



# VISION LOSS ALLIANCE OF NEW JERSEY

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION



## ABOUT US COMPANY FACTS

Throughout our 80 year history, Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey has empowered people with vision loss and blindness by providing support, education, and training in assistive technology and independent living skills.

## STORY AND MISSION

We started as a summer camp program for the blind. Now, we're helping people with profound vision loss navigate and educate the world around them.

Our origins trace back 80 years ago in New Jersey, in 1943. A group of individuals came together at a residential camp for blind women and met in a Newark basement to discuss the societal biases experienced by people who are blind and who have profound vision loss. Their discussion planted the starting seeds of our organization and sparked an immediate desire for change that later led to the formation of the New Jersey Association for the Blind.

At the time, our founders focused solely on women's needs because women were underprivileged and had fewer options for leading an independent life. As time progressed, we realized that providing tools to promote independence was key to helping individuals with profound vision loss.

In 2005, we sought to expand our mission and make our services available to more people. So, we sold our large property and decentralized our program model. We began opening program locations in additional counties in 2010 and started offering a full continuum of programs in Denville, with select programs in Ridgewood. We even started offering virtual classes in 2020 to provide support and address all the challenges people with profound vision loss experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As we look to the future, we're full of optimism and hope. Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey will continue to provide a lifeline to all those with profound vision loss. We'll also continue to serve as a safe haven where the needs of those with vision loss and blindness are understood and their dignity is acknowledged as we guide them through programs that will help them lead a more independent life.

# VISION LOSS ALLIANCE OF NEW JERSEY

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

## ONLINE REACH

MONTHLY  
IMPRESSIONS



600+



1k+



30k+

## STAFF MEMBERS



### BILL SCHULDT

Bill came to Vision Loss Alliance of NJ after working for 33 years at Spectrum for Living, an organization serving more than 800 adults with developmental disabilities in New Jersey. He began his career working directly with their participants and moved into various management positions over the years. He most recently served as their Vice President of Operations. Bill graduated from Springfield College with a BS in Rehabilitation Services. He has dedicated his professional career to helping people with disabilities live purposeful and meaningful lives.

**President and CEO**



### JENNIFER SINGER

Jennifer joined Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey in 2019 and is the Vice President of Development and Communications. Jennifer built her career in the nonprofit sector by increasing visibility and financial support for organizations such as the Arc of Union County, the United Way of Northern New Jersey, and Community Hope. She attended Radford University in Virginia and holds a B.A. Degree. When asked why she loves working for nonprofits, Jennifer said, "Working for a nonprofit is important to me because nonprofits have the power to change a person's life."

**Vice President, Development and Communications**



### ELSA ZAVODA

Elsa, MS OTR/L, SCLV, CLVT joined Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey in 2016 and is the Vice President of Programs. She obtained a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy from the University of Indianapolis and a Graduate Certificate in Low Vision Rehabilitation from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She is the 16th Occupational Therapist in the U.S, and the first in NJ to be awarded Specialty Certification in Low Vision (SCLV) from AOTA in January 2010. Elsa has successfully established and implemented 3 low vision programs in NJ, and practiced at The Low Vision Center of Central NJ. She also serves as the Vision Advisor for OccupationalTherapy.com.

**Vice President, Programs**

# VISION LOSS ALLIANCE OF NEW JERSEY

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

## STAFF MEMBERS



### LINDA GROSZEW

Linda is the Program Director at Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey and is responsible for creating, coordinating, and supervising all classes. Since 2004, Linda has worked with the staff to develop programs and services that empower individuals with vision loss. She has dedicated her life to her career and to teaching private piano lessons (whenever she can find the time!) Her extensive, diverse history of caring for others keeps her interest in non-profit work strong and passionate.

**Program Director**



### KAREN GALLUZZI

Karen joined Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey in 2005. Her responsibilities include bookkeeping, contract administration, planning and coordinating meetings and general office management. Prior to working at Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey, Karen worked at AMY Mohawk Transfer and Warwick Data Systems. Karen attended Marquette University in Wisconsin.

**Senior Finance Manager**

## BOARD MEMBERS



### CARL R. AUGUSTO

Carl served 25 years as president and CEO of the American Foundation for the Blind before retiring in June 2016. During his tenure, he forged numerous strategic partnerships and alliances and expanded the AFB's influence on corporate America, leading to more products and services that improve the quality of life for people with profound vision loss.

**Board Chair**



### CAROL BURGIO

Carol has more than 20 years of experience working in the futures industry at several financial institutions in New York. She has served as a volunteer at the Lighthouse Guild in NY and the Literacy Volunteers of America in Hudson and Morris counties prior to joining VLANJ's board. Carol currently works in the Global Markets division at Santander Bank as a Senior Product Specialist in the Exchange Traded Derivatives department.

**Board Secretary**

# VISION LOSS ALLIANCE OF NEW JERSEY

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION



## MING WU

Ming has spent most of her career working in business development and marketing in the legal sector. In recent years she spent her time volunteering at different UK based non-profits like The Royal National Institute for the Blind and Wakefield District Sight Aid. Ming has a passion for improving the lives of people living with sight loss and loves raising awareness of related topics, which she gladly addresses on her blog.

**Board Vice-Chair**



## JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ

Juan has 17 years of experience in finance & accounting. For the last 2 years, Juan has served as the CFO and COO of General Vision Services in New York City, a leading Eyecare Benefits Administrator and PPO provider of eyecare plans in the Northeast.

**Treasurer**

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Our VLANJ ARISE program was awarded the Morris County Chamber of Commerce award for Not For Profit Excellence Award For Innovative Programs.

“How One Blindness Agency Successfully Pivoted in Providing Essential Services in the Midst of a Global Pandemic,” written by VLANJ staff members Linda Groszew and Elsa Zavoda and published by the American Foundation for the Blind



# VISION LOSS ALLIANCE OF NEW JERSEY

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION



## INTERVIEWS/QUOTES

The instructor “gave me the courage to get back into my life,” said Schreiber, who’d earned a degree in art and sociology from New York University in 1982. “I fell in love with this organization.”

“There is a magic that goes on here at this organization, Vision Loss Alliance.”  
-VLANJ Program Participant

## PRESS RELEASES

VLANJ Goes Virtual to Serve People With Vision Loss During COVID-19 Crisis

‘Beyond Sight’ Picnic Brought Together 100 People With Vision Loss, Volunteers

180 Guests at Dining in the Dark Glimpse Life With Low Vision

VLANJ Participants Use Canes to Navigate Morristown Streets and Businesses

## PRESS COVERAGE

OCTOBER IS BLIND AWARENESS MONTH by CBS News

VLANJ’s First Annual Day of Giving: A Huge Success!

All About Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey’s First Annual Day of Giving by Bold Blind Beauty

Let’s Celebrate Disability Independence Day!  
by: Ming Wu

## CONTACT

jsinger@VLANJ.org

