structures – a rehabilitation clinic was converted to additional space to treat COVID patients, resulting in TBI patients being discharged early. Dr. Jeanne Hoffman, Head, Division of Rehabilitation Psychology and Neuropsychology shares that the limits places on visitors made it very difficult for families to become families with the difficulties individuals had after injury. She explains that therapists described this as "missing the typical 'exposure therapy' or just interacting with their newly injured family member, so even though they came in for training, it just wasn't enough [like in pre-COVID-training] to get patients or their families comfortable with life after the hospital." In-person appointments were cancelled, postponed, or converted to virtual; and yet, if no access to a computer was available, maintaining access to one's provider became nearly impossible. Hospitals and facilities required masks at in-person appointments, which made communication difficult, both verbally and emotionally. Missed appointments required long wait times to reschedule. Surgeries deemed 'elective', such as bone-flap, were cancelled.

BRITE UPDATE (continued)

Barriers of the **Community system** meant that hospitals discharging TBI patients, for example, didn't have as many resources to offer during ongoing 'recovery'. Out of an abundance of caution, offices were closed and access to support services, like vocational rehabilitation, mental health therapies, domestic violence resources, etc., were severely limited. Workplaces were closed and some jobs deemed 'non-essential' were phased out, causing financial woes and concerns. Access to self-care and social outlets, such as massage, acupuncture, gyms, libraries, and churches, were closed. Scheduling of COVID testing and vaccines was cumbersome.

Finally, the **Public Policy system** over-arched all other systems, creating a direct through-line of challenge to each of our study participants, as state and federal governments made policy and legislative changes informed by science from organizations like the Center for Disease Control (CDC). As scientists attempted to catch up to an evolving virus, subsequent policy changes, at times, felt confusing or frustrating.

Collaborative Relationships That Benefit Individuals with TBI

Overwhelmingly, as TCMs shared the challenges faced by participants, they also shared the beauty of collaborative relationships with organizations like the BIAWA, to help participants access resources during ongoing 'recovery'. One of the TCMs, Erin Rants of University of Washington, shares that when she consulted with the BIAWA "[they] facilitated a peer support person to make calls to a young woman in a skilled nursing facility when COVID-19 restrictions kept her partner and baby from being able to visit." TCMs in other states shared how connecting their participants to brain injury alliance liaisons, just as they were finishing their six months of transition, allowed for a bridge of ongoing support. While this study never set out to offer data about a global pandemic and its effects on individuals with TBI, we hope further studies may build upon the information we gathered about providing services to individuals with TBI.

Emerging data from the BRITE study, which relies on partnership with supportive organizations like the BIAWA, has demonstrated ways that such partnerships can assist the 6.2 million Americans currently living with disability related to TBI, under normal circumstances. This study has highlighted, more specifically, the necessity of partnerships with support organizations during a crisis, like COVID, as this pandemic has raised concern that individuals with TBI may be disproportionately affected by reductions in accessibility of supportive services and networks. This study may also encourage more proactive planning, between agencies and organization, for supporting individuals with chronic disability during future large-scale crises. Truly, two brains are better than one – ALL puns intended.

1. Morrow, E.L., Patel, N.N., & Duff, M.C. Disability and the COVID-19 Pandemic: A survey of individuals with traumatic brain injury. Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. 2021: 102: 1075-83.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS



BIAWA Scholarship Applications Now Being Accepted

Each year BIAWA offers **Eastern Washington** and **Western Washington** academic scholarships to individuals with a brain injury who will be enrolling in an undergraduate program at a college, university, vocational or technical school for the 2022-23 academic year. Each scholarship is a one-time only award of up to \$1,000 to further the individual's undergraduate education.

BIAWA also offers **Higher Education/Professional Scholarships** to professionals or students in postsecondary education who are committed to advances in Brain Injury knowledge in Washington State.

Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for a scholarship, you **must**:

- Be a senior in high school ready for graduation in the year the scholarship will be awarded **OR** already be enrolled in an undergraduate program at a college, university, vocational or technical school or postsecondary education program;
- Be a Washington State resident and attending school in Washington;
- Be a survivor of Brain Injury if applying for an undergraduate scholarship. Verification can be in the form of medical records or a vouching from a BIAWA staff member, board member, or support group facilitator;
- Be enrolled full or part time for the academic year of award (award will be prorated if part time);
- Submit a completed application and all applicable attachments by the deadline; and
- Not have previously received an Academic Scholarship from BIAWA.

Deadline

Applicants must submit a completed application with all applicable attachments postmarked no later than **June 30th, 2022** for consideration for the 2022-2023 academic year. Scholarship recipients will be notified within 60 days of this deadline. Only the recipients will be notified. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Application materials can be downloaded online at <https://www.biawa.org/support/academic-scholarships>
You can also call Suzette at (206) 467-4813 or email suzetteh@biawa.org to be sent application materials via email or mail.



Washinton Brain Injury — Resource Center —

A PROGRAM OF BIAWA

The Resource Line is available Monday
through Friday from 9:00 am — 5:00 pm

Call 877-982-4292

Are you having a hard time finding resources in your community for...

- Navigating the Medical System
- Applying for Social Security Benefits
- Developing Education Interventions
- Planning Vocational Training
- Finding Legal Help
- Talking to Loved Ones about Brain Injury
- Facing Any Complex Issue Related to Brain Injury

We're here to help! All of our services are FREE! Give our **Resource Line** a call to talk with a specialist who can point you in the right direction: **877-982-4292**

***YOU Can Make A Difference
in the Lives of Survivors of
Brain Injury***



When You Become a Brain Champion:

- Your monthly donation is automatic and paper-free
- Gifts will occur monthly on the date of your choice
- You can modify your gift at any time through our portal or by contacting us

All Brain Champions Receive:

- A subscription to our quarterly newsletter, MindMatters
- Discounts on BIAWA event tickets
- BIAWA Swag
- Knowledge that you are making a meaningful impact in the Brain Injury community

Learn more about our Brain Champion Membership Program [HERE](#).

If you are not in a place to donate right now, don't worry! Our Resource Center services will always be available free of charge. You do not need to be a member to utilize services or participate in events!

BIAWA PROGRAMS



Brain Health & Wellness

A PROGRAM OF BIAWA

The Brain Health & Wellness Program provides FREE classes on topics such as communication, relationships, health and fitness, cognition and memory, and social skills. Click on a class to register or go on our website at www.biawa.org/calendar to see all the classes and register! If you need help getting signed up, call 206-467-4800 or email Taylor at taylorw@biawa.org.

Classes are being offered VIRTUALLY online via Zoom for Spring 2022!

Registration is REQUIRED to participate in these classes.

Inspiring • Learning • Growing



Brain Injury Today

PODCAST

The Official Podcast of the Brain Injury Alliance of Washington
Hosted by BIAWA Executive Director Deborah Crawley

All BIT episodes are available at BrainInjuryTodayPodcast.com



pact®

The
Pooled
Alliance
Community
Trusts®

Building Lifetime Trust

BIAWA has 39 years of experience in supporting individuals to achieve their highest quality of life. Recently, it was brought to BIAWA's attention that individuals receiving government assistance after sustaining a disabling injury often find themselves in a paradox where acquiring assets (e.g. from a dispute settlement) jeopardizes their qualification for government benefits.

To fill this gap, BIAWA has created The Pooled Alliance Community Trusts (PACT)® in partnership with leading investment and trust management firms including UBS Financial Services, Inc., True Link Financial, and The Zielke Law Firm (Trust Manager). Together, we provide Pooled Special Needs Trusts (for individuals affected by disability) as well as Pooled Basic Support & Maintenance Trusts.

PACT Trusts are open for enrollment. Please contact us via the form on our webpage PACTTrusts.org or email us at info@PACTTrusts.org or call 877-448-7228.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Brain Injury Awareness Month Concert

June 1, 2022

Kirkland Performance Center

New Date!



Join BIAWA for dinner and a concert!

We guarantee that you will be dancing and singing along to Heart favorites by our favorite Heart cover band, Heart by Heart, which includes two of Heart's original band members Steve Fossen and Michael DeRosier!

Learn more and register today at <https://join.biawa.org/BIAconcert2022>

All attendees must show proof of up to date vaccination or a negative PCR test within 72 hours of event.

Register Today!



Walk, Run & Roll 2022

5K or 1 Mile

Saturday, April 30, 2022

Green Lake Park

Presented by Adler Giersch

We can't wait to see you!

Learn more and register at <https://join.biawa.org/wrr2022>

Also sponsored by Dubin Law Group, Alliance Nursing, Nelson, Langer, Engle PLLC, The Walthew Law Firm, and Pushing Boundaries.

PAST EVENTS



The 13th Annual Brain Injury Art Show was held at the [Renton History Museum](#) November 2021—February 2022.

Thank you to our artists who participated in the 2021 Brain Injury Art Show!

If you missed the show or want to see the art again, be sure to check out the 2021 Virtual Art Gallery.

The 2022 Art Show will be held October 2022—February 2023 at the [Bellevue Art Museum](#).

A Call for Artists for the 2022 Brain Injury Art Show will be announced later this spring.

Thank you to our Brain Injury Art Show Sponsors:



WELCOME OUR NEW STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS!



Scott Slater

Scott was appointed Interim Executive Director in February 2022.

Scott Slater comes to BIAWA with 15+ years of experience in the non-profit and for profit sectors. He served as Acting Executive Director, VP of Operations, and Chief Financial Officer for Full Life Care, a Puget Sound based non-profit that employed over 500 staff and provided services to 4,000 clients annually. Prior to Full Life, Scott was CFO Consultant to the SEIU Healthcare Northwest Training Partnership and Health Benefits Trust, an organization committed to the training, health and benefits of over 40,000 home care aides in the state of Washington. Scott began his career in public accounting at KPMG and Global Fund Administration at BlackRock. Scott is a licensed CPA and a graduate of University of Washington.

Scott and his wife Ashley have two kids, Molly (6) and Max (4), along with their English Bulldog Rosco. Scott enjoys spending quality time with his family and friends as well as a good glass of wine.

He hopes you'll join him in raising a glass at an upcoming opportunity!



Randi Carter

Scott joined us in March 2022 as the new Events & Marketing Manager.

Randi was self-employed for 18 years and owned 2 businesses in the culinary and wellness industries in the Seattle area. She also has many years of experience in the catering world and believes that her time there will make a nice contribution to the BIAWA team!

In her free time, Randi loves paddle boarding, live music, karaoke, and is always on the lookout for the best Mexican food in Seattle!



Steve Broback

Steve joined the BIAWA Board in January 2022.

Steve is the cofounder of Dent the Future, hosts of the Dent Conference.

Steve cofounded Thunder Lizard Productions (a technology event production company) in 1991, which became a subsidiary of Fawcette Technical Publications in 2000. At Thunder Lizard, Broback orchestrated pioneering technology gatherings focusing on Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Macromedia DreamWeaver. Steve also produced TLP's Web Design World, Macromedia Web World, and other events with attendees numbering in the tens of thousands.

Steve is a life-long resident of King County, and graduated from the University of Washington with degrees in Finance and Economics.

Steve is also the coauthor of *Publish and Prosper: Blogging for Your Business* (Peachpit Press, 2006) and was a professional magician for many years.

GET INVOLVED WITH BIAWA!

Are YOU interested in giving your time and talent as a board member to BIAWA?

Interested in volunteering for an event?

Contact us today to learn more.

206-467-4800



Visiting the BIAWA Office?

Masking Update

At this time, BIAWA will continue to require masks for all visitors.

If you don't have a mask when arriving, you will be provided one.

Visitors who do not wear a mask will be asked to reschedule their visit or appointment.

Our Vision: A world where Brain Injury is prevented, and every person already affected by its impact benefits from resources to maximize their quality of life.

To get the newsletter sent to your mailing address, call Suzette at 206-467-4813
or email suzetteh@biawa.org
