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Two Local Nonprofits Announce Partnership to Benefit Brain Injury Recovery

NEW ORLEANS, LA— This month, the Secret Gardens Tour® (SGT) and The Brain Injury Association of Louisiana (BIALA) will begin a partnership to raise funds and awareness for brain and spinal cord injury recovery needs in our community and statewide with an eye to merging in the future. The organizations will share an office space in the Advocacy Center at 8325 Oak Street, and SGT will assist BIALA in their development activities.

One of the first items on the agenda in the new partnership is to create a comprehensive online resource guide to brain and spinal cord injury recovery. For years the two organizations have compiled separate resource guides. By merging the two, they will provide a thorough all-encompassing guide to the sometimes convoluted, long, and expensive recovery process after a brain or spinal cord injury. The guide will be available online for any person recovering from a brain injury or their loved one, who needs some guidance.

BIALA is a statewide 501(c)3 nonprofit organization focused on creating a better future for Louisiana citizens with brain injury and/or spinal cord injury through education, community support groups, obtaining services, and advocacy. Their services include a resource center for brain and spinal cord injury recovery, community support groups, prevention awareness and education, an annual conference for survivors, consumers, and healthcare professionals, community outreach events, and a featured speakers tour including presentations by healthcare professionals and survivors. Executive Director of BIALA, Tommy Lotz, is “truly looking forward to a great partnership and synergy of mission.”

SGT began as an annual fundraiser in 2003 after a group of Uptown families and friends were personally affected by the triumphs and tribulations of brain injury recovery. Based upon the concept that nature is healing, the annual garden tour and fundraiser reveals the private, hidden gems of Uptown New Orleans, and all the proceeds support brain injury recovery programs, from providing refreshments for the meetings of the Acquired Brain Injury Survivor Support Group to the installation of the SGT Serenity Garden, a healing space for the public on the grounds of the newly restored Milton H. Latter Memorial Library on St. Charles Avenue.

Julie Lazur, Executive Director of SGT, states, “We are both very small nonprofits with the same goal: to help those recovering from a brain or spinal cord injury in our community. It only makes sense for us to work together, combine our resources, and make a greater impact in the lives of brain or spinal cord injury survivors.”

One of BIALA and SGT’s first joint efforts will be a series of fundraiser bowl-o-thons across Louisiana in October.

Questions or comments may be directed to Julie Lazur at 215-378-7014 or SecretGardensNOLA@gmail.com or Tommy Lotz at 504-982-0685 or tlotz@biala.org. Also, please visit the respective websites, www.SecretGardensTour.org and Biala.org.

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