

PreventionPages

A Publication of the ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation

SPOTLIGHT on the ThinkFirst Foundation

Debby Gerhardstein, RN, BSN, MA, Executive Director

Greetings from ThinkFirst! I am so very honored to serve this organization as executive director. Thank you to the many chapters, sponsoring physicians, VIP speakers and board members for your trust and support.

2007 has been a year of exciting changes for the ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation.

The ThinkFirst Foundation moved to an office complex in Warrenville, Illinois, directly west of Chicago, providing an accessible and economical workplace for our busy office. As with any move, printed materials needed to be updated, which afforded an opportunity to coordinate our look and sharpen our image. PowerPoint presentations, brochures, booth posters and other items now incorporate the red, grey and black branding you see in this Prevention Pages newsletter.

It also has been a year to develop a more consistent revenue stream for operations. This summer marked the roll-out of a new membership structure, giving individuals, professionals and businesses an opportunity to support ThinkFirst by becoming a member. Memberships include 1) an annual chapter fee, 2) a voluntary sponsoring physician match, and 3) a general membership, open to anyone. A fourth membership structure for international chapters is in development. The membership roll-out was very well received, and we thank our chapter

directors, their organizations and sponsoring physicians for their thoughtful response and commitment to the ThinkFirst Foundation.

Research continued to be a priority in 2007. A pilot study was completed on the new ThinkFirst For Youth program and a study on ThinkFirst For Teens was published, demonstrating again that our educational programs are evidence-based.



*Debby Gerhardstein, RN, BSN, MA,
Executive Director, ThinkFirst Foundation*

As you will read in this newsletter, many other creative endeavors have taken place over the past year. As the new director, I have been able to present our collective projects at several key conferences and conventions. With each, I have had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of many prevention-minded organizations to introduce myself and update them on the ThinkFirst Foundation. It has been so rewarding to be greeted with enthusiastic handshakes and

support everywhere I go, from executive directors to front-line advocates for injury prevention who know and love ThinkFirst.

The ThinkFirst Foundation is here to serve you. Please feel free to call me, or Diane Ciambone, administrative assistant, at any time.

Your Partner in Prevention,
Debby Gerhardstein

Debby Gerhardstein, RN, BSN, MA, is the executive director of the ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation. She has an MA in Organizational Leadership, with a concentration in not-for-profit management from Lewis University, Romeoville, IL. Debby has served on the ThinkFirst Board of Directors for 6 years, has chaired numerous committees, and was previously the state chapter director for Illinois. Prior to that she was a certified rehabilitation nurse, caring for people with brain and spinal cord injuries. Her husband, Tom, is a business owner, and their two sons are graduates of the University of Illinois.

MISSION

ThinkFirst: Leading injury prevention through education, research and policy



This edition of Prevention Pages is brought to you by the dedicated sponsoring physicians of ThinkFirst Saginaw, Michigan, Dr. E. Malcolm Field and Dr. Gerald R. Schell, of the Field Neurosciences Institute at St. Mary's of Michigan.

Save the Date!
ThinkFirst
Annual Conference
April 26-27, 2008
with Pre-Conference
Chapter Training April 25th
Chicago, IL • Hyatt Regency

ThinkFirst

National Injury Prevention Foundation

2007 Accolades

David Cavanaugh, MD
ThinkFirst Ark-La-Tex

Community Service Award
Louisiana State Medical Society,
September 2007

Michelle Gibler, PhD
ThinkFirst Missouri

Lifetime Achievement Award
Columbia Safe Kids Coalition,
July 2007

Vicki Hill, RN, BSN
ThinkFirst Alabama

**Excellence in
Nursing Practice**
Children's Hospital of Alabama,
May 2007

Darcy Keith

ThinkFirst Indianapolis

Volunteer of the Year

Brain Injury Association of Indiana,
October 2007

Mack J. Marsh, Jr.

ThinkFirst Ark-La-Tex

40 Under 40 Professionals

Greater Shreveport
Chamber of Commerce and the
Young Professionals Initiative,
December 2007

Nena Ray, LPN

ThinkFirst Indianapolis

Health Care Hero

Indianapolis Business Journal,
March 2007

Hulman Health

Achievement Award

Indiana Public Health Foundation,
October 2007

ThinkFirst Missouri

Columbia, MO

People Saving People Award

National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration Region XII,
July 2007

Michael Turner, MD

ThinkFirst Indianapolis

"TOP DOC"

Peer-reviewed award
for top Indianapolis
Pediatric Neurosurgeon,
November 2007

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Russell Amundson, MD, Philadelphia, PA

I would like to thank the ThinkFirst Foundation Board of Directors for their confidence in electing me as chairman of the board. I am thankful for this chance to help direct this organization into a future bright with opportunity.

My experience with ThinkFirst began when my twenty year old was just three and our neurosurgical practice began a helmet give-away program to children of need in our community. Formal training in the ThinkFirst curriculum and the development of a local chapter led to thousands of children being reached in our ThinkFirst presentations.

This resulted in an invitation to serve on the national board and the assignment to develop our ThinkFirst for Youth (TFFY) curriculum. I am happy to say that this program has been a success and the result of many from across the continent working collaboratively.

I have witnessed a healthy transition in the ThinkFirst Foundation during my time serving on the board. The Foundation is a responsive central hub to a network of contributing units. These units are the ThinkFirst chapters — identifying community needs, working with the national office to develop and distribute products and curriculum, and performing research studies to assess program effectiveness.

As I see it, the role of the national office is to expand our funding base, increase our national and international exposure and provide the tools you need to reach our communities with our messages for safety and injury prevention.

We are working at expanding our relationships with medical professional societies as well as health-related corporations to help their members and clients "think first." There is great potential within the diverse corporate world to build partnerships and raise awareness among consumers in the automotive, entertainment, insurance and sports industries. Foundations and government agencies are also key partners. We can realize a reduction in traumatic injuries if we all work together to enrich our programs, expand our outreach, and help everyone learn to "think first."

NOTES FROM THE PAST CHAIRMAN

David Cavanaugh, MD, Shreveport, LA

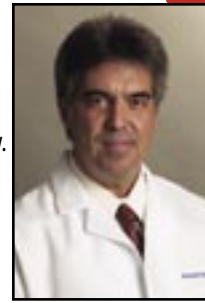
First and foremost, I want to thank each member of the ThinkFirst family nationally and internationally for all the work completed during my term as your chairman of the ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation. It has, and continues to be, an honor to work with and serve this dedicated group of board members, staff, directors, VIPs and others who make up the ThinkFirst family.

The publication of this edition of Prevention Pages, the successful completion of the membership structure, a new executive director, the VIP training video, the Boost 'em Up project, ThinkFirst For Youth, and planning the 2008 Directors' Conference are just a few of the accomplishments nationally. In addition to these are the numerous accomplishments made by individual chapters both in the United States and internationally.

When I speak of leaders involved with this organization, I am referring to all the board members that stepped up to the plate with their time, talents and resources. I am referring to all the chapter and state chapter directors who continue to ensure that the lifesaving message of ThinkFirst is delivered to our target audiences. I am referring to the VIPs who remain the cornerstone of our program. I am referring to the many volunteers and donors who are "charitable investors" in the mission of ThinkFirst. All of these people have been the leaders of ThinkFirst that keep the Foundation vital.

I turn over the chairmanship to a very capable person with extensive experience in ThinkFirst and the "brains" behind the ThinkFirst For Youth program, Dr. Russ Amundson. ThinkFirst will be well served under his leadership. He is always present with new and innovative ideas, and he brings an enthusiasm to the board that will help promote successful expansion of ThinkFirst.

There are far too many people I wish to thank in this column. These people have made a difference in so many lives. My wish is that each of you continues the work of injury prevention in all the different ways that ThinkFirst reaches people of all ages. It has been my pleasure to serve each of you.



Russell Amundson, MD
Chairman, ThinkFirst



David Cavanaugh, MD
Past Chairman

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Philadelphia, PA

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Chicago, IL

Charles Tator, MD
Toronto, ON

Special Thanks
to past Board of Directors members
Lee Larson & Andrew Sherwood,
as well as **Whitney Williams,**
for donating \$11,905.50 in
proceeds to ThinkFirst from their
annual Sporting Clays event!

INTERNATIONAL **ThinkFirst!** SPOTLIGHT For Kids

Gail Rosseau, MD
Chicago, IL



From Left: Natalie Rosseau, Gail Rosseau, MD (Neurosurgeon, Chief of Surgery, Neurologic-Orthopedic Institute of Chicago), Abdelfattah M' Rabat, MD (Orthopedic Surgeon, President of 5th Annual Pan Arab Spine Society Congress, Tunis, Tunisia), Brendan Rosseau

Like many children of neurosurgeons, Natalie Rosseau, age 13, and her brother, Brendan, age 11, often travel with their parents to medical meetings. Natalie and Brendan are the children of neurosurgeon Gail Rosseau and her husband, orthopedic surgeon Richard Rosseau. When traveling in the developing world, they noticed that kids in other countries often travel on the handlebars of bikes or mopeds without helmets. They were astounded to learn that there were no head

and spine injury prevention programs in many parts of the world, so they decided to do something about it! They looked into existing programs and decided ThinkFirst was the best program for kids.

Natalie and Brendan's first goal was to improve things for kids in French-speaking Africa. They acquired grant funding through ThinkFirst and produced a voice-over of the Street Smart video. They then rented a booth at a local French-themed Farmer's market to raise money to purchase copies of the DVD they produced. They presented the program in Senegal in March 2007. It was seen by 120 students and 12 neurosurgeons and was featured by the national news network.

The Chicago Institute of Neurosurgery and Neuroresearch (CINN) Foundation, a philanthropic association which funds neurosurgical research and community service projects, then funded their grant application for a program in Tunisia. Natalie and Brendan traveled to Tunis, where they presented their project for Tunisian children to neurosurgeons and orthopedic surgeons at the PanArab Spine Society meeting, as seen in the photo above.

SPOTLIGHT ON A PROGRAM

Virginia Corrigan, RN, MSN
Wilmington, DE



Virginia Corrigan, RN, MSN, state director of ThinkFirst Delaware and project coordinator for the TFFY pilot study

ThinkFirst for Youth (TFFY) closes the gap between the well-established, best-practice ThinkFirst for Kids curriculum (grades 1-3), and the nationally recognized, award-winning ThinkFirst for Teens program. TFFY targets grades 4-8, a pivotal time in the lives of young people. The curricula meets national science standards and engages students and teachers alike.

The development of the TFFY curriculum was made possible in part by the Alcoa Foundation. Printing and distribution of the first 100 copies was funded by the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Inc. The TFFY pilot study was funded by the Paralyzed Veterans of America. Twenty-five ThinkFirst chapters partnered with 37 schools, involving 59 classes, and reaching approximately 1,900 children.

The pilot study evaluated the TFFY curriculum through a teacher evaluation, student pre- and post-tests, and student focus groups. The curricula evaluations were all good to excellent. The pre- and post-tests denoted a significant increase in knowledge and change in attitude. The student focus groups indicated that the students enjoyed all the hands-on activities.

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One teacher concisely summed up the curricula, "The different levels of difficulty are clearly explained, allowing the teacher the flexibility to teach content to students of all academic levels."

Training Video for VIP Speakers Now Available!

The most compelling component of the ThinkFirst For Teens program is the powerful personal testimony of the VIP speaker. VIPs are "Voices for Injury Prevention" – individuals who have sustained a traumatic brain or spinal cord injury who share their personal testimony with students and community members. In 2007, ThinkFirst unveiled a NEW TRAINING PROGRAM for VIP SPEAKERS! This 30-minute video, designed by expert VIPs nationwide, prepares speakers for their vital role in injury prevention education by demonstrating powerful presentation techniques of effective VIPs.



TRAINING TOPICS INCLUDE:

- ✓ Three basic components of the VIP testimony
- ✓ Practical presentation techniques
- ✓ Advice on how to answer questions and manage a challenging audience
- ✓ Helpful list of VIP presentation DO's and DON'T's

The video is available for chapter purchase at www.thinkfirst.org

DALE J. SPENCER, Chicago, combined his talents as an award-winning independent filmmaker with his extensive experience as a VIP speaker to lead in the production of this film and the development of a comprehensive training program for VIP speakers nationwide.



The ThinkFirst VIP Speaker Training Program was made possible by generous support from the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation.



Hands-on activities like acting as nerves sending a message help students remember information

Mark Your Calendar!

- DEC. 2007 ... National Drunk & Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month
- MARCH 2008 National Brain Injury Awareness Month
- APRIL 26-27 National ThinkFirst Conference, Chicago, IL
- APRIL Alcohol Awareness Month
- MAY 19-June 1 "Click It or Ticket" Mobilization
- MAY National Bike Month
- MAY 18-24 National Emergency Medical Services Week

iGive.com

With the holiday season approaching, iGive.com provides a great way to get all your shopping needs done AND support ThinkFirst at the same time! iGive.com has over 600 partners – such as Harry and David, Eddie Bauer, Barnes and Noble and many, many more. Simply log on to www.iGive.com, select ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation as "your cause" and then... **GO SHOPPING!!**

ThinkFirst

National Injury Prevention Foundation

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Founded by the
American Association
of Neurological Surgeons
and the Congress of
Neurological Surgeons

Partners in Prevention:

BIOMET

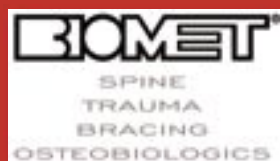
**The North American
Spine Society (NASS)**

SPOTLIGHT on a Partner

Our first 2008 ThinkFirst Annual Conference corporate sponsorship in the amount of \$10,000 was received from BIOMET Trauma, BIOMET Spine. Corporate sponsors contributing \$5,000 or more will have their logo featured on our new Partners in Prevention T-shirt (shown below).



BIOMET handed out 200 "Partners in Prevention" T-shirts at the September 2007 CNS conference



Thank You to ThinkFirst board member Mike Hughes, Vice President, Western U.S. Sales, BIOMET, for making this happen!

SPOTLIGHT on a VIP: Shannon Barnes

*Vicki Hill, RN, BSN
Birmingham, AL*

While on her way home from school on January 22, 2003, Shannon Barnes was hit by a semi truck going 65 mph. Shannon was struck on the driver's side of her car causing it to spin out of control. The semi truck hit Shannon's car again and dragged it 150 feet. When her car finally came loose, the roof caved in on Shannon.

Shannon's neck was broken at C-2 and she sustained severe head trauma and severe bruising to the right side of her brain.

ThinkFirst! For Teens



VIP Speaker, Shannon Barnes,
ThinkFirst Alabama

A blood clot on her brain stem left her in a coma for 4 1/2 months. Though her initial prognosis was not good, she persevered and now shares her story as a ThinkFirst VIP speaker.

Shannon is ready to prove to the world that she has a purpose and reason for surviving, and that she is "still Shannon." Even though she didn't cause her own crash, Shannon is determined to educate the world about safe driving. She emphasizes to students that driving is not a privilege, it's a responsibility. Shannon tells teens that the actions they take behind the wheel today can determine who they'll be tomorrow.

SPOTLIGHT on a State: Alabama

The beautiful state of Alabama has 2 vibrant ThinkFirst chapters located in Birmingham and Mobile.

ThinkFirst Alabama is the name of the state chapter located at Children's Hospital in Birmingham. Vicki Hill is the state chapter director and Dr. Jay Wellons is the sponsoring physician. ThinkFirst Alabama has 2 VIP speakers: Shannon Barnes and Amanda McBay, who work with Vicki to present nearly 300 presentations each year reaching 10,000 kids and teens.

ThinkFirst Mobile is located in southern Alabama. The Mobile chapter is sponsored by the University of South Alabama Children's & Women's Hospital.

The chapter director is Bridget Moore and the sponsoring physician is Dr. Anthony Martino. This new chapter began presenting the program during the 2006-2007 school year and delivered the ThinkFirst message to nearly 3,000 students.

Great job Alabama!

