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ALPHA NEWS

FALL/WINTER 2010

Letter from the CEO

by Scott Livengood

Even though Washington State's budget remains in a state of flux and uncertainty, as fall transitions to winter and we wrap up yet another year of commitment to our vital mission, I am reminded of what is positive and hopeful about our work at Alpha Supported Living Services. We have continued to grow and expand our services, now serving 96 clients in 31 homes across King County. Overall, those we support are happy and living quality lives, and we have the lowest turnover rate ever at 16.8% compared to the State average of 38.1%. Considering the tough economic climate, Alpha is as strong as it possibly could be. Though the coming months and years will be filled with daunting tasks, we are well-positioned and motivated to tackle such challenges with innovation and excellence—as we have done for nearly four decades.

Through much lobbying and advocacy by the statewide association (CRSA) and meetings with the Governor's office staff, we were able to get the proposed 7% cut for January reduced to a 2% cut to the benchmark effective January 1, 2011. This of course is still a reduction in our funding and one that we will have to figure out how to operate within, but it is significantly more manageable for our agency. The proposed 7% budget cut would have been a decrease of our benchmark funding of \$1.12 per hour and a total cut of \$670,000 for our agency on an annual basis, while this 2% cut to the benchmark will be a decrease of our benchmark funding of 32 cents per hour and approximately \$160,000 annually. This is the second funding cut that supported living providers have endured in the last 18 months, having experienced a 49 cent per hour funding cut in July 2009. Even before the next legislative session starts, we will have experienced an 81 cent per hour reduction in funding with more slated to come.

We will continue to hone the budget for 2011, taking into account staff survey results and ideas that we have received from employees as to how expenses can be reduced. I believe we will be able to absorb this



Charlie and his Direct Support staff, Abdula explore the sites in Victoria, B.C. during summer vacation.

cut without significantly impacting client services and/or direct support staff, which has been our goal during the budgeting process. This is good news amidst the continued news of budget deficits in Washington and provides proof of the power of making our voice heard in Olympia. This next legislative session will again be challenging, so I hope that everyone will help out in making legislators aware of the impact of the budget cuts. Here is how to continue sharing your voice with our legislators and Governor:

- The best way to contact your Representatives or Senators is via email using the following link: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature>
- Write Governor Gregoire a letter: Governor Chris Gregoire, Office of the Governor, PO Box 40002, Olympia, WA 98504-0002
- Call Governor Gregoire's Office: Governor's Office 360-902-4111; For relay operators for the deaf or hard of hearing, please dial 7-1-1
- Fax Governor Gregoire a letter: 360-753-4110
- Email Governor Gregoire: <http://www.governor.wa.gov/contact/>

Of course, even though our advocacy efforts have been effective so far in minimizing the impact of cuts on Supported Living, we are still not out of the woods. Come January, the legislature will have to react to the approximately \$5B deficit, which will be impacted by the initiative votes earlier this month. To

impacted by the initiative votes earlier this month. To compound this reality, the latest budget forecast out the week of November 15, 2010, showed additional reduced revenue for 2010 of \$385 Million. This could mean additional cuts effective January on top of the already announced 32 cents per hour reduction. Once back in session in January, the legislature will need to adopt a budget for the next two years, which would begin July 1st. At this point, an additional 7% reduction has been proposed by ADSA (Aging and Disability Services Administration), which could equate to reductions in our rates of over \$1 per hour. However, we hear the Governor may be asking the departments to submit 10-20% cut versions of their proposals. I hate to paint a gloomy picture, but over a two-year period we could be looking at rate reductions of approximately \$2 per hour when all is said and done. This hardly seems feasible or fathomable as this could bring the funding for direct support wages to below minimum wage in this state.

We will know more as the legislature makes decisions. Rest assured, Alpha is prepared to continue its advocacy efforts and potentially turn to a strong and comprehensive contingency plan to address whatever challenges come our way. We hope you will join us in making our voice heard so that services for some of our most vulnerable citizens are not irreparably harmed with these cuts. Our community and network of friends can also help us address these challenges through the Annual Giving Drive: the **2010 Invest In Our People Campaign**. Funds leveraged through this campaign will specifically fuel our work to keep Alpha's clients healthy, active in the community, and on track to realize their personal goals. **See page 3 for how you can participate.**

Thank you for all the ways—tangible and intangible—each of you support and encourage our work at Alpha. The strength of our organization is testimony to the quality of the relationships we enjoy with our clients, families, guardians, Board Members, staff, friends, and patrons. Enjoy the warmth of the holiday season. I look forward to seeing you in 2011.



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Board President, Stacy Gillett (second from left), enjoys Giving Through Song with her daughter, sister, and mom

Giving Through Song, a successful Benefit for 2010

By Leslie Kinkade

Alpha's annual benefit event was held on Saturday, October 23 at The Ruins dinner club at the base of Seattle's Queen Anne neighborhood. It was a record-setting venture, reaching the net revenue goal of \$112,000, a significant increase over 2009. International jazz artist, Jacqui Naylor, sang her beautiful, bluesy notes with elegance and enthusiasm, giving away 1/2 the proceeds from her CDs at the end of the night. Nearly 100 people participated at this year's dinner, which featured terrific food and cocktails, The Ruins' signature "Alphatini" with a chance to win a dinner for four at **The Ruins**, a silently auctioned Friends of Alpha Wine Collection featuring donated wines including a magnum from **Novelty Hill-Januik Winery** and a bottle of 2004 Chateau Montelena Cabernet Sauvignon, and delicious take away cupcakes were donated by **The Radical Cupcake**. Speakers for the evening included Board President, Stacy Gillett; CEO, Scott Livengood; Board Vice-President, Bob Breskovich, and Matt Scroggs, brother to one of Alpha's clients. Also featured at the event, the debut of the new Alpha video, produced by staff videographer, Cameron Hanson. Special thanks to our exceptionally generous group of Alpha Family Members and Friends including Tom Alberg and Judi Beck, Judy and Barry Ohai, Ruth and Steven Gimpel, and an anonymous donor who together

challenged event participants to pledge enough that evening to match their collective advance gift of \$60,000. **Lauren Kahan Photography** provided in-kind photography support (check out the photos at http://laurenkahan.smugmug.com/Events/Alpha-Benefit-Dinner-The-Ruins/14163600_HVnYU) for the evening while **Wells Fargo** and **Enterprise Fleet Management** contributed to the event as corporate partners. For a complete listing of our many generous Giving Through Song donors and supporters go to our website at www.alphasls.com.

The event's Dinner Committee included community volunteers, Mary Lee and Aaron Lindstrom, Board President, Stacy Gillett, and Alpha Staff Members Scott Livengood, Rob Burmaster, Jill Brubacher, and Leslie Martin Kinkade. And last, but definitely not least, the talented Alpha West Program Supervisor, Tess Forte, and the recently promoted Program Coordinator, Tamika Alston, added their impressive musical skills to the cocktail hour and later on in the evening, as well. Tess accompanied on the piano while Tamika shared some smooth and jazzy vocal notes with the audience. Listen for future Alpha performances from this dynamic duo.



Lorna Booker is "Game for it all!"

By Greta Sriviboon

Lorna became a client of Alpha's in June of 2010, when she moved into an apartment in Bothell. With this move, Lorna begins her personal journey for independence and self-discovery - a journey that her mother, Kathy, calls a major milestone and one that Lorna is extraordinarily proud of.

Before moving into an Alpha-supported apartment, Lorna lived at home with her family. She graduated from the community based training program at Ingraham High School. Outside of school, Lorna took dance and piano lessons for several years, and enjoyed a wide range of outdoor activities. As Lorna's family puts it, "she's game for it all!"



Lorna taking a spin around Crossroad Community Park at the 2010 Bike Bash

Since moving into her new apartment, Lorna has developed a special bond with Direct Support staff member, Ashley Bliss. Ashley and Lorna enjoy a multitude of activities, including bowling every Saturday followed by special treats at Dairy Queen or McDonald's. The two ladies also enjoy a competitive game of basketball and exploring the many parks in and around Bothell. Every night before bed, Lorna gives Ashley a hug and says I love you.

Lorna has also begun to participate in a variety of social activities and events through Friendship Adventures. When at home, Lorna is very proficient with the computer and is often busy typing an email or playing a computer game. Lorna has an amazing memory, strong opinions, and a magnificent sense of humor that keeps her staff on their toes. She loves to meet new people, where she asks endless questions on a mission to learn as much about them as possible.

Since becoming an Alpha client, Lorna has experienced tremendous personal growth, which bodes well for the adventures that yet lie ahead in her future. Lorna is a very capable young woman and lives her life with gusto. It is an absolute pleasure to support Lorna, nurturing her quest for independence and self-discovery!



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FilFil FilFil, the perfect fit staff for Alpha

By Tina Hines

Although new to Mountain House Group home in Issaquah, FilFil is not new to Alpha. FilFil came to Alpha by way of the merger with Residence East where he had been employed as a Direct Support Professional since 2005. Before working at Mountain House, Fil worked at several other sites including Fountain House and Lake Hills.

When you meet FilFil, the first thing you notice is his warm smile and easy going demeanor. Those who work with Fil remark on his positive, can-do attitude, compassion



Fil Fil with colleague, Hodan, at Crossroads Community Park

and active engagement with the clients; these traits have endeared him to clients, supervisors, coworkers, and guardians alike. In fact, Jesse VonPapp, FilFil's former supervisor at Fountain House made the following comment in regard to FilFil's work ethic, "The great thing about FilFil is how flexible he was with adding or changing his shifts or how he was able to work with any of our clients whether dealing with challenging behavioral issues or simple hygiene needs. Filfil was very dependable, one of those staff who is always at work on time during any bad weather or holiday shifts when staff were calling out."

FilFil began working at Mountain House in February of this year and has been a great asset to the program. Fil fits right in with the staff at Mountain House and is willing to tackle even the most difficult tasks quickly and efficiently. Moreover, even though FilFil brings his own wealth of experience to Mountain House, he does not hesitate to ask a question or to ask for help when needed. In addition, FilFil was instrumental in helping the most recent Mountain House client adjust to his new home by facilitating interaction with the other Mountain House clients and encouraging activities in the community. FilFil's optimism and motivation has infused energy into the Mountain House climate and he is a welcome addition to the team.

2010 INVEST IN OUR PEOPLE Campaign

In addition to your advocacy efforts, consider making a donation to our annual giving drive and the **INVEST IN OUR PEOPLE Campaign**. Did you know it takes an additional \$6,000 per client above and beyond what Alpha receives from the State to sustain the level of excellence in services we provide every client? That represents a total of nearly \$600,000 we must raise and/or earn from additional sources. Our direct support professionals deliver the holistic services that support our clients 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In this newsletter we have highlighted both clients and their direct support professionals—and the high quality relationships that are shared between them. The importance of strong support relationships in helping people live successful, quality lives in the community cannot be underestimated. Nothing is better for our clients than consistent interaction with people they know and trust. Alpha has been able to sustain exceptional continuity in its staff. In a field plagued by challenges to recruit and retain qualified staff, Alpha is proud of its exceptionally low turnover —16.8% compared to the State average of 38.1%. We hope you will participate in our **INVEST IN OUR PEOPLE Campaign** and consider a financial contribution to support our clients and their direct support staff, the heart and soul of our mission. Please send us a tax-deductible donation or pledge, call 206.284.9130, or go to www.alphasls.com.

ALPHA WISH LIST

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

- Automatic bloodpressure cuffs
- Pedometers and Forehead thermometers
- A new or used Desk-top Computer and a Laptop Computer
- Queen Bed and mattress and set of sheets
- A Dining room table/chairs (6-8)
 - One file cabinet
- Tandem adaptive bicycle for two people to ride together

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

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



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Planting Mountain House's Remembrance Garden

By Mary Barrow

On September 24th, the 12 person Microsoft Windows Server team arrived at Mountain House in Issaquah to tackle the Remembrance Garden project submitted for the United Way Day of Caring. This project entailed the prep work for a garden in memory of Ross Haugland and Mary Cochran, two Mountain House clients who have passed away.

The Microsoft team arrived at 8:30am and quickly got to work pulling 7 stumps, removing 3 Rhododendrons, and then laying compost, generously donated by Cedar Grove Composting, Inc., to create a rich topsoil, ready for planting. The team's dedicated effort culminated in the completion of phase I and readied the garden for phase II which will take place next spring and will be completed by Alpha staff and other volunteers.

Phase II will include; planting various flowers and shrubs such as Camellias, Hydrangeas, Irises, Sweet Olives, Hostas, Wild Ginger, and Rosemary, which signifies remembrance. Once the planting is completed, a boulder, which will have a plaque



Mountain House Remembrance Garden work party, a hard-working coalition made up of the Microsoft Windows Server volunteer brigade, Mountain House staff and Mountain House clients

inscribed with Ross and Mary's names, will be placed in the garden and a dedication ceremony will be held.

Community volunteer and Issaquah resident, Joanne Quinn, has graciously volunteered her time to design the garden and consult on various aspects of its development. Adn Paul Haugland, father of Ross, has also been instrumental in moving the project forward. Thank you Joanne and Paul!

If you would like to volunteer or make a contribution to the Remembrance Garden Fund please contact Mary Barrow, phone: 425.641.7845 ext. 1401; email: mbarrow@alphasls.com.

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

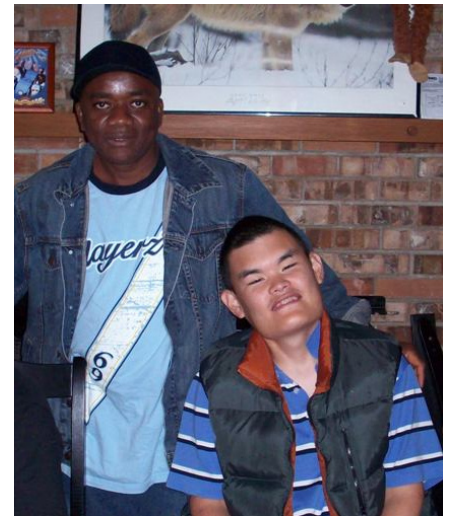
James Yoon is a man with a great many interests

By Sharon Warner

James or "Jim," as he is known, is very active and enjoys a variety of activities. He loves to explore the community and build relationships. Jim is very fond of our local police and firefighters and often tells Alpha staff he wants to go through the rigorous training to become one of Seattle's finest. Jim particularly enjoys day trips to locations that overlook the Puget Sound with views of the Cascade and Olympic mountains. Jim enjoys learning and talking about the history of the area as he explores new neighborhoods. Jim leads an active lifestyle which includes watching car races, going to baseball games, looking at airplanes, window-shopping and listening to smooth jazz. Jim is also a big fan of the Food Network and he is happy to prepare his own meals with assistance from staff in cutting the food and set the oven temperature. One day every week Jim works at Northwest Center developing job skills so he can find a job well-suited to his abilities.

Jim, who came to Alpha from Seattle Specialized Residential Support in 2007, is diagnosed with PDD, which is the most common type of atypical autism as well as XYY chromosomal anomaly. He currently lives with two housemates in a three-bedroom home in Shoreline.

Jim is a delightful gentleman, who is helpful and very caring of himself and his housemates. He has the verbal ability to communicate his thoughts, wants, and needs. Jim often strikes up conversations with community members by giving them a compliment or inquiring about what they are doing that day. He maintains a strong relationship with his father and visits



James Yoon and Ansu share a bond forged over the years.

with him on a regular basis. Additionally, Jim continues to maintain a relationship with his former foster parents and frequently initiates phone calls to them. Ansu Kamara is lead staff at the house where Jim lives, and the two have formed a deep and solid bond over the years, enjoying each others' company and companionship.

Jim loves making day plans and setting up vacations. Day trips have taken him all over the Puget Sound area, including outings to Snohomish, Tacoma, Camano Island, Port Orchard, Bremerton, and Sequim. He is always eager to plan his next big adventure while maintaining his dynamic life style.



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Planning ahead with a Burial Trust

By Ruby Lindner

Although we are all focused on supporting the clients at Alpha to live each and every day of their lives to the fullest, one area that deserves some additional thought is that of our clients' long term planning. A special needs trust fund is a great way to set aside money for those special events that come along and require additional funding beyond the on-hand cash availability of our clients, such as vacations, major purchases, and other unexpected needs. But, another area in which our clients' long term needs can benefit from some forward preparation is with respect to their final resting needs.

None of us like to think about end of life and death planning at length, but a few minutes of advanced planning can provide a great deal of assistance and support to make the process less stressful and the financial side of it less daunting when the time comes.

Much like a special needs trust, a burial trust can be established to set aside funds for the future. Burial trusts are set up through organizations such as Purple Cross, allowing the beneficiary to set aside money over time to cover expenses in the future. The trust does not require that clients or guardians make arrangements now for end of life or funeral details. It simply allows for monies to be saved in a trust that are designated for use to cover those expenses associated with the beneficiary's passing and eventual funeral costs. There is no minimum dollar requirement for establishing a burial trust and monies can be added to the trust on an on-going basis to build up a value sufficient to meet any and all expenses associated with funeral and burial plans.

Financial services supervisors at Alpha are available to assist clients and guardians in establishing a burial trust and can answer questions and provide additional information for clients and their guardians as to how a burial trust might serve their needs.



A group of 30K Riders arriving at the park, led by former East Branch Director, Josh Cutler and Board President, Stacy Gillett



Kyle Cooper riding his way into winning the 2010 Golden Wheel Award

2010 Alpha Bike Bash and Inaugural 30K Ride

By Leslie Kinkade

In 2010, Alpha's Bike Bash included a 30K Ride from Matthews Beach to Crossroads Park in Bellevue on Saturday, July 31, 2010 from 11:30-4:00 p.m. The Bike Ride took off from Mathews Beach at 9 a.m. 20 Riders participated in this inaugural year and \$1,000 was raised in pledges to support client programs at Alpha—a great way to kick off this new addition to Alpha's annual event schedule. The Ride was the brainchild of Alpha Program Supervisor, Tess Forte, who also coordinated this year's ride.

For the Bike Bash itself, our friends at Outdoors For All Foundation again provided a tremendous array of adaptive bikes and gear for all ages and all ability levels. A record number of over 70 clients attended the 2010 Bike Bash. Many of those clients rode the adaptive bikes with family members, staff, and/or guardians, or just on their own, in multiple loops around Crossroads Park. Also new this year was the addition of aerobics and dancing by Metro Parks Tacoma exercise instructor, Kristy Gledhill, and Karaoke by Alpha staff member, Tamika Alston. Over 200 people attended this year's dynamic Bike Bash, including many of Alpha's direct support staff, and 15 Clipped

Wings community volunteers who were instrumental in welcoming the 30K riders, serving the food, and befriending clients.

Kyle Cooper, Tiger Mountain client, earned this year's prestigious Golden Wheel Award for his enthusiastic participation in this year's Bash.

Special thanks to this year's broad array of in-kind contributors: Clipped Wings, Outdoors For All, Costco-Woodinville, PCC Natural Markets, Mark and Linda Johnson, Starbucks-Downtown Bellevue #366, Safeway-North City, QFC-Lake City, Trader Joe's-Bellevue, Albertson's-Lake Forest Park, Top Foods-Crossroads, Myrtle and Bob McNary, Global Studioz.Com, Kristy Gledhill, Tamika Alston, Lori Gagnon and Survive The Night.



Mitch Scroggs and his mother enjoying a spin together at the 2010 Bike Bash



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It's that time of year again and holiday preparations are calling for our attention. This year, why not make your holiday shopping go further, and give a gift to Alpha Supported Living Services by doing your holiday shopping online through GoodShop.com.

Every purchase you make with your favorite online retailer through GoodShop.com, can generate donations for Alpha. Just name Alpha Supported Living Services as your charity of choice when shopping through GoodShop.com. Wow! Could it be any easier to support the quality programs at Alpha?



Members of the Clipped Wings bring helping hands and great enthusiasm to the 2010 Bike Bash and Barbecue.

ALPHA NEWS layout and compilation by Ruby Lindner

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