

Georgia's lead agency working  
to enhance the lives of Georgians with  
traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries.

*Supporting lives of meaning, independence and inclusion.*

For help completing your  
application or connecting to  
additional resources, contact us:

Phone: 404-651-5112

Toll-free: 1-888-233-5760

<https://bsitf.georgia.gov>

Email:

DPH-INFO-BSITF@dph.ga.gov

Since 2003,  
the Commission has  
awarded over

**\$25**  
**million**

in grants.



Grants support  
post-acute  
care and  
rehabilitation.  
Most frequently  
requested items  
include:

- Transportation
- Personal Support Services
- Health and Wellness
- Computers
- Home Access Modifications

# GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

Apply online at <https://bsitf.georgia.gov>

## Just 3 Steps

STEP  
**1**



### Determine Eligibility.

You must be a U.S. citizen, a Georgia resident, and have a traumatic brain injury or spinal cord injury.

STEP  
**2**



### Identify Your Need.

Select an item or service that will improve your quality of life, independence, and participation in the community.

STEP  
**3**



### Submit Required Documents.

Complete the application and all required materials (see list below) and submit for review.

## Required Documents

	<b>INJURY DOCUMENTATION</b> Medical documenta- tion or letter on medical facility letterhead describing NATURE, CAUSE, and DATE of your injury.	<b>AFFIDAVIT OF CITIZENSHIP</b> Present a Notary Public with a valid proof of U.S. citizenship; sign and notarize the affidavit and submit with original application.	
	<b>COST QUOTE</b> Include one cost quote or estimate from a vendor for each request.	<b>PROOF OF GEORGIA RESIDENCY</b> Submit a copy of proof of Georgia residency (e.g., valid driver's license, utility bill from past 60 days, paycheck stub, etc).	

Trust Fund Awards Change Lives.

# FINDING HER DESTINY: Annalyn Tocci

In the summer of 1999 Annalyn Peele, a rising 8th grader from Eastman, was riding in the car with her parents and two younger sisters going to visit friends. It was anticipated to be a great day full of fun and adventure. But in a split second, life changed right before their eyes.

A speeding gas truck approached a vehicle that was stopped ahead and, as he began to break, the truck jackknifed in front of them. The Peele family hit the side of the truck head on.

Miraculously they all survived, but Annalyn's back was broken. She had a complete L4 spinal cord injury that left her paralyzed from the waist down. Though she had a severe concussion at the time, she was lucky to have no long-term cognitive deficit.

Annalyn's life became consumed with hospitals, doctors, nurses, and therapists. She saw first hand how those experiences and relationships could encourage or defeat a person as they struggled to recover. It was only natural for her to begin to dream of becoming a doctor that could heal people like her.

Annalyn worked hard to strengthen her body, to become as mobile as she could be, so to accomplish her dream of going to medical school. She went from not being able to sit up, to sitting in a wheelchair, to walking with braces up to her knees, to standing with crutches. She completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Georgia majoring in Nutrition Science and Microbiology. When she was accepted into medical school in Augusta, she applied for a Trust Fund grant that would allow her to purchase a standing frame wheelchair, to enable her to more actively participate in her labs and surgical rotation. She says, "I was so excited to learn there was such a wonderful piece of equipment that could help me accomplish my goals."

Two years into medical school life threw Annalyn another curve. She met the love of her life and married. Up until then medicine had consumed her. She began to rethink her path and envision a more balanced life that would allow time for both family and medicine.

One day, while shopping at Costco, Annalyn was approached by a supervisor about working part-time in the customer service department. She got the job and soon befriended the manager in the hearing aid department. Annalyn began to learn about the tremendous need for professionals in the hearing healthcare field and found her new path. Annalyn went

through a yearlong apprenticeship program via the International Hearing Society and became a Licensed Hearing Aid Dispenser.

Annalyn tells, "I loved my new job. I was able to spend time with people – to learn about their lives, to educate them, to help them overcome barriers and improve their lives with the gift of hearing. It was awesome!" Because of her journey, Annalyn could empathize first-hand with them about the tendency to be embarrassed about their disability and her patients felt her compassion for their journey.

Today, Annalyn is a wife and mother that's found a wonderful balance between her love for family and healthcare. Through it all Annalyn learned her injury didn't have to define her or limit her, but that it molded

her to be what she was destined to be. She says, "My journey has opened my eyes to the fact that there are so many hurting people. I was meant to give back and help people."

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and help people."*



Photo by Laura Brett Photography