

A newsletter for and about AltaPointe Health Systems' Employees

Vol. 9 · Summer/Fall 2016

# AltaNews

[AltaNewsOnline.org](http://AltaNewsOnline.org)

**People +  
Innovative Technology =  
People Delivering the  
Best Patient Care**

**4-6**



All treatment team members, from behavioral aides to psychiatrists, use technology on the job. Shown here is Julie Bernstein, D.O., psychiatrist.

From our CEO...

## Funding dilemma motivates focus on growth, advocacy for Medicaid expansion

With no funding increases for mental health services on the horizon, we find ourselves in a dilemma. In fiscal year 2015, AltaPointe provided care to more than 23,000 individuals. Now that we have merged with Cheaha Regional Mental Health Center, that number will grow to approximately 30,000. Lack of funding becomes an even greater issue when you consider that 60 percent of these patients have no ability to pay for services.

We are committed to the highest quality of care no matter how great the cost. So, how do we continue providing this level of care when the majority of our patients do not have the financial resources to cover healthcare costs?

We also must ask, how do we uphold the quality and efficiency of care when state funds stay level and medical inflationary rates cause funding reductions? Where will we find the dollars?

One of the answers is to follow a growth strategy for our continuum that will create economies of scale, which will give us a better chance to decrease expenses. This approach may appear to oppose logic, yet when carried out carefully, expanding services will help cover the cost of treatment because growth drives down administrative costs as revenue from added services is maximized. Merging with carefully selected partners helps companies like AltaPointe survive, yet mergers are not the game changers this industry or the people with mental health problems need. Medicaid expansion will be the game changer.

Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley hints that our state wants to expand Medicaid, which is a component of the Affordable Care Act. Yet, that expansion can only come when the Alabama Legislature agrees to it. Not enough lawmakers fall on the side of the expansion delaying the action to vote on this issue.

It is our mission to advocate for the people we care for and the people we employ. In my role not a day goes by that is not dedicated in part to thinking of ways to make Medicaid expansion a reality. We know it would be the one change that would substantially increase revenues to pay for the cost of services.

Until expansion takes place, AltaPointe will continue its short-term growth strategy that can motivate us to be even better stewards of the trust our patients place in us. This strategy offsets the effect of the medical inflationary rate, helps us to avoid service reduction and layoffs, and ensures that everyone in the seven counties we serve will win.

Despite the dilemma we face, it is my hope that every employee will continue searching for ways we can improve services. It is essential that we do not allow distractions to take our focus off doing what's best for the individuals in our care.



**Tuerk Schlesinger, CEO**

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## Something new and different – AltaNewsOnline.org

We are pleased to announce the launch of AltaNewsOnline, a new digital version of AltaNews. We have expanded the news and features from the print format and added video, more photos and external links.

AltaNewsOnline will be produced quarterly along with the print edition of AltaNews. You will find the link, AltaNewsOnline.org, on our website and on AltaLink. We hope you check it out and send your feedback to [info@altapointe.org](mailto:info@altapointe.org). We think you're going to love it!



# Merger with CRMHC is official; AltaPointe welcomes 125 new employees, 7,000 new patients

AltaPointe Health Systems entered into its second merger within two years when it officially joined forces with Cheaha Regional Mental Health Center (CRMHC) Aug. 1. This is only the second merger between two Alabama community mental health centers with the first coming in 2014 when AltaPointe and Baldwin County Mental Health Center merged.

CRMHC is headquartered in Sylacauga, Ala., and now operates under the AltaPointe name and corporate umbrella. The merger expanded AltaPointe's service area of Mobile, Washington and Baldwin counties to include Clay, Coosa, Randolph and Talladega counties. With this merger, AltaPointe will employ 1,450 and provide treatment to more than 30,000 individuals annually.

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**'The biggest winners are the men, women and children who need our services to survive and function.'**

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"AltaPointe began a new and exciting era with this merger," **Tuerk Schlesinger**, AltaPointe CEO, said. "We believe the southwest and east-central region of Alabama now have a better and broader-based system in place to provide additional and more easily accessible behavioral healthcare services."

Schlesinger said dozens of dedicated staff members have been working diligently to make this transition as smooth as possible.

"All of us at AltaPointe welcome our new colleagues, patients and partners in the Sylacauga region," Schlesinger said. "Together, with our existing employees and partners, AltaPointe can achieve great things for the individuals we serve."

## How is a merger beneficial?

Catalysts for the merger were decreased funding of behavioral healthcare services and upcoming major changes for behavioral healthcare that will require increased financial resources were. *(Please see CEO Tuerk Schlesinger's column on the opposite page to learn why this merger is a good decision.)*

According to **Cindy Atkinson**, who served as the CRMHC Executive Director before the merger, the center has been searching for ways to provide services in the face of diminishing financial support. "We believe joining forces with AltaPointe will build a stronger, more efficient organization that will withstand the changing healthcare environment and better serve our communities," she said.

According to Schlesinger, the AltaPointe and CRMHC boards of directors thoroughly investigated the needs of both organizations for more than two years. "They recognized the wisdom of the merger," he continued.

"They were diligent and patient as we pored over a multitude of details."

## Everyone wins with this merger

Atkinson, who now holds the title of AltaPointe Associate Executive Director of Community Mental Health for the Sylacauga Region, went on to say that the former CRMHC began utilizing AltaPointe's resources immediately.

"Over the summer, we began implementing electronic medical records, which gives our staff easier access to patient information," she said. "We also have the great benefit of AltaPointe's administrative service systems such as the HR systems, billing, budgeting and payroll. We expect CarePointe, the access-to-care call center, to be fully operational before the end of summer."

Schlesinger emphasized that "everyone wins" with this merger. AltaPointe benefits from the merger by being able to expand its centralized administrative system so it can reallocate resources into services and grow stronger in scope, he said.

"However, the biggest winners are the men, women and children who need our services to survive and function," Schlesinger continued. "This opportunity is the right thing to do for them."



Cindy Atkinson, AltaPointe Associate Executive Director of Community Mental Health for the Sylacauga Region, left, and Tuerk Schlesinger, AltaPointe CEO, succeeded in making the merger a reality after two years of hard work.

# Recovery is Work. Work is Recovery.

## Supported Employment helps patients become employees

Someone living with a diagnosis of a mental illness will face numerous challenges on the road to recovery. For many, the idea of getting and holding a job can be intimidating and stressful. Since 1987, the AltaPointe Supported Employment program has been helping patients overcome the challenge of reentering the workforce.

“Working has proven to be an essential part of recovery,” **Pam Maumenee**, assistant director of adult services, said.

Maumenee emphasized that individuals living with mental illnesses often avoid applying for jobs because they fear losing their benefits, or they lack transportation. The supported employment team works closely with patients to understand their strengths and weaknesses, helping them establish and meet realistic, personal goals. They counsel them and help them to address these and other issues.

### Supporting the employee

Nicholas, an AltaPointe patient for almost nine years, commented on how his supported employment experience had helped him achieve recovery.

“Before treatment, my life was chaotic,” he said. “It was like a roller coaster. My life was not very manageable. Now, I go to work. I socialize with other people. I deal with the community better.”

The program has played a unique role in the lives of many others who have sought to integrate into the community through work.

“Supported employment gives patients an opportunity to have someone work side-by-side with them to identify their strengths and to encourage them along the way,” **Lisa Gable**, supported employment specialist, said.

Nicholas had some advice for other patients in the program. “Get some help through one of the job counselors,” he said. “They’ll help get you on the right path; that’s what it took for me. If you open up to one of them, they can help you.”

### Working with businesses

Counseling patients seeking work is only one part of the supported employment process. The team also works closely with local businesses. The support structure is designed to counsel the employee and assist the employer for the duration of the employment.

“Cultivating opportunities with local employers is another key element,” Gable said. “The supported employment team works tirelessly with employers helping them to understand the benefits



Members of the AltaPointe Supported Employment team include, standing from left, Jennifer Crain and Lisa Gable, supported employment specialists; Pam Maumenee, assistant director of AltaPointe Adult Services; Emily Demouey, benefits specialist, and Tonya Fistein, supported employment specialist. Seated, from left, are Jennifer Motes and Doris Gayle, supported employment specialists.

**‘Working is wonderful. It has made a world of difference in my life.’**

Supportive Employment participants encourage others to give it a try. The services are available for any AltaPointe adult patient or local business. Call (251) 450-4301 to learn more.

of working with patients and encouraging them to participate in the program.”

Gable said some employers are skeptical at first, but most will change their minds. George Catranis with Catranis Enterprises agreed.

“I had a need for an employee and had been running an ad for part-time help that had received very little interest,” Catranis said. “I got a call one day [from AltaPointe] and they explained the program to me. They said they would like us to try one of their people. They explained that there was basically no risk, and that if it didn’t work out they would completely understand.”

“AltaPointe personnel made sure our expectations were met and the employee had what they needed,” he said. “That’s awesome, and it is something they have done every time we have hired a new employee through the program.”

John, one of the individuals Catranis hired through the program, said he appreciates the opportunity

and knows the difference it has made in his life.

“Having a job gives me a schedule: I get up every morning about six o’clock; I get breakfast; I walk to the bus stop, get here a little before 9 a.m.,” John said. “Lying around the house wasn’t doing me much good. I needed a schedule, so I could eat right and sleep right, take my medicine; I am not having any more problems. And, financially, I can get the kind of groceries I want.”

Another businessman, Tyrone Jackson, owner of Jackson Maintenance Service, has hired people through the supported employment program for several years and said he sincerely appreciates the staff he has hired.

“I have worked all types of odd jobs and never have I met people that put everything into their work,” Jackson said.

“Most people get a job, because they want to pay a bill. But they [supported employment employees] want to do the job just to do the job, and that makes all the difference.”

“If you can come do my job, and pretty much care about it more than I care about it, that means a lot to me.”



John participates in AltaPointe’s Supported Employment program and works with Catranis Enterprises. Employers say he is a model employee.

*Visit [AltaNewsOnline.org](http://AltaNewsOnline.org) to view our Supported Employment videos.*

# Security team on duty at ARS-Zeigler

AltaPointe Adult Residential Services (ARS) has added a 10-member security team to its Zeigler campus with the goal of reducing the number of residents requiring higher levels of care. ARS leadership says the strengthened security presence is began working quickly.

**Bill Hamilton**, ARS coordinator, says the security team was brought on board this spring to prevent issues caused by a growing number of aggressive residents. The team, similar to EastPointe Hospital's security team, wears black uniforms and is made up mostly of former correctional officers. Hamilton said the residents welcome the 'men in black.'

"I studied EastPointe's security team and adjusted that program to match our needs at ARS," Hamilton added. "Residents seem to welcome the team; its presence has a calming effect."

Hamilton said the number of calls to police, as well as the number of residents requiring a higher level of care, such as hospitalization, have decreased.

On a typical day, there are one to two security technicians on duty patrolling the ARS Zeigler campus. They are equipped with radios for efficient communication among all ARS staff members

and the AltaPointe Zeigler Outpatient clinic staff members during business hours.

"Normally, security technicians are housed at Lakefront intermediate care facility (ICF) because these residents can be unstable when they first arrive and are verbally and physically aggressive,"

Hamilton said. "The technicians help discourage this behavior."

The security team members undergo standard training during orientation. "What sets them apart is their background prior to joining AltaPointe coupled with being recertified in MindSet annually," Hamilton said.

**Michael Stallworth**, ARS security technician, spent 26 years as a correctional officer with the Alabama Department of Corrections. Stallworth says that job taught him the importance of listening, a skill he is putting to use in his current role.

"I use the same skill set here that I used in corrections," Stallworth

said. I listen to the residents, and I try to help them. My job is to keep them safe and others around them safe. I do that by listening to them.

Stallworth says he enjoys his new role and plans to be around for the long haul.



Michael Stallworth, ARS security technician, left, and Bill Hamilton, ARS coordinator, on the Zeigler campus

## EOC assessments: Staff members keep SAFETY FIRST

AltaPointe staff members are well-versed at handling emergencies and using environment of care policies and procedures to navigate the way. That statement is one of the conclusions resulting from the annual Workplace Violence and Hazard Vulnerability assessments conducted by the AltaPointe Environment of Care (EOC) Department this year. **Robert Carlock**, EOC director, said these are two of the most important assessments EOC conducts annually as part of AltaPointe's overall efforts to keep patients, visitors, and employees safe.

The Workplace Violence Assessment looks at issues such as history of threats or aggression, working in isolated places, injury or incident history, and employee training. Carlock says assessment results showed staff members have concerns of active shooters. Now, EOC is working to address that concern by developing policies and procedures for guidance should an event arise. Carlock says **Catherine Shropshire**, EOC compliance specialist, has been instrumental putting a plan in place.

"Catherine has made contacts within the Mobile Police Department and the local Department of Homeland Security,"

Carlock said. "Together they will review AltaPointe locations to identify vulnerabilities and educate staff on what to do in case of an active shooter situation."

Hazard Vulnerability Assessment gauges AltaPointe's ability to respond to naturally occurring, technological, human-related, and hazardous materials events. Carlock says it assesses the highest vulnerabilities and conducts drills to test staff members' knowledge and response. AltaPointe's highest vulnerabilities are weather-related such as a hurricanes or other severe weather.

"We find out in the drills, such as the hurricane drill, if our staff is prepared and, if not, we notify EOC of areas that need improvement, and adjustments are made," **Amy Conway**, EastPointe coordinator, said. "Testing our knowledge and making sure we are comfortable responding to any situation is all part of providing the utmost care to our patients. Their well-being is our priority."

*Employees may read these policies on the EOC's AltaLink page.*





# People + Innovative Technology = People Delivering the Best Patient Care



Technology. The word evokes visions of keyboards, computer screens and data waiting to be aggregated into reports, graphs and flow charts. But at AltaPointe Health Systems, technology also means people – people helping patients get the best available treatment.

“With the use of technology, we are able to concentrate on patient care,” said **Kartik Joshi**, assistant director of information technology. “We spend much less time on administrative tasks and more time on what we are here for: to take care of people.”

**Milton Burke**, chief quality officer who oversees performance improvement, CarePointe and centralized services, agreed. “Our technology helps us provide more timely and appropriate care for the people we see,” he said. “We can analyze who we are treating and what they need, identify and predict trends and coordinate with other providers.”

AltaNews recently interviewed the key players whose departments manage and utilize five of the 57 systems AltaPointe uses. This article examines how these particular advanced technology systems allow healthcare professionals to gauge how quickly and effectively patients are served, including tracking follow-up care. It also looks at how AltaPointe maintains fully electronic medical records, equips and maintains an access-to-care call center, and tracks all necessary employee hours, payroll, benefits, vacations, training, and other necessary administrative tasks.

Although not every employee uses a computer throughout the workday,” AltaPointe Chief Information Officer **Steve Dolan**, said, everybody at AltaPointe encounters technology in some way.

“It may only be when they clock in or take some training,” Dolan said. “Or they may be in front of their computers most of the day. No matter where they work, technology touches all employees and affects everything we do.”

Whether or not they recognize it, technology also touches patients the moment they contact AltaPointe about services.

## AVATAR: Medical records, accessibility and more

**CarePointe:** Patients first encounter AltaPointe’s technology when they pick up the phone and call its access-to-care line known as CarePointe. Here, trained staff members triage crises and screen

callers for services they may need. Using the software system, Avatar, call specialists take information and schedule appointments – immediately, if the caller possibly needs hospitalization or within a few days for an outpatient appointment if the matter is less urgent.

**Ingrid Hartman**, assistant director of CarePointe, said call specialists ask the caller questions and to gather information on a caller’s symptoms, demographics, and insurance. “Our CarePointe call specialists enter the information into the system so that by the time an individual gets

to the appointment, he or she doesn’t have to repeat everything because it is already there,” Hartman said.

“Technology shortens the time the patient has to sit and wait, which greatly lessens the stress on the patient. Most importantly, though,” she continued, “technology helps us communicate



Before software systems such as Avatar and RL6 Solutions, creating and monitoring medical records and other patient information took mounds of paper. Illustrating the efficiency of technology by comparing paper stacks with a laptop are Cella Walker, left, assistant director of consumer needs, training and education, and Ingrid Hartman, assistant director of CarePointe.

up-to-date and coordinated information to help effectively treat a patient.

“For instance, it helps the clinician to know what’s going on with the patient and to get an idea of what sort of services they are seeking,” Hartman said. “And, if an individual needs to be admitted to one of AltaPointe’s two hospitals, all the information required to create an electronic medical record for admission is easily accessible.”

Once a medical record has been created, Joshi said, staff members associated with the patient’s care can view it immediately.

“Accessibility is a big advantage,” he said. “Anytime you get a call about a patient, you can access his or her record. Another advantage is that prescriptions are electronic, too, which cuts down on medication errors.”

**Children’s Outpatient/BayView:** Olivia Nettles, director of children’s outpatient services and BayView Professional Associates, said that in contrast with paper records, computerized medical records can be accessed by a counselor or physician from any work location on any given day.

Moreover, electronic records allow managers to compile reports, keep up with caseloads, comply with governmental and insurance industry regulations, share records with a patient’s treatment team and respond quickly to release-of-information requests.

“It makes the whole process so much quicker and our jobs easier,” Nettles said. “All those minutes that we used to spend on generating and filing and finding paperwork we can now devote to patient care.”

**Sherill Alexander**, AltaPointe’s director of performance improvement, who oversees medical records as well as incident and risk management, agreed. She said Avatar helps managers to “really drill down” and pull together critical information for compliance audits such as those required by The Joint Commission or other regulating bodies. The software also can be used to assess patient outcomes, which is vital information considered for accreditation and certification standards as well as for funding.

## RL6 SOLUTIONS: Spotting patterns and trends

**Performance Improvement:** In addition to Avatar, the performance improvement staff uses RL6 Solutions for risk management and incident reporting. **Cella Walker**, assistant director of consumer needs, and training and education, said RL6 provides “real-time information” about incidents affecting patients and staff members.

“We can aggregate data, create graphs and detect trends,” Walker said. “Then we use these data for customized reports for our leadership to review. In addition, when we see trends and patterns that may negatively affect our patients, we can put things in place to mitigate that.”

## API: Helping employees help themselves

**Human Resources:** Meanwhile, in the AltaPointe Human Resources Department, the staff relies on technology provided through API Healthcare to oversee payroll, time and attendance, scheduling, hiring, employee benefits and more.



Emily Miller, standing, human resources specialist, assists new employees Ebony Mitchell, medical assistant, right, and Saterica Tucker, behavioral aide, center, with the API healthcare system on computers set up in the AltaPointe Human Resources Department lobby.

**Jason Holston**, human resources assistant director, said the technology has eliminated “an enormous” amount of paperwork for supervisors and their employees alike.

“For example,” he said, “before API, to request time off, you filled out a piece of paper, which worked its way to your supervisor and then to HR. That took time, and there was a lot of opportunity for the paperwork to be mislaid or delayed.”

Holston said now that the process is paperless employees can make requests online, their supervisors get a notice of the request, and they can act on the request right away.

Indeed, employees can log onto API’s Employee Self-Service at work or at home to access an array of information and services, including verifying the hours worked, checking work schedules, requesting time off, checking on benefits, updating their contact information, making adjustments to tax withholdings, viewing current and previous W2 forms and pay stubs, and scheduling training sessions.

**‘The employees love it... there’s no wait time or paperwork. It has made such a difference for them.’**

*Jason Holston, HR Assistant Director*

“The employees love it,” Holston said. “The system is very user-friendly. There’s no wait time or paperwork. It has made such a difference for them.”

As is the case in AltaPointe’s other departments, human resources staff members use technology to mine and aggregate a variety of useful information.

“Supervisors can use the data to better manage their staff members,” Holston said. “That’s a big plus.”

**Continued on page 6**



He and Kartik Joshi agreed that today's employees are accustomed to using smart phones and computers. "You really find very little resistance to technology," Joshi said.

"Most of our people are pretty comfortable with it," Holston added. "They might need a little training at first in how we do things, but our technology is truly user-friendly."

**Lisa Nelson**, human resources recruitment manager, likes the API feature that gives employees the ability to manage their work schedules. Using the software, they can ask for time off, request to work particular shifts and trade shifts with co-workers. Job seekers within and outside of AltaPointe also use the API software to search for positions.

"We could not accomplish what we do without these efficiencies," Nelson said. "Employees want to work at companies that use technology effectively, and that's something AltaPointe does very well."

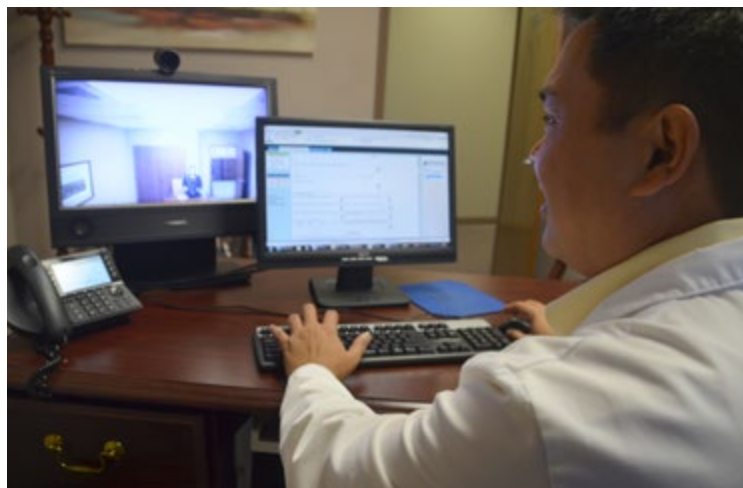
## RELIAS: The importance of training

**Training & Education:** AltaPointe places great value on providing its employees all the training necessary to carry out their responsibilities at the highest level. In 2015, after much research, AltaPointe purchased Relias Learning as its education and training software. Relias makes training more efficient and timely, and employees may schedule training at their convenience.

In addition, the system also tracks and notifies employees and their supervisors when it's time to take a training course. Employees benefit from the availability of 436 courses Relias provides as well as the 134 courses created by AltaPointe that have been integrated into the software.

## Telehealth: Making remote care delivery possible

**Medical Staff:** Telehealth is another example of how AltaPointe harnesses technology to improve the mental health of patients. It makes secure, real-time video transmissions allowing clinicians to deliver the best care possible wherever a patient may reside. It also allows for the transmission of medical data and images for diagnosis or disease management, provides patient monitoring and follow-up as well as the ability to respond immediately to a far-away crisis in progress.



Bayani Abordo, M.D., sits at his desk to demonstrate how Telehealth technology allows doctors to interact with patients remotely.

"Our patients benefit from improved access to our highly trained psychiatric professionals through Telehealth," **Sandra Parker, M.D.**, AltaPointe Chief Medical Officer, said. "It also greatly reduces travel time for patients and physicians."

Through this technology, AltaPointe can provide various types of education to its staff members and patients and conduct collaborative research. Administrators use Telehealth to conduct meetings, supervise employees and deliver presentations in timely and cost-efficient manner.

## Operating the systems

**IT Department:** AltaPointe's successful use of technology doesn't happen by itself; it takes an experienced and skilled team.

"You've got to have a pretty robust IT structure to do all that we do," Burke observed, "and we are fortunate at AltaPointe to have an extremely talented, top-notch IT department."

Joshi and 20 other staff members work under the direction of Dolan to ensure that AltaPointe's 1,450 employees get the most out of the software and hardware they utilize.

"Technology is always evolving," Dolan said. "We have many initiatives this year that will affect our care delivery."

Those projects include adapting to changes in Medicaid requirements, developing touch-screen check-in for patients, upgrading video-conferencing capabilities for all of AltaPointe's sites, improving the exchange of patient information not only between AltaPointe's hospitals but also with other hospitals in the Mobile region and more.



John Keller, left, IT systems administrator, and Eric Talton, IT systems manager, evaluate computer and network usage displayed on a tracking monitor located in the IT Department.

## Ways to Contact IT for Support

- **To make an IT request**, report a non-emergency issue or request an EHR correction, create a ticket using the IT-Pointe Helpdesk found under Favorites on the AltaLink homepage.
- **To expedite requests**, use "Change Template" at the top of the request screen. How you complete your request determines which team member will handle it.
- **Or, use IT-Pointe@altapointe.org email address.** Your email creates a general request ticket that will be reviewed before assigning it to a team member.
- **Call Help Desk at '15906' (251.450.5906) for emergencies** or situations that require an automatic response.
- **Read emails from no-reply@altapointe.org** that announce software updates and schedules for system upgrades/related downtime or IT training.





# Five-Star takes center stage with new promotion

The Five-Star Customer Care (5SCC) program took center stage this spring when new posters, pledge cards, and badges popped up all across AltaPointe's continuum. Along with the changes, questions about 5SCC have emerged, such as, "How does a staff member receive an AltaPraise?" or "How do you submit one?" The answer is, "It's easy."

## STEP 1

You notice a staff member "going above or beyond" the Five-Star Standards of CARE of being compassionate, accountable, respectful or encouraging to a patient, a family member or a fellow co-worker.

## STEP 2

Visit [AltaPointe.org](http://AltaPointe.org) and look for the AltaPraise tab on the homepage, **OR** find an AltaPraise poster with submission forms attached (found at most AHS locations).

## STEP 3

Complete the online form at [AltaPointe.org](http://AltaPointe.org) **OR** fill out and submit the paper form, describing exactly how the AltaPointe staff member you have observed has demonstrated Five-Star Customer Care. We want all the details! Be specific.

[AltaPointe.org](http://AltaPointe.org)

Submit an  
AltaPraise Online



## STEP 4

Select a 5SCC quality that best describes the staff member's actions. Were they being compassionate? Or perhaps they were encouraging? Make sure you choose only one quality.

## STEP 5

Double check the spelling of the AltaPointe staff member's name and job title, hit "send" **OR** place the paper copy of the form in the designated drop box.

## So, what happens next?

The AltaPointe Office of Public Relations receives and records all AltaPraises and sends digital copies to the appropriate program directors. The directors verify that each staff member receiving an AltaPraise is in good standing. Once approved, supervisors award the AltaPraises, and staff members begin to earn CARE

pins for their badges. The first AltaPraise earns the staff member one 5SCC quality pin. Staff members earn another pin when they receive their 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> AltaPraise cards.



## Don't forget Team AltaPraise

Receiving an AltaPraise is not limited to individual staff members. Nine AltaPointe teams have been awarded the Team AltaPraise since October 2015. The AltaPointe Adult Residential Services' Intermediate Care Facility was the first team winner. Since then the other team winners include AltaPointe Environment of Care, Children's Outpatient In-home Team, Baldwin County Intensive Services, Crisis Response Team, Finance & Accounting - Money Management, Developmental Disability Case Managers, the EastPointe Security Team, and the LeMoyné School staff.

**Remember.** You could receive an AltaPraise when you learn the Five-Star Standards of CARE and live them every day.

## Number of AltaPraises Print & Online Submissions

Jan. – Aug. 2016	700
All of 2015	600
All of 2014	500
All of 2013	400

*\*Numbers are estimates*

Learn more about Five-Star Customer Care and AltaPraise at [AltaNewsOnline.org](http://AltaNewsOnline.org), our new digital version of AltaNews.

# Bravo!

Congratulations on becoming United States citizens to Flore Ndongo, centralized services care manager, and Danaïsy Olivera, Fairhope Children's Day Treatment behavioral specialist. [Visit our inaugural AltaNewsOnline to learn more about their journey to citizenship.](#)

**April Douglas**, public relations coordinator, produced a video chosen by the Alabama Hospital Association to be highlighted on social media during Hospital Week 2016. The contest was open to hospitals across the state.

**John Hayes, CRNP**, was awarded the title of Honorary Adjunct Clinical Instructor by the University of South Alabama College of Nursing.



Mark Miele

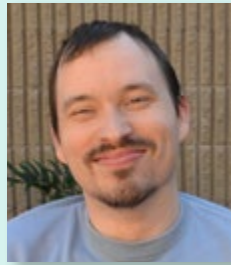
**Mark Miele, MS, LPC**, adult outpatient services day treatment team leader, passed the exam to become a licensed professional counselor.

Congratulations to **Richard Dockery**, **Fairlie Schreiber** and **Beverly Bryant** who recently retired from AltaPointe. Dockery was an AltaPointe Children's Outpatient case manager/co-therapist in-home for 13 years. Schreiber worked with AltaPointe for the past 44 years most recently as an adult outpatient services therapist. She received the first AltaPraise Shining Star award in 2010. Bryant began as a therapist with AltaPointe in 1973.

**Rita Brown, LPC, BC-DTR**, Project Achieve therapist and team leader, presented dance movement therapy at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Permanency Conference in Birmingham hosted by the Alabama Pre/Post Adoption Connections (APAC) and

the Department of Human Resources. Brown also presented at Camp APAC that serves children in the foster care system.

**Kingstone Govati**, accountant, received his final certification to become a certified public accountant.



Ryan White

**Ryan White, LPC**, adult outpatient services therapist, was the guest speaker at the Project SEARCH graduation ceremony. Project SEARCH provides real-life work experience, training in employability and independent living skills to youth with significant disabilities.

**Brandy Gardner**, CarePointe aftercare & referral specialist, earned a master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of West Alabama.

**Rita Metz**, CarePointe aftercare & referral specialist, earned a master's degree in social work from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.



W. Bogan Brooks

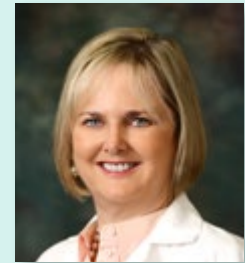
**W. Bogan Brooks, M.D.**, presented "Six Things Every Medical Student Should Know About Geriatric Psychiatry (and How to Teach Them)," at the Association of Directors of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry's annual meeting in Excelsior Springs, Mo. Brooks

described practical ways for medical educators to teach key geriatric psychiatry topics to medical students.



Medical students at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine chose **David Benavidez, M.D.**, as Resident Teacher of the Year.

**Maria Hamilton, M.D.**, was recognized for earning the highest score among the residents on the annual Psychiatry Resident In-Training Examination (PRITE).



Sandra Parker

At the 2016 annual meeting of the Administrators in Medicine organization (AIM), **Sandra Parker, M.D.**, AltaPointe Chief Medical Officer, was among those recognized for their extraordinary commitment to continued education and improvement of the standard of care by preparing and presenting more than 200 hours of instruction (all approved for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*) to more than 4,000 attendees since 2007.

Seven AltaPointe Intensive Day Treatment (IDT) participants' artwork was selected for the 2016 Capitol Showcase Consumer Art Exhibition hosted by Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH). Artists included Jetta Bush, Carl Hill, Earnest Horton, Leo Reed Jr., Jamar Rogers, Betty Shell, and Octavia Withers. IDT is led by Mark Miele.

Please submit your achievement or professional milestone for Bravo! to [info@altapointe.org](mailto:info@altapointe.org).



## People & Positions



Kelley Wilson

earn her master's in applied psychology and her doctorate in clinical and counseling psychology from the University of South Alabama. Wilson completed her pre-doctoral internship at Western Kentucky University Counseling & Testing Center in Bowling Green.

**Kelley Wilson, Ph.D.**, has joined AltaPointe as a licensed psychologist. She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from Samford University in Birmingham, before going on to

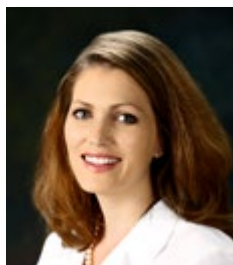


J. Clint Moore

through the University of South Alabama

**J. Clint Moore, D.O.**, has joined BayPointe Hospital as a child psychiatrist on the inpatient unit. A familiar face to many, Moore did his internship with AltaPointe

Department of Psychiatry in 2012. He holds a bachelor's degree in biology and psychology from the University of Alabama and a master's degree in applied psychology from the University of South Alabama (USA). Moore attended medical school at the Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine at the University of Pikeville where he served as class president. During his residency training at USA, he served as chief resident and completed a fellowship in child and adolescent psychiatry. He is board certified in general psychiatry.



Julie Bernstein

dency with the USA Department of Psychiatry since 2011. She received a bachelor's degree in biology and psychology from Shawnee State University in Portsmouth, Ohio, where she received

**Julie N. Bernstein, D.O.**, has joined the AltaPointe Children's Outpatient staff. Bernstein is familiar to many around AltaPointe having performed her psychiatric resi-

recognition for her academic excellence each of the four years she attended. Bernstein attended medical school at the Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine at the University of Pikeville.



Janak Ghelani

health coursework at the University of Iowa, Iowa City. He interned at East Tennessee State University, completed his psychiatry residency training at Texas Tech University, and completed a fellowship in child and adolescent sub-specialty at the University of Alabama-Birmingham. Ghelani is dual board-certified in psychiatry, and child and adolescent psychiatry.

**Janak Ghelani, M.D.**, is a native of Mumbai, India, and received bachelor's degrees in medicine and surgery from Seth G. S. Medical College. Ghelani moved to the U.S. to pursue public

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## Drop boxes keep prescription drugs away from teens

You can hardly watch TV news these days without hearing about a teenager abusing prescription drugs. Curbing prescription drug misuse by teens is the focus of the Baldwin County Community Alliance (BCCA) whose drug drop boxes have collected hundreds of pounds of prescription drugs that have been turned over to law enforcement before misuse can occur.

The BCCA, which operates through AltaPointe Prevention Services, established the prescription drug drop box program in 2014 and has installed permanent drop boxes in Bay Minette, Daphne, Fairhope, Foley, Robertsdale and Spanish Fort. Residents use the boxes to dispose of prescription medications they no longer need with the goal to keep them out of the hands of teens.

**Lantana McKenley**, BCCA prevention program developer, says prescription drug misuse is a problem. McKenley and



Detective Bunky Bishop, Fairhope Police Department, Shai Markris, Baldwin County Community Alliance (BCCA), and Sergeant Shane Nolte, Fairhope Police Department, are pictured with boxes filled with prescription drugs from the Fairhope Police Department's Permanent Prescription Drug Drop Box. The BCCA provided 6 of the 8 drop boxes in Baldwin County.

**Shai Markris**, BCCA assistant prevention program developer, agree that youth who abuse prescription medications are also more likely to use other drugs.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports when teens were asked how prescription opioids were obtained for nonmedical use, more than half of the 12th graders surveyed said they were given the drugs or bought them from a friend or relative. Multiple studies show a correlation between prescription drug misuse and higher rates of cigarette smoking; heavy

sporadic drinking; and marijuana, cocaine, and other illicit drug use among adolescents, young adults, and college students in the United States.

"Alcohol and prescription drugs are gateway drugs to other things, and it is on the rise in our area," McKenley said. "But, we are working to stay ahead of the game."

# AltaPointe makes headlines across the country for merger

News outlets spanning several states including Alabama, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah and Oklahoma published online reports of the merger between AltaPointe and Cheaha Regional Mental Health Center. The merger is the second for AltaPointe and follows a nationwide trend in the behavioral healthcare industry.

Baldwin County Probate Judge Tim Russell signed a proclamation at EastPointe Hospital April 28, declaring May as Mental Health Awareness Month. Television stations in Mobile, Montgomery, Birmingham, and Columbus, Ga., featured the story written and produced by the AltaPointe Office of Public Relations. More than three million people viewed the spots.

AltaPointe's **Katherine Rouse**, assistant coordinator transitional age, was a guest on Studio Ten in May to promote Children's Mental Health Awareness Week.



Michael Goldman, LMFT, Coordinator for AltaPointe's Community Counseling Center for Washington County, met with Washington County Probate Judge, Nick Williams, left, as he signed a declaration from Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley recognizing May as Mental Health Awareness Month.

## Commitment to community

AltaPointe continues to fulfill its mission of community education and engagement in the Gulf Coast community. Between April and August 2016 AltaPointe staff members participated in more than two dozen community events, conferences, and continuing education opportunities.

**Halie Jones**, assistant director of substance abuse services, wrapped up a year-long series titled "House Calls" hosted by the Alliance to the Medical Society of Mobile County. Jones sat on a panel of experts to spread the word about the dangers of SPICE to area students.

## Social media and website numbers show steady climb

Social media continues to provide opportunities to engage and connect patients and their families with AltaPointe programs and services and share the good things happening across the continuum. AltaPointe's Facebook page has grown to more than 1,000 likes. While AltaPointe's Twitter page continues to gain followers, such as National Council for Behavioral Health and the Alabama Hospital Association.

AltaPointe.org averages more than 6,000 users each month. Visit our website to learn more about what AltaPointe offers. You can also follow AltaPointe on Twitter and become a fan on Facebook to join the conversations.



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## IN MEMORY

### Evans Dow Worthy



AltaPointe staff members are mourning Evans Dow Worthy, who died July 24. Known as "Worthy," he worked for AltaPointe 19 years mostly in the maintenance department but recently as the company's Baldwin County courier.

An excellent carpenter, Worthy's most visible piece of AltaPointe handiwork is the wooden foot bridge crossing the lake between Admin-A and BayPointe Hospital.

Longtime coworker and friend, Nadine Woods, purchasing clerk for AltaPointe, said she already misses him. "I enjoyed joking with him and learned a lot working with him. He loved to duck hunt, loved Alabama football and most of all, loved his family."

His family asked that donations in his memory be made to the Mulherin Home in Mobile.

## CarePointe<sup>SM</sup> CORNER

CarePointe specialists are monitoring a new access-to-care standard adopted by the National Community on Quality Assurance and Regional Care Organizations stipulating that individuals calling with "not life-threatening" emergencies are to be seen within six hours.

"This standard reinforces principles already in place and assures that consumers have walk-in availability and same-day appointments, if needed,"

**Ingrid Hartman**, assistant director of CarePointe, says.

Situations where individuals exhibit erratic emotional disturbance, behavioral distress or disorientation and have the strong potential for rapid decompensation and may need supervision are not life-threatening emergencies.

### CarePointe Calls from Jan. 1 through July 31, 2016

	Bus. Hrs.	After-Hrs. Crisis
<b>Totals:</b>	35,671	1,786
<b>Mo. Avg.:</b>	5,096	265