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ALPHA NEWS

SUMMER 2011

Letter from the CEO

by Scott Livengood

The midway point of 2011 is a time to reflect on what has been accomplished and what lays ahead for the rest of the year. Thanks to all of you for your ongoing interest in and support of the important service we provide. Over the last year, even as some clients left the agency, we still grew with a net gain of four additional clients and we now serve 95 individuals in 30 homes across King County. Though the economy continues to be challenging, we remain committed to Alpha's only bottom line being the quality of the lives enjoyed by the extraordinary individuals we support.

The legislative session finally ended, and even though the budget challenges continued to consume most of the efforts, some successes were achieved and gains realized. Despite the budget deficit and the need for the legislature to make drastic cuts, supported living services were only cut by 1%. This is still an impact of just under \$100,000 annually for our agency, but we are appreciative that our advocacy for these vital services resulted in cuts far less than many other service areas. In addition, SB 5459 was passed! This bill calls for the closure of the Frances Haddon Morgan Center by the end of this year. This would consolidate our five state institutions to four; a step toward community inclusion for our state. In addition, this bill would provide additional steps toward the future closure of Yakima Valley School by stopping future placements and creating a task force to make recommendations back to the legislature by the end of 2012.

In other news, Spring always marks the season for the Annual Meeting for the non-profit corporation that has evolved to be Alpha Supported Living Services. This year's meeting on Wednesday, May 11, 2011 was held at the Mercer Island Community Center with board members, parents, guardians, staff, and friends of the organization convening to receive an update of the evolving Strategic Plan and to applaud deserving recipients of the Outstanding



Kingsgate House is Alpha East's newest home

Service Awards. This year's awards were given to long-time Board Member and advocate, **Sally Puff**, whose daughter, Ginny, is served by Alpha, and **Sam Thun**, former East Branch Program Coordinator, recently promoted to Program Supervisor.

Also at the meeting we recognized both **Sally and Bob Puff**, who will be stepping down from Alpha's Board of Directors in 2011, for their outstanding and dedicated service to Alpha. In addition, we welcomed new Board Member, **Bob Acteson**, to the agency. Bob has been a longtime supporter of the agency and is currently employed with F5 Networks.

Every year I take great pride in assessing progress made on Alpha's ambitious Strategic Plan. It is a team effort and it is always refreshing to take a step back and see the body of our significant achievements over the course of a year. Here are some highlights from this year's report outlining both successes and ongoing challenges:

- We continued to refine our person-centered planning process in order to maximize achievement of client goals. Reviews of progress occurred more frequently, and the documentation data was compared for the last three years as to what percentage of the goal was documented over the period. Very significant increases were noted in documenting client goals over the last two years: a 530% increase since 2008 and a 254% increase since 2009.
- Changes to adult day health funding continued to impact the number of individuals eligible and taking part in this service. The continued move toward "independent employment" and away from group employment

impacted many of the individuals served by the agency with more complex support needs. The percentage of clients receiving day program services decreased by over 50%. Even though the percentage of those receiving vocational services and/or who are employed in community settings increased from 2010 levels, the percentage was still a decrease from 2009 levels. All of these changes put an increased burden on the staffing levels in the homes and will continue to do so well into 2011 and possibly beyond.

- The agency continues to employ a full-time Registered Nurse, Lisa Blilie, who has greatly assisted with providing oversight of healthcare issues. Health Care Support Plans have been developed for all clients requiring additional levels of support. The Registered Nurse assessed clients as needing high, moderate, or low nursing needs and then Comprehensive Assessments were completed for those with moderate to high nursing needs. These Assessments have been completed for 54 clients, providing clear and comprehensive reviews of client needs for staff. Nutrition, exercise, and weight management are a focus for achieving overall wellness for all clients.

- In April 2011, the agency opened a new home acquired by a non-profit housing provider through the Housing Trust Fund. To meet funding requirements, as well as the needs of clients who may live in the home, renovations were made to the single-level home in Kirkland to make it entirely accessible. The house in Kirkland's Kingsgate neighborhood is now home to four men with developmental disabilities.

- Alpha continued to participate in United Way's Day of Caring. Four homes had projects completed as part of this annual event: two in the West Branch including Tatoosh (exterior painting) and Wallingford (exterior painting); and two in the East Branch: Kelsey Creek (interior painting in kitchen, living room, and entryway), and Mountain House (landscaping work to complete the prep work



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Letter from the CEO

Continued from page 1

for the Remembrance Garden). A separate group of volunteers from Projectline completed a landscaping project at the new Kingsgate house in April 2011, while volunteer groups from Western Oregon University and the University of Washington assisted with interior painting projects at Dayton and Chelan.

- Alpha continues to focus on further developing its earned income streams. Over the last year a new representative-payee program has been created, now serving 25 individuals who are not served residentially by the agency. The agency also opened training sessions for the newly developed orientation curriculum to employees of other supported living agencies in the area. However, the legislature delayed these training requirements as part of the budget cuts, so this will not be an ongoing revenue stream. Lastly, a marketing plan for Alpha Bookkeeping Services was also developed in order to secure additional clients in this earned income arena.

- In 2010, Alpha Supported Living services raised \$250,427 through various fundraising efforts – an increase of 6.4% from the previous year. The annual benefit dinner, *Giving through Song*, realized a net of over \$112,000, which was an increase of over 20% from the previous year. The agency also added a bike-a-thon to the annual Bike Bash. While the Bike Bash and 25K Ride is essentially focused on raising awareness and is a social event for the clients, staff, and families, the bike-a-thon raised over \$1,000. The agency plans to incorporate the bike-a-thon into future Bike Bash events. The agency continues to look at other possible fundraising events, as well as looking to partner with other like organizations for future events. In addition, Alpha is looking to formalize a Planned Giving program in the future to encourage donors to include Alpha in their wills and estate planning.

- The agency had a net operating income of \$121,905 in 2010, which was 16% higher than budgeted. Taking into account non-operating income of \$78,425 (which included interest/gain on investments) during 2010, the agency realized a total net of \$200,330. These funds are reinvested in the agency in order to offset current and future funding reductions.

- The agency continued to be very active in statewide leadership and advocacy. I continued serving as co-chair of legislative activities for the statewide association, the Community Residential Services Association (CRSA). The Alpha East Branch Director served on the committee that developed the statewide curriculum for the new training requirements, while the Alpha West Branch Director served on the legislative committee for CRSA. Agency representatives continued to be actively involved in advocacy issues with CRSA and played an integral part in having January 2011 proposed cuts of 2% rescinded at the last minute. As noted earlier, due to effective advocacy by supported living and group home providers, we are only seeing a rate reduction of 1% as of July 1st.

- The results of the most recent DDD Residential Staffing Survey showed that the agency turnover continues to be well below that of the state and county (ASLS = 16.8%, King County = 25.3%, State = 36%). This is the lowest turnover that ASLS has enjoyed since data has been compiled and is a decrease in turnover when compared to the previous year (18.5%).

- The individualized training videos continue to be developed. At this time, 35 videos of East Branch clients have been completed. With the completion of these videos, the videographer moved his focus to the West Branch where nine client training videos have been completed with others in development. The videographer also updated the agency video, which is used at the annual fundraiser. The video in 2010 highlighted the story of one individual who moved into one of our supported living homes directly from his mother's home. The story of his first move into his own home underscored the importance of the supports we provide as told by his mother and the visual images of the transition process.

You will read further about our bold, new CareTracker project as well as our participation in *The Willard Suitcases: The Lives They Left Behind* exhibition at the University of Washington which attracted thousands of visitors during its three-month run in early 2011. Also, our new Annual Report is just out. If you did not receive one in the mail and would like a copy, please call 206.284.9130 and we will get a copy to you.

Please add **Saturday, August 20** (date of annual *Bike Bash and 25K Ride*) and **Saturday,**

October 22 (date of *Giving Through Song* annual benefit dinner) to your 2011 calendars. By attending these events you support Alpha's continued service to our clients, as well as our commitment to leading our industry in new directions as the demand for community-based residential services continue to grow. Thank you again for your support. It is only with this support that we are able to achieve such impressive results and continued growth during a time of economic challenges.

SAVE THE DATE!

Giving Through Song

**A benefit dinner to support
Alpha Supported
Living Services**

**Saturday, October 22nd
starting at 6:00 PM**

**The Ruins
570 Roy Street, Seattle, WA**



**Featuring: Cocco Martini, 2009
winner of Earshot Jazz's Golden
Ear Award for NW Vocalist
of the Year**

**For ticket information and/or
to be added to our mailing list
contact Leslie Kinkade at
tel. 206-588-8764 or email to
LKinkade@alphasls.org**



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Debbie celebrating a day of summer sunshine

Debbie: An enterprising woman

By Sharon Warner

Debbie Webster is a friendly and enthusiastic woman who enjoys socializing and participating in community activities such as parties, dances, and BBQ's, Debbie is a long-time client of Alpha, having been an early client of Seattle Specialized. Debbie shares a house in Shoreline with two longtime housemates.

Debbie dabbles in many activities, but has never found anything that compares to her passion for beads. Debbie's love for beads was first apparent during the hours she spent at home playing with a variety of brightly colored beads. With the help of Northwest Center, this passion was transformed into a business enterprise that also raises community awareness about individuals with disabilities.



Debbie's bracelets on display

Debbie creates and assembles unique disability awareness bracelets. These bracelets are sold in various retail locations in Seattle such as the Farmer's Market, special events such as the Association for Persons in Supported Employment conference, which is a two day exhibit on June 14 and 15 from

7:30 am to 5:30 pm, and through her website, www.d-dabs.com. The bracelets are sold for \$10 each.

In supporting Debbie and her work, imagine how we are raising awareness about the endless potential of individuals with disabilities in our community!



Debbie selling her beaded bracelets at a craft's show



Boeing employees of Puget Sound provide generous seed grant

By Leslie Kinkade

In December 2010, Alpha was the recipient of a generous \$40,000 Seed Grant from the Employees Community Fund of The Boeing Company to support its CareTracker project. Alpha is proud to be the first supported living services agency of its kind in Washington State to pursue this progressive client-centered technology, leading the way for others to follow. We see our role in promoting future replicability as vital since the need to place people with developmental disabilities in community-based settings will inevitably grow exponentially in the coming decades due to longer lifespans and a growing waiting list for services.

CareTracker is an innovative, home-based documentation system to improve the quality of client care, ensure overall staff compliance and accountability, and to assist clients and staff in collaborative goal-setting and realization. CareTracker's wall mounted touchscreens incorporate a refreshing approach that makes the recording of vital information accurate, complete,

and quick. Reports on all such data are easily generated in a professional manner (reports will interface with our Windows/Outlook system of mobile and email communications and/or electronic files and can also be easily printed out for paper files). CareTracker is also the green, sustainable approach to client care, support, and management. Currently there are over 25 daily and weekly paper forms that must be filled out for everything from brushing teeth to nutritional intake, to sleep habits, to medication administration, leaving too much room for human error and/or illegibility.

Overarching CareTracker Goals include:

- Building skills in managing and documenting client care using touchscreen technology and enhancing communication with central office administrators with a technology designed to integrate new technology with existing technologies.
- Enhancing quality of care and creating efficiencies to allow for increased access to community resources.
- Shared skill building between staff and clients. This technology will clearly outline the unique supports each individual needs, ensuring each task is approached consistently among staff and is client-centered.

Alpha is piloting this initiative in one West Branch site, Chinook House, and one East Branch site, Fountain House. Staff from these homes are currently being trained in the technology. July is the scheduled launch date for the pilot phase. After assessing both challenges and successes, Alpha will begin pursuing a full roll-out. This full-scale effort is dependent on additional dollars being raised to support an overall initial project budget of \$200,000. With the Boeing grant and other individual major gifts serving as leverage, Alpha is actively seeking another \$150,000 from individuals, corporations, foundations, and other sources to fully launch this exciting industry advancement. Please call Development Director, Leslie Kinkade at 206.284.9130 or go to www.alphasls.com if you are interested in contributing to this exciting project.





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Steve with new best buddy, Peach

Steve and Peach Cat

By Katie Brudwick

Steve moved in to Berry House May 2009, and at that time, he asked for only one thing - a cat.

Steve's dream of cat companionship came true on March 23rd of this year with the adoption of Peach Cat.

Peach Cat is a 14-year-old grey and orange tabby who was surrendered to the Seattle Humane Society due to behavioral issues. Basically, Peach Cat did not like sharing her owners with their children and pets.

What Peach Cat was looking for was a calm and loving home where she would bask in all the attention. And that's exactly what she found at Berry House.

Peach became instantly comfortable with her new surroundings and has already formed an especially close bond with her new owner, Steve.

Each day while Steve is out of the house, either attending Elder and Adult Day Services, volunteering at the Issaquah Historical Society, or enjoying a Dick's cheeseburger, Peach Cat can be found snoozing lazily in her cat bed or tearing up her scratching post.

Peach Cat waits patiently for Steve to return home each night on the Access bus and rewards him with kisses and purrs. On most evenings, the pair can be found curled up watching TV.

Steve provides gentle care for his new buddy, who came to Berry House with special dietary needs in order to keep her vital and healthy. Steve also cleans her litter box and brushes her fur weekly, with extra support from staff when needed.

Clearly, both pet and owner have found the perfect match in each other. Peach Cat has not only moved into Steve's heart and room at Berry House, she has also moved right in to the hearts of Berry House's other clients and staff, too.



Spring growth at Alpha East

By Jill Brubacher

We shook things up a little this spring in the East Branch. We moved in a new client, several clients moved from one location to another, we opened a new program and we relocated another. To make things really exciting, all of this took place over the course of one month! Moves are never easy, but we tackled each one and helped the clients make smooth transitions to their new homes.

The first moves took place after we opened the new Kingsgate program in Kirkland. The opening of the home had its own unique challenges. The agency that owns the house ran into several roadblocks that are now common in this housing market and the purchase took longer than expected. We made good use of the extra time before the program opened by having Matt, Evan, Todd, and Frank, the four future housemates, get together for weekly pizza parties to get to know each other better. It is never easy to foresee how individuals will do living together, even if they already know each other and enjoy hanging out. As it turns out, they are doing great and these four men have become compatible housemates and friends and seem to truly appreciate each other.

Matt moved to Kingsgate from his own apartment, where he had lived by himself since coming to Alpha in 2008. Matt was thrilled to have the opportunity to live in a house with three others and quickly settled in to a new lifestyle of living in a household, which has been a very positive experience so far. Next, Evan moved to Kingsgate from Berry House in Issaquah, where he had been the youngest. Evan seems to really enjoy living with others close to his age and activity level. Evan and Matt quickly bonded over their love of videos and have even loaned each other a favorite or two. Todd

joined the Kingsgate household when he moved from the West Branch to the East Branch, and we are very excited to be able to continue the positive supports that were already in place for him. Todd also enjoys movies and these three now occasionally enjoy a movie night together. Frank, who rounds out the household, moved to Kingsgate from Rainier School. Frank can often be found quietly observing the comings and goings around him, but is slowly reaching out to the others to initiate interaction and develop friendships.

Vicki moved into Berry House in Issaquah. Everyone was delighted with her presence and her smile added to the joy already present in the household. Berry House is a great location for Vicki and the skilled staff were well-prepared to provide her unique supports. Vicki enjoys hanging out with her staff and housemates, but also loves to get out into the community. Issaquah is a great location to go out and take in the beautiful scenery or find an activity in the community to interact with others. Vicki makes friends wherever she goes and puts a smile on the face of those she meets.

The moves for Jenny, Kristen, Lorna and Harshan were triggered by a decision to no longer accept Section 8 by the apartment complex where these clients had been living. This was disappointing, as moves are difficult, all had moved to their apartment relatively recently, and many factors must come together to find an apartment complex for a program. A lot of consideration is given to location, proximity to another program, distance from activities or people the clients want to be near, amount of rent, layout of the apartment, amenities, and the proximity of the available apartments to each other, just to name a few details to consider! Be that as it may, we were able to find available apartments in Bellevue where the Lake Hills and High Croft programs are already established and in the Woodlake complex near the new Kingsgate house. We are so grateful to have found new apartments for these women that meet their needs and provide comfortable environments for them to call home.

With all the big moves completed, it's time to sit back and catch our breath, give everyone some time to settle in and get comfortable in their new homes, and enjoy the fact that we don't need to rent a U-Haul again for a while!



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Kristina's bright smile is the first thing that greets everyone at the Alpha East office front desk

in direct support with their respective programs to their new roles.

On the Eastside, Chris Allen, who started with Seattle Specialized as a direct support staff in 2002, resigned his position as Clinical Manager in order to pursue new opportunities on the East Coast. Stepping in as the new Alpha East Branch Clinical Manager, Jesse VonPapp, who has been with the agency since 2000, was promoted from Program Supervisor for the Fountain House and Lake Hills program. And completing this circle, Sam Thun, who served as Program Coordinator under Jesse for the past two years, took on the reins as the new Program Supervisor at Fountain House and Lake Hills.



Isatou, Jeremy and Tamika at Alpha's West Branch



Staff transitions in early 2011

By Ruby Lindner

In addition to program growth, new clients and new homes, the first half of 2011 has also been a time of transition in several Alpha leadership roles as we bid farewell to valued staff members who moved on to new opportunities and congratulated other staff members who moved up into new roles with Alpha's management team.

Recognizing both her amazing leadership and the increasing demands that Alpha's growth places on the lead in the financial services group, Amanda Reinhard was promoted to Finance Director, a title which takes into account both her management of the financial services team and also her added responsibilities for the agency's financial management.

At Alpha West, Ryan Jones departed as Executive Assistant, and Alpha welcomed Jeremy Oslund as our new Executive Assistant in the Seattle office.

Other West Branch transitions included the departures of Program Supervisors Dan Agerup and Vern Eggerud. Taking on Cascade, Chelan and Quinalt houses as the new Program Supervisor, Isatou Ceesay was promoted from Program Coordinator at those houses. And in a similar transition, Tamika Alston was promoted from Program Coordinator to Program Supervisor of the Salish, Dayton and Olympic houses. Both Isatou and Tamika bring several years of experience



Colleen Heins heads up staff at the new East Branch Kingsgate House

The Eastside also welcomed Colleen Heins, who moved from her position as temporary Program Coordinator at the West Branch to take on the Program Supervisor position for the new Kingsgate House and Woodlake program.

The Eastside HR team was augmented with the promotion of Kristina Berfelz to the Training Specialist and Office Coordinator position. Kristina first joined the Alpha staff in 2008 as a direct support staff with the Canyon Creek program, moving into the lead staff position in 2009.

We would like to give our heartfelt thanks to each of the departing staff for their energy and commitment to our mission and our clients during their years of service to Alpha. We wish them continued success. Congratulations to our existing staff on their well-earned promotions and a warm welcome to the new staff members who have joined the agency during the first half of 2011.



Alpha's annual *Bike Bash and 25K Ride* will take place on Saturday, August 20, 2011. Be sure to mark your calendars.

The ride will begin at 9 a.m. at a location yet to be determined on the North end of Lake Washington (last year's route which started at Matthews Beach needs to be altered due to construction). The length of the Ride will be approximately 25K. We will post details soon on Alpha's Facebook page and our website. Sign-up forms will also be available at our Lake City and Bellevue office locations. The Ride is a fundraising venture directly supporting critical needs associated with Alpha client programs and services. We encourage Ride participants to raise a minimum of \$100 in cash and pledges to waive the \$20 registration fee.

The Bike Bash itself will be from 11-3 p.m. at beautiful Crossroads Park in Bellevue. Outdoors For All staff and volunteers will be there with a wide variety of adaptive bikes. There will be Karaoke and dancing, and of course, lots of food! There will be drawings, give-aways, and prizes—including the annual Golden Wheel Award given by Outdoors For All to a deserving Alpha client. Friends and family of Alpha clients and staff are encouraged to attend.



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Alpha Exhibit at UW exhibition

Alpha creates an exhibit at University of Washington

By Leslie Kinkade

As part of the nationally touring exhibition, *The Willard Suitcases: The Lives They Left Behind*, documenting the often confiscated belongings of patient suitcases from a State Hospital Attic, Alpha was asked to create a complementary display. Up from January 17 through March 18, 2011 at University of Washington's Odegaard Library, Alpha's multimedia exhibit was entitled *Community Residential Services for People with Developmental Disabilities in Washington State*. The content explored the contrasts between institutional living and living in a community-based residential setting for people of all ages with developmental disabilities.

The Willard Suitcases exhibition was brought to Seattle by the all volunteer organization, Live Inclusive. You can find them on the web at www.liveinclusive.org. In addition to working with Live Inclusive to participate in the project, Alpha partnered with PROVAIL in presenting accompanying displays. On February 24, 2011 the two agencies combined forces for a reception and program discussing the issues around Washington State's lack of progress toward downsizing and/or closing its institutional settings. The evening program featured Michael Goodwill of PROVAIL and Live Inclusive; Mike Hatzenebler, President/CEO of PROVAIL; Stacy Gillett, Alpha's

Board President; and Scott Livengood, Alpha's CEO. Over 75 people attended the reception and program.

Even though the exhibition completed its run at the University of Washington in March, you can still see Alpha's display up at our Lake City offices, 2611 NE 125th St, Suite 145, Seattle, WA 98125. Come by anytime 9-5 p.m. and learn about the history of Alpha as well as the ongoing, challenging issues facing people with developmental disabilities in Washington State.



James Okano, an engaged and multi-faceted staff member

James, an HR Coordinator with many talents

By Collin Capes

James Okano started with Seattle Specialized Residential Services in October 2004 and became part of the Alpha Supported Living Services team with the merger. His amazing abilities as a direct care staff have always had people noticing him and he has brought his full range of skills to his current position as Human Resources Coordinator.

When asked to describe his on the job accomplishments, HR Director, Patricia Minton, says of James that he is an excellent interviewer with good intuition about people and excels as a trainer where he leads classes in Right Response, first aid, adult cpr, recognizing and avoiding sexual harassment, orientation and safety, and recognizing and avoiding abuse and neglect. One of James' major strengths lies in his excellent communication

skills, which he brings to bear in dealing with Alpha's highly diverse staff.

In my various positions with Alpha, I have known my co-worker, James Okano, for over 10 years. But, in the process of writing an article about him, I discovered a whole new James! Apparently James is quite the dancer and loves to step lively to his native Lingala music. He recently impressed another co-worker and others at a friend's wedding with his moves. To all who see James it is no secret that he dresses well, but I also learned that James is well-known for his story telling. I have witnessed first hand how comfortable James is speaking to people as he does multiple trainings every week here in the Alpha West office.

James taught economics in his native Kenya along with music, Swahili and math. James is also the communications officer for an organization called Nyanza, Economic and Social Development Forum and is considered quite the mobilizer for political and social causes. James hopes to someday run his own HR consulting firm and I'm going to wager on him being successful as he is in all endeavors!

ALPHA WISH LIST

We are hoping to find community donations to fill the following client and organizational needs:

- Disposable plastic gloves - boxes needed for all of our homes
- Lawn or yard maintenance service
- Queen Bed and mattress and set of sheets
- A Dining room table/chairs (6-8)
- One new four-drawer file cabinet
- Tandem adaptive bicycle for two people to ride together

If you would like to donate, please call Leslie Kinkade @ 206-588-8764 or email at lkinkade@alphasls.org

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



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Staci with Lavita and Katie

Staci Johnson, committed to our community

By Katie Swezea

Staci Johnson has been with Alpha for three and a half years and has made a huge impact on Alpha East programs and many of our clients's lives. Staci became the Kelsey Creek Program Coordinator (PC) in December 2010. To write this piece, I sat down to find out more about my new PC.

Katie: Can you tell us a bit about your background before joining the Alpha team?

Staci: I was raised in Kansas and studied advertising at the University of Kansas's school of journalism in Lawrence. After graduating, I applied at an agency that provided residential, recreation, and employment services for adults with developmental disabilities. I had friends who worked there in college and I was always intrigued by their jobs. I began working at a group home with six women and I absolutely loved it. I worked there for two years, and went on to become an employment consultant and finally worked at the retirement center for the same company.

Katie: What brought you to Seattle?

Staci: In 2005, I moved to Washington to follow a passion and attend the Art Institute of Seattle. I completed my associates of photography at the Art Institute in 2007 and have done freelance

work for Seattle Center's Festival series since graduating. It's pretty exciting when I walk on the Seattle Center campus and see my photographs. One of my favorite photography subjects are the clients I support at Alpha. They are fun, beautiful, and always fascinating subjects.

Katie: What brought you back into the DD field?

Staci: After graduating from the Art Institute, I found myself again drawn back to working with adults with developmental disabilities. A friend, who was Lavita's job coach at the time, suggested I apply at Residence East. I first worked with clients who lived in Issaquah and then I followed them when they moved to Woodinville. And now with my move to Kelsey Creek and High Croft, I find myself working with Lavita and her housemates. I have enjoyed getting to know all my new clients. It seems that working with adults with developmental disabilities is just something I am meant to do.

Katie: So, Staci, with all that, what are your favorite activities to do with clients?

Staci: The two things I like to do best with clients are going out for coffee and doing baking projects

A few of the things that guardians and other staff members say about Staci is that she has a calming presence. She's very reliable. She exudes confidence and a caring for people that is so natural it clearly comes from her heart. I feel lucky to have the support of a colleague who possesses such a strong work ethic, positive attitude, and infectious charisma.



Alpha's new Representative-Payee services

By Amanda Reinhard

Alpha has served as representative payee for Social Security benefits for many of our clients for 37 years and recently we began adding clients outside of the agency to that roster. Since April 2010, we have taken on 25 representative payee clients and are constantly adding to our growing client base. We began taking on new clients last

April when another representative payee agency closed down and there were many individuals who found themselves suddenly without a payee. As word spread among agencies about our new service offering, our client base grew to what it is today.

Clients in our representative payee program receive ongoing financial support and oversight. Their dedicated case supervisor manages monthly income and facilitates the timely payment of bills and other expenses. We also assist with budgeting and other reporting as necessary.

We have been fortunate to be able to truly help many people through this process. Many of our representative payee clients are homeless. One individual was recently able to secure a lease on an apartment because having a representative payee to guarantee timely and consistent payment of rent lowered the perceived riskiness of someone with bad rental history. We were also able to help facilitate the cross country move of one of our clients, which was possible in part due to our budgeting and savings assistance.

Alpha has connected with various lawyers, health professionals, and social services agencies in order to continue the referral process for new representative payees and we look forward to growing this program throughout the year and into the future.

Well, it's finally more than a rumor. Alpha now has its very own Facebook Page. And we need you to LIKE us and then SHARE us with your Facebook friends. Make a comment or two if you are so inclined and watch for additional postings as summer (that means barbecue season for Alpha) revs up in the Northwest.

<https://www.facebook.com/AlphaSupportedLivingServices>

Many thanks and see you on Facebook!

Special kudos to Sparkloft Media and Elena Ferranto for helping us launch this exciting new communication channel for the agency.



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Alpha Supported Living Services

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Scott Livengood

Development Director
Leslie Martin Kinkade

Finance Director
Amanda Reinhard

Human Resources Director
Patricia Minton

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Clinical Manager
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Program Supervisors
Tamika Alston
Isatou Ceesay
Tess Forté
Ethan Rourke
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Greg Cranston
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Training Specialist / Office
Coordinator
Kristina Berfelz

Interested in seeing what's
new at Alpha, finding out
more about the work we
do, or checking out Alpha's
35th Anniversary video?

Visit our website at
www.alphasls.com



Kingsgate House's backyard will make a great
spot for a garden

ALPHA NEWS layout and compilation by Ruby Lindner

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2611 NE 125th St. Suite #145
Seattle, WA 98125