

THE



NEWSLETTER



A SIGNIFICANT YEAR OF CHANGES AND GROWTH!

In our first ASTRA Newsletter a year ago, I talked about ASTRA Growing

and Evolving. Well I think this past year we have had a growth spurt! Not only have we added quite a few new clubs throughout most Districts and at all age levels, but the International ASTRA Committee has worked on many important elements to improve the ASTRA experience and we aren't done yet. We asked you to communicate with us on things that might need to be changed or updated at the International level. We appreciate all the feedback and ideas and want

you to know we were listening. There are so many things to share with you in this newsletter, please read on for all the important information and deadline dates.

Altrusa International Website – ASTRA Section

I know everyone is anxious for the ASTRA section of the new International website to be available, especially our ASTRA Committee. We are working on it but have had so many things we needed to update and get approved before we could start making these items available through the website. We are hoping to finalize most of the information, documents and forms in the next few weeks and launch the ASTRA section with the most current and updated information available to access easily.

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A Note from the President...

Well 2019 is off with a roar. The International ASTRA committee has been working hard behind the scenes to update your ASTRA resources and many of the forms taking into account feedback received from ASTRA supervisors and it is great to see these ready for distribution. Hopefully we will have the ASTRA page sorted out on the new website in the next few weeks so you will have all the resources available at your finger tips. We thank you for your patience while we have worked to get everything updated and ready for you.

Leanne Milligan
International President 2017-2019

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ASTRA Advisors and Member Manuals

There was an ASTRA Manual Task Force established this past year to look at updating and revising the ASTRA Advisor and Member Manuals. With most people becoming more comfortable accessing information on-line, being able to get the most updated information and trying to get rid of all the paper documents the Task Force made recommendations to the International Board to discontinue publication of these manuals and make all the information accessible in the ASTRA Section of the International website. Don't worry, for those of you who are still uncomfortable with accessing information by using these tools be assured all information, forms and documents will be available to you by requesting what you need through the International Office or through the ASTRA@altrusa.org email address.

ASTRA Scholarship Applications and Reference Forms

Hopefully you have recently received the ASTRA email with the ASTRA Scholarship Application and Reference Forms. The second email sent out has the correct documents and the footer states, Revised January 2019. The ASTRA Committee made changes to the documents that were used last year. We saw a need to make some revisions so that the information we were collecting was relevant and allowed the judging committee to evaluate the applicants in an impartial and objective method. Please be sure that all applicants are using these updated forms and submit their applications by the deadline of March 15th. Each applicant is required to turn in 3 references that must be filled out on the Reference Form provided. We will not be accepting any additional Letters of Reference and we hope none of the applicants are penalized in the point system by not submitting the proper documents. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at ASTRA@altrusa.org.

Unfortunately, since the ASTRA Section of the International website is not currently accessible the Scholarship forms have not been set up this year to fill out and submit on-line. Our current committee will make a recommendation to the next biennium's ASTRA Committee to complete this process.

College Scholarships

The ASTRA Committee has been discussing the possibility of making Scholarships available to our ASTRA College members. We have heard from a lot of clubs asking why International has not done this yet. Unfortunately, our committee was not able to make much progress on this topic, but we will be making recommendations to the International Foundation to consider adding ASTRA College Scholarships as they develop the Foundation's budget for 2019-2021. We are hopeful that this time next year our college members will be included in a scholarship selection process.

ASTRA Club Annual Report will replace the End of Year Activity Report Due May 31st – No longer Due March 31st.

The ASTRA Committee put together a new annual report, which is similar to the Club Annual Report used this past year for Altrusa Clubs in the form of a Survey Monkey. This form was approved by the International Board at their recent meeting and it will be known as ASTRA Club Annual Report. The new deadline will be May 31st, which is consistent with the Club Annual Reports as well as the end of most schools' academic year. This report will be emailed out to everyone through the ASTRA email list to be filled out and submitted on-line. Be advised that only one person should submit this report for each ASTRA Club.

Membership Rosters

The International office will no longer be collecting contact information for ASTRA Club members. So, there is no need to send in Membership Rosters. There has been some concern about maintaining information of minors at the International level. At this time, we are only asking for names of newly chartered ASTRA Club members to be sent to the International office so that Charter Member Certificates can be created and sent to the newly formed clubs.

Graduation Cords

Once again you can order graduation cords, at no charge, for your high school and college ASTRA Club members who are in good standing and are graduating this year. Please contact the International office and let them know how many you will need and where you want them sent. Also, as in the past if you send a list of names and addresses of all the graduates our International President, Leanne Milligan will be happy to send them a letter of congratulations.



This year there is a choice of colors. You can request the ones we have given in the past, which are burgundy and silver or now we also have a cord with just the single color of teal that your graduates might prefer. If you decide to go with the new color, you may want to get approval from the school before you order the cords.

In Closing since this will probably be my last ASTRA Newsletter as International ASTRA Chair, I want to say what a privilege it has been to be a member of President Leanne's Program Committee Team. I want to especially thank and acknowledge the members of the ASTRA Committee who I was fortunate to work with, get to know and have developed lasting friendships. This group of Altrusans are amazing and very dedicated to ASTRA and the young people of our International Altrusa organization.

As I mentioned earlier in this newsletter, we aren't done yet so continue to communicate with us and maybe even let us know how you think we are doing. We hope to hear from you and maybe even meet you at the International Convention in July as we continue our involvement with ASTRA.

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 Alumni Task Force

Debbie McBee, International ASTRA Committee

The ASTRA Alumni Task Force was created by International President Leanne Milligan to investigate whether establishing an ASTRA Alumni network was viable and worthwhile. Task Force members met multiple times during the fall and winter. The recommendation by the task force is to proceed on a 5-year trial basis with establishment of an ASTRA Alumni network for the purpose of creating a bridge from high school to college/work ASTRA members and college/work to Altrusa membership.

For this to happen successfully, an ASTRA Alumni Contact Information Sheet was created to be used as a survey to collect basic data each spring of all ASTRA members ages 18 or older who are willing to share their information. Once data has been collected, District ASTRA Chairs and the International office would work together to securely store data and keep it updated. The recommendation is to initially focus most intensely on college ASTRA members and working young adults near Altrusa clubs. Altrusa clubs closest to college-aged ASTRA alumni would be encouraged to reach out to invite the ASTRA alumni in their area to occasional Altrusa social events, supporting these young adults as they get established and encouraging them to look for a way to continue contributing in their communities through eventual Altrusa membership.



The task force recognizes that this will be a long process, that some ASTRA alumni will not have a desire to become Altrusans, and that even those young people who are interested may not be able to commit due to time or monetary constraints for a number of years, but we believe it is essential to try to build this bridge to eventual membership.

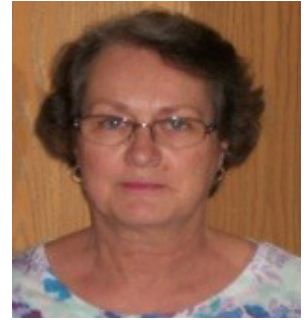
The task force has completed its task and, pending International Board approval, will hand over the implementation of this endeavor to the International ASTRA Committee members.

The passion for ASTRA expressed by task force members representing so many of our Altrusa districts was amazing and is a testimony to the strength of our current ASTRA clubs and the possibilities for our growth in the future.

ASTRA Service Award

Ronda Blakley, International ASTRA Committee

The International ASTRA Committee, Altrusa International and our sponsor Altrusa International Foundation are EXCITED about the newly revised ASTRA Service Award for our ASTRA Clubs. We encourage our ASTRA members to participate in service projects designed to meet specific needs in their 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. Every ASTRA Club is eligible and should be encouraged to enter a service project each year.



The winning ASTRA Club for each District will be awarded \$100 which will be presented at District Conference by the International Representative. All first-place winning projects from each District will then be submitted to International and organized and overseen by the International ASTRA Committee. An award of \$300 will be presented at Convention to the First-Place ASTRA Club winner and awards of \$75 will be given to ASTRA Clubs winning First and Second-Place Honorable Mentions. Checks will be made out to the sponsoring Altrusa Club to handle the disbursement to the ASTRA Club. The new Guidelines and Criteria for the ASTRA Service Awards were distributed this past October to all the District Governors, Club Presidents and ASTRA Chairs and Advisors. There is also a copy at the end of this newsletter. If you have any questions contact us at ASTRA@altrusa.org.

We look forward to reviewing all the Districts selections for the ASTRA Service Award. Good Luck to all. ASTRA members are all “winners” in our eyes for the awesome work that they do in their communities.

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: _____