



Brain Injury Association of Hawaii

January 2021 Vol 1

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII BOARD MEMBERS WELCOME 2021

This is the first issue of the 2021 Brain Injury Association of Hawaii quarterly newsletter. We hope to bring news about what is happening in the community to include events, programs, and resources available to the brain injured. We begin 2021 hoping that the vaccine for COVID 19 will be distributed as soon as possible so we can all gather again without being restricted by physical distancing. The new 2021 Board has been selected. This newsletter includes a bit of

information about each of them. This past year we lost Ian Mattoch a long-time advocate for those suffering brain injuries and have included a short obituary about him. Future issues will contain information about upcoming projects, events and resources. Our Membership Application form is included for those of you who have not already joined as members. In addition, we welcome any donations you are able to make to help fund our programs.

MEET THE BOARD

Dorothy Aliilua, Shelley Hee, Kawena Gwen Kekaula, Karen Lopez, Tirsia Smith, Billie "BJ" Wade, and Dr. Kent Yamamoto are the 2021 BIAH Board Members. The Board consists of a minimum of four individuals who have suffered a brain injury, has a family

member who has suffered a brain injury or who is a care-taker for someone who has a brain injury. All seven of the Board are committed to work toward the betterment of the BIAH community.



Dorothy Aliilua
BIAH President

Dorothy became a family member and caregiver to her son when he suffered a brain injury in 2013. Since that day, Dorothy has been a fierce advocate for her son throughout his recovery. She is current President of and has been a member of the Brain Injury Association of Hawaii and volunteered many hours at the Brain Injury Resource Center while her son attended the pilot programs. Dorothy is looking forward to serving on the Board further to continue her work on identifying and creating resources and programs that will benefit her son and other persons with brain injury and their families in Hawai'i.



**Kent Yamamoto, MD
BIAH Vice President**

Dr. Yamamoto is the Medical Director of the Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program, and a Board Certified Physiatrist at the Rehabilitation Hospital of the Pacific. Dr. Yamamoto graduated from Creighton Medical School in 2002, completed physiatry training at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio in 2006 and has been at REHAB since 2007. He was born and raised in Hawaii, graduating from Lutheran High School. He loves the art of treating brain injuries and looks forward to increasing awareness and excelling the treatment of brain injury in Hawai'i and has been on BIA Hawaii board for the last 2 years.



**Kawena Gwen Kekaula
BIAH Secretary**

Gwen Kekaula-Ching retired from The Honolulu Advertiser after 23 years, working as a clerk in the promotions, circulation, HR depts. and newsroom. She was promoted to page designer before suffering multiple concussions from three car accidents occurring within 13 months of each other. Although the physical damage had healed, the invisible brain injury altered the course of her career, finances, family and personal life. Brain injury support groups such as Ho'oikaika Peer Mentoring; the Neurotrauma Registry and United Self-Help have been instrumental in helping her better understand and work through her condition. She has been secretary of the Brain Injury Association of Hawaii for the past 2 years and support group member 8 years. She interned for the Center on Disabilities Studies at UH and worked as a paraprofessional for children with special needs. Her passion is helping others and strives to become a voice for the voiceless. She is blessed to be the mother of three wonderful children and a grandmother to two adorable girls.



**Karen Lopez
BIAH Treasurer**

Ms. Lopez has been with BIAH since 2000. My daughter Janessa acquired a TBI in 1999. I've served as a board member in the past and I am currently the Treasurer. She lives on the beautiful Windward side of the island of O'ahu where she caregiver to her daughter.



Shelley Hee, RN, CCM, CNLCP

President of Case Management Options Inc, Ms. Hee is a member of the American Association of Nurse Life Care Planners and has been active with the Case Management Society of America, Hawaii Chapter. She has over 36 years of clinical nursing experience and practices in the acute care, home/health care settings, disability catastrophic case management and life care planning. She enjoys sharing her nursing/case management knowledge and skills to further the mission of improved community health in her home state of Hawai'i and has been on BIA Hawaii board for the last 2 years.



Tirsa Smith

Tirsa is a Tax Manager who ensures compliance with tax laws and reporting requirements, including estate, income, and GET for all clients of Estate Administrative Services. She has been with the company for six years, having come from the Wealth Management Trust division of First Hawaiian Bank and previously KPMG. In total Tirsa brings 20 years of experience in trust, estate, & individual income tax. With a bachelor's in accounting, and a not-for-profit MBA from Chaminade university, she enjoys non-profit work. She served as an elected board member of Voyager Charter school and foundation for several years, has served on the audit committee for Elks 616, and as Treasurer for Kumulokahi Canoe Club.



Billie "BJ" Wade

BJ is a retired paralegal. She has been actively involved with the service organization Pilot International whose mission focuses on brain safety and health. She continues to fill offices with the Pilot Club on both the local and national level. BJ was instrumental in the local Pilot Club partnering with BIAH during the years it held offices in the Aloha Building. BJ's goal as a BIAH board member is to assist with promoting awareness of traumatic brain injuries within the Hawaii community by encouraging more organizations and citizens to support and become members of BIAH. Increased support and membership results in more programs being available for BIAH group members, their families and caretakers.

ABOUT BIAH

The Brain Injury Association of Hawaii is an affiliate of the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA). The vision of BIAA is that "everyone in the U.S who sustains a brain injury is diagnosed, treated, and accepted." Its mission is "to advance awareness, research, treatment, and education and to improve the quality of life for all people affected by a brain injury." The Brain Injury Association of Hawaii (BIAH) shares this vision and mission. BIAH is currently compiling a list of resources for anyone within the State of Hawaii who is affected by a brain injury. The resource list will include local, state and federal agencies who can provide information and assistance. Go to the BIAA website for detailed general information concerning brain injury basics, diagnosis, treatment and what to expect in terms of symptoms & recovery, <https://www.biausa.org/brain-injury>

BIAH MOURNS THE LOSS OF IAN MATTOCH



Ian Mattoch is well known for his philanthropy and love for the State of Hawaii. He passed away peacefully at his home on November 6, 2020. For more than 45 years, Ian represented individuals and their families who have been catastrophically injured or who have died as a result of such an injury. Many of the BIAH family have been helped through his representation. Ian was a past president of the BIAH Board and was instrumental in partnering with other organizations in developing programs and

events for the BIAH community. His philanthropy extended to donating free bicycle helmets to promote brain safety for children, hosting a free screening of the documentary State of Grace regarding a physician recounting her struggles after suffering a head-on automobile collision, donating thousands of dollars to organizations promoting brain safety and health, and a myriad of other philanthropic acts. His continued support of BIAH will be sorely missed.



Karen Klemme

KONA BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

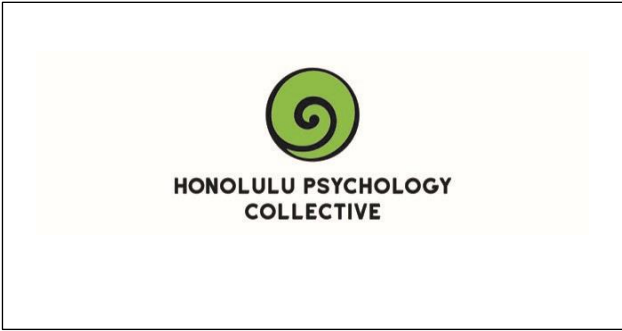
The Kona Brain Injury Support Group in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii is the longest running support group in the State of Hawaii. The group holds monthly meetings for survivors of brain injury and their caregivers. They gather to share experiences, listen to guest speakers and learn how to navigate through the numerous resources available to them. The group is now holding their meetings via ZOOM and have graciously invited BIAH members to participate. Contact Karen L. Klemme by email at kklemme@hawaii.rr.com for information regarding the next available ZOOM support group session.



Eryn Martin suffered a subarachnoid hemorrhage in 2020. Her friend, Mariah Morgan suffered a traumatic brain injury in 2018. Eryn exclaims that "we were lucky to have one another to lean on during our hard times." She further states that "though our injuries were very different, we found support in one another and hope to find ways to support others recovering from brain injuries." Eryn's reason for doing the podcasts is to let those who have brain injuries to know that 'YOU ARE NOT ALONE ON YOUR JOURNEY.'" The podcasts made by brain injury survivors Eryn and Mariah are meant for brain injury survivors. It focuses on sharing the stories of other survivors as

well as interviewing practitioners in the hope that sharing recovery resources, advice, and wisdom will help support others on their journey to recovery. Board Member Shelley Hee reviewed [Making Headway Podcast](#) and found them excellent. She highly recommends the podcasts and urges you to share them with others in the BIAH family. Making Headway is available on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Stitcher](#), [Amazon Music](#), and [Google Podcasts](#). Ms. Martin asks that her podcast be shared with any members or support groups that might find it helpful in any way.

ORGANIZATION AFFILIATES OF BIAH





Are you receiving medical care virtually as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

If so, this study may be for you.

Purpose:

We are conducting a survey to assess participant's satisfaction and experience with telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Benefits

Your responses may help us learn more about patient perception and satisfaction with telehealth as well as find ways to reduce any limitations.

Eligibility:

- Have had a (traumatic) brain injury in the last 10 years
- 18 years or older.
- Experience with telehealth during COVID

Takes ~ 7 minutes to complete

Below is the link and QR code to access the survey

<http://bit.ly/3by072r>



Contact Info: Celina Marte | celina.martecaceres@trincoll.edu



Brain Injury Association of Hawaii

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Phone: 808-372-3391

Email: BIAHawaii2020@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Brain injury is not an event or an outcome. It is the start of a misdiagnosed misunderstood, underfunded neurological disease. People who sustain brain injuries must have timely access to expert trauma care, specialized rehabilitation, lifelong disease management, and individualized services and support in order to live healthy, independent, and satisfying lives. You can help us continue to provide support to those in Hawaii with traumatic brain injury, their families and their caregivers by being a member of Brain Injury Association of Hawaii (BIAH) and making a donation.

In addition, your membership entitles you to our quarterly newsletters, podcasts, virtual seminars and other events.

() \$10/yr - Individual Members

() \$50/yr - Organization Affiliates & Friends of BIAH

() \$15/yr - Family & Caregivers

() \$_____ Tax Deductible **Donation**

() \$25/yr - Individual Professional Affiliates (RN, MD, Ph.D, PsyD, Esq.)

BIAH is a 501(c)(3) organization

Please make checks payable to:

Brain Injury Association of Hawaii

P.O. Box 437

Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

First Name: _____

Organization Name : _____

Address : _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone : _____ Email: _____

Your Occupation: _____

For more information about us see our website and facebook at:

<https://www.biausa.org> - (find your BIA)
facebook.com/BrainInjuryAssociationofHawaii

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII