

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

The Beginning of "Pass the Bass"

Written by Dylan Flynn, *Adult Survivor*

For my fifteenth birthday I got a bass guitar. Five months later, on the last day of my freshman year of high school, I was in a car accident. I suffered a traumatic brain injury and fell into a coma. Doctors told my family they didn't think I would ever wake up. When I woke up twelve days later, I couldn't move the left half of my body. My mother was told that I wouldn't live, or I would spend my life in a nursing home. About ten weeks after the injury, I walked out of rehab and went home. Throughout high school, I struggled to find the right kind of support for my disability, so I dropped out during my junior year and earned my GED instead.

My bass guitar was sitting around, and I feel like a bass needs to be played so I got two bass musicians to play my guitar and I loved being on stage with them. A friend of mine suggested that I start a campaign so in 2015 I started selling merchandise at shows and music festivals under the name Pass the Bass.

Since then I've handed the bass to Blink 182's Mark Hoppus, Flogging Molly's Nathan Maxwell, Alkaline Trio's Dan Andriano, NOFX's Fat Mike, and other iconic bass musicians that play to their fans while supporting my cause at shows.

Pass the Bass is a way to spread awareness of brain injuries and to inspire people in the music community to learn more about the condition. The proceeds from the merchandise I sell are donated to the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA).

Since moving to Colorado in early 2019, I started donating some of the proceeds to the Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado (BIAC). I'm grateful for organizations such as BIAA and BIAC. BIAC gave me the help and support I needed to get my food assistance back. You can find me at some BIAC events where I will be selling Pass the Bass merchandise as well as at concerts. Check out my Facebook page, [**@passthebassdylan**](https://www.facebook.com/passthebassdylan), to learn more and follow my efforts.



Dylan with Dan Andriano, bassist for Alkaline Trio in Portland, OR.

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A Survivor's Story

(Continued from cover)

To this day, I still experience some paralysis on the left side of my body and struggle to remember details like people's names. I'll never be able to stop wondering what my life would be like if not for the brain injury. I've lived the majority of my life with a TBI. I have greatly exceeded the expectations of my doctors following the injury and I feel like the ideal individual to spread the word of what it's like to live with a TBI. While doctors understand what's going on neurologically much better than I ever will, regardless how many books they read, classes they take, patients they see, unless they suffer their own, no neurologist will ever know what it's like to live with a brain injury.

Upcoming Classes and Events

Classes and Workshops

Due to concerns surrounding COVID-19, all in-person classes and workshops are cancelled until further notice. Please check our website BIAColorado.org for updates and virtual class options.



Music Therapy

Every 2nd Thursday of the month
through December
10:15 – 11:15 am



The Mindful Brain

Every 1st Tuesday of the month
through December
10:00 – 11:15 am



Cooking Matters

A 6 week practical education course for individuals with brain injuries to purchase and prepare foods that meet their nutrition, budget, and personal needs.

Date/time: TBD



Concussion, TBI, and the Rehabilitation Process

Hosted by **Daniel Stoot**, Clinical Director for High Definition Physical Therapy (HDPT)

October 9th

3:00 - 4:00 pm

Recreation Programs & Social Activities

For questions, contact Michael Zavala at Michael@BIAColorado.org or 303-562-0401.

Visit the [Recreation Programs page](#) on our website for updates!

Brain Injury Professional Networking (BIPN)

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." For information, visit the [BIPN page](#) on our website or contact Ellen Kordonowy at Ellen@BIAColorado.org or 303-562-3298.



Grief & Loss Group

Every 2nd Wednesday of the month
through December
1:30 – 3:00 pm



Adaptive Yoga

Every Wednesday of the month
through September 30th
9:00 – 10:05 am



OCTOBER 15 | 10-11AM

Getting Hit, Getting Up, Moving Beyond:
The Mindset of Resilience
Joanne Cohen, MA, CTAT

OCTOBER 29 | 10-11AM

The Corona-Coaster: Ups and Downs
Billie Ratliff, LCSW

NOVEMBER 6 | 10:15-11:15AM

Benefits of Resource Navigation
Dr. Lance Trexler, MD

NOVEMBER 20 | 10 - 11AM

Tips and Tools to Improve Sleep Post Brain Injury
Kate Kerkmans, MA

DECEMBER 10 | 10-11AM

Benefits Counseling: Unlock the Power and
Possibility of Work
Anne Christensen, MA & Melanie Honsbruch, CPWIC

JANUARY 14 | 10-11AM

Customized Employment: An Effective Pathway
toward Community Integration through Employment
Brian Dean, MA

JANUARY 28 | 2-3PM

Have You Been Using a Hammer When You Really
Need a Screwdriver? (Panel discussion on brain injury
in the judicial system)
Russha Knauer, MA, Tobin Wright, MA and Joe Creel

Register at www.biacolrado.org. Free to brain injury survivors, all
others \$50. Cost includes all 7 webinars. Certificates of attendance
will be provided. CEU's pending, more information to follow.

BIACOLORADO.ORG



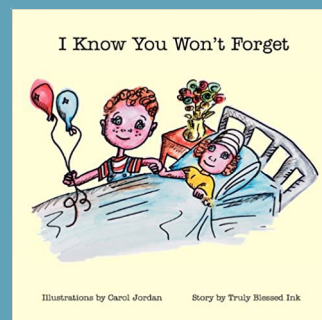
Resource Highlight

This book is great for parents with children ages 6-12 and depicts the story of a young boy whose mother suffers a traumatic brain injury.

The book was written by a group of TBI survivors participating in a structured day program though Living Resources in Albany, NY.

I Know You Won't Forget

by Truly Blessed Ink



For Professionals



Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Panel Discussion: How States are Addressing TBI and Mental Health

9:00-10:30 am (MST) on September 21, 2020

Hosted By: Mountain Plains MHTTC

To address concerns around traumatic brain injury (TBI) and mental health, the Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center has partnered with the National Association of State Health Injury Administrators (NASHIA) to host a series of workshops focused on the intersection of TBI and mental health. This panel will include state TBI leads from South Dakota, North Dakota, Colorado, and Utah. They will answer YOUR questions and engage in conversation around barriers they have experienced while addressing TBI and mental health, as well as promising practices and models that have worked well in their respective states.

For information on panelists, please click [here](#). Register [here](#).

Need more information? Contact Genevieve Berry at gberry@wiche.edu.

Staff in the Spotlight

Liam Donevan, CBIS

Systems Outreach Coordinator - Criminal Justice

What is your role at BIAC?

I am the Systems Outreach Coordinator - Criminal Justice which means that I am responsible for spreading the word about brain injury to those involved in Colorado's criminal justice system. Brain injury survivors make up about half of folks involved in the justice system, so I work to make sure that those survivors are identified and given the support they need to navigate a very complicated system. I will also be in charge of the new project created with funding from Caring For Denver Foundation.

What has been your favorite project at BIAC?

While it's hard to pick a favorite moment from many at BIAC, there is definitely one moment that gave me the biggest smile. For a staff wellness event, I worked with a local puppy rescue to bring six adoptable puppies to the park for staff to play with. The puppies got some valuable experience meeting and playing with strangers, and us staff got some much needed puppy therapy!



What are three traits that define you?

The three traits that define me are empathy, curiosity, and passion.

Brain Injury Research

CU Anschutz Medical Campus: Concussions and Brain Health in Older Adults

The study involves 2 research visits: a baseline and one-year follow-up visit. Each study visit requires a Health History Review, Neurological exam, set of tests that assess memory, attention, behavior and other thinking skills, blood Sample and Brain MRI.

You may qualify if you are:

- 65 years or older, in good general health
- Have had a concussion (less than 30 minutes loss of consciousness) within the past 5 years, but not within the past 6 months)
- Have had medical records documenting your concussion
- Have not been diagnosed with a memory disorder

Please contact Neurology Research Partners to see if you qualify at NeurologyResearchPartners@ucdenver.edu or call 303-724-4644.

DU Department of Education: Concussion Recovery for the Adolescent Student

You may qualify if you are:

- An athlete between the ages of 14 and 19 and have been diagnosed with a concussion
- Have continued to experience symptoms up to 6 months since the day of your injury

Eligible individuals will participate in a 30 to 60-minute interview to describe their school experience post-injury and may be included in a follow up focus group.

For more information email Cari Ledger at cari.timm@du.edu or call 303-775-3569



Caring for Denver Foundation Awards Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado \$418,000 Grant to Support Alternative Responses to Criminal Justice Involvement

Denver, CO – Caring for Denver Foundation under leadership from Executive Director Lorez Meinhold and Board Chair State Rep. Leslie Herod recently approved nearly \$9.2M for 23 grants to community-based non-profit organizations and departments within the City and County of Denver offices.

Grants will support programs that help appropriately move Denver from a criminal justice response to a public health, trauma, mental health and substance misuse crisis response.

Through these efforts, Caring for Denver, in collaboration with community partners and agencies, will reduce incarceration, recidivism, and ensure those released from the criminal justice system have the resources they need. Racial and ethnic disparities are a defining characteristic of our criminal justice system and the funded proposals seek to address these issues by supporting community-authored and led solutions.

We are excited to announce that The Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado (BIAC) has been awarded a \$418,000 grant over three years from Caring for Denver Foundation. BIAC will use this funding to expand our current programming for justice-involved brain injury survivors, which is being delivered in Denver County Jail's Recovery in a Secure Environment (RISE) program. BIAC will identify brain injury survivors in Denver County Jail, provide accommodations including behavioral health services, implement a psychoeducation curriculum, and support re-entry. In addition, funding will allow BIAC to add two full-time staff positions that will be co-located at Denver County Jail.

About Caring for Denver Foundation

Caring for Denver Foundation was founded and funded with overwhelming voter support to address Denver's mental health and substance misuse needs by growing community-informed solutions, dismantling stigma, and turning the community's desire to help into action.

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR CLIENTS' CASES AND LIVES

Practice areas:

Personal Injury • Catastrophic Injuries • Wrongful Death • Dangerous Products
Auto Accidents • Professional Malpractice

Since 1985, the attorneys of Purvis Gray Thomson, LLP, have provided compassionate, knowledgeable legal advice and representation to people who have been seriously injured throughout the state of Colorado, including numerous people who have suffered brain injuries.

Call for a Free Consultation 303-442-3366

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at 303-562-3199 or
Gavin@BIAColorado.org

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For Your Support!**



BIAC

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