

# alliance house

## Clubhouse Chronicle

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



### Genesis Club Welcomes Alliance House for Two Week Training

My Two Week Training in Worcester, Massachusetts  
By Gay Warner



Our two week training at Genesis Club was very intense, but also very wonderful! We arrived at Boston Airport at midnight on January

22nd. After renting a car we drove to Worcester and arrived at the guest house at about 2:30 A.M. The next morning we had to be at the clubhouse by 9:00 A.M. After morning meeting we went upstairs to their conference room to introduce ourselves. There were four clubhouses at our training: Wasatch House from Provo, Utah, Yahara House from Madison, Wisconsin, Coney Clubhouse from Dublin, Ireland and last but not least Alliance House from Salt Lake City, Utah.

One of the things we did on the first day was choose the unit we wanted to work in. I chose the Employment and Education Unit and was able to work in this unit many times. I was able to learn and enter stats on their computers, and sign up members and staff on their white board. I did some outreach for this unit and

most importantly, I met some wonderful members and staff in this unit.

We had a lot of reading and discussion about the Standards and pertinent information about the day to day running of the clubhouse. We got to spend evenings in the guest house, where we were very busy reading our assignments for the next day. Also we were getting to know each other from the different clubhouses. We had the opportunity to eat dinner at various restaurants. If you get a chance, ask me about brunch at Dinky's Diner and Dinkleberry Pancakes.

Our two weeks went by really fast and I feel very grateful that I had the opportunity to represent the members from Alliance House. I don't have space enough to tell you about everything I saw and did, but anytime you want I will be glad to tell you more. Thanks to Genesis House for the wonderful reception and hospitality they so freely gave to us while we were there.

Genesis 2-week Training Report  
By Jeremy Christensen



## 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.*

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Training at Genesis Club for two weeks was an incredibly insightful experience for me personally. Spending two weeks intensely immersed in clubhouse training at Genesis Club in Worchester (Woosta) Massachusetts, reading constantly and discussing ideas from every angle to build on the strong foundation of Alliance Clubhouse Chronicle

House. I was not sure what I expected going to this training, but whatever it was the experience was much more. I returned to Alliance House inspired, energized and more passionate than I thought I could be about clubhouse.

From my observations during training I was reassured that many of the things Alliance House does are examples to the clubhouse community. Our housing, education, and employment programs at Alliance House have a great history and are a firm foundation for what goes on here.

I was very impressed with Genesis Club's organization and commitment to outreach, not only to active members, but also to the community in spreading the unique opportunity of clubhouse to those in need. They visit hospitals, shelters, and schools regularly, visiting with groups and individuals, posting flyers and inviting everyone to come in and checkout clubhouse. Each of the units at Genesis visibly list the members in that unit and persistently follows-up with them to link to resources, pursue their goals, increase socialization and ultimately gain substantial employment. In many ways we do this at Alliance House, and in many ways we can and must do it better to offer this powerful experience to a broader population.

The responsibility to share this is up to all of us, which leads me to another aspect of Genesis that I admired. As all clubhouses, they strongly believe in the importance of peer support with members engaging members. At any given moment there are endless opportunities to fill the needs of members in any clubhouse. Having an organized system, an atmosphere of generosity, and commitment to

filling those needs creatively and consistently, is always something we can work on. When each of us learns a skill in clubhouse, discovers a resource, and becomes infected with the desire to share these with others, it is critical to do just that. Genesis seemed incredibly dedicated to linking each member to critical, life improving resources, and they did this through each other. They first consistently ask what members need and link them to members, staff, and community resources to fill that need and then they expect that those members, in turn, to share their newly gained skill and knowledge with others.

For fear of going on endlessly, I will mention one more thing that impressed me during training it was the central importance of developing employment opportunities through temporary and supported employment. The employment committee of Genesis is constantly engaging members, staff and the board of directors for ideas and leads for new jobs and ways the clubhouse can facilitate linking members to those jobs.

Personally I feel a deeper commitment to help Alliance House progress, increase its membership, fulfill real needs for our members and spread the opportunity to the, many adults struggling with mental illness. We can help build a place to find a place of support, friendship and opportunity to truly improve our members' quality of life through meaningful relationships, education, and employment

(Continued on page 3)

## Workin' in "Woosta"!

By Carla Majerison



Genesis Club in Worcester welcomed Gay, Jeremy and I into their club along with three other groups for two weeks FULL of work and fun. Along with the Action Plan we developed for Alliance House, we picked up an endless number of tips that we will share with everyone as we settle back into our units. Some of my favorite information sessions were related to their Young Adult Initiative and their Wellness Program.

Genesis Club believes that their Young Adult Initiative is where the future of the Clubhouse movement lies. Along with Fountain House and Breakthrough Club, they have determined that Clubhouse is a suitable treatment model for Young Adults despite the differences in their situation from some other members. Since treatment is better now than it was in the past, young adults with mental illnesses are often introduced to the Clubhouse without having spent months in the hospital or years in day treatment. They are looking for support to make their well-formed educational and employment dreams a reality. Genesis holds weekly Young Adult Committee meetings, which a member and a young adult from each unit are required to attend. They focus on the ways in which young adults are being engaged in the units and any concerns that those present have, which can be

Alliance House

turned into work to take back to the units. Among other conclusions, they have found that separate social activities were not necessary after 9 – 12 months of attendance. Young adults stated that the best thing about the clubhouse was the “healthy caring relationships” they had formed with *all* members and staff in the club. Although we have begun to recognize the need to focus on attracting the Young Adult population at Alliance House, we will be continuing to strengthen this initiative with advice from these more experienced clubs.

Their Wellness Program includes weekly nutrition meetings, however the most intriguing aspect was the exercise component. Through their local university, the Clubhouse was able to obtain 20 four-month gym memberships. They developed individual workout plans at the clubhouse and members were required to attend the gym with the group twice each week and once on their own. With no direct request from the Clubhouse, the university awarded a free one-year membership to those who completed the program! Genesis is now planning the second four-month session. It looks like Alliance House needs to write a hefty letter to the University of Utah!

Along with *all* of the information and inspiration and the bonus of getting to know Gay and Jeremy better, the highlight of the entire trip was realizing, again, how strong Alliance House is. We have a great clubhouse and hopefully our little team has done an equally great job of setting a path towards how we can get bigger and better! Thank you so much for trusting us with the task.

## Unit Report

By Betsy Ogden



### Business Unit

We would like to welcome Laura Anderson. She is our newest member. Kent Palmer has graciously accepted to have the house open on Presidents Day for games and socializing.

We are so lucky to have Duncan Macdonald as a Quicken Guru. He is always willing to help out and teach people the Quicken program.

Our Unit has planned a computer cross training, which will start Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> at 10am. We will have various activities to learn. We will learn how to update the daily newsletter, make reach out cards, make tables and posters, create our own budget using Excel, and many more important items.

We would like to thank all our members who help out everyday and invite more to join us.

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### Career Development

We would like to welcome Deborah Black, Kathy Handy, Steven Coult, Donald Lockhart, and Christina Hernandez.

We are currently creating a possible supported employment placement. We have been coordinating with Valley Mental Health to create a hospitality position and are looking

Clubhouse Chronicle

to obtain a position at Barnes and Noble.

We have had a lot of excellent tutors helping us out. We have been busy making a poster that will show a picture of the tutor and what they are able to help with so that members can access that information quickly. We=d like to thank all our tutors for their hard work.

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### **Culinary Unit**

We have had many members pitch in and help in the kitchen. We=d like to thank Mary Krmzyan for making delicious cookies on February 7, 2006. We are glad to have members share their talents with us.

Joy Maxwell held down the fort in the kitchen while Marie and Amber went to Vocational Rehabilitation Training.

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### **Education Spotlight**

By Mary Krmzyan

Welcome Christina Hernandez! She is being spotlighted this week in the education unit. Christina is the newest addition to Alliance House. She is very productive and wants to achieve a GED while she attends Alliance House. She has been a member a mere two weeks. Christina's home base in Alliance House is the Career Development unit. Her goals for Alliance House are to attend at least 1-3 times a week and achieve her GED. When she gets her GED, she wishes to obtain a job. Christina is a great addition and we are happy to have her.

### **Employment Spotlight**

By: Amber Weber and Duncan Macdonald



Margie Mathena was born in Salt Lake City and has been a member of Alliance House since it opened in 1987. Margie likes a clean house, loves to swim, and has two cats named Yaz and Squakers.

She currently holds a Transitional Employment Placement (T.E.P.) at Jones, Waldo, Holbrook & McDonough law firm. She has been in this position since May 2005, which will end one year later, this coming May. Besides the law firm, Margie has enjoyed eight previous T.E.s some of which include PetsMart and Hogle Zoo. She liked these T.E.P.'s because she enjoys working with the animals.

Margie considers the Law Firm T.E.P. to be one of her favorites because of the positive atmosphere, her supportive co-workers, and all the free drinks she could ever want. One of her most memorable and exciting experiences at the law firm was when United Way invited her to speak to her co-workers about how her job opportunity, through Alliance House, helped to boost her confidence. She felt nervous about speaking in front of a large audience but once she was up at the podium looking down into the faces of her co-workers she felt at ease.

Margie believes her T.E.P. has helped improve her self-esteem. The law firm has assisted her "to not be so worried about going to a

future place of work where people might pressure me." She makes her work into a game that will challenge her to get done quickly.

After her T.E.P. is over Margie would like to take a break and sign up for a computer class. When she is adequately rested she wants to try for an Independent Employment Placement (I.E.P.) which would not be overly demanding either with computers or at a library.

Margie's advice to the next member working at Jones, Waldo, Holbrook & McDonough is to "work everyday even if you don't feel like it because the atmosphere is so good that you will feel good about yourself and do a good job. Go in even if you feel down because you feel better after your done. The work is challenging at first, but once you get it down it's a good routine not monotonous." Alliance House is excited to see what upcoming opportunities are in store for Margie and are grateful for her continued participation.

### **Clubhouse Insider**

By Duncan Macdonald & Sue Hanson

We would like to welcome Pete Doenges to Alliance House. His son came in and wanted to get



involved in the program himself. Pete would like to tutor in math, physics, and computers. He had teachers in his family and had a desire to teach. He has a Bachelors

and Masters in Electrical Engineering and “deep-related work” in Computer Science. Pete has 35 years of experience in developing Visual Simulation for Training Simulators in aircraft, maritime, and vehicles. He was freed from his work in 2002 and went to AMES charter school for advice about tutoring. Pete joined Alliance House for tutoring in January 2006. He has been helping many students in many subjects. Pete has worked feverishly with our members in the Education Unit. “I think his help is invaluable and is helping me get through my financial math class.” said John Adams.

Our clubhouse has been busy working on advocacy. Members went to the capital on Thursday, February 2, 2006 to testify in front of the Health and Human Services Committee. We are also preparing for Citizen’s Day at the Radisson Hotel. It is an opportunity for folks to talk to their legislators over breakfast or lunch. Our invitations to Western Regional Conference were very unique. Our seminar logo was engraved along with the date, and location for the conference on gold medals. They



were received with overwhelming support. “The medals are fantastic! Those medals are going to hang in clubhouse work units as reminders about your conference and hopefully result in loads of registrations.”, said Jack Yatsco,

Alliance House

International Training Base Coordinator. Our latest update is that Shelly Osterloh, a newscaster for KSL channel 5 will be our MC at the conference. We had the Park City Mayor, Dana Williams, agree to come to the opening ceremonies and welcome all colleagues from the western states. Interact Club will be doing a mail-out to get what we hope will be new and exciting ideas for workshops and planarians.

As usual, our members work hard to play hard. We will be doing snowshoeing in the near future, attending a Valentine’s Dance at Wasatch House, going to Park City, attending a play at the Grand Theatre, learning Tai Chi, seeing some great movies.

Alliance House continues to have a vibrant work-centered day and encourage our members to come in and check out what’s going on in the house.

### Advocacy Update

By Duncan Macdonald & Amber Weber

Citizen’s Day is February 17, 2006, from 8:00 am to 1:30 pm at the Radisson Hotel. This is an opportunity for members to meet with their legislators over breakfast and lunch to talk about issues that affect them. In addition, there will be brief seminars the members can attend to become educated.

During this time of year, it’s important to know who your legislator is and how you can get in touch with him/her. There is a list of phone numbers available in the CD Unit with more information. Please utilize this source so your voice can be heard.

Since many members have expressed a need for assistance with

their taxes, Amber arranged to have Jerry Cochran from Community Action Program (CAP) help members understand and prepare their taxes free of charge. On February 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, we were fortunate enough to have eight members receive this assistance. The general feedback was that Jerry was very helpful, nice person.

There has been a lot of talk and news about the one billion dollar state surplus. Members have expressed their desire to see a portion of that money used for health and human services. A good way to have a voice in this matter is to write a personal letter about how lack of funding affects your life. Judi Hillman of Utah Issues suggests focusing on how lack of dental, vision, or mental health funding affects your ability to work and contribute to society. She also recommends the use of appropriate humor. She will be collecting these letters and distributing these amongst the legislators. You can e-mail her at: [Judi@healthsolutionsalliance.org](mailto:Judi@healthsolutionsalliance.org).

### This Month’s Standard

By Miriam Hyde



February often brings the bleakest and coldest part of winter. Many of us tend to isolate, brood and let ourselves be drawn into depression. I know personally that, for whatever reason, I sense loneliness stronger than usual. My favorite Standard, #18, is especially appropriate now.

Standard 18 reads, “The clubhouse is organized into one or more work units, each of which has sufficient staff, members and meaningful work to sustain a full and engaging work ordered day. Unit meetings are held to foster relationships as well as to plan the work of the day.”

Unit meetings can be quiet, and the person leading the meeting has to pull teeth to get any response. Or, they can be lively and boisterous (our unit has been known to sing old songs and have synchronized swimming), with everyone grabbing at tasks. The more members, and the right number of staff, the merrier. If anyone complains that there is no work, just ask or look around – I guarantee there is plenty to do.

Using our whiteboards, we organize ourselves in the morning, and again in the afternoon. Some tasks have to be done on a deadline; they get finished on time. Other tasks may take a little longer. In unit meetings, we discuss the importance of each task and “work-to-do’s” and identify longer-term projects.

Unit meetings are also a great time to discuss Standards. Once again, the more members to give input, the more we clarify and understand the intent and meaning of the Standard.

I refer to Standard 18 in every Orientation, stressing the idea of fostering relationships. Relationships are the core of a clubhouse. A member can come every day and stay busy all day. However, if she doesn’t know other members, the work becomes tedious and, often, meaningless. It is the human connection and having similar reasons and purposes for being in the clubhouse. It is knowing that, whether we are

struggling or doing well, we are all working towards recovery, and are all familiar with the process. Differences make us individuals, but our experiences are the same.

Clubhouse relationships start with a tentative hello and a shy smile. In a short time, conversations (silly or serious) occur. Soon, the comfort level is such that many members feel like they have a new family (As for me, I have enough family; I’m happy to have colleagues and friends!)

So many of us experience the difficulty of being in the same room with a lot of unknown people. The unit meeting breaks down the numbers into smaller groups where it is easier to get to know unit mates. It is possible to become great friends with another member, something that many of us have not experienced. These friendships are based on getting and staying well. We’ve even had some marriages grow out of these friendships!

The hundreds of members and staff who suggested Standard 18 knew what they were talking about. Organization is good for the brain, and relationships are good for the soul.

When your brain and soul are in synch, you are a complete, whole person. A person in recovery.

### **Did you know?**

Did you know that in February, Alliance House experienced the biggest orientation group they’ve had in five years? Nine people attended and seven returned to participate in the work ordered day.

## **Jeremy’s Sound byte**

By Jeremy Christensen  
Executive Director



Having just written my article about the two week training we attended at Genesis club, I find my head reeling with ideas and excitement about clubhouse. When I started working here over four months ago, I was curious about all the passion so evident in members, staff and board members dedicated to clubhouse. Sometimes I wondered “is this for real” do I need a little brainwashing to truly get on board? I was concerned in so doing I might become a little dogmatic and rigid... and was intent to discover how other clubhouse members, staff and board members in other parts of the world feel about clubhouse.

Of no surprise to clubhouse enthusiasts, I found that same excitement in Massachusetts’s clubhouses, so I inclined to submit myself to the conversion process. I discovered that once on the path of conversion, it became a slippery slope into a deep pool of enthusiasm, fervor and zeal. It was like I contracted an infectious disease, consumed in the fever of recovery. If there was brainwashing involved... I no longer cared. Clubhouse works... it works in Utah, it works Massachusetts, it works in Wisconsin, it works in Ireland and 30 other countries

# Birthdays for February

across the world. More so than ever, we know why it works. Genesis Club has a strong research connection with a local university that have compared clubhouse to other models and kept copious statistics proving the clubhouse model successful. I came back energized and excited to jump back into Alliance House, a dedicated enthusiast.

We have an action plan that was built by staff and members of Alliance House, reviewed by staff and members of Genesis Club. I have been part of creating many action plans. I have seen many of those fall by the wayside in the face of difficulty, discouragement and neglect. This understandably raises red flags in my mind about this action plan and its future. I don't know of any other action plans I have been this committed to. I believe this is because it supports the mission of Alliance House to provide members a place to "rediscover their self respect... through the opportunity to perform productive work, to belong and to create meaningful relationships." It will be up to all of us to review this plan regularly, decide if we are committed to it and why. As we stick to it, look back and evaluate what was accomplished, I believe we will see many members engaged in productive meaningful relationships and lives. The vision of this result is enough for me to keep this plan in plain view, not only on paper, but in practice... and that will be the real test.

1 <sup>st</sup>	PeggySue Whipple
4 <sup>th</sup>	Mike Perry
4 <sup>th</sup>	Barbara Gale
4 <sup>th</sup>	Kathryn Bartling
5 <sup>th</sup>	Stacie Schofield
6 <sup>th</sup>	Adam Lee
8 <sup>th</sup>	Hy Chau
9 <sup>th</sup>	Breanne Thatcher
10 <sup>th</sup>	Lisa Turville
11 <sup>th</sup>	Linda Riding
14 <sup>th</sup>	Grace Chen
14 <sup>th</sup>	Elizabeth Becar
16 <sup>th</sup>	Duncan Macdonald
17 <sup>th</sup>	Rob Peden
18 <sup>th</sup>	Michael Potter
18 <sup>th</sup>	Rich Eastlyn
18 <sup>th</sup>	Iona Berrette
18 <sup>th</sup>	Linda Christensen
19 <sup>th</sup>	Kathy Jenkins
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Andrew Henderson
27 <sup>th</sup>	James Jones
28 <sup>th</sup>	Gordon Butler
29 <sup>th</sup>	Jared Green

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