



**Brain Injury  
Alliance**  
ARIZONA

## Professional Profile: Lucy Cisneros

### Community Liaison for Centre for Neuro Skills, on Neuro-Rehabilitation and the Importance of Brain Injury Advocacy

By Keerthi Vemulapalli

Imagine being completely independent one moment and having to re-learn how to walk, eat, and talk the next. Lucy Cisneros, a former case manager and current brain injury community liaison, works with people experiencing such challenges on a daily basis. One of her patients gave his permission for Lucy to share his story. At the age of 19, he was in a not-at-fault motor vehicle accident and was not expected to last through the night. It was predicted that even if he survived, he wouldn't be able to eat, talk, walk, or care for himself. However, after undergoing quality rehabilitation for three months, he miraculously is now able to walk independently, only occasionally using a cane, and can also eat and care for himself. Oh, and he is currently in his second year of college.

Stories such as these are why Lucy does what she does. She previously worked as a case manager for seven years and still maintains her certification. Her time was spent advocating and coordinating care for people who had sustained life-changing injuries, including brain injuries, by helping them reach their optimal level of recovery. Currently, Lucy is employed with Centre for Neuro Skills as a community liaison. Her responsibilities now include meeting with physicians, case managers, therapists, family members, and brain injury survivors, as well as members of the community, to provide them with information and education regarding neuro-rehabilitation.

Typically, Lucy meets people and their families at



the time of an injury, or shortly afterwards. She observes them during their first steps of neuro-rehabilitation and is able to watch them working hard during therapy. Some, like the young man in the previous story, are re-learning how to do simple tasks by themselves again. "It is humbling to see brain injury survivors regain their activities of daily living, and many times, return to work," Lucy says.

Lucy's advocacy also includes her interactions with the Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona (BIAAZ), which she has actively been involved with since December 2016. She says advocacy is very important to her because "the more people [who] learn and understand brain injuries, the more brain injury survivors and their families, will get the rehabilitation needed to regain their rhythm of living." In the future, she hopes to become more involved with BIAAZ through professional trainings and volunteering for Camp Can Do.

To those considering a career assisting clients with brain injury, Lucy suggests they not only love working with people with brain injuries, but also with the strong community of brain injury advocates who offer much support.

An Arizona native, Lucy was born and raised in the small mining town of Superior. In her spare time, she enjoys spending it with her 18-month-old granddaughter by taking her out to eat, shopping, and going on long walks together. This winter, she is looking forward to the cool weather, the holiday season, and maybe even some snowboarding.