

HEAD LINES

Winter 2007

IMPROVING LIFE AFTER TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

First Annual Alabama State of the State in Traumatic Brain Injury Conference Announced

Alabamians will have the opportunity to learn first hand about issues of living with brain injury including Aging and TBI, Guardianship, Social Skills, TBI and Visual Impairment.

The Alabama Head Injury Foundation and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services are pleased to host the first Annual Alabama State of the State in Traumatic Brain Injury Conference to be held February 27, 2007 at the Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham.

Conference speakers include top names in research, TBI issues and testing. Among those making presentations are Mary Hibbard, who specializes in TBI in older adults; Lenore Hawley and Jody Newman,

authors of the Social Skills Research Study at Craig Hospital in Denver, Colorado; and Joanne Hamrick on Special Education Issues.

There will also be a professional track with CEU/CRC credits with topics: Special Education, Neuropsychological Assessments, Guardianship, Behavioral Issues and information on the relationship between TBI and visual impairment.

The cost to attend the conference is \$100 for professionals, \$50 each for consumers and family members. A limited number of stipends and scholarships are available for consumers or their family members. Applications are on the AHIF website at www.ahif.org.

Don't GAMBLE With Your Child's Future!

Are you a gambling man or woman? Chances are you aren't. You are probably a good steward of your family's resources. You pay your bills on time, have adequate life insurance and a retirement plan. You might even watch your weight, exercise regularly and wear your seat belt when driving.

What about your family member with a special need? Are you taking chances with his or her future? Many people do and don't even realize what they are doing. If your child might outlive you, how have they been provided for? If you want to be certain that his or her needs (and more) will be met, one tool you can use is the "Special Needs Trust".

Continued on page 3

Congratulations!



Above: Tom Novack with wife Judy.

Birmingham Business Journal 2006 Health Care Hero

Non-Physician Category

Tom Novack

Co-Director of the Head Trauma
Treatment Team
Spain Rehabilitation Center

*Important
DATE!*

Alabama State of The State In Traumatic Brain Injury Conference

February 27, 2007

Wynfrey Hotel
Birmingham, AL

CEU's for nurses, counselors
and social workers applied for

Registration form on page 5
and on the AHIF website
www.ahif.org

Together

I am honored to serve as incoming President of the Alabama Head Injury Foundation. AHIF has had a long and rich history of Presidents who are survivors of a head injury, family members of survivors of a head injury, or providers of healthcare services for survivors and their families.



Being in the financial services industry, I have always been an “outsider” of sorts. However, the longer I am involved with AHIF the more I am aware that there are not really outsiders or insiders. There is just a togetherness. There is just a sense of everyone working together to accomplish a mission.

Past president Mary Watkins began a tradition of beginning each board meeting by reading the AHIF mission. It has been a wonderful exercise in focusing on why we come together and what we are supposed to be doing together. It simply states, “The mission of the Alabama Head Injury Foundation is to improve the quality of life for people who have survived traumatic brain injuries and for their families.”

I look forward to working together with each of you to continue to realize and fulfill the mission of the Alabama Head Injury Foundation

Thomas D. Armstrong
Board President

Board of Directors 2006-2007

Tom Armstrong, President
Al Ellison, Jr., Vice President
Kim F. Hooks, Secretary
Jack Sellers, Treasurer
Tom Novack, Past President

Joe Ackerson
Keith Belt, Jr.
Tammy Crocker
Deane Giles
Ann Horne
Sandra Nicholson
Mary Watkins

Executive Director
Charles Priest

Fiscal Year 2006

Revenues

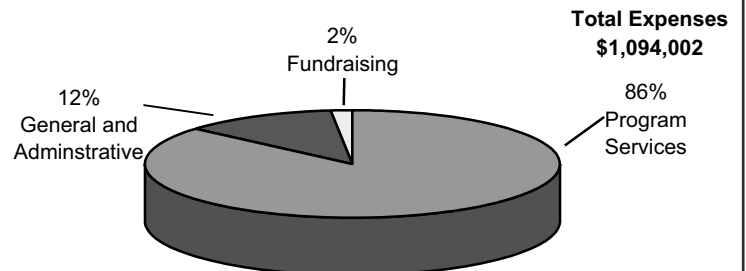
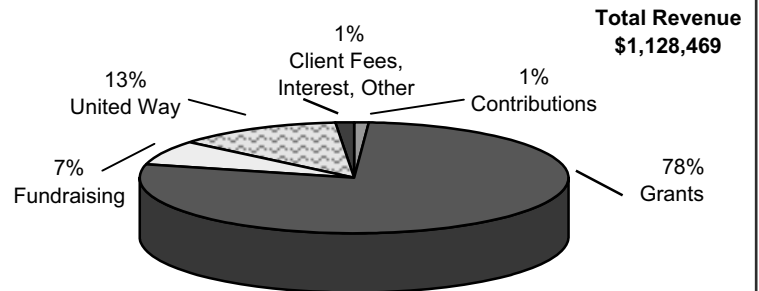
Contributions	12,024
Grants	879,164
Fundraising	81,889
United Way(s)	140,913
Client Fees, Interest, Other	14,479

Total Revenue \$ **1,128,469**

Expenses

Program Services	945,308
General & Administrative	131,637
Fundraising	17,057

Total Expenses \$ **1,094,002**



Alabama Family Trust

Many Americans depend upon governmental entitlements such as Medicaid and SSI to provide for their financial needs. Many of these individuals have mental or physical disabilities that substantially limit their major life activities. However, the financial resources provided by Medicaid and SSI are often insufficient to cover the day-to-day living expenses of those who depend upon these programs. This is particularly true of those with disabilities, who must also face the costs of increased medical bills and the need for special medical equipment.

However, because of prescribed resource limitations, such financial assistance from family and friends can adversely affect the disabled individual's eligibility for Medicaid and SSI. The current resource limit for Medicaid and SSI benefits is anything in excess of \$2,000.

This is where the Alabama Family Trust (AFT) fulfills a need.

The AFT provides for the establishment of a trust from which funds may be disbursed to supplement the care, support, habilitation and treatment of the disabled beneficiary. As written, the legislation establishing the AFT is fairly broad as to what may be expended on behalf of the trust's beneficiary.

The AFT has beneficiaries who are already Medicaid and SSI recipients. It also has many individuals who become eligible for these government entitlements as they simultaneously establish an Alabama Family Trust for themselves or loved ones.

The trust may also be established with a minimum of funds. The current minimum for trust establishment is \$100. A one-time application fee of \$400 is also required at the time of trust establishment. Thus, technically, the minimum is \$500.

If you have questions regarding the AFT, you can visit the program's website at www.alabamafamilytrust.com, or you can contact the AFT's executive director David Tapley at 334-242-3278 or 800-711-1303.

- Jeffrey N. Cotney, Esq. & David A. Tapley

Don't Gamble continued from page 1

A Special Needs Trust (SNT) allows you to make plans now so that your child with a special need will be cared for after you are no longer able to do so. Assume you are 45 and your child is 20. You will care for your child for as long as you are able, but what if you have a stroke at age 65? You will no longer be able to care for your child (who would be 40) and he/she has many years ahead of them. How will they be cared for? Will their needs continue to be met? With a Special Needs Trust, you no longer have to worry.

Many people with special needs are receiving valuable government benefits in terms of healthcare (Medicaid, Social Security Disability, SSI and Medicare) that could be compromised or lost completely if the person receives an inheritance. You might have named your child as beneficiary in your will or under a policy of life insurance so they will have a "cushion" to rely on after you are gone. Were you aware that this act of generosity on your part might deprive your child of government benefits? It may without the protection offered by a Special Needs Trust.

Special Needs Trusts are not designed to provide for food or shelter for the child. The purpose of the SNT is to provide for all other needs, such as: clothing, trips and travel, pets and pet needs, alternative healthcare (massage, acupuncture, etc), furnishings and appliances, hobbies and club memberships, computers, cable TV, birthday parties, and burial plot/plans.

Together, these items and more can add up over time, so the SNT is an ideal way to provide for these benefits without risking the loss of government benefits.

Now for a little advice: 1) See a competent attorney to set up your SNT. Find a local attorney at www.naela.com. 2) Make sure grandparents and other relatives don't ruin everything by unintentionally leaving a bequest outright to your child. Explain to them why their generous gift is not necessarily in your child's best interest.

With a little planning and not much money you can avoid gambling with your child's future. Now it's your call!

Call a qualified Elder law attorney today.

-William G. Nolan, Attorney at Law
www.NolanElderLaw.com
205/313-6536

Down-Home Blues & Barbeque



The outstanding volunteers of AHIF were honored at a “down home” BBQ party at Lakeshore Foundation on September 12th. North Alabama volunteers contributed over 4,000 hours this year to assist AHIF improve the quality of life for survivors of traumatic brain injury and their families. A similar event is planned to honor South Alabama volunteers in the near future.

Alabama Bluesman, Willie King with drummer Willie James Williams, keyboard player Rick Asherson, and vocalist/guitarist Debbie Bond entertained party goers with their own brand of blues. Willie King, winner of the Living Blues 2003 Blues Artist of the Year Award and a 2006 inductee into the Howlin’ Artist of the Year, is known worldwide for his efforts in preserving and passing the blues down to the younger generation. King volunteered his time and talent to AHIF for the evening in honor of his elderly cousin who sustained a brain injury in 1991. King provides his care and looks after him in their hometown in rural Pickens County.

Gene and Chris Boles were off the next day to attend the Telluride Blues Festival with an autographed copy of Willie King’s latest CD. Al Ellison, AHIF board member and drummer, was thrilled to listen to Willie’s beat and view his beautiful vintage musical instruments.

Enjoying the blues along with Jim N Nicks barbeque were Tom Novack, AHIF Board President, and past board presidents Ann Horne with Ken, Mary Watkins, and Kim Ferguson Hooks. Thanks were extended to volunteers Gary and Betty Sue Wates, Deanne and Ron Giles, Rick and Char Bonsack, and Buddy McDaniel who were key to the successful Inverness Member-Guest Tennis Tournament, AHIF’s largest fundraising event.



Volunteer Paula Crosby was celebrated for 16 years of volunteering at the annual AHIF Family Camp held at Camp ASCCA. Other camp volunteers in the crowd were Lauren Gillis, Joan Horton, Cathy and Ariel Hicks, Rebecca Callaway, Michael Wilkerson, Chad Polito and Shuntrice Raybon.

Public Awareness volunteers Steve Perrett, Jamey Freeman, Diane Polito, Jim Alosi, Richard McRae, Melissa Butler with Craig, Jean Jones, and Leathe Gray enjoyed visiting Larry Peake with Sherrie, Lisa Weber, and Cindy Marsh. These volunteers collect used laser cartridges from local businesses to recycle into cash to benefit local AHIF client needs.



REGISTRATION FORM



First Annual Alabama State of the State in Traumatic Brain Injury Conference

February 27, 2007 ~ Wynfrey Hotel ~ Birmingham, AL

Name: _____

Affiliation/Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: State: Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Check appropriate fee: Professional \$100 Consumer/Family Member \$50

Check is enclosed. Please bill me at above address.

Special Requests:

- I would like to be considered for a Consumer/Family member scholarship of \$50 to attend the conference.
- I would like to be considered for a Consumer/Family member stipend of \$50 to help offset transportation and lodging costs.
- Special accommodations needed to participate in conference (request by February 9, 2007): _____

Mail to: Alabama Head Injury Foundation
3100 Lorna Road Suite 200
Hoover, Alabama 35216-5451.

(To reserve a room at The Wynfrey Hotel call 1-800-996-3739.)

This Conference is made possible through the TBI State Implementation Grant, CFDA No.93.234 from the federal Health Resources Service Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau (HRSA MCHB).

Mobile Volunteer "Bingo Man"

Socializing and having fun together is the goal for members of the two year old Mobile AHIF Recreational Support Group and BINGO is their favorite game. Volunteer activities assistant Jerry Green calls the games and awards the prizes - which makes him a very popular guy!

Jerry, a retired businessman has been a great help to the group. He willingly does whatever needs to be done: running errands to the store, helping with lunch, cleaning up and simply talking to the participants.

The Mobile Recreational Support Group meets on the first three Tuesdays of each month at the Regency Church of Christ from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. In addition to socializing and bingo, activities include Arts and Crafts, speakers and always lunch together.

For information about joining the Mobile Group or becoming a **volunteer** contact Ron Haynes at 251-478-2112 or Lucy Haynes at 251-666-2052. Additional volunteers are needed.



Above: Mobile Volunteer Jerry Green calling bingo for the AHIF Recreational Support Group.

Below: Members of the Mobile Group.



Won't you join our volunteer team?

AHIF Volunteers are needed throughout Alabama. You will not only be helping others, but you will be making your own life more meaningful!

Call Sandy Koplou, Director of Community Outreach, 1-800-433-8002 or go to the AHIF website at www.ahif.org.

Contact us today!

Visit Our Website Today!
www.AHIF.org

Learn about AHIF services and programs.

Download current articles on brain injury.

Link to other sites concerning brain injury.

Review opportunities and sign up as a AHIF volunteer.

Help AHIF provide valuable resources by making a tax deductible donation.

www.AHIF.org

This newsletter has been made possible through the TBI State Implementation Grant, CFDA No. 93.234 from the federal Health Resources Service Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau (HRSA MCHB).

Alabama Head Injury Foundation

AHIF

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