

BURN CARE COMMENTARY®

WINTER 2022 - THE EDUCATION ISSUE



CHRISTIAN COOPER

BURN SURVIVOR, PEER SUPPORTER,
PATIENT EXPERIENCE EDUCATOR



BRCA
BURN AND RECONSTRUCTIVE
CENTERS OF AMERICA



JOSEPH M. STILL
BURN CENTERS, INC.

An Affiliate of Burn and Reconstructive Centers of America

LETTER FROM THE

Director of Education

WELCOME to the winter edition of Burn Care Commentary. This issue focuses on education and how Burn and Reconstructive Centers of America (BRCA) works to improve patient outcomes by educating providers and partners throughout the country.

As the Director of Education at BRCA, I am tasked with overseeing our education efforts. I continue to be impressed by the drive of both our education team and our outreach team. Making burn education more accessible and setting each patient up for the best possible outcome is our main focus—thanks to our dedicated team of educators, Physician and Provider Liaisons and administrative support, we have been able to ramp up our efforts to offer virtual classes, in-person training, regular episodes on our podcast, *Burn Care Radio*, and more.

Having spent a great deal of time in academia, including attaining a Medical Education Research Certificate recognized by the Association of American Medical Colleges while

teaching at Georgetown, I know how important education is and the necessity of quality educators. Being an effective educator goes well beyond giving a talk—there is a science to teaching at BRCA and it's been a great privilege and joy to help impart our education science to our educators. We pride ourselves on prioritizing the students' acquisition of knowledge rather than merely presenting.

Since 1978 BRCA has worked to treat every patient no matter their age or range of injury. Through education, we honor that first promise of treating those who need help by advancing the care they receive before making it to the hospital or burn center. We hope you enjoy this issue on education and learn a little more about the work we do across our system. ♦

PHILIP FIDLER, M.D., F.A.C.S. is the Director of Education at BRCA. *He did his Fellowships at Yale in Trauma and Critical Care and Harvard in Burn Surgery. He is Board Certified in General Surgery and Surgical Critical Care.*

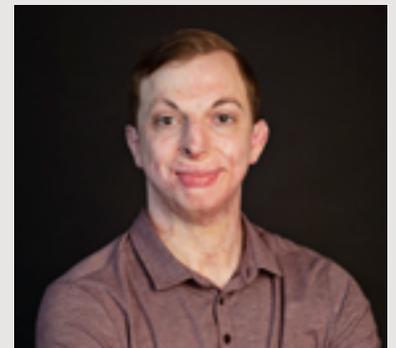


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After attending a BRCA ‘Stop the Bleed’ course, paramedics’ quick actions helped give Casey Davis (pictured) the best possible outcome for mobility and function after a car accident traumatically amputated Davis’s left arm approximately three inches below his shoulder.

Advanced burn life support

Training that saves lives

THROUGHOUT MY MANY YEARS of taking care of critically injured patients, one key component of success has always stood out above the rest, and that is training. I was taught many years ago—by people more intelligent and experienced than me—a motto that has helped me deliver the best care possible,

the five P’s: Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance.

Advanced Burn Life Support training, or ABLS training, is designed to help prepare caregivers, first responders, physicians and other healthcare providers to provide proper burn care. Whether in the field, at an urgent care

facility, in an emergency department or at a specialty burn center, the goal is to set burn patients up for the best possible outcome.

Through the BRCA Foundation, an accredited provider of *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* continuing medical education credits, healthcare professionals have increased access to burn education through scholarships for ABLS and other education programs.

Each year, the foundation sponsors approximately 30 ABLS classes throughout the U.S., reaching an average of nearly 600 caregivers. As caregivers, we all have a responsibility to our patients to provide the highest level of care possible. Therefore, the information in these classes is data-supported and contains proven best practices to help achieve the best possible outcomes for each patient.

Additionally, the foundation helps educate EMS and hospital staff on current emergency burn care strategies and preparation through virtual and in-person lectures, podcasts, a custom education website and ABLS courses. Thanks to a diverse education team comprised of experienced nurses, advanced practice providers, paramedics and physicians dedicated to creating burn education, we extend the knowledge of burn care beyond the walls of our burn centers and honor our mission of *Healing Patients. Healing Families. Healing Lives.®* ♦

BY SEAN MCCONNELL,
MBA, BSN, NREMT-P
Director of Web-Based Education
at BRCA.



Laicy Haro promotes BRCA education at a conference.

Educating across a national system

The impact of Physician and Provider Liaisons in the field

SINCE 1978, Burn and Reconstructive Centers of America (BRCA) has continued to grow, committed to following the mission inspired by its first patient.

One avenue of growth is through relationships with hospitals across the country, which helps make life-saving services more accessible to those in need. The second avenue is through boots-on-the-ground community outreach and education. Located at each facility in BRCA’s system, Physician and Provider Liaisons (PPL) build relationships with referral sources. These relationships help improve the patient experience by educating medical professionals

on emergent treatments for burn patients, coordinating communication with the community and hospital staff and enhancing the transfer process to BRCA locations.

“The PPL team does a great job in the field,” said Ashton Brantley, Regional Director of Outreach-East at BRCA. “Since I first came on board almost five years ago, I am amazed by the team’s ability to raise awareness for our services and build relationships and trust with community leaders and medical professionals.”

A basic breakdown of the PPL role includes continually raising awareness about BRCA and

its services, creating authentic relationships with contacts in their assigned communities, offering clinical education and encouraging facilities to consider BRCA as their new standard for burn care. Persistent to a point, outgoing and charismatic, the PPL acts as the face of BRCA within their communities.

“A PPLs role and responsibilities go far beyond the basics of marketing,” said Laicy Haro, a Physician and Provider Liaison covering the Tallahassee, FL, and panhandle area.

To be a successful PPL, Haro explained, “We need to utilize a holistic approach to create value for

medical professionals through a clear and concise message.”

PPLs cater their messaging to highlight BRCA’s mission according to the individual needs of each healthcare facility. For example, if the facility is rural, PPLs can speak on BRCA’s history with farming incidents. Or, if the area has limited ambulances, they can speak to BRCA’s relationships with air medics and the call center’s ability to help coordinate patient pickup for faster care.

Even as COVID-19 spread, causing lockdowns across the country, the PPL team continued to put themselves on the line each day.

“We go into all different kinds of facilities that are treating, seeing and testing patients for COVID,” said Shawnda Myers, a Physician and Provider Liaison covering the southern half of Texas. “During the global pandemic, we have still worked to meet and be present in each of our facilities to ensure our relationships continue to grow.”

In 2020 alone, the PPL team helped build more than 4,000 new contacts and more than 3,700 new facility connections. In addition to creating new relationships, several PPLs double as educators, teaching classes every month on emergency burn care, pre-hospital emergency burn care, EMS burn lectures and more.

PPLs are not a clinical role. Still, their knowledge of burn care is part of what helps them bring awareness to the BRCA system. For example, each PPL has a thorough understanding of American Burn Association (ABA) guidelines, state and local protocols and BRCA protocols, allowing PPLs to better educate first responders and

healthcare providers on necessary guidelines and provide a seamless referral process to BRCA.

“**We are the face of what we do, and we are the ones who connect our network with the facilities we partner with,” Myers said. “The PPL is a direct line to BRCA.”**

While in the community, PPLs connect with contacts like physician assistants, nurses and other providers who have a personal connection with a BRCA facility. Those connections help open the door to more personal questions that get to the heart of patient care and recovery. Just like any patient story, these answers pull in listeners, often their coworkers, piquing their interest and creating new advocates for BRCA.

“Our contacts become our friends,” Haro said. “We learn about their families, their successes, their challenges and their interests. I like to think we [PPLs] add to the human component of BRCA. Even if a provider or contact hasn’t been to a BRCA facility—they know us.”

Beyond building relationships, PPLs provide an individualized approach specific to their designated regions, communities and environments.

Through weekly and monthly analysis of current referral patterns across BRCA’s system, PPLs communicate issues with BRCA leadership, watch for changes in referral patterns, identify first-time referring providers or accounts and visit and ensure that each patient is being sent to the most appropriate and closest BRCA facility to get the treatment they need.

“Having a PPL at each location is a vital piece of the puzzle,” Myers said. “We can share who we are and what we do through the connections we make—if we didn’t have the PPLs, we would not be able to reach as far as we have.”

Over the last 40 years, Burn and Reconstructive Centers of America has grown to be the nation’s largest physician organization that provides burn, reconstructive and wound care to patients across the country, ensuring each patient experiences the continuity of care unique to a provider group with the breadth of clinical disciplines BRCA provides.

“Being able to meet in person with our contacts is just another thing we offer that is not always offered by every burn center,” Myers said. “It is not always easy, especially during the COVID-19 lockdowns, but we strive to do our best in every way.” ♦



Ashton Brantley (right) and Blaine Carter, PA-C, at the South Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants (SCAPA) conference.



Christian Cooper pictured, April 2021, five years after his accident.

Christian Cooper

*Burn survivor, peer supporter,
patient experience educator*

TWENTY-FOUR-YEAR-OLD

CHRISTIAN COOPER was driving home on Feb. 27, 2016, when a fire ignited in his car. The flames, which started on the floorboard of the passenger side, surprised and distracted Cooper, who was driving home on the interstate.

“I ran off the road,” Cooper said. “The car hit a ravine and flipped on the passenger side door. At that point, the fire was spreading, and I tried to get out, but the door was jammed, and I couldn’t break the driver side window.”

Finally, desperate to escape the burning car, he kicked out the windshield as bystanders came rushing down the embankment to help. They helped pull Cooper out of the car and carried him back up to the interstate, where he said he looked down at his legs to find everything was stripped off.

“I didn’t really know how bad things were until I got up there,” he said. “They sat me down, and I immediately went into shock. A wave of pain came over me,

and it was pretty much lights out from there.”

Paramedics transported Cooper to a local hospital in Birmingham, AL, where he was intubated and stabilized. Cooper was given a grim prognosis with full-thickness, third-degree burns covering 80% of his body.

“They gave me a 5-10% chance to live and said that, if I did live, I would never walk again,” he said.

A few hours away in Georgia, a family friend heard the devastating news and called them to offer any help that he could.

“My sister’s (now) father-in-law approached my dad and said, ‘hey, I know this great burn surgeon, supposed to be the best in the world. Do you want to talk to him?’” Cooper said.

His family didn’t give it another thought. They called Dr. Fred Mullins immediately for a second opinion.

“It really wasn’t a few minutes later when my dad was on the phone with Dr. Mullins,” Cooper said. “That phone call saved and changed my life.”

Within 24-hours, Cooper was life-flighted to the Joseph M. Still (JMS) Burn Center at Doctors Hospital of Augusta, GA, the largest burn center in the nation and the flagship facility of Burn and Reconstructive Centers of America, the most extensive system of burn care in the country. First, he underwent a 7–8-hour debridement surgery to remove the debris and dead tissue from one side of his body. When he responded well to the extensive procedure, the surgeons then repeated this process on the other side of his body for a

total of 14-16 hours of surgery over the first two days.

“There was never a dedicated medical coma, if you will, but there were a lot of drugs involved to create amnesia,” Cooper said. “In my case, I was responsive enough to assist rolling over one second, and the next second I had no control or recollection. It’s all by design—you don’t want to remember, especially the first weeks and months, you don’t want to relive that pain.”

Cooper spent a total of five months as an inpatient in the burn center, but the acute phase of his treatment would continue over the next two years.

“If you’re completely immobile for a month, you’re going to have some serious muscle deterioration,” he said. “You’re going to have to relearn the everyday functions that we really take for granted.”

Most who suffer from severe trauma, burns or skin and soft tissue disorders cannot leave their bed for weeks to

months, which often leads to extreme muscle deterioration. This deterioration can affect walking and sitting up in bed, rolling over and fine hand movements and arm strength. In addition, if the patient had a breathing tube in place, they may also require speech therapy once the tubes have been removed to help recover the throat muscles.

“**It was weird, to say the least,” he said. “I went from a regular 24-year-old, going to the gym and living life, to not being able to roll on my side unassisted.”**

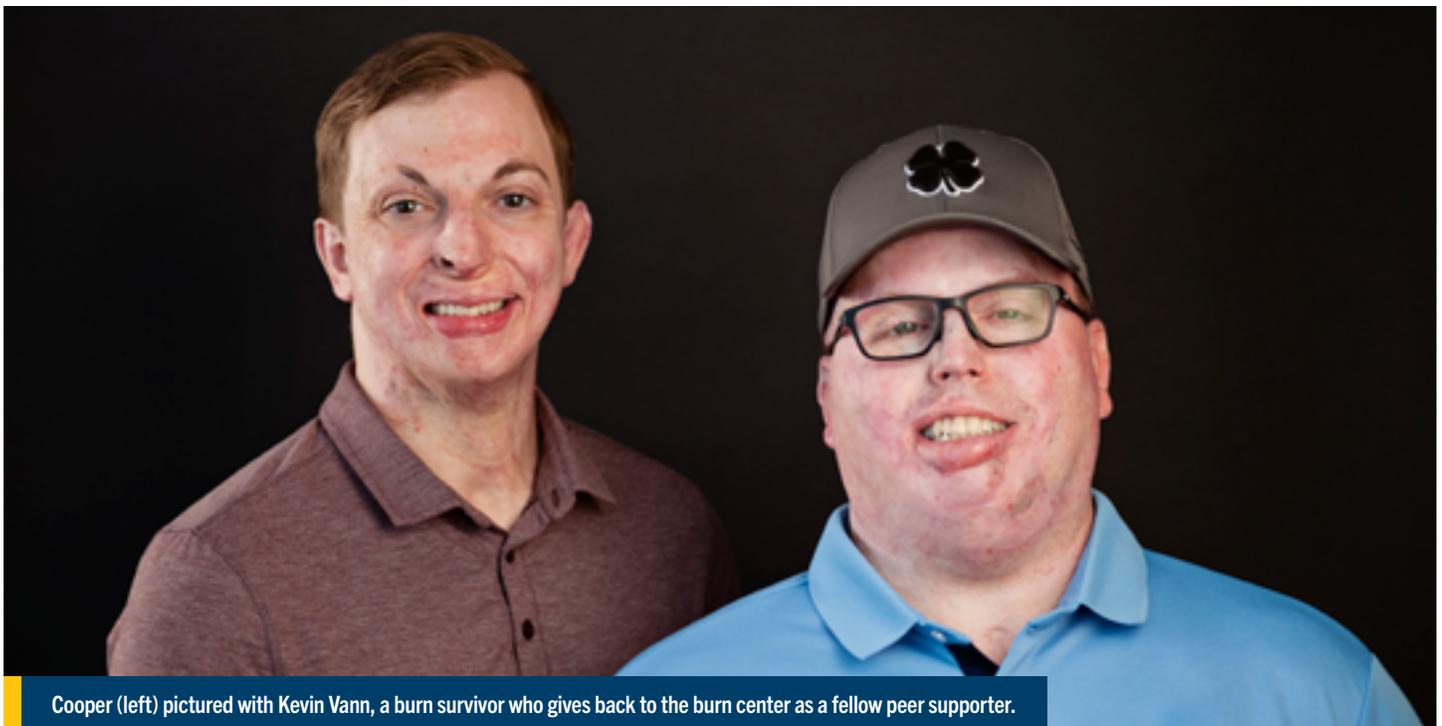
Once patients wake up and are aware of their situation, the most challenging part of their immediate recovery can be finding the motivation and the open mind to actively participate in their care plan. Cooper explains that struggling to find that motivation is normal for survivors dealing with trauma, pain and a life that has been flipped upside down. However, the healing process, how quickly it happens, or how well the outcome often depends entirely on the

patient’s willingness to work with the burn team.

“When you’re a patient, especially in the burn ICU, your only job is to get better,” Cooper said. “Most of the time, you don’t want to move because it creates pain, or you get tired, but that has to become your full-time job. Your only focus should be adding maybe one or two steps to the four or five you took the day before.”

While physical injuries are visible and easier to identify, emotional and psychological trauma is often overlooked due to its subtle nature. Changes in appearance or function are two of the most common causes of the mental health crisis in burn survivors. The psychological impact felt by patients is a fundamental reason why the JMS Burn Center partners with peer supporters, like Cooper, to help address these issues early in the healing process.

“Everyone’s focused on getting the patient healthy, but, anytime you have a



Cooper (left) pictured with Kevin Vann, a burn survivor who gives back to the burn center as a fellow peer supporter.

patient that has sustained a large burn or a traumatic event, there are so many other things, resources and people that need to be involved to make sure their health and wellness are supported,” Cooper said. “When you’re there, it seems like you’re never going to get out of the ICU. So, anytime I can provide any level of comfort for a patient, if I can be an advocate for them, I will.”

As a member of the Phoenix Society’s SOAR (Survivors Offering Assistance in Recovery) Program, Cooper is trained and certified to offer volunteer peer support to those in the burn center. Unfortunately, between COVID-19 and

the distance to the burn center from his home in Alabama, Cooper hasn’t been able to visit patients in person as much as he would like but continues to reach out virtually as much as he can.

It’s been five years since the accident that made Cooper a burn survivor. Today, he works for an employment screening center and continues being a peer supporter for the JMS Burn Center whenever there is a patient who might benefit from hearing his story. While he understands his miraculous recovery serves as an example of what advanced, specialized burn care treatment can accomplish, he also knows that he is an

inspiration to those still in the burn ICU who maybe facing the same prognosis he did.

“As far as telling my story and going into detail, I love it. For me, talking through things is a part of sustaining my mental health,” Cooper said. “There are a lot of patients I see that aren’t living a full lifestyle because they’re holding themselves back in one way or another. There are occasions where I find myself doing the same thing, but I try to push through those moments and get to the other side. Tomorrow is always another day to grow and improve.” ♦

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- + Necrotizing fasciitis
- + Necrotizing soft tissue diseases
- + Skin sloughing disorders
- + Staphylococcal scalded skin syndrome
- + Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS) / Toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN)

CRITICAL CARE

- + Adult
- + Pediatric

Services vary by location

Extending the knowledge of burn care beyond our burn centers

BRCA Foundation

SINCE 2018, BRCA Foundation has advanced burn care education, prevention and awareness in communities across the country. The foundation supports providers caring for patients and addresses the gaps in prevention education through relevant age- and occupation-based education, scholarship and community outreach initiatives. With the support of these programs, community members of all ages are encouraged to take an active role in their own safety and of others. In addition, healthcare professionals are given the tools to further burn care treatment through access to advanced burn life support courses, pre-hospital burn care training and an annual research symposium that

focuses on the newest techniques and technologies in the field.

An example of new and emerging technologies in care, BRCA utilizes virtual reality (VR) goggles as an alternative form of pain management. The VR goggles positively impact burn patients, especially pediatric burn patients, during painful dressing changes and have been proven to help relieve minor pain and reduce stress and anxiety. This calming effect enables healthcare workers to do a faster, more efficient dressing change without the worry of distressing the patient. With less pain and fewer triggers, patients can minimize feeling emotionally or physically drained and have an overall



Jayden Mason pictured using virtual reality goggles provided by the BRCA Foundation.

more positive wound care experience, which is significant considering dressing changes are among the most dreaded steps of the healing process. Whether a community member or a healthcare professional, BRCA Foundation is dedicated to improving the quality of burn care provided to everyone, everywhere, through greater access to certified education, hands-on training opportunities and distribution of research-based information. ♦



An illustration of Taka from the upcoming Phoenix Powers® coloring book.

BURN AND FIRE PREVENTION SUPERHERO PHOENIX POWERS®

is doing her part to help kids stay safe by teaching them to identify burn and fire hazards at home and on the go. Phoenix Powers promotes safety and awareness through online videos and coloring books. The second edition of the Phoenix Powers coloring book is coming soon. It features the importance of having a home escape plan through fun illustrations, activities, and special guest, Taka, a burn survivor and therapy dog. For more about Phoenix Powers or to download the coloring book, visit burnfdn.org. ♦

Education at BRCA

FACE TO FACE AND LIVE WEBINAR TOPICS

- + Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS)
- + Burn Reconstruction
- + Critical Care
- + Emergency Burn Care
- + Fluid Resuscitation
- + Mass Casualty and more

EMERGENCY BURN CARE OBJECTIVES

- + Initial Stabilization of Burn Injuries
- + IV Fluid Resuscitation
- + Initial Wound Care
- + ABA Transfer Criteria

Interested in a certain topic?

Request education at burncenters.com/providers/training-request.

WHAT IS ABLS?

Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS) programs provide knowledge for immediate care of the burn patient through the first 24-hours post injury. ABLS programs also support emergency preparedness and mass casualty incidents focusing on triage, burn survivability, prioritizing transport of patients and patient treatment. ABLS is available for a wide range of burn care professionals.

BRCA provides ABLS classes on behalf of the American Burn Association.

2022 EMERGENCY BURN CARE LECTURE CALENDAR

**Columbia Fire Department
Station 9**
Wednesday, Jan. 12

**Region 9 RTAC
Region J Burn**
Friday, Feb. 11

Fairfield Electric Cooperative
Thursday, Jan. 13

**Prisma Health
Richland Hospital**
Wednesday, Mar. 2

Smyrna Fire Department
Thursday, Jan. 13

Air Care 2
Saturday, Mar. 26

Fairfield Electric Cooperative
Wednesday, Feb. 9 to
Friday, Feb. 11

Oconee Fall Line
Wednesday, Mar. 30

Upcoming education events are at listed location only. These are pre-registered events and virtual attendance is not offered at this time. For a full listing of upcoming education classes, including ABLS, or to bring training to your location, contact BRCA Education at foundation@burnfdn.org.



Current and Upcoming Burn Education

- + A Burn Survivor's Journey
- + Capnography, A Powerful Assessment Tool
- + Electrical Burn: Overview
- + Management of Frostbite Patients and the Role of Advanced IR Treatment
- + Pediatric Series: Emergency Care of the Pediatric Burn Patient

View and register at

burncenters.cloud-cme.com/course/onlinelisting.

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UPCOMING CONFERENCE

2022 Inaugural Southern

Alabama Trauma Conference

Wednesday, Feb. 9

BY THE NUMBERS

January-September 2021

TOTAL EDUCATION
EVENTS

181

TOTAL
ATTENDANCE

1,480

TOTAL CREDITS
CLAIMED

3,426

Total and Types of Credits Claimed

CME

121

ANCC

1,987

CAPCE

1,318



The Dr. Fred Mullins Award

SPONSORED BY THE BRCA FOUNDATION,

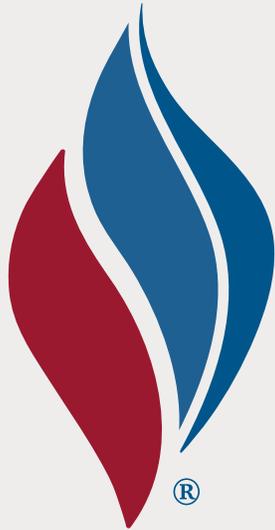
the Dr. Fred Mullins Award recognizes non-physician healthcare professionals who have dedicated a minimum of two years to advancing burn care and recovery. The BRCA Foundation created the award in honor of BRCA's late founder Dr. Fred Mullins and awards financial aid toward burn care-specific education to one awardee each year during the JMS Burn Symposium.

For more on eligibility and the nomination submission process, please visit burncenters.com/foundation or email Lauren Rauscher at foundation@burnfdn.org.

Don't forget!

The deadline for nominations is Dec. 31 at 11:59 p.m.!

2022



JOSEPH M. STILL
BURN SYMPOSIUM

Virtual & In-Person



March 5-7, 2022
Château Élan | Braselton, GA

To register online, scan the QR code or visit
burncenters.com/symposium

BRCA Foundation is accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia to provide continuing medical education for physicians, awarding *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*, and by the Commission on Accreditation for Pre-Hospital Continuing education, awarding CE Credit.



**BRCA
FOUNDATION**

The Joseph M. Still Burn Symposium
is hosted by the BRCA Foundation.