

alliance house

Clubhouse Chronicle

Oct/Nov 2005

WORLD EDITION

Volume 8, Issue 10

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



Alliance House Welcomes New Director

By Duncan Macdonald

Jeremy Christensen, 29, is a middle child with one brother and three sisters. He was born in Provo, Utah. He grew up in Alaska, Colorado, and Idaho and moved back to Utah seven years ago. He has been married to his wife, Arnica, for the last seven years and has two children (Hayden, age five, and Haylee, age two).

Jeremy decided to apply for the position of Alliance House Director because he likes the clubhouse model and forging close relationships toward recovery. He also likes being part of a group that works toward these goals. Some of his own

goals as director include ensuring that AH membership continues to strengthen and increase and helping solidify the financial condition of the clubhouse. He wants to help ensure the continued high quality of the clubhouse program, to assist members in achieving their goals in skill building and employment, and to help them improve their quality of life.

Jeremy has held a number of positions in the mental health field. He has been a case manager, an individual/group therapist, and a crisis worker. Jeremy designed and coordinated the Community Computer Education Program. He hopes to bring consistency, dedication, ideas, enthusiasm, and partnership to Alliance House. He is really excited to be a part of our program. Jeremy hopes

to get life experience, learning, lasting relationships, and a lot of fun from the clubhouse.

Employers Honored at Annual Dinner

Together Toward Recovery

By Rob Peden

By the time September came around, Alliance House was ready to host a seamless, near perfect celebration of the community partners in our Transitional Employment Program. After a long delay, we held our annual Employers' Dinner on 20 September—and, *boy*, was it worth waiting for!



The dinner, normally a spring affair, was first postponed until late summer because of preparation for ICCD certification. Then, because of our focus on hiring new Alliance House staff

See Employers Honored, Page 3

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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Correction

In the *Clubhouse Chronicle* article titled *My 13IS Experience* (August 2005) Michele Gauthier stated, regarding Robby Vorspan's plenary at the 13th International Seminar, "She took a rather drastic view for the clubhouse community and stated that committees should be eliminated altogether
Clubhouse Chronicle

from the clubhouse." According to Michele, "I did not accurately represent Robby's view-point with the phrase *committees should be eliminated altogether*. Robby was talking about committees in which there is a hierarchy, with members judging one another—for example, a situation in which members determine who will and will not be accepted into the clubhouse community during orientation. Robby was not referring to committees such as newsletter committees or advocacy committees." Michelle adds, "I apologize for the overgeneralization in my words." The *Chronicle* editors regret the error.

Business Unit Adds to Staff

By Joy Maxwell

Alliance House is pleased to introduce our new Business Unit staff member, Rebecca Russell. Having worked many years in the private sector, Rebecca brings many transferable, well-polished skills to benefit the membership and advance the goals of Alliance House. These skills include strong computer savvy, excellent diplomacy/communication skills, and (due to her vegetarian diet and daily Tai Chi practice) a centered, well-balanced calm we sorely need and appreciate.



In addition, Rebecca recently completed a Human Develop-

ment degree followed by two years of coursework in substance abuse counseling. Since moving to Utah, Rebecca has worked in both Youth and Aging services for Salt Lake County. Her true passions, however, are Monk and Bea, her two Staffordshire terriers.

Rebecca, although born in Salt Lake City, comes to us via Portland, Oregon, following a young adulthood in San Francisco (a true earth-mother-hippie, she surely wore some flowers in her hair). Upon return to this valley, she was "hands on" engaged renovating a house for her parents. Enthusiastically she explains her love of building and knowing "just how things go together." Given a construction partner, she would love to build a house from the ground up.

When queried about her desire for a position at Alliance House, she expands about her wish to be part of an intentional community that honors people's strengths and offers support for growth. After spending 20 years in the computer industry, Rebecca states, she had an overwhelming urge to do work that makes a difference rather than just making rich people richer. (Whoa, let's not discount the rich—it is these very blessed souls that made Alliance House possible!)

Watch for Our New Look

The *Clubhouse Chronicle* is undergoing some changes and moving to an all-electronic format. We will be sprucing up our front page and rolling out a new look in an issue coming soon.

Employers Honored

Continued from Page 1

and conflicts with the vacation schedules of many of the employers, we again postponed the affair.



Much of the credit for our success goes to Michele Gauthier, who had assumed the role of Employment Coordinator barely two months before the celebration, replacing Dixie Pond. “The fact that Michele was so new to the job made the success of the event even more impressive,” insisted Carla Majerison, our Education Coordinator.

As is typical for Michele, her reaction to inheriting responsibility for one of the clubhouse’s major events was quiet and modest. According to Michele, “everyone, especially our great members, were unbelievably supportive. Members, board, staff, donors, employers—we all pulled together to make it work.”

By six o’clock on September 20, our employer partners from Cornerstone Counseling, Grand

America Hotel, Horizonte Instruction and Training Center, Squatters Pub Brewery, Valley Mental Health, the Salt Lake County Whitmore Library, and Salt Lake County Youth Services were already arriving

for small talk, hors d’oeuvres, and Eliza Weed’s ethereal harp solos. At six-thirty, with everyone in place, Michele Gauthier was able to announce that dinner was served. Just as the last few stragglers finished a delicious dinner of strip steak, garlic mashed potatoes, asparagus, and fruit plate, Michele introduced new Executive Director, Jeremy Christensen, and Rebecca Russell, our new staff member in the Business Unit, then turned the floor over to Ken Verdoia, of KUED. Ken’s new position as Director of Production at KUED has diminished neither his effectiveness as a speaker nor his affection for Alliance House and the clubhouse model in general. It seems that every year, as his resumé grows more impressive, Ken manages to draw on new personal resources

that make him even more articulate and engaging.

Ken introduced the speakers for the evening. Mindi Bradford, who holds the afternoon shift TE at Smith’s Food and Drug, led off by telling the audience how working and participating in clubhouse programs has straightened out her life and outlook. Pat Berckman, Director of Salt Lake County Division of Youth Services, followed with a description of how Transitional Employment Placement fits into DYS’s system and how the system benefits all involved parties. Tracy Park, Horizonte’s TEP, spoke of how much working has meant to her on a personal level. Joe Lambert, Operations Manager at Squatters, provided a witty and insightful look at how TEPs fit into private enterprise to the advantage of the employer, the TE holder, and other employees as well. “All of the speakers were wonderful,” Carla Majerison opined. She added, “I found Mindi to be very classy and inspiring and Joe’s humor refreshing.”

Linda Peterson states that the theme of this year’s Employers’ Dinner, *Together Toward Recovery*, came to her in a dream. Nonetheless, the theme captured the spirit of the evening, as well as adorning the memorial plates that Linda and Michele presented to each of the TE employers. It was manifest to everyone present that the Alliance House relationships among employers, members, placement managers and employment coordinators

See Employers Honored, Page 4

Employers Honored

Continued from Page 3

are genuine, deep, and filled with pride and mutual respect. Employers sought out job holders they had not seen for years to catch up and reminisce about people and events long past. No one who attended would dispute that the evening was lovely in every sense.

A few weeks prior to the Employers' Dinner, someone offered Michelle the opinion that true success for the event could be measured by its apparent effortlessness, naturalness, and inevitability. Karen Wildfoerster, Alliance House Director of Development, asserted, "Michele's careful planning and diligent execution provided exactly that. Every segment of the meal and program fell into place flawlessly."



I couldn't have done it by myself," Michele insists. "The members, the staff, the board were all wonderful." Every time something needed to be done, people stepped forward to get it done. This was all new to me, and I'm just grateful for the great and efficient help. I'd just like to express thanks for myself, as well as on behalf of the clubhouse, to everyone who participated." And very special thanks to our employer partners

who, along with our members, work *together toward recovery*.

Standard of the Month

Considering Standard Five

By Lance Baum

Members, at their choice, are involved in the writing of all records reflecting their participation in the clubhouse. All such records are to be signed by both member and staff.

At a recent *Catch the Vision* meeting, essential questions were brought up that addressed Standard Five. The first question was, "Why is it important for members to be involved in writing their records?" There was quite a bit of input on this question. The first comment was that it increases the ownership and equality of members. It allows members to be involved in their own treatment and helps prevent the creation of a parent/child relationship between staff and member. Also, following this standard allows members to know what is said about them, promoting an atmosphere of trust within the clubhouse. Involvement in record keeping allows members to be active participants in their own recovery, distinguishing the clubhouse from a day treatment program. This philosophy of inclusion is summarized by the statement *nothing about me without me*.

The next question was, "Under what circumstance, if any, should members not be involved in recording their participation in clubhouse activi-

ties?" This question received a short answer, "None." It was unanimously agreed that there are no conditions under which members should not be involved in the recording of their participation in the clubhouse.

The last question was, "How could Alliance House staff do a better job of involving members in the writing of their records?" Recommendations included directly inviting participants to be involved, focusing on more reachout by the clubhouse, and placing announcements in the *Daily News* and calendars when reviews are being held. It was agreed that members must also demonstrate assertiveness in becoming involved. Using these recommendations, members can learn to track their own records. In conclusion, there was a lot of good input at the *Catch the Vision* meeting. It was agreed that the overall intent of Standard Five is that members get to participate in their own records. Adherence to this standard promotes a healthy atmosphere in the clubhouse.

Clubhouse Insider

By Duncan Macdonald
& Sue Hanson

Thanks to everyone who helped make the Greek Festival such a terrific success. We had thirty-nine members, six staff, and five board members who worked very hard during our sixteenth year of doing this event.

We are proud to announce that we have received a three-year certification from the International Center for Clubhouse

See Insider, Page 5

Insider

Continued from page 4

Development (ICCD). One of the important areas in which Alliance House was not compliant with standards was that of staff ratio. It was recommended that Alliance House work to increase membership and attendance (and thereby staff) to correspond to the increase in building size. Congratulations to all of our members, staff, and board for all the work in preparation for certification.

The entire clubhouse is eagerly anticipating the new look for our newsletter and the updating of our website by the Business Unit. Keep your eyes open for changes.

There are a number of important events coming up, so come in and get involved:

Thanksgiving Dinner

November 24, 10:00–2:00

Christmas Party

December 22, 10:00–3:00

Christmas Day

December 25, 10:00–2:00

Unit Updates

Business Unit

By Betsy Ogden

The Business Unit welcomes new members, Scott Vrooman and Karen Reed. The unit has had busy energy this month, with members learning more about the computer and new members sharing what they already know. We are working on a fantastic fresh look for our newsletter. There are lots of work choices available in the

Alliance House

Business Unit, including learning about new programs used to edit the newsletter and create our web site. The Business Unit is going to begin offering short computer classes one afternoon a week. The unit will be posting a sign-up sheet to determine member interest in computer topics, including creating folders, using Excel, using tables, and creating email attachments and address books.

Career Development Unit

By Betsy Ogden

A member's mission is to support the student in the successful realization of his or her educational goals.

The Career Development Unit welcomes Christopher Jones (see *Education Spotlight*, this page). The unit took part in mobile outreach on October 5, visiting two members and dropping off a basket for a third.

The book club is enjoying *Hole In My Life*, by Jack Gantos. If you are interested in reading and discussing books, please join the book club. It meets on Fridays at 10:30.

Culinary Unit

By Peggy Sue Whipple & Marie Bennett

We would like to welcome Mike Potter back to our unit after he was gone for awhile. Mike will be part of the Culinary Unit and is a very hard worker. Mike seems to enjoy our unit and feels he will be a big asset to the unit.

The Culinary Unit would like to send a big *thank you* to Ryan Herron and to our “man on fire,” Scott Pyke, for all the

work responsibilities they take on. Thank you to everyone who helps us out—especially Peggy Sue and other members for all the good meals while she has been here. They have all been wonderful!

Education Spotlight

Welcoming Chris Jones

By David Mathews & Carla Majerison

Chris Jones is our newest high school student in the education program. He is a Salt Lake City native but lived in Oklahoma from February 2004 to August 2005. As soon as he arrived, he started coming to Alliance House, since his family was already familiar with the services that Alliance House provides to its members. His brother Richard graduated with his high school diploma last May from Horizonte Training Center, inspiring Chris to follow in his footsteps.

Chris has been a member of Alliance House for two months and has become involved in the Career Development unit. His current focus is obtaining his high school diploma. He states he would like Alliance House to help him with subjects he finds difficult, such as math. David Mathews (who currently tutors Chris in math) states, “He has a sense of his capabilities and just needs support from Alliance House to help him rediscover his abilities.”

Chris is 18 years old and feels it is a good time to start thinking about his prospects. In the near future he would like to learn how to drive and get a job.

See Education, Page 6

Clubhouse Chronicle

Education

Continued from page 5

Eventually, Chris would like to live on his own and be a provider for his future family. He envisions having a job he enjoys and two children. All of us in the Career Development Unit feel very lucky to have the presence of Chris' calm demeanor, and we can't wait to see him receiving his diploma. Good luck Chris!

Clubhouse Retreat

By Miriam Hyde

It was a clear, crisp autumn day. The vans were loaded, and the climb to the Wasatch Mountain Club cabin began.



Of course, I'm talking about the Alliance House annual retreat. Sue Hansen had arrived earlier, and had a much-needed fire crackling, with chairs and benches around. More importantly, the coffee was ready!



Clubhouse Chronicle

We began the day with a continental breakfast. Throughout the day were breaks to stretch and have more food. There were also drawings for free lunches and \$3 gift certificates to Clubhouse Closet (our fabulous thrift store).

In our first session we discussed last year's goals, applauding ourselves for those we completed and discussing in detail those we had not. As part of the discussion we decided which we wanted to carry over to this year. A few of the goals on last year's list included creating a new clubhouse brochure, increasing the number of members and staff available to give tours, and completing an ambitious capital campaign.

The hot lunch of potato soup and chili was a hit! The Culinary Unit went above and beyond even their normally ultimate performance. During the lunch break, the Alliance



House dancers rocked to the oldies, showing us the Twist, the Chicken, the Hokey-Pokey, and more.

Our new *computer genius* Exec Director, Jeremy Christensen, created a full-fledged

Page 6 of 7



computer game of "Clubhouse Jeopardy," complete with clubhouse-oriented questions and answers. We divided into three groups: the RAMS, the Clubhouse Cougars, and the Hawks.

After a quick break, we settled into the most important part of our day and the main reason for the retreat—creating goals for 2005/2006. One of our new goals makes an important language change to better reflect our relationships. Instead of describing staff as designated to *chart on* members, we choose, in the future, to refer to those staff as members' *contact persons*. We also decided to describe the periodic reviews as *goal reviews* rather than as *charting*.

Other new goals for next year include raising community awareness of Alliance House and further educating our board members on the standards.

Did You Know?

The cumulative wages earned on Transitional Employment (TE) positions for the month of September was \$3,283.

Alliance House was supported by 187 volunteer hours in September.

Alliance House

Jeremy's Soundbyte

What a great opportunity this is for me to be a part of such an enthusiastic, dedicated, and passionate group of members, staff, and board members! I am thoroughly enjoying my first month here at Alliance House. I am surprised and inspired every day by all the great things members are accomplishing and taking on in their lives.

I have been asked to describe a bit about myself, so here it goes. I was born in Utah, lived in Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, and now again in Utah for the past 8 years. I have been married now for 7 years and have two kids. I enjoy hanging out with my family, gardening, landscaping, hiking, snowboarding, indoor soccer, reading anything, music, and now coming to Alliance House!

I have been working in the mental health field for the past five-and-a-half years and am very excited to be part of a program that focuses so much on strength, ability, and vision. I have been observing Alliance House operations for the past couple of weeks and feel very good about the great things and long-standing traditions that have been so important to everyone. I respect the amount of work each member and staff have put into making Alliance House an efficient, effective, and safe place to experience and work toward recovery.

There is much still to do, building off the great foundation that has been laid over the



years, to elevate Alliance House to new heights. I feel it is important to increase new membership at the clubhouse, to spread this great support base to touch more lives. Along with new membership, I look forward to enrolling current members to continued commitment and increased participation in working toward their dreams (and supporting the dreams of others less experienced and looking for that role model and support to guide them). I am committed to sharing the great clubhouse model of Alliance House with the mental health system and the community at large in a way that accurately reflects the great things done here, inspires referrals, and increases donations. I am interested in increasing the financial backing of Alliance House to allow the great programs within Alliance House to continue and grow. With increased membership participation and strong financial standing, I am convinced we can justify increased staff so we can offer more comprehensive services and be in compliance with the ICCD recommended number of staff.

I realize this is a lot to take on; however, these goals have been inspired by those I have seen working so earnestly to see the

members of Alliance House increase and succeed. The model works, and there are so many who are not aware of its effectiveness, I want to share that. Thanks for this opportunity. Thank you all for your dedication. I look forward to meeting everyone and contributing in any way I can.

October/November Birthdays

October

- 1 Cadie Gregerson
- 2 Andrew Watts
- 6 Shaibu Mapila
- 7 Lauren Bloom
- 7 Brent Taylor
- 10 Shelly Hoffman
- 12 Marie Bennett
- 13 Perston Gilbert
- 15 Patsy Anderson
- 16 Nance Nelson
- 20 Scott Rowsell
- 22 Bill Lamm
- 22 Joe Jenkins
- 26 Irene Leishman
- 30 Iris Boyd
- 30 Toni Hall

November

- 3 Kathy Meals
- 3 Robert Magana
- 6 Robert Davis
- 8 Ken Smith
- 9 Paul Retz
- 9 Mike Rugaber
- 10 Gary Adkins
- 10 Larry Christensen
- 10 Kristin Sheehan
- 13 Elizabeth Jensen
- 16 Linda Freeman
- 17 David Reed
- 18 Terry Bangerter
- 28 Patricia Honda

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