



Empower, Enlighten, Engage

2009 Annual Report



Empower, Enlighten, Engage

About our Agency

Alphapointe Association for the Blind is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that has continued to serve people who are blind and visually impaired in the Kansas City, Missouri community and surrounding region since 1911. Alphapointe Association for the Blind is **the largest single employer of visually impaired individuals, employing 176 people, and is the only comprehensive rehabilitation and education agency for people with vision loss in the state of Missouri, serving over 4,000 individuals.**

Our Mission is to empower people with vision loss to maximize their independence.

Our Values:

- We have a passion for serving people with all types and levels of vision loss.
- We encourage creative initiative and value change as opportunity.
- We ensure a positive and safe environment through teamwork.
- We are accountable for our commitments and for our results.
- We put people and families first by treating everyone with honesty and integrity.
- We are responsible for our resources to serve all stakeholders.
- We strive for excellence in everything we do.
- We believe in having fun and celebrating success.

We provide

- **ISO-9001 Certified Manufacturing**
- **Plastics Engineering**
- **Writing Instruments & Office Products**
- **E-Commerce**
- **Military Base Supply Stores**
- **Call Center Services**
- **Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Education Programs**
- **Employment & Job Placement**
- **Low Vision Products Store**

2009 Executive Staff

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Reinhard Mabry,
President and CEO



Steve Hilliard,
Board of Directors Chair

A Message From the President/CEO and Board Chair

2009 was an incredible year for Alphapointe Association for the Blind, made possible by our Community, our Employees and our Volunteers. The theme of this annual report, Empowered, Enlightened, Engaged, expresses the goals we have for serving the needs of people with vision loss. In the following pages, we celebrate the many achievements of the people served by Alphapointe as well as the countless contributions of time, talent and support made to Alphapointe by our community.

We celebrated the achievements of our employees. Marty Cutshall, an employee in the Writing Instruments Department for 16 years, was recognized as our Direct Labor Employee of the Year. Marty's attitude and work ethic have made him an invaluable part of the team in every job we have asked of him. Steve Rosenthal, Chief Information Officer, was honored as the Employee of the Year, which is presented to an employee who is blind who holds an Indirect Labor position. Steve has been with Alphapointe for 22 years, and has held numerous leadership positions during his tenure as the organization has evolved from a small workshop when he started to today's multi-faceted operation. Both of these exceptional individuals were nominees for national awards as well and were recognized by the National Industries for the Blind at its annual conference.

We recognized the hundreds of people who worked to improve their lives through our rehabilitation and education programs. People like Paul Heddings, a student who came to Alphapointe to receive training before entering the University of Missouri's competitive Honors Pre-Law Program. When Paul lost his vision, both he and his parents refused to compromise their dreams for the future. Alphapointe empowered Paul to continue his studies and his dream to one day be a disability advocacy attorney.

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We strived to expand Alphapointe's presence in the community. In August, Alphapointe made a huge stride in the employment of people who are visually impaired when we cut the ribbon on our new tape slitting and packaging business. This new venture, in partnership with the 3M Company, will result in several new jobs for people who are visually impaired. In October, Alphapointe hosted the second Dining in the Dark dinner. Over 200 people dined in total darkness, served entirely by waiters who are blind. It was an event you had to not see to believe. Dining in the Dark was incredibly well received by the community, and has become a signature event for Alphapointe.

Alphapointe was honored by visits from several local, state and federal legislators. These policy makers took time from their busy schedules to tour Alphapointe's facilities and learn more about the AbilityOne Program that empowers people with disabilities to lead independent, productive lives.

We honored the contributions of our donors, supporters and volunteers. The 5th Annual Alphapointe Golf Tournament raised over \$40,000 to directly benefit the comprehensive vision rehabilitation program. In 2009, volunteers gave over 3,000 hours of time, talent and service to Alphapointe by helping at special events, running an art program, reading the newspaper, or providing clerical support. Of special note is David Westbrook, the first recipient of the Alphapointe Luminary Award, for his outstanding contributions to better the lives of people living with vision loss in our community. David has been a friend of Alphapointe for decades, helping in ways too numerous to detail in this letter.

We thank all of you for making 2009 a year of growth, success and celebration at Alphapointe. With an eye to the future, we look forward to 2010 and the continued growth and success of this 99 year-old institution.



Reinhard Mabry



Steve Hilliard

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Manufacturing

Key Partnerships in 2009

- * 3M Companies
- * Kensington
- * Rexam
- * Boulevard Brewing Company
- * Sanofi Aventis

Manufacturing

Alphapointe produces fifteen types of pens which carry the SKILCRAFT® brand; a brand that represents products produced for our government by over 5,000 Americans nationwide who are blind or visually impaired. Alphapointe's pen assembly plant has grown into an annual business of over eleven million pens produced in 2009 by over 60 blind or visually impaired employees. Four million of those pens were utilized by the U.S. Census Bureau to complete the 2010 Census.

2009 marked the beginning of several new partnerships with both local and international companies. Alphapointe recently added a new line of office tape in partnership with 3M. Additionally, Alphapointe embarked on a new business partnership with locally-owned Boulevard Brewing Company to repackage six different varieties of their beer into sample packs. Alphapointe also expanded plastics manufacturing to include a new line of "green" spray bottles, made entirely of recycled plastic.



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Jerry's Story

Jerry Brokaw has worked at Alphapointe since 1981. Jerry's mom, Shirley Brokaw, was a long time employee at Alphapointe and got Jerry a job working summers. He started out assembling pens and bolts, helping out where he was needed. He even spent a couple of summers cutting grass at the old Alphapointe location in downtown Kansas City.



When Alphapointe expanded their business to include plastics manufacturing, Jerry saw this as an opportunity to learn a skill so he enrolled in a class to learn how to operate the Injection Blow Molding machines. After mastering the plastics operation, Jerry moved to the warehouse, where he excelled at the logistics of keeping a large manufacturing operation supplied as well as getting the orders filled accurately. In 2006, Jerry was named manager of the Office Supplies division of manufacturing. He quickly turned around the operation, increasing output as well as making sure all orders were filled on time.

Jerry says that working at Alphapointe for 27 years has been challenging and rewarding. "After working here, it is easy to understand the importance of organizations like Alphapointe", he says. "Just because someone has a vision impairment does not make them unable to contribute to society."

Program Facts

The Comprehensive Vision Rehabilitation Program at Alphapointe is the only one of its kind in the region.

In 2009, this program served over 4,000 people in Kansas City and the surrounding area.

The program consists of five different components: Activities of Daily Living training, Orientation and Mobility training, Adaptive Technology education, Communication Skills education and Vocational Placement.

Comprehensive Vision Rehab

Activities of Daily Living: Occupational Therapists aid clients to assume responsibility for meeting their own needs. Most clients start their training in the Training Apartment at the Alphapointe Life Skills Campus. The Training Apartment is fully equipped with a kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and washer/dryer so that the clients have as much "hands-on" training as possible.

Orientation and Mobility Training: Instructors observe clients who have had a recent loss of vision in a variety of indoor and outdoor settings and training is provided sequentially: traveling with a sighted guide, white cane techniques, and use of public transportation.

Adaptive Technology Training: Instructors work with clients in our computer lab, as well as at home or at the client's workplace. Clients will learn how to operate a computer using a variety of programs that read, speak or magnify the screen.

Communication Skills: Instructors teach clients to utilize adaptive aids to better access written communication. In addition, braille is taught to those clients that are appropriate for instruction and clients work to prepare for GED and college entrance testing.

Vocational Placement: Employment Specialists provide job search assistance, resume and cover letter writing, job interviewing skills, teamwork skills development, workplace protocol and job placement.



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Community Outreach

Diabetes Outreach: The grassroots education program serves the Kansas City area to build awareness of the connection between diabetes and vision loss. Alphapointe provides direct services, outreach and education directly to high risk individuals and through events and mailings. Case management aids clients in procuring inexpensive or no-cost adaptive diabetes management equipment, as well as assist with healthy lifestyle choices.

Student Transition Employment Program (STEP): An eight-week program provides competitive work experience to, generally, high school age youth. The goal is to provide each student with a foundation for the school-to-work transition, to enable each to practice personal independence through work and goal-setting experiences as well as afford them the opportunity for community involvement. This program includes vocational exploration; identifying preferences and abilities at work; learning about work related behaviors; and self-advocacy.

College Preparatory: The PREP Program is designed to increase the chances of success in college and ease the transition for individuals with visual impairment who are attending college for the first time. This program is designed for both blind and low vision individuals and for both first-time and older re-entry students. Case management is provided through a semester at a local-area college.

Senior Adult Services: The goal of the Senior Adult Services program is to promote activity, independence and dignity in the home, family and community for those seniors experiencing age-related vision loss. A registered and licensed occupational therapist visits the home of senior adults to assess vision-related needs; recommend simple modification strategies to promote safety and independence; and identify appropriate visual aids and adaptive equipment.

Program Statistics

Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness in adults 20 to 74 years old.

Age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, cataracts, and diabetic retinopathy are among the most common eye diseases for which people seek vision rehabilitation. These eye diseases affect the lifestyle, safety, and independence of nearly 6.5 million Americans age 55 and older.



Program Facts

A total of 50 clients who are blind with multiple disabilities participated in WAC in 2009, including 48 individuals that participated in the program on a daily basis.

WAC assures a good quality of work life and fulfills the client's desire for extended employment on a regular basis.

The target population is the seven-county metropolitan Kansas City area which includes Jackson, Cass, Clay, and Platte in Missouri; and Wyandotte, Johnson, and Leavenworth in Kansas.

Work Adjustment Center

The Work Adjustment Center at Alhappointe provides a safe, therapeutic working environment to over 50 adults with multiple developmental disabilities. All of these individuals have some level of vision impairment, ranging from complete blindness to partial vision loss. Many of the employees in WAC have cognitive and physical disabilities, and most live in group homes. They spend their time at Alhappointe completing a variety of projects, including assembling pens and other piece work. They are paid for their work, and receive incentives and rewards for a job well done.

More importantly, these individuals receive therapeutic services. Staff members work with clients to improve their orientation and mobility skills, to teach proper workplace behavior and conflict resolution skills. Each client is assessed prior to beginning work, and is subsequently monitored to ensure progress.

The Work Adjustment Center is home to many challenges, but it is also the place where many hard won successes are celebrated. Whether it is something as simple as throwing away their lunch plates or walking to the bathroom utilizing a white cane, all of the victories in the WAC are cause for celebration.



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Brandie's Story

Brandie was born profoundly deaf, and lost her sight at age 16. She came to Alphapointe in 1998, and is currently an employee in the Work Adjustment Center where she works Monday through Friday assembling pens and other office products.

Brandie came to Alphapointe following seven months spent at the Helen Keller Institute in New York State; while there she learned to communicate using a specialized form of sign language called tactile signing. She also began to study Braille, and was introduced to adaptive technology equipment. She came to Alphapointe to continue to learn the skills necessary to live independently.



Today, Brandie lives in her own apartment with her two cats, Brat and Abby. She takes shared transportation to work every day, maintains an extensive circle of friends, and has mastered the use of a Braille keyboard and specialized computer programs to stay connected to the world via her computer.

In 2009, Brandie used these skills to start her own business designing greeting cards and other artwork. Brandie designs using a program called Windows Eyes for Paint, and a machine prints the cards in Braille. She sells these cards to friends, family and co-workers. In recognition of this achievement, Brandie was chosen from a long list of nominees to receive the EITAS Personal Success Award.

Program Facts

Switchboard staff members answer an average of 300 calls per day.

The Base Service Stores at Fort Leonard Wood and Little Rock Air Force Base serve over 35,000 active military personnel combined.

Service Description

Base Service Stores: Alphapointe operates two Military Base Supply Stores at Fort Leonard Wood Army Base in Missouri and Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas. The Base Supply stores are an employment opportunity for Alphapointe clients. The stores offer general office supplies, military clothing, tools and other items for military personnel.

Veteran's Administration Hospital: Alphapointe employees who are blind or visually impaired provide the telephone switchboard services at the Veteran's Administration Veteran's Hospital in Kansas City. Alphapointe has a long standing relationship with the VA that provides opportunities for blind and visually impaired employees.

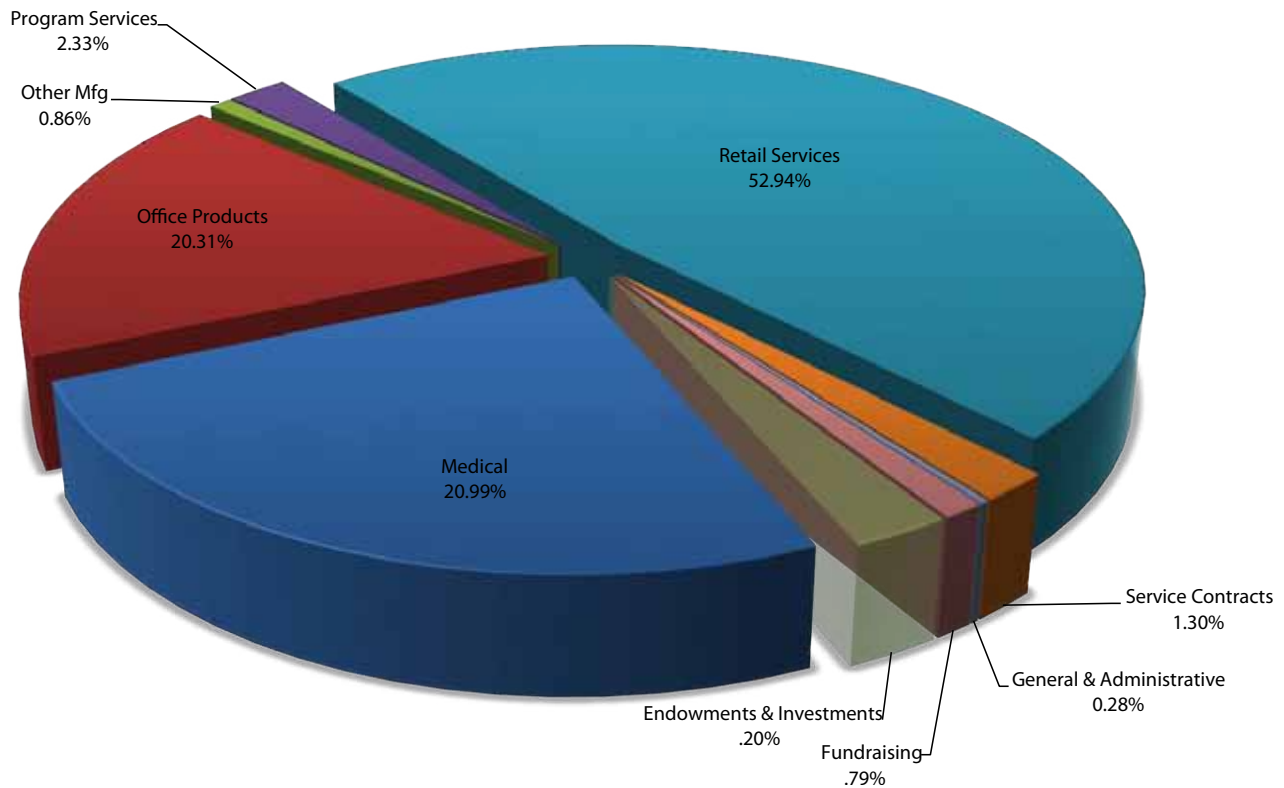
E-Commerce Services

Alphapointe's online store, www.alphapointeonline.com, offers over 40,000 products, including everything from copy paper to credenzas. Alphapointe is proud to serve a broad range of customers, including large government agencies and many small businesses. All of the products offered are of the highest quality, and are priced competitively. Most importantly, the money used to buy needed office supplies and products is reinvested into the Alphapointe organization to help subsidize both employment opportunities and vision rehabilitation services.



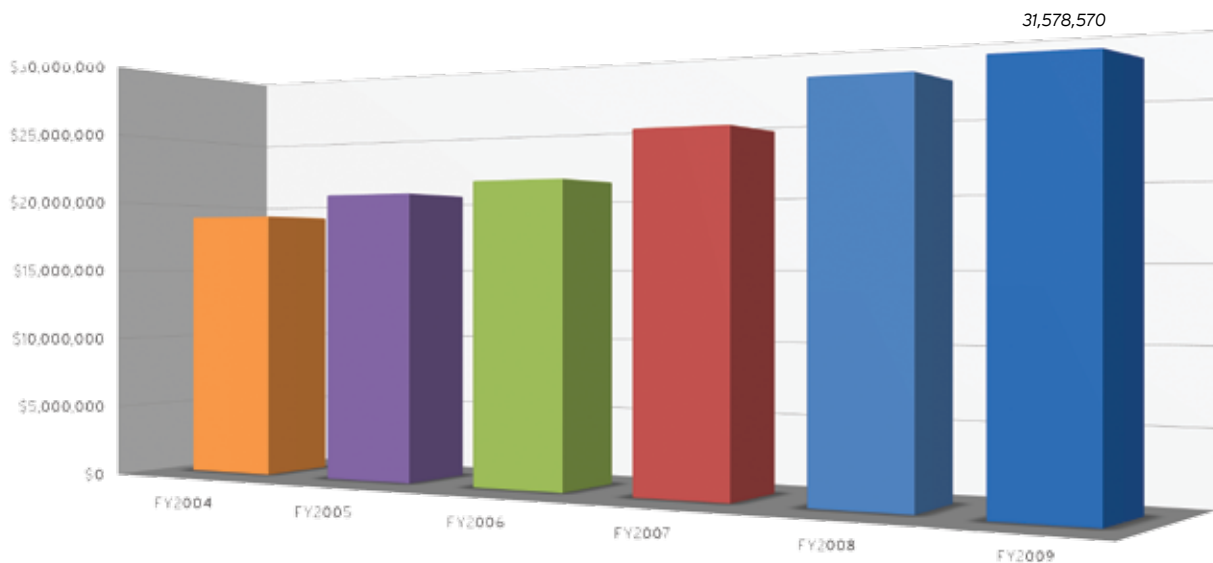
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Fiscal Year 2009 Revenue



Fiscal Year 2004-2009 Revenue

As of September 2009 - Assets to Liability: 2.8 : 1; Debt to Equity: 55%





Volunteers: Engaged

2009 was a banner year for volunteer support at Alphapointe. Over 90 volunteers provided over 3300 hours of service to Alphapointe and our clients. The Audio Reader program, in its second year, continued to provide access to local newspapers read by volunteers over a closed circuit radio system. Volunteer board members gave their time and expertise on a number of new ventures, including several new product lines at Alphapointe. Volunteers provided visits to seniors, recorded books and newsletters, completed numerous administrative projects, helped at our special events, and were tireless advocates for Alphapointe.



Special Events: Dining in the Dark

On Thursday, November 5, 2009 Alphapointe Association for the Blind hosted the 2009 Dining in the Dark benefit dinner at the Westin Crown Center Hotel. The event gave Kansas Citians the opportunity to experience something most people don't face every day- sitting down to dinner and not being able to see what they are eating. Over \$60,000 was raised to support the Comprehensive Vision Rehabilitation program at Alphapointe.



In a pitch black dining room, trained visually impaired wait staff served dinner to over 220 excited and nervous diners. During the dinner, nationally known blind artists, Doug Maxwell and Danny Kean from The Visionary Media Group presented a unique audible experience. The artist's presentation is rooted in Synesthesia, the study of color with chords.

Also new to this year's event was a student table, underwritten by local sponsors consisting of area high school students who were invited to experience some of the challenges associated with vision loss. Students returned to their schools and shared their experience with their peers.



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Dining in the Dark Sponsors

Presenting Sponsor:

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BKD

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IMA

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Westin Crown Center Hotel

Zest Restaurant



Special Events: Classic Golf Tournament

The 6th Annual Alphapointe Classic Golf Tournament was held Tuesday, May 25th at Loch Lloyd Country Club. 134 golfers came out for a great day on the links to support the Comprehensive Vision Rehabilitation program at Alphapointe. Over \$40,000 were raised to support the region's only comprehensive vision rehabilitation program that provides critical training and education to empower people with vision loss to lead independent, productive lives.

Prior to the start of tournament play, Mr. David Meador, a member of the US Blind Golfers Association, conducted an instructional clinic on the methods of blind golfing. Mr. Meador, himself completely blind, showed 19 students with vision loss how to drive, chip and putt the ball using a sighted coach to line up the shot.

At the end of tournament play, all participants and volunteers gathered in the Clubhouse for dinner and the awarding of the trophies to the winners of the tournament as well as the winners of the putting and driving contests. The teams from Lamar Outdoor Advertising and Envision took home the top honors.

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Classic Golf Tournament Sponsors

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IMA

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Oak Street Coffee
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SRO Video
Tanner's
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The Westin Crown Center
Waldo Pizza

2009 Donor List

Thank you to all of our donors who made it possible for over 4,000 people to receive the services critical to living independent, productive lives in 2009. Alhappointe could not continue its mission to maximize the independence of people who are blind or visually impaired without your continued support.

Anonymous	Debbie and Brian Crotty	Denise Hamilton and Michael Soler
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Dr. John Cowan	Anthony and Virginia Guma	Jim Jordan
Mr. Ben Craig	Hallmark Cards Inc	Mr. and Mrs. Greg Kallos



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Leland and Marcia Kolkmeier
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Empowering people with vision loss
to maximize their independence.



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