



christian services

Your Impact Report
2008-2009

Honoring God with their Whole Being

Dear treasured partners,

In my role as President of Elim Christian Services, I am called to guard and promote Elim's mission of equipping individuals with special needs to achieve their highest God-given potential. In my efforts to be faithful to that call I have discovered more and more the profound, powerful implications of the potential that God has given to each of us, in spite of our disabilities.

Jesus' final commissioning of his disciples in Matthew 28 is a very direct command to go and make disciples of all nations. The command is all-encompassing; it sets no conditions and makes no qualifications. It is not dependent on race, gender, education, or disability. As such, the call to discipleship is as applicable to the children and adults at Elim as it is to anyone. In fact, and quite ironically, what Elim is teaching me is that those who have what appear to be the greatest inhibitors to discipleship are often the most effective at it.

From the standpoint of our human limitations, potential is largely defined as how we can grow in our capacity to produce or be self-sufficient. God-given potential, on the other hand, includes that, but then points beyond that to things of eternal significance – the things that disciples do. What you will see in this annual report are God-sightings; places where God is using Elim to help people reach beyond their potential and honor Him with their whole being.

You will read stories of God's faithfulness in the midst of some very challenging economic realities. You will read about updates to Elim Christian School's programming that helps us better serve our diverse student body. You'll read about Elizabeth, whose life has been forever changed through Elim's Discovery program. Additionally, you'll hear about Elim HOPE Packs and the exciting partnerships with churches that are beginning to emerge. You'll even read about Bob, Gail, Steve, and Bob, Elim's first missionaries overseas!

As always, it is our prayer that the stories we share will bring honor to God and build us up as we seek to be faithful to his call to make disciples of all nations.

— Bill Lodewyk
President, Elim Christian Services



Bill Lodewyk talks with Joey, an adult in Elim's ACTS program.

Elim Adult Services

ACTS Program Grows to Meet Need



Adults in Elim's ACTS program practice vocational skills by selling cookies in Elim's central office.

In 2008, Elim launched its Autism Comprehensive Training & Services (ACTS) program, becoming among the first in the state of Illinois to design a program for the growing number of adults with autism.

In 2009, the program is expanding to serve seven to nine adults with autism and adding additional staff. Families of individuals currently served in the program have reported significant boosts in healthy behaviors, life skills, and academics.

Program director Mark Boys believes that the ACTS program not only serves to educate those enrolled but provides a service for our society as well. He explains, "The ACTS Program helps individuals grow and generalize their skills and abilities within the developmental training area and in the community. Through our involvement in service opportunities (like Elim HOPE Packs), our adults participate in work that helps other people. Through their interactions with people in the community, our adults become a voice of advocacy for adults with autism everywhere."

ADULT SERVICES PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- 209 adults with disabilities served in 2008.
- Elim's adult-staffed workshop facility was named Wilton's #1 vendor this year!
- In order to meet increasing demand and plan for the future, an Adult Autism Task Force was put in place.
- 140 adults with disabilities served in the community, either as employees or volunteers.

Elim's Newest Entrepreneur

Many people dream of starting a business, but one Elim adult recently turned her dream into a reality. Jennifer Cataldo recently turned her love of fashion and make-up into a lucrative business by selling Avon!

After deciding that she wanted to pursue a job with Avon, Jennifer went through Avon's online training course and earned her certification. Jennifer is very familiar with the products she sells and uses her natural sales skills to spread the word about her business. Already, Jennifer has several regular clients and earns a steady paycheck for her work.

Originally, Jennifer ventured into Avon on her own but soon partnered with her job coach, Rene Bamonti, for extra help with the sometimes overwhelming math and computer aspects of the position. Every other week, Rene and Jennifer meet to place the orders and then again to organize and deliver them to Jennifer's clients.



Jennifer and her job coach, Rene, make a great team!

Rene has been excited to see Jennifer's skills grow as quickly as her clientele. "Jennifer has gained important math and computer skills through her job with Avon. She is great at selling the products in person and is very open to approaching people to make sales and recommend products. She loves the fashion end of her job and enjoys earning a paycheck to use for fun things."

Elim HOPE Packs

HIGHLIGHTS:

- 189 adults with disabilities provided with vocational opportunities and training through HOPE Packs in the last year!
- Number of HOPE Packs distributed internationally in 2007–2008: 23,000
- Number of HOPE Packs distributed in the U.S. in 2007–2008: 1,800
- Number of HOPE Packs distributed internationally in 2009: 10,000
- Number of HOPE Packs distributed in the U.S. in 2009: 7,000

In August 2009, two of Elim's adults with disabilities were part of a mission team sponsored by Haitian Support Ministries to distribute Elim HOPE Pack school supply kits assembled on the work floor of Adult Services. In third world countries, people with disabilities are often not given the opportunity to go to school, work, and be part of their communities. In the poorest developing communities, people with disabilities are often housebound because of the shame their culture brings on their families. We did not know what to expect bringing our adults into that environment, but what transpired was transformational – for our Elim adults and the Haitian communities visited!

Elim's adults were given the opportunity to serve as missionaries meeting the needs of those less fortunate, which



Gail distributes HOPE Packs to children in Haiti

gave them a sense of personal self-worth and dignity never before experienced. All of their lives they have been served, and they relished the opportunity to serve as an ambassador for Christ and to reach a level of their potential they never dreamed possible.

But the impact God had designed for this trip did not end there. The ministry leader in Haiti was driven to tears as he tried to comprehend the significance of Elim adults coming to minister and to pray for him and the children in the community he serves. The marginalized serving the marginalized – certainly counter to our cultural norms. But isn't that just like God to turn the world upside down to help us see the value He places on all of His creation?

Through Elim HOPE Packs, Elim's adults are provided with the steady, meaningful vocational work that they need in order to earn a paycheck. At the same time, HOPE Packs provides them with a way to fulfill God's mandate – to help others! Already, 18 churches have organized school supply drives. These drives collect the supplies Elim's adults need to create HOPE Packs which are then distributed to needy children in the United States and worldwide!

Jamee's Got a New Set of Wheels!

Jamee loves her new wheels! Previously, Jamee laboriously traveled around Elim's campus on a manual wheelchair. Unfortunately, the manual chair was a very slow means of transportation and required a great amount of physical effort. Because Jamee had unsuccessfully tried out a power chair a few years earlier, many were skeptical that she would be able to successfully control a power chair.



Thankfully, everyone gave it another shot, and Jamee's new power wheelchair is a great success! Gayle Jazo, a physical therapist at Elim, is excited to see Jamee making her way around campus so well. "We were all amazed to see how quickly Jamee progressed in her new chair. She's now able to go to and from the lunchroom on her own. She has it completely figured out. It's great to see her so independent and proud of herself. She feels very grown up – it's obvious that it has boosted her self-esteem!"

Her mom, Colleen, is also proud of Jamee's new accomplishment. She says, "It gives her a lot more independence and makes her a lot less reliant on us. Most importantly, she loves it!"

Elim Aids Families With Transition

Approximately 200 people gathered on Elim's campus in February for the second Transitions Conference. Parents, family, and friends of Elim's students gathered with alumni and individuals from the community to discuss the transition needs of families of children with disabilities.

The conference provided speakers, breakout sessions on a variety of transition topics, and vendors from many agencies that support families with transition needs. Response to the conference has been very positive.

This conference is filling a great need in the local community, especially for families that previously traveled hours to attend a similar conference. Assistant Principal Tim Griffin says, "Transition from school to adult life is one of the biggest concerns for children with special needs. There are so many questions about guardianship and what will happen after graduation. The conference answers these questions and gets people involved in the transition process. We're thankful that Elim is able to provide the resources that our families need."

ELIM CHRISTIAN SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

- 2008 – 2009 Enrollment: 266 students
- Ages of students served: 3-22 years old
- 109 students using augmentative communication devices

Essentials Program Revamped

Elim's Essentials program was revamped last year to better serve Elim's students. Because of the increasing severity of disabilities of most students enrolling at Elim, the Essentials program was redesigned in order to meet the needs of a wider variety of students.

The Essentials program is part of a three-step high school vocational program at Elim. The STEP program provides on-the-job training for students with disabilities, while students additionally receive academic and classroom training each day.

Essentials provides training for students who, because of their disability, are unable to go out and work in the community. Through the program, these students are taught skills needed to work in a workshop environment or developmental training program. Because many students have some level of sensory challenges, the program gives them a chance to learn how

to function in an environment with other people, noise, and distractions. They also learn to work as a team.

Assistant Principal Tim Griffin has been impressed to see the progress of students in the program, saying, "It's good to see students who were previously unable to do any sort of work-oriented skills learning now. Our goal is to increase these high school students' life and vocational skills in order to make them as independent as possible!"



Kevin is learning work skills that prepare him for graduation from the school program.

Elim Expands Literacy Program

Because the majority of Elim's students are unable to access literacy using traditional approaches, Elim Christian School opened the doors of its new Literacy Center in September of 2008. The Center now offers much more than books, including SmartBoard technology, a Listening Center, two computers, and an adapted book library containing books on CD and on PowerPoint.

Additionally, Elim's reading specialist, Sherry Riemersma-Luke, developed a research-based reading assessment tool that will better determine how to help each student succeed in accessing their literacy potential. Riemersma-Luke explains why this tool is so beneficial to Elim's students: "Because of the severity of some students' disabilities, it's difficult to know where to start with literacy programming. Having the assessment tool in place will help determine students' abilities and potential, and give the teachers a clear direction for instruction."

Additionally, new reading curriculum has been adopted throughout the school. The Unique Learning System, designed for individuals with disabilities, promotes greater participation because it is built on a symbol system that students recognize and know how to use. This will reduce the amount of adaptations that teachers need to make



Elim's reading specialist, Sherry Riemersma-Luke, helps assess a student's literacy potential.

with more generalized curriculum.

All of these changes have been made with one primary goal – to promote literacy in the lives of students. Riemersma-Luke is excited to see the life-long benefits. "These changes benefit Elim's students by making literacy accessible and meaningful to everyone, not just a small group of students with traditional reading skills. Research shows that the more individuals are exposed to literacy, the more likely they are to make literacy a meaningful part of their lives."

Elim Residential Services

Doors Slowly Closing at Kamp Cottage

Recently, Elim's Board of Directors was forced to make the difficult decision to begin a long-term process of downsizing out of Elim's much-beloved and long-standing residential program. Due to a shortage of state funding and continuously increasing operating costs, the deficit of running the program has become too great.

While entering into this downsizing transition, Elim will receive sufficient state aid during that time, mitigating the increased costs of the transition and its effect on Elim's operating budget.

The seven-year plan adapted to phase out residential programming at Elim will allow nearly all current residents to stay at Kamp Cottage until their Elim Christian School graduation. However, no new students will be accepted into the program during this time.

ELIM RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- 24 students currently reside in Elim's Kamp Cottage
- 1952: Year that Elim started its residential program
- 2015: Year that Elim's residential program will close

Tim's Family Grows through Elim Residential Program

When Tim DeRuiter's grandparents felt their local public school in North Carolina could not provide for all of his needs, they turned to Elim Christian School and its residential program.



Tim's grandmother, Joanne, explains, "In the two years that Tim has been at Elim, we've been so pleased. He's learning about God and we've seen him become much more independent."

Elim's residential staff has also been so excited to see Tim's progress. One of Tim's caregivers explained, "Tim has done fabulously in the residential program. The staff has become very close to him. During his time in the program, he's become a lot more outgoing and talks a lot more. He seeks out the companionship of his peers."

Tim's grandparents are thrilled that Tim has found a family at Elim. Joanne explains, "We used to refer to ourselves as a family of three. Now, in Elim's residential program, Tim has been given brothers and sisters. We know how much he is loved there."

Note: Elim's residential program remains committed to serving students like Tim until they reach high school graduation, so your gifts are still vital!

Ministry Outreach

Discovery Helps Elizabeth Succeed

She's a very bright child, she just processes things differently," explains Mary Ellen, mother of Discovery Center student Elizabeth Dopp.

Those words sum up the reason that hundreds of students turn to Elim's Discovery Centers for help each day.

While living in the United Kingdom several years ago, the Dopps started noticing that their daughter was having trouble learning to read. Following a teacher's recommendation, Elizabeth was tested and diagnosed with dyslexia. After moving back to the United States, Elizabeth and her sister Sarah were enrolled at Timothy Christian School in Elmhurst, Illinois. There, they turned to the Discovery Center located within the school to help their daughters learn.



The Dopps' older daughter Sarah went to the Discovery Center two years ago for some extra help with spelling. Elizabeth currently goes to the Center every day for assistance with her math. Both the Discovery staff and Elizabeth's family were excited when Elizabeth recently graduated from Discovery's reading program. Elizabeth is especially proud that she is now able to read at her proper grade level with her peers!

The Dopps are thankful for the opportunities and extra support that the Discovery Center provided for their family. Mary Ellen says, "The Discovery Center has made a world of difference for our daughter. Because of her school and the program, we've seen Elizabeth make great strides and leaps. We've also seen her self-esteem grow! It's been such a blessing to have people trained in dyslexia and who know about programs designed specifically for children with dyslexia. I don't know where she'd be without it!"

DISCOVERY CENTERS

Discovery locations in the United States deliver Elim best practices, cultivate special needs programs, and use Elim's unique expertise in a mainstream school environment to serve students with learning and developmental disabilities. In each school, the Discovery Center supports the child's classroom education to meet and surpass curricular requirements.

Discovery is pleased to now offer consultations and evaluations by an occupational therapist and autism specialist. A Discovery occupational therapist also provides in-service training on sensory integration for the staff of Christian schools in the network.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Discovery Centers are now meeting the needs of students in 18 schools.
- Discovery currently serves well over 400 children with learning disabilities.
- Two new centers opened in September of 2009 at Lansing Christian School and Crown Point Christian School!

Elim Shares Expertise in Honduras and Nicaragua

Last summer, members of Elim's staff traveled to Honduras and Nicaragua to provide training for special education educators there. In Honduras, the Elim team spent time in the classroom working with teachers on strategies for communication, sensory input, and behavior. They also brought materials for the school, which serves 95 students with disabilities.

Two members of Elim's team also traveled to Nicaragua to visit Teseros de Dios, a school for children with physical and cognitive impairments. Shortly after Teseros de Dios was founded, Michelle Adams, the director of Teseros de Dios, visited Elim in order to accumulate special education information on which to build her program. Elim's staff provided additional training during their time in Nicaragua, and they were excited to see the positive impact that the school was having in the local community!

Elim Ministry Resources Statement 2008-2009

Operating Fund Details, 2008-2009

Undesignated Net Assets as of July 1, 2008 86,351

Revenues

Public Fees	15,457,967
Private Fees	465,680
Partnership	579,202
Sales	356,719
Gifts	1,675,619
Other Support	26,615
Elim Foundation	580,000
Total Revenue	19,141,802

Expenditures

Wages & Employees	15,291,976
Occupancy	1,060,004
Consumables	581,938
Transportation	481,490
Other	1,539,951
Total Expenditures	18,955,359

Result from Operations	186,443
Interfund Transfers.....	9,607,939
Fixed Asset Activity	(9,457,135)
Restricted Gift Activity	61,764

Undesignated Net Assets as of June 30, 2009 485,362

Operating Fund Projections, 2009-2010

Revenues

Public Fees	15,733,700
Private Fees	383,700
Partnership	537,000
Sales	425,600
Gifts	1,900,000
Other Support	60,200
Elim Foundation	560,000
Total Revenue	19,600,200

Expenditures

Wages & Employees	15,531,800
Occupancy	1,083,300
Consumables	715,300
Transportation	490,800
Other	1,374,500
Total Expenditures	19,195,700

Foundation Performance, 2008-2009

Foundation Balance as of July 1, 2008 11,478,197

Gift Revenues

Trusts & Estates	120,692
Endowments	2,900
Other Gift Revenue	-
Total Gift Revenue	123,592

Investment Revenue

Interests & Dividends	108,190
Realized Losses on Securities	(744,380)
Unrealized Losses on Securities.....	(2,175,240)
Total Investment Revenue	(2,811,430)

Total Revenues (2,687,838)

Expenditures

Investment Fees	33,162
Promotion	12,955
Other	4,680
Distribution to Elim Operating Fund	580,000
Endowment Distributions	2,827
Total Expenditures	633,624

Foundation Fund Balance as of June 30, 2009 8,156,735

Operating Expenses by Program, 2008-2009

School	10,271,433
Adult Services	3,458,750
Residential Services	1,817,584
Discovery Network	738,828
Management & General Office.....	2,129,598
Advancement.....	539,165
Total	18,955,358

Operating Expense Projections by Program, 2009-2010

School	10,933,000
Adult Services	3,592,100
Residential Services	1,517,500
Discovery Network	740,000
Management & General Office.....	1,796,000
Advancement.....	617,100
Total	19,195,700

Equipping people with disabilities to...

help those in need
bless others impact their community
glorify God change the world



Moving Beyond ...

Elim Christian Services
13020 S Central Ave Palos Heights, IL 60463
708-389-0555 phone 877-9-ELIMCS toll-free 708-389-0671 fax
www.elimcs.org and www.hopepacks.com