

# LIFE WITH BRAIN INJURY “VIRTUAL” CONFERENCE

July 28-29, 2022



**Brain Injury Association of South Carolina  
South Carolina Brain Injury Leadership Council**

# OUR CONFERENCE HOSTS!



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# 2022 CONFERENCE SPONSORS





# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

## July 28, 2022



**Cristabelle Braden** is an award-winning singer/songwriter, speaker, writer, podcast host, and advocate for brain injury. After suffering a traumatic brain injury, she began to write music. Since then, she has surpassed medical expectations and thrived in her newfound gift of music. She has come from re-learning daily life tasks in brain injury rehabilitation to setting her feet firmly on the ground as a songwriter, speaker, and artist with a message of hope. She is devoted to bringing support and education through weekly episodes of “[Hope Survives® | Brain Injury Podcast](#)” and her online support community [Hope After Head Injury](#). Cristabelle sits on the Board of Directors for the Council on Brain Injury (CoBI), volunteers with the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania, leads a group called Brain Injury Bible Study both virtually and at Success Rehabilitation, and advocates for persons with brain injury on a statewide and national level. She holds a Master of Arts in Theological Studies from Liberty University and a Bachelor of Arts in Music and Religion (double major) from Lebanon Valley College. For more, visit: [www.cristabellebraden.com](http://www.cristabellebraden.com) & [www.hopeafterheadinjury.com](http://www.hopeafterheadinjury.com).

## July 29, 2022



**Caroline H. Sheppard** was a Clinical and School Social Worker for twenty years, working with families, children and schools. She is certified as a trauma and loss specialist. Her personal experiences in caregiving for five family members over a fifteen-year time period, some long distance, are helpful for those who have a myriad of experiences as a caregiver of a family member. Caroline has authored five children’s books to help children who have experienced trauma and loss. Currently, she volunteers as a moderator for an online support group for family caregivers. Stepping into the role of caregiving of family members caused her own role in the family to shift. Caroline is the author of *When Family Calls: Finding Hope in the Chaos of Long-Distance Caregiving*.

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

## 2022 LIFE WITH BRAIN INJURY “VIRTUAL” CONFERENCE

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**Thursday July 28, 2022**

- 9:30-9:45AM**      **Exhibitor**  
*SC Equipment Distribution Program, Leah Cuthbertson*
- 9:45-10:00 AM**      **Sponsor**  
*SC Developmental Disabilities Council, Cheryl English*
- 10:00-10:20 AM**      **Welcome: Joyce Davis, CBIS, Executive Director, BIASC**  
**Elizabeth Dubose, DPT, BILC Chair**  
**Marty Van Dam, MS, CCC-SLP, CBIST, BIASC President**
- 10:20-10:30 AM**      **Break**  
**Music Videos “Hope Survives” and “Not Giving Up”**  
Written by Cristabelle Braden
- 10:30- 11:30 AM**      **Keynote: *Hope in Song: Music and Brain Injury***  
**Cristabelle Braden, MA**  
Music can have powerful effects on the brain. This presentation will discuss how music can positively impact brain injury recovery. Drawing from current research and practical application, the role of music on mental health will be examined. This presentation will address the physical and emotional effects of music and how to formulate and implement strategies to help the patient.
- 11:30- 11:45 AM**      **Sponsor**  
*Center for Disability Resources, David Rotholz*
- 11:45AM-12:45 PM**      ***What Gadgets Can Help Me?***  
**Alli Upchurch, MRC, CRC**  
Learning how to navigate life after a brain injury requires support including gadgets, software, apps, etc. that can help improve or increase functional capabilities. Learn what the SC Assistive Technology Program has to offer including how to borrow equipment, receive free durable medical equipment and ask for resources.
- 12:45- 1:30 PM**      **Lunch**

**1:30- 1:45 PM**

**Sponsor**

***Prisma Health, Marty Van Dam***

**1:45- 2:45 PM**

***Inclusive Strategies for Working with Individuals with Disabilities who are Survivors of Interpersonal Violence, Human Trafficking, and Abuse***

**Nicky Jones, MSW**

**Dori Tempio, MS**

This session will focus on individuals with disabilities impacted by interpersonal violence or assault, barriers individuals with disabilities experience when receiving services, lack of education and prevention of assault and interpersonal violence for people with disabilities, resources for service providers and people with disabilities, tips for working with individuals with disabilities impacted by violence, abuse, or assault; and how to create safety plans with individuals with disabilities.

**2:45- 3:00 PM**

**Sponsor**

***Disability Rights SC, Erin A. Haire***

**3:00-4:00 PM**

***Caring for the Care-Partner***

**Marti Colucci, ACC, DCPA**

This presentation will provide an overview of who caregivers are and what they are doing. The presenter will share tips, resources and information to support caregivers along their journeys to care for themselves while caring for a loved one.

**4:00- 4:05 PM**

***End of Day Announcements-Adjourn***

**Joyce Davis, CBIS**

## Friday July 29, 2022

- 9:30-9:45AM**      **Sponsor**  
*S.C. Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, Melissa Ritter*
- 9:45-10:00 AM**      **Exhibitor**  
*Rehab Without Walls. Jennifer Litchfield*
- 10:00-10:20 AM**      **Welcome: Joyce Davis, CBIS, Executive Director, BIASC**  
**Dr. Michelle Gough Fry, JD, PhD, LLM, SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, State Director**
- 10:20-10:30 AM**      **Break**  
**Music Videos “Hope Survives” and “Not Giving Up”**  
Written by Cristabelle Braden
- 10:30- 11:30 AM**      **Keynote: *Caregiving for Family Members***  
**Caroline H. Sheppard, MSW**  
The presenter will share her personal story of how she shifted roles from child to caregiver of her parents. She will also share her experience after receiving an emergency phone call from a hospital Emergency Room to inform her that her brother was in serious condition with a closed head injury and brain bleed and how it felt to suddenly become a patient advocate for her brother and manage his life.
- 11:30- 11:45 AM**      **Sponsor**  
*Heart of the Carolinas, Robyn Shockley*
- 11:45AM-12:45 PM**      **“de-LIBERATE-ly ME”**  
**Kimbo Bridges, OTD, OTR/L, CBIS**  
**Megan Theiler, MS, CCC-SLP, CBIS**  
**Ali Twilley, PT, DPT, CBIS**  
This presentation will include a meditation and short writing exercise to promote self-awareness and improve mental health.
- 12:45- 1:30 PM**      **Lunch**
- 1:30- 1:45 PM**      **Special Presentation: BIASC Legislator of the Year Award:**  
*South Carolina Representative Chip Huggins*

**1:45- 2:45 PM**

***Returning to School, Learning, Work and Life after Brain Injury***

**Karen McAvoy, PsyD**

Getting “successfully” back to school, learning, work and life after brain injury has proven to be harder than expected for a myriad of reasons. Those reasons will be reviewed and evaluated as “one size does not fit all”. Unlike a six step Return to Play (RTP), which we do for athletes returning to their sport, the nuances and complications for returning to school, learning, work and life will be considered during this presentation and practical solutions will be offered.

**2:45- 3:00 PM**

**Break**

**Music Videos “Hope Survives” and “Not Giving Up”**

Written by Cristabelle Braden

**3:00-4:00 PM**

***Brain Injury Recovery: The Intersection Between Brain Injury and Mental Health/Behavioral Health***

***(Also known as “can’t” versus “won’t”)***

**Karen McAvoy, PsyD**

Brain Injury recovery is not a solitary or static process. Whether you are a healthcare professional, an educator, a parent, a caregiver, a spouse, or a boss, you will find yourself, at some point, wondering if an emotional reaction or behavioral manifestation is a “can’t or a won’t” when supporting someone with a diagnosis/history of a brain injury. Going further in depth of protracted recovery from the previous presentation, this session will focus on continued nuances of recovery from brain injury that eventually begin to fall into additional questions of mental health or behavioral issues.

**4:00- 4:05 PM**

***End of Day Announcements-Adjourn***

**Joyce Davis, CBIS**

# CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

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### **Kimbo Bridges, OTD, MS, OTR/L, CBIS**

A graduate from Brenau University in Gainesville, Georgia, Dr. Bridges received her master and doctorate degrees in occupational therapy. She has been employed for the past twenty-seven years at Roger C. Peace Rehabilitation Hospital in Greenville, South Carolina, a hospital for persons with acquired brain injury or stroke. Kimbo is currently serving as an occupational therapist and as the manager of the West End Co-op, a cognitive rehabilitation and work rehabilitation model that is part of Roger C. Peace Rehabilitation Hospital where she has helped with program development over the past seventeen years.

### **Marti Colucci, ACC, DCPA**

Marti joined the Leeza’s Care Connection team in May 2015, as Managing Director of the new center at the Mary Meech & Michael J Mungo Home. She is a native of Irmo, South Carolina, and graduated from Irmo High School and College of Charleston. She is a Dementia Specialist, a Certified Business Coach, and has a background in Business Administration and Hospice Education. Her work encompasses giving smiles, hugs and lots of encouragement at the free community center.

### **Nicky Jones, MSW**

As the Violence Prevention and Survivor Services Coordinator for Able South Carolina, Nicky promotes education in the areas of preventing sexual and domestic violence against people with disabilities. She works with Able SC’s community partners to bridge service gaps and remove accessibility barriers for survivors with disabilities. Nicky believes strongly that everyone deserves safety, respect, and autonomy in relationships, and that survivors with disabilities are the experts in their own needs. Nicky is a member of the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (SCCADVASA) and the South Carolina Attorney General’s Office Domestic Violence Coordinating Council. Nicky received her Bachelor of Arts in English from the College of Charleston and her Master of Social Work from the University of South Carolina.

### **Karen McAvoy, PsyD**

Karen McAvoy is dually credentialed as a clinical and school psychologist. She has thirty-two years of experience as a school psychologist, district administrator of mental health services and is a regular consultant, content expert and trainer on traumatic brain injury to the Colorado Department of Education. Dr. McAvoy directed the Center for Concussion with Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children and currently is in private practice providing neurocognitive assessments



and treatment at the Aasha Brain Clinic in Fort Collins, Colorado. She is a frequent contributor to efforts with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC), providing content, training and publications in the field of concussion, specifically related to Return to Learn. Dr. McAvoy is the owner and director of [www.REAPconcussion.com](http://www.REAPconcussion.com), [www.GetSchooledOnConcussions.com](http://www.GetSchooledOnConcussions.com), and [www.GetSchooledOnCOVID.com](http://www.GetSchooledOnCOVID.com).

### **Caroline H. Sheppard, MSW**

Caroline was a Clinical and School Social Worker for twenty years, working with families, children and schools. She is certified as a trauma and loss specialist. Her personal experiences in caregiving for five family members over a fifteen-year time period, some long distance, are helpful for those who have a myriad of experiences as a caregiver of a family member. Caroline has authored five children's books to help children who have experienced trauma and loss. Currently, she volunteers as a moderator for an online support group for family caregivers. Stepping into the role of caregiving of family members caused her own role in the family to shift. Caroline is the author of *When Family Calls: Finding Hope in the Chaos of Long-Distance Caregiving*.

### **Dori Tempio, MS**

Dori graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a Master of Science in Counseling and serves as the Director of Community Outreach and Consumer Rights for Able South Carolina. She is enthusiastic about educating and empowering people. She provides presentations on diversity and inclusion, healthy relationships, the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), service animals, employment, and emergency preparedness for people with disabilities. Dori passionately works to promote disability rights by engaging the individual, professional, and community to promote dialogue for an interactive experience. She has focused primarily on interpersonal communication skills, conflict resolution, empowerment, and pride in oneself, including disability. Dori develops and provides training instruction for the Attorney General's Office Violence Against Women ACT (VAWA) on the intersection of violence, assault, crime, and disability. She is a member of the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (SCCADVASA) and the South Carolina Attorney General's Office Domestic Violence Coordinating Council.

### **Megan Theiler, MS, CCC-SLP, CBIS**

Megan Theiler is a Speech-Language Pathologist and a Certified Brain Injury Specialist. She has six years of experience serving persons with acquired brain injuries. She received a bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Florida State University and a master's degree from the University of South Florida. Since 2017, Megan has worked at Roger C. Peace in the outpatient brain injury and young stroke programs where she practiced interdisciplinary care alongside occupational therapy, physical therapy and neuropsychology. Megan is passionate in supporting her patients in their journey towards returning to home, community, and vocational activities.

**Ali Twilley, PT, DPT, CBIS**

Ali Twilley is a Doctor of Physical Therapy with eight years of clinical experience. Five of those eight years were in providing services to persons with Acquired Brain Injuries. Dr. Twilley received her Bachelor of Science degree with a concentration in Motor Development from the University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina. She received her Doctor of Physical Therapy from the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, South Carolina. Ali has worked for Peace Rehabilitation Center, a Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), an accredited community re-entry brain injury program, of Prisma Health System in Greenville, South Carolina, since 2016. Ali is a Certified Brain Injury Specialist.

**Alli Upchurch, MRC, CRC**

Alli received a Master’s Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of South Carolina and has worked with individuals with disabilities for eight years. She is currently a program coordinator with the South Carolina Assistive Technology Program, Center for Disability Resources in Columbia, South Carolina, assisting adults and children acquire assistive technology devices and equipment through the Reuse Program service.

**2022 CONFERENCE SPONSORS**

<b><i>South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council</i></b> Columbia, SC	<b><i>South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs</i></b> Columbia, SC
<b><i>Center for Disability Resources</i></b> Columbia, SC	<b><i>Disability Rights SC</i></b> Columbia, SC
<b><i>Heart of the Carolinas</i></b> Greenville, SC	

**2022 CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS**

<b><i>South Carolina Equipment Distribution Program</i></b> Columbia, SC	<b><i>Rehab Without Walls</i></b> Augusta, GA
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**2022 CONFERENCE ADVERTISER**

<b><i>South Carolina Respite Coalition</i></b> Columbia, SC
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# CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

## 2022 Life with Brain Injury “Virtual” Conference

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*South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department*

**Harriet Abner**

*South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department*

**Kay Brooks, MA, CBIST**

*Thrive Upstate, Head and Spinal Cord Injury Division*

**Rose Burgess, MSW**

*Conference Coordinator*

**Joyce Davis, CBIS**

*Brain Injury Association of South Carolina*

**Carol Gribick**

*Roger C. Peace Rehabilitation Hospital, Parent of a TBI Survivor*

**Kristi Hartwell, MSW, CBIS**

*Center for Disability Resources, University of South Carolina School of Medicine*

**Megan Johnson**

*SC Department on Aging*

**Rachel Kaplan, MPH**

*Brain Injury Association of South Carolina*

**Yvonne Mulherin**

*Brain Injury Association of South Carolina*

**Nikki Outen**

*South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department*

**Gene Palmer**

*University of South Carolina School of Medicine*

**Melissa Ritter, CBIS**

*South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, Head and Spinal Cord Injury Division*

**Teresa Satterfield, MA, CBIS**

*Protea Counseling and Coaching*

**Hannah Summer, MSP, CCC-SLP, CBIS**

*Roger C. Peace Rehabilitation Hospital*

**Meghan Trowbridge, LMSW, CBIST**

*Center for Disability Resources, University of South Carolina School of Medicine*

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**Stay informed** by joining or renewing your membership with the Brain Injury Association of South Carolina. Benefits of your membership include:

- BIASC Newsletter, Headlights
- Brain Injury Association of America newsletter, The Challenge
- Registration discount for the Life with Brain Injury Conference
- Support Group news
- Legislative updates

Professionals receive benefits listed above, plus an annual subscription to The Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation. Agency memberships are available as well. To join, visit our website at <https://biaofsc.com/membership>



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