



1987-2009

CLUBHOUSE CHRONICLE

OCTOBER 2009

WORLD EDITION

A nonprofit agency in partnership with Valley Mental Health and United Way

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Speech Given at the Milestones Breakfast

By: Jeremy Christensen



Hello, my name is Jeremy Christensen. I have been the Executive Director of Alliance House for the past four years and it is my pleasure to share with you the vision of Alliance House.

Serious Mental Illness manifests itself in so many ways it is difficult to explain without experiencing it yourself. Mental illness has deeply impacted people close to me in my life and is a topic of grave concern for me personally, as well as professionally. Picture yourself living with dark, unrelenting sadness. Imagine living in fear of everything and everyone. Try to comprehend unpredictable mood swings and confused reality making it a struggle every day to determine who is a friend or who is even real. Mental illness derails "normal" life plans and devastates families and work cycles. For too many here and in our community this darkness is a daily reality.

Alliance House, in partnership with Valley Mental Health, was founded twenty-two years ago by several parents in our community. They wanted a place that would offer dignity to their adult children who have serious mental illness.

People coming to Alliance House are adults who have serious mental illness like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and severe anxiety or depression. Alliance House is not your typical mental health program. You won't find traditional therapy, medication, or treatment groups. People coming to Alliance House aren't patients or clients... they are "members" of Alliance House, members who are crucial to the everyday operation of an organization they take ownership in through meaningful work. It is a place they belong... and isn't that what we all want?

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
 meaningful relationships
 meaningful work
 a place to return

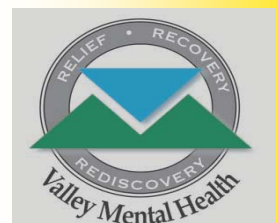
Contributors: Jeremy Christensen; Rick Peay; Luisa Katoa; Jolene Emmett; Lynn Sorensen; Betsy Maxwell; Nikki Crane; Ruthena Hensley; John Cox; Travis Westerman; Angel Teague; and Amber Mackay

Editors: Robert Grey, Jolene Dalley-Waters; Chuck Enriquez; Irene Leishman, David Reed; Joy Maxwell

Subscription Information:

Alliance House Business Unit
 1724 South Main Street
 Salt Lake City, Utah 84115
www.alliancehouse.org
 Phone 801-486-5012
 FAX 801-466-5077
alliancehouseslc@yahoo.com

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Alliance House is open like any business Monday-Friday 8-5. If you step into Alliance House on any day you will witness members and staff working together to run every aspect of the organization... typing documents, editing video, preparing lunch, setting Alliance House policy, writing the monthly newsletter and so much more. There are no staff only offices or staff only meetings. Through this work, members are focused on what they can do, gaining confidence, friends and meaning again in life.

I recently sat down with one of our members named Jeremy. He came to Alliance House several years ago lacking direction, hope and motivation. He entered our high school program and graduated to move onto community college and reports he now has almost completed his associates degree. He has been working at the Salt Lake City Library now for 18 months and is contemplating full time work when he graduates. I remember all too clearly the struggle Jeremy had when he came to Alliance House and some of these images came to mind as we talked. As he finished updating me about his recent success, I realized that he no longer resembled my memories of him. With resolve in his voice he said, "You know, I owe a lot to Alliance House, I don't know where I would be right now without Alliance House, probably dead." Jeremy brought home the realization for me that it wasn't about all the small daily details; it was about saving a life.

Some here may feel they don't have family or close friends with mental illness and ask why they should get involved with a cause like this? I would like to suggest a couple of reasons you should care.

Alliance House currently sees over 360 people a year, on average 52 people a day. We have over 60 members employed in the community at any given time; another 35 are pursuing education in high school or college. In the past year members of Alliance House earned a combined income of over \$400,000 working and paying taxes in Salt Lake County. This is a reason to care.

Research has shown that participation in Alliance

House decreases costly hospitalizations, incarcerations, outpatient care and homelessness, several more reasons to care.

One final reason to care is that the likelihood of one of you dealing personally with mental illness is 1 in 4. 1 in 4 of your friends, parents, siblings or children, who would be welcome at Alliance House.

In addition, Alliance House is internationally recognized as one of 10 training centers in the world, training other communities to establish and effectively run clubhouses in their area. Case in point... with us today are members and staff who greeted you this morning here training from clubhouses in Australia, Washington State and Tooele.

We are proud to report we continue to serve Veterans in a successful collaboration with Veterans Affairs. Sadly there are now many more Veterans who need our help... and they deserve our help.

This year I worked closely with another of our members named Pamela, on a transitional job placement. During our work together, Pamela would talk mostly about when she was a teenager, attending overseas private schools. She described many friends and meaningful memories. She was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder in her late teens and her mental health symptoms eventually deprived her of achieving her life goals. She doesn't talk much about the time after her diagnosis, but I will always remember the day she walked into Alliance House and for the first time seemed upset. I had never seen her show emotion and she startled me with tears and an explanation about how painful it is to have mental illness and how it dramatically changed her life and deprived her of her dreams. Nine months ago she was selected to work at Squatters and recently completed her transitional employment position there. I remember working with her on her second day of the job and asking her how her first day went training with Sue our assistant director. Normally I would expect the response to be that it was difficult or exhausting as the job is very physical, but the response Pamela gave me startled me again. Her face brightened and her eyes absolutely glowed as she exclaimed, "Jeremy it was absolutely the best day of my life." Pamela has

plans to enroll again in education and find permanent employment at a cafe.

For many years Alliance House had been limited to only seeing people who have Medicaid. I have watched many people like Jeremy and Pamela struggling, homeless, uninsured, desperately seeking a future and in years past I have had to tell too many that they would have to come back another day.

Every year in Salt Lake County thousands of people with mental illness struggle to access mental health services that are too often unavailable to them due to a lack of insurance. Many more have not sought treatment at all due to stigma and ignorance, quietly suffering, even dying, in silence.

This is a responsibility that I feel personally, and in the past several years we have worked hard to keep our doors open to any adult with serious mental illness in our community. Over the past year there has continued to be an increase in referrals of uninsured adults with mental illness and we were able to say yes to everyone thanks to many people in this room... but this need continues to rise and I worry about a day we could have a waiting list. When someone is in critical need in our community and has mustered the courage to ask for help... of all times, that is not the time to put them on a waiting list.

I envision Alliance House growing to meet the need in our community; freeing people from isolation and reintroducing them to school, work, friendship and their dreams. What I dream of is the day that the need in our community will be met... and we can only meet that need together.

There are so many more people we need to reach. The face of mental illness stares back at us in the eyes of so many in our families, among our friends, children, neighbors and co-workers. I am committed to seeing those eyes in Alliance House, easing the pain and finding hope. I ask today that you join me in that commitment. Thank you for coming today, thank you for being here for the people of Alliance House.

Member Spotlight

By: Rick Peay



My name is Rick and I have been a member of clubhouse for twelve years. I am working on my recovery. Alliance House is a great place to come to stabilize after a stay at the state hospital.

I spent a year at the state hospital in order to change my meds and have the structure of an institution. My stay though, seemingly hard, ended up improving my life. I made up my mind that I would stay on my meds and improve my supports system. I decided to attend the Alliance House to create a means of support.

I have done well when I work with various recovery programs. I find it hard to remain stable if I am out there all alone. I have friends at the Alliance House. Some I have known for many years. I never feel bad after attending the Alliance House. I always feel better than if I had not come.

Being mentally challenged is not easy. I have my ups and downs. I have a bi-polar illness, I am always working on my recovery. Alliance House is a great place to be because you can be around people who are supportive; many having a major mental illness. You can be sure that if you come to Alliance House, you will be more likely to stay out of the state hospital.

**CAREER
DEVELOPMENT
UPDATE**
BY: LUISA KATO A



We would like to welcome the new members to the CD Unit: Steven Garrett, Lennox Morey, Cindy Krogman, Jordan Baier, Irene Alires, Douglas Zitting, Lori Donlay , Robert Nelson, Jill Roberts, Trevor Nield, Ruth Ann Prescott, Miles Reams, Tammy Austin, Jean Cenci, Jacob Garber, and Jennifer Richmond.

CD Unit has attained three new TE's at Miller Salt Lake Community College Campus SLCC. The jobs will be clerical. There will be two TE's selected this month. A placement will be available for a U of U TE and SLCC TE. So make sure you sign up if you are interested.

Greek Festival was a success! A total of 256 members and staff signed up to work all the shifts. Brad Jackson stated, "The best thing about Greek Festival was meeting Big Buddha and being shown on Fox 13 News." For those who worked the festival, please come and check your shifts that you worked and make sure it is correct.

Employment Training Course (ETC) will be starting on Monday Sept. 28, 2009. This is a week long course designed to help members get ready to rejoin the workforce. Members can learn how to write resumes and cover letters, dress for success, complete job applications and effectively interview.

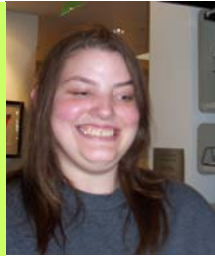
The Clubhouse Closet has had a lot of donations from the University of Utah. Come and check out our new inventory.

We appreciate the educational materials that were donated by P.J.'S Forgotten Children. Some of the supplies donated were calculators, notebooks, dictionaries and other materials.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

David Goodman	10/1
Andrew Watts	10/2
Chelsea Racine	10/3
Doug Henderson	10/6
Brett Williams	10/6
Rebecca Cross- Booker	10/6
Amber Mackay	10/6
Lauren Bloom	10/7
John Clark	10/7
Jerri Lynne Denny	10/8
Yvette Kelly	10/8
Joey Fuller	10/9
Karen Moreau	10/10
Fern Potter-Reed	10/12
Tony Chidester	10/13
Preston Gilbert	10/13
Timothy Nahalewski	10/14
Frank Salazar	10/15
Ron Hendriks	10/16
Jessica Hatfield	10/17
Larey Belka	10/18
Susan Chapman	10/21
Joseph Jenkins	10/22
Dan Carbine	10/25
Stacey Jackson	10/26
Irene Lieshman	10/26
Stacey Wheelwright	10/26
David Tolman	10/28
David Jacob	10/29
Iris Boyd	10/30

School or Job? By: Jolene Emmett



Going back and forth in my mind from enrolling in school to finding more work, Jones Waldo currently employed me; however, my time was coming to an end. For 14 months I had woken up early, caught a bus and clocked in around 7 AM. My job was to load printers with paper, take notes of supplies that needed to be ordered or stocked, recycled papers from lawyers offices and Secretaries desks, but most of all, my job was to be sociable towards the other employees.

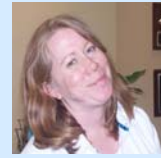
As the last days of working the Transitional Employment (TE) were coming, everyone I approached asked me what I would be doing next. "Cry," was my immediate response; later, telling them I was thinking about school. I made the decision to start college based upon the well known fact that those who have college educations tend to have more options, compared to those who do not.

With the TE now over, Alliance House held my hand as I prepared for the placement test at the Salt Lake City Community College. Nerves, anxiety, and insecurities still hit hard and my scores were not what they needed to be for the School of Applied Technology class I wanted to enroll in.

After consideration, I decided finding work would be more realistic than studying to get into school. WRONG. I've now decided, it is not easier or less difficult to find work, than it is to get academic scores up to college level. BOTH have their difficulties; however, it's better in the long run to have a college education behind you while searching for a job.

Culinary Unit Update

By: Lynn Sorenson



We would like to welcome all of the new members to the kitchen unit. We are having a great time. We would like to tell you about one them. Her name is Aspen. She comes nearly every morning. She arrives with a desire to do any job in the kitchen and we really appreciate that. She said she had not made lemon rice pilaf before. She said she found it "interesting."



Aspen said that when she first came to the clubhouse she found it "neat and organized." She says she chose the culinary unit because it looked like a fun place to be a part of.

One interesting thing about her is she has visited Rocky Point, Mexico, with her grandmother at Christmas time. She reports she found it, "different from the United States, but enjoyable." She enjoyed visiting an aquarium there.

Another interesting thing about Aspen is she has worked as a hostess at a restaurant. "I liked it," she says. I guess the culinary world is where she belongs.

Debi D. would like to announce that she has been accepted into the S.S.I. program and is excited to live on independently in the near future.



Business Unit Update

By: Betsy Maxwell



We have a lot of new members in our unit and we don't want to forget any of them. We

want to welcome Brett Turley, Eric Christensen, Robert Nelson, Lori Donlay, Tara Rogers, Trevor Nield, Chloe Carter, Lisa Jacobsen, and Brad Squires. We also would like to welcome back Cheryl Skiby and Jim McWhorter.

The Milestones Breakfast was held September 22 at the Sheraton Hotel. We heard from several inspirational speakers. We appreciate everyone who donated to Alliance House for a good cause.

We want to welcome our newest staff member Rebecca Cross to Alliance House. Rebecca is from Layton, UT. We are glad she is going to be working for us. Rebecca's favorite color is pink. She has a dog named Josie, who is a White Highland Terrier.



HEALTHY CHOICES

By Nikki Crane



Everyday, one out of four Americans eat fast food. If you are eating out, fast food restaurants is often the cheapest option, but unfortunately, not usually the healthiest one. Just one fast food meal can pack enough calories, sodium and fat for an entire day, but the quick-and-cheap temptation can be hard to resist. Making healthier choices at fast food restaurants is easier if you prepare ahead by checking guides that show you the nutritional content of meal choices at your favorite restaurants. Free downloadable guides help you evaluate your options. If you have special dietary concern, such as diabetes, heart, health, or weight loss, the websites of national non-profits provide useful advice. Pay attention to the descriptions on the menu dishes labeled deep-fried, batter-dipped, breaded, creamy, crispy, scalloped, au gratin, or in cream sauce that are usually high in calories, fat, and sodium. Drink water with your meal. Soda is a huge source of hidden calories. One 32-oz Big Gulp with regular cola packs about 425 calories. Think of eating out in the context of your whole diet. If it is a special occasion, or you know you want to order your favorite meal in a restaurant, make sure your earlier meals that day are extra healthy. Moderation is always the key, but planning ahead can help in a big way.

Cox's Corner

Work and Hardly Working



Work is work, but I have found that watching someone else do a job, looks easier than if you did it yourself. I think about this if somebody who watches me work, might think my work is easy...they might be right... All I can say is, I try to keep my goals and achievements – time lines, and do the things I can do.....right the first time.

Thanks, John Cox

Statistics

by Ruthena Hensley



Our total hour attendance increased by 2.98% during the month of August. Way to go members! Let's keep up the good work. During the month of August the cumulative wages earned by members working TE positions was \$2,560.58. That is a 16.2% increase from the month of July. This is what I call working to the bone.

The Science Behind Calories

By: Travis Westerman



A pound of fat equals 3500 calories. So all you need to do to lose a pound of fat is burn 3500 more calories than you take in. Sounds easy enough?

If you set a goal of losing 1 pound a week, then divide the 3500 calories by the 7 days in a week, you can see you need to burn 500 calories a day, to the additional calories you eat for each day. For example, if you eat a rounded diet of 2000 calories a day, then you need to burn off 2500 calories each day, to lose 1 pound of fat in a week.

One easy way to burn off calories is walking. Walking burns 100 calories per mile on average. Also, the more you weigh, the more calories you burn. The faster you walk, the more calories you burn. Remember to add ALL the total time spent walking/moving in a day to calculate the calories burned. If you have an active job, you could be walking miles throughout an 8 hour period. Top that off with a brisk 30 minute walk, and it can work wonders.

ADVOCACY UPDATE: NAMI WALK

By: Angel Teague & Amber Mackay

On a beautiful Saturday morning in September, 10 members of Alliance House gathered together at the Spring Mobile ball park to prepare to walk for NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill). NAMI hosts an annual fundraiser asking those who support mental health to donate to their cause. Part of this fundraising effort is a walk for mental wellness. This walk was three miles around downtown Salt Lake City.

What was exciting about this walk was the great support from the community. Many mental health agencies attended, including Pathways to Recovery, New Reflections clubhouse, and the Utah State Hospital. Several local radio stations supported the walk with prize drawings at the field as well as music to pump up all the walkers.

When it came time to give away prizes, we were surprised to hear that Alliance House had won a prize for the agency that had participated in the NAMI walk for all five years. This prize was a pack of CD's to share. Member Angel Teague stated, "I just enjoyed it and it makes me really proud to be a part of this group and being at Alliance House. I feel it is a privilege to be able to walk. I think everybody enjoyed it."

Despite bad hips, backs, and blisters the size of quarters, all members finished the walk. We held our clubhouse banner high, which showed off our new logo, as we walked to show pride for our clubhouse. We are proud of the efforts we are making towards busting stigma and increasing mental wellness. We will definitely be attending next year as well, so look for Alliance House.



**Are you interested in
learning more about Alliance House?**

- Check us out on the web at www.alliancehouse.org
- Come in for a “Close-up Tour”
- Email or call us for more information

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