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ASTRA IS AMAZING!

International ASTRA Newsletter

ASTRA: Ability-Service-Training-Responsibility-Achievement

We build future leaders and service-minded citizens!



District Fourteen ASTRA- San Lorenzo, PR

Setting a Great Example: Outstanding ASTRA Clubs in Puerto Rico- District Fourteen!

by Ileana Pacheco, District Fourteen Governor

What does it mean to belong to an ASTRA Club? It means you are among talented committed youth who work together voluntarily as a team with their leaders. In District Fourteen we are proud of the talent and service work done by ASTRA members in their communities among the 14 currently active clubs.

These ASTRA clubs are sponsored by Altrusa clubs of Puerto Rico in Cabo Rojo, Hormigueros, Mayaguez, Moca, San German, San Lorenzo, Yauco, and San Sebastian, which has 5 clubs.

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NEWLY CHARTERED
ASTRA CLUBS:

Dec 13th, 2020:
ASTRA Club of Austin, TX

Congratulations!

LET'S KEEP GROWING!



(Feature continued-) Due to the situation that affected Puerto Rico during hurricanes, earthquakes, and the COVID 19 Pandemic many of our members have not been able to carry out customary activities which would otherwise have been accomplished by them. In spite of this, it is pertinent to recognize the outstanding effort, and support from parents and ASTRA coordinators, who have identified these circumstances in which more than ever before ASTRA members have helped those in need.

Since the beginning of the biennium, these club members have grown in their leadership development, showing their special abilities organizing significant projects, not just for their communities, but for all who might need them. Some of the projects are: orientation and promotion on recycling, clean-up of beach coasts, helping to restore libraries, helping elders in nursing homes, and serving in Kid's Centers. These projects have been accomplished in different levels linking generations of adults and children. Moreover, they have worked together in fundraisers for MDA, cancer, and others. Also, ASTRA members have collaborated during Christmas decorating different communities, and arranging boxes of articles and toys for children. Throughout different teamwork activities they have helped solve specific needs brought to their attention.

Currently, some projects, due to the Pandemic situation, have been revised implementing virtual technology, adapting new tasks and experiences uniting projects and activities of ASTRA clubs. Among these projects, it is relevant to point out the distribution of food boxes, bags of hygienic articles to prevent the contagion of COVID 19, the distribution of school task modules for those homes that lack the equipment and technology for the students' schoolwork, and helping families and friends coordinate available web sites through Internet.

Since the first ASTRA Club, which was organized in San Juan, Puerto Rico, these clubs have increased in number, having had up to 24. For the benefit of our ASTRA members, in 1981 we established the first Annual ASTRA Meet with participation of 19 clubs. By this activity we gather all the ASTRA clubs of our District with the sole purpose of recognizing project plans; providing workshops, orientations and simultaneously sharing their experiences, participating in a Talent Show and having fun together.

Throughout the years some ASTRA members have become Altrusans, while participating as resources for workshops and Conferences. In addition, they have become successful professionals, distinguished leaders in important positions in education, government, and private businesses. The love and commitment of altrusans towards youths is their unique ability to recruit and motivate them to become ASTRA members. Our members are the resources that stimulate, motivate, and allow us to relive past events with our children and relatives. Let us seize the opportunity of these resources to be the link, joining with Altrusans, to provide the service that is required from us.



**DISTRICT FOURTEEN USUALLY
HAS 24 ASTRA CLUBS!!**

**HAS HELD ANNUAL ASTRA MEET FOR
ALL CLUBS SINCE 1981.**



Thoughts from an active ASTRA member in Puerto Rico



Jefte' Daniel Crespo Martinez,
member of the ASTRA Club of Cabo Rojo, PR

ASTRA has been an excellent experience, very happy, and one that I have learned about the things that have been presented.

I have made relationships with my fellow students and learned from them and with my leaders, who are people that fill my soul....

In ASTRA, I am attracted most to the commitment. We need to learn how to resign to ourselves and let the message of service be the focus. I would tell other young adults to help others and be there for others, especially in times like this. Little by little we can change the world--our world or other people's worlds. We have to do it little by little, but we can change the world by our actions.





WHAT'S NEW?

- ASTRA MARKETING VIDEO**
- ASTRA ADVISORS MANUAL**
- ASTRA LEADERSHIP MANUAL**
- OFFICER AND COMMITTEE CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES GUIDES**
- ANNUAL SAMPLE ASTRA CALENDAR**
- REVISED ASTRA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

These new and revised documents are being uploaded to the International ASTRA website now!

Log in at <https://astra.altrusa.org>

UPCOMING DEADLINES:

ASTRA DISTRICT SERVICE AWARD:

MARCH 1, 2021
(OR DATE DETERMINED BY DISTRICT GOVERNOR)

SCHOLARSHIPS:
HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
MARCH 15, 2021

PHOTOS ASTRA IN ACTION



District Eleven ASTRA



District Eleven ASTRA



District Seven ASTRA



District Twelve ASTRA



District Fourteen ASTRA



District Twelve ASTRA

Adapting ASTRA during COVID-19



Please consider the following:

-If your ASTRA club members can meet and do service, go for it--safely! Use masks, sanitizer and social distancing. Our young people find special meaning in contributing during this challenging time--and community needs have grown!

-If you are not allowed to meet in your county yet and your ASTRA club has been inactive so far this year, it's OK. Consider ways to meet via Zoom and to do projects, such as holiday adopt-a-family shopping or donations to local organizations who need support, to stay connected until you can meet again.

-Remember, we are all struggling and adapting through this pandemic. If your ASTRA club membership numbers are shrinking, don't despair. Make a plan to rebuild when schools are back in session and activities resume. Don't give up! Stay connected to and supportive of your ASTRA members!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ASTRA ALUMNI! ...AND BECOMING AN ALTRUSAN...

Dear friends and fellow Altrusans,

The transition from ASTRA Alumni to Altrusan... this has been a hot topic lately, as it very well should be since it literally lays out the future and fate of Altrusa as a club! Today I would like to take you through a brief journey of my transition from ASTRA member to Altrusan and lay out some key points both I and my friend and fellow ASTRA-to-Altrusan, Ande Scott, have discussed over multiple conversations.

I had never heard of ASTRA or Altrusa upon entering college, but in the 2nd semester of my freshman year I was introduced to and joined the university level ASTRA Club. I originally joined to make new friends and find a way to get involved in my new community. Little did I know how much more ASTRA Club would make an impact on my life. I was involved in that club all 4 years of my college experience, and during that time held an officer position for two years, I grew in confidence, leadership and people skills, and made several friends, some of which have fostered into lifelong friendships!

Throughout my ASTRA experience I noticed how much the parent Altrusa club was involved, they were always dependable but not overbearing. We could always count on them for guidance, but ultimately it was up to the students to run the meetings and service projects. I cannot emphasize enough how important it was to SEE that involvement from those Altrusans.

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Fast forward to graduation from college... upon this time I knew I did not want my involvement in my ASTRA Club to end, so I joined my local chapter of Altrusans! This was the same group that I had witnessed making an impact on many ASTRA members. Now, to say it has been a walk in the park in the transition, I would be lying to you. Life has commitments and many ways of pulling you in a dozen different directions... adjusting to life after college, working through a new career, preparing for a wedding, etc... I have not been nearly as involved in my club as I would like to be, but I've appreciated the *flexibility* of Altrusa and when I'm able to jump in on a project or meeting, I know my fellow Altrusans are thrilled to have me.

All of this to say, Ande and I truly believe to foster more ASTRA to Altrusa transitions, **it has got to start with Altrusa involvement in their locally sponsored ASTRA clubs.** Being involved, having conversations and getting to know the students, being a mentor, being a friend... it can be life-changing to an ASTRA member, and they might not realize it until years later. Plant the seeds. Water them. And watch them grow.

Sincerely,

Tucker Saxton, District Nine



SCHOLARSHIPS

FOR ASTRA MEMBERS IN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY/TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ASTRA SCHOLARSHIPS!

Every spring, we accept applications for the ASTRA College/University Scholarship, funded by the Altrusa International Foundation. This is designed to recognize college and university ASTRA members who are actively participating in an ASTRA club, have exemplified a genuine concern for the welfare of others in their community, and have grown through service in ASTRA. Scholarships will be awarded to ASTRA members whose outstanding service to their community through their ASTRA and sponsoring Altrusa Clubs has helped them grow in Ability, Service, Training, Responsibility, and Achievement.

Applicants must be enrolled in and currently attending an institution of higher learning (college, university, technical school, etc.) as of the **March 15th deadline** for application and must be an active ASTRA member.

Up to four \$1000 scholarships will be awarded annually. Applications are available on the official Altrusa ASTRA website <https://astra.altrusa.org> and through ASTRA advisors each year.



Karis Cheek,
scholarship recipient from
University of Arkansas
(District Eight)

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

Attention, high school seniors! It's not too early to begin the scholarship process for 2020! Thanks to the continued financial support of the Altrusa International Foundation, we are pleased to announce four scholarships are available to graduating High School Seniors who are active ASTRA Club members! You can find the scholarship and reference forms at the links below. Please keep in mind the deadline to apply is **March 15th!** Online documents are fillable again this year.

<https://astra.altrusa.org/files/2019/10/ASTRA-Scholarship-High-School-Application-2019.pdf>

<https://astra.altrusa.org/files/2019/10/ASTRA-Scholarship-High-School-Reference-Form-2019.pdf>

AS IN PRIOR YEARS, YOU MUST LOG IN TO THE WEBSITE TO ACCESS THE APPLICATIONS.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Applications available now on the ASTRA website
- Applications must be received by **March 15th**
- Scholarship winners will be announced **April 15th**

Written by Lorraine Brewer and Scott Tice



Sidney Ditscheit,
ASTRA scholarship recipient from
Green Bay, WI (District Seven)



Graham Chernik,
ASTRA scholarship recipient from
Dallas- Ft Worth TX (District Nine)



Roberta Jacobs

I was a member of ASTRA at Troy High School in Ohio from 1970 to 1973. Service to my community is what I remember most about being in ASTRA and "brainstorming" among the members for special projects we could do.

Community needs in the early 70's were a lot different than what they are today. I remember "cleaning up" our community by picking up trash, reading to the kindergarten students, volunteering at our local school for students with developmental disabilities and assisting with Special Olympics.

Regardless of what our projects were, we learned to be leaders, team players, and good citizens. We learned to be aware of our communities and be able to serve in whatever capacity necessary to make it better.

I joined Altrusa of Troy, OH in 2003 and am currently our chapter President, treading through uncharted territory with COVID-19 but we are being creative and active – no contact style! I was in Medical Equipment Sales but now serve as the Media and Project Specialist for a Career Technical School, and love being Grandma "GiGi" to two adorable grandsons.



May this season spark
love and kindness in
all our hearts.

Stay safe and strong!
With gratitude, your ASTRA members

EMAIL OR TALK WITH US!

ASTRA CONTACT LIST 2020-2021

Contact your district resources below,
or Debbie McBee, International ASTRA Chair, at mmcbeed@aol.com or cell- 541-969-8748

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