



ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021



DETERMINATION - PERSEVERENCE - INDEPENDENCE
A TIME LIKE NO OTHER

President's Message



Nancy Good

The year 2020...and beyond, will be one none of us will forget. Or, will it?

So often we think we are living in such an unprecedented time, but as the years pass, our memories fade, and the details we thought were etched in our minds forever blur, and our collective memories become our truths.

Historians say that future generations will learn about this time through the stories told, the journals kept and even through the trillions of social media posts. I thought about how we will remember 2020 at Alternatives and realized that future staff, clients, family members, stakeholders and others will remember this time in this similar way and how grateful I am that 2020 was chronicled in detail.

Many things changed at Alternatives due to the pandemic. We experienced losses and limitations to our everyday lives, but we also developed solutions to new challenges as our priorities remained the same; to keep our clients healthy and safe, and to ensure that they are counted, included and advocated for, when they may not be able to advocate for themselves.

We established a "Reopening Committee", whose sole purpose continues to be to meet and take steps towards our "new normal." Personal Protective Equipment, or PPE, became a household name, as our staff, board members and community volunteers pulled together to seek donations, and to purchase, sew and distribute these items to clients and staff members. The presidential election was historic in every way. For the disability community, the mail-in ballot option provided a higher level of accessibility from which many of our clients benefitted. When our clients' day programs were closed, their travel curtailed and family visits suspended, we worked to find new solutions to offer recreation to stimulate their days and keep their minds and bodies active. Clients enjoyed Karaoke sing-a-longs, played Wii video games, and they expressed their creative sides with arts and crafts. Programs decorated their homes with each passing season and holiday. And, oh my, we discovered many hidden talents as clients and staff cooked and baked as never before!

What will be our memories of 2020? Certainly, the losses we suffered, but I am hopeful that we will also remember the ways we grew together and the ways we adapted to create lasting value and something of which we can be proud.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Nancy Good". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Keith's Story

Keith has been with Alternatives since 1996. He has lived in the same group home in Somerville all that time because it is a comfort to him and his mother for Keith to be in an environment that is familiar. This is an important aspect of Keith's independence. As a client who is blind and hard of hearing, familiarity is paramount. Prior to coming to Alternatives, Keith lived at a school for the blind, where he learned many of the skills needed to function in a sighted world. He also lived at home with his family for many years.

Keith has a love of music, including rock, gospel, and particularly opera, an interest that he shared with his father, and he enjoys spending time alone listening to music and singing "loudly" - partially due to his hearing impairment, but also because that is how he likes it! Not one to isolate himself, Keith also enjoys outings with his housemates, particularly to events where there is music and good food. He also enjoys accompanying his mother when she makes volunteer visits to hospitals and nursing homes. Keith has missed these visits due to COVID restrictions, and others have missed a chance to enjoy Keith's big personality and even bigger heart.



Compassionate is a word that is often used to describe Keith. He displays this when he goes from room to room to "check-up" on his housemates and make sure they are well. When he returns to his family home for visits, he greets neighbors with a friendly "Hi Neighbor!" This is something that continues to pleasantly surprise them. Because of Keith's blindness, they may feel that he shouldn't know that they are neighbors, but somehow he does, and he remembers them from visit to visit. Keith's memory is quite astounding. He has an uncanny ability to remember birthdays and special occasions for ALL of the housemates, teachers and staff that he has encountered over the years, and each time prompts his mother to remember them with cards.

At the height of the pandemic, when family visits were curtailed, Keith lived at home with his mother, but returning to the group home was a special homecoming for him. He returned to his ways of checking on housemates, playfully teasing those who didn't promptly engage with him, and showing his vast ability to show love for the special people in his life. Keith's mother spoke of one particular staff member who Keith calls "Apple Pie." Why apple pie? Because Keith loves apple pie, and knows it is special, just as this staff person is special and "one of the caring ones in his life."

"Keith is a miracle! The things he accomplishes at Alternatives are miracles!"

- Keith's mom

WE AT ALTERNATIVES AGREE!

Chrissy's Story

Chrissy grew up in Farmingdale, NJ where she enjoyed trips to the beach, camping and fishing with her family. She competed in shot put for the Special Olympics, and after graduating from High School, Chrissy enjoyed working at the local movie theater where she excelled.

Chrissy was eager to spread her wings, so when an apartment became available with an organization that provided housing for people with special needs, Chrissy and her family decided she would try living independently. This was a time of highs and lows. The apartment was beautiful, but it was far away from the job that she loved. Chrissy worked hard at maintaining her apartment, but it was difficult, and the transition without supports became too much for her.



Fortunately, in 2011, Chrissy and her family learned about Alternatives. She moved into an apartment that was the right fit and provided the help she needed to take care of daily activities. Best of all, she was working again, adopted a cat, and participated in social activities.

Chrissy lived in the Somerville/Bridgewater area for the next 8 years. She moved as her needs and preferences changed, and Alternatives' staff helped her to set up her new place, and to get into a routine. While this was a good experience for Chrissy, over time, she began to feel that living in her own apartment was lonely, and she needed the support of a different living arrangement.

Having people around would provide company and would help Chrissy complete her daily activities. Chrissy now lives in a very new Alternatives' group home with three housemates. The staff are more involved with things like preparing well-balanced meals and encouraging participation. Chrissy attends a day program that she loves! She looks forward to riding in the van, listening to music, and working in the garden near Liberty State Park.

Life during the pandemic has been difficult, but Chrissy's family considers themselves lucky that her home has an outside deck where they could safely visit when guidelines allowed. During this time, Chrissy and her housemates have enjoyed activities in their home, watching LOTS of movies, and going out on Dunkin Iced Tea runs! Her family organized Zoom calls, remote bingo games and sent packages to keep Chrissy feeling engaged and included in her family.

"We feel blessed to have been part of the Alternatives family for over 10 years." - Chrissy's Sister

WE AT ALTERNATIVES ARE HAPPY TO HAVE BEEN A PART OF WATCHING CHRISSY SUCCEED!



ALTERNATIVES BY THE NUMBERS

Alternatives provides the following services to individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (ID/DD)

24

Individuals served by 3 Supervised Apartment Programs

81

Individuals served by 20 Group Homes

142

Individuals served through Support Coordination

16

Individuals served by a Day Program

30

Individuals offered Behavioral Support in residential and Day Program services



Alternatives provides the following services to individuals with mental health and/or housing needs

80

Individuals receive clinical case management services through Community Support Services

11

Families reside in the Franklin House Transitional Housing Program for homeless families

13

Individuals reside within 3 Permanent Housing Programs



Other Initiatives

160

Job seekers with barriers to employment, including those who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, are served by Bridges to Employment, the Supported Employment Program.

56

Job seekers, ages 16-24 are served through Youth/Transition career readiness services at 7 public high schools.

69

Individuals reside in homes owned by ADTI Housing Corp., an Alternatives, Inc. subsidiary. ADTI also owns a 52 unit low-income apartment complex.

Investing in Their Future

Your tax-deductible contribution is very much needed and appreciated. There are various ways to give, and each one helps to sustain Alternatives' programs and services.

Ways to give:

- **Cash Contributions**
- **Recurring Gifts – Monthly, Quarterly or Annually**
- **Special Events**
- **Employer Matching Gifts**
- **Payroll Deductions**
- **Honor & Memorial Contributions**
- **Name Alternatives as a Beneficiary of your Life Insurance or Retirement Account**
- **Remember Alternatives in your Will or Estate Plan**



Leaving a Legacy of Independence

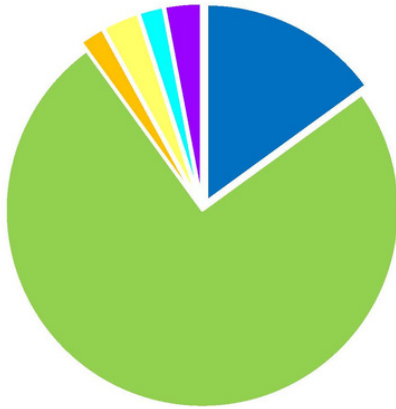
For many people, Alternatives is a place where they can feel empowered through their independence today and into the future. Those who support agency efforts today can perpetuate their care and concern for people with special needs by remembering Alternatives, Inc. in their will or another planned giving mechanism. Leaving a planned gift is a way of receiving tax benefits while adopting an issue close to your heart.

Planned gifts - including bequests, annuities, trusts, and gifts of stock, property or life insurance - ensure the continuation of Alternatives' work in the future. To decide if planned giving is an option for you, consult with a qualified financial planner, accountant, or attorney. Then contact us to learn where your plans best fit with our needs.

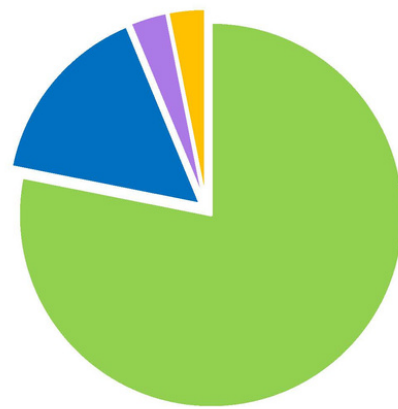


Alternatives, Inc. Revenue & Expenditures for FY2020

Revenue



Expenses



Revenues

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Grants & Contracts	2,140,510	9.58%
Client Services & Rental Fees	19,401,361	86.85%
Investment Income	101,326	0.45%
Contributions	262,323	1.17%
Special Events (Net)	71,735	0.32%
Other Income	362,699	1.61%
Total Income	22,339,954	100.00%

Expenses

Program Services	19,573,628	87.62%
Management & General	2,280,387	10.21%
Fundraising & Development	234,097	1.05%
Operating Reserves	251,842	1.13%
Total Expenses	22,339,954	100.00%

For more information, contact us at:

(908) 685-1444

● info@alternativesinc.org

● www.alternativesinc.org

Alternatives is grateful for the following who made generous contributions in 2020

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ADOPT-A-PROGRAM



Our Board of Trustees wanted to do more to help the agency, and the individuals we serve, during this very difficult time. They wanted to find a way to make sure the clients and staff knew that they were here for them. As a result, the 'Adopt-A-Program' initiative was born. Board Members grabbed the opportunity to take a particular program under their wing, and through a process of exploration with the program staff, they are finding new ways to interact with and support the program. At one group home, the Board Member dropped off gift baskets to each client. At that same home, they have come up with a plan for starting Karaoke sing-a-longs as a weekly event. At another home, the clients love to be active, so the Board Member donated a basketball hoop, allowing the clients to enjoy the warm weather and to have some fun, all within the comfort of their home. One program loves to participate in arts and crafts. The Board Member gave them the pieces of a project, and through a secure video call, they worked together to complete the project.

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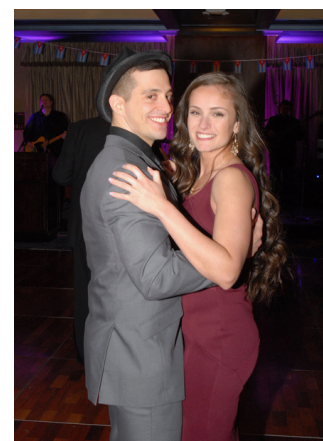
Give Through Celebration

In 2021, the agency determined that guidelines and restrictions due to COVID-19 would hinder our Dignity Gala event. We transitioned to a golf outing that was a great success!

We are now planning to continue to hold the golf outing, and we are also bringing the gala back. We know that there are those among our family of contributors who like to support our mission through celebration at the gala, because it is a great way to come together and enjoy a sense of community, along with superb dining, dancing and entertainment.

Watch for more information announcing the 2022 Dignity Gala!

If you are interested in helping with this event, just one hour per month will help bring the gala back to all it's glory! If your time is already committed, please ask yourself - whom do you know who likes to plan parties and can articulate the need to support our clients? Contact Anita Feiner, Director of Development, at afeiner@alternativesinc.org for more information about this effort and other fundraisers.



2021 Fundraisers - Join us in 2022!

Dignity Golf Outing



Dignity Dash



Dignity Run

