

SCIRF #2017 SI-01

Principal Investigator: Angela Rodriguez, MSW
Executive Director
South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Association

Bio:

Angela Rodriguez was born and raised in Decatur, Illinois. She spent thirteen years in the United States Air Force, moving up the ladder to Health Promotion Director. After leaving the air force she attended the University of South Carolina and received a double major in English and Experimental Psychology. Angela then continued on at the University of South Carolina obtaining a Masters in Social Work. She began working with the disability population in 2006, working with the National MS Society, and began her adventure with the SC Spinal Cord Injury Association as the Outreach Coordinator in 2011. In 2017, Angela became the Executive Director of the SC Spinal Cord Injury Association. In her free time she enjoys reading, playing with her cats, and being outdoors.

Overview:

The South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Association (SCSCIA) was established in 1989 by a small group of individuals with spinal cord injuries (SCI). They wanted to find a way to empower South Carolinians with spinal cord injuries through peer support, consumer and family education, and advocacy.

Today the statewide association offers free membership to individuals in South Carolina's 46 counties and is a chapter of the United Spinal Association. The major activities of the SCSCIA are: 1) seeking and promoting research opportunities for people with SCI to participate, 2) ongoing education to people impacted by SCI, 3) face-to-face and telephone peer support groups, 4) outreach to individuals with new injuries, 5) information and referral, 6) advocacy, 7) a Wheeling In New Directions (WIND) conference, and 8) injury prevention education. All of these functions support the association's mission of "Building connections in the community through education, awareness, and peer support."

The SCSCIA hopes to achieve greater awareness of SCI and research opportunities within SC, bring educational research to those with SCI, and provide resources to people with SCI, family and friends, and professionals.