January through March is a busy time of year for BIA-MA as we are finalizing plans and preparing for Advocacy Day, Brain Injury Awareness Month and the Annual Conference (all of which you will hear about in the following pages). This year was no different, except we added a long-awaited and much anticipated Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet to the mix!

"Meeting & Awards" continued on page 3
The beginning of a new calendar year is always promising as it not only marks a new year, but the half way point of our current fiscal year. It is an opportunity for BIA-MA staff and board of directors to take the pulse of the organization. Most of the big activities and functions are already underway and I am always amazed at what this small group of dedicated professionals, families and survivors can do together.

Advocacy Day at the State House in February came with a hefty snow storm. But, that didn't stop our advocates, many of whom braved the pending storm for a visit with their State Legislators to discuss important matters in brain injury.

“Executive Message” continued on page 8
Open to all, the Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet was an opportunity for BIA-MA members, friends and donors to come together and learn more about BIA-MA, recap and celebrate the previous fiscal year, and learn more about our future endeavors. It was also a way to highlight the successes and challenges in the brain injury community throughout the year, as well as acknowledge a very special group of partners, volunteers, survivors and families through our Community Impact Awards.

The evening was well received with 150 in attendance. We heard from keynote speaker Ann Pike-Paris who shared her experience as a nurse and mother turned support group leader and caregiver.

Stay tuned for future award nominations and invitations for next year's Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet!

Congratulations to our winners:

**10 Years of Service**
Barbara Webster

**5 Years of Service**
Scott Doane
Helen Stewart, RN, CBIS

**Contributions in Advocacy**
Rev. Timothy Shotmeyer, V.D.M.

**Survivor & Family**
Hunt Bergen
Lauren Fender

**Community Partner**
Community Rehab Care (Partner)
Sally Johnson, LICSW (Individual)
BIA-MA advocacy efforts set the stage for Brain Injury Awareness Month on March 6th with a Legislative Briefing Day. BIA-MA gathered legislators and aides at the State House to learn more about the Cognitive Rehabilitation Bill. This was a unique opportunity to educate newly appointed legislators on the need for cognitive rehabilitation. The bill will prohibit private insurance companies from including unreasonable lifetime or annual limitations on treatment visits, require them to cover reasonable expenses for periodic reevaluations, and expand coverage to include individual practitioners and treatment facilities qualified to provide care. Senate President Emerita Harriette Chandler (D-Worcester) and Representative Kimberly Ferguson (R-Holden) filed the bill (S546/H968) and both spoke at the policy briefing.

Last session, the Cognitive Rehabilitation Bill moved along with favorable votes in both Financial Services and Healthcare Finance committees – moving it two steps along the legislative process, prior to the session ending. BIA-MA refiled the bill for the 2019 session. Nicole Godaire, BIA-MA Chief Executive Officer, spoke about the importance of getting a vote on the bill early this session to continue moving the bill along through the process.

Continuing our advocacy efforts, BIA-MA representatives attended Brain Injury Awareness Day on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., arranged by the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force. The Congressional Brain Injury Task Force is comprised of over 100 bipartisan members, whose mission is to educate and raise awareness on brain injury, including its prevalence, prevention and treatment. Joined by friend and survivor Tim Shotmeyer, the BIA-MA representatives visited all of the Massachusetts delegate offices to share information about brain injury in our state.
While in D.C., BIA-MA attended the Administration Community Living’s (ACL) Third Annual TBI Stakeholder Day, “Collaboration to Community Living”. This was an opportunity for members of the TBI community to hear about and discuss important issues related to TBI with other stakeholders, brain injury survivors, family members, support networks, and state and federal representatives. For more information on the Cognitive Rehabilitation Bill and other advocacy efforts please visit www.biama.org/advocacy.

Pictured to the right are participants of the ACL Third Annual TBI Stakeholder Day: BIA-MA CEO Nicole Godaire, Survivor Tim Shotmeyer, Congressman Bill Pascrell, President and CEO of BIAA Susan Connors, MRC VR Counselor Kevin Mahoney, and MRC Director of Community Based Services Sandy Biber.
ANNUAL CONFERENCE:
BIA-MA would like to thank the over 700 attendees and 40+ vendors who attended the 38th Annual Brain Injury Conference, held on March 27th & 28th. This year we rolled out a Half-Day Pre-Conference with a Behavior Management theme that provided 3 separate tracks focused on application and solution. Also present were 7 poster displays from community organizations and local healthcare providers which provided attendees a glimpse into ongoing clinical trials and research projects. Keynote presenter, Dr. John Corrigan from Ohio State University, kicked off our Full Day conference which included 27 workshops presented by professionals in the field of brain injury. We hope you enjoyed this conference as much as we did, and we look forward to seeing you in 2020.

ABI CLINICAL CONTINUING EDUCATION SERIES:
On Thursday, June 13th, Frank Sparadeo, Ph.D. will host an all-day training on “Acquired Brain Injury and the Problem of Chronic Pain”. This training will define chronic pain and discuss the co-existence of chronic pain and ABI, how chronic pain compounds cognitive deficits, compromises emotional well-being and limits functional capacity. In addition, Dr. Sparadeo will review data on chronic pain and the opioid epidemic and discuss rehabilitation measurements that assess a patient’s experience with chronic pain after sustaining an acquired brain injury. Often Acquired Brain Injury not only results in physical injuries or conditions such as cognitive impairment and physical disability, but also pain. Learn more www.biama.org/abitraining

BIA-MA CEO Nicole Godaire
8TH ANNUAL SPRING FLING
Events should be about having a good time and fun! And that was what happened when almost 70 people attended the 8th Annual Spring Fling Event at the Southeastern Region with a theme of “The Magic of Springtime”. Attendants dressed in their best spring attire and enjoyed a delicious meal followed by a Magician/Illusionist performance.

BLACK AND WHITE BALL
The theme of this year’s Annual Western Massachusetts Gala certainly reflected something we all understand: “There Is Nothing Black and White About Brain Injury!” Survivors, family members, caregivers and friends donned outfits of black and white to further carry on the message. Sunshine shone through the huge windows overlooking the still-snowy Berkshires, affording us breathtaking views as we feasted on delicious fare prepared and served by the Berkshire Hills Country Club staff. Bobby Sweet, a sixth generation singer/songwriter, regaled the rapt audience with his storytelling and songs.

Each delightful aspect of the afternoon added up to a wonderful sense of community for all who attended and a feeling that we are not alone on this journey. Find events at www.biama.org/eventsandactivities

NEW OFFICE HOURS
BIA-MA is pleased to announce that Resource & Support Manager Zelinda Pereira now has office hours at Spaulding Cape Cod, 311 Service Road, East Sandwich, MA. The hours are 1st Tuesday of the month 9am - 3pm, 2nd Tuesday of the month 9am -3pm, 3rd Tuesday of the month 12pm - 3pm, and 4th Tuesday of the month 9am- 12pm. Questions? Contact Zelinda at zpereira@biama.org

BRAIN INJURY PREVENTION IN THE NEWS
The Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts (BIA-MA) has long advocated for a hands-free driving law in the Commonwealth. On Wednesday, May 15, 2019 the “Hands Free” bill was passed 155-2 by the Massachusetts House of Representatives. The Senate will pick up their version of the bill on June 6.

In 2010, Massachusetts outlawed texting, emailing or using internet-based apps while driving. The hands-free driving law will take this a step further prohibiting any driver from using hand-held wireless communication devices (phones) in Massachusetts. Hands-free technology such as Bluetooth will continue to be allowed.

Connecticut and Rhode Island have seen a decrease in roadway fatalities since they implemented their hands-free laws. The Rhode Island hands-free law went into effect in June 2018. From June 2018-December 2018 there were 26 fewer roadway fatalities compared to the same time frame the prior year.

BIA-MA, Safe Roads Alliance, AAA, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security and many other public advocacy and prevention agencies have been tireless in advocating for this much needed law. In early April, Massachusetts House Speaker Robert DeLeo said he expected that the House would vote soon on the hands-free driving law. This is a huge step forward for a law that would protect so many.

The BIA-MA Think A-Head prevention program for students includes content on the dangers of distracted driving and the importance of not using cell-phones while driving.

To learn about BIA-MA Prevention programs, visit www.biama.org/prevention
“Executive Message” continued from page 2

Brain Injury Awareness Month gives us the opportunity to showcase all of what goes on at BIA-MA for an entire month – support groups, recreational events, special events, fundraising, educational workshops, prevention and advocacy initiatives. It’s a long list that continues month after month, not just during the month of March.

Also in March, the 38th Annual Brain Injury Conference added a half-day Pre-Conference with a special focus on Behavior Management. Adding three tracks, six workshops, seven poster presentations and a wonderful experience for registrants to the already bountiful full day conference is an achievement we are proud of. Also new this year was the Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet providing an opportunity to recognize individual contributions and discuss challenges and achievements facing the brain injury community. The meeting provided a unique opportunity to connect with old friends and acquaintances from many different sectors who have worked with the organization, some for over 30 years. The following day BIA-MA staff and volunteers hosted another successful full day Annual Conference.

After an action-packed quarter, there’s little time to recoup before jumping into our summer of special events – the Annual Golf Classic on June 17 and the Falmouth Road Race on August 18. Save the dates and read on for more information!
ANNUAL MEETING CANDIDS
A Proclamation

Whereas, Acquired brain injury is often overlooked and underfunded, and affects thousands of Massachusetts residents each year; and

Whereas, A traumatic brain injury is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to, or penetration of, the head that disrupts the normal function of the brain; and

Whereas, More than 67,000 Massachusetts residents sustain non-fatal traumatic brain injuries each year; and

Whereas, Falls are a leading cause of brain-related injuries in Massachusetts; they can also be the result of motor vehicle crashes, assaults, sports-related injuries, occupational-related injuries, or opioid overdoses; and

Whereas, Massachusetts has approximately 4,000 active military personnel and more than 325,000 veterans residing in the state; and

Whereas, Traumatic brain injury has been the signature injury of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, treatment is often complicated by high rates of PTSD and suicide, presenting new challenges for member of the military and their families in the state; and

Whereas, 30 percent of sports-related injuries happen among youth 5 and 10 years of age, and, because the signs of brain injury are not always well recognized, youth may put themselves at risk for another injury and potentially fatal second-impact syndrome; and

Whereas, An estimated 1.6-3.8 million mild traumatic injuries, often called concussions, occur in the United States per year during competitive sports and recreational activities; and

Whereas, Early and adequate intervention, especially cognitive rehabilitation, will greatly increase the quality of life and enable individuals with brain injury to return to home, school, work, or their communities; and

Whereas, March has been designated as National Brain Injury Awareness month to promote awareness of the extent, consequences, causes, treatments and prevention of acquired brain injuries; and

Whereas, The Brain Injury Association of America and Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts are dedicated to Changing Minds about Brain Injury.

Now, Therefore, I, Charles D. Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim March, 2019, to be,

BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

And urge all the citizens of the Commonwealth to take cognizance of this event and participate fully in its observance.

Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston, this twenty-second day of February, in the year two thousand and nineteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and forty-second.

By His Excellency

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

KARIN E. POLITO
LT. GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
SURVIVOR SPOTLIGHT - BOB EDWARDS

Bob Edwards suffered a traumatic brain injury when he fell and hit his head as a small child. Now, Bob is a tireless brain injury advocate championing services for the brain injury community and prevention across the state, by contacting and working through his legislators.

Bob has been an active member of the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts (BIA-MA) for many years and recently aspired to have March proclaimed Brain Injury Awareness Month in the Commonwealth. He contacted Governor Baker’s office and worked with various legislators to attain the proclamation. With some help along the way Bob’s vision was realized - March 2019 was proclaimed Brain Injury Awareness Month by the State of Massachusetts!

Thank you Bob for all your incredible efforts over the years. This is one for the scrapbook. And GO SOX!!


To learn more about BIA-MA Advocacy efforts and how to get involved visit www.biama.org/advocacy

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT - HELEN REID STEWART

Helen Stewart’s successful healthcare career included 28 years as a Registered Nurse on an inpatient psychiatric unit - from staff nurse, to charge nurse, and then unit director. Everything changed in 2009 when Helen sustained a traumatic brain injury when going to a meeting at work.

During the course of her recovery, her neurologist encouraged her to attend a BIA-MA support group, “Tea & Talk”. Once there, she found kindred spirits who shared and understood the challenges of learning to live life as a brain injury survivor. Attending that support group marked the real beginning of her healing, and subsequent groups acted as a compass on her journey toward a “new normal”.

In August of 2012, Helen joined BIA-MA staff as the Western Region Outreach Coordinator. It was here that she found she could combine her past knowledge and skills with her newfound deep understanding of brain injury. She began to work with survivors, families, caregivers and professionals to help bring forward the mission and goals of the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts. She has stayed close to her roots, however, and loves to facilitate support groups to “pay it forward” so that others may benefit from BIA-MA in the same way that she did.

In 2018, she became a statewide Outreach Coordinator. She is currently responsible for connecting with community groups and providers to help increase brain injury awareness through instructive programs throughout the Commonwealth. She recently obtained certification as a brain injury specialist (CBIS). (We are so proud of her!)

Because of her passion for lifelong learning and curiosity about how things work, she spends her spare time pursuing the understanding of humanity through the Arts, traveling frequently to NYC to enjoy live jazz, the visual arts, and honing her own artistic abilities. Thank you, Helen, for all you do for BIA-MA!
In proud support

We proudly support the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts.

Encompass Health
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encompasshealth.com
Building bridges between Substance Use Disorder and the Traumatic Brain Injury Communities in MA

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) and the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts have received a federal grant for three years to implement “Bridges Between”. The project will build connections between the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment communities, strengthen services for families and individuals living with TBI and SUD and conduct statewide trainings for professionals in both fields.
Seven Hills NeuroCare (SHNC) supports people with brain injuries in their seamless transitions from clinical facilities to residential options. SHNC’s person-centered programs include day habilitation, workforce readiness and employment, and recreation through meaningful, community-based activities. SHNC helps identify each person’s life goals and the steps needed to achieve them. The SHNC interdisciplinary team includes:

- Certified brain injury specialists
- Certified rehabilitation counselors
- Speech language pathologists
- Psychologists
- Behavior analysts
- Nurses
- Assistive technology professionals
- Access to mental health counselors, social workers, and psychiatrists

Through a distinctive array of comprehensive supports, the experienced and dedicated Seven Hills NeuroCare team works to restore hope, independence, and dreams. To learn more, contact Dr. Jonathan Worcester, Vice President of SHNC, at 508.320.4991, or jworcester@sevenhills.org.
NeuroRestorative Massachusetts is a leading provider of post-acute rehabilitation and support services for individuals with brain injuries and other neurological challenges. In a variety of locations and settings, we offer a continuum of care through our community-based programs.

- Neurorehabilitation
- Neurobehavioral
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- Day Treatment
- Outpatient
- Respite
- Neurofunctional Home & Community

800-743-6802
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Helping Our Patients Live Life to the Fullest.

At Spaulding Rehabilitation Network (SRN), we help our patients rebuild their physical and cognitive function after traumatic brain injury. We focus on helping them find the emotional strength to thrive in the days to come.

Our brain injury clinical teams bring specialized experience and world-class expertise to the patients in their care. Our physician-led teams provide an unwavering commitment and the support to help patients and family members stay hopeful, determined and strong.

SRN provides patients and families access to an unmatched range of services and programs - from advanced evaluation technologies to evidence based rehabilitation programs to extensive family and community resources.

Patients in the BI Program at Spaulding consistently achieved higher rates of functional improvement than national averages (UDS & e-rehab database).

The TBI Program at Spaulding has been selected as a Model Systems site by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR).
Vinfen proudly supports the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts!

Thank you for serving the needs of people with brain injuries, their families, and their caregivers across Massachusetts.

Vinfen transforms lives by building the capacity of individuals, families, organizations, and communities to learn, thrive and achieve their goals. Our services promote the recovery, resiliency, habilitation, and self-determination of the people we serve. As a human services leader, we strive to be the provider, employer, and partner of choice.

Advocates

Brain Injury Services
Our Brain Injury Services offer personalized solutions in the heart of the community.

• Community Supports
• Day Services
• Recreation
• Residential Services

For questions or more information contact BrainInjury@Advocates.org.

New Start Brain Injury Community Center

The New Start Brain Injury Community Center offers its members a variety of activities and services that increase community integration.

• Work Preparedness Skills
• Volunteering
• Benefit Planning
• Education Services
• Community Linkages
• Health and Wellness
• Explore Social & Recreational Opportunities

Please contact BAMSI at 508-326-9873 or MRC at 617-204-3852 for additional information.
Adult Foster Care is a state-funded program that transforms lives. Its services allow seniors and persons with disabilities who need assistance with personal care tasks to remain in a home and in the community with a qualified and approved caregiver. We at the Massachusetts Council for Adult Foster Care offer professional support to the agencies across the state that provide this valuable program.

The council has supported its dedicated member agencies since the mid-1970s. This support comes in many forms - through interpreting and implementing regulations, developing best practices, establishing networking connections for like agencies or advocating for appropriate funding for caregivers. All of these efforts ultimately benefit vulnerable individuals in Massachusetts communities who need it most.

Through leadership, knowledge and advocacy, we engage with more than 100 Adult Foster Care provider agencies across the state, allowing over 13,000 participants, starting as young as age 16, to thrive in their homes and their communities through the support of their caregivers.

www.MASSAFC.org

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**IF THEY:**
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- Are over 18 and have a permanent disability

Supportive Living, Inc. might be the right home for them. We meet the challenges of brain injury survivors with affordable supportive residential programs that enable people to live as fully as possible. To learn more contact us at 781-937-3199 or info@supportivelivinginc.org

Visit us at supportivelivinginc.org

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Heads Up Headlines - SPRING 2019 19
Upcoming BIA-MA Events

Acquired Brain Injury Clinical Continuing Education Series:

   ABI and the Problem of Chronic Pain                        June 13, 2019

2019 Golf Classic                                          June 17, 2019

2019 Falmouth Road Race                                   August 18, 2019

2019 Walk & Roll for Brain Injury                          September 21, 2019

Learn more at www.biama.org or call 508-475-0032

YOUR BIA-MA SPRING 2019 NEWSLETTER HAS ARRIVED!!