



# Brain-e-News

FALL 2017

## RESOURCES

MOSS REHABILITATION  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
[www.mrrl.org](http://www.mrrl.org)

MOSSREHAB RESOURCE NET  
[www.mossresourcenet.org](http://www.mossresourcenet.org)

THE CENTER FOR OUTCOME  
MEASUREMENT IN BRAIN  
INJURY  
[www.tblms.org/combl](http://www.tblms.org/combl)

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION  
OF AMERICA  
[WWW.BIAUSA.ORG](http://WWW.BIAUSA.ORG)

BRAIN INJURY RESOURCE LINE  
**1-800-444-6443**

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF  
PENNSYLVANIA  
[www.blapa.org](http://www.blapa.org)  
**1-866-635-7097**

BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE OF  
NEW JERSEY  
[www.blanj.org](http://www.blanj.org)  
**1-732-745-0200**  
FAMILY HELPLINE  
**1-800-669-4323**

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF  
DELAWARE  
[www.blausa.org/Delaware/bla.htm](http://www.blausa.org/Delaware/bla.htm)  
**1-800-411-0505**

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH BRAIN INJURY  
HELPLINE  
**1-866-412-4755**  
**TTY 1-877-232-7640**

MODEL SYSTEM KNOWLEDGE  
TRANSLATION CENTER (MSKTC)  
[www.msktc.org](http://www.msktc.org)

[www.Brainline.org](http://www.Brainline.org)



## Five More Years—Again!

We are delighted to report that as of October 1, 2017, MossRehab and Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute have received their 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive 5-year award from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research as a TBI Model System (TBIMS). Under the direction of Tessa Hart, PhD and John Whyte, MD, PhD, the Moss TBIMS will join 15 other centers across the US for the 2017-2022 project cycle. Watch future issues of this newsletter for more information about local and collaborative projects that will roll out over the next few years.

Congratulations to all involved!

## Bridget Kaiser: A Story of Recovery and Resilience



In 2003, Bridget Kaiser “woke up” at MossRehab Hospital, having no idea that she had been a passenger in a serious car crash weeks earlier. What she did know was that her legs didn’t work anymore and that she felt like she was “freaking out.” Her mother was in the room and told her about the accident. There followed intense frustration as Bridget knew that she knew how to do things like walk and write, but couldn’t make her body do them. In the grueling days that followed, she celebrated every achievement with her family and her treatment team: “The first time I stood for a full minute, you would have thought I won the Olympics!”

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## Bridget Kaiser's Story (con't)

After 5 weeks of intense rehabilitation at Moss, Bridget had to wait another few months before starting outpatient therapy. She was concerned about regression, but her therapists gave her exercises and activities to help her keep the skills she had gained, and she was diligent about doing them. Said Bridget: "Mom raised me to think that school was my job, and that's the same way I treated recovery. I worked at it that way, like it was my job." This hard work paid off: After several courses of outpatient therapy, Bridget became involved in the Moss Community Re-Entry Program, where she worked on the more advanced skills necessary to move forward with her life. She did office work as a volunteer, and participated in "very helpful" groups with other individuals who had sustained brain injury. All this work made for long days, but it was worth it; she learned to pace herself to avoid "shutting down."

What would Bridget like to say to others who are going through this difficult process? First, she advises, keep in mind that recovery is an ongoing process. While you might not see big changes all at once, you will notice smaller changes that add up to make a big difference. Three years after her injury, Bridget started driving again, got her own apartment, and filled her days with activities to keep her busy and productive. Not long after that, she met the man who was to become her husband; they have recently celebrated their 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Bridget shared information about TBI so that her husband would understand some of her challenges, both past and present.

Bridget continues to experience forgetfulness, and gets overwhelmed in a noisy environment or when there's too much going on. She plans carefully to cope better with overwhelming situations. She uses technology to keep track of information and appointments, and has developed the habit of checking her calendar, phone, and memo app several times a day. For a long time she was "stubborn," wanting to do things just the same the way that she did before her injury; but with experience, Bridget learned for herself the value of these strategies. Not only are they now a routine part of her life, she also sees them commonly used by others, with and without brain injury. Bridget's stubbornness has a positive side, too: it's a personal asset that prevents anything from getting in the way of what she wants to accomplish.

Today, Bridget manages her home and finances, takes care of 3 dogs, and manages the books for a family business. She is also a paid consultant to a brain injury treatment study at Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute. "All in all," she says, "I have a pretty good life!"

## The Faces of the TBI Model System: Rachel Raucci



Meet Rachel Raucci, our newest TBIMS participant recruiter and data collector. Rachel, who hails from Pine Bush in New York's Hudson Valley, received her Bachelors' degree in Neuroscience from Ursinus College in 2017, with minors in Biology and Environmental Studies. Rachel now lives in Manayunk and enjoys exploring Philadelphia in her spare time. She also plays tennis and likes to read, hike, and surf Netflix. Welcome to the Moss TBIMS, Rachel!

# Update about the MEMRI-D-TBI: Clinical Trial on Severe Memory Impairments due to TBI

The Moss TBIMS continues its involvement in a 5-year treatment study funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, entitled *Multicenter Evaluation of Memory Remediation after TBI with Donepezil: The MEMRI-TBI-D Study*. This study is testing a treatment for memory deficits, which are among the most common complaints after TBI. Participants are randomly assigned to receive donepezil or placebo (an inert pill) daily for 10 weeks. Donepezil is a safe, FDA-approved medication that boosts the levels of a neurotransmitter (naturally occurring chemical in the brain) which is thought to be important in memory functioning.

**This study is still open to enrollment.** If you have experienced a TBI and you have difficulty remembering everyday material such as events, conversations, or things you want to do, you might be able to participate.

## What is involved:

A screening interview and examination will take place first, to make sure you are eligible.

Eligible participants will then be in the outpatient treatment phase of the study for 10 weeks, which includes medical monitoring and assessment of memory function and other aspects of daily life.

A family member or friend who spends a lot of time with you will answer questions about what they think of your memory and functioning.

You will be reimbursed for your time and transportation costs.

**If you're interested in finding out more, please contact:**  
Shira Neuberger at 215-663-6432 or [neuberger@einstein.edu](mailto:neuberger@einstein.edu)  
[Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute](#)

## Websites to Watch: LoveYourBrain

Loveyourbrain.com: LoveYourBrain Foundation is a community of individuals dedicated to brain injury prevention and healing. Former professional snowboarder Kevin Pearce founded LoveYourBrain after a near-fatal snowboarding accident. Kevin promotes awareness of brain injury and what it means to love your brain through motivational speaking, retreats, and educational programs. Visit this website to learn more about upcoming community programs and resources to help those affected by brain injury.



## EMPOWERMENT and SUPPORT GROUP INFORMATION

### PENNSYLVANIA EMPOWERMENT GROUP

The Elkins Park Empowerment Group meets on the second Monday of each month from 5-6:30 at 60 Township Line Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027.

For more info, contact  
Debbi Eisen at 215-663-6857.

### NEW JERSEY SUPPORT GROUP

The New Jersey Support Group meets *most* months on the fourth Tuesday from 3:00-4:00 at 135 S. Broad Street, Woodbury NJ 08096.

For more info, contact  
Dayna Scott at 856-853-9900.



MossRehab at Elkins Park Hospital  
50 E. Township Line Road  
Elkins Park, PA 19027  
ATTN: Kelly Bognar

## The Moss TBI Model System

The National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research has designated MossRehab as a Model System for traumatic brain injury since 1997. The TBI Model System program seeks to improve lives by creating and disseminating new knowledge about the course, treatment and outcomes of TBI.

**The Traumatic  
Brain Injury  
Model System  
(TBIMS)  
Centers for  
the current  
funding cycle  
(2017-2022)**

