

HeadSTRONG

The Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado is the go-to resource for help and services for survivors of an injury to the brain, their families, and providers.

A Survivor's Story

Steven Heidenreich



The 1971 Watertown High School grad is the greatest miler South Dakota has ever produced, breaking the 4-minute barrier eight times. He is a member of the Watertown High School Hall of Fame, the Indiana University Hall of Fame and the Howard Wood Dakota Relays Hall of Fame.

In high school, Heidenreich was two-time state champion in the mile and medley relay, setting state records in the mile run (4:11.2) and 2-mile relay (7:55.1). He finished second in the mile (4:11.8) at a national prep meet near Chicago on June 12, 1971.

After graduating from Watertown, Heidenreich attended Indiana University. In 1972, running for IU, he won six straight cross-country meets, setting course records in five. In 1974, Heidenreich anchored the Indiana indoor 4-mile relay team to a world record. In 1975, he ran several sub-four minute miles. That year he was the Big Ten mile champion, and finished 4th place in the NCAA National Championships, earning All American status. In the USA vs. Africa meet in Cleveland he ran his best mile time of (3:58.4) where he defeated the Kenyon miler by blazing a 54-second last lap. In Prague, Czechoslovakia, he ran a 3:38.8 in the 1,500-meter run placing second (equivalent to a 3:55.0 mile). At the World University Games in Rome, he placed second in the 1500 meter run. In 1976, he was the first Big Ten runner to run a 4-minute mile indoors.

In 1976, the 5-foot-10, 130-pounder was ranked fourth in the US in the 1500 meter run. He was a top candidate to make the

1976 Olympic team when he was injured in a near fatal hit and run accident while he was training. Following the accident, the neurosurgeon gave him a 5% chance of surviving with little hope of ever recovering beyond a vegetative state. There was no expectation that he would ever compete again or complete college. In spite of these poor odds, Heidenreich completed an MBA, MSHA, and M.Ed. specializing in Special Education. He also trained for the 1980 Moscow Olympics. *(continued on page 5)*



There was no expectation that he would ever compete again or complete college.

What We Do

Client Programs

Case Management

With a team approach and local presence, Case Managers provide creative and collaborative statewide services to give our clients support, guidance, and hope. In-person, phone, and email based support regarding medical providers, state benefits, and other resource related needs.

Recreation Programs

Single and multi-day educational, social, recreational, and creative programs for adults and youth with brain injury.

Therapeutic Music and Art Classes

Music and art therapy classes led by a board certified therapist.

Emergency Utility Bill Assistance

Financial assistance with heating and electricity bills for individuals and families facing life changes after brain injury.

Seminars, Classes, and Workshops

Educational events for individuals with brain injuries, families, and caregivers.

Support Groups

Statewide meetings to provide education, recreation, and emotional support to individuals with brain injury, family members, and friends.

Online Resource Directory

Database of brain injury related providers available for public access on our website.



Our Vision

That all persons with a brain injury thrive in their community.

Professional Programs

Brain Injury Professional Networks

Groups of providers who work together to enhance the system of supports for survivors across the state.

Professional Conference

A two-day professional conference in Denver featuring presentations from nationally known BI experts.

Community Outreach and Education

Presentations, exhibits, and seminars to increase public awareness of brain injury.

Other Programs & Fundraisers

Pikes Peak Challenge Fundraising Event

All proceeds benefit Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado.

Public Policy

State and federal legislative advocacy to allow for greater access to services

Quarterly Newsletters

Regular communication including brain injury related articles, news, and information on statewide events and meetings.

*With funding from the
Colorado Brain Injury Program*



Brain Injury Research

Actively Recruiting Research Studies

University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS):

UCCS researchers are conducting a study about Psychological Assessment in Younger and Older Adults. All volunteers will receive \$10 for participating in a single 45 to 60 minute session. During the session, you will be asked to watch a video, answer questionnaires, perform tests of your cognitive (thinking) ability, and complete a memory and preference questionnaire about the video. To qualify, you must: be aged 55 or older; have received at least one concussion in your lifetime prior to the last three months; never have sustained a moderate to severe head injury (mild TBI would be eligible); not be diagnosed with Autism, Bipolar Disorder, or Schizophrenia; and not be on medications that affect your ability to think.

If you believe you qualify and would like to participate in this study, please email UCCS_Study@yahoo.com or call (719) 301-9022.

Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA):

The VA is seeking Veterans to participate in a research study to learn more about the psychosocial benefits of exoskeleton training in Veterans with lower extremity weakness. Participants will attend up to three training sessions, complete questionnaires and answer interview questions. Compensation will be provided.

For more information contact Molly Strobel at 303-399-8020 x5696.

Research News & Recent Publications



Researchers from Craig Hospital recently published an article in the peer-reviewed journal *Brain Injury* about their feasibility study regarding improving personal self-advocacy skills following brain injury.

For more information please visit:
<http://bit.ly/2ISomPo>



University of Denver's Graduate School of Professional Psychology is teaming up with the Department of Biological Sciences to study the impact of traumatic brain injuries on aging adults. The researchers hope to uncover the reasons older adults take longer to recover from concussions and why they suffer more severe consequences than younger people.

For more information please visit:
<http://bit.ly/2IE7Pfe>

Partnership with Boulder County Jail

BIAC is part of a four year federal grant with the Colorado Brain Injury Program to connect TBI survivors incarcerated in Boulder County Jail to services as they re-enter the community.

The University of Denver is a partner on the grant and administers screening for individuals who participate in Jail Based Behavioral Services (JBBS) and have a history of TBI. Those that meet the threshold of deficits related to their reported injuries are automatically referred to BIAC.

BIAC has been able to establish a strong relationship with the Boulder County Jail JBBS staff. Often, BIAC staff is able to meet with clients before they are released from jail and get them started with case management services. Connecting with clients prior to release has helped to establish rapport and assist them in making plans for life after release. This has resulted in **75% of all referred individuals entering services and having access to a case manager.**

Caregiver Column

Lessons Learned

by Starla Thompson, *Caregiver of adult survivor*

Our story is not rare, in no way is it unique, and in some strange way it is painfully ordinary.

We have all heard the heart wrenching perspective and prognosis from the professionals. I know we have all heard “every brain injury is different, everyone heals differently and there is just no way of knowing the outcome with any level of certainty”. If this is true, then why are there so many variables that make our story so much like other stories? Once you can get to a place where you can breathe and talk with other families, TBI survivors, and caregivers, you find peace in knowing that others are in the same boat – you are not alone!

I'd like to share some things I learned the along the way:

LESSON 1: Don't get comfortable in survival mode, that place where nothing good is happening but then nothing bad is happening either. You must realize that others, whether they be professionals, friends, or family can see you in survival mode, and if you don't raise your hand for help or scream at the top of your lungs they tend to think everything is going ok.

LESSON 2: When someone asked if you have any questions or need anything, never ever say I can't think of anything. If you really can't think of anything at least ask them for suggestions. You don't know what you don't know, so always ask for input from others.

LESSON 3: Keep a journal. There is no way on the planet that you are going to remember or even recognize when good advice comes your way, so write everything down. Better yet, give them an email address and ask them to kindly forward everything they are suggesting. Even if you don't think it is relevant at the time, things will change and it's nice to have a ready reference for the future. In addition, everywhere you go people want the history of your story. When was this surgery, where was that rehab, what are the current medications. You get the picture.



LESSON 4: As you navigate from ICU to different hospitals to long term care to rehab to home or any variation of that formula there is absolutely no guarantee that you will interact with other individuals that are as passionate about their job as you are about providing the best options for your loved one. Knowing this in the beginning allows for you to be on the offense rather than fighting battles from the defense. During down time, research the number for the ombudsman at each facility and keep it handy. Those folks are designed to help you fight battles so you can reserve your strength for more important issues. Also know there is still so much good in the world and you will meet people you will never forget.

LESSON 5: Know up front that there is no one out there that will advocate for your loved one any better than you do. It is unfortunate, but true, that not all case managers are the same. Communication is the key, and do not wait on them to provide you with all the options. Again, communication is the key. Ask them if they have told you everything you need to know.

LESSON 6: I have found that the absolute best resources available are other people in that same boat. It is liberating to find a group, Facebook page, or blog where folks like yourself are striving to figure things out. Not only do you get so many great ideas but it also feels amazing when something you found to work for your loved one is the key to helping another.

In closing, never ever give up! There is help, there are resources for every situation. Fight hard to get the help you need. Keep reaching out, someone has the answer.

Policy Update

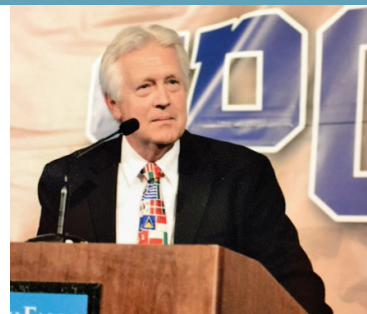
In March, CEO, Gavin Attwood will travel to Washington DC for the annual 'TBI Day on the Hill'. Advocates from many of the states convene in DC to lobby Congress. For the past two years we have asked that Congress appropriate \$5 million to establish and oversee a National Concussion Surveillance System. CDC creates surveillance systems, like this, to track and monitor health information in order to better understand a health problem and learn how best to safeguard the health of Americans and their families. CDC proposes the use of a new national household telephone survey to capture health information on concussion in this country.

In addition to this work at the federal level, BIAC partners with several other brain injury agencies to work on legislative and policy issues that impact the Colorado Brain Injury Community. We work very closely with staff at the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) and the Department of Human Services on issues that impact access to services by the brain injury community. We have also worked with legislators to pass legislation that increases access to services.

Each year we determine what the policy priorities should be for the following 12 months, given the limited resources that we have. In 2017, we have been focusing on 'Hard to Place' clients. Individuals who may have behavioral challenges often struggle to find long term housing. The options can be very limited or non-existent. We are trying to determine how many people this issue affects, what services are available and what a solution might be moving forward.

A Survivor's Story Steven Heidenreich

(continued from cover)



Heidenreich taught and coached several successful high school cross country and track and field athletes in Colorado, Texas, and South Dakota. In 2000, one of his female athletes finished second place in the Colorado Cross-Country Championship. During the 2002 Cross Country season, the Ridge View Academy High School Cross-Country Team finished 8th place in the AAU National Championships in Orlando, Florida. All the runners on that team finished in the top 100 in a field of 1,200 participants. In 2005, at Harrison High School in Colorado, the 4 by 800 relay team won the state title which helped the Harrison Track Team finish second in the Colorado State Championships. In Texas, a junior in her first year of training finished third and a sophomore finished 5th place in the 1600 and 3200 meter run at the state meet. This past fall, Heidenreich conducted workshops with the Northwestern High School Cross Country Boys' team in Mellette, SD. They finished 2nd in the State Cross Country Meet in their first year ever competing as a team. Under his guidance all of his athletes practiced yoga to stay focused, healthy and injury free. He taught them to daily visualize the perfect performance in order to compete to the best of their ability. Two athletes that followed visualization have become state champions in two different sports. They found out that visualizations works.

Currently, Heidenreich travels the country sharing his miraculous, inspirational story with future Olympians, college and high school students, athletes, religious organizations, and businesses. He encourages them to use the characteristics and traits of Olympic athletes to find success in any arena a person wants to pursue. Heidenreich also presents Yoga for Runners workshops. He teaches yoga to Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress survivors. He helps nonprofits fundraise with the help of Kroger, King Soopers, and City Market. He has instituted a program helping special education teachers provide specialized physical, restorative yoga training for their students. Heidenreich helps schools receive free books for their students with the help of FirstBook. Currently, Steve is the Secretary of the Colorado Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) to help the community of citizens with disabilities served by the centers for independent living. With the help of the Frisco Toastmaster's International, Steve's presentation skills are being perfected in order for him to give a world class speaking performance!

Memory and Brain Injury

Challenges with memory is one of the most common things we hear at BIAC from survivors after an injury. There are strategies and compensation techniques that are worth exploring. Because each brain injury is unique and as individuals, finding a memory strategy that works for you might take trial and error. Before we dive into what you can try, let's learn a little more about memory and its complicated relationship with brain injury.

This is part one in a series in which BIAC will dig deeper into memory strategies. Look for more in upcoming newsletters!

What kind of memory is affected by brain injury?

There are several kinds of memory, and brain injury affects some more than others.

Long-term and short-term memory

Brain injury-related memory problems don't work the way you might see "amnesia" portrayed on TV. You don't forget everything from your past and remember what happens going forward. In fact, you're more likely to remember things from the past, including much of what you learned in school. This is known as long-term memory. However, after a brain injury, you may have trouble learning and remembering new information, recent events, or what's happening from day to day. This is known as short-term memory. Here are some short-term memory problems that are common in people with brain injury:

- Forgetting important details of a conversation, such as remembering to pass along a phone message
- Forgetting where you left things (i.e.: keys, phone, etc)
- Feeling unsure of what you did or said this morning, yesterday, or last week; this can lead you to say things or ask the same questions many times
- Losing track of time or feeling unsure of what day it is
- Being unable to retrace a route you took recently
- Forgetting all or part of what you read in a book or what you saw in a movie

Prospective memory

Brain injury may also affect prospective memory, or "remembering to remember." This means remembering plans and intentions long enough to act on them. Here are some prospective memory problems that are common in people with moderate to severe brain injury:

- Forgetting to keep appointments or showing up at the wrong times
- Telling someone you will call or visit at a certain time, then forgetting to do so
- Forgetting what you were supposed to do or intended to do at home, work, or school or in the community
- Forgetting important occasions, such as birthdays, holidays, and family events
- Forgetting to take medicines at the right time
- Forgetting to pick up children at a certain time

Although brain injury affects new memories more than old ones, people with brain injury may have trouble retrieving the correct information when needed. For example, you may recognize your aunt and know who she is, but have trouble remembering her name. Or you may be able to define all the words on a vocabulary test, but have trouble remembering the exact word when you're talking.

Memory of the injury

People with brain injury may not remember the injury itself. In this case, the brain has not stored the injury as a memory or series of memories.

People may remain confused and unable to store memories for some time after the injury. The loss of memory from the moment of brain injury onward is called post-traumatic amnesia. It can last from a few minutes to several weeks or months, depending on the severity of brain injury.

If you can't remember the events of your brain injury, you likely never will. That's because your brain did not store those memories. The best way to learn about the injury is to ask family members, friends, or medical personnel who may have objective information

What can you do to help your memory?

After a moderate to severe brain injury, you may have more trouble remembering things from day to day. Research has found very few ways to restore the brain's natural ability to learn and remember. One or two medicines may be worth trying (ask your doctor). But "brain training" programs and memory drills don't really help.

Using compensatory strategies is the best way to tackle memory problems and still get things done. This approach uses memory devices that we all use to make up for limited memory storage in the brain (e.g., a grocery list, address book, notepad, or alarm on a cell phone).

Some people think that these methods weaken memories. But that's not true. When you write down information or enter it into a phone or computer, you may actually strengthen the memory trace in your brain, and the information will always be available for you if you need it.

Here are some compensatory strategies to help work around memory difficulties:

- ☐ Get rid of distractions before starting on something that you want to remember.
- ☐ Ask people to talk slower or repeat what they said to make sure you understand it.
- ☐ Give yourself extra time to practice, repeat, or rehearse information you need to remember.
- ☐ Use organizers, notebooks, or a cell phone calendar or "apps" to keep track of important information, such as appointments, to-do lists, and telephone numbers.
- ☐ Keep all items that you need to take with you (e.g., wallet, keys, and phone) in a "memory station" at home—like a table by the door or a special section of the counter.
- ☐ Use a pill box to keep track of and take your medicines accurately.
- ☐ Use checklists to keep track of what you've done or different steps in an activity. For example, make a checklist of bills that you need to pay each month and the dates on which they are due.

Having memory problems after brain injury may make it harder for you to remember to use some of these strategies. At first, ask a family member or friend to remind you of these strategies. Over time, the strategies will become a habit, and you can use them on your own.

What kind of professionals can help with memory?

A Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) can help a brain injury survivor with memory in a variety of ways. Examples of what treatment might focus on include:

- finding ways to improve memory (e.g., using memory log)
- learning strategies to help problem solving, reasoning, and organizational skills
- working on social skills in small groups
- improving self-monitoring in the home and community

For more information about Speech Language Pathologists who work with brain injury in Colorado go to: <https://tinyurl.com/BIACSpeechTherapists> or enroll in BIAC's Case Management program to work with a Case Manager who can help navigate resources with you.

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Upcoming events and classes

Music Classes

Every Thursday

10:00-11:30am

Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado
1325 S Colorado Blvd, B-300
Denver, CO 80222

You will experience exciting and fun ways to work on functional goals in a relaxed and social environment through music. You will also engage in sustained, selective, alternating, and divided attention exercises through playing instruments and listening to live music.

Contact Linda Heesch at 303-562-0401 or Linda@BIAColorado.org



Art Classes

Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month, starting on February 14th

10:00-11:30am

Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado
1325 S Colorado Blvd, B-300
Denver, CO 80222

Art encourages the development and healing of physical coordination, personal expression and mental outlook, and provide survivors with a social space in which to interact.

Contact Linda Heesch at 303-562-0401 or Linda@BIAColorado.org

Challenge by Choice #1 Recreation Program

June 11 - June 17, 2017

Breckenridge Outdoor Ed. Center
655 South Park Avenue
Breckenridge, CO 80424, USA

River rafting, ropes course, hand cycling, wall climbing, theme dance. Program staffed by volunteers, RN, and Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC) experienced staff, instructors & interns. Cost: \$1890.

To register or inquire about scholarships contact Linda Heesch at 303-562-0401 or Linda@BIAColorado.org

Rock Climbing

Saturday, May 20

10:00am - 12:00pm

Tunnel 6 Clear Creek Canyon
(transportation to and from Denver provided)

Learn climbing safety and basic techniques with experienced instructors from the National Sports Center for the Disabled. All ages welcome. Cost: \$55, lunch included.

Contact Linda Heesch at 303-562-0401 or Linda@BIAColorado.org



Brain Injury Professional Networking (BIPN) Meetings

The Brain Injury Professional Networking (BIPN) groups seek to "improve the availability of services and supports for individuals with brain injury, promote the ongoing sustainability of community support systems, and share resources."

Each BIPN group is unique to its geographic region and strives to serve its community/region based upon identified needs.

Denver

Friday, April 7, 2017

Friday, May 5, 2017

Friday, June 2, 2017

11:45am - 1:00pm

Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado
1325 S Colorado Blvd, B-300
Denver, CO 80222

Contact Liz Gerdeman at 303-562-3298 or Liz@BIAColorado.org

Colorado Springs

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Tuesday, April 17, 2017

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

Tuesday, June 20

11:30am - 2:00pm

Health South Rehab Hospital
325 Parkside Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Contact Carol Roche, MA, CBIS:
 719-330-3624 or
 carol.supportforsuccess@gmail.com
 Carol Cochran, CBIS:
 carol@BIAColorado.org

BIPN Meetings Continued....

Johnstown

Monday, May 8, 2017

2:30 - 4:30pm

Northern Colorado Rehab Hospital

4401 Union St.

Johnstown, CO 80534

Contact Sarah Beetch: 970-491-3733
or Sarah.S.Beetch@colostate.edu

Aurora

Friday, May 5, 2017

3:30 - 5:00pm

Statewide Pediatrics

Children's Hospital

13123 E. 16th Ave.

Aurora, CO 80045

Contact Liz Gerdeman: 303-562-3298
or Liz@BIAColorado.org

Brews with the Board

May 4, 2017

6:00-8:00pm

Great Divide Barrel Bar

Contact Tina Ziwak at 303-355-9969
or Tina@BIAColorado.org

Opportunities for Professionals

Networking Groups

Connect with other professionals in the brain injury field by attending your local Brain Injury Professional Networking (BIPN) group. Learn about resources, services, and activities available to you and your clients. Enhance your knowledge and develop a support system of other professionals. BIPNs are located in Denver, Colorado Springs, Boulder, Grand Junction, and Fort Collins.

Find a networking group near you at:

BIAColorado.org/brain-injury-professionals-network

Professional Conference - Save the Date

BIAC's Annual Professional Conference will be held October 26 - 27, 2017. For over 30 years we've been hosting a conference featuring presentations from nationally-known brain injury experts. Join us again this fall for another high quality educational event. More details to be announced soon!

Resource Directory

Is your business listed in our Online Resource Directory? Professionals, family members, and survivors of brain injury utilize this directory to find resources and services across Colorado.

BIAColorado.org/resource-directory



Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado Board of Directors cordially invites you to join us for a fun brewery-esque evening of networking, brews, appetizers, back yard games and a silent auction. You don't want to miss this unique fundraising event.



MAY 4, 2017 6:00 - 8:00 P.M.

GREAT DIVIDE BREWING CO • 3403 BRIGHTON BLVD • DENVER, CO 80216

INDIVIDUAL TICKETS \$50 - AVAILABLE AT BIACOLORADO.ORG

Staff in the Spotlight



Gavin Attwood, *Chief Executive Officer*

How did you first get involved with BIAC?

Prior to this position I was the VP of Marketing and Events with the National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD). Steve Shapiro of Fleishman Shapiro was on both the NSCD and BIAC boards at that time and he recommended me to the BIAC board when the CEO position became open. I went through 3 rounds of interviews and was eventually hired in September 2008.

What does true leadership mean to you?

I think that there are three aspects to leadership. To listen, to inspire and to empower. I try to listen to everyone I work with to allow them the opportunity to express their views. Then I hope I can motivate people to do their jobs to the best of their ability. Finally I try to empower staff to achieve their goals which often means I get out of the way and do not micro-manage staff!

What has surprised you most about working with BIAC?

I came to BIAC from a disability organization so I thought I knew my way around the issues that people with a disability experience. I was surprised, however, by the unique challenges that people with a brain injury face. I did not realize just how much their personalities can change and how fairly simple tasks can become monumental for a survivor.

What would you tell someone that is thinking about donating to BIAC?

I would tell them the story of Michael who was injured in 1993 tubing on St Mary's Glacier. Michael has fought back from his injury. When he graduated from high school he achieved his goal of walking across the stage to accept his diploma. He was also chosen to be the commencement day speaker and received three standing ovations. He now volunteers at Craig Hospital.

BIAC has been able to help Michael in a number of ways, particularly with our recreation programs. He attends our camps each summer and loves the biking, ropes course and white water rafting.

Michael takes credit for his amazing recovery but there is no doubt that BIAC has been alongside him for most of his journey. To quote Michael: "Nothing can stop me now!!! Nothing can stop me in my recovery!! I love my life. I have the BEST life in the world!!"

What is your favorite thing to do outside of the office?

I like to work out and binge-watch shows on HBO and Netflix!

“There are three aspects to leadership. To listen, to inspire and to empower.”

BIAC's New Model of Case Management

Our staff are the knowledgeable, organized, positive, and professionally-connected supporters that not every survivor has as a resource in their life. BIAC staff are the collaborators and creative problem-solvers, helping to find resources survivors need to become their own self-advocates.

- Team approach
- Proactive mindset
- Classes and workshops tailored to brain injury
- **FOR YOUTH:** Specialized support and consultation for school-related issues
- Local presence
- Continuation of services
(Youth through adulthood)

*With funding from the
Colorado Brain Injury Program*



www.tbicolorado.org

thank you



UNYIELDING DETERMINATION.
EMPOWERING LIVES.

Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado
would like to thank
Craig Hospital for their support!

thank you



Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado
would like to thank
A Wildflower for their support!

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month



Learn more at USBIA.org

 @USBrainInjuryAlliance  @U_S_B_I_A



Brain Injury Alliance

COLORADO

1325 South Colorado Boulevard
Suite B-300
Denver, CO 80222

info@BIAColorado.org

BIAColorado.org



@BrainInjuryCO

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Small gifts can make a **BIG** impact!

YES! I want to support Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado
by donating \$ _____

- ☐ Charge my credit card
☐ One Time ☐ Monthly
☐ Please find my enclosed check

Name as it appears on card

Address

City State Zip

Signature

Credit Card Number

Expiration CCV

Mail completed form to Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado
1325 South Colorado Boulevard, Suite B-300, Denver, CO 80222

Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado is a 501(c)(3) organization.
All donations are 100% tax deductible. EIN # 84-0893049



Donate online at
BIAColorado.org