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A newsletter for and about
AltaPointe Health Systems employees

AltaPointe staff members show 'grace under fire'

It is human nature to take normal, busy workdays for granted. It isn't as easy to take a crisis in stride and maintain focus when workdays become anything but normal. A case in point is Aug. 19 when a fire set by arsonists damaged the south wing of the AltaPointe Gordon Smith Adult Outpatient building.

You may have seen the news accounts and the images of the burned offices, computers, and the furniture that was further damaged by smoke and the water used by firefighters to put out the blaze. What most people have not witnessed are the amazing, positive attitudes of the displaced staff members.

Their reactions to this crisis illustrate AltaPointe's core values of service, quality, integrity, innovation, and collaboration. Allow me to explain.

Therapists and case managers understood individual and community needs and met those needs despite the destruction of their offices. On the day of the fire, they responded by going out into the community and providing services to consumers in their homes, with compassion, dignity and respect.

Determined not to allow the aftermath of the fire to compromise quality, the care coordinators continued to review records, and licensed therapists completed 90-day reviews and closures.

AOP staff members worked with the public relations department to make certain the public knew that our consumers could still reach us by phone. It was important that we kept our word to be available when our consumers needed us. Now that is integrity.

Without missing a beat, these same staff members solved problem after problem by relocating staff to other AltaPointe locations, providing them with computers and phone access.

With traces of the fire still being wiped clean and repairs getting underway, our professionals have doubled up in spaces not intended as offices. One therapist has even found temporary office space in a storage closet.

According to Beth Blair, our AOP coordinator at Gordon Smith, the Bridge team therapists are still going out to see consumers in their homes to accommodate for the lack of space. She reports that AOP was "back up and running the day after the fire seeing a full schedule of consumers in clinic and only the morning therapy appointments had to be rescheduled to give staff time to clean out their offices."

Finally, Beth's observations about her staff tell the story of their resilience. "As with any crisis, facing difficult situations often brings people together and brings out the best in those around you. I have seen the best in this staff over and over again in the past few weeks, and I truly appreciate the maturity and flexibility of the staff here at AOP."

We all can be proud of this group's professionalism and reaction to this crisis. It is my hope that if, and when, one of our normal days turns into a crisis that we, too, will display grace under fire.

Sheridan's quick actions save a life



Clarence Sheridan recently put his AltaPointe CPR training into action and saved the life of a stranger. Sheridan, who is a behavioral aide in BayPointe's Adult Evaluation Unit,

was riding home on Bay Bridge Road one day this summer when he spotted a car on the side of the road and woman standing outside the car screaming hysterically. He stopped to see if he could assist. The woman told him that her uncle, who was inside the car, had apparently suffered a heart attack and was not breathing. Clarence instructed her to call 911 and immediately began CPR. By the time the paramedics and police arrived minutes later, the man was breathing. Sheridan became a real hero when he saved this man's life!

HR team 'touches' employees at all levels

Only one department can claim a face-to-face encounter with each AltaPointe employee. That department is Human Resources (HR). HR may be the portal for every employee into the work world of AltaPointe, but the initial contact at the time of hiring is just the beginning of a very important relationship.

"We touch every person at every level," said Becki Haines, director of HR. "Our HR staff works hard to make sure every first experience is positive."

Haines, who joined AltaPointe in 2007, emphasized how seriously she and her staff take their responsibilities. "HR manages AltaPointe's greatest resource, its people; and it carries the responsibility for its greatest expense, salaries and benefits."

Most staff members are aware that it is HR's job to hire, fire, train, and make sure everyone is paid every two weeks. The duties go far beyond these. HR provides a support system for employees and has an open-door policy.

"We want to help them through whatever health crisis, FMLA, or worker's comp issues they may have," Haines said. "We hope employees see us as a resource for their issues such as pay and benefits; really, for any struggles."

Annual goals and initiatives

The HR Department has focused on four areas this past year that it will move toward over the next year as well. These include people development, providing the best service to employees, improving quality, and fiscal responsibility.



The AHS Human Resources Department staff members include, clockwise starting from left front, Lisa Nelson, Cristina Rodgers, Toby Cummings, Sonja Butts, LaTia Lee, Verenda Smith, Cindy Martin, and Becki Haines.

"All this sets the stage for the first day on the job," Haines said.

This past year, HR made two highly visible changes that improved both service and quality. Pay stubs are now available online with plans to have more employee information available electronically. HR also mailed employees' total compensation statements, which helped staff fully understand their compensation.

An emphasis on fiscal responsibility means that HR helps to make the company as financially secure as possible. Though the economic recession has not affected AltaPointe as much as it has other companies, Haines said it is HR's responsibility to think ahead so drastic measures are not necessary.

Another HR goal is to help leaders learn how to better coach staff, to give them the tools they need to do their jobs correctly. HR kicked off its first supervisor training in August and will continue sessions throughout next fiscal year. "This training

will help make sure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect," Haines concluded.

HR team supports 650+ employees

Seven people work in the HR Department under Haines' leadership. They include HR specialists Cristina Rodgers, Cindy Martin, Lisa Nelson, and Toby Cummings; payroll specialist, Sonja Butts; HR assistant, Latia Lee; and employment assistant, Verenda Smith.

Rodgers oversees Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) administration, unemployment claims,

workers compensation, and random drug screens. Martin administers compensation and benefits plans, coordinates the benefits fair and open enrollment, and negotiates contracts. Nelson's concentration is employment, which includes recruiting and hiring.

Cummings recruits physicians and nurses, and oversees physician and CRNP credentialing. He also organizes new hire orientation, the Halogen process, and is HR's main liaison with Information Services.

Butts makes sure payroll is accurate and on time, manages mileage reimbursement, HR metrics, and the HR scorecard.

Lee manages the front desk, accepts applications from prospective employees, answers phones, is the records custodian, and supports the entire HR team.

Smith manages fingerprints, background checks and drug screens, sets up orientation logistics, creates files for new employees and makes sure HR is compliant with regulations.

AltaPointe: Alive with activity

AltaPointe is such a busy place it isn't easy to keep up with all the action, but we managed to snap a few photos. Photo descriptions begin at top left moving clockwise:

Patricia Sullivan presents Brandi Williams with a gift from the ARS management team. Each ARS staff member received an AltaPointe/ARS T-shirt in appreciation for successful site visits this summer.

AltaPointe administration surprised the entire staff with a summertime gift this July. Tuerk Schlesinger, CEO, second from right; and Julie Bellcase, COO, far left; pose with Country Wood Court Transitional Age program staff, Kimberly Green, behavioral aide; and Steven Booker, therapist.

Mark Miele and James Persons, Bridge Team case managers, ham it up as they stand in line for lunch the Monday after the AOP fire August 22.

Becki Haines, director of human resources, offers some tips on supervising less experienced staff during the first AltaPointe Supervisor Training class this August.

Cheryl Holmes, coordinator for AOP substance abuse and geriatric services, makes a point during the first AltaPointe Supervisor Training class.

Jessica Reeder, a teacher on BayPointe's ABS Unit, prepares to donate blood this past June at AltaPointe. Reeder enjoys a laugh with Tuerk Schlesinger, CEO, center, as Julie Bellcase, left, joins in the fun.



People & Positions at the Pointe

Human Resources reports the following new employees joined AltaPointe between May 11 and August 11:

Administration — Human Resources Assistant: **LaTia Lee**

Adult Outpatient Services — AOP-Gordon Smith —



Carrie Moore

Behavioral Aide: **Christy Wallace**;
Case Managers: **Glenn Reynolds** and **Rhonda Faulk**; Executive Assistant: **Carrie Moore**; Physician: **Luke Engeriser, MD**; Therapist Day Treatment: **Melissa Agerton**; Therapist: **Ann Bethea**; AOP-West Mobile — Case Manager: **Kimberly Meadows**; Office Professionals: **Blondie Williams** and **JanDee Kidd**

Engeriser joins AOP-GS team



Dr. Engeriser

Luke Engeriser, MD, joined the staff at Adult Outpatient-Gordon Smith on Aug. 27. He grew up in Chicago where he also attended medical school at Northwestern University. After graduating medical school, he joined the US Army, completed his residency in Honolulu, and worked as a psychiatrist at Fort Benning, Ga. Engeriser spent the last two years working as a psychiatrist at a community mental health center in

Rockport, Maine. In addition, before entering medical school, he earned a master in divinity from the University of Chicago Divinity School and spent time in Poland teaching English to non-native speakers. Engeriser and his wife, Barbara, have two daughters, Aubrey, 8, and Elsa, 7, and a son, Wilson, 4.

Adult Residential Services — Behavioral Aides:

Tomeka Lovett, Seretha Bryant, Crystal Hawthorne, Darryl Land, Melissa Bosley, Chantel Gray, Lawanda Hudson, Patricia James, Tammy White, Chante Jones, Jermaine Marshall, Tiffany Hill, Tammy Stuckey, and Sheddric Brackett; Behavioral Specialist/Therapeutic: **Brandi Williams**; Registered Nurses: **Birtha Roberts, Joyce Seibert**; LPN: **Carolyn Carson**

BayPointe — Therapists: **Juanita Johnson, Kara Biggs, Barbara Adams, Candi White, and Deirdre Clark**;

Coordinator of Social Services: **Tiffany Rush**; RN: **Charisse Johnson, Darla Sizemore** and **Kenyada Marshall**; Recreational Aides: **Shanta Parker**; Recreational Specialists: **Lindsay Sport**; Behavioral Aides: **Demitris Davis, Kenneth Wright Jr., Oran Alexander III, Donald Pritchett Jr., Elaine Jackson, John Davis II, and Kasheda Dortch**; Admission and Referral Specialists: **Katherine Davis**; Behavioral Specialists: **Ashley Smith** and **Erica Webb**; Behavioral Specialists/Day Treatment: **Katherine Beeson**; Unit Clerk: **William Bush**; Admissions Professional: **Danielle King**; Charge Nurse: **Carmin Mark**; LPN: **Shontal Taite**

Children's Outpatient Services — Case Managers: **Tifani Tucker** and **Jennifer Bennett**; In-Home Intervention Therapist: **Kenita Bonner**; Behavioral Aides: **Marion Hawthorne** and **Natasha Madaris**.

Community Counseling Center of South Mobile County — Therapists: **Diane Cook** and **Melody Jefferson**

Moves

Alefyah Husain, therapist, is now working in Day Treatment and Adult Outpatient Services in the West Mobile office.

Promotions



Stephanie Landrum

Stephanie Landrum, therapist, has been promoted to Team Leader and is responsible for coordinating special projects and contracts as well as overseeing all the current and new groups at Children's Outpatient.

Carolyn Plash has been promoted to Adult Community Services Resource Specialist.

Patricia Sullivan has been promoted to Adult Residential Services Assistant Director.

Josh Willis has been promoted to program manager of Adult Community Services.

Bravo! Bravo!



Michael Goldman, MA, LMFT, coordinator of AltaPointe Community Counseling Center of Washington County, has been elected to serve a two-year term as the regional chair for the Child Advocacy Center of Clarke, Washington and Choctaw counties.

The Alabama Department of Mental Health Substance Abuse Division selected **Marcia Joiner** and **Ellen Lambert** from a pool of applicants to participate in the "Trainer of Trainers" program of the American Society of Addictive Medicine (ASAM). Joiner, a Bridge team therapist, and Lambert, coordinator of the Assessment Department, will train providers in the DMH Region IV to administer the PPC 2-R.

Davey Chastang, SAC, counselor in AltaPointe's substance abuse and federal program, has been elected to serve as the master's in social work class representative to the University of Alabama-School of Social Work. As class rep, he will meet with the University of Alabama MSW board once monthly to address any concerns of the Mobile student body.

Josh Willis, Adult Community Services program manager, completed his master's degree in public health and graduated from the University of South Alabama this August.

The Sunrise Rotary Club of Mobile recently chose **Kathy McMaken, LCSW, PIP**, for membership in Rotary International. She also was selected to serve as a trustee for the Alabama Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Tiffany Shea recently became a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). Shea is a therapist at Children's Outpatient Services.

Rebecca Stephens and **Shannon McGee** have begun preparation to become licensed professional counselors (LPC). Stephens and McGee, both therapists at Adult Outpatient Services at Zeigler, are currently Associate Licensed Counselors (ALC's).



Robert Carlock, ARS assistant director, is preparing for the January 2010 First Light Marathon that will benefit L'arche Mobile. He averages running 53 miles a week in training. After the First Light Marathon, he plans to run the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, DC.

Patricia Sullivan, ARS assistant director, and **Beth Blair, LPC**, AOP coordinator, competed in the US Tennis Association's Alabama State Championship in June where their team, "Making Racquet" finished third. **Kim Whitfield**, BayPointe ABS care coordinator, also played in the USTA tourney as part of the Lake Forest women's tennis team, placing fourth in her flight.

The Drug Education Council recognized Mobile County District Judge **Michael McMaken** with the Spirit of Recovery Award at its annual awards breakfast on Sept. 1. McMaken, immediate past president of the AltaPointe Board of Directors, was honored for his work on behalf of the Mobile Recovery Community.



Khan sets example of compassion



When family members learn that loved ones require inpatient evaluation or possibly long-term treatment for mental illness it can be almost too much to bear. One individual facing such a scenario recently met with Farah Khan, MD, in the AltaPointe Assessment Department and commented on the doctor. "If Dr. Khan is any indication of the treatment that AltaPointe provides, I feel much better about having gotten my sister the attention she needed." Thank you, Dr. Khan, for setting an example of compassion and understanding for each of us as we work with consumers and families.

Cummings goes 'extra mile'



AltaPointe's newest physician, Luke Engeriser, his wife, Barbara, and his children moved to the Mobile area this summer. Mrs. Engeriser noticed that the garage door would not close. Since Dr. Engeriser was out of town, this concerned her because it left the house easily accessible. Toby Cummings, human resource specialist, heard about the situation and voluntarily went to her house and repaired the garage door one afternoon after work. "This exemplifies great customer service and shows how important this new doctor and his family are to us," said Becki Haines, director of human resources. "I am very proud that Toby chose to go the extra mile to make sure our doctor's family would be safe."

Program Progress

Adult Outpatient Services Federal program increases 400 percent in two years

A federal program designed to provide substance abuse and mental health services increased its service provision by nearly 400 percent in two years, according to AltaPointe billing records. Since May 2007, **Davey Chastang** has been responsible for fulfilling AltaPointe's contractual obligations to the US District Court, Southern District of Alabama, US Federal Probation Office.

"Monitoring the billing process helps us to make sure we are collecting funds that allow us to continue providing services," said **Cheryl Holmes**, coordinator for substance abuse and geriatric services at adult outpatient-West Mobile Office.

Therapist **Brandie Johnson** provides mental health therapeutic services, Chastang provides the substance abuse treatment services and **Dr. Marianne Saitz** provides psychiatric evaluations and medication monitoring as needed.

Collins-Bush joins SO Management team

AltaPointe recently added therapist **Mary Lee Collins-Bush** to its Sexual Offenders (SO) Management Program team. Collins-Bush, who also works with the AHS ACT team, joins therapists **Faye Schreiber** and **Norris Laurence**, both of whom have worked in the program for many years.

These three therapists continue to maintain their other job duties and caseloads. More than 60 consumers currently participate in the SO program.

The US Federal Probation Office, Alabama State Probation Office, and the

Mobile County Community Corrections office refer offenders to the program.

Children's Outpatient Services Day Camp promotes self-awareness, empathy

This summer, AltaPointe Children's Outpatient Services case managers managed an eight-week day camp for children in the in-home and the outpatient programs. Combining learning opportunities with activities that promote self-awareness and empathy, the goal of the day camp was to prevent reversal of therapeutic progress made during the school year.

Therapists and case managers working with the children's day camp included **Lillian Walker, Latrina Thomas, Francesca McQuirter, Angela McMillan, LaQuanda Wingate, Iwana McCall, Shameka Longmire, Megan Glenn, Joel Dobson, Richard Dockery, Julie McMullen, Jonna Sanders, and Kenita Bonner.**



Case Manager Latrina Thomas looks on as young camper, Shaniya, enjoys the activities at the Mobile Botanical Gardens in August.

Casey Foundation audit reports STOP program 'impressive'

The Casey Foundation recently reported that AltaPointe's STOP program for sexual offenders was "impressive and appears to hold considerable promise for providing insights to both youth and parents about sexual acting out and offending behavior."

The report followed an audit of programs at the Strickland Youth Center (SYC). STOP is a collaborative program run by AltaPointe therapists **Sarah Whitfield**, Children's Outpatient Services; **Elena Stewart**, Access to Care; and Sandra Kendall, SYC.

Boys attending the program range from 12 to 18 years, with the median age being 14. Half of the boys are court-ordered. A new cycle of 10 sessions began on Aug. 18. Both the parents and the offender must attend.

Adult Residential Services ARS sustains improvements

ARS Director **David Beech** reports that it has been one year since ARS undertook a major reorganization. "Since the reorganization and before and during this summer's site visits, our staff members have rallied, taken ownership and made personal investments in making improvements sustainable across the entire adult residential program," Beech said. "Our direct care staff members are the eyes and ears of this 24-hour-a-day operation. We rely on them to tell us about the effectiveness of changes we have made.

"I am pleased to say that we have acted on several suggestions from staff and have made changes based on their input," Beech continued. "ARS staff members have made excellent suggestions for improvement."

Psychiatric clinical rotation at BayPointe impacts USA nursing students

Ashley Raymond only thought she knew what to expect as she walked through the doors of BayPointe Hospital & Children's Residential Services this past spring.

"As a nursing student I expected to work with children and adolescents whose parents had abused them," she said. "What I didn't expect was to work with young children and adolescents diagnosed with schizophrenia or bipolar disorders."

Along with six other University of South Alabama nursing students, the Gulfport, Miss., native completed a four-week psychiatric clinical rotation at BayPointe, working with children and adolescents admitted to the hospital's residential program. BayPointe is the only locked psychiatric hospital in lower Alabama that provides this learning opportunity.

"Many of the children come from abusive situations and are working through the mental health issues that go along with that abuse," Margaret Moore-Nadler, RN, MSN, the community mental health clinical instructor for USA's College of Nursing, said. "The students develop health communication skills with a vulnerable group of patients, learning about the significance of mental illness."

The nursing students spend a lot of time with the children, according to Carla Ladnier, assistant director at BayPointe. "These children are here for an extended period so the students work with the same child their entire rotation," she said. "They go with them to class, group, the gym and to basic living skills groups."

'Shocked' by their own reactions

Ladnier noted that the nursing students are intimidated when they arrive. "They are pretty quiet and stay close together," Ladnier said. "Once they've been here a while, they see the patients as real people and not people to be scared of or avoid."

Moore-Nadler accompanied the nursing students the entire four weeks. She said her students are "shocked" by their reactions to what they experience at BayPointe.

"To say I was shocked is a good description," Jeremy Vance of Gulf Breeze, Fla., said. "It is powerful to see these young kids



USA nursing students, from left, Chidi Ohanele, Tina Crane, Melanie Cain, Ashley Raymond, Jeremy Vance, and Peter Guergues spend the last day of their psychiatric rotation this spring with the adolescent consumers in BayPointe's residential program playing softball.

dealing with real-life issues; things they shouldn't even know about."

Vance taught anger management to adolescent boys. "On a micro level, things are stacked against these kids," he said. "They want to be happy and well, just like everyone else."

Students learn to become patient-centered

Chidi Ohanele, a Californian, worked one-on-one with a 13-year-old boy who had not previously been allowed to work with a nursing student because of his severe condition.

"He didn't smile. At first, I wasn't sure how to work with him, how to make him respond," Ohanele said. "I had to learn how to begin, how to estimate a baseline."

Ohanele learned that the boy wanted to be an engineer. "I worked with him and his therapist on a few things to help him respond. I recommended that he read engineering books. At the end of four weeks, the boy was smiling."

The BayPointe Experience

Moore-Nadler described the BayPointe-USA collaboration as unique. "When [Mobile area] hospitals closed psychiatric services years ago, there were no children's inpatient facilities in the region where students could receive this kind of education," she explained.

USA's Fast-Track Bachelor's Nursing Degree

These students were in their first and only year of nursing school and enrolled in USA's accelerated bachelor's degree in nursing program. Each student holds a bachelor's degree in an area other than nursing and can complete their BSN degree requirements within 12 months.

"Students in the accelerated program are high achievers and serious about acquiring the knowledge and skills to be a professional nurse," Dr. Debra Davis, dean of the USA College of Nursing, said. "The college is fortunate to have a clinical partner such as AltaPointe."

Consumer Council observes Mental Health Awareness Week

AltaPointe's Consumer Council will host a raffle Oct. 5-9 in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Week. Staff members and consumers that donate \$1 will have their names entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of two boom boxes or a personal CD player.

Council members will visit each AltaPointe program to make the tickets available to all staff. The proceeds will benefit the purchase of art supplies and recreational items for AltaPointe programs.



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Benefits Fair offers info and screenings

The seasonal change from summer to fall means it is time for the AltaPointe Annual Benefits Fair. Organized by the Human Resources Department, our benefit providers will host the fair and give AHS staff members sufficient access to important benefit and health information.

This year's fairs will offer health screenings including assessments on blood pressure, blood sugar and bone density. Not all fair locations will offer the same screenings, so please watch for details.

Each staff member who attends the Fair may enter for a chance to win prizes including a grand prize of a trip for two.

Benefit providers planning to attend include Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Alabama, Medco, Humana, MetLife, Chappelle Consulting Group (FSA), and Principal Financial Group. Representatives from Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA), Weight Watchers, Blue Cliff College for massage therapy, and Employers' Claim Management for employee safety will be attending for the first time this year.

2009 Benefits Fair Schedule

BayPointe Gymnasium

October 13 and 14, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Zeigler Outpatient Day Treatment Room

October 20 and 21, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Children/Adolescent Outpatient Auditorium

October 22, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

MARC Building (next to Gordon Smith Center)

October 23, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Fair kicks off open enrollment

The Benefits Fair kicks off "open enrollment" when staff members evaluate their benefit line-up and make changes. All eligible employees may choose from the health, dental, vision, voluntary life insurance, cafeteria plan/FSA, and the optional 403(b) retirement plans. Enrollment and change forms will be available at the fairs as well as in the HR office. The deadline to submit enrollment forms is Wednesday, Nov. 25. All changes take effect Jan. 1, 2010.

AltaPointe prepares for flu season

When the Novel H1N1 virus was first detected in April, AltaPointe began preparations for the 2009-2010 influenza season.



"We have revised our pandemic influenza preparedness plan and assessed all programs to make sure there are sufficient current pandemic influenza supplies on hand," Sonya Sims, employee health nurse and assistant coordinator of performance improvement said in August.

Flu vaccine availability

The employee health office will offer seasonal influenza vaccine beginning in October. Sims also expects the H1N1 vaccine also to be available sometime in October. Initially, it will be given to priority groups.

Vaccinations and basic infection control measures with emphasis on effective hand-hygiene are the cornerstone for prevention. Employees may call the Employee Health Office at 665-2561 for any questions.

Think about this...

"You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him."
— James D. Miles

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