

Holiday Closings

Alternatives will be closed:

October 12 for Columbus Day, November 11 for Veterans' Day, November 26 and 27 for Thanksgiving, and December 25 for Christmas. We will be closing at 1:00 PM on December 24, and will close the drive-thru at 5:00 PM on December 31.

"Are You Ready for Business?" - Intro to Entrepreneurship

Are you tossing around a business idea or interested in working for yourself? If so, then this class is for you. "Are You Ready for Business?" is a three-session course that introduces prospective entrepreneurs to the world of business ownership. Topics include market assessment, financial planning, researching a business idea, and much more.

You'll gain the knowledge and tools to address key questions:

- Is my business idea viable?
- What are the challenges and rewards of owning my own business?
- What skills will I need? What resources are available?
- What are the next steps to starting my own business?

When: Tuesdays, October 13-27

Time: 6:00-8:30 PM

Where: Alternatives' 2nd floor conference room

Cost: Sliding scale, \$30 - 90

Registration required: Contact Alison, alison@alternatives.org.

Art Gallery

July: **Paulina Klimkiewicz**

August: **Nick McAfee**

September: **Laura Hogan**

RoundOff

July: **Advocacy Center**

The Advocacy Center has provided support, advocacy and education for survivors of domestic violence since 1977, survivors of child sexual abuse since 1982 and survivors of adult sexual assault since 2003. The goal of the Advocacy Center is to help reduce the trauma that results from domestic violence, sexual assault and child sexual abuse.

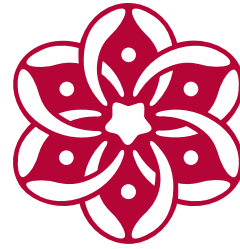
August: **GreenStar Community Projects**

To initiate and support community projects that promote cooperatives, healthful living, local self-reliance, self-sufficiency and community, ecological stewardship and social justice, and that do so in ways which seek to honor and enhance the socio-economic diversity of the projects and those intended to benefit from them.

September: **Alternatives' Tree Fund**

Alternatives is working with RPM Ecosystems and the City Forrester to plant trees at the Lehman Alternative Community School, as well as the surrounding park. Donations will go to the Alternatives Community Venture Fund, a 501(c)3 organization.

If you would like to be featured in our Art Gallery or RoundOff monthly lobby displays, please contact Suzanne at suzanne@alternatives.org or 216-3454.



125 N. Fulton St., Ithaca, NY 14850
607-273-4611
www.alternatives.org

Toll-Free Member Service 877-273-AFCU
Fax 607-277-6391
Fortune Teller 607-273-4611 ext. 1
Balance Financial Counseling 888-456-2227
Anytime LoanPhone 866-529-8722

Alternatives CU@Home on-line banking:
www.alternatives.org
email: afcuc@alternatives.org

VISA, lost or stolen
888-428-4721 Credit
800-554-8969 Debit

Hours:
Tellers: Mon-Fri 9-3, Sat 10-1
Drive Thru: Mon-Fri 12-6, Sat 10-1
New Accounts, Loans: Mon-Fri. 9-5

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Supervisory Committee
supervisory@alternatives.org

Staff email:
Any staff can be reached by email:
firstname.lastname@alternatives.org

Staff direct dial:
607-273-4611, Ext:

Leslie Ackerman	423
Tolkyn Aidarova	413
Bob Anderson	446
Everett Boutillet	404
Alison Cahill	442
Joe Catlin	472
Suzanne Cerquone	454
Carol Chernikoff	412
Robin Cochell	424
Tristram Coffin	417
Carrie Cohen	410
Junito (Gilberto) Cubero	439
Joe Cummins	429
Josh Ganger	449
Karl Graham	422
Kat Hauger	402
Becki Hawley	465
Leni Hochman	418
Larry Honigbaum	406
David Hopings	476
Miroslav Knezevic	430
Brian Kunk-Czaplicki	409
Courtney Lawrence	425
Lynn Lauper	407
Greg Lee	447
Shanequa Lee	461
Eric Levine	421
Janet Mara	444
Renee Martinez	469
Rachel Minkley	403
Rubi Noe	448
Anita Ocasio	457
Lenore Olmstead	470
Melissa Pollack	420
Amanda Rohrer	411
Reiley Schoen	414
Rebekah Scott	400
Deirdre Silverman	416
Amy Smith	405
Martha Van Gelder	438
Joe Welch	453
Brendan Wilbur	445
Brian Zapf	459
Mary Ziegler	419

Consumer Loans 721
Mortgage Rates 850
Student Credit Union 429



Alternative Currents

Fall 2009

A publication for Alternatives Federal Credit Union members

125 N. Fulton St., Ithaca, NY 14850 • 607-273-4611

The New Alternatives ATIRAc credit card

If you have an Alternatives credit card, you've probably noticed the changes in our credit card program. We've partnered with ATIRAc credit through TMG Financial Services, created by credit unions to provide card options for members. We spent several years considering this decision and the impact on our membership, ultimately choosing to join a group of other credit unions that would support common goals. In doing so, we were able to provide a credit card that offers many members a lower interest rate, while also providing benefits many of you had asked for, such as a rewards program.



A change of this type can bring short term inconveniences. New cards must be issued and activated. Some automatic payments must

be updated. Nonetheless, members have helped make the transition a smooth one.

We believe the Alternatives ATIRAc credit card will offer members the same features and conveniences of bigger credit card issuers, but without the high rates and punitive fees often seen in the marketplace.

When we analyzed our old credit card program, we realized that managing our own card program presented several problems. For example, we found that in order to make the program financially sustainable for a credit union our size, we would have to encourage members to increase balances on existing cards (as opposed to simply issuing new cards), which we saw as being in conflict

with our efforts to promote responsible financial management through education. Through our new partnership, we continue to offer a very attractive credit card option, and we do so in a manner that allows us to focus our resources in other areas where we can make a difference.

If you do not have a credit card with Alternatives, we encourage you to apply online at www.alternatives.org/creditcard.html, or by coming to the office. Our Alternatives VISA Debit Card with a Line of Credit continues to be another option. For more information, see *Make the Most of Your Debit Card*.

Town Of Dryden's New IDA

The Town of Dryden has partnered with Alternatives Federal Credit Union to provide Dryden residents with Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), a matched savings account that helps moderate-income people save for asset purchases. Alternatives will facilitate the Town of Dryden IDA program, which is designed to promote small business development in the town.

The Town of Dryden IDA will provide a 2:1 match on individual savings – so, for every dollar a person saves, the Town of Dryden will contribute two dollars. A maximum of \$1,000 can be matched, for a total of \$3,000. Matching funds can be used for start-up or expansion of business ventures located in the Town of Dryden and owned by Dryden residents. The maximum household income for the IDA is \$36,600 for a household of one, and \$5,250 for each additional household member.

Meet Our New Staff!

Rubi Noe

I am a 4th generation Ithacan, previously employed with Alternatives from 2001 to 2005 as an MSR, MSS and Consumer Loan Officer. I'm happy to return and serve our community and our members.

Rachel Minklei

I was born in Southern New Jersey, and moved to Ithaca in 1998. Now that I lived here half of my life and adjusted to the harsh winters, I feel that I can finally call myself an Ithacan! I graduated last year from SUNY Cortland with a Bachelors in Business Economics, and started at Alternatives about four months later. I'm proud to be working for an organization that values diversity and community support, and pleased to be part of a staff that is so warm and receptive.

Shanequa Lee

I have lived in the Ithaca area my whole life. I recently received my Bachelors Degree in Communications from SUNY Albany. In my free time I like to make music, dance, sing, model and act. I am part of a local band called NRU and One Floor Away, a part of DMKR Studios. I was attracted to working for Alternatives because they seemed very nice, and as a member, I always received excellent customer service.



MONEYWISE

Alternatives' money management course MoneyWise provides people with the tools to confront financial issues in their lives. Topics covered include; income & debt, expense tracking, setting and saving toward goals, practical economics, record keeping, insurance, predatory lending, establishing & repairing credit, conscientious consuming and investment options.

While other financial education courses are primarily geared towards providing information and worksheets, the MoneyWise course walks students through the behavior change process. We believe that instead of overwhelming our students with templates to solve their financial troubles, we identify the individual as the instrument of change. MoneyWise requires only one task - tracking expenses. Our goal is to see people realize that they have the ability to change and use that

realization to confront their own financial issues and begin managing their money.

MoneyWise meets once a week for seven weeks and is offered four times a year. If you are interested contact Brendan Wilbur at 216-3445 or brendan@alternatives.org

UPCOMING MONEYWISE COURSE

When: November 2, 2009
(once a week for seven weeks)
Time: 6:00-8:30 PM
Where: Alternatives' 2nd floor conference room
Cost: Sliding scale \$20-100 (based on median household income) Scholarships are available. A light vegetarian meal is provided.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED: e-mail Brendan at brendan@alternatives.org

New from Business CENTS – Intensive Business Coaching

Many small businesses feel a need for someone to turn to for regular, on-going assistance, especially during challenging times. CENTS's coaching program pairs the business owner with his or her own personal mentor who acts as a resource, sounding board and advisor. In a series of one-to-one consultations over several months, the coach and client work together to problem solve, strategize, set action steps, and keep the client accountable to his or her goals!

For more info, please contact Leslie Ackerman at 216-3423, or leslie@alternatives.org.

Make the Most of Your Debit Card!

Using your Alternatives VISA Debit Card can be easy and efficient. When you use your debit card instead of writing checks, you can save time balancing the checkbook and view your debit transactions online at CU@Home, Alternatives' online banking system.

Are you constantly on the go, and don't always have time to check your balance? Or maybe you need to tap into extra funds for emergencies? We suggest applying for a Line of Credit, which covers your checks and debit transactions in these times. Apply online at http://www.alternatives.org/loan_application.html, or call our Anytime LoanPhone at 866-529-8722.

Tax Credits for Energy Efficient Home Improvements

The government provides tax credits for a wide array of energy efficiency home improvements, including:

- Insulation
- Solar Panels
- Water Heaters
- Roofing
- Biomass Stoves
- Windows & Doors
- Geo-Thermal heat pumps
- And more!

For more info, go to <http://www.energystar.gov/taxcredits>, or call the ENERGY STAR Hotline (888) STAR-YES.

If you need to finance these home improvements, Alternatives will work with you secure the best Home Equity rate possible. We work closely with NYSERDA (New York State Energy and Research Development Authority), who refer local certified contractors for energy efficiency work, and provide the tax rebate for the installation afterwards.

Ask about our Solar Panel HELOC, where you'll potentially cut your monthly payment **in half** by paying interest-only payments until your NYSERDA rebate arrives!



Our Business is Helping Your Business Grow!

Alternatives wants to partner with you and your business for all your loan, merchant services and depository needs. We've established a reputation for excellent products and services, and we'll take the time to learn about your business's unique needs. We specialize in SBA micro-lending, but Alternatives is able to provide financing for other business needs as well.



» Bob Anderson, Business Loan Officer
607-216-3446 • banderson@alternatives.org