

CORRECTIONS TO COMMUNITY

QUARTERLY NEWS FROM ALTERNATIVES, INC.

WINTER 2021



Mission Statement:

We promote public safety and challenge offenders to become responsible, productive citizens.

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Compass Grand Opening

By Amanda Green, Director of Development

On September 17, 2021, Alternatives celebrated the grand opening of Compass, our Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Treatment program. Approximately 120 attendees gathered under a tent in the ABC (Alternatives, Beta, Compass) building's parking lot to hear from Lisa Skriner, Board of Directors President, David Armstrong, CEO, Danielle Dunn, Compass' Clinical Director, Todd Buchanan, Board of Directors Past President, and Governor Greg Gianforte. Clinical services are provided by nine State Licensed Addiction Counselors (LAC's), Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors (LCPC's), and Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW's), and include Level 2.1, Level 1, and aftercare outpatient treatment for substance abuse, individual and group mental health counseling, ACT/Prime for Life for DUI clients, Partner Family Member Assault for domestic violence cases, Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Minor in Possession, Marijuana Awareness, Anger Management, among others.

There are 3,500 adults aged 12+ who need, but are not receiving, treatment for illicit drug use - Yellowstone County Substance Use Community Assessment

Why Services are Needed: According to the Yellowstone County Substance Use Community Assessment in 2019, more than 4,000 Yellowstone County residents 12 and older are dependent on or abusing illicit drugs. Compass serves as a low cost/no cost substance use disorder, mental health, and community treatment program specializing in treatment for methamphetamine, and opiate abuse as well as mental health issues.

From 2014-2018, methamphetamine violations increased, and heroin/opioid arrests were up to 570 from 4 in 2005. From 2010 to 2018, the number of positive methamphetamine tests for adults supervised by Probation and Parole in Billings grew by 865%. In 2020, Billings saw a 20% spike in violent crimes from March 1 to July 31 and 44% increase in robberies, mainly attributed to the rise in demand for methamphetamine. There are 3,500 adults and aged 12+ who need, but are not receiving, treatment for illicit drug use.



Board Member Blade Stiller, First Federal Bank & Trust holds the ribbon for the Governor to cut.

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Compass Grand Opening, cont.

By Amanda Green, Director of Development

(Continued from Page 1) With over 42 years of experience in providing services and treatment to offenders, Alternatives acts as a resource for those referred from local courts, Probation and Parole, the United States Probation Office, and the residents of Alpha House and Passages with the capacity to serve over 1,200 individuals each year. As a state Substance Use provider, we predominantly bill Medicaid for patient services.

The local community and government officials from as far away as Helena were in attendance to commemorate the date by cutting a ribbon, taking tours of the newly remodeled 16,000 sq. ft. building, and enjoyed sweet and savory hors d'oeuvres prepared by Passages' Culinary Arts Program (CAP).



As always, the Culinary Arts Program (CAP) students and their goodies were the hit of the event.



The Governor tours the Beta Alternatives program with Joey Anderson, Jail Alternatives Manager



The Governor, Billings Mayor Bill Cole, and City Administrator Chris Kukulski.



Parole Board member Steve Hurd (Chairman) and Jimmy Patelis converse with Yellowstone County Sheriff Mike Linder.



City Administrator Chris Kukulski, Commissioner Denis Pitman, Sheriff Linder, and Mayor Bill Cole



Governor Greg Gianforte tours the new building, with David Armstrong, CEO



Governor Gianforte addresses Grand Opening attendees.



120 people attended the Compass Grand Opening.



Erin McGowan - Executive Director of the Montana Community Corrections Association, DOC Director Brian Gootkin, and Tom Rupsis - City Councilperson

Gina Poor, MS, LAC, LCPC Selected as Passages Director

By Jan Begger, Current Passages Director and Chief Operating Officer

This is a bittersweet article for me to write, but it is with great pride that I announce Gina Poor as the new Passages Director!

Gina started with Passages the day we opened our doors in 2007. She was hired as a Licensed Addiction Counselor and Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and provided services to the women of the Passages Assessment, Sanction, and Revocation Center (ASRC). Gina has been the Program Supervisor for this program since October of 2018. Not only has she helped hundreds of women address their sobriety and mental health needs, but she has also mentored many staff members who have become amazing Case Managers, Addiction Counselors, and Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors.

Gina graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Rocky Mountain College in 1999 and a Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling from MSU-Billings in 2002.

She interned at the Mental Health Center in 2002 and was ultimately employed there until she came to Passages in 2007. She knows the “ins and outs” of the entire program, and the transition to Director should be a smooth one for her, our staff, and residents.

As I head into retirement, I am pleased to say that Passages is in very good hands, and I am excited about the energy, creativity, and passion that Gina will bring to this role!



Gina Poor, LAC/LCPC and new Passages Director. Gina will assume her new role in January



Jan Begger to retire in June of 2022

In 34 years of employment, Jan Begger, COO, has been part of every major development at Alternatives, Inc. Most notably she opened the Passages Program in 2006-2007, the program that she'll leave in the capable hands of Gina Poor. Jan's experience, drive, and ability to make coworkers feel part of a family are unmatched.

“I’m honored to have been given the opportunity to take on the role of Director Passages. The experience I have gained working with the agency for the last 15 years is invaluable and will create a smooth transition for both the staff and residents of Passages. Director Begger has created an atmosphere at Passages that fosters openness, kindness, and consistency. My hope would be to continue these traits moving forward while we grow and evolve as an agency”. - Gina Poor, New Passages Director

Passages' Alcohol & Drug Treatment (ADT) Program Scores in Upper 17% Nationally on the Correctional Program Checklist

By Jen Porter, Program Supervisor - Alcohol & Drug Treatment Program

House Bill 133 from 2017 legislative session requires all Department of Corrections treatment and Pre-release programs to undergo the Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) audit, developed by the University of Cincinnati's Correction Institute. The CPC involves an intense 2-day audit that is divided into two basic areas: content and capacity. The content area includes offender assessment and treatment characteristics domains and focuses on the extent to which the program meets certain principles of effective intervention (RNR). Capacity is a measure of whether the correctional program has the capacity in terms of staffing and curriculum to effectively deliver evidence-based interventions and services to offenders.

There are three domains in capacity: program leadership and development, staff characteristics, and quality assurance. The auditors complete this checklist by interviewing staff and residents. The auditors also observe individual and group sessions. They review open and closed files, treatment plans, case notes, and discharge summaries.

During this process, there are 73 indicators that are scored over these five domains, for a total possibility of 79 points. The University personnel make it clear that no program will ever score a 100%. Each domain, each area, and the overall score are tallied and rated as Very High Adherence to EBP (65-100%), High Adherence to EBP (55%-64%), Moderate Adherence to EBP (46%-54%), and Low Adherence to EBP (45% or less).

Passages' Alcohol & Drug Program (ADT) underwent the Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) audit in May 2021. This was the first audit completed by the Department of Corrections since COVID-19 reached pandemic proportions. ADT had been preparing for months, and the team was nervous - but prepared. The audit process itself went smoothly. ADT received a score of 63.2%, placing ADT in the High Adherence category which is unusually good for a first audit as the criteria are not specified ahead of time. Nationally, 607 programs have undergone the CPC audit process during the period of 2005-2019. Of these programs, 17% finished with a High Adherence rating.

The ADT Program will now use the detailed information obtained from the CPC audit to continue to refine the effectiveness of the program. With continued effort and teamwork, ADT hopes to join the 7% of programs scoring in the Very High Compliance category the next time around.

The ADT Team:

*Jen Porter, LAC Program Supervisor
Rhonda Stennerson, LAC
Vickie Coonfare, LAC
Shelbi Wolff, LAC, PCLC
Katie Vogl, LAC
Crystal Hanson, LAC-C
Mal Tift, Treatment Assistant
Stephanie Kraai, Case Manager
Eli Sisson, Case Manager*



ADT Staff Pictured from "Grand Escape's 'Suspicion at 30,000 ft.' Escape Room" (L-R): Crystal Hanson, Mal Tift, Katie Vogl, Vickie Coonfare, Rhonda Stennerson, Eli Sisson, Jen Porter, Stephanie Kraai, Shelbi Wolff



ALTERNATIVES

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Alpha House

3109 1st Avenue North
Billings, MT 59101
406-259-9695

Passages

1001 South 27th Street
Billings, MT 59101
406-294-9609

Beta Alternatives / Compass

2120 3rd Avenue North
Billings, MT 59101
406-256-3501

Carbon Alternatives

PO Box 1652
Red Lodge, MT 59068
406-446-1675

Stillwater Alternatives

PO Box 1050
Columbus, MT 59019
406-322-4121

info@altinc.net

Find us on the web at www.altinc.net

If you prefer to receive our publication via email, please contact Gwen Albrecht at 406-256-3501 ext. 239 or galbrecht@altinc.net

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Retired - Billings Police Department

Blade Stiller - 2nd Vice President
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