

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

Adam

Written by Adam Campbell, *Adult Survivor*

My first brain tumor was found at age 9. I got dizzy while playing a game with my brother and my sister; I fell over, hit my head on the floor, and was knocked out. After rousing me, my dad took me to the emergency room. They did a CAT scan to look for brain damage. The radiologist told my dad that no damage was found, but showed him something else that was alarming. The blood ventricles in my brain were about four times the size they should have been. A follow up MRI was completed and the tumor was found.

I had brain surgery and the tumor was successfully removed. I developed double vision and had eye surgery. In total, I've had two brain tumor surgeries to date, three eye surgeries, radiation therapy, morning paralysis from bleeding in the brain, psychological breakdowns, and blinding migraines. I wear prism glasses now to help with the double vision. It has been a journey for sure. I've relearned to walk after each brain surgery and each eye surgery.

"It has been easy to see the compassion in others and how it heals wounds and softens pain."

I have been watched over, loved, and protected. So many people have prayed for and served me and my family over the years. It has been easy to see the compassion in others, and how it heals wounds and softens pain.

I am so grateful for love, the love of others, and the love of God. For me, God's love has been easy to see from the beginning. I know we each have our own beliefs. God's love lies at the heart of mine. It is a real power, and I am still around because of it.



Upcoming Classes and Events

Classes and Workshops

Some classes will be in-person at BIAC's Denver office at 1325 S. Colorado Blvd., Ste B300, Denver, CO 80222 and some are virtual. Please check our website BIAColorado.org for more details.

Virtual classes and workshops will be held via Zoom. Click [here](#) to register. Please provide email during registration to receive the Zoom link. For questions, contact Michael Zavala at Michael@BIAColorado.org or 720-907-1455.



STEP Parenting Class

The STEP parenting class is 6-part series designed for adults living with a brain injury who parent children ages toddler through pre-teen.

Every other week from July 15 - September 23
6:00 - 7:30 pm
Virtual

Grief & Loss Group

Every 2nd Wednesday of the month through September
1:30 – 3:00 pm
In-person and Virtual

The Mindful Brain

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

Social Wellness

Every 3rd Wednesday of the month through September
2:00 - 3:00 pm
Virtual

Music Therapy

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

Art Therapy

Every 3rd Thursday of the month through September
2:00 - 3:00 pm
In-person and Virtual

Tai Chi & Breathwork

Every 3rd Tuesday of the month through September
2:00 - 3:00 pm
In-person and Virtual

Justice-involved Brain Injury Basics

July 28
2:00 - 3:30 pm
Virtual

Recreation Programs & Social Activities

For registration and questions, contact Michael at Michael@BIAColorado.org or 303-562-0401. Visit the [Recreation Programs](#) page for updates.

Challenge by Choice

River rafting, ropes course, hand cycling, wall climbing, theme dance. Program staffed by volunteers, registered nurse, and Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC) experienced staff/instructors & interns. Accommodation is at the Scott Griffith Lodge in Breckenridge.

#1 July 1 - 16 (FULL)

#2 August 1 - 6

#3 August 15 - 20

Cost: \$2,390

Rafting Excursion

Experience team building, rafting, camping, on shore cooking, fishing, swimming, and splashing. The journey begins and ends at a BOEC. Accommodations at the beginning and end of your trip will be at the Scott Griffith Lodge in Breckenridge.

August 30 - September 3

Cost: \$1,070

Creative Minds

Cooking, hiking, field trips, poetry, painting, journaling, movement, karaoke, laughter, dancing and socializing. Program staffed by volunteers, registered nurse, and BOEC experienced staff/instructors and interns. Accommodation is at the Scott Griffith Lodge in Breckenridge.

September 10 - 13

Cost: \$1,090

BIAC News Spotlight

The city of Denver is considering funding an apartment complex that would offer services to unhoused people who have brain injuries

The 72-unit complex would be built on East Colfax Avenue.

Denver is a step closer to funding an apartment complex that, according to those involved in the project, would be the first of its kind in the U.S.

On Wednesday, a Denver City Council committee approved \$2.4 million that would help pay for construction and services for the 72-unit apartment complex on East Colfax Avenue. The complex would offer housing and services for low-income

residents, including for people experiencing homelessness who have brain injuries. The full council will vote on the contract at a later date.

Valor on the Fax will be located at 7900 East Colfax Ave. on a city-owned parcel. Units would be reserved for people experiencing homelessness and people earning up to 30 percent of the area median income, which for Denver would be \$21,000 for a single person.

City deputy director of housing opportunity Debra Bustos said in an interview with Denverite before Wednesday's meeting that the complex was planned with community feedback.

"Any housing units that we can develop is healthy," Bustos said. "This type of housing in particular is very valuable because this is the population that has the greatest need when it comes to housing. There aren't a lot of options for people earning less than 30 percent of area median income."

Brothers Redevelopment, which specializes in affordable housing, will build the complex. The city's contribution, which would pay for construction and cover services at the complex like 24-hour front desk support and RTD passes for residents, is a fraction of the \$23.6 million the overall project would cost. A majority of the money paying for the project will come from the state housing authority and federal low income housing tax credits, according to a presentation given at the meeting.

Brothers Redevelopment President Jeff Martinez called the project unique, since the complex will partner with Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado to provide services for people living with brain injuries. Gavin Attwood, CEO at Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado, said studies have suggested that more than 60 percent of people experiencing homelessness have had a brain injury at some point. Attwood said this project is likely the first of its kind in the country.

Megan Yonke, housing development officer with the city's Department of Housing Stability, said construction on the site would likely start in April.



BIAC News Spotlight continued

Valor on the Fax will include 47 one-bedroom, 19 two-bedroom and 6 three-bedroom apartments. Residents would receive housing vouchers to help pay their rent.

The location where the complex will be built is currently vacant. The empty parcel will be sold to Brothers Redevelopment for \$10, with the understanding that it will be turned into affordable housing.

Source: Hernandez, EL. (2021, February 24). The city is considering funding an apartment complex that would offer services to unhoused people who have brain injuries. *Denverite*. Retrieved from <https://denverite.com/2021/02/24/the-city-is-considering-funding-an-apartment-complex-that-would-offer-services-to-unhoused-people-who-have-brain-injuries/>

Program Spotlight Clinical Services

BIAC is excited to announce the brand new addition of the Clinical Services Program. In working with survivors, BIAC has heard how difficult it can be to find behavioral and mental health counseling from professionals who understand brain injury.

In the Clinical Services Program our therapists appreciate that there is a strong relationship between brain injury and mental health. BIAC therapists are trained and work in a variety of treatment modalities to help meet our clients particular needs and goals that are unique to brain injury survivors.

Our counseling services are also available to caregivers and family members of survivors.

Options for Counseling Services

- ❖ In person
- ❖ Telehealth
- ❖ Video options

Insurance Accepted

- ❖ Medicaid

For more information, please call **303-900-5232** or email Counseling@BIAColorado.org.

Staff in the Spotlight

Peggy Hugger, CBIS

Program Manager - Self-management

What is your role at BIAC?

I am the Program Manager - Self-management. Our team meets one on one with clients for six months to help them work on skills that can be challenging after a brain injury. I am proud of our team and the work we do. Many clients re-apply to the program because it has been such a positive experience for them.

What is your favorite part of working at BIAC?

The best thing about BIAC is working with an amazing group of coworkers who are dedicated to helping our clients live better lives. I think one of my favorite experiences at BIAC is watching clients come out of a group that meets at our office whether it's Art therapy, Mindfulness, or Music Therapy. Everyone is energized and I hear comments like "Wow, that was great!" or "Look what I made!". It's so nice to know that we make a difference.

What are three words that describe you?

Outgoing. Funny. Genuine



Brain Injury Research

University of Colorado Boulder: Gender Disparities and Concussions/mTBI

Researchers at the University of Colorado Boulder are studying gender disparities in concussion and mild TBI and are investigating the social impacts of concussions and brain injury. Participation requires about 1-2 hours, and access to a phone, email, or video conferencing. Qualified participants may receive a \$25 Amazon gift card upon completion for their time.

You may qualify if you are 18 years or older and have had a concussion or mild TBI as an adult.

Please contact Marley Olson to see if you qualify at Marley.Olson@Colorado.edu or call 206-375-4761.

Kessler Foundation: TBI Spousal or Partner Caregiver Study

Researchers at Kessler Foundation are conducting a telehealth study comparing the effectiveness of two different types of group wellness interventions for partner caregivers of individuals with TBI. The study will take 20 weeks to complete. All participation will take place through a secure online website and live video conferencing - no in-person visits are required. Compensation is \$300 for completion of the study.

You may qualify if you are:

- 18 years or older
- You are in an intimate relationship with a person with TBI for at least one year prior to their injury.
- Your partner was discharged from inpatient rehabilitation at least 3 months ago.
- You provide care to your partner on a daily basis.
- You have access to the internet in a private location.

Please contact Samantha Schmidt at SSchmidt@Kesslerfoundation.org or call 973-323-3686.

November Brain Injury Symposium Speaker Spotlight

Courtney Sand, MS, LBA, BCBA, CBIST

Neuro Resource Facilitator, Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa

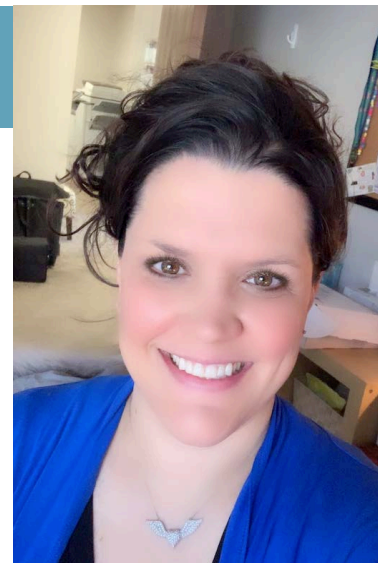
As a Neuro Resource Facilitator with the Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa, Courtney's primary role is to help Iowans find, connect to, and keep the necessary supports, services, and information that they want and need after their lives have been impacted by brain injury. As a licensed and Board Certified Behavior Analyst, Courtney is able to utilize her knowledge and experience in the management of challenging behavior to help her clients navigate the neurobehavioral issues that are common after brain injury. Within her role as a Neuro Resource Facilitator, Courtney enjoys teaching, be it webinars, co-facilitating the Academy of Certified Brain Injury Specialists course, and leading a Brain Injury Coping Skills group.

What is your favorite part about being a Neuro Resource Facilitator?

My favorite part about working as a Neuro Resource Facilitator centers around moments when someone feels less alone in the world. Another favorite part is during the intake conversation when Neuro Resource Facilitation is described to someone who has never heard about it before, and is in desperate need of what this service can provide. In this moment, I can hear, often through tears, painfully heavy shoulders drop in relief as the individual realizes that they are no longer alone in their journey.

What is your presentation about at the Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado's 2021 *Facing the Future – Together* Symposium?

I will be speaking about ambiguous loss. Ambiguous loss is a unique kind of grief that is specific to brain injury, often referred to as "having but not having," where a loved one is physically present, yet, not. Things have changed, and in a world-shattering way. The survivor of brain injury is still here, but they are cognitive and emotionally changed. Ambiguous loss is considered to be one of the most stressful kinds of grief that exists in the human experience.





Promoting choice, dignity, and independence for adults with brain injuries.

Hilltop's Brain Injury Services provide a safe and nurturing environment where adults with brain injuries receive personalized care that allows them to achieve maximum self-sufficiency. Located in Grand Junction, Colorado, we combine person centered care and community activities in a park like setting. We offer residential services, adult day services, and independent life skills training. Contact us today to learn more about the services that best suit your needs.

For more information call (970) 245-3952
or visit HilltopBrainInjuryServices.org

HILLTOP 
Brain Injury Services



Interested in Advertising in Head**STRONG**?

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