

The CommUNITY Buzz

Hello everyone and welcome to our newest Community Buzz!

Spring has Sprung! And what a wonderful spring it will be. As we gradually move away from the shadow of Covid, and the lifting of the emergency orders on May 11th, it finally feels like we have turned the corner! This week we brought back some of our ICF individuals to our Day Program. Beth and her team are excited to have them there, and the individuals are thrilled to be out of their homes having fun and reconnecting with old and new friends.

I am happy to announce that all employees now have a company email. For security reasons and improved communication between us, we switched over from Google to a Microsoft platform. We will be sending you important messages and documents, including this newsletter, so please check your ALT-INC.ORG email regularly.

This is about the time of year when we start making our summer plans. We are looking for employees that want to join our Company Picnic Committee. If you are interested in participating and helping to plan that special event, please email Kristina at kmauriello@alt-inc.org.

In closing, I would like to mention that this has been a difficult 3 years. Health care has been hit particularly hard with the pandemic. The Alternatives Community faced many challenges and we managed to survive! We've continuously pivoted to make the best of difficult situations. We still face challenges, and I'm certain changes. I want you to know how much I have appreciated your work and dedication to the HEALTH and SAFETY of those we support.

Thank you,

Kelly Callahan
Executive Director



March Employee of the Month: Kristina Mauriello

About Kristina

Kristina has been with Alternatives for almost four years, working in the administrative office as an HR specialist. Her passion for learning a bit of everything keeps her engaged as each day presents unique challenges and opportunities. Kristina's primary responsibilities include sourcing and interviewing potential candidates, guiding new employees through the hiring process, creating the company newsletter and general HR support. Her dedication to these tasks shows her versatility and commitment to Alternative's success.

Kristina is the "go to" person in the office. If there is a job or a task that needs quick and thorough attention, she's there to help. She never refuses any request, happily researches a topic, educates herself and helps others however they may need. She has pulled together PowerPoint presentations, fixed computer issues, worked on community projects, and fills in when other administration employees are out of the office.

Kristina serves as a guardian to one of our oldest individuals with complicated medical care. She takes this responsibility seriously. She finds making more involved and thoughtful decisions rewarding. This guardianship role has made her consider and find additional ways to advocate for all the people we support.

It's evident that Kristina likes to help people. She states that working at Alternatives has changed her perspective on people and herself. She considers herself more confident and more comfortable in communicating with lots of people.

Kristina received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of New Haven in graphic design. She is a newlywed and recently returned from her honeymoon in Costa Rica. She lives in Berlin with her husband, Nick and their chickens. She likes to crochet, is an avid reader, and considers herself a movie buff.

Messages

Kristina was nominated and chosen as the March Employee of the Month because she exudes all aspects of the Alternatives community. No matter what, she always has time to help whenever and wherever needed. Her interaction with our clients is stellar. Always patient, kind and caring. She truly cares about our agency. Congratulations!

-Kendra Giulini, Payroll Specialist

I work upstairs with Kristina putting stamps and labels on envelopes that are used to send out the newsletters. She is creative in helping me set up my materials in a way I can be independent. She does not get frustrated by my "obstacles." She always has a cheerful face. She is patient and kind.

-Tracy Daley, Goldbach





FAQs: Employee of the Month Program

Who can nominate?

Nominations can be submitted by any employee, supported individual and/or guardian.

Who is eligible for nomination?

Any full time or part time employee is eligible for nomination (managers, administration, DSPs, and LPNs).

How do I nominate?

Write a brief paragraph explaining why you feel the individual you are nominating should be chosen as Employee of the Month.

When & where do I send a nomination?

Nominations can be sent into the office at any time via fax, email, or drop off. If you choose to email, please email kmauriello@alt-inc.org.

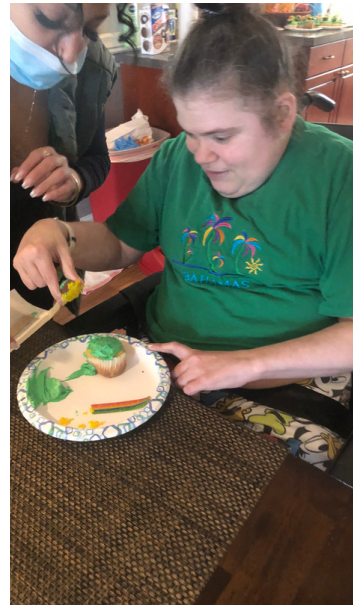
How is the Employee of the Month chosen?

A committee will review the nominations and select the Employee of the Month using a rubric scoring system.

What happens if you win Employee of the Month?

You will receive \$100 and a certificate, be featured in the newsletter and put in the running for Employee of the Year.

What's the Buzz?



Anniversaries

1 Year

Debra Hans, Day Program
Amanda Milton, Day Program

Birthdays

Tanya Scalo	March 2nd
Jaime Muirhead	March 15th
Deborah Romero	April 12th
Sharon Mason	April 15th

10 Fun Facts

1. You can't see your ears without a mirror.
2. You can't count your hair.
3. You can't breathe through your nose with your tongue out.
4. You just tried number 3.
6. When you did no. 3, you realized that it is possible but you look like a dog.
7. You are smiling right now because you've been tricked.
8. You skipped number 5.
9. You just checked to see if there is a number 5.
10. Check the bottom right corner.

5. April Fools!

Benefit & 401K Information

Now that everyone has set up their Alternatives email, I will be sending all benefit and 401K information notices through your work email. Please be aware and check your emails regularly.

-Kendra Giulini, Payroll Specialist



Shout out to all the FABULOUS staff and nurses at Highview. Every single person pitched in and did an amazing job getting us ready for the floors to be replaced. Between packing and moving things, to keeping our residents happy, comfortable, and clear from the construction!! It was amazing teamwork as always, from the best team anywhere!!

-Vicki Donaghy, Highview Residential Manager

Thanks to Gary Chute for all his help in getting all the emails up and running. He was very available and took lots of time to assist staff individually.

-Alternatives Program Managers

I want to give a shout out to Jemiah, Quiana, Thea, Maklah, Tameeka, Jessica, Michelle, Torisene, Nakisha, Tammy and Janae. Thank you all for helping with all the open shifts at Goldbach and Middlebrook. Without all of you it would've been impossible to fill all those shifts. Thank you ALL!

-Karen Custis, Goldbach & Middlebrook Residential Manager

A big thanks to Justin St. Jean and everyone at Day Program for their help during Highview's floor replacement! We couldn't have done it without you!

-Vicki Donaghy, Highview Residential Manager

I would like to send a huge group shout out to the nurses at Genoa! This group has pulled together and proven to be a powerful team. We have seen this group of nurses step up and communicate more efficiently and effectively. The areas of care, med ordering, and follow up has improved immensely. Thank you to each and every one of you responsible for this positive change!

-Deb Godbout, Programmatic Director

Did you know anyone can submit a shout out for the next newsletter? Just send it along to kmauriello@alt-inc.org.

RECIPE

Mini Cheesy Chicks

Recipe from ideas.hallmark.com

- 2, 8-oz. packages cream cheese
- 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- Salt and pepper
- 1, 14-oz. can whole black olives
- 2 cups finely shredded cheddar cheese
- Round crackers
- Carrot rounds (for beaks and feet)
- Whole peppercorns (for eyes)

1. Using a mixer, combine the cream cheese, Worcestershire sauce, lemon zest, and salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate the mixture for 1 hour.
2. Drain the can of olives. Using your fingers, cover each olive completely with about 1 tablespoon of the cream cheese mixture and form it into a ball. Refrigerate for another hour.
3. Before serving, roll each ball of cheese into the finely shredded cheddar cheese to cover. Place each ball on a round cracker.
4. Cut pie-shaped wedges from carrot rounds for beaks and feet and press on. Add black peppercorns for eyes.



ACTIVITY

String Easter Basket

Activity from hometalk.com

- Balloons
- Colorful String
- Small Bucket
- Scissors
- Modge Podge (can substitute with 1 part glue: 1 part water)
- Fabric Stiffener Spray (found at any craft store)

1. Blow air into the balloon until a large egg shape forms. Tie off the balloon and set it aside.
2. Put your spool of colored string into a bucket. Fill the small bucket halfway with Modge Podge. Let the string soak in the solution for a few minutes.
3. Tie the Modge Podge soaked string to the balloon tie. Start to wrap the colorful string around the balloon to create an egg-shaped base. Continue to wrap the string around and across the balloon until it almost looks like a spider web. The more crossing of the strings the better.
4. Spray the string and balloon evenly with a fabric stiffener. This will help hold the string into place after the balloon is popped. Let the balloon and string dry for 24 hours.
5. Pop the balloon with a pin and allow the air to drain from the balloon.
6. Cut an oval shape into the basket. This will be the opening of your basket to display your Easter decor. Decorate both the inside and outside of the basket to your liking.



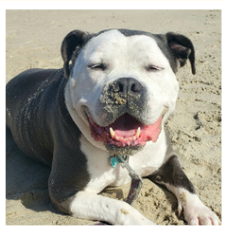
Have:

- 2 - 10 Quart Tupperware Containers with Snap-Lid
- 3 Tier Rolling Cart with Removable Top, Navy Blue
- Aquarium Tank with Stand
- 3 - Pretty Glass Flower Vases

Need:

- Blankets & Towels
- Air Fryer
- Plants (Any kind)

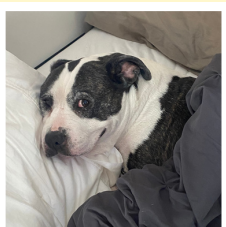
PET CORNER



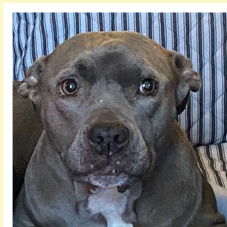
This is PI She is 7 years old. She loves to go on adventures with Lindsey Goss. One of her favorite places is the Outer Banks, NC.



Chloe is a 5 year old rescue. She is the newest member to Donna Lockwood's family. She loves to steal toys from her doggie brother and sister.



Darla is 14 years old and she is Deb Godbout's favorite car passenger and the consumer of left overs queen. She will be anybody's best friend if you have a snack to share.



Ruby is 14 years old and Darla's sister. She has the personality of our dear friend Susan Dieter. She is very energetic, almost always happy and she makes people smile!

APRIL

10 FUN THINGS TO DO

1. Bunnies & Paws, April 8th
Middlefield, CT (Lyman Orchards)
2. Brickfest, April 15th - 16th
Hartford, CT (CT Convention Center)
3. Cherry Blossom Festival, April 16th
New Haven, CT
4. Earth Day Celebration, April 22nd
West Simsbury, CT (Flamig Farm)
5. Food Truck Fest, April 22nd - 23rd
Meriden, CT (Meriden Mall)
6. Daffodil Festival, April 29th - 30th
Meriden, CT (Hubbard Park)
7. Gazillion Bubble Show, April 30th
Ridgefield, CT (Ridgefield Playhouse)
8. Watch a Hockey Game
Islanders (Bridgeport) or Wolfpack (Hartford)
9. Go to a Baseball Game
Yard Goats (Hartford)
10. Go see a Soccer Game
Hartford Athletic (Hartford)