

# POSITIVE+

Fall 2023

# CONNECTIONS

*Your Connection to the  
Alliance for Positive Health*

**Inside:  
Health Homes  
Overdose Awareness Day  
Harm Reduction  
Staff Milestones  
& more!**



  
**alliance**  
for positive health

**Featured SPOT**



**Carrie Coryer** pg 4



FROM OUR **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

## **B. Kim Atkins**

Dear Friends,

It's been a busy last couple of months and there are no signs of slowing down. Our team was out in the community on Overdose Awareness Day, we hosted a staff appreciation day to give back to the heart and soul of our organization, and we held our annual Columbia-Greene Garden Party.

We witnessed firsthand the devastation and destruction that the opioid epidemic is causing. We attended events in the counties we serve, distributed Narcan kits and administered training, heard stories, met with survivors, and worked with like minded organizations to spread awareness and work to find solutions that meet people's needs. A big thank you to WRGB for airing a story highlighting the important work we are doing regarding overdose, harm reduction, and spreading awareness to amplify the issue (To read the story, [click here](#)).

It is evident that our harm reduction services are critical, and the expansion of our programs and services is necessary.

To battle the epidemic, efforts must be focused on syringe exchange and harm reduction.

Programs like our SEP are crucial to meeting individuals where they are and keeping them safe. And the evidence shows that it works. The CDC released a report that stated syringe service programs are effective at reducing syringe sharing and providing HIV testing and linkage to care.

For nearly 40 years we have provided HIV services built on the foundation of concern for safety, education, and connection to care. We respect people for who they are and where they are, no matter what.

All the work done at the Alliance comes full circle. We wrap our arms around our clients ensuring they are never alone at any step of the way. The entire team at the Alliance is steadfast in our dedication and passion to and for the clients and communities we serve each day. We recognize that none of this could be possible without our staff, volunteers, and board members.

Thank you to each one of you. Together, we will end the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Warm Regards,

B. Kim Atkins, Executive Director  
Alliance for Positive Health



## ***We're Moving!***

After 20 years at our 927 Broadway location, our Albany office will be relocating to a more efficient space!

Our new office will be at 845 Central Avenue, and we are expected to move in by mid-late December.

The new space is better suited for the post covid hybrid work world we are now in. It is 1 floor (no need for elevators), allows for working individually and in groups, has plenty of parking, and is easily accessible from route 90.

We will also be upgrading our phone system to new and improved technology, saying goodbye to the landline.



### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

John Coppola  
PRESIDENT

Joe Yetto  
VICE PRESIDENT

Joan Hayner  
TREASURER

Yvette Kelly  
SECRETARY

Kandis Backus, PharmD, MS, AAHVP • Sharon J. Butler • John Coppola • Joan Hayner • Yvette Kelly • Keira O'Brien • Eric Simonds, CCIM • Robert A. Stout Jr., Esq • Lawrence T. Waite, Ph.D. • Joe Yetto

### **ALLIANCE LEADERSHIP**

B. Kim Atkins  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Diana Aguglia  
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rita Cox  
INTERIM DIRECTOR OF  
MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

Susan Friedman  
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Quinn Lee  
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM SERVICES

Joseph Peterson  
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE &  
ADMINISTRATION



### How long have you worked at the Alliance?

Almost 4 1/2 years

### What about the work appeals to you?

I love knowing what I do can save a life. You can't say that in every job. The people we work with know they can call or text and I'm going to be there. I'll reach our medical provider if needed. Many times, they just need a person who cares to listen. They need to be reminded they have a reassuring, positive person in their corner. So many don't have that.

### What does a typical day at work entail?

If our provider is in, I'm greeting and talking to clients with appointments. I'm making sure that paperwork is finished for them and their next appointment is scheduled. I'm doing medication prior authorizations and working with other offices in the area on mutual clients. Other times, I'm in meetings, doing reports, helping pack Harm Reduction supplies, or helping in Syringe Exchange.

### What do you find most challenging?

Keeping clients engaged and on track in the Suboxone Program.

### What is your proudest moment at the Alliance?

The moment when you're out in public, and you see someone you helped in the Suboxone bridge clinic working hard in public. It may sound silly, but you smile watching them smiling and interacting with others, knowing their past struggles, how far they've come, and how proud you are of them. That is as close to a proud parent moment as you can get without being a parent.

### What advice would you give on working here?

Use the time you're given for self-health! As an older staffer, I've worked a long time and in many different places. But never where we were given so much time and told to use it. So, use it!!

### What three words would you use to describe yourself?

That is hard! Trusting, empathetic, homebody

### What are your hobbies?

Easy! Watching baseball, college basketball, and football! My 3-year-old Golden Doodle Scout is my life and best friend in the whole world, and I love to shop on Amazon!!

### What is your favorite thing to do?

Vacations in Myrtle Beach with my boyfriend, mom, brothers, and their families. Family is the most important thing!!

### What is something about yourself that people would be surprised to learn?

Some people know this because it is something that I am excited and talk about especially when I am sore, but I do CROSS FIT and LOVE IT!!



We had an incredible afternoon at the Columbia-Greene Garden Party and it could not have been possible without you.

With immense gratitude, we thank everyone who attended!

As we look forward to next year's Garden Party with excitement, we urge you to join us in the planning process. Your ideas, suggestions, and involvement will make next year's event even more memorable. Please, do not hesitate to reach out to us!

If you are interested in joining next year's Columbia-Greene Garden Party committee, please contact Marissa at [mgoddard@alliancefph.org](mailto:mgoddard@alliancefph.org).



**Saturday, Sept. 2, 2023**



***"After the pandemic my husband Adrian was displaced, we received exceptional assistance with rent, utilities and even some food. Thank you Alliance for making us feel like we matter."***

**- TM**



## HEALTH HOMES SPOTLIGHT

**Quinn Lee, Director of Program Services & Denise Dupigny, Asst. Director of Program Services**



Are your clients in need of additional care management or assistance with housing, medical care, and/or connection to health care providers? Do you need help assessing which Social Services (food/benefits/transportation) and other community programs will be most beneficial to improve health outcomes?

Health Homes can help.

By working with various health and community agencies that cater to serious and chronic health issues, we can swiftly connect clients to become safer and healthier within their communities.

Once an initial intake is complete, clients will be paired with and meet with their care coordinator to discuss their challenges and goals. Then a plan will be created to address immediate needs. Goals are reviewed by client and care coordinator to ensure they stay on track.

At the Alliance for Positive Health, we pride

ourselves on providing clients with wrap around services and support at every step of their journey.

**By utilizing Health Homes as an additional resource, you are not losing a client, you are offering additional care and support.**

Health Homes services are offered in Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren and Washington Counties.

Clients do not have to change medical providers or managed care programs, and their connection with Medicaid will not change by enrolling in Health Homes.

Please be sure clients being referred are Medicaid recipients living with HIV/AIDS, chronic illnesses, substance use disorder and/or mental illness.



**Left:** The Health Homes team at Employee Appreciation Day.

## Overdose Awareness Day 2023

On August 31, in honor of Overdose Awareness Day, our team was out in the community providing knowledge, resources and awareness.

In Albany we attended the Capital Region Overdose Awareness Day event at Academy Park. 33 Narcan kits were distributed, and we collaborated with multiple like-minded community organizations including HRX, Truth Pharm, Rainbow Access Initiative, Hive of Hope, and Youth Voices Matter.

Members from our Plattsburgh team attended All Ways to Recovery/MHAB Community Center in Plattsburgh where we tabled and provided information about our organization. 15 people were trained in Narcan administration and kits were distributed to all attendees. We worked in collaboration with the Champlain Valley Family Center. After the training, survivors of overdoses shared their stories.



In Hudson falls we partnered with Hope and Healing Recovery Community Outreach Center in Juckett Park. We had tabling, giveaways and Narcan training for the first hour. The second hour was a support group, followed by a candlelight vigil. This gave the community an opportunity to process their losses together, then honor the folks we have all lost. A photo can be found on Alliance's Facebook page.

Although Overdose Awareness Day has passed, the need to raise awareness remains.



**Upper Left:** AFPH staff members, Bianca Snide and Vanessa Capon conducting Narcan Administration training in Plattsburgh.

**At Left:** Tabling with Hope and Healing Recovery Community Outreach Center in Juckett Park.

**Above:** Narcan kits that are distributed free of cost.



# Employee Appreciation Day





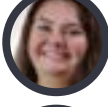
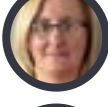
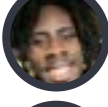

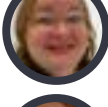
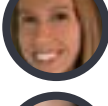
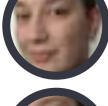
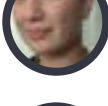
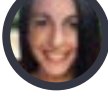

On September 14 at Moreau Lake State Park, we celebrated our incredible team on staff appreciation day! Your hard work, dedication and passion make our organization thrive.

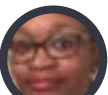
Thank you for being the heart and soul of our success!






Welcome New Staff Members!\*




- **Chuck Copenspire** (He/They), LGBT Life Services Supervisor, *Glens Falls*
- **David Criag** (He/Him), Care Coordinator, *Hudson*
- **Ely Delgado-Reyes** (She/Her), Care Coordinator Health Homes, *Albany*
- **Meredith Gavin** (She/Her), Corrections Health Specialist, *Albany & Glens Falls*
- **Jenny Gutierrez** (She/They), Care Coordinator, *Albany*
- **Lisa Harrington** (She/Her), Care Coordinator Assistant, *Glens Falls*
- **Kamrin Johnson** (He/Him), Testing Counselor, *Albany*
- **Karissa Leggett** (She/Her), Community Linkage Specialist, *Albany*
- **Elizabeth Liberty** (She/Her), Community Health Specialist, *Glens Falls*
- **Jessica Nolie** (She/Her), Marketing & Development Specialist, *Albany*
- **M Pomazal-Flanders** (They/Them), Community Health Specialist, *Schenectady*
- **Monica Scott** (She/Her), Client Support Specialist, *Albany*
- **Danielle Siskavich** (She/Her), Harm Reduction Navigation Specialist, *Plattsburgh*
- **Annalise Spinney** (She/Her), Corrections Health Specialist, *Plattsburgh*

- **Christina Tribble** (She/Her), Public Health Specialist, *Schenectady*

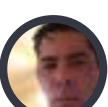
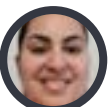


Red Ribbon Winner, July


- **Rebecca Fay** (She/Her), Program Manager, *Hudson*

Congratulate Promotions & Transfers!\*

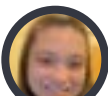
- **Rachel Field** (She/Her) Health Homes Program Manager, *Glens Falls*
- **Gedalia Nunez** (She/Her) Program Manager, Ryan White Case Management and Health Education, Part D and Emerging Communities, *Albany*
- **Christie Tomala** (She/Her), Health Homes Assistant Program Manager, *Glens Falls*


Celebrate Anniversaries! (July-September)


- **28 YEARS**  
**Randy Viele** (He/Him), Assistant Director of Program Services, *Albany*
- **8 YEARS**  
**Nikki Diaz Gonzalez** (She/Her), Test Coordinator, *Albany*
- **6 YEARS**  
**Michelle Moore** (She/Her), Care Coordinator, *Hudson*
- **Grace Egbe** (She/Her), Care Coordinator, *Albany*

- **5 YEARS**  
**Rachel Field** (She/Her), Program Manager, *Glens Falls*

- **4 YEARS**  
**Gabrielle Draper** (She/Her), Program Manager, *Albany*

- **3 YEARS**  
**Victoria Hotaling** (She/Her), Hiring & Payroll Manager, *Albany*

- **Ashley Warner** (She/Her), Assistant Program Manager, *Albany*

- **2 YEARS**  
**Kim Atkins** (He/Him), Executive Director, *Albany*


- **1 YEAR**  
**Robert Brooks** (He/Him), Test Counselor, *Schenectady*

- **Kevina Burgess** (She/Her), Care Coordinator, *Albany*

- **Andrew Demchenko** (He/Him), Quality Improvement Analyst, *Albany*

- **Andrea La Salle** (She/Her), Care Coordinator, *Plattsburgh*

- **Francesca Locorini** (She/Her), Care Coordinator Assistant, *Plattsburgh*

- **Bianca Snide** (She/Her), Harm Reduction Care Coordinator, *Plattsburgh*

“My first visit was professional, friendly and without judgements. I was comfortable, relaxed and felt empowered with my HIV. The knowledge that was given to me has changed me. I am even more proud to be a 62 year old male living with HIV. Thank you Alliance for positive health.”

– John

“That was easier than I thought! I just needed someone to sit down and help me through it.”

– New Client

\* Through September 30, 2023

## Upcoming Dates

OCTOBER

2023

*AIDS Awareness Month*  
*LGBTQ+ History Month*

**8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>**

National Case Management  
Week

**10<sup>th</sup>**

World Mental Health Day

**15<sup>th</sup>**

National Latinx AIDS  
Awareness Day

**16<sup>th</sup>**

World Food Day

**18<sup>th</sup>**

International Pronouns Day

**19<sup>rd</sup>**

Spirit Day

**23<sup>rd</sup>**

PrEP Awareness Week

**26<sup>th</sup>**

Intersex Awareness

NOVEMBER

2023

*Addiction Awareness Month*  
*Trans Awareness Month*

**5<sup>th</sup>**

Trans Parent Day

**8<sup>th</sup>**

Intersex Day of Remembrance

**12<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>**

Transgender Awareness Week

**20<sup>th</sup>**

Transgender Day of  
Remembrance

DECEMBER

2023

*World AIDS Month*  
*Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month*  
*International AIDS Awareness Month*

**1<sup>st</sup>**

World AIDS Day

**8<sup>th</sup>**

Pansexual Pride Day

*“I like working with you guys because  
you’re actually part of the community  
and I don’t have to explain why it’s so  
hard for LGBT people right now.”*

*– New Client, Glens Falls*



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



If we made an error, you would like to be added or removed from our email list, or have ideas for future articles, please contact our Development Department at 518.434.4686 or [development@alliancefph.org](mailto:development@alliancefph.org).

*Positive+ Connections* is a publication of the Alliance for Positive Health. ©2023

ALBANY  
927 Broadway, Albany, NY 12207  
518.434.4686

GLENS FALLS  
13 Chester St, Glens Falls, NY 12801  
518.743.0703

HUDSON  
160 Fairview Ave, Hudson, NY 12534  
518.828.3624

PLATTSBURGH  
202 Cornelia St, Plattsburgh, NY 12901  
518.563.2437

SCHENECTADY  
155 Erie Blvd, Schenectady, NY 12305  
518.346.9272