



# NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 2

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## Special points of interest:

- 40 Communities
- 9 Businesses

For a current listing visit:

[ndcares.org/  
communityprograms](http://ndcares.org/communityprograms)

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## Unmasking Brain Injury

TBIs are caused by external impacts, usually violent blows to the head. They may occur in a variety of ways, from car accidents to falls to assaults. Brain injuries can also result from non-traumatic means, such as strokes, aneurisms, or oxygen loss.

Brain injuries aren't always readily apparent and few people understand the impact a brain injury can have. Now, however, brain injury survivors are finding their voices through the Unmasking Brain Injury project, which was launched by the North Dakota Brain Injury Net-

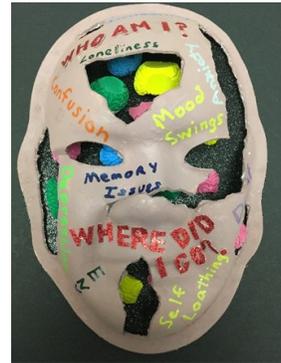
work (NDBIN) in January 2017. NDBIN provides art supplies—masks, paints, and other materials—so survivors can tell their stories. Not only do the masks educate others about what it is like to live with a brain injury, they also provide creative, therapeutic outlets for survivors.

“There’s a story behind every mask and behind every mask there’s a person, a person that’s been touched by brain injury,” said Rebecca Quinn, program director of NDBIN. “This shows it in a visible way.” Since the project’s inception in North Dakota, more than 80

brain injury survivors have created masks. NDBIN has hosted 11 events across the state for people to create masks. The organization also mails masks to individuals, along with a lesson plan that walks them through the process, if they are unable to attend a larger event.

For more information about TBIs or the Unmasking Brain Injury project, contact Quinn at [rebecca.quinn@med.und.edu](mailto:rebecca.quinn@med.und.edu) or (701) 777-5200. Following are some of the masks created by survivors and the stories they wanted to share.

**Name:** Tim City: Grand Forks  
**Brain Injury:** Bicycle Accident-Multiple Skull fractures. Fractured right orbital bone and major damage to temporal lobe.  
**Explanation of Mask:** Explains everything about my TBI.



### Factoid

From 2000 through 2011, 4.2% (235,046) service members who served in all components of the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps were diagnosed with a TBI



**Name:** Tom D. **City:** Dickinson  
**Brain Injury:** Multiple Sclerosis TBI beginning with car crash in Washington City (1973)  
**Explanation of Mask:** The brain fog started after my diagnosis in 2003 and continued for several years. The blue color is from duty in the U.S. Navy (1969-1975)

# COMING SOON

**2018  
Tele-Conferences**  
Who: Steering Committee Members  
All POC's (Community & Business)

What: Teleconferences

When: April 19 & October 18

Where: Via Phone  
Dial in information will be published

Why: Exchange ideas  
Address issues

## Regional Support Network

### Building the ND Cares Support Network

#### Progress?

Since ND Cares officially began operation in January, 2015, our support network has grown to 40 Communities and 9 Businesses. (To view the list of Community and business partners go to [ndcares.org/community programs](http://ndcares.org/community programs).) While these are good numbers, continued expansion is necessary.

#### What next for Communities and Businesses?

Many have asked, "Are we doing OK?" or "What do you want us to do?" We love what we have heard, read, and seen in the communities and in the businesses. Please share your events with us so we can tell others about the great things you are doing. That being said, we encourage Communities and Businesses to look now for processes to provide support when needs are identified. (Some examples: snow shoveling, rides to appointments, clothes, housing, etc) Keep in mind that some of the support may need to come from outside the community or business but at least you know where and how to seek support. If you know of businesses

(big or small) in your community that would be interested in our Business Initiative, let us know. We will contact them and share our program with them.

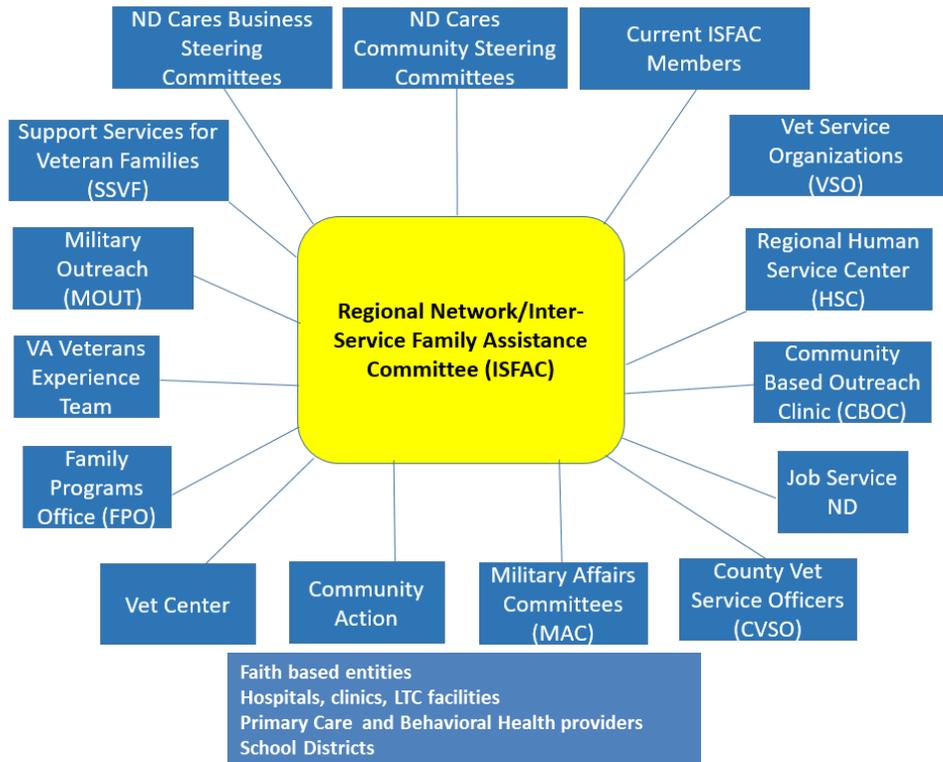
#### What about a Regional Support Network?

The area we need to strengthen is our Regional Support Network structure. In the past it was known as the Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC). Currently, most of those committees are dormant; however, Fargo and Dickinson regions are working hard to rebuild their consolidated network structure. The Fargo ND Cares Steering Committee has agreed to take on the coordination of the Human Services Region 5 support network. The intent of the network is to provide entities, within the respective Human Services Region, with a platform to raise/address issues related to Service Members, Veterans, Families, and Survivors (SMVFS). The network would consist of people from a diverse group of entities, so that the network has the capacity to appropriately address issues at the regional level. The key is developing community based solutions, whenever possible.

Once fully developed, Regional Support Networks will invite our communities and businesses to attend/call-in to the Network meeting, when scheduled. It will allow communities and businesses the opportunity to voice their issues/concerns to a regional level. Systemic issues requiring a solution beyond the local level may be brought to the ND Cares Coalition for consideration/action. At the macro level, the Coalition looks at laws, policies, and processes that inhibit SMVFS from getting to the services they deserve and have earned. The Coalition has over 40 members representing many state, federal, and private entities from across North Dakota, so we have the expertise to provide sound guidance or develop appropriate solutions.

#### The bottom line?

The Regional Support Network concept needs to be strengthened in all 8 Human Service Regions to enhance localized education, communication, and collaboration. This is an objective within goal 2 of our ND Cares strategic plan, which will be worked/coordinated by the ND Cares staff with the support of all our partners.



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