

RI Council on Assistive Technology
October 22, 2015 ~ 2:30 – 4:00 pm
Tech ACCESS of RI
110 Jefferson Blvd, Suite I, Warwick, RI

MINUTES

Attendees: Kathleen Grygiel, ATAP Program Director; Monica Dzialo, Ying Sun, Becky Wright, Kim Wennermark, Elisabeth Hubbard

Guest: Justin Pasquazzi, President of ASTRO and Pat Robert

Partners: Denise Corson, ATEL; Lisa Labitt, EBEC; Lorna Ricci, OSCIL; and Kelly Charlebois, TechACCESS

Excused: Chair Michael Matraccia, Teresa O'Brien, Tara Townsend, Robert Pires, Melanie Sbardella, Courtney Petrarca, Flo Adeni-Awosika, and Colleen Poliselli

Welcome: Meeting was called to order by Kathleen Grygiel, ATAP Program Director at 2:30 pm. Introductions were done by all attendees.

Approval of Minutes from April 23, 2015: Kim Wennermark made motion to approve minutes with no changes. Ying Sun seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

New Business: Due to the absence of Michael Matraccia, Chair, permission was granted to Kathleen Grygiel to conduct the meeting.

- **Program Director:** Linda Deschenes has been promoted to Assistant Administrator of Operations within ORS. She will also be functioning as the Director for the ATAP program. She has great ideas, experience in Vocational Rehabilitation, and expertise around physical disabilities. She will be joining the group for the January 2016 meeting. She has been with ORS approximately 12 years where she began as a rehabilitation counselor for the northern part of the state. Prior to joining ORS she worked at Northern Rhode Island Mental Health Center as a supervisor of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program; prior to that she worked at Community Counseling Center.

- Denise Corson, ATEL program, will be receiving an award for outreach for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community on November 8th.
- The ATAP program and IL programs have been moved to the office of Health and Human Services. In terms of ATAP it is status quo. Because the ATAP position has been vacant for a long time, there is concern over the lack of consistent presence at some of the national conferences. With the new ATAP Director, there is hope to resurrect that relationship with some of the other partners around the country and funding source.
- The new ATAP brochure was passed around for review.
- The New England AT programs collaborated to develop a website so people could access technology that might be available in other parts of New England. There was an annual maintenance fee to participate in this website. We found the website not being utilized. The ATAP Advisory Committee felt the money being paid for the maintenance fee was money that could be reinvested into other needed equipment. A decision was made not discontinue being part of that website. Rhode Islanders can still access the website and still have the opportunity to get the devices they might need or want.

New Members Needed: New application submitted by Justin H. Pasquazzi, Founder and President of ASTRO. Justin started doing volunteer work in St. Petersburg, Florida with the Action Sports Foundation and worked with Wounded Warriors. He had the opportunity to bring a number of people out to participate in some action sports, such as water skiing and kite boarding. Since moving back to Rhode Island, he has started his own organization called ASTRO (Action Sports Technology Resource Organization) which contracts with the Providence School Department for after-school programs. He also works part-time as a job coach and job developer for RHD (Resource for Human Development). His goal is to become a vendor for ORS and provide services to this population. He interned with Michael Matraccia over the summer with a client.

Partner Reports:

ATEL: Device Demonstrations for this quarter, ATEL did 81 demos to 127 participants.

In State Financing, ATEL serviced 83 clients and issued 101 devices with a retail value of approximately \$13,064. An amplified phone was installed for a gentleman from the VA who was blind and hard of hearing. He was not only able to hear much better but adjusted some of the features on the phone to assist with his vision. He was shown the bump on the number five where he could navigate from there. The talking keypad and caller ID were turned on. The gentleman was thrilled with the AT and VA programs.

In the category of Public Awareness, over the last quarter ATEL participated in a dozen presentation and expos.

Committee Update: Lost two committee members, James Litvack and Doris Simas. Two new members should be coming on board once the Governor approves them.

Legislative update: The bill went through the house. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to contact Senator Gallo who is our representative and part of our ATEL committee.

OSCIL: Received Rhode Island Foundation funds which will continue the program for the blind. With this program it raises the eligibility limit. This program allows OSCIL to purchase higher end pieces of equipment.

Another program is with ATEL and OSCIL partnered together to be able to provide AT demonstration information during the day. This has been expanded to include other disabilities and other AT information.

OSCIL received 130 requests for AT a rate of 65 referrals per month. There has been an increase of 83% increase for direct services many from previous clients of PARI. Out of the 83% -- 401 were served.

Device Demonstrations: There were 45 AT device demonstrations done during this quarter, the majority in the Community Living category.

Device Loans – Short Term: During this quarter there were 5 short term loans.

Reutilization: During this quarter gave out 25 pieces of AT through open-ended loans. Examples of devices given out were: alert master for the deaf, shower chairs/benches, bedrails, commodes, coach canes, flashing doorbells and other low-end devices.

Public Awareness: Lunch and Learn Work Shop, Dr. Polly Leonard will be present to speak about her own experience how adaption and assistive technology benefits many of her clients and patients. Flu Clinic will also be offered prior to the presentation.

As of Tuesday, October 27th there will be voting on expansion with a satellite office at 175 Main Avenue, Pawtucket referred to as OSCIL North.

Technical Assistance - Transition Services: Provided assistance to three individuals through its Community Living Options Program.

AT Inventory: The AT room has expanded and filled with different devices not only for physical impairments but for sensory impaired as well.

Other Activities: Receiving a lot of complicated situations for home modifications and it usually dovetails with AT that is required. Many of the requests are from individuals who do not own their own home, which is a criteria for a home modification.

Increase in staffing – Tim Flynn, Independent Living Coordinator and Advocate of OSCIL; Gloria Stuart is now working in the AT loan program; Heather Shay, Receptionist. With the number of people coming on board with different disabilities and utilizing different technology, it has raised the awareness of how technology can be used every day to perform your job and enhance your life.

Case Study: A wheelchair was delivered to a consumer to use while recovering from a broken leg. The consumer was educated on how to use the wheelchair features, transferring to and from the wheelchair, as well as making sure the area in front is clear. With the consumer's permission, the furniture was moved around to create an easier maneuverability of the wheelchair. The wheelchair did not fit in the kitchen or bathroom but would use his walker when entering those rooms.

TechACCESS: Continues to offer monthly technology demonstrations. Summer tends to be a slow month. Has seen more of an increase in information/referral calls.

Public Awareness: Attended several public awareness activities. Did an AT overview for all of the consultants at About Family CEDARR – general information on AT and basically the hierarchy of how AT services are provided. Attended the Governor's Commission on Disabilities ADA event. Also, did an AT for Employment presentation for the DD Supported Employment Council.

During this quarter, TechACCESS started Cohort 3 of Project AT with RIDE. This group had 14 teachers/therapists. Preparing teachers/therapists in the classroom as far as utilizing AT and giving them the skills they need to triage kids and give them appropriate supports. Lisa Labitt sat in to audit this session. In the spring, Cohort 4 will be held at EBEC. Lisa Labitt also had a Teacher Assistant who audited the course as well because part of the developmental work with RIDE is to look at taking the information that has been used as the foundation for the Cohorts and build one for Teacher Assistants.

Updates: Recently purchased several adapted toys for use in the loan library that could be used for older students as well. Purchased a couple of portable document scanners, good for people with LD and/or vision issues.

Conference update: Day one pre-conference there are 143 registrants; day two there are 212 registrants; vendor hall is sold out; *The Bringing Access to Life Expo* is up to seven guests. Fifty percent of the people coming are first time attendees.

Some attendees are coming from Minnesota, Texas, and became a true New England conference when Vermont joined in. The conference is already booked for next year. To register for the conference go to:

www.assistivetechologyconference.com

EBEC: The numbers for this quarter are low, however, since then things have become very busy.

Device Loan: Reported about 6 device loans. Purchased a Light Aide which is a vision tool. This is for students with residual visual impairments but are not totally blind. There are a team of teachers of the visually impaired that are using this as a professional development and using it with students. Currently working with five or six teachers of the visually impaired and they are housed out of the Sherlock Center at Rhode Island College. They have been using the device and it has been traveling around the state. There is approximately 20 teachers of the visually impaired in the state and also some orientation and mobility specialists. She is hoping they all get a chance to use the device with the next year.

Device Demonstrations: Participated in 12 this quarter. Communication is a vital need in the schools. Students between the ages of 14 and 24 do not have a good means of verbal communication. She is working with vocational rehabilitation counselors and transition age education staff to make sure the students have some sort of communicative device.

Device Training: Working with several high school teachers on a blended learning approach. Teachers are more facilitators in the classroom and the students are taking more responsibility for their learning, they learn very differently, the platforms they are learning on are different, they are using a lot of interactive computer skills and digital learning environments.

Hasbro Early Intervention Program will be closing. There was a lot of business with device demonstrations; training and on-going loans through the HEI Program and hopes the staff will be absorbed in other community early interventions.

Also participated with “*The Better Bottom Line*” which was about employing people with disabilities.

Roundtable: It was suggested for the conference this year to put all the ATAP partners together in the vendor hall so people could understand this is a partnership made up of several different agencies. This is a great idea to help people understand how all the agencies are interconnected.

Announcement: 2016 Meeting Dates – Meetings will continue to take place at: TechACCESS, 110 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick, RI -- January 28th; April 28th; July 28th; October 27th – from 2:30 to 4:00 PM

Next Meeting Date: January 28, 2016 from 2:30 – 4:00 p.m., TechACCESS of RI, 110 Jefferson Blvd, Suite 1, Warwick, RI.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm

Attachments: Partner Reports



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ATEL Partner Report for 10/22/15 RICAT Meeting

Device Demonstrations

We did 81 device demonstrations and had 127 participants from 7/1/15 – 9/30/15.

Anecdote –

A 90 year old client had received a Captel from our program a few years ago, recently received a cochlear implant; she lives alone and is extremely independent. However, after a big storm her Captel was damaged, and we were not open to exchange the device. She did have a cell phone that she was able to text her daughter, who was able to make phone calls for her. Unfortunately, we were not able to get to exchange her Captel for a new one for a few days and she was extremely anxious about not being able to call anyone other than text her daughter. When I exchanged her Captel for a new one, I also showed her how to use web Captel, so in the future if this ever happened again she could make caption calls utilizing her cell phone and her laptop; as well as, use this service when she travels and doesn't have her Captel phone with her.

State Financing

We serviced 83 clients and issued 101 devices with a retail value of approximately \$13,064.

Anecdote –

I installed an amplified phone for a gentleman that was both extremely hard of hearing and blind. Not only was he able to hear MUCH better on the phone, but was also able to adjust some features on the phone to assist with his vision. I showed him that there is always a bump on the number 5, so when you find the number 5 with your finger then you will be able to navigate where the other numbers. I also turned on talking keypad dialing, and talking CID. He was so thrilled with the phone and told me the ATEL program and the VA are the two programs that he couldn't live without!!

Public Awareness/Information & Assistance

We did Technology Demonstration programs on **Technology and Communication Strategies for Persons with Hearing Loss**: 9/9/15 and demonstration from 12-2 PM at OSCIL, **Lunch and Learn, Removing Barriers to Independence**: 9/30/15.

Presentations and Expos/Conferences:

7/14/15- Presentation at the Middletown Senior Center
7/15/15- Presentation at the Coventry Senior Center
7/22/15-Networking Meeting for Senior's Rule
7/23/15- ADA Celebration display at Fort Adams Newport
7/30/15- RICAT Meeting
8/27/15- Captel/TTY Presentation at Providence Network RI
9/2/15 - Captel/TTY Presentation at Woonsocket Network RI
9/8/15 - Networking Meeting at Brightview
9/15/15- Health Fair at Greenwich Bay Manor
9/23/15- Senior's Rule Networking Meeting
9/24/15- Lincoln Senior Center Health Fair
9/24/15- RI Rehab Hospital Health Expo

Atel Committee Update

Doris Simas and James Litvack's term expired last year, and are unable to attend meeting anymore; therefore, we will be in need of new members. Doris Simas and James Litvack's term expired last year, and are unable to attend meeting anymore; therefore, we will be in need of new members. However, we have two new members awaiting approval from the governor.

Respectfully submitted:

Denise Corson

RICAT Meeting: 10/22/15 EBEC Quarterly summary

The ATAP Children and Youth Resource Center located at East Bay Educational Collaborative provides a Lending Library of Assistive Technology Devices and a Demonstration Center for school age children, educators and families.

Device Loan: Number of devices borrowed: **6**

Anecdote: The Light Aide vision Tool has provided the TVI (Teachers of the Visually impaired) Team at the Sherlock Center an opportunity to develop some professional skills and learning prerequisites for using a large Vision tool that promotes interactive displays of color that support core learning and infuse the building blocks of visual reading for low vision learners. Bright and engaging the Light Aide works in literacy, mathematics and cognitive skill building. This AT tool is scheduled out with 5 Educators through the month of December 2015.

Device Demonstration: 12

Anecdote:

Communication is a vital skill that impacts all elements of the human condition. Technology is providing some social interaction and for the students with limited verbal output. Cell phones and mobile devices used in classroom integration and work place vocational accommodations for limited verbal young adults continues to be a prominent need for our communities. Expressive and communicative function in middle school and high school environment remain a challenge for a number of students.

Demonstration of *Go talk now*, *Assistive Express*, *proloquo2 Go* and *Touch Chat* have all been a focus this quarter.

Device Trainings: 6

Number of Participants: 61

- Para Educator Support for Students with disabilities: Teacher Assistant network at the East Bay Educational Collaborative continues it's outreach and programming for supporting students with disabilities

- **Blended Learning using the Microsoft Surface pro 3:** A High School English teacher is able to provide instruction in a digital format in a diverse blended approach. The Google Classroom is the platform for such a method of instruction. Students are engaged in a positive way, they are provided with multi resources without a lot of down time. Accessibility, voice recognition, word prediction and organization are all being used within classroom and home. The importance of responsibility and digital footprint as well as tracking information data on students' time and productivity is an additional benefit. Students may choose to stay connected although they are suspended or absent with reasons. Educators are able to provide real time feedback to students for a realistic work environment. It is a new building process where access is playing a key role. Training and support with High Technology tools for blended use in a classroom is on- going for educators.

Info. & Assistance 30

The Transition Advisory Council in the East Bay Region as well as Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are a steady source of information sharing. Employment representatives and family members have been utilizing the ATAP center this quarter.

The Hasbro Early Intervention Program will be closing in the coming months. I have enjoyed working with a number of therapists and staff and hope they re-connect with our ATAP center/partners in their new therapeutic work.

Respectfully submitted: Lisa Labitt 10/19/15

RICAT MEETING
Thursday, October 22, 2015
ATAP Partner Reporting: TechACCESS of RI
Highlights from Quarter: July, August, September 2015

Demonstrations

We continue to offer monthly Technology Demonstrations, with a focus on Technology for those with Blindness/Low Vision, Alternate Computer Access, and Tablet Technologies. We continue to see a decrease in attendance for these demonstrations. We are developing a survey to determine the cause.

Public Awareness, Information & Assistance

- We provided several public awareness activities during this quarter:
 - AT Overview for About Families CEDARR
 - Attended the Governor's Commission on Disabilities ADA Event
 - AT for Employment presentation for the DD Supported Employment Council
- During this quarter, we began Cohort 3 of our Project AT with RIDE. 14 teachers/therapists are participating and learning about AT, preparing them to support students in the classroom and in accessing online curriculum/testing. These sessions are being audited by Lisa Labitt (EBEC) in preparation for hosting the Spring Cohort (4) at EBEC. We also have a Teacher Assistant auditing the course to provide information about how we should develop a TA Cohort. Many of the participants in this Cohort have utilized the Loan Library to trial tools in their classrooms.

Updates

- We recently purchased several adapted toys for use in our loan library. We have also purchased document cameras that will allow individuals to scan information directly into their iPads. This is good technology for those with LD and/or vision issues.
- The Assistive Technology Conference of New England has reached its largest attendance ever. Our Pre-Conference workshops are being received very well, and we currently have 143 registrants. For Day 2, we have 212 registered. Our Vendor hall is full. The *Bringing Access to Life Expo* has 7 guests.

Respectfully Submitted: Kelly Charlebois





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Report for October 22, 2015 RICAT Meeting

Highlights from Quarter: July- August 2015

- Information & Assistance & Public Awareness:

- OSCIL's Information & Referral Specialists responded to more than 130 requests for information on AT, primarily from consumers, but also from family members and service providers. These requests came by way of phone, emails, via OSCIL's website and Facebook page and also from walk-ins.
- OSCIL Staff attended the ADA Anniversary in Newport event sponsored by the Governor's Commission on Disabilities. OSCIL also sponsored the *Public Forum to Identify the Concerns of People with Disabilities* held at the Warwick Public Library. In September, OSCIL staff exhibited at the 17th Annual Optimism Race, Walk & Roll for Parkinson's Disease at Goddard Park and also at the Salvatore Mancini Senior Center.

- Demonstrations

OSCIL continued to experience an increase in requests for service including home visits and assessments for AT and home modifications. 45 demonstrations of AT devices or equipment were done during the quarter with the majority in the Community Living category.

- Device Loans – Short Term

During this quarter, OSCIL loaned out 5 items as short-term loans. These included an alarm clock, transport chair, door chime and Pocket Talker.

- Reuse - Open Ended Loans. During the quarter OSCIL gave out 26 pieces of AT through open-ended loans. AT included the following:

- Alert Master
- Shower chairs/benches
- Bedrails
- Commodes
- One handed can & jar openers
- Couch cane
- Flashing doorbell
- Reachers
- TV listeners
- Coffee sensor
- Pocket Talker

- Shake A Wake Smoke Detectors
- Shoe horn, shoe laces

These items enable consumers to address home safety issues and eliminate the necessity of having to purchase these items.

- ***Technical Assistance- Transition Services:*** During the quarter OSCIL provided assistance to 3 individuals through its Community Living Options Program (Nursing Home Transition). Two are in the process of being transitioned.
- ***Other Activities:*** OSCIL's AT Coordinator continues to participate in the ATEL Advisory Committee and ATEL's Technology Night training and oversee our monthly Lunch and Learn sessions.
- ***Case Study***

Wheelchair was delivered to consumer to use while recovering from a broken leg. Consumer is staying at his mother's house while he recovers, where he will stay on the first floor. He has never used a wheelchair before. He was educated on how to use the brakes, leg rests and how to open/fold up the chair. He was also educated on what to do when transferring in and out of the wheelchair. He was instructed to make sure that the brakes are fully locked and that he keeps the area in front of the chair clear by swinging the leg rests out to the side so that he doesn't trip on the footrests. He demonstrated correct use of the wheelchair and transferring. With his permission I was able to move around furniture in the living room and dining room to make for easier maneuverability of the wheelchair. He was not able to fit the chair in the bathroom or kitchen but said he would use his walker as much as possible when accessing these rooms.

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