

Georgia Advocacy Office, Inc.

Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with a Traumatic Brain Injury

(PATBI)

FOUNDED ON OUR VALUES

Individuals who have experienced a traumatic brain injury (TBI) contribute gifts, perspectives, and opportunities which are essential to all of our communities and efforts.

PATBI PROGRAM PRIORITIES

1. To protect persons with traumatic brain injury in Georgia from abuse and neglect.
2. To respond to allegations of discrimination and legal rights violations of persons with traumatic brain injury.
3. To promote the integration and self-determination of persons with traumatic brain injuries in the community.

Call, write, or visit

Georgia Advocacy Office, Inc.

One Decatur Town Center

150 E. Ponce de Leon Avenue, Suite 430

Decatur, Georgia 30030

404-885-1234 or 1-800-537-2329 (both are voice or TDD)

404-378-0031 fax

<http://www.thegao.org>; info@thegao.org

One Story of Our Work

WHEN WE MET CARL*, he was thirty years old and living in a state hospital. Prior to his admission, Carl enjoyed guitar music and lifting weights. He received a traumatic brain injury at the age of 26 that caused him to lose his sight.

Carl was referred to GAO's PATBI advocate by his hospital roommate. Carl told the advocate that he was taken to the hospital by his mother and had been there for four years. He was clear that he wanted to leave the hospital and live in the community.

To be successful in the community, Carl, with help from hospital staff, worked on developing the skills necessary to be able to move around more independently. He also needed the support of his mother, who was his legal guardian.

The PATBI advocate spoke with Carl's mother and helped arrange for her to speak with another mother whose son was living in the community with supports. Carl's mother then understood better what could be possible and realized that there were other local mothers who had similar experiences. As a result, she became more supportive of her son's moving into the community.

The next step was to advocate for a Medicaid waiver and to locate a home in the community for Carl. Through much work and repeated conference calls, a plan was developed in which Carl and his mother would visit a possible home in which he would live with two other gentlemen. Negotiations with another state agency produced additional funding so that Carl would have support throughout the day. Support during the evening was to be provided by one of the two roommates.

Ultimately, Carl was able to leave the hospital and move to a home in which he has more choices and the opportunity to do more with his life. Carl is now 33 years old and looking at options for work in the community.

**name changed*