Abilities Expo 2013

The TTAP Team will be at the Abilities Expo Houston again this year! We’ll have new assistive technology to show you, so be sure and come by our booth! People of all ages with all levels and types of disabilities experience their possibilities at Abilities Expo.

Access the latest products and services to enrich your daily life. Whether you know what you want, or just want to see what’s out there, Abilities Expo will expand your idea of accessibility; wheelchairs, adaptive home furnishings, daily living aids, assistive technology for people with sensory disabilities, fitness gear, travel services...and that is just for starters.

Free workshops will keep you in tune with the issues that most resonate with the Community. Learn about accessible living, dating, financial planning, adaptive vehicle purchasing, preparing for emergencies, selecting the perfect mobility device, fitness, travel, canine companions, and more.

World-class events and activities—the perfect complement to exhibits and education—make for three days of non-stop entertainment. There are adaptive sports, dance performances, gravity-defying stunts, technology showcases, canine assistance demos, and much more. You can get involved or sit back and enjoy.
News from the Device Loan Program

OrbiTouch Keyless Keyboard is now available from our Device Loan Program

The orbiTouch is the first ergonomically designed, fully functional keyless keyboard with an integrated mouse that utilizes the hands and arms instead of the fingers to type. The patented design eliminates finger motion and significantly reduces wrist motion -- two major causes of typing discomfort and pain.

For more information, contact:
John Morris
Assistive Technology Coordinator
(512) 232-0753
jcmorris@austin.utexas.edu

Assistive Technology Q&A

Q: Will the new Google Glass device be accessible?

A: The Google Glass device is accessible with voice commands. The screen is much too small if you require magnification. However, the technology can be quite valuable to those with certain visual, auditory and physical handicaps. The University of New Brunswick Libraries, Jeff Carter, wants to use Glass to make things more accessible to the visually impaired via real-time optical character recognition and text-to-speech translation.

Navigating the stacks would be a lot easier (for everybody, really) with digital signage overlaying the physical world. Indeed, for the visually impaired, navigating just about anywhere could be made much easier thanks to Glass's augmented reality maps and voice control.

Tech Corner

Air Carrier Access Act – Web Accessibility Requirements

U.S. and foreign air carriers operating flights to or selling tickets to the U.S. public are required to ensure the public-facing content of website they own or control conforms to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level A and Level AA. If enacted, the proposed requirements will not just apply to U.S. air carriers’ public-facing pages; they will also apply to foreign carriers’ public-facing pages that are used to advertise or sell to the U.S. public for air transportation that begins or ends in the U.S.
In addition, **carriers will be held responsible for the activities of their agents**, including travel sites such as Orbitz, Expedia, and sites that package air travel with vacation packages – such as rewards sites for financial services companies. The NPRM requires carriers to ensure these agents comply with the same website accessibility requirements that the agencies themselves comply with.

For more information: https://www.ssbbartgroup.com/blog/category/2013-accessibility-trends

**Travelers with a Disability or Medical Condition**

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) employs approximately 50,000 Transportation Security Officers who serve at more than 450 airports nationwide. These Officers screen nearly 2 million passengers a day.

The Disability Branch of the Office of Civil Rights & Liberties, Ombudsman and Traveler Engagement, ensure that TSA security screening policies, procedures, and practices comply with all applicable laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and policies, and do not discriminate against travelers. The Disability Branch collaborates within TSA on screening of travelers with disabilities and medical conditions and oversees “TSA Cares” to resolve civil rights complaints from travelers with disabilities.

TSA’s Disability Coalition includes approximately 50 organizations representing an array of disabilities and medical conditions. TSA Cares provides a helpline to assist travelers with disabilities and medical conditions and their families prior to getting to the airport. (1-855-787-2227)

Travelers may call the TSA Cares toll free, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday – Friday and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekends and holidays, with questions about screening as well as what to expect at the security checkpoint. TSA Cares provides information about screening that is relevant to the traveler’s specific disability or medical condition, or the traveler is referred to disability experts at TSA.

**Spotlight on TTAP Demonstration Centers**

**East Texas Center For Independent Living**
4713 Troup Highway Tyler, Texas 75703
(903) 581-7542

**ETCIL is...**

- A non-profit agency providing services to the one in five East Texans who have disabilities.
• A provider of education to the community on disability-related topics.
• Governed and staffed by a majority of people with disabilities who bring a wide range of knowledge and experience to their work in assisting others with disabilities.
• Funded by contributions from foundations, corporations, and individual donors, as well as federal, state, and local grants.
• One of over 400 such centers in the United States.

ETCIL assists people with...

• Any and all types of disabilities such as: Mobility impairments, amputations, spinal cord injuries, arthritis, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, post-polio, spina bifida, and cerebral palsy
• Mental, cognitive, or developmental disabilities such as traumatic brain injuries, depression, and learning differences
• Hearing loss
• Vision impairments

Mission/Philosophy

The mission of ETCIL is to help people facing barriers related to their disabilities achieve full participation, greater independence, self-sufficiency, and involvement in their communities.

Independent Living Philosophy

• Living independently is living much like everyone else – having the same opportunities to succeed, to fail, to make decisions, to pursue enjoyment, to learn, and to experience life.

• The philosophy of Independent Living was one born out of the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

• American laws and policies had historically placed persons with disabilities in restrictive living environments, required massive amounts of spending to support this segregation, and ignored the desires of the individual in planning of support services.

• “Nothing about us without us” became the mantra of the 1970s – a radical departure from the traditional medical rehabilitation paradigm that treated us as “sick.” People with disabilities should have an integral part in defining their destiny, and the Independent Living philosophy was born.

• With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, equal access, barrier removal, anti-discrimination laws, and removal of stigmas and
segregation have been goals of the Independent Living movement. Evidence is clear that people with disabilities can live full, productive lives if; we learn effective coping and management skills related to our disability as well as insuring that our living arrangements and community environment are open and accessible.

- In most instances, the disability does not determine the level of independence – the development of independent living skills and environment do. A proper mix of barrier minimization, disability awareness, advocacy, technical assistance, provision of role models, and encouraged self-determination defines Independent Living.

**Purchasing Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM):**

*A Quick Reference Guide*

*Provided by Texas Assistive Technology Network & Region 4 ESC*

**Why Purchase Accessible Instructional Materials?**

All students have the right to access and participate in the general education curriculum and use the instructional materials delivering the educational content. As referenced above, individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) specifies that a student with a print disability needs accessible instructional materials, and that the educational agency provide those materials in a timely manner. Civil rights legislation, including Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, guarantee students’ rights to an equally effective education. Students such as those who struggle with learn, those with dyslexia, and English language learners, also can benefit from the use of accessible learning materials resulting in increased participation and academic achievement. Furthermore, accessible instructional materials are of benefit to all students as they allow all students to interact with and use the materials according to their needs and preferences.

**What are Accessible Instructional Materials?**

Accessible instructional materials, or AIM, are materials that are designed or converted in ways that make them usable across the widest range of student variability regardless of format (print, digital, graphic, audio, and video). The IDEA specifically mandates that specialized formats of print instructional materials (Braille, large print, audio and digital text) are provided to students with disabilities when needed. What’s more, the rapid emergence of digital materials in educational settings makes it critical to address accessibility and usability when considering the purchase and use of these materials. It is vital that digital content is made accessible from the start as it is difficult or impossible to retrofit accessibility. Both the digital content and the
technology used to deliver the content must be accessible and meet the students’ needs.

**What is the Instructional Materials Allotment?**

Texas Legislation (Senate Bill 6) created an instructional materials allotment (IMA) for districts and open enrollment charter schools for the purchase of instructional materials, technological equipment, and technology-related services. Instructional materials are defined as content addressing the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills to include: books; supplementary materials; workbooks; computer software; digital media; digital courseware; and online services. As districts move forward with the increased responsibilities for purchasing materials, it is critical that accessibility is included in purchasing criteria.

**Accessibility Standards**

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) is an international set of guidelines that provide a wide range of recommendations related to developing accessible web content. There are four principles which provide the foundation for accessibility.

**Principal 1: Perceivable** – Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive.

**Principal 2: Operable** – User interface components and navigation must be operable.

**Principal 3: Understandable** – Information and the operation of user interface must be understandable.

**Principal 4: Robust** – Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies.

To further understand the four principles, refer to the Web Accessibility Initiative’s (WAI’s) document “How People with Disabilities Use the Web.” The WebAIM website, and the WebAIM’s WCAG 2.0 Checklist.

**District Action Steps for Purchasing Accessible Learning Materials**

1. Review your purchasing criteria and policies to ensure that accessibility standards are included.
2. Include accessibility criteria in contract language.
3. Ask publishers about accessibility. Ask if they have a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) on file. The VPAT is voluntary but provides baseline information on compliance with Section 508 Functional Performance
Criteria. If they do not have a VPAT on file, ask if they have published other information on accessibility of their products.

For further information and resources go to the Texas Assistive Technology Network website at http://www.texasat.net

**What’s on TTAP for Summer**

**August 2-4, 2013**  
**Abilities Expo 2013**

**July 8 - 13, 2013**  
**AHEAD Conference 2013**  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Contact: AHEAD  
107 Commerce Center Drive, Suite 204  
 Huntersville, NC 28078 USA  
Tel: (704) 947-7779  
FAX: (704) 948-7779  
E-mail: information@ahead.org

**July 17-20, 2013**  
**Ms. Abilities America - a Pageant**  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma  
Contact: Elizabeth Reeve  
549 South Cherokee Avenue  
Tahlequah, OK 74464  
Tel: (918) 431-0445  
E-mail: msabilitiesamerica@gmail.com

**Just for Laughs**

Cartoon showing man hitting/breaking window with live mouse. Directions on computer monitor say “Open window with mouse”

If you have any suggestions, comments, or article you would like to have included in our newsletter, please contact us:

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(512) 232-0753/jcmorris@austin.utexas.edu  
(512) 232-0750/dwest@austin.utexas.edu  
(512) 232-0772/srthomas@austin.utexas.edu

The University of Texas at Austin  
Texas Center for Disability Studies  
Commons Learning Center  
10100 Burnet Road  
Austin, Texas 78758-4445  
http://techaccess.edb.utexas.edu
TTAP Demonstration Centers

- Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living, Bryan
- Paso Del Norte Children’s Development Center, El Paso
- Ability Connection, Dallas
- Goodwill Industries of Fort Worth
- Easter Seals of Greater Houston
- Coastal Bend Center for Independent Living, Corpus Christi
- RISE Center for Independent Living, Beaumont
- East Texas Center for Independent Living, Tyler
- Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, Austin
- Brazoria County Center for Independent Living, Angleton
- Helping Hands, Amarillo
- Not Without Us, Abilene
- REACH Center for Independent Living, Plano
- Houston Center for Independent Living, Houston
- Heart of Central Texas Independent Living Center, Belton
- VAIL – Valley Association for Independent Living, McAllen