

September 1, 2021

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Dear «INFORMAL_SAL»,

I am writing to thank you for your past gifts to Outlook Nebraska, to request your continued support with a new endeavor, and to introduce myself. My name is Paulette Monthei, and with your help, I look forward to leading **Outlook Enrichment** as its new Executive Director.

For more than two decades, **Outlook Nebraska** has been the largest employer of blind and visually impaired (BVI) individuals in Nebraska and Iowa, and several other Midwestern states. **More than 65 percent of Outlook's associates are BVI**, and thanks to adaptive technology and a collective can-do spirit, they manufacture a full line of socially responsible tissue and paper towel products supporting a federal government contract.

In 2019, **Outlook Enrichment** was formed as a new 501(c)3 organization to focus on bringing Outlook's enrichment programs to a broader consumer base. While this initiative is new, we know these programs bridge the gap in services currently unavailable to BVI individuals in the Omaha, Nebraska and Council Bluffs, Iowa metropolitan area. The U.S. Census Bureau reports approximately **15,000 people in the Omaha area are experiencing measurable vision loss**.

Data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention's Vision Health Initiative finds blindness or vision problems to be among the **top 10 disabilities among adults aged 18 years and older**. Vision loss impedes one's ability to read, drive, prepare meals, watch television and manage personal affairs. Further, impaired vision among mature adults can lead to social isolation, family stress and health issues (Ellwein, Friedlin, McBean, & Lee, 1996).

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Outlook Enrichment is the only organization that provides training initiatives and extensive programming for BVI individuals in Nebraska, Iowa, and five other states in the North Central Region.

Our adaptive technology training program teaches BVI consumers how to use smartphones, tablets, computers, and both high- and low-tech visual magnification aids - tools to be self-sufficient, empowered, employable and independent.

Our recreational programs provide opportunities to safely engage in exciting experiences, including monthly teen events and recreational sports activities for BVI individuals of all ages and their families.

Outlook Enrichment is also leading the way in providing opportunities to enjoy musical performances, audio descriptions of live theatre performances and exhibits, sensory art workshops and so much more, enabling BVI consumers to lead culturally engaged, vibrant lives.

Our team actively participates in an array of community, state, and national agency coalitions, providing project collaboration, and advocacy and referrals for BVI individuals. We coordinate tours, provide team-building experiences, and conduct outreach activities to educate the public on issues related to blindness.

Your support will help us continue meeting the needs of individuals in our community and surrounding states who are experiencing vision loss. The CDC expects incidence of vision loss to double by 2050 due to the rise of diabetes and age-related loss of sight. Our services have become even more relevant, critical and in-demand.

It would be my pleasure to visit with you - to learn how you came to know about Outlook, and how vision loss may have touched your life. We welcome you to visit **Outlook Enrichment** anytime to catch a glimpse of our mission in action. It truly is "more than meets the eye!"

Warm Regards,

Paulette

Paulette Monthei
Executive Director
pmonthei@outlooken.org

P.S. Thanks to a generous challenge matching grant from the Rupert Dunklau Foundation that has been reserved for **Outlook Enrichment**, your gift of financial support in any amount will be doubled when you respond by October 15, 2021!

Outlook Enrichment (EIN 84-2495814) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.
Please consult your tax advisor or IRS regarding the tax-deductibility of your charitable gifts.

www.outlooken.org ♦ 4125 S 72nd St ♦ Omaha, NE 68127 ♦ (531) 365-5051