



Head Injury Association of Northern Nevada History and Background

The Head Injury Association of Northern Nevada is commonly referred to by the acronym HIANN (pronounced “Hi, Anne.”) HIANN was founded in Reno, Nevada in 1982 as an informal support group for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) survivors, their family members and caregivers. In 1987, HIANN established The Headway Foundation as an IRS 501(c)(3) charitable organization. For most of its existence, HIANN primarily served as a support group for TBI survivors called Making Headway.

In 2011, HIANN explored ways to expand its membership and geographic area. A new TBI support group sprung up in Minden, Nevada called The Travelers, which was a member of newly formed Brain Injury Association of Nevada (BIAN) – a local chapter of the Brain Injury Association of America. HIANN elected to abandon its roots and join BIAN. However, BIAN dissolved shortly thereafter and HIANN returned to its original organization (HIANN maintained its 501(c)(3) status during its association with BIAN.) After dissolving, BIAN donated its approximate \$13,000 in funds to HIANN. This was the first significant cash contribution to HIANN since its formation and HIANN embarked on a mission to use this funding to expand its programs and the area it served.

The Travelers group joined HIANN and moved its meetings to Carson City, Nevada. HIANN now operated two support groups; Making Headway in Reno and Travelers in Carson City. HIANN membership also expanded to include Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) survivors, who suffered from a stroke, tumor or other acquired brain injuries.

In 2014, HIANN began shifting its focus away from operating two separate support groups and expanded its activities for all members to include Cognitive Training classes, participation in the Nevada Day Parade and the addition of more social events. HIANN also began collaborating with the Nevada Department of Transportation’s Bicycle Safety Advisory Board to fit and distribute free bicycle helmets (and other bike safety materials) to children in Reno, Sparks, Carson City and Lake Tahoe.

In 2017, HIANN received a major donor contribution of \$100,000 as a general operating fund to support HIANN’s programs for its brain injury survivors and other members. In 2018, HIANN received another major donor contribution of \$80,000 as general operating support. These funds allowed HIANN to greatly expand its services, programs and activities.

As a result, HIANN’s membership has experienced rapid growth. From a group of about a dozen support group members in the early years, HIANN’s membership has grown to in excess of 100 members. HIANN now offers 45 different programs and activities to its members and has an annual operating budget of \$40,000.