

American Ingenuity

An American Classic At Work

(NAPSA)—If you've ever served in the military, worked for the federal government, signed a visitors log in a federal building, or addressed a letter at a post office, chances are you've had your hands on an American classic.

That's because you've probably used a SKILCRAFT® U.S. Government Pen. It's really something to write home about. In fact, the pen can write continuously for a mile and in temperatures up to 160 degrees and down to 40 degrees below zero.

It all started 50 years ago, when National Industries for the Blind (NIB) and its associated nonprofit agencies met the government's challenge of producing a jaw-dropping 70 million retractable ballpoint pens according to rigorous specifications.

Today, manufacturing the pen sustains employment for more than 100 people who are blind at three NIB associated nonprofit agencies: Alphapointe in Kansas City, Missouri; Industries for the Blind in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Industries of the Blind in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the pen project was and remains the fact that this outstanding quality writing instrument is produced by people who are blind working at NIB associated agencies. The quality of the pen they produce has shifted perceptions about the capabilities of people who are blind and led to new products introduced over the decades. More than just a writ-



Lynn Larsen is proud that the work she does supports the U.S. military.

ing instrument, the pen symbolizes the strength of American manufacturing and the nearly limitless capabilities of people who are blind.

Today, people who are blind working at NIB associated agencies produce more than 7,000 different products for the federal government, including office supplies, cleaning supplies, hardware and paints, and a wide range of products to equip the U.S. military, such as uniforms, bedding and protective equipment.

Since 1938, NIB has focused on enhancing the opportunities for economic and personal independence of people who are blind, primarily through creating, sustaining and improving employment. NIB and its network of associated nonprofit agencies are the nation's largest employer of people who are blind.

Learn More

Visit <http://NIB.org/pen> to learn more about this American classic.