

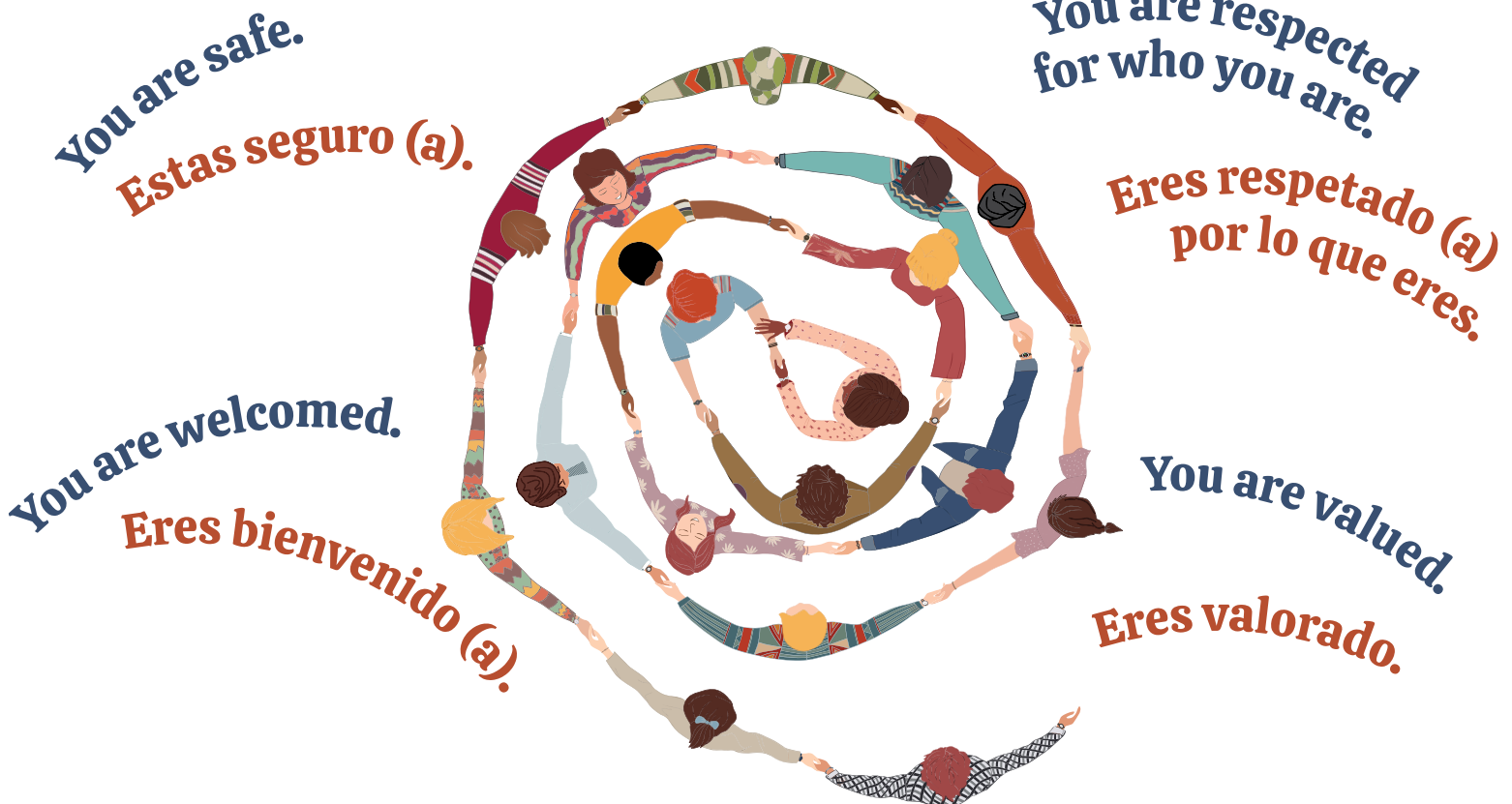
POSITIVE+

Winter 2024

CONNECTIONS

*Your Connection to the
Alliance for Positive Health*

Inside:
We've Moved!
World AIDS Day
Housing Spotlight
Staff Milestones
& more!





FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

B. Kim Atkins

Dear Friends,

First and foremost, happy New Year to all!

I hope everyone enjoyed their holidays and took some time to relax, catch up with loved ones, and reset. We've been busy as usual at the Alliance – particularly so as we prepared to move into our new office space in Albany. Thanks to the hard work of our staff, the process went smoothly. I appreciate everyone's flexibility, willingness to pitch it, and accommodation to changes.

Updated phone systems, a one-floor, floor plan to make for better communication and camaraderie – it's all coming together.

In months to follow we are planning an open house, and we look forward to welcoming you all into our new space.

Amid the challenges of our move and the never-ending grant applications, I took some time to reflect on the past year, and I am extremely proud but not at all surprised at how much we have accomplished: the expansion of our harm reduction services to additional counties, providing comprehensive services to those aging with HIV, increased outreach to LGBTQ+ individuals to engage and connect them to necessary health services; and the efforts to bring our support services to those throughout our region. Our partnerships grew stronger and we forged new, meaningful relationships. This is a true testament to the Alliance for Positive Health team.

In just the past three months, Gilead sponsored our PrEP Awareness and World AIDS Day campaigns and local media continued to show their support to our cause. Times Union covered a story acknowledging us for all we do, and we took the opportunity to chat with WNYT on World AIDS day to spread awareness on the importance of knowing your status, the ease of testing, and the resources we provide to the community.

As I look forward to the coming year I am confident we will continue to make impactful strides. With expansions, additions, and changes on the horizon, our mission of ending the epidemic remains our guiding star. We will continue to work until HIV/AIDS is no more, and, as long as the community needs us, we will be here to meet their needs.

Warm Regards,

B. Kim Atkins, Executive Director
Alliance for Positive Health



We've Moved!

As of January 2, 845 Central Avenue became our new Albany office. Thanks to collaboration and hard work, we are right at home. Services have resumed and we've welcomed clients with open arms.

Staff are enjoying seeing friendly faces everyday and building stronger bonds.

We're most proud of the way the building makes clients and staff feel warm and welcomed. The graphic on the front cover

of this newsletter greets people when they walk in. Everyone is welcome here.

In the near future, we will be holding a client lunch and an open house for our partners, colleagues, and friends. Take the opportunity to learn more about our organization, programs, services, meet staff, and tour our new space. Light refreshments will be served!

We can't wait for you to join us.

WALL OF FAME

In the coming days, you'll be seeing something new in the kitchen. Check out our Wall of Fame to see if you can find yourself!

We'll be posting a new version every quarter, so please send photos to jnolie@alliancefph.org - the more the better!!



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ADMINISTRATION

What makes a star employee? A dedication to the mission, unwavering commitment to finding solutions and making clients feel respected, valued, and important. Transportation Specialist, Colin Coughlan, exemplifies all of the above and more.

How long have you worked at the Alliance?

At the end of March it will be 3 years!

What about the work appeals to you?

Working with a predominately queer adult population, because of neglect from the government many of our queer elders did not survive the AIDS epidemic and as a young gay boy I did not see representation of a happy queer future to look forward to. It is an honor to work with those who survived and persevered through the 80s and to hear their stories and life experiences when they choose to share, and I hope the younger generation of queers are doing them proud!

What does a typical day at work entail?

A large coffee, misspelled or confusing text/email responses until the caffeine kicks in, a cozy sweater, listening to the Renaissance World Tour playlist, office chit-chat, and if I am working from home there is a 90% chance I have a cat on my lap.

What do you find most challenging?

Knowing and accepting that sometimes things are just beyond our control, I think we all wish we could just wave a magic wand and alleviate all of our clients' struggles.

What is your proudest moment at the Alliance?

Securing Uber Health as a contracted transportation vendor. We went through a bit of a rough patch with previous vendors, and using Uber has revolutionized the way RWT functions. Uber covers a wide range of counties, and allows us the ability to track ride progress, make split second changes, and provides accountability to ensure our clients are receiving the safest and most efficient services possible. Not to mention the cost per ride is much cheaper than Taxis.

What advice would you give on working here?

Try and meet and get to know people across grants and departments. We are all so bonded with our teammates and go through a lot together, but I encourage everyone to build connections across programs to hear different perspectives and be more informed on program services other than your own.

What three words would you use to describe yourself?

Bubbly, ambitious, and supportive.

What are your hobbies?

Performing in drag, cooking, makeup, yoga, dancing, video games

What is your favorite thing to do?

Be surrounded by friends and loved ones, it doesn't matter the occasion, activity, nor place - moments with people who mean the most keep my heart full.

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

I was a D1 athlete in college. I was a springboard diver at Binghamton University.



World AIDS Day



Each year on December 1, World AIDS Day, we honor and remember the lives lost to HIV/AIDS and continue to support those living with HIV/AIDS.

As individuals live longer, productive lives, they face unique challenges aging with HIV. Recognizing the changing needs of our community, we are proud to offer a variety of services for People Aging with HIV (PAWH).

This year we took the opportunity to spread awareness and speak on the importance of testing. Executive Director Kim Atkins was invited for an interview with [WTEN](#), and shared information and resources available to the community.

On World AIDS Day, and everyday, we are here to support everyone, no matter where they are in their journey. Whether you were recently diagnosed, a long-term survivor living with HIV/AIDS, or unsure of your status and looking to be tested, we can help.

Please give a warm welcome to our two newest board members

Maureen Buckley of Consultant Inspire Confidence Group, A Private Wealth Advisory Practice of Ameriprise Financial, LLC

Kimberly J. Irish, PhD Partner, Director of Medical Strategy Peregrine Market Access.

“When my doctor and I decided it was time for me to stop working due to complications of long term AIDS the wait for social security disability was excessively long, and housing was a major concern.

The Alliance for Positive Health housing team made it financially possible for me to continue to remain in my current residence. It was a very difficult time in my life and Alliance and its staff was there for me and continue to be very supportive of my housing needs!”

*– Anonymous
Albany County client*

HOUSING SPOTLIGHT

*Randy Viele, Assistant Director of Program Services and
Jenn Braun, Housing & Financial Assistance Program Manager
interviewed by Jessica Nolie, Marketing & Development Specialist*



Housing is health care; we cannot expect people's lives to fall into place without having a stable place to live. From inflation to unrealistic rental qualifications, and simply a shortage of properties, the state of housing today is in crisis.

Our housing program works to stabilize our clients, and we set long term goals. We aim to set a path for successful, stable, and self-sufficient lives. To be successful in our program, you must be an active participant in the process and in your life.



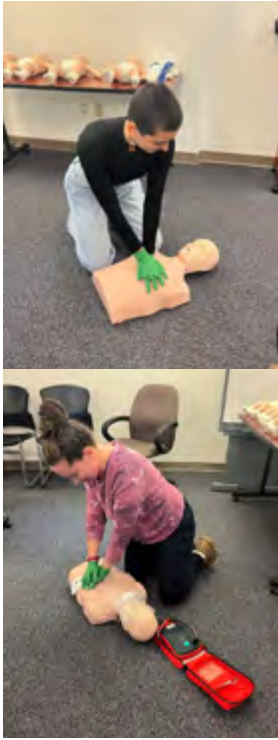
Our program criteria require individuals to be HIV+, at risk or homeless, and/or transitioning

from an institutional setting to be eligible for assistance. We provide an affordable housing list to assist with identifying housing. All our rentals meet HUD standards – ensuring that we are not putting people in unsafe housing situations. And we help in unique ways, like covering the costs of moving and storage.

Many of our clients struggle with mobility issues, which brings additional challenges when seeking appropriate housing. Shelter systems often lack wheelchair accessible entrances and exits and require clients to walk flights of stairs. Placing ramps in apartments can be an expensive task that many landlords do not deem necessary. Other clients rely heavily on their pets as their biggest form of support – and many cannot take their pets to shelter. The same goes for families without children – many partners will be split up by the system; and that often means staying homeless to stay close to support.

DSS and landlords pose as barriers as well. Clients must go through DSS before we can help. At virtually every agency, including DSS, resources

***“I’ve been a member of the Alliance For Positive housing program for a number of years. (It) has given me stability and peace of mind and has allowed me to age in place with dignity which is invaluable to people with disabilities and chronic illnesses. I’m not sure I can put into words how grateful I am to the staff and the programs of the Alliance for Positive Health.”
– Anonymous client in Clinton County***



are strapped. This leads to long wait times on decisions and longer time spent homeless. The quicker a decision is made; the quicker stable housing can be obtained. Additionally, as housing stock has gone down, rent has gone up. Landlords must be willing to accept subsidies to help low-income people, and many who once collaborated with us have phased out.

However, Todd Cutler has remained. Todd got

involved with our landlord program through his furniture business; and he is not new to this – he can recall stories about clients of ours from 20 years ago! In addition to collaborating with us, Todd has over 200 units and works with organizations like Unity House, Equinox, Albany County Section 8, Catholic Charities, and St. Josephs. Cutler Properties has been a dedicated partner of ours, and their commitment to ensuring housing stability for our clients is unwavering. Partners like them are the reason we can help our community the way that we do.

The system relies on our team and the programs we facilitate to ensure people are placed in housing and shelters that accommodate their specific, unique needs. The services we provide at the Alliance aim to address and navigate barriers before they become an issue.

At the end of the day the housing crisis does not have one quick fix. It's a systematic issue. We work every day to help clients get safe housing, but ultimately, we are working to effect collective

“Working with the housing assistance team at The Alliance has been such a positive experience!”

I started working with Jenn in 2019 and my current ally, Danielle. From the beginning, it has always been such a great experience.

These are people who display genuine care and compassion. I'm truly grateful for The Alliance!”
–Client in Rensselaer County

change. You too can be part of this change– keep talking about the issues at hand, advocate when possible, and before you know it, we will be one step closer. Together we can make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Opposite page: The Housing Team, Dan Callahan Housing Retention Specialist, Olivia Ortiz HOPWA Coordinator, Jenn Braun, Housing and Financial Assistance Program Manager, Danielle Patterson Housing Retention Specialist, Camryn Verdi Client Support Specialist

This page: Members of the housing team learning CPR, Top: Olivia Ortiz, Bottom: Danielle Patterson

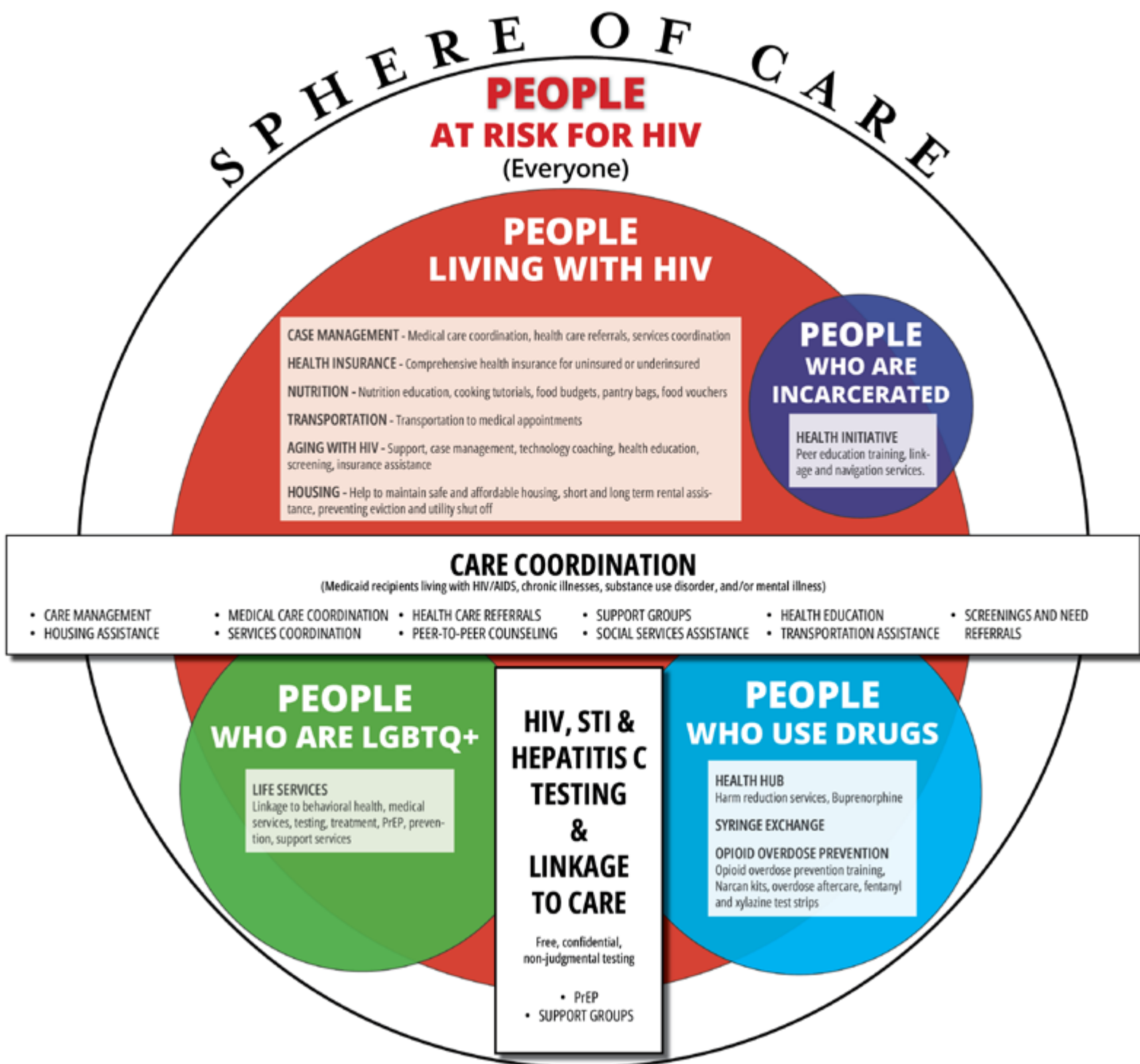
Sphere of Care

How many times has someone asked you what the Alliance does and you've struggled to explain it? It's hard! How many of you aren't even sure what some of the other programs do or what clients they serve?

We developed the Sphere Of Care to *SHOW* what

we do and who we serve. Find your program or programs and see how they relate to others. Are there other things serving the same people that might be helpful for some of your clients?

Check it out full size in the lobby of the Albany office.



2022–2023 By The Numbers

It's tough to understand how many people our programs impact we're busy taking care of our own clients and responsibilities. We get it!

In case you haven't had a chance to take a look at last year's Annual Report, here are the numbers – the clients we served and the services provided.

The Alliance for Positive Health reached more than 28 people and provided 210 services EVERY SINGLE WORKDAY!

PROVIDING THE BASICS

34,151

meals provided

107

clients served
with housing

MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT TO KEEP THEM SAFE

2,079 harm reduction
services provided

366 clients provided syringe
exchange services

3,506 individuals trained to
use Naloxone (Narcan)

3,892 Naloxone (Narcan)
kits distributed

508 Buprenorphine
clinic services

7,403 clients

54,727 services

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO CULTURALLY COMPETENT CARE

12,279

care coordination
services

1,032

rides provided
to medical
appointments

TESTING

1,465
STI Tests

549
HIV Tests

76
Hep C
Tests

SAFE AND HEALTHY REENTRY INTO COMMUNITIES

74 clients served

Staff Milestones October–December 2023

Welcome New Staff Members!



Inquil Brown (She/Her), Care Coordinator
Health Homes, *Albany*



Cierra Leo (She/Her), Harm Reduction
Specialist, *Albany*



William Parslow (He/Him), Client Support/
Health Educator, *Albany*



Nick Cramer (He/Him), Linkage Specialist,
Albany



Naesha Kelley (She/Her), Harm Reduction
Specialist, *Glens Falls*



Nicole Babu (She/Her), Data Entry
Specialist, *Plattsburgh*



Shannon Goddeau (She/Her), Care
Coordinator Health Homes, *Plattsburgh*



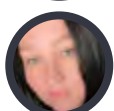
Kayla Nunez (She/Her), Harm Reduction
Specialist, *Albany*



Asia Harris-Relation (She/Her), Harm
Reduction Specialist, *Plattsburgh*



Christopher Grullon (He/Him), Health
Homes Training Coordinator, *Albany*



Christina Griffin (She/Her), Overdose
Prevention Coordinator, *Albany*

Red Ribbon Winner, December

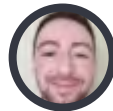


Theresa Goodman (She/Her), Executive
Assistant, *Albany*

Congratulate Promotions & Transfers!



Chuck Copenspire (He/Him), Program
Manager, *Glens Falls*



Francis Grandis (They/Them), Harm
Reduction Specialist, *Albany*



Heather Mattison (She/Her), Program
Manager, *Glens Falls*



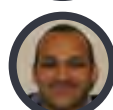
Bridgid Murnane (She/Her), Regional
Program Manager, *Albany*

Celebrate Anniversaries! (October–December)



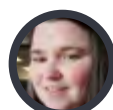
16 YEARS

Michael Curran (He/Him), Accounting
Manager, *Albany*



10 YEARS

Steven Pagan (He/Him), IT Specialist,
Albany



7 YEARS

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



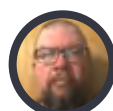
6 YEARS

Korey Posillico (He/Him), Program
Manager, *Albany*



5 YEARS

Jenn Braun (She/Her), Program Manager,
Albany



4 YEARS

Brad Morgan (He/Him), Data Systems
Coordinator, *Albany*

**3 YEARS**

Tin Vo (He/Him), Care Coordinator, *Albany*



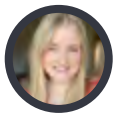
Caitlin Ball (She/Her), Finance Assistant, *Albany*

**2 YEARS**

Greyson Allen (He/Him), Corrections Health Specialist, *Plattsburgh*



Dan Callahan (He/Him), Housing Retention Specialist, *Albany*



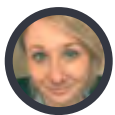
Chelsey Hanley (She/Her), Program Manager, *Plattsburgh*



Heather Mattison (She/Her), Program Manager, *Glens Falls*



Danielle Patterson (She/Her), Housing Retention Specialist, *Albany*

**1 YEAR**

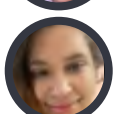
Tarissa Healey (She/Her), Care Coordinator, *Plattsburgh*



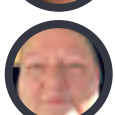
Angelica Mack (She/Her), Case Manager, *Albany*



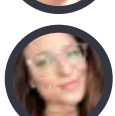
Aurora Powell (They/Them), Case Manager / Health Educator, *Albany*



Gabby Quintana (She/Her), Harm Reduction Specialist, *Plattsburgh*



Sheri Turton-Cassidy (She/Her), Enrollment Specialist, *Albany*



Morgan Ann Winters (She/Her), Care Coordinator, *Glens Falls*

“This is work you cannot help but take home with you. A client in need of housing, moving assistance, utility arrears, etc is not something that can be set aside on the weekend.

Although our hours are weekdays, my work brain is constantly thinking about finding solutions to safe, sustainable housing for our clients.

As a housing team, we do our best to create good connections with our clients and landlords to make sure can mediate should housing issues arise.

Housing is where my heart is! Housing is essential and everyone should have access to it. I am lucky to be able to do this kind of work every day.”

– Jenn Braun

Upcoming Dates

FEBRUARY

2024

Black History Month

7th
National Black HIV/AIDS
Awareness Day

19th
Presidents Day

28th
HIV is Not a Crime Day

MARCH

2024

Women's History Month
National Nutrition Month

10th
National Women & Girls HIV/
AIDS Awareness Day

20th
National Native HIV/AIDS
Awareness Day

20th-24th
National LGBTQ+ Health
Awareness Week

31st
International Transgender
Day of Visibility

APRIL

2024

National Minority Health Month
STI Awareness Month

4th-8th
National Public Health Week

10th
National Youth HIV/AIDS
Awareness Day

18th
National Transgender HIV
Testing Day

26th
Lesbian Visibility Day

***"I went here for
the first time
to get free
testing and got***

***a test that was administered by Brooks. This place has not only
the most calmest ambience, but the nicest staff ever, especially
Brooks. I couldn't have had a more comfortable, validating,
non-judge-mental, and overall positive experience."***

– Google Review



alliance
for positive health

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Department at 518.434.4686 or jnolie@alliancefph.org.

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