



Winter 2025



# Step Ahead

## Happy Retirement to Anna Jurak

It is with mixed emotions that we announce the retirement of Anna Jurak, who has dedicated years of exceptional service to the Brain Injury Association of Windsor and Essex. After a distinguished career of leadership and advocacy, Anna has stepped down as Executive Director.

Throughout her tenure, Anna has been a pillar of strength for our organization, bringing visibility and growth to help us meet the needs of the brain injury community. Under her leadership, BIAWE has made significant strides in raising awareness and fostering a supportive network for individuals and families affected by brain injuries. Anna's passion, visionary approach, and tireless dedication have been instrumental in advancing the mission of BIAWE.

While Anna will certainly be missed, we are grateful for the profound impact she has made. Her legacy will continue to inspire us as we move forward in our work to support brain injury survivors, their families, and the community.

On behalf of everyone at BIAWE, we wish you a retirement filled with happiness, relaxation, and the joy that comes with knowing you have left a mark on the lives of so many. Thank you for your service, leadership, and heart.

With appreciation and best wishes,  
Rachel Olsen  
Executive Director



**Care from  
the inside, out**



**Specialty services:**

- Concussion care
- Stroke
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Peripheral nerve injury
- Bell's palsy

**Core services:**

- Post-op knee and hip replacement rehabilitation
- Pelvic health
- Physiotherapy
- Vestibular rehabilitation
- Occupational therapy

Trust Lifemark to build on your care for neurologic health needs and support safe rehabilitation for your patients.

**Make a referral today.**

**Lifemark Physiotherapy Tecumseh**  
tel: 866-925-0560 | fax: 519-739-1419  
windsor-tecumseh@lifemark.ca  
lifemark.ca/Tecumseh

**Lifemark** 

**Thank**

**CANARX**  
Simple. Safe. Smart.

 **PPSA Canada**

---

EAGLE SPONSORS



BIRDIE SPONSORS



LOCAL 444



HÔTEL-DIEU  
ESTD GRACE 1888  
HEALTHCARE



**simplyclose**  
Real Estate Lawyers



## Our Support Team

**Executive Director** - Rachel Olsen - info@biawe.com, 519-981-1329

**Client Services** — (interim) Danielle Bridges clientservices@biawe.com

**You Are Not Alone Facilitator**- Danielle Bridges—goals@biawe.com

**Under 40 Support Group Facilitator** - Rebeca Robinet—social@biawe.com

**Caregiver Support Group Facilitator** - Danielle Bridges—goals@biawe.com

**Peer Support Program Coordinator** - Ali Caputo—connect@biawe.com

**Social Coordinator** - Rebeca Robinet—social@biawe.com

**STAR Program** - Rachel Olsen - info@biawe.com

**Graphic Design** —Donna Ntumba—info@biawe.com

**Volunteer Coordinator** - Carol Basily—volunteer@biawe.com

**Art Class Facilitators**—Christine Paris, Rachel Olsen—art@biawe.com

**Music/Singing Facilitator**—Alice Chiu—music@biawe.com

**ABI Parent Peer Support Facilitator**—Lauren Fields –psg@biawe.com

**Children ABI Peer Support Group Facilitator**—Krista Skiba children@biawe.com

## Bingo Dates 2025



BIAWE Volunteers will be there at these times:

Wednesday, January 1 from 7 to 9 pm

Sunday, January 19 from 3 to 5 pm

Saturday, February 1 from 3 to 5 pm

Sunday, February 9 from 5 to 7 pm

Friday February 21 from 5 to 7 pm

Saturday, March 1 from 5 to 7 pm

Sunday, March 9 from 7 to 9 pm

Saturday, March 22 from 1 to 3pm



Our volunteers work these sessions and help raise money for BIAWE.

If you're interested in volunteering, contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Carolyn Basily at volunteer@biawe.com or complete the application at [How you can help – BIAWE](#) to take the on-line course and become one of our bingo volunteers. It's easy and it's fun. Do it with a friend.

If you're a bingo player, consider playing at All Star Gaming Centre at 1385 Walker Road (corner of Walker and Ottawa Streets). Play anytime—we all share in the proceeds.

---

## Coffee Chat

This weekly social is for those living with a brain injury. It's a good way to keep in touch with friends and acquaintances you've made attending support groups. It helps in reducing the social isolation and keeps you up-to-date as to what's going on at BIAWE. Talk with old friends and make new friends. It's unstructured and you can talk about whatever you want. Each week is different..

**VIRTUAL - Every Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. through zoom**

Call for an invitation if you are not on the email list. 519-981-1329

info@biawe.com. No need to register.

**IN-PERSON - Kingsville 12:30 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month**—Kingsville Community Centre 1860 Division Road, Kingsville. Drop in when you can. Refreshments provided.



**Session Dates: Thursdays**

**January 9 and 23**

**February 13 and 27**

**March 13 and 27**



### Pasta Night—first Wednesday of the Month—Caboto Club

Mark your calendars for the first Wednesday of each month for the Caboto Club's "Charity Pasta Night".

BIAWE is a recipient of the funds generated by this monthly event.

The Caboto Club shares the sales of the \$15 pasta dinners with twelve (12) charities including BIAWE.

Enjoy pasta (meat and vegetarian), bread/butter, salad and coffee/tea.

## Art Classes

There is increasing evidence that art enhances brain function by impacting brain wave patterns, emotions, and the nervous system.

Making art helps produce the neurotransmitter dopamine which stimulates the creation of new neurons and boosts your focus and learning process.

Join artists **Christine Paris and Rachel Olsen** in creating your own masterpiece.

All classes are held at 1100 University Ave. W. (3 blocks east of Crawford).

Email: [art@biawe.com](mailto:art@biawe.com) to register and receive a reminder.

**Thursday, January 16 at 7:00**

**Thursday, February 20 at 7:00**

**Thursday, March 20 at 7:00**

---

## You Are Not Alone Peer Support Group– zoom

This is a free support group for individuals living with acquired brain injury aged 18+ years and their family and friends. Talk with others about things you care about and get information and support that can help you.

### The benefits of joining a support group include:

- ♦ Feeling less lonely, isolated or judged
- ♦ Reducing distress, depression, anxiety or fatigue
- ♦ Talking openly and honestly about your feelings
- ♦ Improving skills to cope with challenges
- ♦ Enhancing self-esteem
- ♦ Promoting lifelong good mental health



Join Danielle Bridges MSW on zoom at 7:00 pm. Email [goals@biawe.com](mailto:goals@biawe.com) for more information and to get a reminder message. (second Tuesday of the month)

Tuesday, January 14 at 7:00

Tuesday, February 11 at 7:00

Tuesday, March 11 at 7:00



Assisted Living | Aide à la vie autonome  
Southwestern Ontario | Sud Ouest de l'Ontario

---

## Memory—Reminders

Memory loss/difficulty is a common complaint among those living with a brain injury. We understand that many clients/members intend to attend support group meetings and socials but often forget.

You can opt to receive a text/phone call or email on the day you want to attend a program if you register first. Once registered on-line, the group facilitator will contact you by your preferred method to remind you of the event that day. (except Coffee Chats)

For Art Class—[art@biawe.com](mailto:art@biawe.com)

For Music Class—[music@biawe.com](mailto:music@biawe.com)

For You Are Not Alone—[goals@biawe.com](mailto:goals@biawe.com)

For Survivor Social—[social@biawe.com](mailto:social@biawe.com)

For Caregivers Group—[goals@biawe.com](mailto:goals@biawe.com)

For Under 40 Support Group—[social@biawe.com](mailto:social@biawe.com)

For Pediatric Caregivers Support Group—[psg@biawe.com](mailto:psg@biawe.com)



## Peer Support and Mentoring

**Partner** - You will have the opportunity to learn from someone “who has been there” and can offer you guidance and support based on their own personal experience living with ABI.

Support is provided to you via the telephone or internet, based on your preference so you can participate in the comfort and privacy of your home.

**Mentor** - You have the opportunity to help others by sharing your experience by providing support and information to your partner who has a similar lived experience.

You will have comprehensive training in your

This is a free program available to any person with an acquired brain injury (ABI) and to a caregiver (family or friend) of a person with an ABI.

To register, email [connect@biawe.com](mailto:connect@biawe.com) for a short intake to match you up with someone who has your shared experience.



## Survivor Socials

Research shows that strong social ties stimulate attention and memory, and help to build neural pathways. You may be laughing and talking, but your brain is hard at work. This increase in mental activity pays off over time.

Email [social@biawe.com](mailto:social@biawe.com) to register and get a reminder call.

Meetings are at 1100 University Ave. W at 7 pm unless otherwise noted.

**Monday, January 27**

**Monday, February 24**

**Monday, March 24**

---

## Thank you to our Conference Sponsors

### Executive Frontal Lobe



University  
of Windsor



HÔTEL-DIEU  
ESTD GRACE 1888  
HEALTHCARE



---

## **Under 40 Peer Support Group (formerly Young Adult Group)**

Young adults ages 18 to 40 meet to discuss their experiences, share ideas and provide emotional support for each other.

Participation can help you develop new skills and learn to deal with problems and issues related to your brain injury. Socialize with others who understand and are non-judgmental.

Everything that takes place within the support group is confidential.

Second Wednesday of each month 7:00 on zoom except where noted.

Email [social@biawe.com](mailto:social@biawe.com) to get on the email list for the zoom link.



**Wednesday, January 8**

**Wednesday, February 12**

**Wednesday, March 12**

## **Caregiver Peer Support Group**

This group is for parents, siblings, spouses, and friends who care for someone living with an acquired brain injury. This is a drop-in in-person program.

Why come to this group?

1. improve your coping skills
2. enhance your sense of empowerment and control
3. reduce your stress and rate of clinical depression
4. learn more realistic expectations
5. access to practical advice
6. facilitate your loved one staying at home longer

These monthly group meetings are held at 1100 University Ave. W. at 7:00 pm. (the same time as the Survivor Social– 4th Monday of each month). Email [goals@biawe.com](mailto:goals@biawe.com) to register and get a reminder.

**In-person 1100 University Ave. W.**

**Monday January 27**

**Monday, February 24**

**Monday, March 24**



---

# Step Ahead Newsletter

**Step Ahead** is published four times each year and is circulated primarily in Windsor and Essex County. A copy of the current newsletter is posted on the website. Older newsletters are archived on the website.

**Advertising revenue helps cover the cost of this vital means of communication about brain injury with our members, professionals in the brain injury field and the general public.**

By choosing to be an advertiser your ad will appear in two newsletters per year.

	<u>SIZES</u>	<u>PRICE</u>
A)	Newsletter Sponsor (for the year)	\$500
B)	Full Page (8 1/2 in x 11 in)	\$150
C)	1/2 Page (8 1/2 in x 5.5 in)	\$75
D)	1/4 Page	\$50
E)	Business Card	\$30

**DEADLINES: September 15 (for fall newsletter), December 15 (for winter newsletter) March 15 (for spring newsletter) and June 15 (for summer newsletter)**

The best format for ads is electronic (GIF, JPG, TIF BUT NO PDF), sent as an e-mail attachment. Camera ready black and white material is also acceptable. We do not accept faxed documents. If you choose business card size, please ensure your card with larger version of graphics can be scanned clearly into the computer.

Thank you for your order and for supporting the Brain Injury Association of Windsor & Essex County.

**Full payment is due with your order. Order and pay on-line at [www.biawe.com/newsletter](http://www.biawe.com/newsletter) and email your ad to [event@biawe.com](mailto:event@biawe.com).**

## Disclaimer

## Advertising Policy

BIAWE welcomes advertising in the "Step Ahead". Advertisers may not imply that their products/services or memberships is an endorsement by BIAWE or its directors or staff. No advertisement will be accepted for publication until a completed, signed Order Form is received. BIAWE reserves the right to refuse publication of any advertisement.

The opinions expressed herein are those of the respective authors and advertisers and not necessarily those of the Brain Injury Association of Windsor & Essex County. (BIAWE). BIAWE will not be liable for any damages or losses howsoever sustained, as a result of the reliance on or use by the reader or any other person of the information, opinion, or products expressed, advertised or otherwise contained herein. Where appropriate, professional advice should be sought.

To unsubscribe to the newsletter send email to [unsubscribe@biawe.com](mailto:unsubscribe@biawe.com)

## Volunteer Opportunities

**Committees**—Board Committees include Fundraising, Education, and various subcommittees such as Helmets for Kids and Brain Games.

**Exhibits and Expos**—Represent BIAWE at various events, exhibits and expos throughout the year

**Sunshine Callers**—Make a friendly check up call to those living with ABI.

**Bingo**—Receive training by the province if you're 18 years of age or older and provide two hours of volunteering at All Star Bingo for a session. Sign up for dates your are available.

**High School Students**—receive volunteer hours

These often occur during the daytime and requires your own transportation.

To volunteer go to [volunteer@biawe.com](mailto:volunteer@biawe.com) or visit our website and complete the application on-line.

---

## Membership Benefits

For one annual membership fee , individuals and families can become members of both the Brain Injury Association of Windsor and Essex County (BIAWE) and the Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA).

Application forms can be found online at: <http://obia.ca/dual-membership-application-form/>

### Why should you become a member of BIAWE?

- You can vote at the annual meetings for BIAWE and OBIA and run for the Board of Directors
- You will receive a one year subscription to the "OBIA Review" - the official publication of the Ontario Brain Injury Association. It's full of information about the latest in brain injury research, stories and supports.
- You will have free access to OBIA's resource library.
- You will be eligible for a discount on most of OBIA's training programs.
- Your voice will be heard both locally and provincially.
- Discounts on some BIAWE sponsored events and socials where there is a cost.
- Invitations to special events

### Annual Fees for Dual Membership

Individual	\$30
Family (2 or more at same address )	\$50
Subsidized (please enquire)	\$5
Complete the OBIA online survey	Free

**Survivors** can participate in an on-line survey - **Membership free for one year** -go the OBIA home page to find the survey

[Ontario Brain Injury Association](#) | [Education, Awareness, & Support](#) | [OBIA](#)



## OUR MISSION

To enhance the lives of residents of Windsor and Essex County affected by acquired brain injury through education, awareness and support.

Phone: 519-981-1329  
E-mail: [info@biawe.com](mailto:info@biawe.com)  
[www.biawe.com](http://www.biawe.com)