



**ADVOCACY
SUPPORT
AWARENESS
EDUCATION**



ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Brain Injury Society of Toronto, I am pleased to offer this Message from the Chair in support of the Annual Report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2019.

Yet again, BIST had an exceptional 2018/2019 year. With the help of our fearless leader and Executive Director, Melisa Vigar, BIST continues to shine. BIST continues to grow and has now been called on by Government bodies to assist with advocacy for and education about individuals living with acquired brain injury. With support from our committed Board of Directors, Melissa and her dedicated team of staff and volunteers continue to work hard to promote our mission: to enhance the quality of life for people in the City of Toronto living with the effects of acquired brain injury, through education, awareness, support and advocacy.

BIST continues to offer high quality programming for our members. Our monthly community meetings, support groups, education workshops and social events provide opportunities for our members to connect, learn, share and grow. This year, we introduced two new programs to our members: the Acquired Brain Injury Information Series, which is led by two of our distinguished board members, Dr. Hiten Lad and Alex Piotti, and the Men's Social Drop-In, which is held on the second Tuesday of each month. These programs have been so successful that they are continuing in the 2019/2020 year.

Also new, as of October 2018, is our Homeless Prevention Program, run by Ryan Natale who joined the BIST team as a student and transitioned into the role of Homeless Prevention Coordinator. Ryan's role is to assist those members who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, by helping them secure housing.

With Ryan Natale and Laura Bellon, BIST now has two employees whose sole purpose is to assist our members in the community. Laura and Ryan continue to work with the amazing BIST team made up of Meri Perra, our Communication & Events Coordinator, and Julie Notto, our Program & Peer Support Coordinator. Their countless hours, dedication and hard work help make BIST the strong organization that it is today.

BIST is funded solely by our generous corporate sponsors, third party fundraisers and the government grants secured by our hardworking team. Without these organizations, BIST would be a small voice in an area that requires a loud presence. We want to thank our corporate sponsors for their continued financial support, which allows BIST to enhance the quality of life for people in the City of Toronto living with the effects of acquired brain.

I am incredibly honored to have served as the 2018/2019 Chair and I am looking forward to another amazing year as the Chair for 2019/2020 year.

As I end this message, I reflect back on the progress that BIST has made over the years and I want to acknowledge the departure of Asad Hussain, who due to other commitments had to end his term with the board in January 2019. We thank Asad for his contributions to BIST, especially his support in establishing our Peer Caregiver Support Group. Sadly, three other key board members will be leaving us at the end of this term. We extend our sincere appreciation to Colleen Worsley, Kerry Maclean and Michelle Diamond for all their hard work, effort and dedication both to the board and to our membership during their two terms of service. These three amazing board members have been instrumental in propelling BIST to become the organization it is today. I have learned a lot from our valued board members and will strive to continue to carry their passion for this organization.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the annual BIST 5K event (where you can come out and drop me into the dunk tank)!

Sincerely,

Jordan Assaraf



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It has been another year full of new learnings, growth and community involvement at BIST, and I am extremely grateful to be a part of this amazing team. From our always wise and supportive Board of Directors, to our extremely hard working and dedicated staff, to all our creative, generous and skilled members, we are an organization fuelled with passion, creativity and vision.

BIST is always looking for ways to grow and expand our reach, and this year was no exception. In October 2018, through a partnership with the Brain Injury Association of Durham (BIAD), we received funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for a Seed Grant to pilot a Homelessness Prevention Coordinator (HPC) position. More information on this program can be found in the HPC section of this report. Through this funding we have been able to start addressing a very pressing need in the City. As over 50% of Toronto's Homeless population have an ABI, it has become an important mandate of BIST to do more work to service this population whose needs continue to be unmet. We continue to submit grants that have a direct impact on poverty and those who are most vulnerable, and during this fiscal year, we have submitted applications to support victims of Domestic Violence, as well as to provide additional education and insight on ABI to the legal community. ABI is unfortunately also overrepresented in the criminal population, which often perpetuates the cycle of poverty.

BIST has met and participated in discussions regarding poverty and ABI with various community organizations and support agencies including: Covenant House, Inner City Family Health Team, The Housing and Homelessness Services Network (HHSN) and the Shelter and Housing Justice Network (SHJM).

On an agency level, BIST membership continues to be financially attainable at five dollars per year, which can be waived should a person not be able to afford it. BIST does not keep any waitlists, and individuals are always welcome to trial our programs before signing up as a member. In addition, this past year we began reimbursing TTC tokens to members whose transportation costs are a financial barrier to them attending our programs. BIST is dedicated to continuing to find ways to make our services more accessible to a greater number of people. All suggestions on ways to improve and expand our reach are welcome.

As advocacy, awareness and education continues to be a BIST priority, we are highly honoured to participate in various consultative committees and coalitions. Throughout the past year BIST was a part of the following:

- **Toronto Police Community Consultation Committee** – This is a group of community agencies that are working with the Toronto Police to spread awareness on the challenges people with various abilities face, especially when dealing with law enforcement and EMS. The mandate of the committee is to assist Toronto Police Services in identifying, prioritizing and working towards solutions to issues in policing. This past year, BIST had the honour of participating in the creation of a training video that will be shown to all Toronto Police Officers. This video highlights the lives of people living with various abilities, and specifically highlights one of our BIST members. The video will be made public once its closed captioning is complete, and BIST will then post it on our website and share it on all our social media outlets.

BIST was also proud to be a part of the inaugural Toronto Police Disabilities Consultative Committee Town Hall on November 13, 2018, with Chief Mark Saunders, whereby an update from this committee was presented and the floor was opened to questions, concerns and stories of lived experiences from community members. Approximately 80 people were in attendance, and the Town Hall was viewed by almost 4,000 Facebook subscribers.

- **Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)** - BIST was a member of this committee until November, 2018, when it was decided that advocacy efforts would be redirected to other initiatives. BIST sincerley thanks Cynthia Sprigings for all her years volunteering on behalf of BIST on this committee.
- **Vulnerable Road Users Coalition** – This coalition created by Bike Law Canada is working to advocate for penalties for drivers who violate any provision of the Highway Traffic Act that results in injury or death of a vulnerable road user. BIST is proud to lend its voice to this group and help advocate for safer streets and reduced risk of injury or death. During this year, we participated in the following advocacy initiatives with this group:
 - April 10, 2018 Bill 158 Protecting Vulnerable Road User Act, was re-introduced by MPP Catherine Fife, with BIST representatives present in the Upper Chamber of the House of Commons.
 - November 22, 2018, BIST was present at a Press Conference on the corner of Spadina and Queen street in downtown Toronto, while victims of road collisions presented their stories, accompanied by Patrick Brown, Founder of Bike Law Canada, discussing the importance of implementing Bill 158.

BIST has also added its voice and input to the following policy changes that would be sure to adversely affect our members:

- Proposed changes to the Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule (Ontario Regulation 34/10) under the Insurance Act
- Proposed changes to the Ontario Social Assistance Program (including an Open Response to Social Assistance Reform, August 7, 2018)
- Proposed changes to structured settlements funding, requesting that settlements or awards for future medical care or pain and suffering are exempt from consideration for social assistance eligibility.

BIST has also developed a relationship with our local MPP Jill Andrew, who has taken time out of her busy schedule to listen to the specific concerns and barriers faced by those with ABI. We sincerely thank Ms. Andrew and her team for taking the time to meet with our team and for supporting our annual holiday party. Additionally, we thank the honourable MP Carolyn Bennett, for her support of BIST and for her opening remarks at our holiday event.

In addition to these committees and the events outlined in our Awareness Section, BIST was proud to be a speaker at the following events:

- Providence Care, Community Brain Injury Services - Now is the time for you, Understanding the Path to Caregiver Recovery, April 22, 2018
- The Queensway Employment & Social Services Office - Information session on brain injury and BIST supports, including our Transitional and Homelessness Preventative supports, October 18, 2018
- The Boulevard Club, Children and Concussion - Detection, Treatment & Returning to School and Sports safely, November 7, 2018
- Medic Alert Connect, Protect with Brain Injury Launch - September 25, 2018
- 13th World Congress on Brain Injury - Workshop for Survivors and Caregivers, in collaboration with the Ontario Brain Injury Association and Brain Injury Canada, March 17, 2019

BIST's supports and information on the prevalence and impact of brain injury were also featured on:

- Voices 4 Ability Podcast, July 27, 2018
- Breakfast Television Toronto, May 31, 2018
- CFRB 1010, June 14, 2018
- Media Planet, Health and Hope for People with Brain Injuries, April 2018

For brain injury awareness month in June 2018, BIST participated in a province wide Unmasking Brain Injury initiative. BIST partnered with Community Head Injury Resource Services (CHIRS) to run 4 workshops which encouraged members to create masks that depicted their experience with

brain injury. In total, BIST created 50 masks which were on display at 9 Bars, a local coffee shop for two months. Photos of the masks have been submitted to the Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA) and are featured on the project's international site www.unmaskingbraininjury.org. The masks were also on display during the 13th World Congress on Brain Injury, which took place in Toronto.

In January 2019, BIST had donation boxes in LCBO locations throughout Toronto. These boxes acted both as a fundraising campaign as well as an awareness initiative, spreading information on brain injury and BIST supports within the City.

As BIST's social work placement program had been so successful, in this reporting period the team decided we would increase our commitment to this program. As such, in June 2018 we brought on two students from Mohawk College's Brain Disorders Program. And in September 2018, we had two Social Work Students from Ryerson University complete their placement with us. During both terms students were given the opportunity to participate in groups, assist with workshops and events, provide resources and information to members and the community, as well as direct support to our members. We continue to be committed to this program and will continue to recruit students for the upcoming terms.

BIST has great success with funding applications this past year. We were the recipients of the following grants:

Shoppers Drug Mart – Shoppers Love You Program -For a second year, this grant was provided for BIST to continue our monthly support group specifically for Women with Brain Injury.

Ontario Trillium Grow Grant - This grant was received in October 2018 and is a joint project with the Brain Injury Association of Durham. It provides three year funding for a Homelessness Prevention Coordinator who can assist individuals who are homeless or precariously housed in finding, maintaining and/or secure safe, affordable housing.

Throughout the upcoming year, BIST will continue to be committed to improving the lives of individuals with ABI and their families. We are excited to pursue new opportunities, for advocacy, awareness, education and support. Feedback on our programs, services and supports are always welcomed.

Sincerely,

Melissa Vigar

2018/2019 FISCAL YEAR ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT

by Julie Notto, Program and Services Coordinator/ Peer Support Coordinator

Since the summer of 2016, which marked the hiring of our new Executive Director and Programs Coordinator team, program offerings have increased and diversified based on the needs of our members. BIST is pleased to report that 2018/19 saw the launch of five new programs:

- Not so Blue Monday: Our first weekly drop-in program facilitated by Dave Slonim and offered in collaboration with Community Head Injury Resource Services (CHIRS).
- Men's Social Drop-In: Formerly our BIST Social drop-in. 2017/18 data showed that 95% of participants in this group were males. With the introduction of our monthly women's group, it made sense to offer a men's group tailored to the unique needs of this population.
- Peer Support for Post Concussion Syndrome (PCS): Launched in January 2019 this peer led program offers hard to find support for our PCS members.
- Women's Group: Thanks to a grant from Shoppers Drug Mart LOVES YOU program, we launched our first women's only support group in September 2018.
- Weekly one-on-one member support: Offered by a social work placement student this pilot program offers direct resource support to members.

Other 2018/19 programming additions include the tracking of our information and resource phone support program and a new pilot program offering one-on-one member support facilitated by our placement students. Launched 2017/18, the phone support tracking program continues to track new and current members education and resources. Launched in October 2018, our one-on-one support program provides members an opportunity to meet with a Social Work placement student and receive support with issues such as applying for Wheeltrans, the ABI Network, Access2 cards, etc., as well as organizing paperwork and assisting with program/appointment reminders. A senior staff member supervises all student-members interactions.

BIST is proud to note that as a team we have worked to ensure our groups and program space is open and inclusive to people of diverse cultural backgrounds and sexual orientation. As a team, we have been dedicated to ensuring our programming is relevant to and reflects the diversity of the city of Toronto and individuals affected by ABI. It's also important to note that two facilitators, including one registered social worker, facilitate BIST's Adult Support Group and Women's Support Group.

BIST served 2396 members in the 2018/19 fiscal year. This represents an increase of 437 members served from 2017/18 and 1086 from 2016/17. It's important to note that this increase occurred while maintaining the same annual 2016/17 program budget (with the exception of the Women's Group Grant). Going forward, programs will work towards improved tracking for our expanded programming and member supports, while maintaining outstanding member services within the capacities of staffing and program space.

2018/19 Fiscal Attendance & Service Breakdown	
Group	Total # Served
Not So Blue Mondays (weekly)	371
Adult Support Group	175
New Men's Social Drop-In	64
New Peer Support Post Concussion Group	9
Community Outings	278
Parent Support Group	44
Young Adult Group	53
Women's Group (Sept'18 to Mar'19)	67
Community Meetings	244
Caregiver Peer Support	33
Pilot-Phone Log Member Phone Support	900
New Social Student Placement Member Support	100
Workshops	314
Total Members Served 2018/19	2652
Total Members Served in 2017/18	1959
Total members Served in 2016/17	1310

2018/19 Program Breakdown

Not So Blue Monday: This is our first weekly support group offering, in collaboration with Community Head Injury Resource Services (CHIRS). This is a fun and feisty social educational group facilitated by a CHIRS staff.

Total # of annual members served: 317

ABI Adult support group: Started as a pilot in the winter of 2017, this group maintains high attendance throughout the year. It provides psycho-educational support for member's ages 27 to 60+. The group is usually a 40/60 split between men and women (40% men, 60% women) with 25% of group participants dealing with post-concussion syndrome.

Total # of annual members served: 175

Social Drop-In: The numbers for this group are lower due to several factors such as regular attendees moving out of the city, being away on holiday during summer and BIST redirecting participants to other services better suited for their higher ABI needs. 2017/18 data showed that 95% of this group's attendees were men. With this in mind, in Jan 2019 we launched this group as a dedicated Men's Social Drop-In which has proved to be very successful and engaged new members.

Total # of annual members served: 64

Peer Support Post Concussion Syndrome Drop-In (launched in Jan 18): This pilot drop-in support group was a member driven initiative that grew from the success of our Fall 2018 Concussion Series. It is facilitated by a peer support leader and supervised by our Programs Coordinator. It has continued to grow in the 2019/20 fiscal year due to increased BIST promotion and outreach and word of mouth referrals. The program is a budget-friendly initiative, as BIST staff are already onsite, a trained peer volunteer leads the group and the group is offered in our programs room.

Total # of annual members served: 8

Young Adult Group: Attendance in this group dropped due to youth members either aging out of this group, moving on to college/university, developing new health issues and/or the need for more intense ABI support. We continue to engage in outreach and promotion in an effort to serve new members.

Total # of annual members served: 71

Parent Support Group: Unfortunately, the parent group numbers have also dropped this year the reason are similar to those of the youth group. We continue to engage in outreach and promotion in an effort to serve new members.

Total # of annual members served: 58

Women's Group: Launched in September 2018 thanks to a generous Shopper's Drug Mart grant. This group addresses the unique challenges/needs of women with ABI by acknowledging the impact of gendered roles, physiological and sociopolitical differences and the prevalence of abuse and PTSD within this population.

Total # of annual members served: 67

Community Meetings: These meetings function as mini-educational workshops for our members and the larger community, and provide the platform of our annual Halloween and Holiday parties, annual summer picnic and Annual General meeting.

Total # of annual members served: 244

2018/19 Presenter Thank You!

Special thanks to our amazing presenters for sharing their time, energy and wisdom with our BIST members!

Kristen Borho – Chair Yoga

Amee Lee – Face Mapping Expressive Art workshop

Paul Hyman - Brain Fitness

Shawn Gargoum & the Complex Injury Rehab Team – The Concussion Series

Rosanne Partridge – Essential Oils for health and wellness

Dr. Hiten Lad – The ABI Series

Alexandra Piotti - The ABI Series

Celia Missios – Vision Board

Michelle Jacob – Heart mapping

Caregivers Peer Support Group: This group continues to fill an important gap in services and is still offered on the same evening as our Community Meetings. This format provides caregivers an opportunity for support and respite while their loved ones attend our Community Meetings which offer social educational support. It remains cost free as staff are already onsite at this time, trained peers volunteer to lead the group and the group is offered in our programs room.

Total # of annual members served: 33

Weekly member phone support: Based on our 2017/18 pilot project we've formalized this previously untracked service into a program which provides new and current members with brief psychosocial support (as needed), education and resources which has led to an increase in member program engagement and retention.

Total # of annual members served: 900

Weekly one-on-one member support: Launched as a pilot Oct 2018, this program provides members with an opportunity to meet with a placement students to receive support around applying for Wheeltrans, the ABI Network, an Access2 card, volunteer tasks, organizing paperwork, setting up calendars, etc.. A senior staff member supervises all student-members interactions.

Total # of annual members served: 42

Workshops

In 2018/19 BIST continued to offer workshops with varying success. Concussion and new ABI Series were successful in terms of attendance and rate of return on investment. Both programs had attendance wait lists and will be offered in the next fiscal year. The Expressive Art show continued to grow in participants and opening night attendance and will be offered in the next fiscal year as a stand-alone event without the Community Agency Fair.

2018-2019 Workshop Offerings			
Date	Workshops	Presenter	Attendance
April 26, 2018	April Expressive Art Show & Community Agency Fair	Special BIST presentation	120
July 18, 2018	Back to School Post Concussion: Strategies & resources for success	Elke McLellan, OT; Darcy Roza, SLP; Andrea Dermody, SW	30
Oct 17 & 18, 2018	Brain Basics - Introduction to ABI	Presenter by OBIA	18
Oct 15 to Dec 3/19	Fall 8 week Concussion Series		
Week #1	Concussion 101	Dr. Shawn Gargoum	11
Week #2	Helping Others Help You - Advocacy & Resources	Colleen Worsley, Social Worker	14
Week #3	Mood Management & Heart Mapping	Michelle Jacobs, OT	14
Week #4	Planning & Pacing Fatigue & Management	Ayushi Dhingra, OT	12
Week #5	Wellness Planning & Balance	Richard Chui, OT	12
Week #6	Concussion & Nutrition	Nutrition & Sleep Hygiene	6
Week #7	Concussion & Exercise	Dr. Shawn Gargoum	11
Week #8	Information Re-Cap	Dr. Shawn Gargoum	11

Nov 18, 2018	Brain Injury & Sexuality: How to Develop Health Sexuality Post-ABI	Reema Farhat, OT	20
Feb 25 to Mar 18/19	Winter 4 week ABI Series		
Week #1	ABI Education - What is a brain injury	Dr. Hiten Lad	11
Week #2	Community, Healthcare and Government Resources	Laura Bellon	14
Week #3	Finding Acceptance: Learning strategies for adjustment and acceptance	Dr. Bojana Budisin, Dr. Liesel-Ann Meusel	14
Week #4	Coping After Acceptance	Simone Friedman, SLP Natalie Zaraska, OT	19
Total # of annual members served	314		

BIST/OBIA PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

In August 2018 Carrie MacKinnon left this position to pursue a new opportunity. We thank her for all of her outstanding work with this program from September 2016 to August 2018. In September 2018 Programs and Service Coordinator, Julie Notto, become the new Peer Support Coordinator. BIST has continued to successfully partner with the Ontario Brain Injury Association to offer this innovative Peer Support Program to ABI survivors, and their families.

This program connects persons with lived experience (the Mentor) with an individual who is living with the effects of acquired brain injury who requires the support (the Partner).

To date, there continues to be an ongoing province wide shortage of peer support mentors. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Peer Mentor or needs peer support please contact Julie Notto at 647-990-1485 or peersupport@bist.ca.

2018/19 Peer Support Program Numbers	
Category	# Served
# of Trainings	1
Current # of Active Matches	14
# of Partners Intakes	15
# of Mentors Intakes	6
# of BIST Mentors Matched	5
# of Matches completed	19
Total # Served	60

BIST FINANCIAL REPORT

By Josh Himmel, Treasurer

BIST had another great year in 2019 driven by strong financial growth. We continue to further develop our expansive program offering while seeking new and exciting fundraising opportunities and gaining more traction with our corporate sponsors. In addition to the Transitional Support Initiative grant received in early 2017, BIST secured an additional grant from the OTF for \$75,000 during the 2018 fiscal year to run the Homelessness Prevention Program. This program helped to provide services to individuals with brain injuries that are at risk of homelessness. We are continuously looking for new grant opportunities that will allow us to offer additional services to the community and we are very excited about the opportunities ahead of us.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our members, board members, community partners, and sponsors including our new corporate sponsors, OBIA and our dedicated staff for all their work. Without these significant efforts BIST would not be the organization it is today.

CDN \$	Year Ended March 31, 2019	Year Ended March 31, 2018
Gross Revenues	\$ 342,956	\$ 251,213
Expenses		
Contractor Fees	\$ 34,223	\$ 27,858
Program Expenses	96,930	93,522
Fundraising Event Expenses	66,772	64,332
OTF Grant Expenses	111,801	16,212
Admin and Other Expenses	43,257	49,500
Total Expenses	\$ 352,983	\$ 251,424
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (10,027)	\$ (211)

CDN \$	As At March 31, 2019	As At March 31, 2018
Assets		
Cash	\$ 172,417	\$ 104,030
HST Receivable	10,886	16,338
Accounts Receivable	4,516	5,857
Prepaid Expenses	4,685	4,706
Investments	61,945	61,262
Total Assets	\$ 254,449	\$ 192,193
Liabilities and Equity		
Accounts Payable	\$ 41,746	\$ 30,238
Deferred Revenue	127,764	66,989
Retained Earnings	84,939	94,966
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$ 254,449	\$ 192,193

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR PROGRAM

By Laura Bellon, Transitional Support Coordinator

The Transitional Support Coordinator Program, a three-year Ontario Trillium Foundation Grow Grant, is now in its second year with a program start date of February 5 2018.

The program offers support to adults who identify with a brain injury and/or cognitive issues, who live in the Toronto area. The program is for those who are seeking support in accessing social assistance and stabilizing their financial needs through applications with the Ontario Disability Support Program. The three-year grant target is to support 75 participants throughout its duration.

Although not an exhaustive list, the program has supported individuals with finding various community supports, such as: Family Physicians, Headache and Pain Specialists, Physiatrists, Psychiatrists, Psychotherapists, Social Workers, Case Managers, Dentists and Optometrists. The program has also supported clients in connecting with long-term supports through program referrals to Access Point, CAMH, One-Link, Housing supports, Women's Habitat and Barbara Schlifer Clinic. While assisting to stabilize client's financial needs, support was given to help individuals complete taxes, acquire ID, connect with landlords to help pay rent, initiate referrals to legal aid, and support client's through the Ontario Court system.

The Transitional Support Program initiative produced a secondary talk with Ontario Works employees in the Etobicoke area to provide additional information to workers on brain injury, BIST and program supports. As well, this Coordinator presented to BIST members on March 11, 2019 on Community, Healthcare and Government Resources, thus providing event participants with increased knowledge on how to access supports in their community.

As of March 31, 2019 the program has serviced 54 participants, with 10 self-referrals, 13 BIST member self-referrals, 7 Community Agency referrals, and 24 Ontario Works referrals. The total number of referrals between April 1, 2018 and March 31, 2019 reached 31 participants. The project is set to enter its final year in February of 2020.

HOMELESS PREVENTION COORDINATOR PROGRAM

by Ryan Natale, Homelessness Prevention Coordinator

Given the success of the Transitional Support Program, BIST endeavoured to expand its umbrella of support to the brain-injured community of Toronto by addressing an overlooked population, the homeless. BIST, in partnership with the Brain Injury Association of Durham, received a one-year seed grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in September 2018 to develop and deliver a homeless prevention program for individuals identifying with a brain injury and/or cognitive impairment and experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

The homeless prevention program launched on October 1st, 2018 with a target of servicing 30 participants throughout the year. Several individuals immediately self-referred to the program through word of mouth, internal communications to BIST members and clients. Additional referrals came within the first month after a presentation delivered to the Employment and Social Services office in Etobicoke, and communications within the ABI network.

This initiative has supported individuals with applications for rent geared to income, supportive, and market rent housing, housing searches and connecting with landlords to facilitate viewings, moving, and mediating landlord/tenant issues. In addition, the program has supported individuals in the community with finding a family doctor, attending medical appointments, obtaining medical records, acquiring identification, improving food security, and referrals to service providers.

Between October 1st, 2018 and March 31st, 2019, this program served 16 individuals, 10 of which were referred internally, 2 self-referred, and 4 from Ontario Works. The numbers in this 6 month period indicate that the need for assistance is high and that the grant target is well within reach. Of these 16 participants, 5 have secured housing (i.e., began the program homeless or insecurely housed and were relocated), and 3 now live in a stable housing environment (i.e., issues that would have otherwise precipitated their eviction or created unsafe conditions have been ameliorated).

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

BIST is fortunate to have so many hard-working and dedicated volunteers. Our volunteers sit on committees, help plan and lead our programs, plan our fundraising and social events and contribute to our blog. Our volunteers are survivors, family members, professionals from the ABI field, and individuals interested in giving back to their community and supporting the mission of BIST.

Due to the high number of quality volunteers, the committee acknowledged volunteers in 3 categories: ABI Survivor/Thrivers, Caregiver, BIST Ambassador. Nominations were submitted by individuals within the BIST community and reviewed by the committee and Board of Directors.



BIST ABI Survivor/Thrivers Winner

Alex Brazen Mongkonrob

No stranger to lending a helping hand wherever we need one, Alex has helped out with tasks such as being the photographer for our 2017 5K Run/ Walk/ Stroll and co-curating our Expressive Art Show for the past 2 years. He is known for his quirkiness, jokes, and his ability to lend an empathetic ear to anyone who could use it. Keep shining!

BIST Caregiver Winner

Kevin Redmond O'Keefe

After co-facilitating a caregiver support group at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital for a couple of years, Kevin moved over to BIST and has facilitated our Parent Support Group since. Kevin is a great listener and co-facilitator and understands that although we cannot solve everyone's problems, we can all learn by giving an opportunity to all participants to share their story.

BIST Ambassador

Tonya Flaming

As a long time member of the Brain Injury Awareness Month (BIAM) Committee, Tonya has been an integral part of several aspects of our BIST Community for many years. Tonya organizes our Green and Blue Lit CN Tower in June, and is always available to help out the day of our 5K Run, Walk or Roll. In addition, Tonya helped plan and organize an Inaugural 3d Party Halloween Fundraiser to raise money for BIST. Way to go Tonya - we couldn't do what we do without you!

AWARENESS COMMITTEE

By Matthew Chung, Committee Chair

For the 2018 Brain Injury Awareness campaign, the Awareness Committee collaborated with community partners to raise awareness and understanding about the effects of brain injury. Building on our relationships with various hospitals and community groups, our volunteers attended events to share information about brain injury statistics, effects as well as BIST supports and programming.

During this campaign we handed out areyouaware stickers, pens, pamphlets and reflective stickers. In case you missed us, we had information booths set up at the following:

- Toronto Western Hospital
- Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital
- St. Michael's Hospital
- Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
- Toronto Rehabilitation Institute at both the Rumsey Centre and University site
- Toronto Bike to Work Day at Nathan Philip's Square
- Toronto Pride
- Accessible You at the Artscape Wychwood Barns
- International Brain Tumour Conference

In addition, for the first time this year, we were able to provide the Ride to Conquer Cancer information sheets on concussion and brain injury as well as a list of resources that was made available to riders and the first aid stations. We would like to thank Kelly Ann Rover for getting us involved in this event.

BIST also partnered with OBIA on an Unmasking Brain Injury initiative. Our members made and painted masks that shared their stories of living with brain injury through an artistic display of masks. We launched the initiative with a kick-off at 9 Bars Coffee and our members masks were on display at the shop for two months during the awareness campaign.

BIST and the Unmasking Brain Injury initiative was also featured on Toronto's Breakfast Television. A special thank you to Frank Bruno, who appeared in the segment and talked about his mask and the effects of living with brain injury.

The CN Tower was once again lit up Blue and Green, the colours of brain injury awareness to commemorate our annual BIST/OBIA Mix and Mingle as was The TORONTO sign in Nathan Phillips Square. Mayor John Tory proclaimed June Brain Injury Awareness month.

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR UPDATE, BY MERI PERRA

On all platforms, BIST reached almost **814 000** people and engaged approximately **56 000 people** in the period from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

Across all platforms, BIST has 5,980 followers, **an increase of 950 followers or 19% from the previous period.**

**Please note: There was a typo in the 2017-2018 Annual Report which indicated BIST reached 559 351 people over that period. The correct total was 904 554.*

Platform	Reach	Engagement	Followers
Blog	26 634	19 869	281
Twitter	487 090	9 353	2998
Facebook	229 125	17 450	1422
Instagram	47 155	8016	1002
Linked In	23 983	1268	277
TOTAL	813 987	55 922	5980
Bist.ca	48 076	n/a	n/a
areyouaware.ca	1254	n/a	n/a
TOTAL	863 317	55 922	5980

BLOG: Brain Injury Blog TORONTO

Views and visitors on Brain Injury Blog Toronto continue to grow. Blog visits **increased by 11% from the previous period and visitors increased by 13%.**

Brain Injury Blog Toronto - Annual Comparison			
Period	# of Posts	Views	Visitors
2018-2019	39	26 634	19 869
2017 - 2018	38	23 892	17649
Difference	+ 1	+ 11%	+ 13 %

The following is a monthly break down of analytics from the blog.

Brain Injury Blog Toronto - Analytics from March 2018 - April 2019					
Month	Views	Visitors	Likes	Top Post	Top Post - Views
April 5 Posts	1990	1530	6	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	422
May 3 Posts	2764	2115	3	Why are we more susceptible to developing dementia after brain injury?	544

June 4 Posts	2425	1855	4	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	557
July 1 post	2147	1643	5	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	567
August 4 posts	1720	1314	9	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	400
September 1 post	2153	1607	0	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	635
October 2 posts	2736	2042	16	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	927
November 4 posts	2225	1580	11	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	645

December 7 posts	2356	1737	4	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	584
January 4 posts	2526	1892	10	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	460
February 3 posts	1883	1361	3	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	412
March 1 post	1709	1193	5	Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem	371
39 posts	26 634	19 869	76		6524

Thank you to all of our blog contributors for their hard word and a special thank you to **Colin Harding**, whose blog post *Post Concussion Syndrome: Why giving up screen time is part of the solution & problem (posted October 2017)* received the most views for 11 months out of 12 months.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR AMAZING BLOGGERS!

Alison	Blue Helmet Girl	Janet Craig
Erin Moore	Leah Danielle Karmona	Mark Koning
Dawne McKay	Shannon Schilling	Theresa McColl
Alyson Rogers	Sophia Voumvakis	Julia Renaud

Visitors by Country

braininjuryblogtoronto.com receives most of our visitors from the US, as shown below. Please note the limitations of our free plan with Wordpress show data from January - December 2018 only, which explains why these totals are different than those above.

Brain Injury Blog Toronto - Analytics from March 2018 - April 2019	
Country	Total Visitors in 2018
US	13 312
Canada	9 237
UK	1 225

TWITTER: @BrainInjuryTO

Our Twitter account continued to gain followers. We began the period with **2843** followers on April 1, 2018 and ended with **2998** followers on March 31, 2019 marking a **5.45% increase**. Brain Injury Awareness Month in June had the highest engagement over other months.

Other metrics on this account were down compared to the previous period, showing more attention needs to be paid to this platform.

ER= Engagement Rate

RT=Re-Tweets

@BrainInjuryTO Twitter Analytics March 2018- April 2019									
Month	Total Tweets	Impressions	Engagement	ER	Clicks	RT	Likes	Replies	Followers
April	54	28451	595	1.60%	143	110	170	18	2843
May	53	27923	585	1.80%	107	103	168	18	2859
June	115	83284	2748	1.60%	136	303	653	17	2906
July	43	39126	446	1.20%	118	84	154	9	2918
Aug	56	29113	502	1.50%	156	80	113	3	2900
Sept	88	52141	1501	1.30%	90	143	254	8	2910
Oct	63	29352	389	1.60%	127	51	143	6	2917
Nov	74	69778	652	0.90%	58	88	169	6	2935
Dec	48	40302	569	1.00%	83	76	129	9	2942
Jan	65	37929	582	1.40%	122	76	134	11	2957
Feb	64	22911	392	1.20%	80	45	79	7	2971
March	54	26780	392	1.30%	171	58	159	9	2998
TOTAL	777	487 090	9 353	1.37%	1391	1217	2325	121	2998

Impressions: The times a user is served a Tweet in a timeline or search results.

Link clicks: Clicks on a URL or Card in the Tweet

Re-tweets: Times a user re-tweeted the Tweet

Likes: Times a user likes a Tweet

@BrainInjuryTO Twitter Analytics - Annual Comparison			
Time Period	April '17 – March '18	April '18 - March 19	Difference
Total Followers at period end	2843	2998	5.45 % +
Engagement Rate (Avg)	1.57%	1.37%	0.2 % -
Total Link Clicks	1532	1391	9.2 % -
Total Re-Tweets	1658	1217	26% -
Total Likes	2617	2325	11% -
Total Replies	195	171	12.3% -
Total Impressions	446 227	487 090	0.9% +

FACEBOOK: @BrainInjurySocietyTO

BIST's Facebook followers increased 23% this period, with BIST's page reaching 229 125 people, and engaging 17 450 users. June was also the most popular month during this year.

@BrainInjurySocietyTO Facebook Analytics March 2018 - April 2019									
Month	Total Posts	Reach	Organic Reach	Paid Reach	Impressions	Engaged Users	Followers - Month Start	Followers - Month End	Change
April	33	8214	8214	0	12220	635	1160	1159	-1
May	30	17654	17654	0	25500	1111	1159	1205	46
June	40	36436	36436	0	53050	2800	1205	1262	57
July	26	14151	14151	0	20882	1024	1262	1281	19
Aug	29	18051	18051	0	27336	703	1281	1298	17
Sept	38	11755	11755	0	17449	777	1298	1313	15
Oct	35	14214	14214	0	21087	1105	1313	1328	15
Nov	42	23593	23593	0	34010	1761	1328	1345	17
Dec	30	14768	14768	0	21540	973	1345	1363	18
Jan	42	22154	22154	0	31506	3601	1363	1380	17
Feb	37	16408	16408	0	23774	862	1380	1393	13
March	34	31727	31727	0	46116	2098	1393	1422	29
TOTAL	416	229 125	229 125	0	334470	17450	n/a	1422	263

@BrainInjurySocietyTO Facebook Analytics - Annual Comparison		
Time Period	Total Reach*	Total Engaged Users*
2018 - 2019	229 125	17 450
2017-2018	343 925	16 388
Difference	33 % -	6.5 % +

*Reach: Total reach of people who see the post including organic, paid and distribution through other sources (i.e. people who search for our page, or share the post.)

*Engaged: Similar to last year, BIST's reach on Facebook declined during this period, by 33%, yet engaged users (users who liked, commented or reacted to our content) increased by 6.5%.

Instagram: @braininjurytoronto

BIST joined Instagram in August 2016, and our followers have grown steadily since. Brain Injury Awareness Month in June was the most successful month on this platform as well.

Followers: 1002

@braininjurytoronto Analytics March 2018 - April 2019									
Month	# of Posts	Likes	Comments	Saved	Impressions	Reach	Engagement	Video views	Followers at Month's End
April	7	250	3	5	2578	1911	13.20%	n/a	452
May	11	342	6	4	3930	2996	11.60%	602	457
June	34	1202	86	26	13312	9596	1288	646	465
July	7	198	1	4	2766	1997	9.90%		472
August	10	429	24	37	4220	3178	14.30%	784	483

September	20	565	23	7	9640	7892	7.50%		511
October	14	382	10	9	5227	3897	10.10%		578
November	14	404	16	7	4173	4014	10.50%		613
December	18	444	7	8	5753	4875	9.30%		711
January	7	221	11	19	2816	2055	11.30%		787
February	8	166	8	16	3222	2387	7.30%		844
March	7	242	8	10	3278	2357	10.60%		975
TOTAL	157	4845	203	152	60915	47155	10.70%		1002

@braininjurytoronto Instagram Analytics - Annual Comparison				
Period	Total Posts	Impressions	Engagement	Followers
2018-2019	157	47155	8016	1002
2017-2018	191	48 937	5627	576
TOTAL	- 34 posts	+ 3%	+ 42%	+ 43%

Linked In: Brain Injury Society of Toronto

BIST's Linked In has a moderate following of 277, up by 25 followers since the last period. This platform had a significant decrease in reach, yet increased engagement by a modest amount. May was the most popular month during this period.

Brain Injury Society of Toronto Linked In Analytics - March 2018 - April 2019							
Month	# of Posts	Clicks	Impressions	Social Actions	Average Impression / Post	Average Engagement/ Post	Followers
April	7	140	3517	46	502	0.16%	275
May	9	77	5045	57	560	0.20%	277
June	14	75	2512	71	179	0.25%	277
July	5	35	2560	70	512	0.25%	277
August	5	21	1551	50	310	0.18%	277
Sept	1	30	914	12	914	1.42%	277
October	6	26	895	31	149	0.21%	277
Nov	11	53	1792	76	162	0.76%	277
Dec	9	35	1349	27	150	0.05%	277
January	4	27	599	33	149.75	0.1	277
February	8	69	1618	52	202	0.074	277
March	6	98	1631	57	272	0.085	277
TOTAL	85	686	23 983	582	338.5	2.45%	277

Brain Injury Society of Toronto Linked In Analytics - Annual Comparison			
Period	Total Posts	Impressions	Engagement
2018-2019	85	23 983	1 268
2017-2018	98	60 436	1 216
Difference	- 13	- 60%	+4.3%

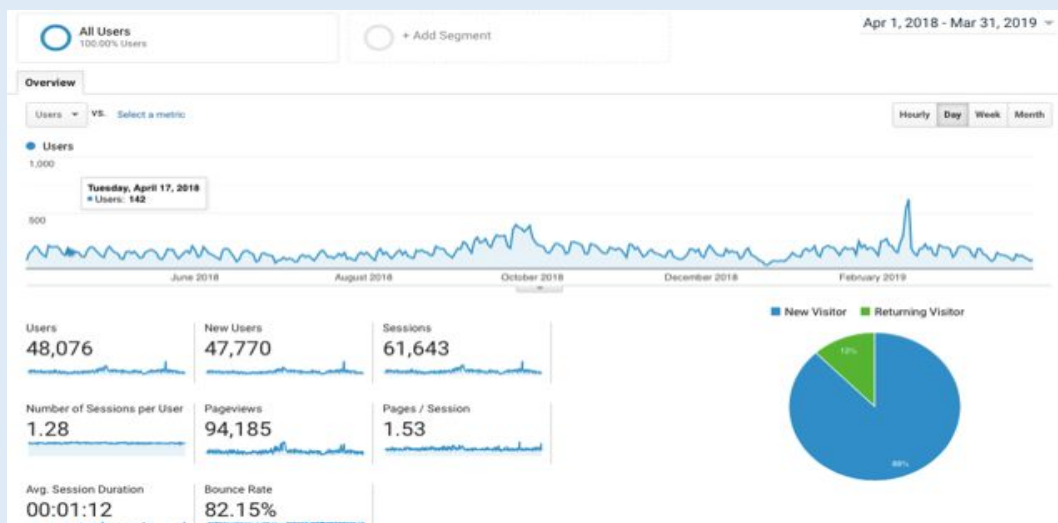
BIST Websites











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

bist.ca and areyouaware.ca have access to Google Analytics, which provide more extensive data compared to the free WordPress platform on the BIST blog.

The following screenshots from Google Analytics shows how bist.ca performed throughout **April 1, 2018 - March 31, 2019** compared to the previous period. These indicate there was:

- A 38% increase in TOTAL USERS AND total NEW USERS over the previous period
- Having said that, the amount of time people spent on the site decreased by 14%, down for the second year in a row
- Blog articles are also posted on bist.ca - this period our most visited page was *Alison's 17 Activities to Pass the Time While Recovering From a Concussion*, this post accounted for over 40% of traffic to the site.



City	Users	% Users
1. Toronto	6,704	 13.51%
2. (not set)	975	 1.97%
3. New York	931	 1.88%
4. Chicago	614	 1.24%
5. Ottawa	601	 1.21%
6. Montreal	467	 0.94%
7. Washington	458	 0.92%
8. Los Angeles	457	 0.92%
9. Mississauga	456	 0.92%
10. Hamilton	416	 0.84%

Country	Users	% Users
1.  United States	28,018	 58.44%
2.  Canada	15,453	 32.23%
3.  United Kingdom	600	 1.25%
4.  India	475	 0.99%
5.  New Zealand	318	 0.66%
6.  Australia	311	 0.65%
7.  Philippines	278	 0.58%
8.  France	275	 0.57%
9.  Denmark	133	 0.28%
10.  China	115	 0.24%

Sessions: What one site visitor views during their visit to the site - during a specific time period (i.e. 30 minutes). So if a visitor visits the site once in the morning, and once in the afternoon, this counts as two sessions.

Unique Page Views: If a user visits the same page more than once in a session, this counts as one unique page view.

Bounce Rate: When a visitor leaves the site after going to the landing page without clicking further

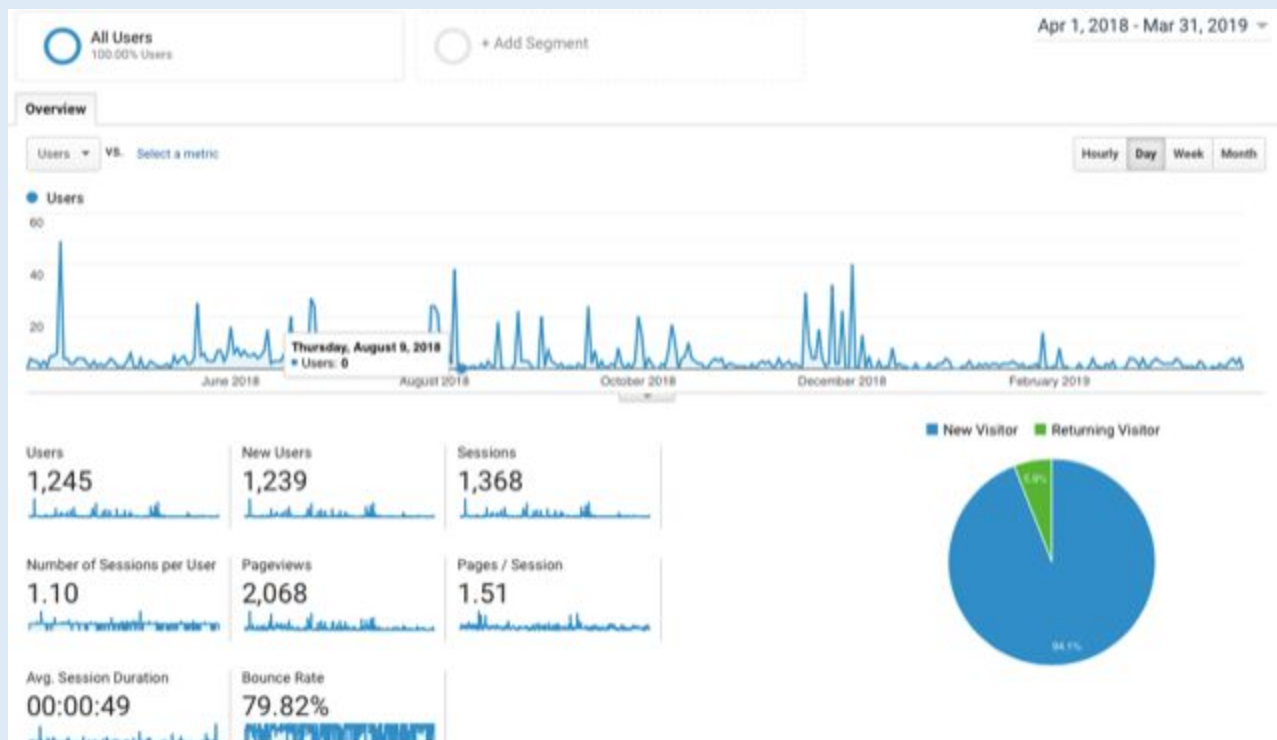
Likely due to the popularity of blog posts, US visitors make up more than 58% of our visitors.

bist.ca's third most popular page is www.bist.ca/event which lists our monthly programs likely explaining why the most popular city for the website's visitors is Toronto.

www.areyouaware.ca

BIST promotes areyouaware.ca site during Brain Injury Awareness Month in June. In 2019, as in 2018, most focus was placed on social media platforms.

As a result numbers for this website were also low in this period, and slightly down from the previous period.





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BIST/OBIA MIX & MINGLE

Over the past 13 years the Brain Injury Society of Toronto (BIST) and the Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA) have co-hosted the BIST/OBIA Mix & Mingle. This year's fabulous celebration of partnerships with our ABI community took place on Wednesday, June 13th, 2018 at the Steam Whistle Brewery in Toronto, Ontario.

With over 600 guests in attendance, this year's event was once again another success in raising awareness for this important cause, as well as raising funds to support our ongoing programs and services.

A huge thank you to all our sponsors for your generous donations and continued support.

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Mix & Mingle Organizing Committee

- **Greg Neinstein, (Chair)**
Neinstein & Associates
- **Jordan Assaraf**
Gluckstein Personal Injury Lawyers
- **Terry Bartol**
OBIA
- **Joanne Driscoll,**
McKellar Structured Settlements Inc.
- **Pam Foster**
Howie Sacks & Henry
- **Deena Ginsberg**
The Social Work Consulting Group
- **Nick Gurevich**
FunctionAbility Rehabilitation Services Inc.
- **Michelle Kudlats**
Neinstein & Associates
- **Ellie Lapowich**
Innovative Case Management
- **Ad Lewis**
OBIA
- **Jennifer Norquay**
OBIA
- **Diana Rockbrune**
Oatley Vigmond
- **Cynthia Sprigings**
Bartmaeus Rehab
- **Melissa Vigar**
BIST
- **JP Zenl**
Thomson Rogers

BIRDIES FOR BRAIN INJURY

Our 4th annual Birdies for Brain Injury was another well organized and fun day for all. Held at Lionhead Golf Club on June 22nd, 2018 this event brought together the ABI community, sports and the great outdoors. Many thanks to the committee, golfers and sponsors who helped us reach our fundraising goal.

Birdies for Brain Injury Committee: Jordan Assaraf (Chair), Robert Nigol, Ryan Murray, Diana Rockbrune, Jeff Nunn, Erik Joffe, Pearse Brett, Darrell Booker, Daniel Fenwick and Colleen Worsley



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5K RUN, WALK & ROLL 2018

We had another successful event on September 30, 2018! Plenty of team building, family and canine fun! Thank you to all of those who came out to participate.

Many thanks to our dedicated committee who helped make this event such a success: Kate Mazzucco (chair), Jennifer Bowler, Jaleh Ghazi, Melissa Dowrie, Ann Grozier, Mark Lapowich, Rohit Tamhane, and Alana Bernick



5K HERO RUN, WALK OR ROLL

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Michelle Cohen & Associates
Neuro-Rehab Services Inc.
Saitua Legal
TCL Economic Valuation Experts

THIRD PARTY FUNDRAISERS

BIST is extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated and generous community. As we continued to receive requests for other organizations to create third party fundraisers on our behalf, this year we created Third Party Fundraising Guidelines which can be found on our website: www.bist.ca

This past year Colleen Worsley, together with her committee once again organized another successful **Beach Blast Event** whereby the funds raised were donated to BIST and Brain Injury Association of York Region (BIAYR)

We also had a second annual spooky **Halloween Party** compliments of Tonya Flaming, Lynn Hartford and Joe Pilleggi. All proceeds from this event were donated to BIST – thanks to this great committee for organizing such a spooktacular event!

On May 16, 2018, John Groe of ADL, hosted a **Comedy for A Cause**, a 3rd party fundraiser in support of BIST and BIYAR with headlining comedian Frank Spadone - we thank John for organizing this night of laughter for us!

BIST Board Member, Alexandra Piotti, organized a **Paint Nite** fundraiser on March 7, 2018. Community supporters, friends and family all brought out their creative side, with all proceeds being directed to BIST.

BIST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jordan Assaraf, Chair

Jordan Assaraf is a lawyer at Gluckstein Personal Injury Lawyers. By being involved in contact sports his entire life, Jordan has seen how traumatic brain injuries can occur and affect not only the person who acquired the injury, but their whole family. This has led Jordan to become the personal injury lawyer he is today, and has also led him to volunteer his time and raise awareness about brain injuries by joining BIST.

Jordan's other volunteer experience includes leading his law firm's team in the annual Wheelchair Relay Race and supporting the charitable organization THREE TO BE in their efforts to assist children with neurological disorders. Jordan is committed to raising public awareness about the effects of brain injuries on victims, their families and the broader public.

Alexandra Piotti, Vice Chair

Alexandra Piotti is a private Case Manager/ Rehabilitation Consultant working with the catastrophically injured. Her areas of expertise include working with individuals who have sustained an acquired brain injury, have complex medical needs, mental health issues, dual diagnosis and the behaviourally challenged. Alex is an advocate for her clients, dedicated to helping to ensure the best environment for maximal recovery.

Alex has been a member of BIST since 2012 and currently is the Chair of the Awareness Committee. As a member of the BIST Board, Alex hopes to bring her passion for people and service and hopes to find new ways to cast a wider net to increase the presence of the Brain Injury Society of Toronto in our city.

Colleen Worsley, Secretary

Colleen is dedicated to raising awareness and building support systems for individuals living with acquired brain injury. (ABI) Colleen is currently working with Delisle Youth Services as a Community Resource Consultant as well as continuing to work on fund raising projects in the ABI community.

She has more than 15 years of experience in the social services field. She graduated from York University with a Specialized Honours Degree in Psychology, has a certificate in Nutrition and training in Behaviour Therapy techniques. Her continuing education involves conferences, seminars, and courses focusing on advances in the understanding and treatment of ABI and spinal cord injury.

Josh Himmel, Treasurer

Josh is a Senior Accountant at Lipton LLP, a mid-sized accounting firm. He has had extensive experience working with clients in the not-for-profit sector and has a strong background in the Accounting Standards for Not-for-Profit Organizations (ASNPO). Josh is hoping to apply his knowledge and expertise gained through his practices in the accounting field to the Treasurer role at BIST.

Additionally, as Josh has had a close relative suffer from ABI, he has seen the effect it has on the individual and their family members. Josh is looking forward to both raise awareness for brain injury and broaden the reach of BIST while using his professional experience in accounting to help ensure long-term growth from a financial perspective.

Kerry MacLean, Past Chair

Kerry MacLean has been working with adults with Acquired Brain Injury for over 18 years. She is a Service Coordinator at Community Head Injury Resource Services (CHIRS), managing an outreach team that provides home and community support to adults living with ABI. Kerry is also the ABI System Navigator in the Central LHIN, and a member of Provincial ABI Network. In this role, she works to improve system access for individuals with ABI and their families. Kerry has a Bachelor's Degree in Social Welfare and has a background in addictions and mental health.

Outside of her work with ABI, Kerry is a busy mom of two boys, actively involved in her local community and enjoys pursuing her two other passions: painting and running.

Michelle Diamond

Michelle Diamond currently works with Functionability Rehabilitation Services as the Director of Case Management and Client Services. She has worked in the field of Brain Injury for over 12 years. She graduated with her Master's Degree of Social Work from the University of Toronto in 2000 and began working at Toronto Rehab on the ABI service department in 2001. Michelle was with Toronto Rehab for over 10 years in the capacity of Social Worker, Service Coordinator and was seconded for one year to the Toronto ABI Network as Project and Referral Coordinator.

Michelle continues to work directly with clients and families living with the effects of brain injury. Michelle has been involved with BIST for many years as a volunteer on two committees; the BIAM Committee and was a founding member of the Run Committee.

Asad Hussain

Asad is a family member of an individual who has an Acquired Brain Injury. He has been a member of BIST for a number of years and has volunteered and spoken at previous BIST Family Retreats and other Brain Injury Conferences.

He is currently employed at the Department of Justice as a Regional Director of Finance and holds an accounting designation (CMA-CPA) and MBA (Schulich School of Business).

Asad is looking forward to bringing both his personal and professional experience to the board and the members of BIST. In his spare time he is the proud father of a 2-year-old and an avid sports enthusiast.

Erik Joffe

Erik Joffe was motivated to join BIST as a result of his experience growing up working at Camp Awakening, and later on in life, as a result of his experience working with clients suffering from traumatic brain injury.

Erik has been an Associate with Neinstein LLP since joining as a summer student in 2011. He completed his Bachelor of Arts at McGill University, where he obtained a double major in Political Science and Sociology and graduated with Distinction. He went on to graduate with a J.D. from Queen's University Law School. While at Queen's University, Erik was an active member of the Queen's Law Journal, Clinical Correctional Program, and an Executive Producer of Queen's Pro Bono Radio.

Erik is an avid traveler and spent half of his final year of law school on exchange in South Africa. He has backpacked through Nepal, Israel, South East Asia, South America and Europe. During his free time Erik also enjoys running, playing hockey and golfing.

Erik's practice is devoted to all areas of Personal Injury litigation on behalf of plaintiffs, including motor vehicle accident claims, disability claims and Canadian Pension Plan, occupier's liability claims, product liability claims, medical malpractice and accident benefit claims.

Rick Menassa

Rick brings 27 years of business development experience working for global and Canadian technology companies in Canada and across Europe. He is the President and co-founder of, iCare Home Health, a boutique home health care co. serving Halton, Peel and the GTA region; and iCare Navigator providing Patient Advocacy and Expert Opinion regarding standard of care for persons who suffered injury, serving Ontario.

Rick is also the VP, Marketing, Pharmaceutical Innovation Ltd., a start up and creator of the IntelChip. A device that will revolutionize medicine dispensing to patients with accessibility challenges.

Making a difference is an integral part of his DNA, Rick fundraised for several organizations and continues to participate in the annual Heart & Stroke Ride for Heart, the Healing Cycle Ride in support of Palliative care, and the annual Alzheimer Society fundraising campaigns in Halton and Peel.

Serving on the BIST Board compliments Rick's passion to empower injured and aged to live with dignity and maintain the quality of life they deserve.

Celia Missios

Celia Missios is the founder and author of the internationally read lifestyle blog High Heeled Life. Since 2010 she has been inspiring women worldwide with her journey of surviving what should have been a fatal accident, finding her "Joie de vivre" and creating a new life that fits the person she is today.

Celia has been a brain injury survivor for almost 9 years, and has volunteered with BIST as Peer Mentor; spoken at community meetings and is a regular editorial contributor to the blog. She is also a regular speaker for Canadian Blood Services – Speakers Bureau. Prior to her accident Celia had a successful corporate career as Business and Market Development for a local communications firm. And volunteered her time as Chair of the Fundraising Committee for an East York homeless youth shelter.

Celia believes it's not what happens to you that determines your future, it's how you chose to react to it. When she is not volunteering her time in the community and helping others create a healthy lifestyle that fits who they are today– she enjoys traveling; meditating; afternoon tea; self-care; yoga; writing; gardening; photography; and playing with her Yorkies, Dolce & Gabbana.

Dr. Hiten Lad

Dr. Lad is a registered Clinical Psychologist with specialization in the practice of Clinical Neuropsychology for adults and seniors. He is listed with the Canadian Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology and is the Practice Director and Owner at Lad & Associates. Dr. Lad previously held positions as a Clinical Neuropsychologist with the Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Program at Hamilton Health Sciences and as an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of

Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University. He is also involved in research and has co-authored journal articles as well as a book chapter related to acquired brain injury. Dr. Lad also held a position as a clinical coordinator and training supervisor for the Canadian Psychology Association Accredited Neuropsychology Internship program at Hamilton Health Sciences. Furthermore, he worked as the clinical supervisor for rehabilitation therapists at the Acquired Brain Injury Community Services program at Hamilton Health Sciences. Prior to working with Hamilton Health Sciences, Dr. Lad worked in a multidisciplinary team at Toronto Western Hospital providing cognitive behavioural rehabilitation services for the treatment of chronic pain patients.





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