

NEWS RELEASE
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Shepherd Center Brain Injury Peer Visitor Association Director Ann Boriskie Wins Statewide Hospital Hero Award

ATLANTA – Shepherd Center Brain Injury Peer Visitor Association Director Ann Boriskie was awarded the prestigious Georgia Hospital Heroes Award at the Georgia Hospital Association’s (GHA) annual Hospital Hero Awards luncheon Nov. 9 in Atlanta. Boriskie, who was one of only nine individuals statewide to receive the award, was recognized for her help in offering recovery and resources to brain injury survivors.

Nearly 20 years ago, a car accident left Ann Boriskie with a serious brain injury. With limited resources and no one to guide her through the traumatic experience, the recovery was long and painful. Not wanting others to be without support, she vowed that when she got better she would help others going through the same ordeal.

In 2006, Boriskie joined Shepherd Center as a volunteer peer visitor and, three years later, had logged an impressive 4,000 volunteer hours. Around this same time, she created the Brain Injury Peer Visitor Association, which is modeled after the American Stroke Association’s Peer Program for stroke patients and their families. Her volunteers began visiting brain-injured patients at Shepherd Center in 2009.

At Shepherd Center alone, Boriskie’s team visits patients, families and caregivers five days a week. All team members have either recovered from brain injuries themselves or are family or caregivers of brain injury survivors. The volunteers lend a supportive ear to patients and their family members while modeling how it is possible to thrive after sustaining a serious brain injury. Volunteers also distribute packets of information about brain injuries that Boriskie developed after struggling to find information about her own injury.

Today, the Brain Injury Peer Visitor Association has 150 trained volunteers who conduct peer visits in 41 hospitals and rehabilitation facilities in the Atlanta metropolitan area and throughout Georgia, as well as in Florida and Wisconsin. As of December 2016, approximately 40,000 peer visits have been completed and more than 41,000 volunteer hours have been donated, with Boriskie personally donating more than 10,000 hours.

“Recovery from a brain injury is a difficult and arduous process,” said GHA President and CEO Earl Rogers. “Thanks to Ann Boriskie and her volunteer efforts, many of these patients have found the support they need to ensure a full and complete recovery. She is most-deserving of this award.”

About GHA

Founded in 1929, GHA serves more than 170 hospitals in Georgia and promotes the health and welfare of the public through the development of better hospital care for all Georgia’s citizens. The mission of GHA is to advance the health of individuals and communities by serving as the leading advocate for all Georgia hospitals and health care systems. GHA represents its members before the General Assembly and Congress, as well as state and federal regulatory agencies, and is an allied member of the American Hospital Association. For more information, please call 770-249-4500 or visit gha.org.