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What a great first half of this Altrusa year! I have enjoyed seeing all of the great projects our clubs are doing and sharing on social media. You all are truly making a major impact in your communities. I am very excited about how many of you have embraced the Kindness Challenge. I want to especially give a shout out to Altrusa International of The West Valley, AZ., who has chosen a theme for each week and encourages their members to do an intentional act of kindness that fits the theme. What a great idea!

It is gratifying to see our clubs continuing with our book challenge. Hardly a day goes by that I don't see a Facebook post about a club donating books. You all are amazing in the difference you are making in literacy in your communities. Membership continues to be prominent in our clubs. Many clubs have shared photos of the new members being initiated. Did you set a goal for the year for new members? Have you re-evaluated to see if you are meeting the goal. This is a great time to bring in new members since we are in the half price dues months.

Charter ceremonies were held recently for two clubs in District Eleven - Altrusa International of Coachella Valley and Altrusa International of Southern CA Virtual Club. During the virtual charter ceremony of the virtual club, we welcomed new members from Mexico in addition to California. Both clubs are off to very strong starts with great projects. On December 11, Altrusa International of North East Texas (District Nine) was chartered. Their official charter ceremony will be February 3. We still have several additional clubs in formation and we look forward to them reaching charter strength soon.

I am excited to see what our clubs will accomplish in 2024! Happy New Year!

Let's all continue to R.O.C.K. – Realize Opportunities, Create Kindness! Did you know that Saturday, February 17, 2024 is Random Acts of Kindness Day and that February 13-19 is "Kindness Week." Let's see what our clubs can plan to make a difference in your communities during that week. Any kindness act no matter how large or small will make a difference for someone.

Let's R.O.C.K.!



Linda K. Smith, President
Altrusa International, Inc.

Everyone Has a Voice

Julie Stratos, International Leadership Development Committee Member

Have you ever sat in a meeting in which the majority of those attending never said a word when discussing an issue? Then a decision is made and later those same silent meeting goers complain about the decision that was made. Everyone has a voice but unfortunately too often those voices aren't used.

Why don't people speak up? They're shy; they want to avoid controversy; they think people won't listen to them; and the list goes on and on. As we strive to develop leaders, we must encourage everyone to use their voice. As they do, they will gain confidence, begin to participate more actively, and be more open to taking leadership roles.

Altrusa's leaders, whether they're club presidents or committee chairs, district governors, or International president, recognize that to accomplish a goal, it takes a team working together. Leaders must give their team the opportunity to use their voices and listen to those voices to gain their support and endorsement of the goals they wish to attain.

One of Altrusa's principles is "Altrusa develops true leadership..." If our voices aren't used - and heard - we won't have the future leaders we need to ensure Altrusa will stay strong and grow to continue to serve our communities around the world.

A Review of Altrusa.org

Emily DeVlieger, International Communications Chair

Altrusa International, Inc.'s website plays a pivotal role in connecting people with our mission, initiatives, and opportunities. We will assess the user's experience and determine the effectiveness to meet your and others' needs.

1. **Responsive Design:** Altrusa.org has a responsive design that adapts to different devices, making navigation easy and user-friendly.
2. **Content:** Content accessibility provides an enhanced experience for users with disabilities.
3. **Engagement Opportunities:** There are many engagement opportunities for events and initiatives.
4. **Donation Process:** Donating made easy! Multiple payment options make it convenient for those contributing to our causes.
5. **Content Refresh:** Website content is updated to the latest news, events, and information about our organization.
6. **Social Media:** All social media is integrated for users to share content easily.
7. Finally, altrusa.org meets the needs of users by providing a responsive, accessible, and regularly updated platform. There is a lot of room for improvement, what do you think is a good website practice?



Reminders

- ASTRA Scholarship applications are now available and due March 1, 2024.
- 2024-2025 dues open April 1, 2024.
- District Conferences begin April 5, 2024.

Navigating the Web...

- Important websites to know!
 - www.altrusa.org (click Member Login in the upper right)
 - login.altrusa.org (go directly to the members area)
 - www.altrusastore.com (purchase Altrusa branded items including pins and banners)
 - www.altrusaservice.org (browse and share your club's service projects)
- Give us some feedback and share your thoughts on improving Altrusa with the [Suggestion Box](#).
- If you have forgotten your password to the site please send an e-mail to Altrusa@altrusa.org or call the International Office for assistance.

Important Dates

February 4 World Cancer Day

February 20 World Day of Social Justice

March 1 Zero Discrimination Day

March 22 World Water Day

April 7 World Health Day



ASTRA IMPROVE

COMMUNICATION

BY HEATHER CLEAVINGER, DISTRICT EIGHT



IN THE JOURNEY OF LIFE, ADULTS SERVE AS GUIDES AND MENTORS, OFFERING INSIGHTS BORN FROM EXPERIENCE. THEIR INFLUENCE IS A COMPASS, NAVIGATING OUR YOUTH THROUGH CHALLENGES AND SHAPING CHARACTER. THESE YOUNG ADULTS ALSO HAVE THEIR PERSPECTIVE AND WISDOM, TALENTS AND INSIGHT THAT CAN HELP US BE BETTER. HOW DO WE BRIDGE THE GAP AND IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITH EACH OTHER? HERE ARE A FEW TIPS THAT I CHALLENGE YOU TO TRY. I WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR FEEDBACK AFTER IMPLEMENTING THEM.

1. ATTEND AN ASTRA MEETING. OBSERVE BUT THEN BE WILLING TO GIVE SUGGESTIONS AND GET INVOLVED.
2. ASK ASTRA MEMBERS TO HELP WITH YOUR NEWSLETTER AND SOCIAL MEDIA. THESE STUDENTS ARE SO TALENTED WITH TECHNOLOGY. NEED A FLYER? ASK FOR THEIR HELP!
3. PLAN A GROUP PROJECT WITH THE ASTRA CLUB THAT WILL BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY. TEAM UP AN ALTRUSAN WITH AN ASTRA MEMBER AND HAVE THEM WORK TOGETHER. WE HAVE SO MUCH WE CAN GAIN BY LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER.
4. INVITE GRADUATING SENIORS TO JOIN ALTRUSA. SEND A GRADUATION LETTER, FOLLOW UP WITH A TEXT, AND A PHONE CALL.
5. HOST AN ACTIVITY WITH THE ASTRA CLUB AND THEIR PARENTS . IT'S A GREAT WAY TO FIND NEW MEMBERS AND GROW ALTRUSA.
6. ADOPT A MEMBER . SELECT AN ASTRA MEMBER AND ADOPT THEM FOR AN ENTIRE YEAR. THIS WILL KEEP BOTH INVOLVED AND IS A GREAT WAY FOR YOU TO LEARN FROM EACH OTHER.

TEENS CAN OFFER ADULTS FRESH PERSPECTIVES ON TECHNOLOGY, SOCIAL DYNAMICS, AND EVOLVING CULTURAL TRENDS. THEIR INNOVATIVE THINKING MAY INSPIRE NEW APPROACHES TO PROBLEM-SOLVING, FOSTERING A VALUABLE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS. AFTER ALL, WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER!

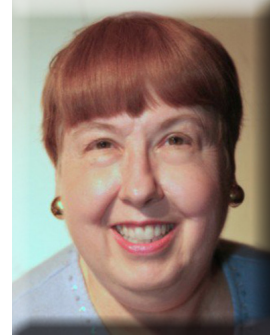
WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING YOUR SUCCESS STORIES! HAPPY NEW YEAR AND LET'S MAKE THIS THE BEST YEAR EVER!

ASTRA@Altrusa.org

United Nations: International Years

Kathy Schrein, Altrusa Representative to the United Nation's Department of Global Communications, Civil Society Unit/NGO, Chair

Did you know that 2024 is the United Nations Year of Camelids? Camelids-those are camels, llamas, alpacas, vicuñas, and guanacos. This important group of animals is known for food, milk, transportation, and wool throughout many parts of the UN's world. OK, maybe not large Altrusa cities! (See <http://undocs.org/A/RES/72/210> for the exact resolution and further explanation)



In the last Compass issue, the UN's Days of Observance were detailed. The UN designates not only specific days, but also weeks, years and decades. These occasions mark particular events or topics to promote, through awareness and action, the objectives of the UN. Usually, it is one or more Member States that propose these observances. Next, the UN's General Assembly establishes them with a resolution. On certain occasions, these celebrations are declared by the specialized agencies of the UN, such as UNESCO or UNICEF. These special organizations support the designated occasions when they concern issues that fall within the scope of their agencies' particular competencies. Some of them may later adopted by the General Assembly.

Future UN International Years:

2025-International Year of Glaciers Preservation

2026-International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists

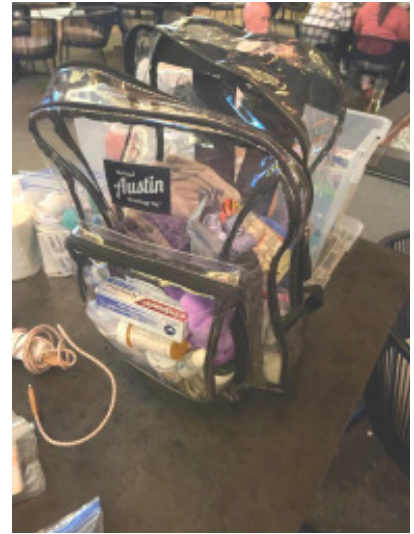
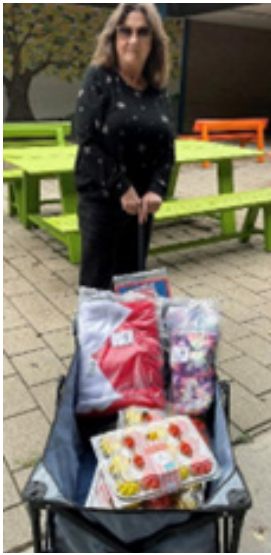
So, if an Altrusan happens to see a camel in 2024, be sure to give a hearty greeting and a big CONGRATS!

Peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet...United Nations

District Nine Highlights

Altrusa International of Austin

Members collect winter coats for Cook Elementary in North Austin and toiletries for the Hill County Community Ministries



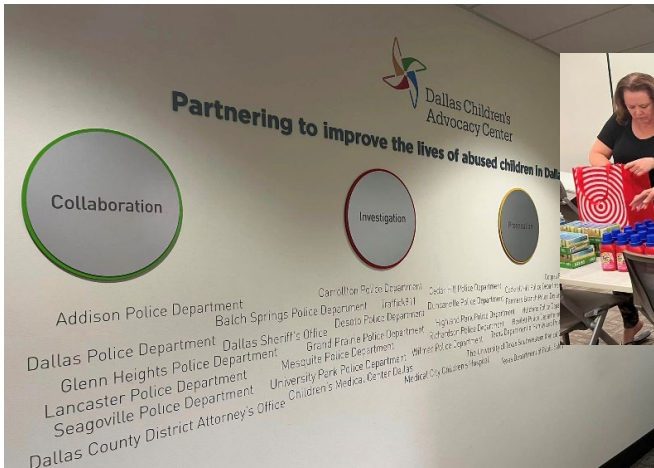
Altrusa International of Lubbock, Texas, Inc.

August 23 at 2:28 PM · 🌐

Lubbock Meals on Wheels has such a tremendous, local impact, and Altrusa Lubbock is honored to proudly support the LMOW mission to support and feed residents, and their four legged friends! 🐾🐕

[#supportlocal](#) [#weloveourcommunity](#)





Altrusa International of Dallas

Members partnered with Dallas Children’s Advocacy Center to assemble 20 Clean Start Kits that will be made available to clients needing to start fresh in a new place. Each kit contains toilet paper, paper towels, all purpose cleaner, dish soap, clothes detergent and sponges. We also placed a positive note into each bag.



Altrusa International of Greenville

Preparations underway by stuffing goodie bags for the October 14th Altrusa Greenville A21 Walk for Freedom.

Click below for more highlights from District Nine.

[**District Nine Highlights**](#)



District Fourteen

Transforming the Service

Altrusa San Lorenzo during National Peace Day promotes through local schools students messages about what does peace means to Puerto Rico and the World. Enlightening Educational and Gathering Activity.

Altrusa Caguas Acts of Kindness, the Club donates Car Seat and Baby items to family in need.

Altrusa Yauco Service Project, delivers first aid articles to Dominicas Nuns who impacted Yauco's communities.



Altrusa Guánica-Service Project – Portal de Amor Orfan Children Shelter was impacted with gifts for children.

Service Actions

Altrusa San German impacted Animal Shelter with towels and other cleaning products.

Altrusa Humacao Literacy Activity, "Don't Be an Easy Target" activity, Altrusans, Local and Federal Law Authorities educate about Human Trafficking. This event impacted 200 students from a local school, community in Local Radio and Parents in the city downtown.



Altrusa Cabo Rojo ASTRA provided a recruitment presentation to a local school to engage students to the program. The active discussion of ASTRA mission, roles and benefits clearly attracted the students.



Altrusa San Sebastián Service Project: Eight Outstanding and Impeccable students were granted with ALVA Scholarship for their excellence in academia and admirable service rendered to the community. Commendable Accomplishment!!

Altrusa Yauco Literacy Activity: Altrusa Yauco created a Song Book entitled “Yauco in Musical Notes”. Altrusa also shared with the community by singing along with students and those in presence. It was a fun time!

Altrusa Yauco



Altrusa San Lorenzo National Peace Day celebration with ASTRA Club. Giving Peace message to children in need.



Altrusa San Lorenzo – Literacy Activity
The Altrusa group positively impacted a room full of Elders and Kindergarten students at a Community Center showing and entertaining with Hand Crafting activities. It was a success!

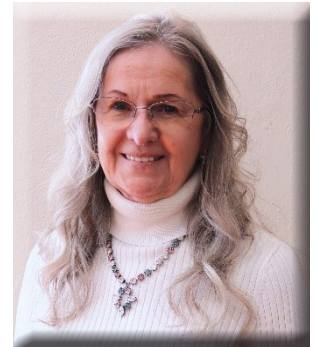


Altrusa Moca group presented a Peace Workshop to Second Grade students with positive values and perspectives.

Long Range Strategic Planning

Kitty McElhaney, International Vice-President

The Altrusa International, Inc. Strategic Plan spans a six year timeframe, with revisions every biennium, per Altrusa International Policy 9 I. The current plan for 2022-2028 is located on the Altrusa International website. The Long Range Strategic Planning (LRSP) process is underway to prepare the 2024-2030 LRSP. In August 2023, each International Committee Chair, Governor's Council Chair and International Board members were provided the current plan along with the goals of International President Linda Smith and each International Committee. The intent was to include all levels of membership in the process, in that committees are comprised of members across the districts.



During the months of September and October I was afforded the opportunity to meet with committees and share the process, including the timeline for development of the LSRP 2024-2030. The first step was to do an analysis to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to the organization. This is referred to as a SWOT analysis. The groups submitted their SWOT analysis by early December. What a plethora of topics included! The submissions were comprehensive and many groups identified the same analyses on items. The information was collated into one document.

In early January each International Committee Chair, Governor's Council Chair and International Board member were provided the collated SWOT Analysis, 2022-2028 plan, current biennium goals, sample goal, and goal template. Each Committee/group is asked to submit at least one goal, but no more than two by April 15, 2024., with one goal in the committee's area of expertise and if they so choose, another goal in any area. The Governors and Governors-Elect can choose the area(s) for which they would like to prepare goal(s).

The dedication of all who contribute to the process is greatly appreciated, as it will be representative of members across the organization.

The submissions will be compiled as a draft plan. The International Board along with the Governors-Elect will be finalizing the updated plan in July 2024 at a joint meeting.

District Conferences & the International Visitor

Christine DeVlieger, President Elect

Have you ever received an invite to a wedding or family reunion? Sure. Sounds exciting. You'll know at least a few people there. But then you start to wonder...who will I know there? What should I wear? What should I pack? Who will I sit with? What about the travel plans? The list goes on and on.



Well, this is similar to when we, as International Board members, are assigned to visit a District Conference. One of my favorite things serving on the International Board is when I have the opportunity to visit other Districts. I can hardly wait to receive the assignment list each year. Then once I receive the assignment, my mind starts spinning. Have I been to this District before? Will I know anyone? What would they like me to do? How long will I have to share news or present on activities and/or happenings throughout our association? Again, the list of questions goes on and on.

So, I am happy to share with you a few things about International visitors at District Conferences.

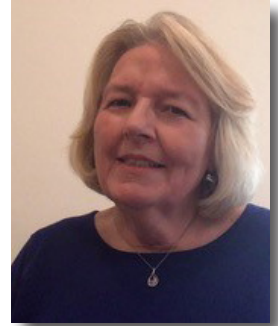
1. We are connectors. One of our roles is to be a liaison between Clubs, Districts and International. Sharing information and networking about membership, service projects, club building, fundraising, succession planning, or whatever is on your mind is vital to the success of our association.
2. We are communicators. We can't wait to share what is happening worldwide within Altrusa. Make sure to give us time during your Conference to present.
3. We listen. This is important for any relationship to thrive and last. This includes removing any mistruths or barriers. Don't be shy. Ask an International visitor anything (well almost anything!) LOL We may not have an immediate answer, but we will find out and get back to you.
4. We love continuous improvement. We are on a journey of learning and leadership as many of you are. Each time we present and/or lead a workshop, you help us grow and develop as leaders. If you should need a workshop presenter, facilitator or any assistance, don't hesitate to ask.
5. We care. We are happy to support the District Governors, their Boards and Conference Chairs as needed. We want you to have the best District Conference ever!
6. We are Altrusans. So put us to work! We love helping out in any way and with anything. This could include assisting with set-up or preparing Pre-Conference, or even afterwards with Post-Conference. Let me give you a few examples of when I visited District Conferences. I've helped pack goodie bags. I've moved boxes. I've carried flags for the flag ceremony. I've participated in service projects. I've even bused tables after meals. I believe that any Altrusan or International Board member is not above rolling up their sleeves and doing whatever it takes to help the District Board and Conference Chairs.

District Conferences are a perfect way to renew and reconnect. On behalf of the International Board, we look forward to seeing everyone at your upcoming Conferences. Together, we will discover ways to continue the legacy of service started over 107 years ago by Mamie Luella Bass and grow Altrusa in our communities.

International Service Committee Literacy Challenge

Karyn Evans, International Service Committee, Chair

If there is one thing Altrusa may be known for, it's literacy. The One Million Book Challenge continues this biennium, and it will take every District, every Club, and every member to meet - or ideally, surpass this number. What have you done and what do you have planned to help ensure our success?



During the last biennium, Altrusans recorded the donation of 644,437 books - an amazing number, but not meeting our goal of one million. I can't help but wonder how much closer we would have been to meeting this goal if all the books had been reported? Did your club distribute any books? Did you report them - all of them? Some clubs were diligent in reporting the books distributed through their main literacy projects but didn't report smaller projects. For example, some clubs maintain one or more Little Free Libraries. Even with a few books each month, the numbers add up. Perhaps, your club handed out a few books at a small community event. Twenty-five or thirty books may not sound like much when looking at a million-book goal, but if 100 clubs fail to report 25 books, that is 2,500 toward our goal.

Reporting is an easy option on the Altrusa International website. Just log in and go to the Service Page. At the bottom of the article on the Altrusa International Literacy Challenge, click on "Entry Form" and respond.

Altrusans are more than capable of surpassing this goal. Let's get going!



Congratulations to the 2023-2024 Cycle One Grant Awardees!

The Altrusa International Foundation awarded **\$86,413** in grant funding to **37 Altrusa clubs and three international organizations** in Cycle One of the grants program. **The deadline for Cycle Two is March 15.** Please visit the website, foundation.altrusa.org, for guidelines, applications, and more information on recent grants program changes.

<u>District</u>	<u>Altrusa Clubs</u>	<u>Project/Individual Name</u>
15	Hamilton NZ	<i>Winter Warmers</i>
15	Ohariu NZ	<i>Literacy for Life</i>
15	Te Awamutu NZ	<i>Bright Boxes</i>
15	Taieri NZ	<i>Literacy in the Community</i>
15	Tauranga NZ	<i>Togs and Towels for Safety</i>
14	San German PR	<i>Altrusa San German and Me: An Interest Guide to San German</i>
12	Spokane WA	<i>Literacy in Spokane 2023</i>
12	Yaquina Bay OR	<i>Let's Read</i>
12	Hermiston OR	<i>Read N'Walk Trail</i>
12	Roseburg OR	<i>Celebration of Literacy</i>
11	Santa Maria CA	<i>Youth STEAM Literacy Kits</i>
11	Anaheim CA	<i>Creative Writing Project</i>
11	West Valley AZ	<i>Hope Community Services</i>
11	Reno Sparks NV	<i>Senior and Family Outreach</i>
10	Artesia NM	<i>Working to Change Their Paths</i>
9	Lake Cities TX	<i>Remember We Care</i>
9	Pampa TX	<i>Tralee Shelter Paint and Renovate</i>
9	Temple TX	<i>Friends of Neema Village and Arusha Tanzania</i>
9	Copperas Cove TX	<i>A Book in the Hands of Every Child</i>
9	Downtown Dallas, TX	<i>Housing Insecurity: Our Friends Place & Shared Housing</i>
9	DFW TX	<i>Filling the Gap</i>
9	Texarkana TX	<i>Christmas with Opportunities Ince</i>
8	Stillwater OK	<i>Backpack Buddies</i>
8	Greater Kansas City KS	<i>Ronald McDonald House Charities Grab N'Go Bags</i>
8	Jonesboro AR	<i>A Library of My Own</i>
7	Omaha NE	<i>Bingo and Books for Friends</i>
7	Green Bay WI	<i>Connecting Nature Play & Learnin for Brighter Futures</i>
7	Door County WI	<i>Reading Friends</i>
6	Lexington KY	<i>Reading Warriors</i>
5	Hamilton OH	<i>ASTRA Club- My Own Book</i>
5	Akron OH	<i>Princess Night Project</i>
4	Clarksville TN	<i>Changing Lives in Uganda</i>
4	Jack AL	<i>Rebel Readers Book Box</i>
3	Monticello FL	<i>Altrusans Flying High in Monticello FL</i>
2	Martinsville Henry County VA	<i>Laundromat</i>
1	Plymouth County MA	<i>Literacy Day: Abby Mac's Smile</i>
<u>New Club Charter Grants</u>		
11	Coachella Valley, CA	<i>Habitat for Humanity - NEW CLUB</i>
3	Charlotte NC	<i>New Beginnings - NEW CLUB</i>
<u>Club 21 Grants</u>		
	Ghana Health & Education Initiative: MMCD Through 23	
	Andando Foundation: Beds for Moms & Thiamene Taba Health Post Repairs	
	Tandana Foundation Community Health and Well being in Otavala Ecuador	

The 2023-2025 International Foundation Board of Trustees



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Ways to Support the International Foundation

The International Foundation heavily relies on the generous financial support of donors to enable us to advance our grant-making, awards and scholarships, and disaster relief efforts.

Your donations help support:

- Altrusa Club Grants Program
- Club 21 Program
- Disaster Relief Aid
- ASTRA Scholarships and the Anna H. Settle Community Leadership Award
- Mamie L. Bass, Letha H. Brown Literacy, Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations, and ASTRA Service Awards
- Endowment Fund

Other ways to support the Foundation include Planned Estate Giving and IRA Required Minimum Distributions/Qualified Charitable Distributions

Please visit the website to make a credit card donation, text Altrusa Fdn to 41-444, or mail a check or money order to the Foundation.

Your gift is tax-deductible!

Donating Stocks is Easy!

Enjoy the Tax Benefits of Gifting Appreciated Stocks to the International Foundation.

Stock Donations to the Endowment Account

To transfer stock from your current custodian as a donation to Altrusa International Foundation-Endowment Account, provide the following information to your custodian. All three data points below are needed for a successful transfer.

Charles Schwab Delivery Instructions: Delivery to DTC Clearing 0164, Code 40

Registration: ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION INC
Custodian Account Number: 9883-0105

Stock Donations to the General Account

To transfer stock from your current custodian as a donation to the Altrusa International Foundation-General Account, provide the following information to your custodian. All three data points below are needed for a successful transfer.

Charles Schwab Delivery Instructions: Delivery to DTC Clearing 0164, Code 40

Registration: ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION INC
Custodian Account Number: 3526-0713

Please Notify Altrusa International Foundation when a stock donation is being made at foundation@altrusa.org. **If you have any questions on how to make the donation, please contact the investment advisory team of eCIO at (608) 291-4646.**