TTAP Newsletter Text Version
Vol 2 July 2009

What’s in this issue:
- From the Director’s Desk, by Roger Levy
- News from the Device Loan Library, by John Morris
- Assistive Technology Q&A
- Article: “AT for Hidden Disabilities,” by Darlene West
- Spotlight on Demo centers
- New Word Prediction Program
- Tech Corner
- What’s on TTAP for the Summer
- Just for Laughs

From the Director’s Desk by Roger Levy

Eleven years ago, while working on the Twenty-fourth Institute on Rehabilitation Issues, I wrote the following: “A prevalent misconception is that only certain types of people can benefit from assistive technology (AT). Historically, modifications focused on accommodations for those with mobility, hearing, and visual impairments...”

In retrospect, we have seen some expansion of AT for individuals with, what may be referred to as having, hidden disabilities or impairments. This population received little benefit from AT in the early years. In this decade, we have seen AT for people with learning impairments, cognitive aids beyond medication reminders, orientation, and process-reminding aids. We hope, as your AT Act Program, we are meeting everyone’s needs. As the Director of your Program, I welcome feedback on how we can improve and expand our services to be of more assistance. Our goal is to be of assistance to all persons with disabilities in our state when it comes to access or acquisition of AT. So regardless of your age, where you live in our state, or what limitations you might have, if you have comments or suggestions on our services, contact me.

For further information, please contact TTAP at (512) 232-0751 or e-mail at rogerlevy@mail.utexas.edu

News from the Device Loan Library by John Morris

The following items are new to the Device Lending Library: iPod touch AC device, Dynavox M3, Vantage light, UB Duo, Reading Pen, ChatBox, and the ChatBox40.

To try out these new devices, visit our Web site and complete a loan request application. For further information, please contact the Device Loan Program at (512) 232-0753 or e-mail at jcmorris1@mail.utexas.edu

Assistive Technology Q&A
Q. What is the latest version of the Window Eyes screen reading program?

A. Straight from “The Ranger Station,” the rumor is that Window Eyes 7.1 is now out of Beta testing and ready for shipping. Window-Eyes 7.1 is packed with features, including support for Windows 7, support for 64-bit versions of Windows Vista, Windows Server 2008 and Windows 7, enhanced Braille functionality, new scripting features for end users, script authors, and more.

**Health Care Therapies, LP - “Leaders in Positive Touch”**

Health Care Therapies (HCT) is a unique therapeutic services agency providing in-home massage and community-based aqua services for children and adults of all levels of ability. The mission of Health Care Therapies is to improve the quality of life for children and adults with Cerebral Palsy, Traumatic Brain Injuries, Autism, and other special needs. Working with medical experts, they provide professional services through evaluation and implementation of effective treatment plans. All HCT Massage Therapists are licensed by the State of Texas.

**Contact Us**

Health Care Therapies welcomes parents and clients to contact us for any further information regarding the services we provide.

6800 Westgate Blvd. Suite 132-325
Austin, Texas 78745
Phone: (512) 444-2288
Fax: (512) 716-8010

**Article: Assistive Technology for “Hidden Disabilities,” by Darlene West**

Article: Assistive Technology for “Hidden Disabilities”
Some of the most difficult disabilities to accommodate are hidden disabilities. These hidden disabilities can include autism, asthma, cardiovascular conditions, acquired brain injury, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), sleep disorders, schizophrenia, and many others. Although these disabilities may be overlooked by the casual observer, they can cause major deficits in some or all aspects of an individual’s independence and ability to work. Some of the more common disabilities and assistive strategies were addressed by Tony Gentry, Ph.D., OTR/L from Virginia Commonwealth University, in a recent presentation of the subject. Dr. Gentry offers insights on some of the common limitations these hidden disabilities cause and offers suggestions for accommodations.

**Common Limitations and Accommodations:**

- Functional Cognition Deficits
  - Possible accommodations include:
    - removing clutter and simplifying environment
- Teach pacing, doing one thing at a time
- Work environment in a quiet setting if possible
- Utilize low-tech and high-tech memory/organization aids
- Teach relaxation skills

- Decreased Stamina/Chronic Fatigue
  - Possible accommodations include:
    - Flexible schedule with regular down-times
    - Schedule a daily nap, if possible
    - Use cooling jacket, if fatigue is related to overheating
    - Work and shop from home (using internet) when possible
    - Delegate responsibilities when possible
    - Keep fatigue diary to better time tasks
    - Consider sleep clinic assessment

- Emotional Stress
  - Possible accommodations include:
    - Relaxation and movement therapy
    - Conflict resolution training
    - Behavioral management training
    - Collaborate with co-workers on task delegation
    - Utilize Positive Behavioral Support strategies

- Reading/Writing/Speaking
  - Possible accommodations include:
    - Use accommodations software on PC or Mac
    - Text-to-Speech or Speech-to-Text software
    - Identify strengths and work to enhance them
    - Allow extra time for completing tasks
    - Ask a co-worker to proofread written materials

- Sensory Defensiveness/Sensitivity
  - Possible accommodations include:
    - Occupational therapy assessment
    - Use of Assistive Technology to compensate for problem (glare guards for computers, ear plugs, etc.)

To view case studies: [http://www.vcu.edu/partnership/pda](http://www.vcu.edu/partnership/pda)

**Spotlight On Demo Centers**

**Goodwill Industries of Central Texas: AT Lab**

The Assistive Technology Lab, located in the Goodwill Community Center, provides Goodwill consumers, employees, and members of the community access to the latest in assistive technology. Training is available on specialized equipment and demonstrations are available on programs and software.
The Assistive Technology Lab, located in the Goodwill Community Center, provides Goodwill consumers, employees, and members of the community access to the latest in assistive technology. Training is available on specialized equipment and demonstrations are available of programs and software.

**DEMONSTRATION**

Services to show and demonstrate the assistive technology lab

- Use and capabilities of technology programs
- Information and assistance on accessibility
- Navigating the internet

**TRAINING**

Assistance with lab equipment and efficiency of technology use in:

- JAWS™ (Job Access with Speech) for persons who are blind or have visual impairments
- Magic™ (magnification software) for persons with low or limited vision
- Deaflink (video relay interpreting) for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Dragon Naturally Speaking™ (speech recognition software) navigation through the computer and the internet by voice and for persons who may have limited mobility, learning disabilities or spasticity

**JOB ASSISTANCE**

Using assistive technology equipment:

- Job seeking skills training
- Application skills
- Interviewing skills
- Typing skills

For information regarding eligibility and appointment, contact their Assistive Technology Lab Specialist at (512) 637-7520 or email sarah.brody@austingoodwill.org

**New Word Prediction Program**

AT Breaks Writing Barriers for Students with Autism, Cognitive, and Physical Challenges

Don Johnston, Inc. has released a new case study which confirms the writing success of students using their intelligent word prediction programs. To view a video of the case study visit donjohnston.com and click on “case studies” on the left side of the page.

The Co:Writer program is an intelligent word prediction program which allows the
user to write in any word processor, e-mail program, or on the Internet. Co:Writer uses context clues and common spelling information to “predict” the words students try to write even when they spell them phonetically or inventively (such as writing the word “elephant” as “lfont”.

Co:Writer offers predictions in a list form that the program reads audibly. When students hear the right word, they choose the word and it is sent to the writing application.

Don Johnston also offers the Write:Outlout program. This is an award-winning talking word processor and writing software program built specifically for students in grades 3-12.

For further information and to request a catalog: Donjohnston.com

**Tech Corner**

*Picture*: New iPod touch augmentative communication device

Proloqu2Go, the groundbreaking Alternative & Augmentative Communication (AAC) program for Apple’s iPod touch is now available. The low price and fantastic features, plus the "cool factor" of the iPod Touch means the iPod touch has the potential to change the lives of some AAC users - especially young people for whom the "cool factor" may mean that they're more willing to use their device in public.

**What’s on TTAP for Summer**

**AHEAD 2009 - Global Access: Opening a World of Opportunity**
Louisville, KY July 20-25, 2009
Contact: Association on Higher Education and Disability
107 Commerce Center Drive, Suite 204
Huntersville, NC 28078 USA
Tel: (704) 947-7779
FAX: (704) 948-7779

**National Disability Sports Conference**
September 10-12, 2009
Kennesaw State University, Georgia

Contact: Jeff Jones
Blaze Sports America
280 Interstate North Circle, Suite 450
Atlanta, GA 30339
Tel: (770) 850-8199
FAX: (770) 850-8179
E-mail: jjones@blazesports.org
[www.blazesports.org](http://www.blazesports.org)
Closing The Gap 27th Annual Conference  
Minneapolis, MN October 15-17, 2009  
(Preconference Workshops October 13-14, 2009)

Contact: Closing The Gap  
526 Main St, PO Box 68  
Henderson, MN 56044  
Tel: (507) 248-3294  
FAX: (507) 248-3810  
www.closingthegap.com/conference

Picture: Flag with title “Happy Fourth of July”

Just for Laughs

Overheard in a computer shop...

Customer: “I’d like a mouse mat, please.”  
Salesperson: “Certainly sir, we've got a large variety.”  
Customer: “But will they be compatible with my computer?”

Contact Information

Texas Technology Access Program  
Texas Center for Disability Studies  
The University of Texas at Austin  
10100 Burnet Road, Bldg. #137, Rm 1.154, MC/L4000  
Austin, Texas 78758-4445  
http://techaccess.edb.utexas.edu

Roger Levy, Director  
(512) 232-0751

John Morris, AT Coordinator  
(512) 232-0751

Darlene West, AT Specialist  
(512) 232-0750

Sissy Molanders, Research Associate  
(512) 232-0753