

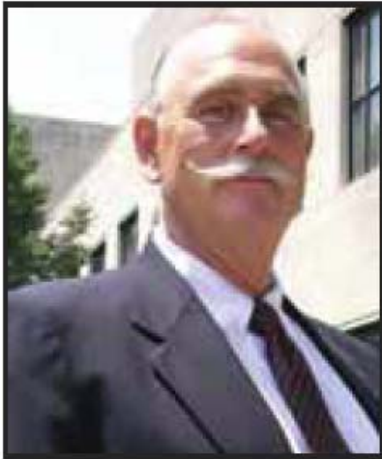
About Our Leadership

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Clair Russell Hesselton, President

Clair Russell Hesselton was elected to his second consecutive term as President of United Spinal in 2006. He has served on the Board of Directors since 1993 and is a former vice president and secretary. A Marine Corps veteran, Hesselton was injured in 1972 while serving with a security detail. He speaks three languages, holds a PhD on the political and historical development of Zaire, a bachelor's degree in communications, and a six-year certificate in African development from the Université Catholique de Louvain in Belgium. He's a former creative director and executive producer for two New York advertising agencies, managed restaurants in Vermont and Lake Placid N.Y., and is a former chairman of the Town Board of Selectmen in Marlow, New Hampshire. In addition to being a sponsored player on the International

Wheelchair Pro Tennis Tour, he's the resident tennis professional, coach, and instructor at the Tri City Racquet Club in Latham, N.Y.

He has been a veterans' counselor with the New York State Office of Veterans Affairs, a counselor and continuing education professor at Marist College, and a personnel administrator with the New York State Office of General Services. He's written numerous feature articles on antiques, co-authored a manuscript on diabetes and renal failure, authored and designed greeting cards from his original watercolor paintings, and created successful copy for television, radio, and print media advertisements. He's an experienced grant writer, a master scuba diver, an avid skier and kayaker and has lectured widely on disabilities and veterans benefits. Hesselton is also a Native American of Seminole descent. He currently lives in Altamont, New York, outside of Albany.



Paul J. Tobin, Executive Director

Paul J. Tobin was unanimously appointed Executive Director of United Spinal Association in June 2006. He served as Deputy Executive Director from July 2003 and was a member of the Board of Directors from 1995 to 1996.

Tobin, a United States Navy veteran, oversees all strategic operations of the organization and ensures the execution of United Spinal's mission and vision. In addition to his tour as Deputy Executive Director, Tobin

has held a variety of managerial positions, including Hospital Services Officer, Director of Special Projects, and Group Director of Benefit Services. He was promoted to Associate Executive Director of Benefit Services in 1998.

A Long Island native, Tobin graduated from Manhattan College with a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering in 1991. Upon graduation, Tobin attended the United States Navy Officer Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island, from which he was commissioned an ensign in November, 1991 and joined the Civil Engineering Officer Corps. With the CEC, Tobin was stationed at the Naval Training Center in Orlando, Florida and the Naval Air Warfare Center in Lakehurst, New Jersey. After sustaining a spinal cord injury in August of 1993, Tobin underwent rehabilitation at the Castle Point (NY) Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Tobin has also pursued a Masters degree in Public Health Administration at Columbia University.

Tobin stresses the tradition of service that is the legacy of United Spinal Association and, as Executive Director, urges our membership and individuals with disabilities everywhere to “continually challenge the limitations imposed by attitudes, medical technology, society, and government.”

He and his wife Lorraine live in Staten Island, NY, with their son, Connor.