

**Ninth Annual Northern Kentucky  
Traumatic Brain Injury Conference**  
*“TBI and Sports: Keeping Our Heads in the Game”*  
March 27, 2015

**Speaker Biographies**

**Todd Arthur, MD** – Dr. Arthur is a 1999 graduate of the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He completed his Pediatrics training at West Virginia University, Charleston Division and his Pediatric Neurology Residency at the University of Washington (Seattle Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center). He evaluates and treats pediatric patients who have suffered brain injury in the Outpatient Head Injury Center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Dr. Arthur specializes in the management of pediatric concussions and post-traumatic headaches.

**Joseph F. Clark, PhD** - Dr. Clark is a professor of Neurology at the University of Cincinnati and has been in Cincinnati for 15 years. He is a team leader for the Concussion Management Program for sports medicine and assists with all the University Athletes who have or are suspected to have a concussion. He also designed and initiated many of the concussion prevention and concussion diagnosis methods used by the University of Cincinnati, many of which are being adopted by other Universities.

**Kerry R. Crone, MD FAANS** - Dr. Crone graduated from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine in 1978. Following graduation, he completed his neurosurgical training in 1985 at the North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Bowman Gray School of Medicine, Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He completed a fellowship in pediatric neurosurgery at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Canada. Dr. Crone was appointed as a clinical scholar at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in 1986 and became the first full-time pediatric neurosurgeon in the tri-state region. He created the division of pediatric neurosurgery at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and remained as division director until 2012. In 2013, Dr. Crone accepted the position as Program Director for Resident Training in the Department of Neurosurgery at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center. He has been named as one of the “Best Doctors in America” every year since 1998.

**Mark H. Deis, MD** – Dr. Deis was born and raised in Dayton, OH, the youngest of six children. He completed under-graduate studies at the University of Dayton, medical school at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, then went on to complete a residency in General Pediatrics at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and a fellowship in Developmental Pediatrics at Children's Hospital Medical Center of Akron. He then stayed on as a member of the Department of Developmental Pediatrics in Akron for 2 years, moved into general pediatrics with the Cleveland Clinic Foundation for the next two years, and for the past 12 years has been with Pediatric Associates of Northern Kentucky. His main clinical interests are Down syndrome, ADHD, care of children in hospice, psychopharmacology and developmental disabilities in general. He has been an invited guest speaker for the Cleveland Clinic Foundation for the past 17 years, and is the author of three chapters of a review book on normal and abnormal child development for the Cleveland Clinic. He lives in Union, KY with his wife, Andrea, and their 5 children, ages ranging 10 to 21.

**Becky Cook, DNP, APRN-PC** – Ms. Cook provides advanced nursing care for pediatric trauma patients including care of the traumatically injured child/family; comprehensive patient/family assessment including physical exam, diagnostics and labs; patient/family education; school re-entry services, collaboration/consultation with multidisciplinary services and resource referral. She facilitates trauma resuscitation team processes and communication to assure optimal patient/family outcomes. Provide and coordinate educational opportunities for staff nurses, surgical residents, social services, child life specialists and school personnel.

**Deborah J. Dillon, BA** – Ms. Dillon was a financial expert for over 25 years until diagnosed with a brain tumor that physicians predicted would be terminal. After unexpectedly surviving the brain tumor, she became committed to creating a set of tools to make it easier to face the challenges of illness, injury, dementia, aging,

etc. Experts in the fields of care giving, medical matters, finances, children, pets, domestic and household matters, small business, and emergency planning were consulted to create over 70 one-of-a-kind tools to enable us to get the help we need to keep our lives together when faced with the unplanned events in our lives.

**Michelle Gerken, PhD** - Dr. Gerken has been teaching at EKU for 18 years. She has worked with a variety of patients from head injury, elderly, children with autism, developmental disabilities, at-risk youth, and clients with CVA. Currently, she is performing research related to multiple sclerosis, foster children and parenting, developmental disabilities, and evidence-based practice.

**Rick Graebe, OD, FCOVD** – Dr. Graebe received both his B.S. degree in Visual Science and Doctorate of optometry from Indiana University. He is a Behavioral Optometrist and learning expert. He has been in private practice for the past 24 years. Besides offering full comprehensive eyecare, he also offers vision therapy and neuro-rehabilitation service.

**Tim Johns** – Mr. Johns received the inspiration for the Brain Injury Adventure Camp, Inc. after his son, T.K., suffered a traumatic brain injury while snowboarding in Colorado in November 2003 at the age of 25. While exploring opportunities for T.K. to grow physically and mentally, he discovered an adventure camp in Colorado. In 2009 he began developing a similar camp on 42 acres in Henderson County, KY that serves those with brain injury, special needs and other disabilities.

**Kirk D. Little, PsyD** - Dr. Little is a licensed psychologist. He earned his baccalaureate degree in psychology from Brown University and his doctorate degree from the University of Hartford. Dr. Little is specially trained in neuropsychological assessment, pediatrics and child and family therapy. He has been a professor at the University of Hartford Graduate Institute of Professional Psychology and Central Connecticut State University, teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in psychological assessment and developmental psychology. Dr. Little is the President-Elect of the International Society for Neurofeedback and Research (ISNR.org) and is President of the Brain Injury Alliance of Kentucky, NKY Branch (BIAK.us). He is the founder and President of Little Psychological Services ([www.LittlePsych.com](http://www.LittlePsych.com)), where he has practiced in Florence, KY since 2002. He can be reached at [Kirk.Little@LittlePsych.com](mailto:Kirk.Little@LittlePsych.com).

**Michael J. Miller, MD** - Dr. Miller was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio and has been a resident of Northern Kentucky for the past 30 years. He is a 1984 graduate of the Ohio State University School of Medicine and subsequently completed a residency in Family Medicine from St. Elizabeth Healthcare here in Northern Kentucky. After finishing his sports medicine fellowship from the Cleveland Clinic in 1988, he returned to Northern Kentucky to help start the St. Elizabeth Healthcare Sports Medicine Center. In the summer of 2010, he helped develop and implement the St. Elizabeth Healthcare Concussion Program. Dr. Miller and his wife of 30 years have two daughters and currently reside in Boone County.

**Randy Neises** – Mr. Neises is the owner of Palmetto Construction, Inc. in Louisiana, but grew up in Bellevue, KY. Randy suffered a TBI from a bicycle accident on July 20, 2013. He was at Rapides Medical Center in Alexandria, Louisiana for 18 days and then air cared to UC Medical Center in Cincinnati where he remained in ICU for 9 days. He then was moved to HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital in Edgewood KY for one month and 4 days. He has made a remarkable recovery and has been able to resume his business and bicycling activities.

**Nicholas M. Nighswander, Esq** – Mr. Nighswander had a short stint in the Canadian Football League and the World Football League both in 1975 and is a member of the NFL Alumni organization. He graduated from the Chase College of Law with a juris doctorate degree in 1983. He was a former part-time public defender in the Kenton, Gallatin and Boone County System and past criminal justice act attorney for criminal defendants in the Southern District of Ohio and the Eastern District of Kentucky Federal Courts. Since 1985 he has engaged in a private law practice in Florence KY specializing in bankruptcy, domestic relations and civil litigation. He is a member of the pending Plaintiffs' class action NFL Concussion lawsuit: [www.nflconcussionsettlement.com](http://www.nflconcussionsettlement.com). Mr. Nighswander and his wife of 40 years have two sons and reside in Northern Kentucky since 1978.

**Mindy Ortlieb, OTR/L** - Ms. Ortlieb is a 2003 graduate of Eastern Kentucky University's Occupational Therapy program. She currently works at Newcare of Louisville, an acquired brain injury home and community rehabilitation program. Mindy is on the Board of Trustees and Board of Directors of BRIDGES, Inc. and currently facilitates the monthly support group meetings. She entered the field of Occupational Therapy after seeing the progress her sister Nichole made after she sustained a TBI in June of 1997.

**Carole Paine, MS, LAc** - Ms. Paine is a licensed acupuncturist with the NCCAOM, the state of Ohio and California. Carole trained at the highly regarded American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in San Francisco. She also interned in China at the Cheng Du Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Carole completed a study intensive in Beijing, China with senior acupuncturist, Wang Ju-Yi, DOM, of Xuan Wu Hospital of Chinese Medicine. The study intensives became part of the material used for Jason Robertson, L.Ac. and Wang Ju-Yi's book, Applied Channel Theory in Chinese Medicine. Carole has had the honor of studying Dragon's Way with Nan Lu, Daoist teacher, author, acupuncturist, herbalist and Qi Gong master. Dragon's Way is a Qi Gong class developed by Nan Lu that is nationally taught. Qi Gong is a branch of Traditional Chinese Medicine that supports our inner balance. Carole came to study Traditional Chinese Medicine seeking health and balance in her own life. She has been happily engaged in the dynamics of practice since 2000.

**Ashok Poluri, MD, DABPMR** - Dr. Poluri graduated from medical school in India and completed his residency in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PM&R) from Stony Brook University Medical Center, New York where he was Chief Resident followed by fellowship in Interventional Pain Management. He is Board certified in PM&R and pain management. He has extensive research background in the field of PM&R with over 20 publications in peer reviewed journals and training in exercise physiology. He has joined Health South of Northern Kentucky as Rehab-Medical Director in October 2014 and has been consulting at various local hospitals helping patients restore function and lead active independent lives.

**Tom Sullivan, PhD, ABPP-CN** - Dr. Tom Sullivan is a local neuropsychologist. He founded the concussion management program for the Cincinnati Bengals in 1998, and has been with the Bengals or the NFL since that time. He works with children and adults.

**Amery Treble-Barna, PhD** - Dr. Amery Treble-Barna is a psychology fellow at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Her research focus is in pediatric traumatic brain injury.

**Chad Walters, DO** - Dr. Walters received his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in 2003. He completed his residency training with the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Kentucky. After completion of his residency training, he served as Assistant Professor in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Kentucky as well as Medical Director of the Brain Injury program at Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital in Lexington, KY. He currently holds a private practice in Louisville, KY and serves as Medical Director for Neuro Restorative in the Louisville, Middletown, Lexington and Ashland locations. Dr. Walters specializes in neuromuscular rehabilitation with special emphasis on medical management of traumatic brain injury patients, neuromuscular rehabilitation and electrodiagnosis. He is currently a Certified Brain Injury Specialist Instructor and is Board Certified by the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

**Steven Wheeler, PhD, OTR/L** - Dr. Wheeler is an Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy at the West Virginia University School of Medicine and a Certified Brain Injury Specialist (CBIS). Dr. Wheeler has published as well as presented both nationally and internationally on community re-entry issues following TBI. He received his Ph.D. in Health Related Sciences with a specialty in occupational therapy from Virginia Commonwealth University; his dissertation topic was Community Participation and Life Satisfaction following Intensive Community Based Rehabilitation using a Life Skills Training Approach. Dr. Wheeler serves as a consultant with NeuroRestorative's community based, brain injury rehabilitation programs in Ashland, Lexington, and Louisville, KY. He is also a Governors Appointee on the West Virginia TBI / SCI Rehabilitation Fund Board.