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ALPHA NEWS

SUMMER 2009

State Budget Crisis Impacts Alpha

by Scott Livengood

In the newsletter earlier in the year, we outlined an impending \$5 billion budget shortfall, but looked optimistically at the Governor's proposed budget wherein services for people with developmental disabilities were spared from the majority of cuts. Those were such optimistic times, which soon turned to the reality of a \$9 billion - and growing - budget deficit and a state budget that left many in the wake of deep budget cuts. In the end, services provided by Alpha Supported Living Services (ASLS) were impacted on many fronts. Here are some of the lowlights of the numerous budget cuts, along with how these cuts impact our agency.

- **3% cut to the benchmark** - this is the funding paid to community residential agencies to pay for wages and benefits for the staff working directly with those we support. This rate was cut by 49 cents per hour, which has a direct impact on the compensation package available for these valuable employees.
- **Cut to Indirect Client Support/Administrative rates** - this is the funding paid to providers to pay for all of the other agency expenses, such as program supplies, medical supplies, office rent, office supplies, administrative wages and benefits, insurance, minor equipment, and much, much more. On average, this funding was cut by 3.4% across the state. Because ASLS is already funded below the standardized rate, we were cut by 3.1%.
- **Hold vacancies in community residential** - essentially, when a person leaves services or passes away, the state is looking to not fill these vacancies "when savings can be achieved" (direct quote from the budget). As a result, fewer people will be served in the community and agencies may need to decrease staffing and lay off employees when vacancies are not filled. Keep in mind, this trend to freeze and/or reduce the number of clients served in community based residential settings in Washington State is happening

in the face of over 16,000 people with developmental disabilities patiently waiting for a chance to live in the community with necessary supports.

• **Cuts to Adult Day Health** - services will continue for those living without supports or living with family members. For those supported by agencies like ours, funding is eliminated. For Alpha Supported Living Services, 37% of those supported were also receiving Adult Day Health services prior to the cuts. As such, these hours will now need to be covered within supported living contracted hours without any increase in hours.

In total, Alpha Supported Living Services needed to cut approximately \$300,000 from the annual budget to be able to operate within the reduced funding resulting from State budget cuts. The agency worked diligently to not have these cuts impact the services provided. However, it is very challenging to ensure this when ASLS is contracted to serve the same number of people with the same number of staffing hours, but with significantly decreased dollars. In addition, many clients will end up increasing the time they spend at home due to deep cuts in services around Adult Day Health and other daytime community activities.

These are extremely difficult economic times and the worst may not be over. Recent budget forecasts have shown an additional revenue shortfall that will need to be addressed. In addition, a separate initiative slated for the ballot would mean decreased revenues if passed. All of this could mean that essential services for people with developmental disabilities will continue to face the devastating impact of budget cuts. The battle is not over. So I will recall my plea from the previous newsletter to get involved and make your voices heard. Please contact your legislators to advocate for funding for people with developmental disabilities. During these seemingly insurmountable times we must make sure that vital community resources for some of our most vulnerable citizens do not continue to be compromised.

In addition, during these uncertain times and beyond, ASLS must continue to diversify its funding base and leverage private contributions from both new and existing funders and donors. We hope you will continue supporting our valued work and organizational mission. I look forward to seeing many of you at our annual benefit

dinner, *Giving Through Song*, when we come together on Saturday, September 19, 2009, to celebrate the good and tireless work of ASLS in support of the inspiring individuals we serve on a daily basis.



SAVE THE DATE!

Giving Through Song

A benefit dinner to support
Alpha Supported
Living Services

Saturday, September 19th
at 6:00 PM
The Ruins
570 Roy Street, Seattle, WA



Join us for an evening of golden era
jazz and swing with Seattle's own
Troy Kline and his band

For ticket information and/or to be
added to
our mailing list contact
Leslie Kinkade at

206-588-8764
or
LKinkade@alphasls.com





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Julie sharing one of her contagious smiles

Julie Fills her World with Sunshine and Song

By Jan Williams

Do you want to laugh a lot, have a happy heart, and experience abundant joy? The people who live and work at Kelsey Creek Group Home do these things daily. And Julie is one of the main reasons. With her warm smiling greeting and the lovely songs that she sings, Julie can't help but bring happiness to everyone around her.

Julie came to live at the group home in 1989. She has always taken pride in her home and can often be seen encouraging her housemates to participate in chores to keep the home looking nice and clean – teamwork is the name of her game.

Julie was independently employed with Medtronic/Physio Control in Redmond from 1989 until early 2009, when the general downturn in the economy forced the company to downsize. Julie, who had worked full time and with full benefits for those twenty years, was laid off. For someone who has always enjoyed going to work, the adjustment to all this free time has been difficult for her, but the staff at Kelsey Creek do their best to keep her busy with activities. And Trillium, Julie's employment service, has arranged for her to do volunteer work several days per week. With luck, her old employer will be rehiring the laid off staff in a few months. Julie and her staff are keeping their fingers crossed.

Besides being an industrious lady, Julie enjoys access to the community and independently uses public transportation to do her banking and go to the mall. She also likes to walk to her favorite mini market for a snack after dinner. She enjoys parks department activities such as Social Club, dancing and bowling, and is always game for various activities around the house. Her favorite weekend activity is going to the mall with her housemates to listen to live music and meet up with her other friends. If you want to know the lyrics to any oldies, just ask Julie, she sings them all!



The Big Bike Bash and Barbecue is Coming Soon

by Ruby Lindner

Mark your calendars for Saturday, August 15th, noon to 4 pm. Join us for another day of fun in the sun at Crossroads Community Park at the 2009 Big Bike Bash and Barbecue.

In addition to the modified bicycles provided by the great staff at Outdoors For All, look forward to a fabulous hosted barbecue, face painting, dancing, an appearance by Tilly the Balloon Clown, and an assortment of games and fun activities.

Crossroads Community Park is located two blocks east of Crossroads Mall in Bellevue at 16000 NE 10th Street, Bellevue, WA 98008. Parking is available at the park.

So be sure to add a special note to your calendars and come on down to Crossroads Community Park on Saturday, August 15th from noon to 4 pm for a memorable community event.

ALPHA WISH LIST

Consider donating an item from our wish list to support the homes and care of our clients.

- Automatic bloodpressure cuffs
- A patio furniture set with a table and four to six chairs
- One small fuel-efficient sedan
- Forehead thermometers
- Large locking metal file cabinet
- Three ceiling fans
- Gardening supplies, tree and bush pruners, shovel, weed trowel, etc.,
- Outdoor barbecue - propane or charcoal
- A small refrigerator
- A wheelchair
- Gas-powered generator for emergency electricity
- Sporting event tickets for the clients, i.e. Mariner's, Seahawks, Sounders, etc.
- Two new sofas for men's residences

If you are interested in donating, please call Leslie Kinkade at 206-588-8764 or email at lkinkade@alphas.com

A big Alpha thanks to everyone who has supported ASLS by purchasing or donating wish list items.



Congratulations to Rashid, who graduated from Shorecrest High School in June.



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Disneyland 2009 - Alpha East Goes on Tour

By Tina Hines

This March, Scott, Colleen, David and Kevin, clients from two of our Issaquah programs, joined three Alpha staff members for a fun-filled trip to Disneyland.

The trip started off on a high note with a great plane ride. Everyone agreed it was great to be so high up, enjoy snacks and look out of the windows to watch the mountains passing below.



Colleen and David catch a smile and a breeze

Colleen took a particular delight in her own special dance to the catchy a capella singing of the theme song. Later in the morning, David had his own treat when a roving face painter transformed him into a wandering pirate. Other guests at the park proceeded to high-five him everywhere the troop went for the rest of the day. Other highlights included the rollercoaster and “Buzz Lightyear Astro Blaster.”

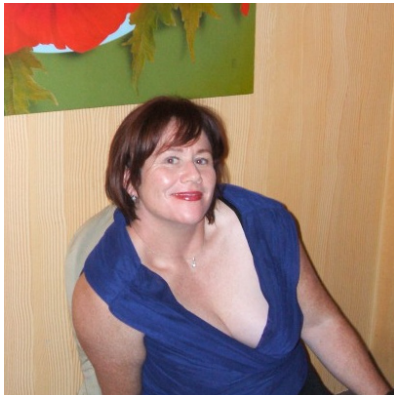
The next day, the gang again arose early to start their adventure, taking in as many rides as possible. The smells of cotton candy and hot dogs filling the air added to everyone’s enthusiasm as the group soared high up into the California sky on the flying Dumbo ride.

On the last day of this magic journey, the vacationers treated themselves to a fabulous dinner that was hosted by a gathering of Disney characters, who all graciously posed for photos with the group. After dinner, the exhausted but happy Alpha gang went and watched the spectacular Disneyland fireworks show – a perfect ending to an amazing vacation.

Long after the photos are put away and the new t-shirts have been folded up in the bedroom drawers, the experience at Disneyland is one that none of these travelers will soon forget.

Congratulations Amanda Reinhard!
Alpha’s new Financial Services Manager.

Alpha would like to wish our departing Financial Services Manager, **Joe Smith** and his family all the best for their new adventures in Florida.



Tess Forte is all about music, fun, and a positive attitude

Tess Forte, Has It All: Wit, Charm & Experience

By Collin Capes

One might be surprised to learn that beneath that smiling, laughing and quick-witted exterior is almost 25 years of experience in the field of supporting adults with developmental disabilities. Tess came to Alpha in 2003 from a similar agency where she performed direct care services and coordinated health care services. She is now the Program Supervisor for 3 homes: San Juan, Whidbey, and Emerald.

Tess believes in supporting clients to realize who they are in the world and to discover their connection to others. She visualizes an invisible system of support that treats people with dignity and respect in attaining their goals. Tess feels humbly honored to have the opportunity to assist people in this way.

On top of the daily duties of her position, Tess assists with the bi-weekly walking club and is looking into starting a bike club. She also plays keyboards and sings in a band with no name, who will perform at some upcoming dances she will help arrange.

Tess and her husband Carl celebrate their 21st wedding anniversary this year. Tess also occasionally dips her toe in the pool of political activism, advocating for basic human rights.



Alpha clients on tour at Disneyland: (L to R, rear) Scott, “Goofy,” Tina, “Minnie,” Amanda, Kevin, (L-to-R, front) Wendy, David, and Colleen

Once the group arrived at the hotel, the excitement to get to Disneyland the next day mounted. In order to get an early start to the day, everyone hit the hay early that night.

On the first day at Disneyland, the gang enjoyed watching a performance of “The Empire Strikes Back,” and then moved quickly onto the rides. The big favorite among all the rides was “It’s a Small World,” which the group rode four times.



Scott takes to the saddle for a merry-go-round jaunt



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Cameron Archibald still lends his charm to Alpha

Cameron's Corner

By Josh Cutler

Cameron's Corner was established in 2008 in honor of Cameron Archibald. Cameron was a client for many years at Residence East prior to the merger with Alpha Supported Living Services. In 2007, Cameron passed away. After his passing, his parents, Susan and Mac Archibald, generously requested that any donations be made to the agency in memory of Cameron.

Finally, last summer, upon the completion of the long awaited remodel of the Eastside branch office, we were able to use the funds to

create a space in the office we appropriately call "Cameron's Corner" to properly honor Cameron's memory. More than almost anything else, Cameron loved watching movies and lounging around. On the wall in Cameron's Corner, there is a picture of Cameron smiling and holding his favorite video, welcoming all guests to this special spot. The room has comfy leather chairs, a big screen TV with a dvd player, and a variety of games and movies to choose from. Clients and staff can regularly be found hanging out in the "corner," taking a break from their day to relax. Everyone at Alpha would like to extend a big thanks to all those who donated funds to create this fitting memorial to Cameron!



Mark brings brilliant color to everything he does



By Mark Nogaki

Mark is a wonderful artist, who works diligently to craft every detail in his pieces with perfection and precision to demonstrate his passions. Over the years, he has worked in all kinds of media. Many people still talk fondly of a series of ceramic dogs he made and painted for an exhibition in the 1980's. Mark is best known for his festive holiday and birthday postcards. He has created an extensive line of cards for all major holidays as well as Mother's Day and Father's Day cards. These collected postcards are displayed proudly around many offices and homes in our agency, as well as by his exceptionally wide circle of friends and acquaintances. Should you find yourself driving down Wallingford Avenue in the 3600 block between August 5th and September 30th, stop by and treat yourself to a first hand view of Mark's amazing artistic abilities.



Cameron's Corner is a comfortable place to get away from it all and just relax

The Magic and Artistry of Mark Nogaki

By Nephtali Stackhouse

This summer, artists all over the Northwest are preparing for art shows. Alpha's own Mark Nogaki is one such artist. Mark, who is 53 years old, is one of our original residents and has lived in an Alpha home since 1975. We at Alpha have had the privilege of enjoying Mark's artistic talents for many years through the work he generously shares with staff throughout the agency.

This summer, Mark's artwork will be shared with an even broader audience as it will be featured at the Oasis Art Gallery in Wallingford. The art exhibit runs from August 5th through September 30th.

Oasis Art Gallery
3644 Wallingford Ave N.
Seattle WA. 98103

Hours: Tuesday – Saturday. Noon-8pm
and Sunday. Noon-6pm
Website: www.oasisinseattle.com

GoodShop

Shopping for Mother's Day flowers this past May through florists featured on Goodshop.com raised almost \$50 for Alpha Supported Living Services. Wow! Could it be any easier to support the quality programs at Alpha?

So, the question is:
Who do you GoodShop.com for?



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Shop and Benefit Alpha

By Leslie Martin Kinkade

Now you can take care of your summertime online shopping needs while making a difference for Alpha. If you use either GoodShop.com and/or GoodSearch.com for all your online shopping and search engine needs, a small portion of your shopping expenses will be directly awarded to Alpha Supported Living Services. In the case of GoodSearch.com, for every internet search conducted, Alpha receives a small donation. All these contributions go toward providing Alpha's residents with the highest quality residential support through a holistic network of financial services, health services, and strong direct support staffing to promote person-centered goals around employment, exercise, outside hobbies, and more. Please don't forget to designate Alpha Supported Living Services as the beneficiary. And feel free to pass the word to your varied networks of family and friends. A big thanks to Ruby Lindner, East Branch Financial Services Supervisor, for signing Alpha up for this great opportunity.

Another shout out to our friends at Ombú Salon and Spa in Edmonds who generously donated 10% of all art sales beginning May 21 for one month to Alpha as part of the Edmonds Art Walk activities. Special thanks to our own Alpha West Branch Director, Rob Burmaster, and his wife, Nisha Burmaster, an esthetician at Ombú, for encouraging this innovative collaboration to benefit ASLS.

TRIBUTES

Special thanks to the following individuals and families who made generous tribute gifts to benefit Alpha Supported Living Services in May, June, and July:

- Ruby Lindner and Jeff Sloan in memory of Fritz Lindner
- Joe Smith in honor of his daughter, Natalie, and Alpha Supported Living Services
- Ginny Groesbeck to celebrate her dear friend, Carol Elwell's, birthday
- Team Alpha in honor of the amazing, compassionate direct support staff at Baker House and Berry House

Need a special gift for a loved one? Make a difference for Alpha by making a tribute gift of \$25.00 or more to commemorate a birthday, anniversary, or other significant occasion.

For further information, contact Leslie Kinkade by phone at 206.588.8764 or via email at lkinkade@alphasls.com



Jesse and support staff member, Vanessa, enjoying themselves at the park

Jesse VonPapp is a Long-Term Asset for Alpha

By Jill Brubacher

Jesse is the Program Supervisor with the longest history at Alpha's eastside branch. He began working for Residence East in November 2000, and has been a tremendous asset to the agency ever since. Upon entering any of the sites Jesse supervises, visitors are immediately struck by the cleanliness and organization in the homes. Jesse has systems for everything, so his staff always know what goes where and who does what. The clients in these homes are always busy with a range of activities in the community or at home, all charted out on color-coded schedules filled with each client's favorite pastimes.

Jesse is a strong advocate for his clients and doesn't shy away from the hard work it takes to help a participant settle into a new routine, learn a new skill, modify a challenging behavior, or move into a new home.

Last April, Jesse played a vital role in bringing two new clients into the Alpha programs. When Nick and Rodney moved into Fountain House, Jesse spent many hours in preparation to make the transition successful

- a huge undertaking - but Jesse never complained or questioned whether it could be done. He just made it happen. He is always up for a challenge, and that is always appreciated!

Jesse has great rapport with his staff and co-workers and is a strong team player. He is a resource and support for other supervisors, and is always available with helpful advice based on his years of success working with clients who exhibit significant behavioral issues. Another Program Supervisor at Alpha sums up Jesse's unique strengths this way: "He seems to have a plan or a form for everything and a calm attitude for any issue. When I'm stuck on a problem, I ask myself, 'What Would Jesse Do?' and things eventually work out!"

When you first meet Jesse, he may initially strike you as a pretty quiet guy. But after even a brief chat, it becomes clear that he has a wealth of experience, an abundance of great ideas, and a passionate commitment to his clients.



In Memoriam

Alpha bids farewell to two dear clients:

Forest Skinner
4/26/1931 - 4/14/2009

Connie Thomas
3/31/1956 - 5/30/2009





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Scott Livengood

Development Director
Leslie Martin Kinkade

Controller
Davina Gilroy

Financial Services Manager
Amanda Reinhard

Alpha West Branch

Branch Director

Rob Burmaster

Client Services Manager

Collin Capes

Clinical Manager

Craig Eidsmoe

Human Resources Manager

Patricia Minton

Program Supervisors

Dan Agerup

Vern Eggerud

Tess Forté

Ethan Rourke

Kim Schwery

Nephtali Stackhouse

Health Care Supervisors

Greg Cranston

Carla Kammer

Rory Patos-Robinson

Financial Services Supervisor

John Engel

Amos Kihara

Human Resources Coordinators

James Okano

Lissa Sams

Alpha East Branch

Branch Director

Josh Cutler

Client Services Manager

Jill Brubacher

Clinical Manager

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Sally Puff

Wally Tablit

Alpha counts on the support
of its growing circle of friends.

Make a difference
and donate today to:

Alpha Supported Living Services
2611 NE 125th St., Suite #145
Seattle, WA 98125



In June, Jenny celebrated her 21st birthday, prom,
and high school graduation all within one month

ALPHA NEWS layout and compilation by Ruby Lindner

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