

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

SOARING TO *New Heights* TOGETHER

Kiran Karkhanis, a member of the Alternatives Board of Trustees, made the trip of a lifetime by climbing to the Mount Kilimanjaro Summit. He made the climb to fulfill his own dream and to raise funds for Alternatives. As a parent of a child on the autism spectrum, Kiran is especially aware of the gamut of challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and their families in ensuring their safety and learning as they grow.

"It was by far the hardest thing I have done, mentally and physically. I had to keep motivating myself through the 7 days of relentless mountain climbing, cold and lack of oxygen - and one of those motivations was the campaign to raise funds for Alternatives, Inc. and our clients."

Kiran says he is proud to be associated with Alternatives and that he believes in the mission to serve individuals and families with special needs. This belief in Alternatives' mission stretched beyond Kiran's board involvement or climb this year. His wife, Priya, climbed a mountain of her own (metaphorically) when she co-chaired the return of Alternatives' Dignity Gala.

This dynamic duo has taken to heart our guiding principle to support people in ways that enable them to achieve their highest levels of independence and integration in the community.



Message from the President



It wasn't long ago when many of our written communications were filled with updates about Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), new variants of the COVID-19 virus, and coded colors to indicate the current risk factor and numbers of cases. It is a time that we will never forget, and one that continues to provide lessons, as it was filled with challenges and hardships, as well as teamwork and tenacity.

We are grateful to be on this side of pandemic, and we are so fortunate to have the dedicated and caring staff who helped to ensure the well-being of our clients through all of it. While we are on the other side of the pandemic from a historical perspective, we continue to work through the financial ramifications. Supplemental COVID funding has expired, resulting in financial challenges to the agency. In order to ensure our utmost priority of quality services, Alternatives had to make some very difficult decisions over the past year, including the discontinuation of some services and restructuring of others, in an effort to strengthen the organization. I am confident that the agency is moving in a positive direction towards fulfilling our mission and future expansion to meet the needs of our community.

Alternatives is dedicated to advocacy to benefit our clients, and we participated in several efforts, in a variety of ways, including meeting with state senators, attending advocacy days at the state house, and participation in letter writing campaigns. Together with the New Jersey Association of Community Providers (NJACP), of which Alternatives is a member agency, we worked to support the "Keep the Lights On" campaign, to advocate for an increase in funding that takes into account the challenges associated with inflation and other fiscal pressures.

I am grateful to our dedicated Board of Trustees, who continue to support our mission in every aspect, through good and challenging times, despite their own full lives. I am also thankful for the community of supporters who stand behind our philosophy and support it through fundraising and advocacy efforts.

To learn more about what is happening at Alternatives, and to stay in touch, visit our brand-new website and follow us on social media.

Best Wishes,

Nancy Good

Mary Lynn's Story

Mary Lynn lived an average life filled with what most of us would term typical rites of passage. Originally from Morris County, Mary Lynn studied Nutrition and Communications at Glassboro State College (now Rowan University) for two years. She then worked as a broker's assistant for a financial services company.

Mary Lynn moved to Somerset County, had children and married. She describes these good years as nothing out of the ordinary - she was a stay-at-home mom who enjoyed cooking and gardening. In 2003, she divorced and went back to working in finance, but things were far from ordinary then. Mary Lynn became overwhelmed with feelings of anxiety and paranoia, and she lost custody of her son - an episode that resulted in years of soul searching.

It seemed as though the bottom had dropped out of Mary Lynn's life. She was homeless and alone, but somehow there was a glimmer of who she once was, and who she could become. She enrolled as a finance student at Morris Community College, and made the Dean's List, as she was showering at the school and sleeping in the parking lot. Finally, Mary Lynn reached out to the Board of Social Services and was placed in a shelter.

In 2010, Mary Lynn obtained services with Alternatives and entered the Permanent Housing Program. She had a new job as a temporary worker with the Office on Aging and was sure she had her life together. Mary Lynn left Alternatives, thinking it was a crutch from which she could be free. But, the overwhelming anxiety and feelings of dread returned, and she found herself searching for the support that she received through her team of case workers and behavioral health professionals at Alternatives. She returned to Alternatives, and today, Mary Lynn receives the support she needs while also supporting others.



Mary Lynn still receives supportive services, but she now lives in her own apartment and is her father's caretaker. She is active in the lives of her sons, as well as her beloved grandson. In an effort to give back to the community that supported her needs, Mary Lynn enjoys volunteering for organizations that serve people who are traveling a road similar to the one she experienced. Mary Lynn is a frequent volunteer at SHIP, Home Now and at the St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia. With an eye toward constantly moving forward, Mary Lynn is destined to Reach New Heights.

"I BELIEVE THAT BY FOLLOWING A GOOD AND HONORABLE ROAD, I WILL DO THE WORK I WAS CREATED FOR. I'M THANKFUL FOR THE MANY ANGELS THAT HAVE CROSSED MY PATH ALONG THE WAY."

Valerie's Story

Valerie is a woman who embodies the phrase "Reaching New Heights." Growing up in the 1950s and 60s with a developmental disability was far different than what is experienced today. Val lived at home with her parents and siblings and attended the Bridgewater School System and then The Midland School and graduated in 1975. These were difficult years for Val, when she was often ridiculed for her learning differences, but she was learning lifelong lessons at this time in addition occupational training.

Because Valerie remembers Midland as the first place where she could feel comfortable and be present without judgement, she credits the early years for instilling in her a volunteer spirit that she continues to share with others today. It was also the place where she met, Greg, her husband of 33 years.

Valerie and Greg came to Alternatives as a couple, in 1992, and remained clients until Greg's death in 2021. During that time, Alternatives encouraged Valerie's growing independence and desire to be involved in the community. Although she worked several jobs over the years, her many volunteer positions were and continue to be where she thrives and grows.

"SO MANY PEOPLE HAVE HELPED ME IN MY LIFE - I WANT TO HELP OTHERS IN RETURN"



Valerie's resume of accomplishments is long and varied. She actively supports Alternatives as a member of the Dignity Gala Committee, while she also volunteers for the Laurel Circle in Bridgewater. She gives back to her home town of Somerville in countless ways – she is Co-President of the Civic League, is active in the Business and Professional Association, and helps the parish of St. John in multiple ways. In addition, the Somerville Library has dubbed Valerie the "finder of books," because of her expertise in conducting book inventories. When Val isn't volunteering, she is making beautiful craft projects, often to be donated to organizations where she volunteers and others. Valerie has received several awards over the years – Somerset County United Way Circle of Excellence Award, Somerset County Federation of Democratic Women Extraordinary Volunteer Service Award, Somerset County Profiles of Positive Aging Award and The Alternatives, Inc. Dignity Award which she shared with the Gibson Family.

When asked why she remains so constantly busy, Valerie shyly smiles and admits that it's something that she feels she needs to do! "So many people have helped me in my life – I want to help others in return."

ALTERNATIVES BY THE NUMBERS

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

22

Individuals served by 3 Supervised Apartment Programs

81

Individuals served by 21 Group Homes

144

Individuals served through Support Coordination

70

Individuals served by a Day Program

25

Individuals offered Behavioral Support in residential and Day Program services



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

59

Individuals receive clinical case management services through Community Support Services

9

Individuals reside within 3 Permanent Housing Programs

11

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



Other

60

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



How To Give

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.

- **Contributions** - Mail, Credit Cards, Venmo
- **Recurring Gifts** – Choose Monthly, Quarterly or Annually
- **Employer Matching Gifts** - Double Your Donation
- **Payroll Deductions** - \$5 a week can make a big difference
- **Honor & Memorial Contributions** - In Lieu of Flowers
- **Special Events** - Alternatives holds four events each year.



1



2



3



Leaving a Legacy of Independence

It's as easy as 1 - 2 - 3

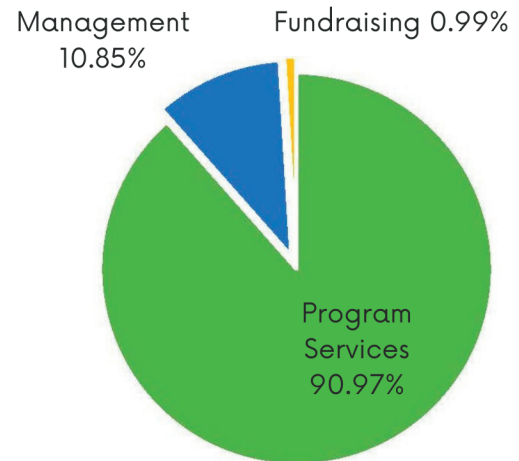
For many people, Alternatives is a place where they can feel empowered through their independence today and into the future. Those who support agency efforts today, can perpetuate their care and concern for the individuals we serve by remembering Alternatives, Inc. in their will or another planned giving 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 into 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.

"We are proud of our agency's history and the impact we have on the lives of our clients. We ensure that revenue is used wisely by directing more than 90% of our funding to client services."

Morris Malmstrom, Board Chair

FY22 EXPENSE ALLOCATION



OPERATING REVENUES

- Grants & Contracts
- Client Services & Rental Fees
- Contributions & Special Events

AMOUNT

\$2,050,369
\$21,207,646
\$249,317

In-Kind Donations

\$14,397

Thank you

Somerset County Library Services
Sebco Laundry Systems
FinPro, Fiddler's Elbow Country Club, American Institute, Philippine Nurses Assoc. of NJ - Somerset Co., Johnson & Johnson, Colgate, AXA

Volunteerism

more than
5,000 hours!

Thank You

Alternatives Board of Trustees and Committees
Corporate Volunteers - Morgan Stanley, Colgate, Raritan Corporation

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 2022/2023

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strategies
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enterprise

FLEET MANAGEMENT

withum⁺
ADVISORY TAX AUDIT

Soar With AIM

Alternatives' Abilities in Motion (A.I.M.) Day Programs provide structured activities and opportunities for growth for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Clients work on life skills and social skills in a small group setting. Each person's activities are designed to maximize their individual potential with a goal of building new skills and interests.

With three day programs (two in Raritan and one in Toms River), activities are constantly changing and developing with the interests and abilities of the clients enrolled. Fun activities include low impact exercise, arts and crafts, and community outings, such as trips to the local YMCA, retailers, movies and restaurants.

A.I.M. clients learn new ways to socialize and how to manage money. In our ever-developing technological world, our staff empower those served to enhance their skills in many areas, in a way that is fun and interactive.



A.I.M.'s hours of operation are
Monday through Friday,
9:00 am – 3:00 pm.

Transportation is available
within mileage parameters.
We are accepting referrals!
Don't miss out!

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Community In Action

We were thrilled to have been the beneficiary of QuickChek's 2022 Golf Outing, resulting in an \$86,500 donation. We couldn't have been more grateful to learn that they selected Alternatives again to be the beneficiary for this year's Golf Outing. Amidst the smoke and haze from the Canada fires, 144 golfers and over 30 volunteers came together at the beautiful Beaver Brook Country Club to again raise money for Alternatives. It is projected that funds raised this year will exceed last year's donation.



Parents, Tim and Lori McConway, are finding ways to support the agency that fit their style. Tim, an avid golfer, co-chairs the Dignity Golf Outing Committee and enlists the support of many others who are in trade unions along with him. Lori doesn't play golf, but she does do yoga, so for two years, she held fundraisers in their hometown of Clark and invited friends and family to Downward Dog for Alternatives!



Project Volunteers & Product Donations
are a BIG hit with our clients

Lots of Fun!

Springtime brought with it the return of our elegant affair, the Dignity Gala and 18 holes of friendly competition at the Dignity Golf Outing.

We were excited to bring back our Annual Gala, after the last in-person Gala was held back in 2019. The event was held at the Marigold in Somerset, and was magnificent in every way. Honorees included the Somerset County Library System, Union Avenue Pharmacy and QuickChek. Everyone enjoyed dancing all night and bidding on fantastic auction items.

A full complement of golfers enjoyed a beautiful day at Stanton Ridge Golf and Country Club at the Alternatives' Third Annual Dignity Golf Outing. The weather couldn't have been more beautiful which only added to the excitement for playing at the lovely and picturesque venue.

One thing is for sure, the dollars raised through events enhances the quality of life for our clients and enables Alternatives to help them live their best lives.

Planning for 2024 events is already underway. If you would like to help plan for the 2024 Dignity Gala or Dignity Golf Outing, we would love to have you. Contact Anita Feiner at 908-809-8654 to learn more.



The Fun Continues This Fall

Our next event is the Dignity Dash, scheduled for September 10th at Duke Island Park. You can join in by doing a 10K, 5K, 1 Mile Walk or Kids' Dash! On October 22nd, join us for our 9th Annual Dignity Run and stay for the party at the Bridgewater Eagles, including music, food, vendors and more!



<https://runsignup.com/Race/Events/NJ/Bridgewater/DignityDash>



**For more information, contact: Anita Feiner at: (908) 809-8654
or afeiner@alternativesinc.org**