

October 2018

THE



NEWSLETTER



I think we can all agree that Altrusa's future is tied strongly to our ability to engage with the youth of today and young adults of tomorrow and encourage a passion for service. ASTRA is an excellent vehicle for achieving this. It is great to see so many clubs supporting ASTRA clubs and even better still when we see the formation of new ASTRA Clubs. One of our challenges though is how as an organization we maintain contact with our ASTRA members and get them to become Altrusa members. With this in mind a few months ago we set up a special task force to investigate the formation of an ASTRA alumni. Where did this

idea come from – I would love to say it was mine, but unfortunately it wasn't – the idea came from a young ASTRA member who was about to graduate and move onto college. I am pleased to report that the task force made excellent progress and at our October International Board meeting we approved establishing an ASTRA Alumni. Please keep an eye out for more news on this front in the coming months as we bring this concept to life.

Leanne Milligan
International President 2017-2019



ASTRA - WHAT'S NEW?

April Smith, International ASTRA Chair

For all of you involved with ASTRA Clubs I hope you have been keeping up with the information about the important things the International ASTRA Committee has been working on this past year. In the ASTRA Newsletter that was sent out in March I mentioned the committee was focusing on ways to make the ASTRA experience even better and more successful for ASTRA members as well as all our dedicated Altrusa members who put in countless hours as ASTRA Chairs, advisors and mentors. Our main priority was communication and we hope we are accomplishing this goal. I want to thank those of you who have reached out to the committee with your ideas, suggestions and concerns. We have received some valuable input, great ideas and answered some important questions as we work on updating and improving the ASTRA program. This newsletter will cover specific information on the different areas the committee has worked on and important items to share with your ASTRA Clubs.

ASTRA Service Club Award

Attached at the end of this newsletter is the document for the ASTRA Service Award Guidelines. We sent this information out in September in an email for all the Governors, Club Presidents, ASTRA Chairs and Advisors. These guidelines were approved by both the International Board and the International Foundation Board and will be in effect for the 2019 District Conferences and the International Convention. It is similar to the guidelines used for the Mamie L. Bass Award for the Altrusa Clubs' Service Projects.

Unfortunately, after we sent out the document in September we found a few errors and have since edited it to reflect all the correct information. This document will also be available soon on the International website on the ASTRA page. Please be sure all ASTRA Clubs are given this information as they work on their service projects this year and decide what project they would like to submit.

New ASTRA Clubs - Charter Process

We are very excited that there have been quite a few new ASTRA Clubs chartered this past year. We are still working on setting up an efficient system to document and maintain records on all the ASTRA Clubs, the dates they chartered and if and when they may have disbanded. There is still confusion as to the steps to charter a new club and we are going to address that in the new ASTRA Manual that we are currently working on with a newly established Task Force. Here is a basic list of what needs to be done:

1. Sponsoring Altrusa Club send Letter of Intent (may be an email) to the International President at the International Office. Include Sponsoring Altrusa Club Information, Name of ASTRA Advisor for Club and contact information, Name of ASTRA Club or school of proposed club, age level of ASTRA Club members (middle, high school or college).

2. When club attains 15 members required to charter send names, emails and phone numbers for members and include names of elected officers. Specify a date the club will officially charter.
3. When the International office receives all the information of club members a Club Charter Certificate and Charter Certificates for each member will be prepared and sent to ASTRA Club Advisor along with a Letter of Congratulations from the International President.

Please let us know if you need any additional information or help with this process.

International Website - ASTRA

The new International Website has been up and running now for many months but you may have noticed there is no ASTRA page yet. So much work needed to be done to get the new website set up and our ASTRA Committee has been revising and updating so many things lately that it was decided to add the ASTRA page when we had more current information completed to share. We are about ready to launch the ASTRA page, which will be similar to the Altrusa Member page. It will also include a Toolkit section to easily access forms and items for Club Advisors. Keep checking the website and if there is something you need that you can't find please contact us at ASTRA@altrusa.org or at the International office.

ASTRA Logo

I'm sure most of you know we have a generic Altrusa Logo with ASTRA inserted where an Altrusa club name would usually appear. Did you know you could also request an Altrusa Logo with your own ASTRA Club name? Here is a sample of what it would look like. All you need to do to get your club's personalized logo is contact the International office and give them your club's name and they will get it set up.



ASTRA Manual

One of the goals our International ASTRA Committee set for ourselves this Biennium was to update the ASTRA Advisors and Members Guide. This is a pretty big job and has required us to work on many of the components that would not only be included in this document but might be more accessible in a Toolkit on the website. International President, Leanne Milligan has set up a Task Force specifically to work with our committee on this undertaking. The Task Force Chair is one of our own committee members, Pam Hayes from New Zealand who will work with a committee to help identify the changes and updates that need to be made. We are hoping to have just one manual to be available for both Advisors and Members that is easy to understand and is "user friendly."

Follow ASTRA on Facebook

Wyneisha at the International office has recently set up a Facebook page for ASTRA International. Please look for it and "like" it as well as follow the posts. We are still working out some of the kinks and I am personally still trying to figure out how to maneuver around

Facebook. We are hoping this will be a valuable social media tool for all of our ASTRA Clubs to establish contact and learn more about other ASTRA Clubs throughout the International organization.

ASTRA Service Projects Spreadsheet

The email that was sent out in September with information on the ASTRA Service Award also included a link to an Excel spreadsheet that listed Service Projects shared by many of our ASTRA Clubs. We are planning to have this available on the International website soon. If you did not get a chance to see it or save it please contact us at ASTRA@altrusa.org and we can either mail you a copy or send it in an email.

ASTRA Alumni and Virtual Club Task Forces

In addition to the ASTRA Manual Task Force, two more Task Forces were set up. One to look at maintaining contact with ASTRA Alumni members who have graduated but are not yet ready to join Altrusa and an additional task force to look at the possibility of starting ASTRA Virtual Clubs. These committees are in the process of meeting to discuss and present recommendations in these areas of growth for ASTRA.

In Closing please enjoy the articles contributed by our committee members Pam Hayes from New Zealand, District Fifteen and Julie Ruiz from Texas, District Nine. Pam’s article shares with us the different academic calendar year for New Zealand and even though they may be doing things at different times of the year than most of the ASTRA Clubs you will see that their projects are similar and represent the spirit of Altrusa.

I also want to put the spotlight on our ASTRA International Committee listed below and thank them for their dedication and commitment to ASTRA and all the time and effort they have put in this past year to help improve the ASTRA experience. I want to remind everyone that each member of our committee is a liaison to both their own District ASTRA Clubs and one or two more Districts. You can reach out to them with your questions, concerns or comments and as always you can reach us at ASTRA@altrusa.org or through the International office.

Committee Members & Liaison Districts

April Smith, Chair	District Eleven, California, aprilboat@gmail.com	District Two
Sylvia Juarbe, Vice Chair	District Fourteen, Puerto Rico, sylviajuarbe@yahoo.com	District One & Three
Ronda Blakley	District Eight, Missouri, rondab@cx.macc.edu	District Five
Pam Hayes	District Fifteen, New Zealand, pamela.hayes@xtra.co.nz	District Six & Seven
Debbie McBee	District Twelve, Oregon, mmcbeed@aol.com	District Ten
Julie Ruiz	District Nine, Texas, julie_ruiz@yahoo.com	District Four

ASTRA in New Zealand (District Fifteen)

Pam Hayes, International ASTRA Committee

ASTRA in New Zealand commences at the beginning of the School year, which is February and finishes at the end of the third term, which is the end of September. This is due to the fact that throughout the next term (to mid-December) most students are involved in exams and Summer Sports fixtures.

ASTRA Club of Auckland Central – 20+ Members

The girls at Auckland Girls Grammar School have had a busy year with their fundraising and projects and are doing well.



1. Easter Raffle - In Term 1 they held an Easter Raffle and prepared three hampers open to both students and teachers.
2. Ronald McDonald Cook night - In Term 3, seven ASTRA students and one parent participated in the Ronald McDonald cook night at the Ronald McDonald cookhouse in Grafton Mews, this is a children's hospital. They cooked a variety of meals for 40 or more families and took full responsibility of the process of buying ingredients, preparing food, serving, and cleaning.
3. Star Ship Hospital Emergency Packs - We are currently in Term 3 planning emergency packs for families who stay with their children overnight at the Star ship Hospital. We will be contacting companies to support us by providing items for these packs and aim to make 200 or more packs. Towards the end of the term we will personally deliver these packs to the hospital.

Waitaki Girls High School ASTRA

The members have been collecting items for the Emergency bags they are making for the Emergency Department, Oamaru Hospital for patients who arrive with nothing. Local companies have all been very generous with donations. A sewing bee is planned for members to make bags for six children and six adults.

Recently they catered a ball, providing supper. Six members made sandwiches under supervision and another four came at night to finish creaming, serve the supper and clean up. They received a cheque for \$500.00 for their efforts – a great result. Their Sponsor Club, Altrusa Club of Oamaru contributed to the supper.

ASTRA . . . Each Club is Unique!!

Julie Ruiz, International ASTRA Committee

I have visited with many Altrusa Clubs who have expressed interest in forming an ASTRA club. There is always a **BUT** . . . and the concerns or roadblocks immediately follow throughout our discussions. Many of the issues that seem to be hindering progress in forming new clubs can be conquered when we work together as a united Altrusa TEAM! Your District and International ASTRA Committee members are there to help you combat the issues! Something important that all clubs should know is that each ASTRA Club can be unique in its member recruiting, meeting dates, times, meeting structure and board positions. I would like to spotlight District Nine to provide examples of 3 different ASTRA Clubs to provide some insight.



ASTRA Club of University of Mary Hardin Baylor:

This club started with just 3 officers and now has an active membership of over 30 each year. They chose to meet **twice per month in the evenings**. We have found that the college students are able to handle more of the Parliamentary Procedures and embrace the creation, organization and implantation of their own projects. Our sponsoring Altrusa club is active in hosting social events and projects with the club.



ASTRA of Belton High School:

This club started with 15 and now has a very cyclical membership with about 70 at its peak and 20 at its lowest. This club meets after school **every other month** and functions at its prime when we have projects at EVERY meeting. We have found that ASTRA BHS members are so involved in other sports, clubs and activities that we are more successful providing the service opportunities rather than having them formulate and execute the projects themselves.

ASTRA of Salado High School:

This club started with 32 and keeps an active rolling membership of at least 50. The success of this club is attributed to having our on-campus advisor having been recruited to become an Altrusa member as well. This club meets **DURING the school day once per month** during their advisory period, which is only 30 minutes in duration. There is a project at every meeting and this club also is very active in organizing and executing projects for themselves and their school.



There are many other styles of clubs being formulated such as in after-school programs and middle schools. I encourage you to think “outside the box” and consider forming an ASTRA Club that will benefit youth and enrich your Altrusa members as well. Don’t sweat the details in the beginning. Just focus on how we make our organization so special and the motto of ASTRA “GROWING IN SERVICE”!!



ASTRA SERVICE AWARD GUIDELINES

The ASTRA Club Service Award has been established by Altrusa International and sponsored by Altrusa International Foundation to encourage ASTRA Clubs to actively participate in service projects designed to meet specific needs in the local community or within their own school community. This award is an opportunity for Altrusa International to recognize outstanding ASTRA Clubs for their achievements in service.

District and International Competition

Service projects nominated for the ASTRA Service Award are judged each year at District Conferences. First-place winners from each District are entered in the competition at the International Level. Established judging criteria are used by Districts and by International. Projects will be assessed by impartial judges based on their merits and results. One (1) service project from Clubs-At-Large may be included in the competition at the International level. This service project selection will be organized and overseen by the International ASTRA Committee.

Eligibility

Every ASTRA Club is eligible to enter one (1) service project each year. Projects that are primarily fundraising projects are not eligible. Also, a project submitted for an ASTRA Service Award may not also be submitted for the Mamie L. Bass Service Award. Clubs can enter any service project that was:

- Conducted in its entirety during the twelve (12) month period ending prior to the date of submission of entries for judging; or
- Completed on or before the date of submission or entries for judging; or
- Club with projects of on-going nature may submit for judging those major activities conducted during the twelve (12) month period ending prior to the date of submission for judging.

Guidelines for Entries

- All entries may not exceed three (3) pages. Must be typed and single spaced with a 12-point font, black print on white paper and presented in PDF format.
- First page heading to be ASTRA Service Award Nomination and include Name of Service Project, ASTRA Club's name, sponsoring Altrusa Club, city and state, District and date of project. Must also include contact person with email address and phone number.

* SAMPLE:

ASTRA Service Award Nomination	
"Dr. Seuss – Read Across America" – March 2, 2018	
ASTRA Club of Central High School Springfield, CA	Altrusa International of Springfield, Inc. District Eleven ASTRA Chair: Mary Jones mjones@mail.com 987-654-3211

- The following points or questions should be addressed in the summary to assist judges in evaluating the submission.
 - Selection of Project:
 1. Include reasons for choosing the project.
 2. The goals of the project.
 3. What resources were required for the project. If fundraising was necessary, describe the technique and how much was raised.
 - Summary
 1. Who was impacted and how?
 2. Short and long-term consequences of the project.

3. Facts that show the importance of this project.
4. What was the club's membership involvement and describe how the ASTRA Club and its members benefitted by participating in the project?
5. Was the sponsoring Altrusa Club involved? Describe their involvement.
6. Photos may also be included as long as they are within the body of the three (3) pages and formatted within the PDF document.

Procedures for Submitting Entries

- Clubs submit entries for the District competition on or before the date established by the District Governor. Entries must be submitted electronically in PDF format.
- The winning District entry is forwarded to the International Office by the Governor or their nominee immediately following the close of District Conference.
 - Winning entries must reach the International Office no later than June 1st in the Convention year to be considered in the International competition.

Judging Committees

- The District Governor appoints the District ASTRA Chair, or another person if the District does not have an ASTRA Chair, to select three (3) individuals of the general public to serve as judges and provide them with judging instructions, criteria and score sheets.
- The International ASTRA Committee coordinates the International judging activity. The Chair appoints three (3) individuals of the general public to serve as judges.

Awards and Awards Presentations

The names of the winning entries should be kept secret until the time of the awards presentation.

District Awards: A Certificate of Merit is presented by the District to the First-Place award winning Club at each District Conference. Runner's up may be given Honorable Mention and all clubs may be given Participation Certificates.

International Awards at Conference: An award of \$100 (U.S. dollars) is presented by the International Representative to the winning ASTRA Club or Altrusa Sponsoring Club at the District Conference. For ASTRA Clubs-At-Large, an award of \$100 (U.S. Dollars) is given to the winning ASTRA Club or Altrusa Sponsoring Club. Checks shall be made out to the sponsoring Altrusa Club to handle the disbursement to the ASTRA Club.

International Awards at Convention: An award of \$300 (U.S. dollars) is presented to the First-Place ASTRA Club winner and awards of \$75 (U.S. dollars) are given to ASTRA Clubs winning First and Second-Place Honorable Mentions. Checks shall be made out to the sponsoring Altrusa Club to handle the disbursement to the ASTRA Club.

**ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL ASTRA CLUB SERVICE AWARD
JUDGING CRITERIA AND SCORE SHEET**

I. Selection of Project (15 points)

- A. States reason for selecting project.
- B. Goal of the project.
- C. Resources that were required to complete project.

Maximum Points: 15

Points Earned: _____

II. Summary (30 points)

- A. Who was impacted and how?
- B. Short and long-term consequences of the project.
- C. Facts that show the importance of this project.
- D. Description of how the ASTRA Club and its members benefitted by participating in this project.
- E. If the sponsoring Altrusa Club was involved describe how.

Maximum Points: 30

Points Earned: _____

III. Cover Page (5 points)

ASTRA Club Name _____ Sponsoring Altrusa Club _____

Name of Project _____ Date of Project _____

Contact Information _____

Maximum Points: 5

Points Earned: _____