

Inglis Foundation Award for Continuing Excellence 2009-2010 Report Summary

The Acquired Brain Injury Network has been profoundly changed through the ACE Award. Our self-image, public image, and internal growth received a jump start, leading to a broader vision, and significant milestones. We are very grateful for the resources we needed to carry out the goals of our proposal (below) and establish a firm base for our fourth year of continued growth.

A. "Maintain and improve the quality of our current activities."

(1) telephone services. Toll-free teleconferencing was arranged but not helpful. A new telephone, unlimited calling, voice mail, and a separate fax line proved very helpful and will be continued.

(2) supplies for information tables. Twelve royal blue tablecloths imprinted with our name in white, carrying cases, stronger rolling tubes, and mailing cartons were secured for statewide distribution. The tablecloths are proving very effective for information, panel and registration tables. Six table top standing displays, a cold laminator with film, Velcro dots, and mailing cartons will allow us to decorate these panels and distribute them statewide. Our new pens and refrigerator magnets are very helpful in promoting our name, website and 800 number, and we await delivery of imprinted mugs.

(3) supplies for presentations. We are now prepared for various contingencies with a spare bulb for the projector, a small public address system, and a tent canopy for outdoor information tables.

(4) printing equipment. Our new high capacity, high speed printer duplexes, collates and staples, allowing us to print hundreds of brochures and newsletters each month with less strain on our volunteers.

B. "Institute a formal ongoing program of training and development for our board members." Pamela Leland of the LaSalle Nonprofit Center explained board responsibilities and recommended expanding our board so we added five new members to a total of nine. Then, Linda Collins provided training on strategic planning and operations planning, and she will provide training in fundraising this week. In addition, one board member attended a training in communication at NOVA in Jamison, PA.

C. "Institute a formal ongoing program of training and development for our volunteers." As events unfolded across the year, it became evident that our biggest developmental hurdle was a general belief that the brain injury community is powerless. As a result, we arranged imprinted tote bags and our "2010 ABIN-PA Leadership Training for Brain Injury Survivors, Families & Friends: Building a Better Future". Local speakers in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Camp Hill (Harrisburg) provided a keynote on "Leadership for Change", a cross-disability panel on "Advocacy in Action", a panel of brain injury organizations, and a presentation on our new manual "Building a New Life After Brain Injury: A Peer to Peer Training". It was heartwarming as people realized they could enjoy working together for change.

D. "Create a standard educational program for families and survivors..." Despite many obstacles, our new 24 page Peer to Peer manual was completed and put on our website for free downloading. We ordered anatomy models and colorful booklets on the brain as part of our plans to "train the trainers" but we could not generate interest. As an alternative, we printed and mailed the manual to all of our newsletter subscribers (then 598, now 679). We received many messages of thanks and also a very positive response to the presentation of this manual at our tri-city leadership training events. The manual has been embraced by many individuals and organizations and we are receiving in-kind printing.

E. "Learn more about grant writing and how to use a grant writer..." Next week, our Executive Director and Webmaster will attend the American Association of Grant Professionals conference in New Jersey. Our Executive Director will also attend a local event to meet with funders. Finally, we have arranged with a grant writer to prepare and deliver two grant proposals to us this month.