



Annual Report Fiscal 2010

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Brain Injury Society of Toronto, it is my pleasure to report on the past fiscal year. Regretfully, last year has been characterized as a year of transition, turnover and some instability. We began the year by losing our Chair which was followed by the resignation of Michele Meehan, our Director of Community Services. As a result, the Board needed to spend time reorganizing and attend to the responsibilities previously performed by the departing individuals.

Despite the unforeseen turmoil, activities of the BIST Board did not stop. We were able to launch a new program for caregivers to be delivered by social workers and re-launch a mild-ABI survivor group (to be run out of Sunnybrook). In addition, the Board (further to consultation with membership) has initiated some work to set priorities for the not so distant future. This work is intended to bring additional benefit to the membership in the medium term as the Board and Committees focus on priority areas.

Special attention will have to be given to fundraising in the upcoming year. This will be of particular importance as our future goals entail significant spending.

For last year's activity I would like to thank my fellow Board members and committee members who continue to be very committed to BIST and its membership. Lastly, none of this would have been possible without the support of our dedicated membership – Thank you all.

Nick Gurevich, Chair



TREASURERS REPORT

Fundraising Activities

BIST's 2009-2010 fundraising and fees from programs totaled \$35,194.36, representing a slight decrease from our 2008 receipts (\$37,305), our last full year of reporting. Total funds raised through targeted activities fell due to a drop in number of events held when compared to previous years, total dollar of contributions and membership enrolment. In the past BIST had undertaken a fall fund raising drive.

For the reporting period of April 1, 2009 through to March 31, 2010 our major fund raising event was the Spring Mix and Mingle, supplemented with requests for donations. In 2009 our partnership with OBIA hosting the Spring Mix and mingle contributed \$17,321.56 as reported at the 2009 AGM. Most recently our 2010 Spring Mix and Mingle contributed \$23,406.58 towards BIST's fundraising effort, a significant increase reflecting higher ticket sales, greater sponsorship and increased fundraising through the silent auction. Details of the event's fundraising history and expenses through to 2010 are outlined below.

In addition to the Spring Mix and Mingle, BIST partners with OBIA on membership (through our dual membership approach), Peer Support programs, OBIA's Brain Basics training program, activities promoting the Provincial Conference and OBIA's On-line directory. For the period ending March 31, 2010 BIST received an additional \$11,440.25 from OBIA, representing our contribution in support of these joint programs.

Disbursement Activities

Over this past year BIST has worked to expand its programs and services with the support of Kat Powell, Michele Meehan and the Programs and Services Committee. BIST's total operating expenses (\$47,744) reflect a combined reimbursement to the Administrator and Program Facilitator (\$27,931.47) in addition to reflecting expenses associated with Brain Injury Awareness Month, work on updating the BIST website - which we hope to introduce over the coming month - and general administrative expenses supporting BIST (for example insurance, telephone expenses, room rentals for our monthly community event, etc.).

While we have continued to closely track and control expenses, BIST completed F2010 with a deficit (\$12,550) reflecting a second year where expenses exceed revenues. This outcome is partly a reflection of timing of the fiscal year end (March 31) and when proceeds from the Spring Mix and Mingle are received (the following September), and partly a reflection on the need by BIST to proactively identify additional sources of revenue/fundraising.

Balance Sheet

As at March 31, 2010 BIST's account reflects a positive cash balance in the amount of \$24,549.18 with cheques outstanding issued for \$2,409.31.

BIST continues to adopt a conservative approach to its finances with a priority goal to revitalize its fundraising approaches to ensure sustainable cash balances on hand at the beginning of each year in an amount sufficient to cover all planned disbursement during the upcoming period. To achieve this goal, BIST must continue to identify opportunities to engage the broader Toronto community in supporting program development and delivery to our members.

Several new fundraisers were initiated following our March 31, 2010 year end and will be incorporated into the annual reporting for F2010/2011.

OBIA –BIST EVENT		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Income		Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
	Ticket Sales	\$3,240.00	\$2,800.00	\$4,216.00	\$5,575.00	\$8,855.00	\$12,460.00
	Donations	\$5,210.00	\$3,920.00	\$5,234.00	\$4,613.00		
	Sponsorship	\$9,500.00	\$15,500.00	\$18,500.00	\$18,000.00	\$27,900.00	\$32,300.00
	Auction Items	\$3,151.00	\$3,712.00	\$3,700.00	\$3,345.00	\$2,690.00	\$6,616.00
	Total Income	\$21,101.00	\$25,932.00	\$31,650.00	\$31,533.00	\$39,445.00	\$51,376.00
Expenditures							
	Venue & Food	\$4,050.69	\$4,677.91	\$4,934.08	\$5,222.38	\$6,440.46	\$9,286.76
	Entertainment	\$337.50	\$495.00	\$495.00	\$525.00	\$500.00	\$1,419.76
	Office Supplies	\$750.80	\$778.11	\$526.24	\$638.85	\$1,075.80	\$1,127.37
	Total	\$5,138.99	\$5,951.02	\$5,955.32	\$6,386.23	\$8,016.26	\$11,833.89
Net Income		\$15,962.01	\$19,980.98	\$25,694.68	\$25,146.77	\$31,428.74	\$39,542.11
BIST Share		\$7,981.01	\$9,990.49	\$12,847.34	\$12,573.39		
0.5	00 to 25,000					\$12,500.00	\$12,500.00
0.75	>25,000					\$4,821.56	\$10,906.58
						\$17,321.56	\$23,406.58
OBIA Share		\$7,981.00	\$9,990.49	\$12,847.34	\$12,573.38		
0.5	00 to 25,000					\$12,500.00	\$12,500.00
0.25	>25000					\$1,607.19	\$3,635.53
						\$14,107.19	\$16,135.53

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

BIST's membership grew in the past 12 months, seeing an increase in survivor members, family of survivor members and professional members. BIST continues to sign up new members at every Community Meeting.

While we are excited by every single new member, we know that there are still thousands of people impacted by acquired brain injury in the City of Toronto who have never even heard of BIST. We continue to work with other committees in hopes of increasing our membership base. In addition, we have been working with rehab agencies and hospitals to increase awareness about BIST and hopefully to increase membership.

We are planning on pushing for membership at our awareness events in the coming year. Also, we are determined to update the current membership database to ensure that we have updated contact information for all current members. This will make sure that all of our current members are receiving BIST information and updates. We also anticipate that our new website will serve as an important recruiting tool.

As much as the membership committee is devoted to increasing the membership, we rely on our current members to spread the BIST message as well.

As a reminder, the dual BIST/OBIA membership allows individuals to join both organizations for \$30/year. Family memberships (two or more people in a household) are available for \$50/year. For ABI survivors, the membership fee can be subsidized to just \$5/year.

2010 Membership Committee Members: Megan Patterson (Chair), Greg Noack, Jonathan Burton



AWARENESS COMMITTEE

The Awareness Committee committed to expanding its focus this year and had a daunting task: How do we provide another successful June Awareness Event AND increase our survivor involvement in the event AND increase our awareness initiatives throughout the year?

Well, we did it by engaging our membership! Our ‘Featured Artist’ component, asked for survivors to submit their artwork so that we could incorporate one of their creative pieces into the event poster and highlight their work at the event.

In addition, our ‘Featured Speakers’ component asked for survivors to submit their stories to share at the event. The Awareness Committee read through survivor submissions and was touched by all the powerful stories. Two applicants were chosen to at the VIP Survivor Tent during the June 17th event and inspired the audience in attendance.

As an extension of the ‘Featured Speakers’ series, another new and exciting opportunity came upon the Awareness Committee to increase community education about ABI. Two Toronto public schools agreed to hear one of our ‘Featured Artists’ stories promoting her awareness message. We also invited musicians from one of those schools to perform for us at our June event. Both schools were also invited to attend our event

So, once again, we held our Annual Brain Injury Event at Nathan Philips Square in June...this was our TENTH, and by all accounts, most successful one to date.

The Awareness Committee worked closely together with the various other BIST committees to organize this successful event. The vision of the event is to primarily provide public awareness but we also manage to incorporate a “survivor celebration” as a secondary focus.



Targeting the lunchtime crowd again this year at Nathan Philips Square, the theme was “Cerebral Circus”. Circus-type entertainers engaged the crowd and drew them in while providing education/awareness messages about brain injury. The square was alive with stilt walkers and circus clowns, an aerial artist ‘The Girl in the Sky’ dazzled the crowd and the main stage hosted two bands ‘So Called Reality’ and ‘Silverfish’ from the Karen Kain School of the Arts Musical Mentors Program.



There were also booth displays. On one side, service providers provided information/awareness (and gave away freebies). And on the other side, a Survivor Awareness booth showcased the creative talents of survivors showcasing our Featured Artist winner.

The Survivor VIP tent again was a great success and with the added Feature Speakers component it went above everyone’s expectations for success. The survivor speakers shared their stories and provided a personal account of the obstacles, challenges and successes that can be encountered along the way when living with a brain injury.

The Membership Committee also had a display booth, reaching out to new members. Our volunteers were out in full force, greeting people and spreading the awareness message. The Survivor VIP tent was again a success in providing a place for survivors to connect.

Finally, building on last year’s success, the Awareness Committee collaborated with the BIST Fund Development Committee to host the Mix and Mingle fundraiser the same evening. The success of this committee is due to the dedication of its members, the passion for the cause, the collaboration and support from the BIST Board, and the fact that we love to have fun!!

2010 Awareness Committee Members: Julie Osbelt (Chair), Leslie Bolt, Colleen Boyce, Chris Brown, Tonya Fleming, Darcy Merkur, Vivian Ng (on hiatus), Gary Otsu, Joe Pileggi, Annabel Pitts, Marnie Russell, Ed Shaul

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Community Meetings

Our monthly community meetings have continued to be a great success in 2010. These meetings were created to provide members with a consistent opportunity to meet with other members, participate in leadership opportunities and to take part in information sessions provided by a variety of guest speakers. This past year we have heard from experts on topics such as nutrition, anger management, disability tax credits, vocational exploration, technology & rehab and most recently we enjoyed a very interactive presentation on Laughter Yoga. We have also had the distinct honour of hearing some moving and compelling survivor stories at our community meetings.

For several years the Anne Johnston Health Station has generously donated space for our monthly community meetings. However, this year we recognized that we needed to find a consistent space large enough to accommodate our growing numbers. As luck would have it, we managed to find what we were looking for just down the street. And so, this past spring we relocated our Community Meetings to the Northern District Library (Yonge & Eglinton), second floor, Room 200, 40 Orchard View Blvd, Toronto.

Social Events

Social events are a great opportunity to meet fellow BIST members and to explore new interests. This year BIST has been able to continue and expand the opportunities being offered.

The social events that took place this year included a Halloween Dance (in partnership with CHIRS), bowling, our Annual Holiday Party, and our Annual Summer Picnic was a great success (thanks in part to the weather and the absence of a garbage strike!) We are already planning another Halloween Dance in collaboration with CHIRS (Oct. '10), another round of bowling, our Annual Holiday Party and of course, our Annual Summer Picnic!

Programs

The programs that took place this year included a Brain Basics Training program (in partnership with OBIA), and the Meet and Learn program that was offered in collaboration with the TBI team at Sunnybrook Health Sciences. We also established massage services for BIST members through Medix School for Massage.

Several upcoming programs, including Brain Basics Training programs in October, November and January (in partnership with OBIA) and the Meet and Learn program starting in October '10 (in collaboration with Sunnybrook) are already in development.

Program Development

As you may be aware, earlier this year we conducted some very important surveys of our members and stakeholders. In response to these surveys we have begun the process of developing some interesting new programs. One of the new programs we are developing is a Family/Caregiver Support group. This group will be facilitated by a Social Worker and will meet on a monthly basis to discuss the various topics and issues relevant to family members and caregivers of individuals living with the effects of brain injury.

Information and Referral

BIST continues to receive emails and phone calls on a daily basis with requests for information about ABI and the services available to support people living with the effects of an ABI. Many referrals are made to the Toronto ABI Network, OBIA or local brain injury associations in other communities. BIST also directs callers to on-line resources.



2010 Program and Services Committee: Denise McRiner (Co-Chair), Paul McCormack (Co-Chair), Kat Powell, Brenda Scott, Alison Jardine, Gail Prentice, Beth Perfect

The Program and Services Committee is also supported by a number of subcommittees with the following volunteers: Sarah Briggs, Michael Clouthier, Tim Collin, Mary Jo Jorgensen Bachen, Kevin Maynard, Cynthia Cabrera, Beth Perfect, Brenda Scott, Ken Lanni, Gary Otsu, Sandy Grant, Gail Prentice, Robert Ashe, Gitta Poor, Jason Radhakonty, Lynda Baptiste Friedman, Gabby Leggieri, Anat Barak, Eden Dales, Noha George, Alison Jardine, Leslie Bolt, Alice Black, Frank Bruno, Mary Hubbard, Daniel Lazo, Norm Lamarre, Jane Martindale, Tim Nourse, Tammy Ng, Victoria Ojubuyi

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee continues to create and refine communications materials.

The BIST Beacon remains the largest and regular communication tool created by the committee with the assistance of BIST staff. Our readers and members often provide us with submissions of both articles and photographs, and we look forward to publishing more incredible member stories in the coming year!

The committee has also completed a PowerPoint presentation which is available to those working as BIST ambassadors speaking at public events. The PowerPoint presentation ensures the messages we share with the general community are consistent and accurate.

In the coming year, the Communications Committee will have a major role in maintaining the new BIST website. This committee will be responsible for updating the content of the website, as well as incorporating feedback from members in keeping the website informative and fresh.

2010 Communications Committee Members: Ian Bowles (Chair), Brad Moscato, Sybil Edmonds, Colleen Boyce, Marni Blouin, Jack Shapiro, Jeffrey Shinehoft, Jonathan Burton



FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

This past year discussions were initiated with larger organizations to explore opportunities to partner on major fundraising activities. While there is interest by other organizations in supporting BIST, one of the key ingredients to get this work off the ground had yet to be completed – feedback from our members! With the results of the BIST survey now available coupled with the details of the programs and services currently available across the province, the Fundraising Committee is in a position to start planning major fundraising activities. These events will build on the momentum of the Spring Mix and Mingle, help to close the shortfall in our operating budget and position BIST to support the many programs and services identified by our members.

Our new website will have an updated Donations area that will help make regular giving to BIST very simple. Stay tuned for more information on how you can get involved and help BIST build a strong financial future.

Fundraising Committee: Janet Wortsman, Nick Gurevich, Greg Neinstein, Todd Gotlieb

* If you are interested in joining the Fundraising Committee please advise one of our members of the Volunteer Committee or email info@bist.ca providing your name and contact information (email or telephone) to let us know you would like to get involved.

The 2010 Mix and Mingle was an incredible event, thanks to the hard work of the subcommittee.

2010 Mix and Mingle Subcommittee: Suzanne Amodeo, Lynda Baptistein Friedman, Howard Blitstein, Deena Ginsberg, Todd Gotlieb, Darcy Merkur, Greg Neinstein, Corey Sax, Adam Wagman, Terry Wilcox



VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE

The mandate of the Volunteer Committee is to recruit and interview volunteers and help them find the right opportunities to best use their skills and meet their interest.

This year the committee placed volunteers with the Communications Committee and the Fundraising Committee. In addition, it has interviewed a number of other volunteers who are interested in becoming involved with BIST. The committee will be helping these individuals find the right fit in the coming months.

The Volunteer Committee has also begun to develop an orientation package to help volunteers familiarize themselves with the organization and its various activities. In addition, the committee is working towards improving some of the processes involved in becoming a volunteer with BIST. For example, scheduling regular volunteer information sessions and building in an introductory process. This will give volunteers an opportunity to get to know the committee and understand the work to see whether it is the right fit for everyone involved. The volunteer committee has also met with the Program and Services committee to better understand the types of volunteers and skill sets that are needed.

Volunteer Committee: Judy Moir and Beverley Melamed (Co-chairs), Colleen Boyce, Cynthia Sprigings, Dr. Peter Rumney, Helen Barsby, Troy Lehman, Jeff Bryce, Kat Powell



Goodbye and Thank You Michele!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jane Conte, Chair*

Nick Gurevich, Acting Chair

Jonathan Burton, Vice Chair

Janet Wortsman, Treasurer

Dr. Gary Gerber, Secretary

Marnie Russell

Todd Gotlieb

Greg Noack

Denise McRiner

Judy Moir

*Jane stepped down as chair midway through the fiscal year

