

alliance house

Clubhouse Chronicle

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A long-standing partner with Valley Mental Health and United Way, a non-profit agency



The Power of Alliance House

By Eleisha Hewes

My name is Eleisha Hewes I am 27 years old and I would like to talk a bit about my story and how Alliance House has impacted my life so deeply.

I grew up among 5 sisters and I always felt like I did not belong. I was always the one who seemed to get in trouble. Sort of the black sheep of the family from a very young age. I began looking for some sort of support and a supplemental family in my early teens. I began using drugs and alcohol at 12 to try to fill the void in my life, but something was still missing. My search sent me in the direction of gangs and the family lifestyle that they portrayed. I found out real fast

that this was not all it seemed to be. I spent the better part of my teenage years struggling with the pain that was eating at my soul of my everyday life in the gang. I finally got out in my late teens and I still had this urge eating away at me to be somewhere I belonged, where I felt loved and supported.

In my early twenties I began to struggle with Major depression, PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), Borderline Personality Disorder and of course Addiction. My past had finally caught up with me and I had nowhere to go. I tried to go to my family, but they would never believe what I had to say. I had pushed all my friends away, I did not want to take medication because that would be admitting I was sick. I was not sick, in fact, I honestly was okay, it was them not me. So, for about 4 years I

struggled with things just getting worse and worse. I would not stay on the medication and I would not stay in treatment. When I finally came to the realization that I was in deed sick I was so alone and afraid that I could not trust anyone and I felt that no one could ever help me. I became very angry at the world and myself all I wanted to do was give up and walk away from it all.

In 2003, I met a therapist, Jeremy Christensen, who figured out a way to reach me. He began on a level that was safe, music. He figured we could relate on this level and slowly a therapeutic relationship evolved. I began to trust him more and talk to him. It did take an intervention in the very beginning, but he proved he was not going anywhere and was very supportive the whole time I was in the hospital. This finally helped me get a taste of what true support is, what I had been looking for so long. We met for about a year and a half and he began to introduce different ideas into my treatment to offer more support. Some were not so good and some were better. The best was Alliance House.

He now works as the Director of Alliance House and the funny thing is he suggested Alliance House before he knew he was going to be working there. I of course resisted. He then had me visit a few times after he began

working there, I still resisted. The last straw that drew me to the program was my friend Tarra called me one day and said she was going to check it out and asked if I would also. I thought about it and I decided I would try. It was amazing when I first walked in the door people were greeting me and making me feel welcome right off the bat.

Well I have been coming to Alliance House since February 22, 2006 and I love it. I play around with staff and members. I have learned more here about relationships than I ever would have anywhere else and I am building my self-esteem and pride in myself. I had a Transitional Employment position with Jones, Waldo, Holbrook, & McDonough Law Firm, I was doing really well and I was happy and I had finally found what I had been searching for for so long. As time went by though the loyalty and support of Alliance House was truly put to the test

In June of 2006 after two years of sobriety I began using drugs and alcohol again due to some really hard things that were going on at the time. I kept going to work and going to Alliance House until August. In August, I began pushing people away. However, every time I pushed, the staff at Alliance House retaliated twice as hard. They responded with antics such as constant emails reminding me of better days at Alliance House, pictures of fun events, and just plain supportive letters. They came to my apartment several times to talk to me and make sure I was okay. On one occasion they decorated the outside of my apartment with hearts and a big one in the middle saying "you have just had a heart attack." They called Clubhouse Chronicle

even though I would not answer the phone, they sent cards signed by members and staff. They did this constantly for about a month and a half until I agreed with my therapist to go into the hospital.

When in the hospital I discovered that once again my family fell short of being supportive. It took my mom three days to call to see if I was okay and when I called her she never answered or called back. My sister who I had always seen as my closest friend had proven to be to involve with herself to care about me. It hurts when you find out that those who are closes to you stab you in the heart. But once again my friends from Alliance House have been there to support me in my darkest times. I betrayed them, I walked away from the many projects that were very important, and I left behind everything and was not even nice about it. Alliance House never walks away from you; they are always there when you need them and that is something that is very rare in life. To find some place where you can go and better your life where people never judge you and never give up on you. That means more in life than most other things you can ever have.

They have been up to see me several times at the hospital and every time they come it makes my day ten times better. Alliance House is not just about work and education and volunteering although these are indeed important, the most important aspect is the people and the lifelong heartfelt relationships you form while you are there.

Thank You to Alliance House for being there for me and for ending my life long search for a

place to belong and feel supported and better my life.

Clubhouse Chronicle

Alliance House is a member of the International Center for Clubhouse Development...

...a global network creating opportunities for people living with mental illness to be respected members of society.

Alliance House provides...

...A guaranteed right to a place to come. A guaranteed right to meaningful relationships. A guaranteed right to meaningful work. A guaranteed right to a place to return.

Contributors: Duncan Macdonald, Jeremy Christensen, Carla Marjerison, John Cox, Betsy Ogden, B Robinson, Ted Echols, Eleisha Hewes, Tracy Park, Amber Weber, Kent Palmer,

Contributing Editors: Duncan Macdonald, Betsy Ogden, Brooke Baltazar, Collette Soffe, Ted Echols, Joy Maxwell

Subscription Mailing and Phones: Alliance House Business Unit, 1724 South Main Street Salt Lake City, Utah 84115
www.alliancehouse.org
801-486-5012
FAX 801-466-5077

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Standard of the Month

By Ted Echols

#15 All work in the clubhouse is designed to help members regain self-worth, purpose and confidence; it is not intended to be job specific training.

(IF IT'S TO BE IT'S UP TO ME)

The three words in this standard that stand out the most for me are self-worth, purpose, and confidence. They are so important in our daily lives. I know that's why I am at the clubhouse to better myself and make new goals in my life.

First, self-worth is an overall measure of how much we value ourselves and gives priority to our own needs and happiness and also, our self-worth is a measure of our love for our self and others. To build on our self-worth is to face our fears, forget our failures, know what you want and ask for it.

Second, purpose is a thought or action taken in pursuit of a goal. How we can build on purpose is to make small steps when pursuing our goals, set reachable goals for yourself and think about them always. Also, put your plan on paper and into action as soon as possible.

Third, confidence is an attitude, which allows clubhouse members to have a positive yet realistic view of themselves and their situations. We can become more confident by looking for someone who is confident and learn from them, focus on your achievements, learn relaxation skills, always smile, and reward yourself when you succeed.

Last, standard #15 helps us to know this is not intended to be job training but life training. Also, it helps us understand why we are here at the clubhouse to regain our self-worth, our purpose and our confidence.

Look beyond today

There is a landscape larger
Than the one within our view
If we can only look beyond
The old and find the new,

If we can understand each day
That time is on our side
That with a little effort,
Hope can help to turn the tide

For there is a landscape larger
Than the one which we can see
Where the sun is shining brighter
And true joy waits patiently

Emily Matthews

Employment Spotlight

By: Amber Weber and Tracy Park



Top five Benefits of Employment

There are thousands of benefits to being employed. With the help of Alliance House members and a moving article by Robby Vorspan, Publications Director for International Center for Clubhouse Development (ICCD), here is our top five.

- 5) Working in one of the keys to recovery
- 4) Financial Gains

- 3) Greater sense of belonging and networking
- 2) Builds Self Confidence
- 1) Build Skills and Opportunities

5) Working is one of the keys

to recovery: "Working has given me purpose and has helped me to be able to work on my social fears" Tracy Park

"I have come to realize that it is genuine involvement in our work that allow therapy to become the very valuable asset that it can be. Therapy is completely dependent upon the real thing, works, relationship, obstacles and success that make up our day."

Robby Vorspan



4) Financial Gains: "Whether rich or poor it is nice to have money" Rob Peden

"Working gives members the opportunity to buy things to make our lives easier with extra spending money." Tracy Park

3) Greater sense of belong and networking:

"Nice to work for a organization where people have a interest in you goals" Kent Palmer

"For hours at a time I was no longer alone, I was part of a living organism that was bigger than I was" Robby Vorspan

"Work gives us opportunity to develop new relationships in which we can immediately feel good about ourselves. We know deeply that we are taken seriously and respectfully by someone that is depending on us to help accomplish a job." Robby Vorspan

2) Builds self-confidence: “

Working made me feel I was a important person, that I can accomplish something.” Gay Warner

“No matter who you are, work has a profound meaning in your life. It gives you a sense of who you are among other people. Working pushes you to come in touch with your own very unique strengths, talents and abilities. As you discover and rediscover these things in yourself, you gradually begin to define a more and more consistent representation of who you are to yourself and how you are unique and how you are the same as those around you. This consistent sense of yourself, I think, is the absolute prerequisite to self-esteem, and to the ability to develop real relationships with others.” Robby Vorspan

1) Building skills and

opportunities:“ The work skills you gain at clubhouse can help you get back into the real work force.” Duncan MacDonald



“ It is a good thing to learn how to mop. Now that I know how, it is easier to clean what I need to clean.” Betsy Ogden

Whether on a Transitional Employment Placement (TEP), or being involved in the work-centered day, the benefits of working are extremely valuable within our lives. As Robby Vorspan would say, “Work Works.”

Clubhouse Insider

By Duncan Macdonald
&
Kent Palmer

Thanksgiving was enjoyed by approximately thirty members. Alliance House staff, members, board members and volunteers added much to the occasion. They served up a variety of scrumptious dishes and lifted the spirits of all. Most everyone gorged themselves. We thank those that participated in helping with the meal prep and clean up.



The time is almost here for us to have our Alliance House Christmas Party. We're looking forward to seeing our members on Friday,

December 22 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Goodwill Band will play for us at 1:00 p.m. We will also have Christmas carols and games. We will be munching on appetizers, snacks and croissant sandwiches.

Come to Alliance House for a delicious dinner to be served at noon on Christmas Day. The clubhouse will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We would like to invite our members to help out and be a part of this activity. Members can bring a guest but they need to sign up ahead of time. We'll be playing games as well.

On January 11th, we will be celebrating our 20th Birthday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. We'll be inviting family, other Utah clubhouses, Board members, Founders. We'll also be inviting some VIPs and public officials, which include County Mayor Peter Caroon, Jackie Biscupski,

the President of NAMI. This will be an open house with individuals stationed in each unit to engage the visitors. Appetizers and beverages will be served.



The Alliance House Choir met for the first time on November 29th.

Bonnie Weber, an experienced choir organizer, spent time helping people determine which part they should be singing. The group discussed possible places or events where the choir could perform. The group will rehearse every Wednesday at 4:00 p.m. until Christmas.

There was a fantastic Coffee House on Thursday Nov. 30th. The people there were treated to a ton of terrific performers. Dru Watts and his parents performed some wonderful songs. The Moon Clouds, which is comprised of members Gordon, Rob and Mason, performed some songs for the attendees. Scott Pyke read a poem about his Mom. Tracy Park read some Christmas readings. Jared Smith performed with his guitar. Thanks to Scott Pyke for donating donuts. Everyone ate leftovers.

Culinary Unit Update



By Duncan Macdonald & B

Culinary Unit is happy to report a few new items in the kitchen. We have some plastic aprons for dishwashing, cloth aprons for food prep, and a few more signs to let us know the floor is wet so no one breaks a hip. The biggest addition for your dining pleasure is the new heat lamp to keep all the food nice and hot.

Thanks to everyone who handed in their menus on time. We appreciate all the great ideas for meals. We invite anyone that has an idea to come in the kitchen and teach the rest of us how to prepare the meal.

On December 29th, the Culinary Unit will help in preparation for the New Year's dance. Come and join the fun at Alliance House. Requested songs are welcome. This event will go from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Come join the fun.

Business Unit Update



By Betsy Ogden

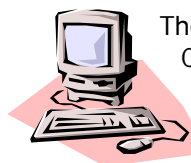
Welcome to James Warner and Brett Hansen. We are glad to have you in our unit.

We have been busy making lists of the valuable property at Alliance House for our insurance people. We have also had a lot of mail outs to do for the holiday season. We have also been working hard on updating the

master and business unit outreaches. That's quite the task!

We have also started to prepare for the Alliance House 20th Anniversary Open House. We are making a powerpoint and buying gifts.

CD UNIT UPDATE



The Community Computer Education Program (CCEP) is

gearing up for its next session, scheduled to begin January 3rd. CCEP is an excellent program designed to teach all phases of computer use and maintenance in an intensive six-month course. Tracy Park, a former student, says, "CCEP broadened my computer skills as well as giving me the opportunity to hone my socialization." Among other perks of CCEP, each student who completes the course receives a free, fully loaded computer. Application forms for the class are in the Education Room in the Career Development Unit and must be filed by December 10.

Congratulations to Jeff Hoven for taking the Transitional Employment Placement at Squatter's. Squatter's is a six-month position which consists of doing set-up for lunch at their cool restaurant. Again, way to go, Jeff!

The next Education Dinner will be December 20 at 5:00 PM. It is open to all members doing coursework at any level and to Alliance House tutors. Please take the opportunity to get to know our students and tutors better.

At long last, we've tracked down the elusive bench for the

Clubhouse Closet dressing room. Who would have thought it would take a whole year? Anyway, feel free to stop by and gaze reverently at it.

Cox's Corner



By John Cox

I have been asked to shed some light on how I feel about all the work I do as the Valley Villa mailman person and work in general.

Well, even my favorite job in mechanics has no Job security.....I feel. But since I found a job in janitorial sanitation has Job security because everyone needs a janitor. Due to past problems with energies, any kind of work brings me pain. Sometimes, even walking hurts. The problem comes from my enjoyment of doing a job well done.

My present doctor is trying to find an answer to the problem so I may be able to go back work??

I really love your support

Thank You
J. Cox

Jeremy's Sound byte



By
Jeremy Christensen
Executive Director

Happy Holidays, Christmas, Hanukkah, Boxing Day, New Year, al Adha, Full Moon and Cold December! (In no particular order).

Energy seems elevated here at Alliance House, in spite of the cold weather. Attitudes seem up. People seem to be confronting their fears, accepting and supporting each other and working hard towards personal progress.

The theme I keep hearing over and over this last month is personal choice. In different forms I keep hearing talks, speeches and quotes that lead to the general message that it is fundamentally impossible for anyone to offend anyone else. Well that message implies a lot of things... and what about when someone is really mean to me, and on purpose? It seems we don't always have a choice about what other people will do, but it is always our choice how we will react to it. Do we decide to be offended and bitter, or find a way to learn from the situation and improve our lives and relationships.

I really believe it is a message of personal power to say that no one can offend me. I am the one that chooses to be offended, or chooses not to be offended. How freeing is that? Now no one is in control of my feelings. I guess that means I have to take personal responsibility for my feelings and for the consequences of my actions based on the feelings I choose.

This does seem a bit overwhelming and difficult as I look at it, after all it doesn't always seem like I choose the feelings, they just come. But I do agree that taking the stance that I can choose what to do about those feelings can be very helpful overall, in spite of it being a long and difficult road.

I also believe that it is our responsibility to be aware of those around us and not use this principle as a 2x4 to crack over people's heads by being untactfully blunt and rude to someone and excusing our actions by saying, "Well you were the one to choose to be offended!" We can take responsibility for creating an environment where it would be very easy for someone else to choose to be offended.

Anyway, those are some of my thoughts going into the holiday season. May we all choose happiness, joy and cheer. May we all choose service, giving and gratitude. My best wishes to all of you and yours!



**"Let Every Day Be
Christmas"
Christmas is forever,
not for just one day,
for loving, sharing,
giving, are not to put
away
like bells and lights and
tinsel, in some box
upon a shelf.
The good you do for
others is good you do
yourself.
~Norman W. Brooks,**



December Birthdays



1 st	Tim Smith
4 th	Kenneth Romrell
5 th	Kent Palmer
5 th	Margie Mathena
5 th	Patricia Sanchez
8 th	Debra Black
9 th	Debra Brogger
11 th	Connie Bell
13 th	Carla Marjerison
29 th	Dave Matthews

Actitives For December

7	Tree Trimming Party (Donuts & Hot Cider)
9	One Heart Holiday Gift Fair (Free)
14	Temple Lights & IHOP Bring (\$2)
16	Park City
21	See Christmas Lights around Town
22	Christmas Party 9:00am – 3:00pm Games, Surprises & Music
23	Games & Leftovers
25	Christmas Dinner & Games
28	BINGO Win prizes
29	New Year's Eve Dance DJ – "B" Brunch at 10:00 Dance at 1:00
30	Sugarhouse Movie (\$1)

Did You Know?

In the month
November:

Number of Members
employed: 40

Number of hours worked
byTE: 768 Hours

Here's wishing this season
brings you happy memories
to Cherish always!



**A Christmas candle is a
lovely thing;
It makes no noise at all,
But softly gives itself
away.**

~Eva Logue



Happy Hoildays

+



+

Alliance House
1724 South Main Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84115
USA

