CELEBRATING

ALTERNATIVES INC

1979 - 2019

dignity through independence

40 YEARS

Annual Report 2018

Dear Friend of Alternatives,

As I look back on 2018, I am amazed by our growth. When I began working at Alternatives, we were serving about 70 people in 8 programs. We have grown to serve over 600 individuals through our 34 programs, and now our service catchment area reaches more than half of the state.

When assisting people with special needs to become their best selves, growth like this happens because of mandate of need and Alternatives' board, staff and volunteers rising to the challenge to provide what is needed. Alternatives' staff has the passion to assist our clients to reach their greatest potential, and it is a commitment they do not take lightly. Our supporters – volunteers and donors, bring a commitment to our mission, for which I am truly grateful.

Alternatives consistently adapts our services to meet the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including those on the autism spectrum. These individuals, as well as those with mental illness and homeless individuals and families in greater Central New Jersey, can look to Alternatives for assistance with community support services and housing.

Every person is an important part of our community and should have the opportunity to live a full, meaningful life.

This annual report is a snapshot of who we are. You will see our financial outlook and growth in the number of clients served, but you will also have a glimpse into the lives of the people supported by Alternatives this year. The people featured represent thousands and thousands of people Alternatives has helped over our 40-year history – and we will be here to help thousands more in the future as we use our resources to continue supporting our communities.

So, in reporting on our 39th birthday (and looking forward to our 40th this year), I can't help but reflect on the beginning, 1979, when Alternatives was founded. The agency set forth with a mission to serve individuals in integrated community settings. We knew, as did the families and individuals impacted by our services, that institutional, congregate living was not where individuals belonged. Every person is an important part of our community and should have the opportunity to live a full, meaningful life.

Alternatives has definitely grown and evolved since 1979, adapting to the changes in the service provider environment and the desires of our clients. What has not changed is our dedication to people with disabilities. I know the staff, board and volunteers join me as I look forward to a future where we use innovative ideas to provide services that are community-based and help people live independently with dignity.

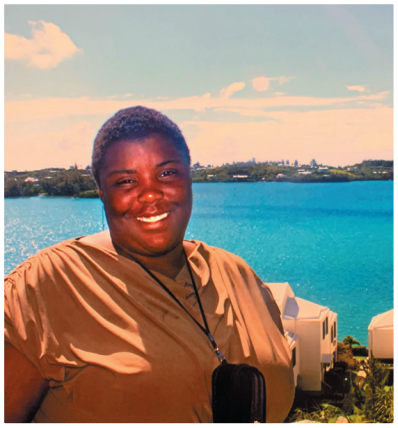
With gratitude,

Nancy Good, President Alternatives, Inc.

Client Stories

Sara Jane

For the first time in a while, someone was there for Sara Jane. After living a life bouncing around from one foster home to another, and one institution to another, in 2017, she began receiving support services at Alternatives. Like many of us, Sara Jane experienced a series of highs and lows in life, but by coming to Alternatives, she chose the services she needed and wanted. This helped Sara Jane settle into a routine that included moving into a new group home managed by Alternatives and attending a day program.



The Direct Support Professionals helped Sara Jane settle into her new home and to decorate her room. She received games, arts and craft supplies, as well as personal care items through generous donations. This made the house a true home for Sara Jane and her housemates. Today, Sara Jane enjoys playing those games and expressing her creativity through art. Though there are challenges to living with others, Sara Jane enjoys the company of her new housemates. She has also moved on from her day program and secured a job at a local fast food restaurant.

Sara Jane loves her job and the people she works with.

Her supervisor tells her she exceeds the expectations of performance, and Sara Jane's dedication to her work is valued and admired. She has gained a sense of independence she has never known, and now enjoys saving some money and feeling a sense of pride and accomplishment in how far she has come in her life.

Elizabeth

It can be difficult for many of us to imagine the hardships and loneliness of homelessness and dependency. This was Elizabeth's reality when she came to Alternatives in 2013. She felt alone, with nowhere to turn except to behaviors and people she knew were not healthy for her.

Elizabeth's quality of life began to improve the moment she made contact with the staff at Alternatives. She credits Alternatives staff for helping her to turn her life around. With Alternatives' support, she began focusing on making a fresh start and rebuilding her life. Day by day, Elizabeth took small steps to create a stable, more joyful present and future. She started eating healthy and exercising, and she stayed away from the people and things that hindered the future she wanted– vastly improving her quality of life.

Elizabeth's journey could not be forged in hardship and loneliness – it takes a strong individual desire, supported by a dedicated and caring support team. She has built bridges and strengthened relationships in order to experience that support. Elizabeth now sets positive goals, recently receiving her driver's license. She is no longer afraid to ask for help; through Alternatives, she has experienced the power of support. Her team has shown her what a motivated person who is ready to address needs and challenges head on can accomplish.

Because of the support she received at Alternatives, Elizabeth is now a driven person with positive goals for her future. This is what dignity through independence looks like with Alternatives.

"When a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, it goes through drastic changes and a very painful metamorphosis. This is how my life is. Changes come, I struggle, I feel pain every day and sometimes I fall. By getting help from Alternatives. I can stand here - this butterfly, spread my wings and fly." Elizabeth

Client Stories

Abel

The year 2018 was one of job growth in New Jersey. Yet, for people with disabilities, every year brings forth a challenging job market. Even though there has been tremendous progress in inclusion and non-discrimination, it is often difficult to find work that is meaningful and provides a living income, with an employer who will provide the proper accommodations.

Abel illustrates the challenges of finding employment when you have a disability, and how services and supports offered by Alternatives can help. Abel is deaf, and he once felt finding a job was impossible. Employers just would not give him a chance, and he was unemployed for three years. When you know you are capable of working, and you want to work, long stretches of unemployment can negatively affect your quality of life. It is not just about being unemployed. It feels like you have no productive place in your community.

Fortunately for Abel, Alternatives operates a Career Development Center for people who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Abel took full advantage of the evaluation services, placement opportunities and job coaching offered by the center.

Upon evaluation, Alternatives' staff knew Abel had a strong work ethic and willingness to learn and apply himself to any situation. The staff knew Abel would succeed with the correct support from the agency, and together, he and his team approached Amazon for a job.

Abel was out in front with his skills and job readiness, and his support staff was there when he needed a boost of confidence or to answer a question. Abel secured employment at Amazon. His first few months were exciting and challenging, as he adjusted to a different schedule and an environment where productivity was valued. He persevered, making the most of his work ethic and willingness to apply himself. He looks forward to each day, and a sense of confidence and comfort has replaced the frustration associated with unemployment.

Peter

Paul Manion was one of the first clients served by Alternatives, forty years ago. Paul was a person with a developmental disability who did not let the disability define who he was. He was known for his positive attitude and spirit – and inspired all who knew him. To honor Paul, and the work of all Alternatives' clients to live their best lives, Alternatives presented the Paul Manion Award to a client who embodies the attributes of the award's namesake. The award is the highest achievable by an Alternatives' client.

The 2018 Paul Manion Award recipient was Peter, a client with a developmental disability who has received services at Alternatives for 32 years.

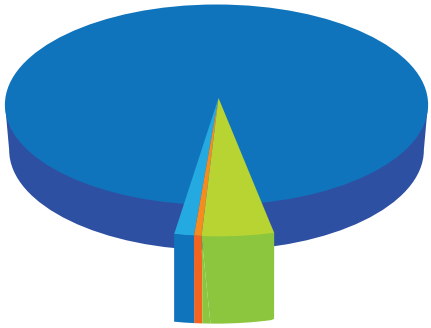
Throughout the years, Peter has shown tremendous growth in many areas of his life. He lives independently and enjoys speaking out about his beliefs and opinions with other clients and the staff.

Perhaps because of the motivation he received from a new staff member, or just coming to terms with his true capabilities, Peter demonstrated a surge in wanting to be even more self-sufficient. He made strides is setting personal goals and learning more about himself, as he explored a new interest in electronic devices. Recognizing the progress Peter made over the years, and the increase in his motivation, his peers chose to nominate him for this award.

With assistance from his Alternatives' team, Peter has been able to satisfy his yearning for self-sufficiency. He lives a well-rounded, community-based life, which includes a commitment to taking care of himself and maintaining his health. Peter is learning about proper nutrition and is an avid bicycle rider. He travels daily from Flemington to Somerville, and everywhere in between, in an effort to stay physically fit, independent and connected with the community.

Alternatives' Supported Employment division, Bridges to Employment, is located at the agency's Raritan location. The Career Development Center for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing is located in Edison and includes a Demonstration Center for Assistive Technology. Supported Employment Services are available to residents of Somerset, Hunterdon, Warren, Middlesex, Union, Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean Counties. For more information, call 908-685-1444, text 908-524-3442 or VP 908-458-9204.

Alternatives, Inc. Revenues and Expenditures for FY 2018



Revenues

- Grants & Contracts: 73.81%
- Client Services & Rental Fees: 21.34%
- Investment Income: 0.74%
- Contributions: 2.96%
- Special Events (Net): 0.37%
- Other Income: 0.78%

Expenses

- Program Services: 88.11%
- Management & General: 8.81%
- Fundraising & Development: 0.71%
- Operating Reserves: 2.38%

Support & Revenues	**Amount**	**Percent**
Grants & Contracts	14,679,330	73.81%
Client Services & Rental Fees	4,243,443	21.34%
Investment Income	146,363	0.74%
Contributions	589,399	2.96%
Special Events (Net)	73,068	0.37%
Other Income	155,653	0.78%
Total Income	**19,887,256**	**100%**

Expenses	**Amount**	**Percent**
Program Services	17,522,087	88.11%
Management & General	1,752,319	8.81%
Fundraising & Development	140,348	0.71%
Operating Reserves	472,502	2.38%
Total Expenses	**19,887,256**	**100%**

Alternatives provides the following direct services to individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (ID/DD):

73

73 Individuals served by our 18 Group Homes

51

51 Individuals served by our 6 Supervised Apartment Programs

42

42 Individuals served by our Supportive Living Program

15

15 Individuals served by a Day Program

25

25 Individuals offered Behavorial Support within residential and day Program services

Other Initiatives:

Supported Employment Program serving **160** job seekers with barriers to employment, including those who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

Youth/Transition career readiness services for job seekers ages 16-24

ADTI Housing Corp. an Alternatives Subsidiary that offers affordable housing

Alternatives provides the following services to individuals with mental health and/or housing needs:

Community Support Services are provided to a capacity of **80** individuals through clinical case management services

2 Permanent Housing Program residences serving **9** individuals

1 Transitional Housing Program serving up to **11** homeless individuals

Alternatives is grateful for the support received from the following donors in FY 2017 - 2018

Margaret & George Abrams
Acorn Financial Services
Affinity Federal Credit Union
Allstate - Astute Agency
Allstate Paper Box. Corp.
John Alves
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Susan Anczarki
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Volunteers from Janssen Pharmaceuticals and Raritan Corp. give of their time to improve the landscaping at two Alternatives group homes. If you are part of a work, school, worship or community group and would like to volunteer please contact Anita Feiner at 908-685-1444 ext. 226.

ALTERNATIVES INC
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ALTERNATIVES 2019 CELEBRATIONS!

Dignity Gala – April 13

ALTERNATIVES INC
5K
DIGNITY DASH
2019

Dignity Dash – September 8

Dignity Run – October 13

The Dignity Run
Dignity through independence for people with disabilities

Morgan Stanley volunteers lend a hand improving the landscape at our Raritan office & also package food donations for our clients

Not only does Meeker Sharkey & Hurley insure our homes they also volunteer to ensure they are safe