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A newsletter for and about  
AltaPointe Health Systems employees

# New name and brand transition runs smoothly

During a week of celebration, the administration and staff of 50-year-old Mobile Mental Health ushered in a new name, AltaPointe Health Systems, Inc. The unique, upbeat name has taken center stage as the former name has slipped into the annals of the organization's history.

Employees gathered at ten "new name" celebrations this past October and heard Tuerk Schlesinger, AltaPointe CEO, explain why a new name and brand were necessary. While the name may help reduce the stigma attached to the Center's old name, he said, the major reason for the name change has more to do with optimism and progress.

"We are no longer just a mental health center," Schlesinger said. "We have grown into a comprehensive, regional healthcare system and the largest mental health services provider in the state."

Schlesinger also talked about the importance of AltaPointe's emphasis on quality, its technological advances and its strong relationships with the University of South Alabama-College of Medicine and the Infirmiry Health System.

The name change also has provided an opportunity to rebrand services and programs into the AltaPointe family and present a

clearly unified brand to the public. For instance, LeMoyne is now AltaPointe Child & Adolescent Services. In addition, Gateway is now AltaPointe Medication Assisted Treatment Program, and Oasis is now AltaPointe Outpatient Adult Substance Abuse Services.

It takes more time for employees to become accustomed to the changes than it does the public. The more the new name and brand are used, the sooner the public and our consumers will recognize and embrace them.

New logos, corporate colors, signage, literature and a new Web site work together to create a more positive image. Be on the watch for more AltaPointe marketing and public relations materials.



## 1957 Cultural Milestones

- "Father Knows Best," "American Bandstand," "Gunsmoke," and "The Danny Thomas Show" were among the most popular TV shows.
- Drive-in movie theaters reach the peak of popularity.
- The average US family income was \$6,130.
- Factory workers average \$2.08 an hour in wages.
- A gallon of gas = 23 cents; A gallon of milk = 97 cents; A dozen eggs = 80 cents
- An Oldsmobile Golden Rocket 88 four-door sedan sold for \$2,895.
- The average American production worker made \$82.32 a week.
- The Brooklyn Dodgers moved to Los Angeles.
- Elvis's "Teddy Bear" and Pat Boone's "Love Letters in the Sand" were on the top 10 pop music charts.
- The Milwaukee Braves, led by Hank Aaron, defeated the NY Yankees in the World Series, three games to one
- "Leave it to Beaver" premiered on CBS.
- The Wham-O Company produced the first Frisbee.
- Steve Allen was the host of "The Tonight Show."

# New name creates opportunities for growth

*From the CEO's desk*

By now, most of you have formed an opinion about our new name—AltaPointe. We have received lots of positive feedback from staff and other providers, which affirms to us that the name change was a good idea. We hope you agree.

Introducing our new name has given us opportunities to define who we are and what we do, to explain how AltaPointe is more than a mental health center and why others see us as the leading, and largest, provider in Alabama.

Many of you may wonder why growth is important, how being larger can be helpful. There are several reasons. Our size allows us to develop specialized services, which gives us the strength necessary to bridge service gaps. Because our system has expanded, we have the ability to benchmark our quality against other providers across the nation. We also have the capability to affect policy by shaping services based on our population's needs. All these facts work together to provide better delivery of care to consumers and improve their quality of life.

How is AltaPointe different? It is different because it has grown into a comprehensive behavioral healthcare system, that provides much more than outpatient, inpatient and residential services. AltaPointe also provides hospital management and consultation; behavioral and placement services in nursing homes and assisted living facilities; administration and faculty for the University of South Alabama College of Medicine-Department of Psychiatry; faculty and research support for Auburn University-USA School of Pharmacy, as well as collaborations in dozens of government and community programs.

The work of our clinical, medical and administrative teams has far-reaching, positive effects on both our consumers and employees. Changing our name has simply created more opportunities to tell others how satisfying it is to play a role on this great team.



## AltaPointe professionals appear on WKRG-TV

AltaPointe received some great visibility as part of a three-part television story featured Feb. 11 on WKRG-TV. News anchor and reporter Rose Ann Haven interviewed William Billett, MD, about the symptoms of depression and the purposes for and side effects of antidepressants. The cameras rolled at Gordon Smith AOP capturing the pharmacy and our own pharmacist, Claude Powe, on film. WKRG invited AltaPointe professional staff members to participate during the news broadcast that evening to answer questions from callers about depression and various other topics. Thanks to the following staff who volunteered their time: Ray Lorenz, PharmD; John Conrad, LCSW, Coordinator, BayView Professional Associates; Dolores Bray, CRNP; Danette Overstreet, CRNP; and Dr. Billett.



# Access to Care, Assessment unit assure consumers reach appropriate service area

Assuring that adult consumers receive treatment from the appropriate program is vital to achieving successful care. AltaPointe's assessment and evaluation procedure is designed to make sure all consumers receive the most appropriate treatment.

The first step to receiving treatment usually begins with a phone call to our Access-to-Care Unit, housed in 5750-B at Southland Drive. Established in 1998, Access to Care is the single point



**Access to Care Team**

The Access to Care team answers more than 30,000 calls annually. The staff members include, front row from left, Elena Stewart, coordinator; Deanna Morgan; back row from left, Judy Rand, Tina Wilson and Carol Seibert.

of entry into our programs, according to Sheril Alexander, director of performance improvement, who oversees the unit.

"Access" provides telephonic assessments, appointment scheduling, daytime and after-hours crisis coordination, and arrange for hospital consultation when needed. It also coordinates admissions to AltaPointe from local hospitals, the courts, jails, the health department and other social service agencies.

## Assessing Children and Adolescents

AltaPointe Child & Adolescent Services professional staff members assess and evaluate children and adolescents referred through Access to Care to the Old Shell Road Office. Occasionally, a child or adolescent goes immediately to BayPointe for assessment and evaluation, depending upon needs.

After an initial evaluation via telephone, adults receive additional face-to-face evaluation and assessment through AltaPointe's Assessment Unit located on the second floor of the adult outpatient (AOP) services building at Gordon Smith Drive. The Assessment Unit screens all adult consumers that are new to our services, or have had their cases closed, to determine immediate level of care needs.

"We focus on identification and documentation of each consumer's treatment needs," said Ellen Lambert, assessment unit coordinator. "Our process helps to assure that each consumer is referred to the appropriate treatment option within the center or community."

An Assessment Unit master's level clinician completes a bio-psychosocial, initial treatment plan, medical checklist, and consumer family education for the adult consumer. A psychiatrist completes the evaluation process at a scheduled session. An Assessment Specialist then coordinates consumer transfers to the next unit, referrals to community resources, and secures appropriate releases and coordination of care forms. Individuals may be screened

"out" of our service continuum if criteria are not met.

Adults may receive adult outpatient services at either the Gordon Smith location or the West Mobile Office, located on Highway 90. Adult consumers presenting for entry into substance abuse programs continue evaluation and receive treatment provided in the appropriate program. Some adult consumers may also receive care at the BayPointe AEU.

AltaPointe developed the Assessment Unit in Fall 2007 to complete evaluations on adult consumers presenting as new admissions, re-admissions or aftercare admissions for outpatient and crisis pre-hospitalization screening prior to admission to BayPointe's Adult Evaluation Unit (AEU).



**Assessment Unit**

AltaPointe's Assessment Unit team takes time away from a hectic schedule. They are, from left, Jean Maguire, therapist; Ron Finch, therapist; Ellen Lambert, unit coordinator; back row, Dr. William Billett; Dionne Strain, assessment specialist; and Debbie Carmichael, therapist. Cassandra Kennedy, office professional, not present.

# People & Positions at the Pointe

New faces since the last issue of AltaNews include:



**Toby Cummings**

joins AltaPointe as a human resources specialist. He is as new to AltaPointe as he is to Mobile. Before moving to Mobile, Cummings worked as an

HRIS Specialist for the law firm, Bryan Cave LLP in St. Louis. He has more than 10 years of human resources experience.



**Tamonica Jones, RN,**

is the assistant nurse manager for Adult Residential Services at the Zeigler campus. Before AltaPointe, Jones worked with the Infirmiry Health

System as a registered nurse.



**Deborah Simkin, MD,**

represents AltaPointe as residency director of the University of South Alabama Medical Residency Program/ Department of Psychiatry.

Dr. Simkin revised the entire residency program by modeling it after the Harvard program, which she attended. She has also applied for a child and adolescent residency program. She is author of numerous articles and chapters. Dr. Simkin has operated her own private psychiatric practice and worked as a psychiatric consultant in recent years. She served as chair and co-chair for the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry's (AACAP) Adolescent Substance Abuse committee for 10 years and currently is the liaison for the AACAP to the American Academy for Pediatrics Substance Abuse Committee. Her academic experience includes being an assistant professor at Dartmouth Medical School and a clinical faculty member at Louisiana State University and Florida State medical schools. She is board certified in adult, addiction and child and adolescent psychiatry.



**Elena Stewart, MS,**

is the assistant coordinator for the Access-to-Care Department. Stewart has more than 10 years experience in mental health services. Before moving

to Mobile, Stewart worked as supervisor of Adult/Residential Services and Community Mental Health Officer at Madison County Mental Health in Huntsville and as a school-based counselor in Rockford, Illinois. She earned a master's degree in community counseling and currently is working on the licensure for professional counselor (LPC).



**Cindy Optholt, CRNP,**

is a nurse practitioner with AltaPointe Behavioral & Placement Services for Adults/Seniors (formerly known as Senior Adult Services). In this role, she

cares for referred consumers in 14 nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Mobile and Washington counties. Optholt worked with Covenant Hospice at its inpatient care facilities in Pensacola prior to joining AltaPointe. She holds certifications as a family nurse practitioner and in hospice and palliative care.



**Becki Haines, PHR,**

began her work as AltaPointe Director of Human Resources in October 2007. Before joining AltaPointe, she was the employee relations

manager for Lakeview Center, Inc., a Baptist Health Care facility, in Pensacola. Haines has 13 years of experience in human resources. She is certified by the HRCI as a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) since 2000.



**Ingrid Hartman, LPC,**

is the new assistant coordinator for Child & Adolescent Services Case Management. Hartman moved to Mobile from Santa Fe, NM, where she

worked with adults as outpatient program manager, clinical intern supervisor, and quality improvement coordinator for The Life Link, a private non-profit social service agency. She holds a master's degree in counseling. Hartman is a licensed professional counselor (LPC) in both New Mexico and Alabama and is certified by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC).

## AltaNews is all about YOU...

Yes. AltaNews is all about keeping you informed, educated and, occasionally, entertained. AltaNews will be a better publication if we hear directly from you about new people, positions, promotions, or problems solved.

Help us make this newsletter an important part of the AltaPointe work environment by sending your ideas for articles, questions or comments on programs, customer service or any other area of interest. We want to hear about it.

This is your opportunity to make an important contribution. Submit your news to Carol Mann, director of public relations, Administrative Office, via email at [cmann@altapointe.org](mailto:cmann@altapointe.org) or by telephone at 662-7317.

*'Can't wait to hear from YOU!*

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## Position changes during the past six months include

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Several employees have moved into new positions during the past six months. They include: **Julia Bass** – coordinator, Behavioral and Placement Services for Adults/Seniors; formerly a therapist; **Michelle Brazeal** – coordinator, Transitional Living-Child/Adolescent Services; formerly Grants and Contracts; **Dee Dee Cook** – coordinator, BayPointe Adult Evaluation Unit; formerly coordinator, Access to Care; **Mildred Hopkins** – nurse manager, ARS; formerly working as an RN; **Tameka Jackson** – nursing team leader, Adult Outpatient (AOP); formerly AOP Nurse; **Dwight Lacy** – director, Business Services, formerly director, Professional Services; **Ellen Lambert** – coordinator, Assessment Unit; formerly Hospital Liaison; **Ramona McDaniel** – hospital liaison, formerly assistant coordinator, Adult Outpatient (AOP); **Donald McGraw** – team specialist, BayPointe; formerly a training and education specialist; **Wanda Moore** – assistant coordinator, ARS; previously AOP case manager; **Gwen Mose** – assistant coordinator, Adult Residential Services, formerly therapist; **Sonja Sims** – assistant director, Performance Improvement (PI); formerly PI coordinator; **Rose Skanes** – assistant coordinator, MR Case Management; formerly a case manager; **Patricia Sullivan** – coordinator, Clinical Services/Adult Residential Services (ARS); formerly coordinator, BayPointe Adult Evaluation Unit. **Eric Velleux** – Business Manager, formerly a staff accountant.

## Above & Beyond

### Staff keep calm, act quickly as bank robbers flee through AOP

AltaPointe's Gordon Smith Adult Outpatient office is always a busy place. However, one day early in December 2007, the office was a lot busier when three bank robbers ran through the building in an attempt to escape from the Mobile Police Department, who had surrounded the premises with police cars.

Several staff members averted what could have been a chaotic and frightening situation during the incident. AltaNews heard that Judy Glaude, medical records clerk, gave clear, calm, concise, and very stern instructions for the staff leaving no room for questions about what to do. In addition, security guard, Brenda Phelan, also made every effort to help apprehend one of the suspects.

Both deserve a big thank you for their courage and calmness in the face of uncertainty.

### Governor, judge praise AltaPointe staff members

Two AltaPointe staff members have received letters complimenting their outstanding service and professionalism; one from **Gov. Bob Riley**, the other from **The Hon. Sarah Stewart** of the 13th Judicial Court.

**Angie Cook**, LCSW, coordinator of AltaPointe Community Counseling Center of Washington County, received a letter from Gov. Bob Riley in response to a consumer's letter to the governor praising Cook's efforts. The governor wrote: "...I commend your dedicated and selfless service to your community and fellow neighbors in need. Alabamians like you...are the fabric and framework of all that is good about our state..."

Judge Stewart praised **Marcia Joiner**, therapist, in her letter to Megan Griggs, Clinical Director for Adult Services. The judge wrote: "Ms. Joiner exemplifies the best of your profession. She is compassionate, courteous and genuinely interested in making the system work in the way it should..."

# Think about this...

## Obstacles? Deal with them now

*An old farmer had plowed around a large rock in one of his fields for years. He had broken several plowshares and a cultivator on it and had grown rather morbid about the rock. After breaking another plowshare one day, and remembering all the trouble the rock had caused him through the years, he finally decided to do something about it. When he put the crowbar under the rock, he was surprised to discover that it was only about six inches thick and that he could break it up easily with a sledgehammer. As he was carting the pieces away he had to smile, remembering all the trouble that the rock had caused him over the years and how easy it would have been to get rid of it sooner.*

~ Source

**Brian Cavanaugh, T.O.R.,  
The Sower's Seeds**

# AltaPointe staff celebrates new name and 50 years of service

More than 400 employees ushered in a new era at AltaPointe Health Systems by celebrating the new company name and brand during the week of Oct. 16, 2007. Employees enjoyed festive events with food, gifts, prizes, and presentations about the name change and business direction of AltaPointe from Tuerk Schlesinger, AltaPointe CEO.

The New Name and Anniversary Planning Committee members include: Beth Blair, Jan DeMouy, Jana Foster, Karen Hutchens, Monica Jones, Norris Laurence, David McCarter, Donald McGraw, Rosita Moore, Billie Mosley, Ivy Singley, and Carol Mann, chair.



CEO Tuerk Schlesinger addresses ARS employees at the Zeigler campus.



The Kick-Off Planning Committee made sure the atmosphere was festive at each location.



Schwanna Robbins is pleased with the prize she won for answering AltaPointe trivia correctly.



Julie Bellcase jokes with Charles Graham as she checks his ticket number for a prize.



Michelle Dees, Karen Hutchens and Jana Foster helped things run smoothly at Gordon Smith AOP.



Perry Tan and Joyce Barber laugh at the trivia answers at Gordon Smith AOP.



These Bridge Team staff members attended the Kick Off at Gordon Smith. Enjoying the moment are, from left, Yosha Wallace, Donyelle Reese, Teresa Lanier (in front), Jasmine Taylor, Danielle Paige, and Leah Nichols.



Vanessa Marks, left, and Labarron Breech seem to be enjoying themselves at the Adult Residential Services (ARS) event.



The food adds to the festive mood at ARS Zeigler. Tina Frank, left, and Eula Richardson serve their plates as Donald McGraw, center, waits his turn.



# Bravo! Bravo!

## DEC awards Spirit of Recovery award to Anderson



Congratulations to Heather Anderson for winning the “Spirit of Recovery” award from the Drug Education Council for her work as a substance abuse counselor. At the AltaPointe Medication Assisted Treatment program (formerly Gateway), Anderson provides individual and group counseling, staffs an interdisciplinary treatment team and monitors consumer progress.

## Jones earns Supported Employment recognition

Lisa Jones received an award for achieving and surpassing all the milestones for her Supported Employment caseload the 2006-2007 fiscal year. As job developer, Jones assessed, coached, and/or placed more than 25 people in competitive employment jobs in our community. This is a record number of placements for Jones and the Supported Employment program.



## Dyson earns MAC credential



Kim Dyson, LPC, has completed the Masters Addiction Counselor (MAC) credential. The MAC is a nationally recognized credential for professionals with a master’s degree who have had clinical supervision in the treatment of addictive diseases and who have passed the National Association of Addictive Disease Examination. She also has passed the Department of Transportation Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) requirements to provide substance abuse assessments to clients governed through the DOT. Dyson is a therapist with BayView Professional Associates.

## Case managers complete program

Congratulations to the MR Case Management staff for successfully passing the 2007 annual Medicaid audit with no deficits, no citations and no charge backs on the 23 records reviewed.

## Christmas ‘HAM TOSS’ brings smiles

*It has become an annual Christmas tradition for CEO Tuerk Schlesinger to visit AltaPointe locations to give each employee a ham. This year’s “ham toss” fell on a very cold December day. Despite the weather, spirits were high and Tuerk and his helpers reported having a great time visiting with everyone.*



Kevin Markham, from left, Teresa Lanier, center, and Tuerk Schlesinger pose for a snapshot during the “Ham Toss” at Zeigler Campus.

## ‘Scale Back Alabama’ motivates 190 employees to lose pounds, get fit

Some of us only talk about taking better care of our bodies and getting healthier, but 190 AltaPointe employees have done more than talk as part of the 2008 Scale Back Alabama. Each employee committed to lose at least 10 pounds as part of the initiative sponsored by the Alabama Department of Public Health and the Alabama Hospital Association.

Our employees were among more than 41,000 participants in Scale Back. Across the state teams of four weighed in from Jan. 5-11 at more than 300 sites. The official weights of the AltaPointe participants were due to the Scale Back headquarters March 21.

Team members that lost at least 10 pounds were entered into a drawing for a grand prize of \$1,000 for the winning team.

If an entire team did not achieve its goal, individuals that lost at least 10 pounds were put into an achievement prize drawing for one of 20 prizes of \$250. Winners will be announced April 1.

Cella Walker, performance improvement specialist, coordinated the weigh-ins and weekly nutrition-related classes at numerous AltaPointe locations throughout the 10 weeks. She also solicited guest passes to the following gyms and fitness centers for participating AltaPointe staff: the YMCA of Mobile, SportPlex, Omni, Christ United Methodist Church, and Cottage Hill Baptist Church.



## Introducing "Alice Alta and Paul Pointe," AltaPointe's new mascots



Fifty-three employees submitted names for the AltaPointe "Name the Mascots" Contest, which began during the New Name Kick-off Week in October.

**Diane James**, an office professional at BayPointe, won first place for her submission, "Alice Alta & Paul Pointe." First place prize is a \$25 Target Gift Card.

**Charmagne Jackson**, a behavioral aide at BayPointe's Male Adolescent Residential unit, won second place and a \$15 Target Gift Card for her entry, "The Pointe Brothers."

**Ellen Lambert** won third place and a \$10 Target Gift Card for her submission, "Hope and Spirit." Lambert is the Assessment Unit Coordinator.

Congratulations to our winners and to everyone that participated. Now we just have to find someone to wear the Mascot costumes for special events!



**AltaPointe**<sup>SM</sup>  
Health Systems



**Blast  
from the  
Past!**

ENTER  
TO WIN!!!  
  
COUPON

**Name this  
longtime  
AltaPointe  
employee...**

...and an opportunity to win a gift card to Panera Bread. Submit your answers via email or in writing along with your name, title, department and office phone number to the Public Relations Office, [admin@altapointe.org](mailto:admin@altapointe.org), before April 14.

**WINNER!**

Congratulations go to Ann Brye, RN, winner of a Panera Gift card for correctly naming Billie Mosely in the first-ever AltaNews' "Blast from the Past." Brye's correct entry was drawn from among 20 others correctly naming Billie. Brye works at AltaPointe's Community Counseling Center of South Mobile County.

## Looking back: the AltaPointe chronicles

- 1969** — MMHC broke ground and began construction of facility at 2400 Gordon Smith Drive, funded by \$960,000 federal grants, \$480,000 Mobile United Fund (now United Way).
- 1970** — Began headquarters operation of the state's first comprehensive mental health program from Gordon Smith Drive
  - Began emphasis on children and adolescents, providing day treatment, mental health consultation and residential treatment intervention
  - Introduced adult programs including consultation and education; adult day treatment and pre-and after care programs. Began evening office hours.
  - Growth of service / recognition of community need marked by \$2 million budget and a client caseload of 5,128
- 1971** — Added drug abuse services
- 1972** — Opened Libra House, outpatient services for adolescents ages 13 to 18
- 1974** — Opened Libra Home, residential services for adolescents ages 13 to 18
- 1979** — Opened north Mobile clinic in Saraland; Hurricane Frederic hit Mobile, slowing services briefly
- 1980** — Reorganization of MMHC board of directors embraced varied ethnic, racial, gender and age groups. Leonard Wyatt is first black elected as board president. Budget increased to \$3 million
- 1981** — Distribution of federal funds through block grants created funding challenge. Opened Fairway, children's residential services for children ages 5 to 12 with mild to moderate emotional disturbances. Opened Sojourn, a shelter for youth-at-risk
- 1983** — Opened Hickory House, children's residential services for children with severe emotional disturbance
  - Changed corporate name to Mobile Mental Health Center, Inc.

Next issue – more AltaPointe Chronicles

- **Chief Executive Officer**, Tuerk Schlesinger
- **Chief Operating Officer**, Julie Bellcase

- **Editor**, Carol Mann, Director of Public Relations
- **Design & Production**, Pixallure Design

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