#### 2020... a year of change - expected and UNexpected - that left us searching for solutions.



#### **Across:**

3. To turn; to modify a program while retaining continuity with its previous version

- 5. \_\_\_\_\_ Classic Golf Tournament
- 7. Type of class offered by our new partner, A Place to Be
- 11. Location of SCC's Maryland center
- 12. There's no \_\_\_\_\_ sign on the road to recovery
- 13. Founder of Stroke Comeback Center
- 14. An optimistic state of mind that is based on an expectation of positive outcomes
- 15. Unforeseen; surprising
- 18. Format of all SCC classes since March 2020
- 19. A person who gives something of value, especially to a charity
- 20. Common microphone setting on Zoom

#### Down:

- 1. Popular afternoon virtual social event
- 2. Caring \_\_\_\_\_ Support Group for family and friends
- 4. Offered to those in need, ensures no survivor is turned away for financial reasons

Anticipated

- 8. Stroke Comeback \_\_\_\_\_ Virtual 5K
- 9. Location of SCC's Virginia center
- 10. We have three centers, yet one \_
- 16. \_\_\_\_\_ 24: 24-hour online fundraiser
- 17. Virtual meeting platform

\*answer key available on page 5

## Join us in remembering a truly unforgettable year...

#### **Dear friends of Stroke Comeback Center,**

Stroke Comeback Center knew 2020 would be a challenging year, with the long-anticipated retirement of our founder and recent expansion to new centers. Little did we know that we would be facing these challenges during a global pandemic.

When we think back to 2020, we'll always remember the celebrations that were cancelled, the milestone events reduced to socially distant gatherings, and the time spent on Zoom. I hope we also remember the many valuable lessons we learned: that virtual meetings are a powerful way to maintain connection, the importance of community to provide support through difficult times, and that unanticipated challenges allow us to grow in ways that we could not have otherwise imagined.

Those of us at Stroke Comeback Center will also remember the support provided by you - our faithful donors. You consistently responded each time we asked with your generous donations and participation in new events, such as the Stroke Comeback Trail. Your continued support allowed us to grow in new ways and bring our programs to stroke and brain trauma survivors during an especially difficult time. Most importantly, you allowed us to stay true to our mission of never turning away a survivor for inability to pay. On behalf of all the families we serve, we are very grateful.

Please follow us on our website, social media, and in our newsletters to see how we continue to adapt to the expected and unexpected in 2021 and beyond. Together we'll continue to *Open the door to a brighter tomorrow.* 

Many thanks,

Logle mza me

**Suzanne Coyle** Executive Director

#### **Leadership Team**

Suzanne Coyle, MA, CCC-SLP Executive Director

Amy C. Georgeadis, MS, CCC-SLP Program Director

**Brooke Hatfield, MS, CCC-SLP** Rockville Center Coordinator

Melissa Richman, MS, CCC-SLP Virtual Center Coordinator

**Connie Dupuy** Development Coordinator

Julie McGraw Financial Administrator

#### Founder

Darlene S. Williamson, MA, CCC-SLP

#### **Emeritus Board**

John D. Phillips, Ph.D.

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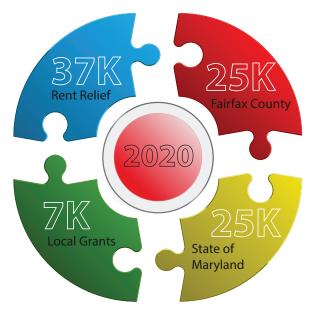
**Eric Robinson, Esq.** President and Patent Attorney, Robinson Law Office

# 2020

It was a year full of expected and unexpected major events, from the planned retirement of our beloved founder to the changes brought on by a global pandemic. Through it all, Stroke Comeback Center adapted and found new ways to keep our community of members, care partners, volunteers, and families together.

Due to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, we closed our Vienna and Rockville centers in March 2020 and quickly restructured to a fully-virtual platform to keep our community connected and supported. In that first week, we trained our professional team and over 80 survivors how to use the Zoom videoconferencing platform and resumed with fully-virtual programs on March 23, 2020. Since that time our enrollment and programs have continued to grow, and we currently serve over 130 survivors each week through our virtual programs.

In addition to our transition to fully-virtual programs, we significantly reduced our program fees for all members, ensuring that all those experiencing unexpected financial difficulties may continue to participate in our programs during an especially difficult time. We are grateful for the many emergency funding sources that allowed us to continue our programs while maintaining our physical centers in Vienna and Rockville, keeping them ready to re-open them as soon as it is safe to do so.



2020 COVID-19 Emergency Funding



## **Stay in Touch Program**

To complement our existing programming and help keep our community safe and connected during the pandemic, we introduced new virtual Stay In Touch groups. These free groups offer new topics each week and are open to all of our members at no cost. In contrast to our traditional classes, these Stay in Touch groups focus purely on social interaction and connectedness. These groups have proven to be a lifeline for our members, many of whom live alone and therefore are especially isolated during the pandemic. A special thank-you to our professional team, volunteers, and McLean Community Foundation for their support of this valuable program.



## **Caring Connection**

The Caring Connection is an informal support group led by care partners themselves, for the family and friends who live with or help support Stroke Comeback Center members. Due to the pandemic, the Caring Connection transitioned to virtual meetings and increased their frequency to twice a month. Participants meet to share tips and resources, hash out problems, and sometimes just vent. Most of all, whether in-person or virtual, the Caring Connection is a place where our families encourage each other and provide understanding of what others are going through.



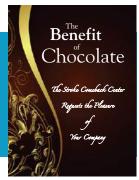
In 2005, believing that stroke survivors could continue to make progress if provided with ongoing supportive services, speechlanguage pathologist Darlene Williamson opened the Stroke Comeback Center in Oakton, Virginia. Her vision was to continue care beyond traditional insurance limits and provide services to ALL survivors, regardless

of their ability to pay. As Darlene often said throughout her tenure as our Executive Director, "There is no STOP sign on the road to recovery." All survivors deserve the respect and the support needed to live successfully and fully participate in life. We are grateful for her vision and tireless commitment to our community. Thank you, Darlene, for always believing and leading the way!

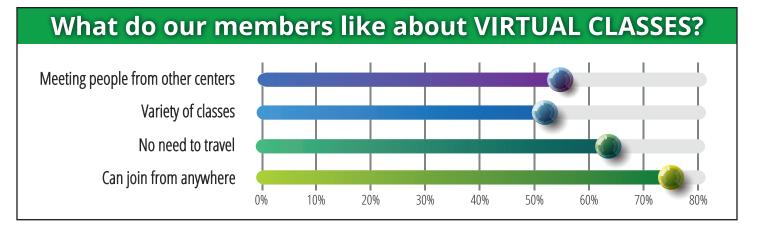
In June 2020, we said "farewell for now" to Stroke Comeback Center's Founder and Executive Director, Darlene Williamson. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we celebrated Darlene's retirement with a drive-by parade.



**Mark your calendars!** On October 14, 2021, please plan on joining us at the Benefit of Chocolate, where we will celebrate Darlene and her many successes! Details coming soon at www.strokecomebackcenter.org...



## After several sessions of fully-virtual classes, we asked our members and families what they thought about virtual programs.



According to our members, VIRTUAL CLASSES are

Helpful to keep

in touch

with others

Convenient

and

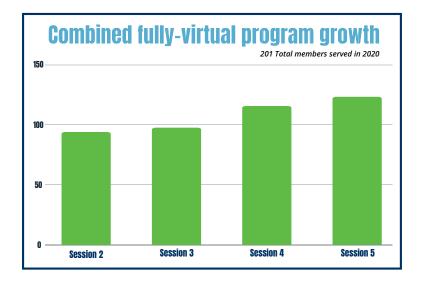
enlightening





Our members feel that **VIRTUAL CLASSES** have helped them to . . .





#### **CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY**

ACROSS 3. PIVOT 5. KALIKIE 7. MUSICTHERAPY 11. ROCKVILLE 12. STOP 13. DARLENE 14. HOPE 15. UNEXPECTED 18. VIRTUAL 19. DONOR 20. MUTE

#### DOWN

- 1. HAPPYHOUR
- 2. CONNECTION
- 4. SCHOLARSHIP
- 6. EXPECTED
- 8. TRAIL
- 9. VIENNA 10. COMMUNITY
- 16. DOMORE
- 17 700M
- 17. ZOOM

*The list below recognizes those supporters who, over the course of their years as donors, have contributed a cumulative \$25,000 or more. We gratefully acknowledge these generous and steadfast donors who have provided us with a foundation for our efforts. (\* denotes support of \$50,000+)* 

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## Thank you to all our committed supporters. Your Support = Our Impact

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While the 12th Annual Kalikie Classic looked a little bit different this year due to the pandemic and social distancing, over sixty golfers had a fun and safe day at Raspberry Falls Golf Club in Leesburg, Virginia and raised more than \$22,000 for the Stroke Comeback Center.









"I love it as much as when I first stepped through the door! The Center has groups and an environment where you feel at ease. As in years past, all proceeds of the tournament will benefit the Stroke Comeback Center's mission of never turning any stroke survivor away due to the inability to pay."

- Christie, SCC member, volunteer and Kalikie Classic Founder and Chairperson

### In October 2020, the Stroke Comeback Center introduced the fully virtual *Stroke Comeback Trail*

With over 280 participants from 16 states and more than \$12,000 in donations and sponsorships, our community came together to support survivors and families along their road to recovery, proving that there are no stop signs on that journey.









*"Thanks for putting on such a great event. My team and I enjoyed being part of something bigger than us. See you down the Comeback Trail!"* \_\_Terry, SCC member



#### Thank you for another year of support, connection and community

A special thanks to those who give so generously to the center through workplace giving, including the United Way of the National Capital Area and the Combined Federal Campaign, Benevity Foundation, America's Charities, Give Back Foundation, and the BASF Corporation and many others. Your support makes our work possible.

Please join us in 2021 as our community continues to expect the un-expected



Building a Legacy of Lasting Impact

**Partners for a Brighter Tomorrow** honors those who have chosen to make a lasting investment in Stroke Comeback Center, allowing us to meet the needs of our community now and in the future. Planned gifts are as simple as naming Stroke Comeback Center in your will or living trust, as a beneficiary of your IRA or life insurance policy, or gifts of stock and appreciated assets.

Planned gifts enable you to create a meaningful philanthropic legacy and will help us to support stroke and brain trauma survivors and their families for years to come. To discuss planned giving opportunities, please contact Connie Dupuy at 703-255-2950 or connie@strokecomebackcenter.org.

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