



Youth Shaping Positive Change

**Fall 2016 Update to Alternatives'
Ambassadors Circle Members**



AMBASSADORS CIRCULAR





**“The best part of
Alternatives is having
a chance to express how
I feel.”**

- Urban Arts Participant

A NOTE FROM JUDY GALL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This is our inaugural Ambassadors Circular and part of our effort to keep you more updated on our impact. Last year, Alternatives worked with more than 4,000 young people and trained more than 1,200 teachers and administrators within the Chicago Public Schools. These are growing numbers, but they don't show the full impact of our work.

Here are just a few statistics from the past year:

- **Career and Employment Services**

88% of employers said they would hire the youth placed with them if a position opened up

- **Girl World**

92% of participants reported setting higher goals for the future as a result of the program

- **Behavioral Health**

86% of youth showed improvement on their post-assessment and 85% of youth whose caregiver was also participating in their counseling made improvements in that relationship



I am so committed to this work because I have seen what youth can accomplish over and over again. One young person really captured it by saying, "I think the best part of Alternatives is the open space and the freedom to be yourself. It is an experience I will never forget." I'm so proud of what our youth accomplish with staff members every day. This is the impact that your support makes possible. We truly appreciate your commitment to Alternatives and the young people of Chicago.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Judith A. Gall".



GREENCORPS

Alternatives' Career and Employment Services Greencorps program, involves youth in environmentally friendly projects. Participants learned the fundamentals of bike repair and bike safety.

Youth learned how to break-down and rebuild a bicycle, how to change tires, fix breaks, true wheels, and repair gear shifters. In addition to learning the basics of bike maintenance, youth learned proper hand signals and how to ride safely in an urban environment.

Participants had a blast, and some have even gone on to work in bike shops.



“ I didn’t expect to learn about bikes, but I’m glad I did because it prepared me for when I got one. I know things that I wouldn’t have known.”

- Greencorps Participant

DONOR PROFILES

“There’s no shortage of organizations accepting donations, especially organizations that serve youth.

I choose to give to Alternatives because its programs are smart, engaging, and responsive to young people’s unique needs. Programs such as Restorative Justice and Girl World make a difference in young people’s lives, not only for that moment but also into adulthood.”



MAMTA MUJUMDAR
ATTORNEY, MOMKUS,
McCLUSKY, ROBERTS LLC.

Mamta has served as a board member since 2013 and became Board Secretary in 2016.

“I support Alternatives because they ‘get it.’



DAVID LEVINE,
SR. VICE PRESIDENT
OPTIUM INTERNATIONAL

They get the challenges confronting kids in Chicago, they get that the best solutions come from the kids themselves and the communities in which they live, and they get that cultivating healthy and active kids supports a future we all want to see. For over 45 years the agency has overcome obstacles to maintain the value of helping empower youth. Please join me in supporting Alternatives, some of the ‘salt and light’ of the great city of Chicago.”

David served as a board member for 7 years (2009 until 2015) and as Board President (2010-2013).

45TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

On Saturday, September 10th, Alternatives celebrated its 45th year of building community with youth by hosting a community block party, featuring music, games, performances, and a special unveiling of our new logo! We want to thank our wonderful Alternatives' community for supporting this memorable celebration.



Positive programs
defined, developed
and led by youth.

Old Logo



New Logo



RJ AND URBAN ARTS IN ENGLEWOOD

Alternatives has been working closely with public high school students in the Englewood Community Area.

At Robeson High School, our Restorative Justice and Urban Arts programs have been working



together to foster stronger school community, resolve conflicts among students and staff, and assist students in developing their social and emotional skills.

During the 2015-2016 school year, students and teachers at Robeson confronted numerous challenges, including budget cuts and community violence. Students collaborated with Alternatives' staff from both programs to process their traumatic experiences and channel them into building stronger

school community. Dealing with the trauma of violence is never easy or straightforward. Alternatives' programs give students a space in which they can feel safe expressing their feelings.

In September, Robeson Peace Ambassadors (student leaders in the Restorative Justice program), organized a Peace Rally. Nearly 1/3 of the school's daily attendance participated in the event. One of the students most active in the event had developed a reputation among teachers for being volatile and combative with others.

This was a great opportunity for his teachers who also attended to see a different side of him, which has helped in their efforts to build rapport. In turn, the teachers who attended the Peace Rally boosted their credibility among students, who saw teachers' participation as a gesture of caring for the whole student, not just their attendance and test scores.

What is the Ambassadors Circle?

Alternatives' Ambassadors Circle is a group of committed individual donors who generously support Alternatives, Inc. with annual gifts of \$1,000 or more.

Thank you to our Ambassadors Circle Members

Jeffery Becker

Sally Beverly

Colleen Carrillo

Michael and Susan L. Cramarosso

Larry and Char Damron

Randall and Sally Doubet-King

Rob Flot

Judith Gall

Meredith George

Ozzie and Cheni Godinez

Ann Kennedy

David and Karla Levine

Debra Levis and Family

Larry McLaughlin

Jeanne McLaughlin

Mamta Mujumdar

Ellen Sadur

Larry and Ardis Sophian

Jennifer Steans

Gregory A. Stewart and Dr. Robert M. Turner

Cat Tager

Darran Wee and David Single

Catherine Weidner

Steve Wilcox

Constance and Hugh Williams

Did you know?

You can now make secure monthly reoccurring credit or debit card gifts to Alternatives, Inc. You can set them up on our website or by contacting us. Additionally, we can now accept gifts in the form of stocks or mutual funds.

If you are interested in either of these, please contact Kirsten Rokke, Director of Resource Development at 773-506-7474 or krokke@alternativesyouth.org.



**Alternatives, Inc.
4730 N. Sheridan Rd.
773.506.7474**

Info@alternativesyouth.org

**710 E. 47th St. Suite 200-201
Chicago, IL 60653**

***By appointment only**

Connect with us



@alternativesinc

[Facebook.com/alternativesyouth](https://www.facebook.com/alternativesyouth)

Visit us at www.alternativesyouth.org