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Illinois Assistive Technology Program

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

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Mission Statement

IATP's mission is to increase access to and the acquisition of Assistive Technology (AT) devices and services for individuals of all ages with disabilities.



*Independent Living
Through Assistive
Technology.*

REUSE

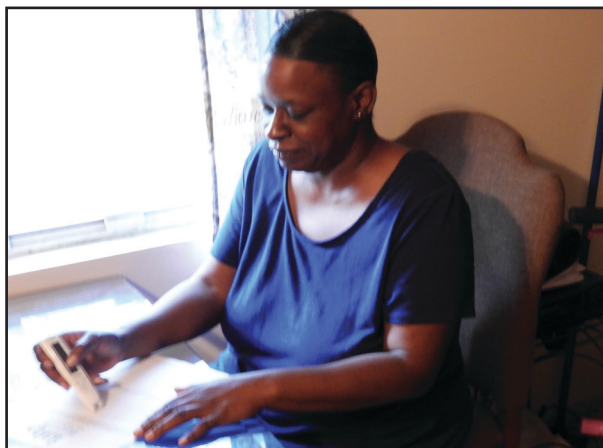
IATP's Reuse Program takes assistive technology and durable medical equipment that is no longer needed or used by its original owner and is made available to a person who can't afford to purchase new. The equipment can be used for short term (while a patient is recovering from an injury or illness, or awaiting a device to be repaired or funded) or as an open-ended loan that can be kept until it is no longer needed. In FY19, consumers received 1,061 pieces of equipment resulting in a savings of \$414,334 if purchased new.



in and out of her house safely and with ease. After 6 weeks, the equipment was returned to the Reuse Program and was ready for the next consumer.

SUCCESS

Janice needed foot surgery that would leave her non-weight bearing for 6 weeks. In addition to needing a knee scooter, she also needed to find a solution to negotiate the 4 steps that led into her home. Janice tried crutches on the steps, but she felt too unsteady. She contacted the Reuse Program and found that both a ramp and a knee scooter were available. The ramp was installed and Janice was able to get



SUCCESS

Elnora stopped at IATP for an appointment with the WIPA program when she mentioned having problems reading due to a print disability. Elnora successfully trialed a C-Pen Reader that was available through the Reuse Program. She borrowed it as an open ended loan and now reads her mail independently.

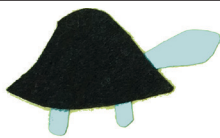
DEVICE LOAN

The Device Loan Program provides short term (5 week) loans of assistive technology to individuals with disabilities, family members, professionals and others. The devices are used at home, in schools and in the community. The program allows potential technology users the opportunity to try out devices to ensure that it is a good "fit" prior to purchase, to use as a back up, or to use while awaiting funding. In FY19, a total of 1,836 devices were loaned to 1,464 customers.

A grant through the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) made it possible to purchase additional devices that are dedicated to Illinois school districts. Of the 1,836 devices that were loaned to customers in FY19, 915 were provided to 917 school districts in 60 counties.

SUCCESS

My experience with the Illinois Assistive Technology Program (IATP) in Springfield exceeded my expectations in each step of the process of AAC. I was impressed with the speed and efficiency of communication from the very first email inquiry. Each person with whom I spoke was courteous and knowledgeable. The team's ability to immediately connect me to resources was much appreciated. I was thankful for the expertise from the SLP who evaluated my student and also pleased with the respectful collaboration we shared. Written reports and loaner devices were received more quickly than expected and instructions were easy to follow for device return and new device funding. I highly commend the IATP for their professionalism, expertise and courteous service to me, my student and his family. This thank you note below was dictated by him, then he signed it and drew arms for a great big hug to you!



Dear NovaChat,
I will miss you, NovaChat,
so much. I love you, NovaChat.
Good luck, NovaChat. I love
you, NovaChat. I will be sad.
Be good; Good luck,
NovaChat.

William



DEMONSTRATION

IATP'S 8 room Demonstration Center showcases a variety of assistive technology (AT) in areas that include an accessible bathroom, bedroom, kitchen, office, toy and sensory room. Tours and Demonstrations provide hands-on exploration of AT, resource information, low tech solutions, smart home options and much more to individuals with disabilities, family members, service providers, educators and others. In FY19, 75 tours were given to 430 individuals.

Demonstrations of equipment are given on and off site, enabling participants to compare and contrast the features and benefits of devices so they can make an informed decision as to whether a device would or would not meet their needs. In FY19, 613 demonstrations were provided to 1,492 individuals.



SUCCESS

Helen is 96 and has macular degeneration. She was a former seamstress and loved making and wearing beautiful clothing. She said that her visit to IATP was prompted after someone mentioned she was wearing a red blouse with a pink skirt. She vowed to never let that happen again. Helen received services from 3 programs on her visit. She tried many devices in the Demo Center and found a magnifier that she wanted to try in her own home. She borrowed that device for a 5 week loan from Device Loan, and the Reuse Program had a color identifier that will ensure that she never wear pink with red again. A trifecta!

EDUCATION

IATP'S Education Liaison works with families, students and schools to provide information, advocacy and support for IEPs and 504 Plans. She also assists college students who need help with getting accommodations from their college or university and provides information and training on Transition. This free service is available to all families who have a student with any disability in the state of Illinois; the issue does not have to be related to assistive technology. In FY19, IATP's Education Liaison attended 998 IEPs or 504 plans either in person or by phone. She advocated in 260 school districts in 95 counties in Illinois.

SUCCESS

Kaeden is 13 years old. He was born with cerebral palsy, vision issues, and a rare form of epilepsy known as Lennox Gestaut Syndrome. He has been an AT user from an early age. While in early intervention, he was using adaptive toys to explore his environment. When he started school at 3 he was using a motorized wheelchair as well as a Dynavox to help him communicate. He had a speech teacher and a preschool teacher who understood AT so he became a pro at using his device. His vision teacher was a great part of this team and worked to make sure everything he used was accessible.



Speech was a big part of his program because his mother realized early on that communication was going to be key to him being part of his community. Now that Kaeden is older, school is more of a challenge for him because of the great number of seizures he has. He has had to be on homebound because of this but he never loses his zest for life and his love for his mom. He was recently chosen to be a Make A Wish Child and his wish to be granted is a smart bedroom which will be accessible in every aspect including 120 inch interactive tv which he can use for school, fun and communication.

While this story is about Kaeden it is also about his mother Amanda. Kaeden would not be where he is today without her love and tenacity and her determination that no matter what, Kaeden would keep surviving.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY



IATP provides trainings on Information Communication Technology (ICT) Accessibility. ICT is the concept that everyone should have access and ability to use all devices, documents, web pages and web applications. When the ADA was enacted, the primary issues at hand were physical problems like curb cuts, ramps and widening doorways. Since then, the internet and digital documents like PDF, Word and PowerPoint have become commonplace in our lives. IATP, through the ICT trainings are helping public and private agencies put curb cuts, ramps and widened doorways in the digital world. IATP provides accessibility audits on websites and web-based applications and digital documents like PDF, Word, and PowerPoint. IATP follows the Web Consortium Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 with Success Criteria AA, and the Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act, Web Accessibility Standards when conducting trainings. In FY19, IATP trained 553 individuals in the development of accessibility of Information Communication Technology.



NOTABLE NUMBERS IN FY19

4,323

Total number of devices received by consumers through acquisition programs that include Device Loan, Reuse and Fast Track.



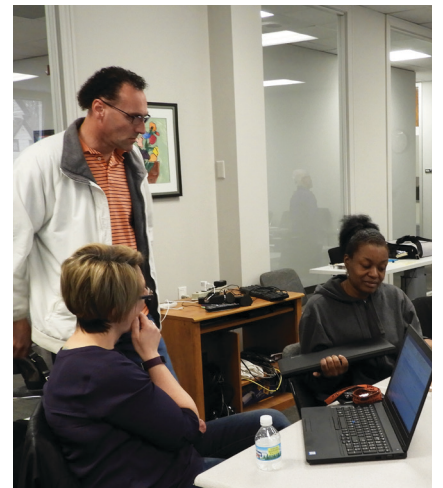
3,448

Number of participants who attended events and presentations where IATP provided information on our programs and services.



1,594

Number of individuals who participated in trainings given by IATP staff on topics that include AT Products/ Services, Funding, Transition and more.

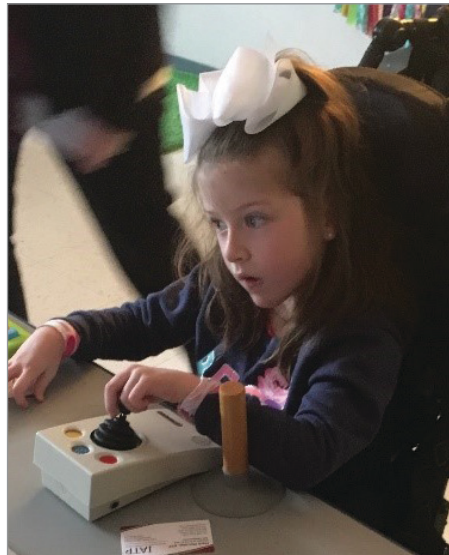


K-12 ASSESSMENT

Through a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), IATP provides Assistive Technology (AT) and Augmentative and Alternative (AAC) evaluations for K-12 students throughout Illinois. In FY19, there were 48 AT evaluations and 119 AAC evaluations conducted in 126 schools, in 43 counties bringing the total to 167 evaluations for the year.

SUCCESS

Cerebral Palsy causes deficits in Ella's fine motor skills making writing a difficult task. During her assessment, several tools were used to give her greater access to her Chromebook. A large button keyboard provided a larger target area. A joystick was introduced and the cursor was slowed down for greater control. Jelly bean buttons were attached for simple access to left and right clicks. Great strides were made in a single visit.



Iris has profound bilateral hearing loss which has greatly affected her expressive language. Her parents only speak Spanish while English is spoken at school. This has made communication that much more difficult. She was referred through IATP's K-12 assessment program for an AAC Evaluation. The team is now going through a 4 to 5 week trial with the TouchChat Express Mini, then will move forward with the funding process.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION EVALUATION / FAST TRACK

Assistive Technology Specialists (ATS) provide assistive technology evaluations, training and technical support to customers in the home, school or in the workplace. After a customer referral is made by a vocational counselor, ATS staff identify assistive technology needs and provides either recommendations for home modifications and/or training on adaptive technology and software. In FY19, ATS staff provided 205 evaluations and 162 technical assist sessions to customers.

Fast Track is an open-ended loan program for DHS/DRS Vocational Rehabilitation customers. During an evaluation, the ATS will trial adaptive technology, software and other devices with the customer. If the technology is appropriate, the customer may keep it the day of the evaluation, eliminating delays waiting for equipment to be ordered and delivered. In FY19, the Fast Track Program provided 1,426 devices to 409 customers saving the state \$1,090,503.

SUCCESS



Mike suffered a spinal cord injury in a farming accident. IATP partnered with AgrAbility to make the necessary adaptations for Mike to return home and work. While Mike cannot get into a tractor, he contributes to his family's farm by keeping up with the office work. He said, "I do anything I can to help out. I want to work."



Spencer received an Apple Watch through Fast Track after a workplace evaluation determined that wearable technology will increase his independence by sending reminders of tasks to complete, thus decreasing his need for a job coach.

WORK INCENTIVES PLANNING AND ASSISTANCE

IATP administers the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA) grant in Illinois. The grant is funded through the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation (DHS/DRS). The program helps individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) make informed choices about going to work. If you are working or have a job offer, you may be concerned about what will happen to your benefits. A Community Work Incentives Coordinator (CWIC) can help you understand the process and inform you about work incentives such as the extension of Medicaid or Medicare benefits while you work. The WIPA Program provides services throughout the entire state of Illinois with the exception of the city of Chicago.

SUCCESS

Meet Ron! Ron has taken full advantage of the Ticket to Work program and become financially self-sufficient as a result. Ron was referred to the WIPA program by a local Employment Network (EN), whom he was receiving employment services from. Upon receiving WIPA services, Ron was able to develop his career goals while utilizing work incentives. The information Ron received from WIPA was individualized and helped him to maintain health insurance. Ron gradually lessened his dependency on Social Security benefits and today, Ron has worked himself off of benefits. Ron is now working a salary paid position for the EN who once helped him find employment.



918
Referrals

2,523
Approximate
Service Hours

400
Benefits
Analysis

285
Information
Packets

PUBLIC POLICY

IATP was heavily involved in public policy during FY19 on the following 3 initiatives.

1

The legislative session was wild and woolly with a new governor and 40+ new legislators. Some of the disability legislation that passed included HB 3586 which requires schools to utilize multi-tier interventions as part of an evaluation system to see if a student is eligible for special education due to a specific learning disability or other disabilities.

2

IATP partnered with the ARC of Illinois, Self-Advocates, and the Siblings for the second year of our SEAP grant which is looking at the low rate of employment for people with developmental disabilities. Our specific role was to look at the part AT can play in this.

3

IATP is serving on two important committees, Employment First and specifically how AT can help in the employment realm and the AT sub-committee for DD and how to speed up funding for people with developmental disabilities and the difference this can make in their lives and independence.

IATP AT LOAN\$

As a direct lender, IATP makes loans to qualified individuals with disabilities and their families for assistive technology and limited home modifications. Credit builder loans for AT are available to assist individuals with disabilities with no or poor credit and to establish good credit. A total of 43 applications were reviewed in FY19 resulting in 9 approved loans for a total of \$159,009.

SUCCESS

Meet Bart! At eleven years old Bart is now in a wheelchair and has outgrown all car seats. The family needed a vehicle that would provide him the ability to travel safely and in comfort. They also wanted the opportunity to take Bart out of house more frequently, not only when it's absolutely required. The family worked very hard to make this happen. It was a long journey but with personal savings, crowd funding, family assistance, and the help of the Tommy Finnegan Legacy Foundation, Division of Specialized Care for Children and Exceptional Children's Charities, the family was able to obtain an affordable financial loan through IATP.



FAMILY'S NOTE TO EVERYONE INVOLVED

Hello,

Thank you so much for your help and for the support of our collection, which lasted almost two years. All documents were completed and we could pick up the car. It is awesome. Bart is very happy and the first week using new car is behind us. Now we are able to leave the house without any problem. Thank you all very much that you helped to make our life easier and more normal. Bart got a great gift for Children's Day, a new car and possibility for more going out of home! ~ Krzysztof, Joanna and Bart

CONTACT US



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