

WIND Conference: SCIRF 12-003
Final Report: July 8, 2014

Goal 1: The Wheeling in New Directions (WIND) consumer conference will be offered every other year, with the next event proposed for the spring of 2014. Along with a varied lineup of topics to enhance the quality of life for people with spinal cord injuries, the conference will include a session on SCIRF-funded research.

Year One Objective 4.1: Set the date, select the venue, form a planning committee and secure the services of an event planner.

Work Completed: The event is scheduled for Saturday May 10, 2014. After visiting several venues and meeting with staff, a selection was made for the Columbia Conference Center. A contract was signed with Jennifer Suber to serve as event planner, splitting the workload between her and SCSCIA staff.

A planning committee was formed and began meeting in April 2013. Though the composition of the committee has changed over the past year, it currently consists of: two SCSCIA staff, professional event planner, a SCSCIA office volunteer, SCIRF Executive Director, three SCSCIA board members, and a staff member with the SC Assistive Technology Exchange, and our VR liaison.

Year One Objective 4.2: Develop all marketing materials to promote the event to consumers with spinal cord injuries and professionals who work with them.

Work Completed: The following materials were developed and distributed:

“Save the Date” Postcards: Mailed to all consumers in January 2014

Brochures: Mailed to all consumers and professionals in March 2014

Hand-delivered to rehabilitation facilities and independent living centers, as well as a selection of urology offices, adapted vehicle dealerships, DME dealers, and home health agencies

Website Updates: Written and posted on an ongoing basis, starting in November 2013

Facebook Promos: Posted on an ongoing basis, starting in November 2013

Poster: Displayed at Assistive Technology Expo and in presentations to Breeze groups

Year One Objective 4.3: Research and secure keynote speaker, decide on lineup of breakout topics, and secure speakers for each topic.

Work Completed:

General Sessions Attended by All Participants: Daniel Tratt, a New York City special education teacher with a spinal cord injury, was recruited for the keynote session. The final session will be a SCIRF research update by Catherine Graham.

In addition to the general sessions, four breakout sessions have been scheduled, with three topics to be presented during each breakout session. The 12 breakout sessions include four panel discussions. Session topics are as follows:

Taking The Reins on Pain: Clinical hypnosis for pain management
Good Grub: Adapted cooking from a wheelchair
Stretch, Breathe and Relax: Adapted yoga
Grab a Paddle, a Lifejacket, and Go: Adapted Kayaking
Aw, Mom, Do I Have To? Parenting Panel Discussion
Tips from the Toolbox: Wheelchair Maintenance Panel Discussion
On My Own: Independent Living Panel Discussion
Just Do It: Exercise Session
There's No Place Like Home: Home Accessibility Panel Discussion
More Than Just Social: Social Media as a Communication Tool
Dinner and a Movie: Online Dating
Pinpointing a Better You: Acupuncture

Fifteen of the 25 speakers have spinal cord injuries or are wheelchair users for other conditions. Additionally, a dancer with a spinal cord injury put on a dance demonstration, Grace on Wheels, during one of the breaks.

Year One Objective 4.4: Work with planning committee and event planner on vendors, sponsors, scholarships, registration, information packets and other components of the event.

Work Completed: A total of 32 vendors have been recruited, representing products ranging from the Shower Buddy alternative to a roll-in shower, the FreeWheel attachment for all-terrain wheelchair use, Botox use for bladder issues and Delta Airlines on air travel for passengers with disabilities.

A total of 13 corporate sponsorships have been sold and 13 individual sponsorships solicited. The Presenting Sponsor is Southeast Medical urological products.

Over the past year, a myriad of other details have been addressed and plans made for such components of the event as: food and beverage, logistics with the venue, the Comfort Room staffed by an RN, volunteer staffing at the event, a photography contest, WIND Works station for attendees interested in going back to work, an after-WIND get-together at a local restaurant, and "What's Your Bag" lunch tables that allow attendees to eat with other people who share similar interests.

WIND Statistics

Registered Attendees: 118

Total Attended: 103 (15 no-shows)

Volunteers 43

Please see attached document for a demographic analysis of WIND attendees.

WIND Summary Video:

A 3 ½ minute video was filmed and produced that captures the essence of the event. The video will be shared with all sponsors, posted on YouTube, the association's website and the association's Facebook page. It will also be used to highlight the association's work and promote future events.