

Volunteering Starts With You

ASTRA



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ASTRA MEMBERS' GUIDE

ASTRA BACKGROUND

Altrusa International, Inc. appointed a special Youth Group Committee in July 1965 to identify and develop a suggested structure and name for youth groups sponsored by Altrusa Clubs. The youth groups would be based on the following principles, as adopted by the International Board of Directors.

- 1) Altrusa's participation in the area of youth groups should not duplicate what is already being done by other organizations.
- 2) Altrusa's participation should be unique in purpose.

WHAT IS ASTRA?

ASTRA is an international community service organization for students between the ages of 12 and 25 and is supported by local Altrusa Clubs. ASTRA is an acronym for:

Ability – To know that all of us have special talents to share with others.

Service – To improve the lives of those less fortunate in the community.

Trainning – To develop leadership ability and potential.

Responsibility – To learn to accept obligations and know the satisfaction of carrying projects through to a successful conclusion.

Achievement – To experience success; to know that a group can accomplish so much more than any one individual.

Through ASTRA and with the help of each club's advisors, who are Altrusans, ASTRA members are provided opportunities to learn leadership skills, personal development, career planning and preparation, as well as citizenship development.

MOTTO

"Growing in Service"

STARTING AN ASTRA CLUB

Starting an ASTRA Club is **easy**... just get a group of youth together and then decide on a project to do that will improve their community.....Well, maybe it's a little more involved, but not much more. The most important part is involving the youth. There are so many young people who are excellent leaders already, or in the making, and all that is needed is a little guidance to enhance their leadership skills. Having the youth take on different aspects of starting an ASTRA Club helps hone those skills and gives them a sense of ownership as well as loyalty.

- Once complete approval of sponsoring an ASTRA Club is garnered by the local Altrusa Club the International Office needs to be informed of the decision. Those at the International Office will then give guidance regarding needed information, contacts for questions, resources for more information, etc. – contact Adriana Mena, the ASTRA Contact person in the International Office @ Adriana@altrusa.org
- Altrusa Clubs should be incorporated before sponsoring an ASTRA Club for liability concerns.
- Two or more Altrusa members from the sponsoring club shall be appointed as advisors for the new ASTRA Club.
- ASTRA Clubs shall adapt and then adopt the model Bylaws approved for such clubs by Altrusa International, Inc.
- Determining and being prepared to set up an account for funds that the ASTRA Club will raise for internal use (dues, etc.) and community use (projects, donations).
 - Local bank
 - School account
- This guide contains examples of various scripts for charter meetings, initiation of new members, installation of officers, as well as Bylaws, and also sample agendas for meetings.

ASTRA Club Types

Middle/High School
 Home School
 Vocational School/Occupational Center
 College/University
 Other Community organization
 On its own – *ASTRA Club of Anytown*

Making An ASTRA Club Successful

Generally speaking, keeping an ASTRA Club successful refers to keeping it going year after year. Due to the nature of it being comprised of an ever-changing body of students its membership makeup will be ever fluid. Just as school sports teams change each year according to the composition of students and their various skills, so too will ASTRA Clubs be “*the same thing, only different*” each year. Understanding that element is helpful to the advisors’ mindset. However, consistency is possible and necessary in certain areas of an ASTRA Club.

Some key elements to a successful ASTRA Club include:

- Meeting as a general membership at least once a month
- A consistent date, time, and place for meetings
- Having a project and/or program at that meeting
- Member-elected officers

- Encourage ASTRA members and Altrusa members to bring potential members to all meetings
- Altrusa members who are devoted to ASTRA and keeping it going through thick and thin
- Practicing parliamentary procedure on a level the ASTRA members can understand
- Including a school “contact” (staff member)
- Directing meeting progress with an agenda which includes “Info from your advisor”
- Expecting the ASTRA Members to bring project ideas to be explored and carried out
- Bringing project ideas to the ASTRA members for them to choose to do or not do
- Having the ASTRA and Altrusa Clubs work together on projects for each club
- Understanding that students are very busy and cannot do everything they want to, however they need to be held accountable to the club, its meetings, and projects
- Working knowledge of today’s youth’s means of communication – texting, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.
- Utilizing local press to spread the word of ASTRA’s great involvement and service to the community
- Helping ASTRA members to know about and be involved with District and International activities as much as feasible
- Completing the End of Year Club Activity Report and using it as a tool and guide for growth
- Completing Club Roster for the International office each year
- Inviting ASTRA members to Altrusa meetings
- Inviting Altrusa members to ASTRA meetings

AWARDS TO ASTRA MEMBERS FROM ALTRUSA

It is important to know that great strides are being taken to make ASTRA its own body within the Altrusa International organization and in so doing Altrusa now has means by which it recognizes ASTRA Clubs, and outstanding ASTRA members.

The Altrusa Foundation now funds \$500 to recognize five different ASTRA Clubs for **service** within their community. Each ASTRA Club that completes and turns into the International Office on time an **End of Year Club Activity Report** is eligible to be recognized. Recognition is in the form of a gift of \$100 in honor of the ASTRA Club to an organization or project with which the club has worked in the past year. For example, a club’s report which is randomly chosen may describe their work with a local child advocacy center which the ASTRA members warrant is deserving of recognition and support from Altrusa International and the Altrusa Foundation.

Scholarships are now available to ASTRA members graduating from high school and continuing their education at a technical school, college, university, etc. Starting in 2012 the Altrusa Foundation will fund two \$500, and two \$2,000 scholarships to four ASTRA members who demonstrate outstanding community service, leadership skills, and potential. This \$5,000 commitment from the Altrusa Foundation validates its appreciation of the importance of ASTRA to Altrusa’s future.

The End of Year Club Activity Report as well as the Scholarship application and relevant information are both **available online at www.altrusa.org**.

ASTRA MEETINGS

Each ASTRA Club should hold at least four different kinds of meetings each year:

- Regular meetings
 - Board meetings
 - Initiation meetings
 - Installation meeting
- **Regular meetings** are for the entire ASTRA membership and should include information about upcoming projects, a wrap-up of recent projects, a request of the membership for new project ideas, and when feasible should also include a program and/or project for the members to complete during the meeting time. (A sample Regular Meeting Agenda is at the end of this Guide.)
 - **Board meetings** are for the officers of the club. It is at these meetings when project ideas that come to the Advisors can be discussed as to whether or not to take to the general membership, bills can be paid by the treasurer, correspondence can be completed by the secretary, and other business can be decided as to whether or not be taken to the general membership. For well-established ASTRA Clubs, a workable budget can be established. As well, prospective new members can be filtered by the board and Advisors.
 - **Initiation meetings** can be held as often as the club deems necessary, or just once or twice a year. It is at these meetings that new members are brought into/initiated into the ASTRA Club membership. (A sample script of an ASTRA Initiation is at the end of this Guide.)
 - **Installation meeting** is held once a year with the purpose to be to install the newly elected officers who will lead the club in the upcoming year. Elections of officers can be held at the end of the ASTRA/school year so that the club is ready to go upon the starting of the new year. Or, elections can be held at the beginning of the new ASTRA/school year to allow for any changes in membership that may have occurred since the end of the previous year. (A sample script of an ASTRA Installation Meeting is at the end of this Guide.)

For ALL meetings, as well as projects, it is good practice to have a **sign-in sheet** for members to use, and for Advisors to be able to refer for attendance, service hours, etc.

ASTRA POLICIES

ASTRA Club Policies are set by International for all ASTRA Clubs. Each club may adapt guidelines or regulations so long as they are not in conflict with Bylaws and Policies of Altrusa International, Inc.

ALL clubs for youth that are organized and sponsored by an Altrusa Club shall be known as an ASTRA Club.

Altrusa International Photo Release Policy

Altrusa International has an existing policy that requires written consent from members and/or their guardians who appear in a photo that is sent to the International Office for publication or display on the website. A photo release is to be used ANYTIME a photo is to be published, regardless of whether the use is by Altrusa International, ASTRA, or any other entity.

Limitation of Membership in ASTRA

Membership in ASTRA is limited to youth/young adults between the ages of 12 and 25 years of age. This age span is to account for those citizens who are considered “traditional” students in the community, as in they have not yet been considered eligible for membership in Altrusa.

District Conference and International Convention

Altrusa International policies encourage the attendance and involvement of ASTRA Members at all District Conferences as well as at International Conventions. Particularly when conferences and/or conventions are in close proximity to ASTRA Clubs it is important to encourage ASTRA members to attend these events for they will learn a lot about Altrusa of which they are all a part.

SERVICE PROJECT IDEAS

- Children’s Hospitals
 - Visitation
 - Activities for patients
- Food Banks
 - Food Drive competitions between other clubs
 - Staffing facility
 - Shelf stocking support
 - Sorting support after other Community food drives
- Soup Kitchens
 - Serving and/or preparing meal
 - Food drive for their “pantry”
- Homeless Shelters
 - Coat, hat, gloves, and/or mitten drives
 - Hygiene kits
 - Blanket drives
- “Cause” Walks
 - Breast Cancer, Alzheimer’s, Relay for Life, etc.
- Road side or other area clean up
- Humane Society
 - Pet Food and Supply Drives

- Shelter assistance
- Child Advocacy Centers
 - Supply needs
 - Client needs
- Resource Centers Needs
- Support of OTHER organizations' foundation fundraising efforts (hospitals, hospice, police, etc.)
 - Set up and/or Clean up
 - Serving
 - Coat checking
- Drug Free Promotional Programs
- International Outreach Programs
- YMCA or Recreation Center community events
- Holiday "Secret Gift Giving"

SAMPLE ASTRA MEETING AGENDA



ASTRA Club of CHS

Thursday, October 4, 2012

Call to order

Collect and Pledge of Allegiance

- *Our heavenly father, surrounded by blessings may we learn to bless*
- *Reaping the fruits of patriotism, may we love our country more*
- *Members of a worldwide community, may we cherish our neighbors everywhere*
- *Grateful to Thee, may we show our gratitude by efficiency and service.*

ASTRA Accent - What did you find at Altrusa.org???

**Introduction of Guests
Projects**

Adopt A Highway
Kits.... Karina
Ideas....

Program

Mrs. Brown – Abraham Connection

Next meeting

Thursday, November 1st

CHS Library – 6:00 PM

Dec. 6, **Jan. 3 or 10**, Feb. 7, Mar. 7, Apr. 4, May 2

Reminders

Applications & Parent Permission forms
Sign in to book for meetings and volunteer hours
Facebook page.... **CHS ASTRA**
Email addresses and/or cell phone #s to text reminders

Benediction

*May we go forth with high ideals to greet our fellow man
Be true to all ASTRA aims until we meet again.*

Meeting adjourned

FAQs about ASTRA

What is ASTRA?

ASTRA is an international community service organization for students between the ages of 12 and 25 and is supported by local Altrusa Clubs.

What does ASTRA stand for?

A - Ability **S** - Service **T** - Training **R** - Responsibility **A** - Achievement

Are the letters for the name ASTRA always capitalized?

Yes! ASTRA is an acronym which means that each letter stands for an individual word so to show respect for each word that ASTRA represents each letter in the name is capitalized.

Who can join ASTRA?

ASTRA is for youth between the ages of 12 and 25 years old.

Why does ASTRA go up to the age of 25?

ASTRA goes up to the age of 25 to accommodate the members of ASTRA Clubs that are on college/tech school, etc. campuses.

Is ASTRA just for girls?

ASTRA is for both boys and girls.

How many people does it take to make an ASTRA Club?

To be officially chartered by Altrusa International an ASTRA Club is required to have at least 15 members.

Must an ASTRA Club have at least a certain number of members?

Once chartered with at least 15 members ASTRA Clubs are encouraged to at least remain at Charter Strength to keep the club strong and growing.

What is “Charter Strength?”

Having at least 15 members.

How many countries are ASTRA Clubs in?

As of 2013 ASTRA Clubs are in the US, Puerto Rico, and New Zealand.

Does an ASTRA Club have to be part of a school?

No. ASTRA Clubs do not have to be part of a school. The one thing they must be is sponsored by an Altrusa Club.

Do advisors to an ASTRA Club have to be members of Altrusa?

No. However, the ASTRA Club must have at least one advisor who is a member of Altrusa. More than one Altrusa member advisor is much better for the ASTRA Club.

What is an “accent?”

An accent is a brief presentation at a meeting that shares with the members information that is important to the club such as news about Altrusa or news in the community.

Can a parent be an advisor to an ASTRA Club?

Yes. However, it is strongly encouraged that if a parent/teacher/friend is interested in ASTRA then they should talk with an Altrusa member about becoming an Altrusan because it will help with understanding more about ASTRA.

Do ASTRA Clubs have to meet every week?

No. ASTRA Clubs are required to meet once a month, though.

Do ASTRA Clubs follow a format when holding meetings?

Parliamentary Procedure is the format by which ASTRA Clubs are to run their meetings. How strictly Parliamentary Procedure is followed is up to the advisor's discretion.

How does a president of an ASTRA Club know all of what is to be covered at an ASTRA meeting?

It is suggested that the president follow an agenda for each meeting.

What is a Meeting Agenda?

It is basically a listing of all that needs to be covered at the ASTRA meeting from the Collect, Introducing guests, Old Business, New Business, Reminders and more.

What is a "Motion" at a meeting?

A motion is basically an ASTRA member saying, "I think 'this' is a good idea" A motion is presented by the member saying, "I make a motion that our ASTRA Club assist the Town Food Bank with their annual food drive on Saturday, June 1, 2020 by sorting and shelving the donations they will receive" – a who, what, where, when, and how.

What is a "Second" at a meeting?

A second is basically an ASTRA member saying, "I think that's a good idea" by saying, "I second that motion."

What is "Discussion" at an ASTRA meeting?

Discussion is when questions and concerns can be brought up about the motion. It is during discussion that sometimes it is realized that some details need to be added to the motion. Discussion cannot happen if the motion does not get a second.

Does every motion have to have a "second"?

No. Sometimes a motion "Dies for lack of a second" which basically means no one in the group thought it was a good idea.

What happens after a motion is seconded and then discussed?

The presiding officer will call for a vote – All those in favor say Aye... All those opposed say Nay. The most votes decides whether or not the motion is accepted/passed.

What are minutes of a meeting?

Minutes are the written accounting of WHAT was done and decided at a meeting. They do not include dialog or quotes except in the situation of a motion. Minutes also generally include the date of the meeting, where the meeting was held. Sometimes it's appropriate to include who attended the meeting as well.

Do ASTRA members have to attend EVERY ASTRA meeting?

No. However, ASTRA members are encouraged to attend as many meetings as possible. It is at ASTRA meetings that decisions about and for the club are made.

What is a Service Project?

A service project is an activity that an ASTRA Club does in its community to make the community a better place.

What are examples of Service Projects?

- Helping the local food bank stock their shelves
- Holding a food drive for the local food bank
- Visiting residents at a local nursing care facility
- Decorating an health facility's office
- Yard care for the elderly
- A coat/hat/mitten etc. drive for a homeless shelter
- Fixing meals for a homeless shelter
- Coat checking for a local fundraiser
- Buying gifts for a child in need who's part of a Giving Tree
- Collecting gently used stuffed animals for first responders to give to traumatized kids
- Holding a Pet Food and Supply drive for a local animal shelter
- Walking/caring for pets at a local animal shelter

What is a Fundraiser?

A fundraiser is an event where the ASTRA Club raises funds/money to be used to fund club projects. If money is received from the community, it must go back to the community.

What are examples of fundraisers?

- Bake sale
- Yard sale
- Car wash
- ASTRA Members for Hire
- Recyclable items collected and cashed in

Can ASTRA members attend Altrusa meetings?

YES!! As "Future Altrusans" ASTRA members are strongly encouraged to attend Altrusa meetings to get to know Altrusa members, to see how an Altrusa meeting is run, to learn about what is going on in Altrusa... for so many reasons, ASTRA members are encouraged to attend Altrusa meetings.

Are there any rewards for being an ASTRA Member?

Yes. Altrusa International offers 4 scholarships each year for graduating ASTRA members. The Altrusa Foundation generously funds (2) \$500 scholarships and (2) \$2,000 scholarships which are offered to ASTRA Members who complete an Altrusa scholarship application. Applications can be found online at the altrusa.org website.

Do ASTRA Clubs have officers?

Yes. They generally have a president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer.

What does the president of an ASTRA Club do?

A president presides over or runs each meeting as well as sets the example of how to be a good ASTRA Member. The president is expected to lead the ASTRA Club.

What does the vice president of an ASTRA Club do?

A vice president is the back up for times when the president is not available. It is recommended that the person serving as vice president consider it a two-year term to have a year of “practice” and then step up to the office of president the next year.

What does the secretary of an ASTRA Club do?

The secretary is responsible for all written correspondence, writing it as well as sharing what is sent to the club. The secretary also is responsible for taking the minutes of each meeting.

What does the treasurer of an ASTRA Club do?

The treasurer is responsible for keeping track of the funds that come into and go out of the ASTRA Club.

What is a Club Roster?

It is a listing of the members of the club that is sent to the Altrusa International office.

What is an orientation?

Orientation is a meeting that tells new members about what is involved with being an ASTRA Member.

What is a Board Orientation?

Board Orientation is a meeting with the new officers and the advisor as to what is expected of them in the upcoming year.

What is a Board?

The Board consists of at least the officers: president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer, and at least one Altrusa member/advisor.

What are service hours?

Service hours references an accounting of how much time ASTRA Members put into a service project.

Do ASTRA Clubs have to send information about the projects it does to the Altrusa International Office?

Yes. Every ASTRA Club is encouraged each spring to complete an End of Year Club Activity Report which asks questions about the club. The good thing about the EoYCAR is that there are no right or wrong answers, but it is very important that each question is answered completely.

Are ASTRA Clubs given awards for their service in their communities?

YES...indirectly. All of the End of Year Club Activity Reports that are received into the Altrusa International Office on time and complete are grouped together. From all of those reports 5 are randomly chosen for a \$100 donation, funded by the Altrusa Foundation, to be given in honor of the ASTRA Clubs to a project that each ASTRA Club has chosen. For example: if an ASTRA Club names a Food Bank as one of its favorite projects and that ASTRA Club's EoYCAR is one of the 5 chosen, then a \$100 donation is sent to that Food Bank in honor of the ASTRA Club. The award is the project receiving money because of the ASTRA Club.



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