



## NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Alphapointe Closes On Purchase of Future Home in Queens**

*New York City's Largest Employer of Individuals Who Are Blind and Visually Impaired will Transfer All Departments in Brooklyn to Richmond Hill Property by End of Next Year*

**June 16, 2017, Brooklyn, NY** ~ Alphapointe, the non-profit organization dedicated to helping individuals who are legally blind secure gainful employment, announced today that it has acquired a 138,000-square-foot building at 87-46 123<sup>rd</sup> Street in the Richmond Hill section of Queens, which is to become the official home of the organization. The 501(c)(3) organization is currently pursuing philanthropic support for this critical project.

Formerly known as New York City Industries for the Blind (NYCIB), Alphapointe is New York City's largest employer of individuals who are blind and visually impaired and the only industrial employer of this population in the city's five boroughs. Alphapointe currently rents 100,000 square feet of office, factory and warehouse space at 3611 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn.

Kansas City-based Alphapointe Inc. arrived in New York in May 2014 to merge with NYCIB, and assumed the lease that organization was holding in Brooklyn. "The plan from the outset was to locate and purchase a property in New York," said Reinhard Mabry, President/CEO of the organization.

"Our goal has always been to find a sustainable permanent home in New York so we would not have to spend our funds on ever-increasing rent," he said. "But we had to wait until we could find a space that is accessible and a good place to work for our

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employees while also allowing us to grow. This new location will allow us to create a thriving contemporary workplace that will benefit people who are blind and visually impaired long into the future.”

In addition to administrative offices, the new location will house Alphapointe’s New York-based manufacturing facility specializing in janitorial and office supplies for businesses, government and the military, a contract sewing department, an inbound call center, and a warehouse/fulfillment center that counts New York Administration for Children’s Services among its key customers. It will serve more than 200 current employees, of which 130 are legally blind, and will allow Alphapointe room to expand its business lines and provide training and jobs for more people who are blind and visually impaired in the New York market over the coming years.

“As 70 percent of Americans who are blind are unemployed, it was critical that Alphapointe find suitable space that can allow it to serve that growing demand in New York City,” explained Mabry.

In addition to being outfitted with a contemporary design and state-of-the-art accommodations for navigation, information gathering and accessibility, it will also include special features such as a sensory garden where employees and guests can socialize and recharge during breaks.

Relocation to Queens will occur in stages over the next 14 months, Mabry said, as renovations are completed. Alphapointe is raising funds largely through grants and donations to cover the cost of those renovations. The warehouse area is already suitable for Alphapointe’s needs, and that department will take occupancy over the coming weekend. Alphapointe’s shipping department is scheduled to make the move over the weekend of June 24-25. All remaining departments are expected to relocate by September of next year.

### **About Alphapointe**

Alphapointe, headquartered in Kansas City, MO, has been empowering people with vision loss to achieve their goals and aspirations since its founding in 1911. Alphapointe, one of the largest employers of people who are blind in the U.S., with manufacturing facilities in both the State of Missouri and the State of New York, has nearly 400 employees, of which 230 are blind or visually impaired. Alphapointe is one of the region’s largest resources for people with vision loss, offering products and services nationwide. Alphapointe’s business lines include plastics, micro-molding, office products manufacturing and sales, textiles manufacturing and sales, janitorial products, contact center services, retail stores and a comprehensive rehabilitation and education program for people who are blind or are losing their vision. For more info about Alphapointe, visit [www.alphapointe.org](http://www.alphapointe.org).