

# Annual Report 2025

Celebrating Our Vision For Tomorrow



# A New Chapter: Building a Stronger Future Together

## Message from the President



The year 2025 has been one of growth, reflection, and renewed purpose for Alternatives. With new leadership and a shared vision, we took time to ask important questions about who we are today — and who we aspire to be in the years ahead. What emerged was a deep commitment to strengthen our foundation and continue changing lives with compassion and impact.

Together with our board and leadership team, we refined our strategic plan into a clear roadmap for the future — one that builds on our strengths, focuses our goals, and ensures we remain strong and sustainable. Along the way, we built trust, clarity, and optimism about where we're headed. Our work ahead centers on five pillars:

- **Funding & Growth:** Expanding support to sustain and grow our mission.
- **People & Talent:** Investing in the dedicated professionals who make our work possible.
- **Client Services & Empowering Lives:** Enhancing programs and launching new initiatives, including our first behavioral supports home.
- **Public Awareness & Voice:** Sharing the stories that bring our mission to life.
- **Organizational Efficiencies:** Strengthening systems so we can work smarter and serve better.

Each goal moves us closer to a future where every individual has the chance to live with dignity, purpose, and belonging.

As we move forward, I'm inspired by the passion and heart that define our team and community. Together, we are building a stronger, more inclusive future — one filled with hope, opportunity, and possibility for everyone we serve.



Derek Hodkey, President & CEO

## Board of Trustees

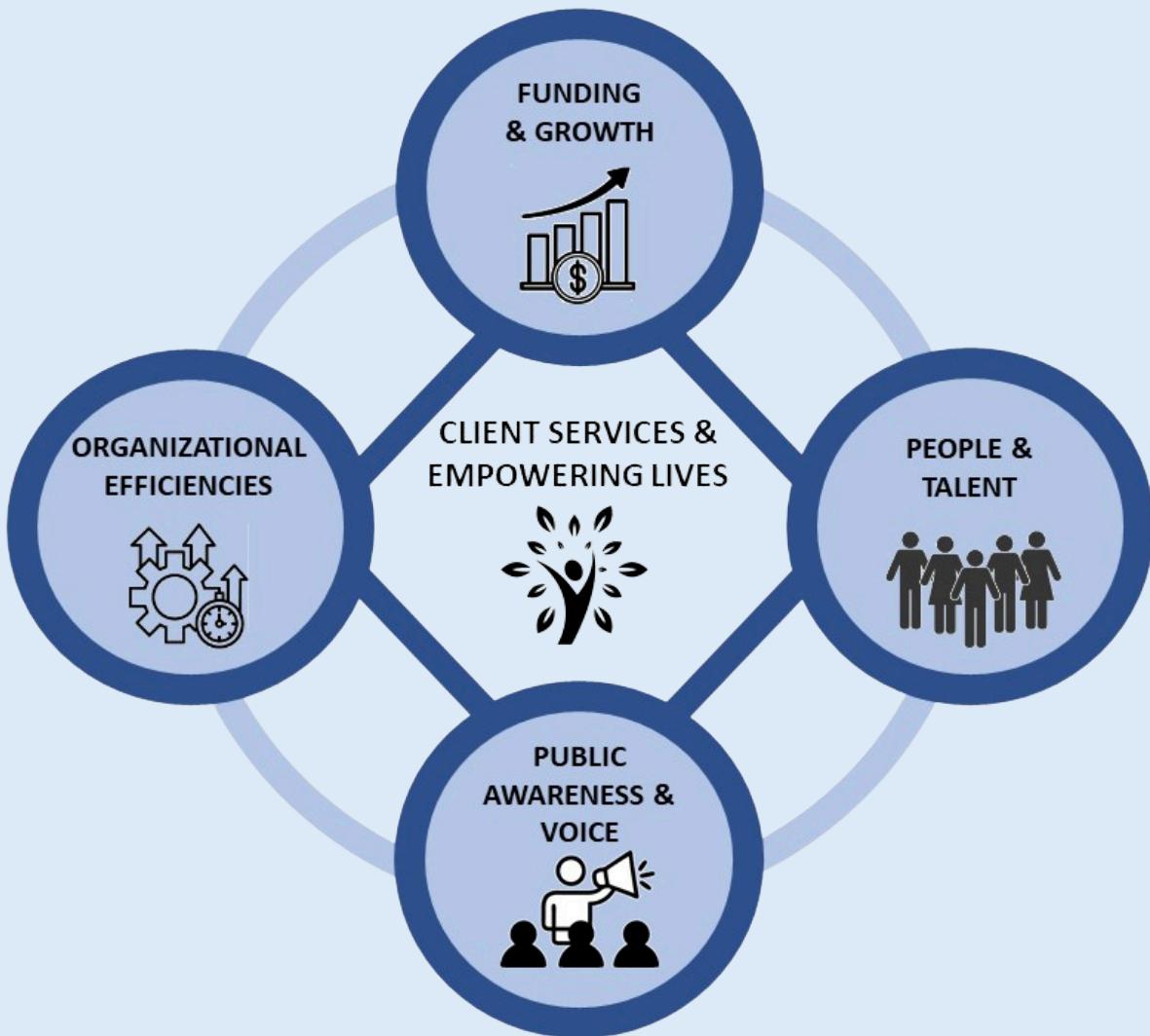
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# Our 5 Strategic Pillars



## Our Promise

At Alternatives, we strive to empower adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, those with mental health diagnoses, as well as individuals and families experiencing homelessness, by providing comprehensive services that foster greater autonomy and dignity. Our mission is to promote inclusion and to enhance the quality of life for each individual we serve, ensuring they have access to the resources and support necessary to thrive in their communities.

# Pillar 1: Our Keystone

## Client Services and Empowering Lives

At the heart of everything we do are the people we serve—individuals with disabilities, mental health challenges, and families facing homelessness—empowered through compassionate, person-centered services that build confidence, foster independence, and help each individual live with dignity and purpose.



### A New Chapter of Happiness and Health

Joey's journey is one of transformation. Once easily upset by small changes - being told "no," waiting for an outing, or if family visits were cancelled - his days were filled with frustration. Even meals were a source of struggle; on a restricted diet for diabetes, many of his favorite activities centered around food.

With the support of his guardian and a comprehensive plan, Joey began learning new ways to manage disappointment and to make healthy choices. Consistency between his group home and his mother's home made all the difference. Together, they built a schedule that gave Joey control over his daily routine. This structure allows him to make decisions and feel empowered.

Mealtimes have become transformational! Joey's tastes have expanded dramatically and with that, so has his level of happiness. After a recent visit home, his mother was so delighted by his progress that she asked staff for recipes to try at home. Joey has lost 30 pounds, improving his diabetes and overall health.

Today, Joey is thriving. He attends Alternatives' Abilities in Motion (AIM) 2 Day Program, five days a week, and looks forward to it. He is much more content in his surroundings. Once dreading that she would get a phone call because of a crisis, Joey's mom is now pleased by his calm demeanor and his joyful attitude. Joey's success demonstrates the power of teamwork, structure, and the belief in personal growth.

## Pillar 2: People and Talent

We celebrate the dedicated professionals who bring Alternatives' mission to life each day. We invest in our team—providing training, support, and opportunities for growth—so they can continue delivering exceptional care and empowering the individuals and families we serve. Our people are the heart of our organization, and their talent, compassion, and commitment drive everything we do.



Each year, the **New Jersey Association of Community Providers (NJACP)** hosts its annual Heroes Awards Event, to recognize everyday heroes in the community. Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are honored for all of the important work they do to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This year, Edgar Okumo, an employee of Alternatives' Supervised Apartment Living (SAL) 1 program, was recognized for his unwavering compassion, integrity, and dedication. Edgar creates a positive and empowering environment that uplifts everyone he encounters, and we are deeply proud of his achievement.



## Pillar 3: Public Awareness and Voice



Alternatives is focused on our presence in the community and amplifying the voices of those we serve. By increasing public awareness, building strong community partnerships, and advocating at the local and state levels, we ensure that the needs and rights of individuals with disabilities, mental health challenges, and those facing homelessness are recognized, respected, and supported.

*Your*  
**VOICE**  
**MATTERS**



### Standing Up for People with Disabilities

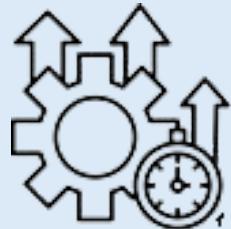
Alternatives' Vice President of Admissions and Development, Carolyn Suero, along with other members of the Alternatives Leadership Team, and staff and clients from the agency's programs, attended the recent New Jersey Budget Hearings, in an effort to show support for increased funding for people with disabilities. Carolyn also serves on the Board of the New Jersey Association of Community Providers (NJACP). The trade organization, which serves over eighty-five community provider agencies, offered testimony at the hearings, on behalf of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities across the state.

Alternatives' staff, clients, and family members joined hundreds of advocates at the New Jersey Statehouse, raising their voices against proposed Medicaid funding cuts. Medicaid is a lifeline for nearly two million New Jersey residents, including children, seniors, and people with disabilities—ensuring access to essential care and support.

We urge everyone to stand with us in advocating for people with disabilities. Reach out to your legislators and share how critical this funding is—and how it sustains the life-changing work being done by organizations like Alternatives.

## Pillar 4: Organizational Efficiencies

We are centered on working smarter to maximize the impact of every dollar, volunteer hour, and resource entrusted to us. Through innovation, collaboration, and continuous quality improvement, Alternatives strengthens its operations to ensure that donations and funding are used effectively—allowing us to expand our reach, sustain our programs, and deliver the highest level of care to those we serve.



Consider lending your support by donating gifts or gift cards for individuals at the holidays.

## Community Partners in Action!

Many thanks to our incredible volunteers from Legrand, Colgate, Matthijsen, NY Life and Morgan Stanley for rolling up their sleeves and helping support events and landscaping projects! Their generosity, through hands-on service and ongoing support, truly makes a difference in the lives of the people we serve. We are incredibly grateful for your partnership and commitment to building stronger, more inclusive communities.

# Pillar 5: Funding and Growth



We are focused on building a strong foundation for the future, through diverse and sustainable funding. From signature events - like the Dignity Gala, Dignity Dash, and Dignity Golf Outing - to grants, corporate partnerships, individual giving, and planned gifts, our fundraising efforts ensure the continued growth of Alternatives' programs and services. Every contribution, large or small, fuels our ability to empower lives, expand opportunities, and create lasting impact across the communities we serve.



September 2026



March 14, 2026



May 11, 2026

## The McConway Family: Open Hearts, Lasting Impact

For the McConway family, Alternatives is more than an organization, it's family. Their son, Kevin, has lived in one of Alternatives' twenty-one group homes for eight years, and his parents say he is truly thriving.

"Kevin is the happiest he's ever been."

Kevin's days are filled with activity — yoga, swimming, horseback riding and community outings. "The staff bring him everywhere," his parents say proudly. "They take him to appointments, to activities, and they make sure we stay connected. They really work together with us."

Determined to make a difference beyond their own family, the McConways volunteer on the Dignity Golf Committee, helping to secure some of the event's top sponsors for one of Alternatives' most successful fundraisers. With their enthusiasm and network of community partners, they have helped the outing grow into a highlight of the year, generating vital funds that directly support housing, day programs, and essential services for people like Kevin.

Their commitment doesn't stop there. The McConways host a community yoga fundraiser that receives matching contributions from corporations. It has become a local favorite and grows each year. The McConways' journey with Alternatives reminds us that when families and communities come together, extraordinary things happen.

To learn how your family can become more involved, contact Anita Feiner, Director of Development, at (908) 809-8654.

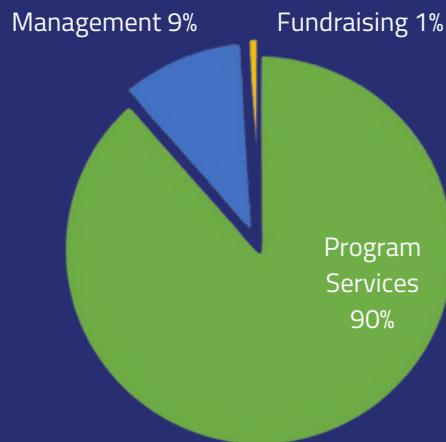


# Our Impact Reflected

Alternatives earned the Candid Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level of recognition bestowed by Candid (formerly GuideStar). This places us among the nation's most accountable nonprofits and reflects our commitment to openness and data-driven impact.

For donors and partners, the Platinum Seal provides confidence that Alternatives uses resources responsibly and communicates its results clearly. It highlights the effectiveness of our programs, the strategies guiding our work, and our dedication to transparency. This achievement reaffirms our commitment to delivering meaningful, measurable impact in our communities.

## FY25 EXPENSE ALLOCATION



### OPERATING REVENUES

	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Grants & Contracts	\$874,987
Client Services & Rental Fees	\$22,272,047
Contributions & Special Events	\$397,534

## Your Generosity Makes a Difference

Your support plays a vital role in ensuring our clients receive the care and stability they deserve. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps strengthen our programs, expand essential services, and create opportunities for people to thrive in their communities.

### How to Give

Your tax-deductible contribution is deeply appreciated. There are many meaningful ways to support Alternatives:

- Contributions – Mail, Credit Card, Venmo
- Recurring Gifts – Monthly, Quarterly, or Annually
- Payroll Deduction – Even \$5 per week can create meaningful impact
- Honor & Memorial Gifts – A thoughtful way to remember or celebrate a loved one
- Special Events – Support our annual fundraising events
- Donor-Advised Funds – Recommend a gift directly from your DAF
- Matching Gifts – Many employers will match your contribution
- Planned Giving – Include Alternatives in your will, trust, or estate plans
- Gifts of Stock or Securities – A tax-advantaged way to maximize your impact
- Corporate Sponsorships – Partner with us through event or program support

# Alternatives is grateful for the following who made generous contributions during fiscal year 2025

Isaac Abady  
Irum Abidi  
Affinity Federal Credit Union  
Anita Agarwal  
Rahul & Jyoti Agarwal  
Joe Allard  
Allied World Insurance  
Susan Anczarki  
Matt Anczarki  
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Brian & Cheri Auger  
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Sandy Bachar  
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Daisy Desimone  
Devin Desmond  
Jorge & Ingrid Diaz  
Chris DiCo  
Alyssa Dillonaire  
Nicole DiPetrillo  
Michael Dixon  
Trang Doan  
Jeffrey Domitrowski  
Priya Doshi  
Margaret Draghi  
Lisa Dyer  
Chris Edwards  
Anthony Elia  
Fran Engle  
Mary Englert  
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Sharon Eosso  
Essex County Building & Construction  
David Falk  
Sylvia Falk  
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Lucinda Ferreri  
Maria Fidelibus  
Claudia Figueiroa  
Veronica Finlay  
Jack Fowler  
Vanessa Fowler  
Tamar Frame  
James & Nancy Frankowski  
Friends of Anthony Verrelli for Assembly  
Full House Fitness LLC  
Fulton Bank  
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Gertrude L. Hirsch Foundation  
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Suzan Hemstock  
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Diana & Thomas Hickey  
Meghan Hickey  
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Jennifer Malavolta  
Morris & Linda Malmstrom  
Allison Malouf  
Paige & Tom Mangan  
Manyville-Hillsborough Elks Lodge 2119  
Derek Manwaring  
Rudolph & Melonie Marano  
Antoinette Marrero  
Tatiana Martinez  
Matthijsen Business Systems  
Elizabeth Matusik  
Jennifer & Kathleen McCleary  
Lori & Tim McConway  
Michael & Janet McCormick  
Erica McCrystal  
Michael & Rachel McGeehan  
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Christine Pallas  
Mahesh & Ruchika Panjwani  
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Nilpa Patel  
Hiral Patel  
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Colleen Powers  
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QuickChek Corp.  
Dylan Quigley  
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Matthew Williams  
Jane Williams  
Edward & Carol Zabel  
Matt Zadroga  
Hal & Natalie Zenner

# Awards & Honors

## Spotlight on Success: Demetrius' Journey



Alternatives was pleased to honor Demetrius for the **2025 NJACP**

**Community STARS Award.** For more than 20 years, Demetrius has been an important member of the Alternatives family. Over the years, he has grown tremendously, by setting goals, working hard, and thriving at his day program, where he enjoys exercising, singing, and arts and crafts.

Demetrius is known for his kindness and generosity, always ready to share with friends and others, no matter how little he has. He greets everyone with a smile and treats others with the utmost respect. He loves being out and about in the community, attending local events, shopping with friends, and welcoming visitors to tour his apartment and day program.

Demetrius has even participated in visits from legislators, proudly sharing his story and advocating for others. Whether he's making music, showing off his dance moves, or simply brightening someone's day, Demetrius embodies enthusiasm and lives each day with joy, compassion, and pride.



## Celebrating A Remarkable Career

In June, members of the Alternatives Board of Trustees, staff, and friends came together to celebrate Nancy Good, to wish her the very best in her retirement. After 37 years of dedicated service - including 35 years as the agency's President - Nancy has chosen to embrace a well-deserved, quieter chapter of life. We are deeply grateful for her unwavering leadership and compassion, which guided Alternatives through decades of growth and change. While we will miss her steady presence, we also celebrate the joy and time she will now share with her friends and family.



# Contact Us

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## **Franklin House Coordinator, Keisha Graham, Shares a Story of Resilience**

### ***Finding Safety and a New Beginning at Franklin House***

Maria and her 3 children arrived at Franklin House, Alternatives' transitional shelter for women and children, after enduring years of domestic abuse, substance use, and declining health. Despite holding a college degree and once living a stable, middle-class life, the trauma she experienced led to a cycle of instability and homelessness that lasted nearly a decade.



When Maria first came to Franklin House, she was hesitant to trust that things could truly get better. The idea of safety, something most people take for granted, felt unfamiliar to her. But with compassionate support from Franklin House staff, Maria began to rebuild her confidence. Through individualized case management, counseling, and life-skills training, Maria found the structure and encouragement she needed to heal and focus on her goals.

Over time, she began to see what was possible. She learned to manage her health, established a consistent daily routine, and worked toward securing employment. With her Case Manager's help, Maria transitioned out of Franklin House and continues to live independently today.

Maria's journey is one of courage and perseverance—and a testament to what can happen when women are given the safety, stability, and support they need to rebuild their lives.

Keisha received this year's Recognition Award from [NJPRA](#), the New Jersey Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association. She was recognized for her extraordinary leadership on behalf of our Franklin House and Permanent Housing clients!



## **SAVE THE DATE**

For information about our events, as well as other methods of giving, including contributions, matching gifts, stock transfers, DAF and more, contact Anita Feiner, Director of Development, at (908) 809-8654.