

THE
University of Vermont
MEDICAL CENTER

trauma survivors
network
provided by **ATS**

Survivor News

Newsletter for Resilience and Rebuilding

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LIFE AFTER TRAUMA: CELEBRATING SURVIVORS



Maggie Holt, physical therapist, at the 2019 Life after Trauma event.

National Trauma Survivors Day

May 19, 2021

In 2014, the American Trauma Society hosted the first National Trauma Survivors Day. The theme of the event was to draw inspiration from and provide support to survivors of traumatic injuries and their caregivers, opening the road to their recovery from trauma. In 2019, the University of Vermont Medical Center hosted their first Life After Trauma: Celebrating Survivors event to raise awareness and celebrate our survivors and their support networks.

The event showcased survivors' stories and shared updates about the Trauma Center. Survivors and their families were able to connect with others who understood their struggle over appetizers and cakes. At the event, the UVMHC Trauma Program Manager, Jennifer Gratton, announced the intent of the University of Vermont Medical Center to build a Trauma Survivor Network for the survivors of traumatic injury in our region.

Unfortunately, 2020 caused some speed bumps in the program's implementation and caused the 2nd Life After Trauma event to be cancelled.

Fortunately, you can attend Life After Trauma: Celebrating Survivors 2021 virtually next month! The virtual event will include survivor stories and awards to those who have made a difference in our trauma community.

Register online at UVMHealth.org/TSN by clicking on the link under *Life After Trauma: Celebrating Survivors* or by e-mailing TraumaSurvivors@UVMHealth.org.



Race to Rebuild

Registration is Live

May is National Trauma Awareness Month and has been since 1988. As part of the month-long goal to raise awareness of traumatic injury and the National Trauma Survivors Network is hosting a physically distance walk/run/cycle/roll race to honor trauma survivors. Challenge your friends and families to join the race ! You can participate in the race anywhere and anytime from May 1st to May 31st. You can also pick the length of your race to match your needs, including 1 mile, 5k, and 10k.

The registration fee is \$45 and you can also fundraise for your registration fee through the race website. Trauma Survivors can use the code: SURVIVORMARCH for \$15 off registration.

All registered participants will receive a t-shirt, a race day bib, a TSN face mask, and access to the RaceJoy app for tracking their distances. When you sign up for the event, make sure to put UVMMC as your site!

Brain Injury Association of Vermont

By Dani and Mia of BIAVT

Brain Injury Association of Vermont (BIAVT) is here to provide direct support and advocacy for individuals living with brain injury, their friends and family, professionals, and the general public. When you reach out to us, we will help guide you through Vermont's available resources to help survivors on their path to recovery. It is crucial for trauma survivors and their families to contact us and access our services as we will work to understand what you are going through and become a contact for when you need support.

Anyone looking for support can join one of our support groups and find a place to gather with other survivors, family and friends, and professionals for mutual support. Similarly, our BIAVT helpline is staffed Monday-Friday 9-4 at 802-244-6850 for anyone to call and receive support, referrals, and resources. These services are particularly important for trauma survivors and their family and friends anytime they are in need of support and assistance.

Additionally, we provide educational tools such as trainings, a variety of webinars, and tip sheets to help brain injury survivors, their families, and professionals. Our website also has an abundance of educational information available to you.

For quick access to the resources mentioned above, check out these links!

- Online resource directory: <https://biavt.org/support/resources>
- Upcoming events and recordings of past ones here: <https://biavt.org/advocacy/events>
- List of available support groups: <https://biavt.org/support/support-groups>



PHAT

Protect your Head at All Times

Protect your Head on All Terrains

Spring weather is here! Flowers are starting to bloom, grass is turning green, and there is even signs of spring at the Trauma Center! The mechanism of injury for admitted patients is shifting away from slip and falls on the ice and our injury prevention program is going all out with PHAT!

What is PHAT?

PHAT was founded by Robert Williams, MD in 2002 as an effort to reduce head injuries among skiers and snowboarders. In a few years, the helmet use among children at Smuggler's Notch increased 20% and helmet use among adults had nearly doubled!

The success of PHAT at the ski resorts allowed it to expand to other activities where head injuries can be prevented or outcomes improved by the use of helmets, like bicycling, skateboarding, and ATVing. The goal is to reduce the number of head injuries from these activities and the severity of injuries when they do occur.

What does PHAT do to help prevention traumatic injuries?

- Increasing availability of helmets to all riders. The PHAT helmet program works with a wide range of partners, such as primary care offices, bike and pedestrian safety experts, schools, and parks departments to reduce barriers around access to bicycle helmets for both adults and children.
- Raises awareness on the importance of helmets. Education and outreach around the importance of wearing a helmet is key, but so is education on how to keep yourself and others safe while participating in activities. PHAT supports bicycle skill development, messaging for ATV users, and supporting infrastructure in a way that puts safety first.



- Works with communities and community champions to promote a cultural shift around helmet use. Research has shown that when adults wear helmets, the rate of helmet usage among children and teens increases. The goal is for wearing helmets to become a social norm here everyone **Rides PHAT** and **Lives PHAT**.



Share your Story

Survivor Spotlights Wanted

Are you interested in sharing your story as a traumatic injury survivor or as the family member of a survivor? We are looking for individuals to volunteer to be spotlighted in our future newsletters. We want you to share your experience with life after trauma and the path to recovery.

Survivor spotlights can help survivors and families feel connected and not alone in recovery. Additionally, sharing your story offers you the opportunity to reflect on everything you have done and the people who were there for you since your traumatic injury.

Survivor Spotlights can be self-written or our staff will interview you for the article. Besides the article, your picture will be included on the front page of the newsletter!

Contact TraumaSurvivors@UVMHealth.org or call 802-847-2291.



Meet the Trauma Team

Amy Sharpe, Trauma Registrar

Amy has been part of the trauma team for 5 years. She is the Lead Trauma Registrar. The mission of the trauma registry is to provide a comprehensive, concurrent, and accurate database, in compliance with the National Trauma Data Standards (NTDS), Trauma Quality Improvement Program (TQIP), and UVMHC Inclusion Criteria to allow for regional and national benchmarking while supporting UVMHC Trauma Centers' required activities, such as performance improvement, outcomes research, injury prevention initiatives, and resource utilization.

Award Nominations Open!

Every May, we want to take a moment to recognize those in the trauma community who push for improvement and change. Nominations are open for two awards.

- Excellence in Trauma Care is for a professional who has contributed to enhanced care traumatic injury patients. It may be due to their clinical skills, their advocacy for patients and families, or their ability to find creative solutions.
- Community Champion in Trauma is for an individual who has made a difference in the community. It may be due to advocacy for legislation, promotion of education and outreach, or the support their offer to survivors and families.

Know anyone who deserve these awards? Nominate them today online at <https://forms.office.com/r/3Vs5FxN5ap> or using the QR code to the right.

Scan the QR code below to open the nomination form on your phone or smart device



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Tips for Stress Management

- Meditation or quiet reflection. Even if it's only for a few minutes, taking time to meditate can reduce your stress level. You can do deep breaths or follow a guided meditation online or on an app.
- Be as active as you can manage. Physical activity can release endorphins which improves your mood. It can also reduce the levels of stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol.
- Journal or write it down. Take the thoughts racing through your head and write them down. You can keep it in a journal or write it on scrap paper that can be recycled afterwards.
- Change your scenery. Move to a different room of your home, rearrange your space, or go outside if the weather is nice. Changing the environment around you can shift your mindset.
- Listen to music. It can be your favorite song to dance to or it can be a song that lets you close your eyes and relax. Either way, it can help you center yourself and feel less stressed.