

RI Council on Assistive Technology
October 23, 2014 ~ 2:30 – 4:00 pm
TechACCESS of RI
110 Jefferson Blvd, Suite I, Warwick, RI

MINUTES

Attendees: Acting Chair Daniel Pieroni, Elisabeth Hubbard, James Litvack, Teresa O'Brien, Daniel Pieroni, Ying Sun, and Kim Wennermark, Becky Wright, Melanie Sbardella

Guest: Robert Pires and Tara Townsend

Partners: Roberta Greene-Whittemore, ATAP Program Director; Denise Corson, ATEL; and Kelly Charlebois, TechACCESS.

Excused: Flo Adeni-Awosika, Margaret Hoye, Thomas Karweh, Michael Matraccia, Colleen Poliselli, Bill Robinson, Allen Parent-Wentmore, Lisa Labitt, EBEC; Lezlee Shaffer, OSCIL;

Welcome: Meeting was called to order by Acting Chair Daniel Pieroni at 2:37 pm. Introductions were done by all attendees.

Approval of Minutes from July 24, 2014: Teresa O'Brien made motion to approve minutes from July 24th. Ying Sun seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

New Business:

- **Contract Renewals:** Roberta Greene-Whittemore stated PARI is no longer around and OSCIL is now the central Independent Living Center. There were 70 brand new walkers in a box, and OSCIL is in the process of taking inventory of what comes in and who in the community needs them. There are a lot of changes, and this is a year of stabilization. Laurie DiOrio is overseeing the project.

- **New Members Needed:**

- Rob Pires-Vision Rehab Teacher – works with individuals on AT and assessments. He trains on devices using JAWS, some Apple devices, low tech stuff, and digital recorders. He was previously at Insight.
- Tara Townsend – Family Voices (Non-Profit), mom with a seven year old son, Andrew, who suffers with very limited movement.

Dan Pieroni asked if anyone would like to make a motion to accept the two new members. Teresa O'Brien made motion to approve. Ying Sun seconded. Motion approved unanimously. Roberta Greene-Whittemore stated that someone is still needed to represent Independent Living since PARI is no longer. Leslie has been asked but is too busy at this time, maybe in the future. Someone is also needed from the Workforce Investment Board. Roberta will ask Kathleen Grygiel if she knows of anyone who might be interested. Three additional individuals are needed after that. Kelly Charlebois met with Randy Kulman who may be interested and is up for further discussion and information. Sharon will reach out to contact him. A request was made to send a letter to Thomas.

Meeting dates for 2015 are as follows: January 22nd, April 23rd, July 23rd and October 22nd.

State Plan Update: Due in February 2015. This is being done a little earlier because Roberta Green-Whittemore has announced her retirement date of January 23, 2015. Emphasis this year is on loan with transition age students which is part of the fifth core service that independent living has to talk about which is everywhere from transition, to education, to employment or from post-secondary education to career planning and what employers needs are and getting those individuals ready to fill those needs. Roberta Greene-Whittemore will be connecting with the partners requesting updates. The goal is to have this done by the end of December 2014.

Program Director's Report: Roberta Greene Whittemore reported on the progress of the State Plan as noted above and her retirement date. She is unsure if ORS will still be designated as the lead agency for the AT program given the transition from Department of Ed to Department of Health and Human Services. There are a variety of factors that could happen. There has been an inquiry if there will be any changes in the AT State Plan. Status quo at this time; as the year plays out, things might change in data collection.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Dan Pieroni stated on behalf of everyone, the committee appreciates all of Roberta's efforts and wishes her the very best.

A TEL: Denise Corson stated last quarter Device Demonstrations, A TEL did 68 demos to 108 participants.

In the category of Public Awareness, A TEL participated in two dozen events.

In State Financing, A TEL had 80 clients and issued 98 devices with a retail value of approximately \$12,000.

James Litvack also chair of A TEL committee will no longer be with us. Courteney Petracca, Vice Chair, agreed to fill in if he cannot continue.

Legislative update: Wireless technology has not been approved through legislation. Will continue to try for approval and reach out to another representative with deaf parents and come up with a different approach and, hopefully, get approved this next year.

There has been a change in the FCC rule for captioning phone. The captioning button remains on. There is no longer a need to remember to push down the captioning button.

Added another CapTel, Model 2400I, which is a touch screen model. Other models are still available.

Another amplified phone has also been added.

Kelly Charlebois commented on the individuals picking up the phones stating that they are always happy, nice and grateful.

EBEC: Lisa Labitt was not present. Melanie Sbardella read the report provided. EBEC quarterly report attached.

OSCIL: Lezlee Shaffer was not present. Melanie Sbardella read the report provided. OSCIL quarterly report attached.

Question from Kelly Charlebois: How do folks find out about the Young Adult Transition series?

Response provided by Dan Pieroni who spoke as a guest back in August. He was somewhat disappointed as to the minimal amount of information provided.

PARI: No longer in business-nothing to report

TechACCESS: Kelly Charlebois continues to do Technology Demonstrations monthly, most people attending are asking to look at IPADS and Androids.

Public Awareness: Currently updating their brochure and looking to update TechACCESS website. Rhode Island Material Access Center (RIMAC) has had some changes to terminology such as Accessible Instructional Material will change to Accessible Educational Material. Fact sheets and references on website will need to be changed as well. TechACCESS continues to receive information and referral calls and continues with the equipment loan program. Due to an increase in demand a third voice amplifier was purchased. They are also getting a lot more walk-ins.

AT Conference – November 20, 2014 at the Crowne Plaza – Warwick. There were 38 exhibitors in total and approximately 181 registered guests to attend. An e-mail was sent to special education directors trying to get entire teams to attend. Arlene Lugo volunteered to pass out flyer and get word out in Connecticut. The main sponsors for the conference were ATAP and RIDE. Denise Corson was able to get a scholarship sponsor, breakfast and break sponsor, and sponsor for the bags. Mountain Movers sponsored the tablet playground. This was a great opportunity to talk about how important it is for people to look at and consider TechACCESS as a source for technology.

Kelly noted they will continue to write and work on grants. They are working with funds received by the IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Science) called ALLAccess, which focuses on integrating the library and technology access into the adult education and workforce services. TechACCESS has been invited back for a second round of that grant. A conference call is scheduled to determine what that means and who will take part.

There was an event held in October to acknowledge the \$40k grant received from Walmart. A portion of the grant was used to purchase tables, chairs and laptops. Another portion of the grant was used to develop a User Group, which meets bi-weekly with Mathew Provost. The goal is to support the development of communication and social skills of adult users, introducing some tech support and eventually working towards starting to develop tasks such as filling out resumes on line and talking about communication in the workplace. She would like to start an adult user group in January for AT which would meet on alternate weeks.

PD calendar in on-going. There have been several requests from districts to take the presentation on the road. First one is scheduled November 3rd in Coventry.

Mathew Provost will be speaking at the Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA) national conference in January 2015 in Orlando. Two staff members have returned from Closing the Gap which was held in Minneapolis.

The digital badge program in partnership with RIDE and the Sherlock Center on Disabilities has been developed and delivered. Thirteen teachers and therapists have earned their digital badges. Another session is scheduled for February 2015.

Roberta Green-Whittemore asked if the any DD workers responded to AT conference. Kelly Charlebois received an email from two women and has sent out the information and flyer.

Roundtable: Roberta Greene-Whittemore announced they are working with the partners to develop a new ATAP brochure.

Highlander Institute is a Meet Education Project that does a podcast broadcast every week or so to talk about students transitioning from high school to college aimed at those students with IEP's or 504's plans who are moderately disabled. The podcast is available at: meeteducationproject.com/podcast and is approximately a 50 minute discussion. Dan Pieroni talked with a young lady and her father about attending Curry College. He helped her and her father through the process and she was accepted and will be starting in the fall.

Next Meeting Date: **January 22, 2015** from 2:30 – 4:00 p.m., TechACCESS of RI, 110 Jefferson Blvd, Suite 1, Warwick, RI.

Adjournment: Teresa O'Brien made motion to adjourn at 3:40 pm. Seconded by Ying Sun. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

Attachments: Partner Reports

ATEL Partner Report for 7/24/14 RICAT Meeting

Device Demonstrations

We did 68 device demonstrations and had 108 participants from 7/1/14 – 9/30/14.

Anecdote –

I installed a Speakerphone for a lady with significant neuromuscular disability, as well as, non-verbal. She used a speech generating tablet to communicate over the phone. She was able to activate the phone with the remote and dial her family members. She repeatedly thanked me, through her device and was so excited to use it.

Public Awareness/Information & Assistance

We did Technology Demonstration programs on Technology and Communication Strategies for Persons with Hearing Loss: October 8th only.

Presentations and Expos/Conferences:

7/16/14- Living with Hearing Loss Presentation with Prof. Nancy Shuster, Marie Younkin-Waldman speak about their experience with Hearing Loss and cochlear implants, offering practical information and wisdom to those affected, their families and friends and information on the ATEL Program and assistive technology.

7/21/14- James Litvack, Courtenay Petracca and I moved our monthly Wed night demo to Monday afternoon at the Warwick Library!

9/5/14- Stopped off at ENT offices to let them know about the ATEL Program, as well as give them ATEL materials.

9/9/14 - Did a Presentation with Hamilton Relay to the Sparrows I senior living bldg.

9/10/14 -Met with Seniors Rule Group in Greenville to discuss upcoming outreach opportunities.

9/11/14 - Did a presentation on Captel to Network RI in Providence.

9/15/14- Did a Presentation on Simply Solutions for Individuals with Hearing Loss at the Warwick Library.
9/16/14- Did a presentation with OSCIL at Sparrows II in Warwick.
9/18/14- Attended a Health Care Expo at the Rehab Hospital in Smithfield.
9/22/14- Did a Health Fair booth at Greenwich Bay Manor.
9/25/14- Did an informational booth at the Lincoln Senior Center Health Fair
9/25/14- Did a presentation at Scituate Vista Senior Living Complex.
9/30/14- Demonstration at Sparrows III
10/2/14 - Presentation at the MS Dream Center
10/7/14- Networking Meeting with Senior Care workers in Lincoln
10/8/14- Did a booth at the Prime Time Expo for seniors!!

State Financing

We serviced 80 clients and issued 98 devices with a retail value of approximately \$12,124.

Anecdote –

I installed a Captel 840i for an elderly gentleman who had significant hearing loss and whose wife was in poor health and was critical to be able to communicate with family. I also had to install a router since they did not have WIFI capability, as well as, contact Cox to come out and install a telephone jack near his chair because it was too difficult to get up and answer the phone in the kitchen. Once Cox came out and installed Jack, I revisited him to make sure the telephone was properly set up.

Other Activities

Committee update – James Litvack may be no longer able to attend the quarterly ATEL meeting, due to the closing of PARI independent living center. James has flexibility with PARI which allowed him to attend the meetings, but not sure where he will be in the future. The committee decided it would be a good idea to elect a vice chair, in the event that James cannot attend the meetings; Courtenay volunteered for the position.

Legislative update - Representative Naughton's assistant responded that she is unsure exactly what happened with bill 7068, but pledges to refile it and work to pass it. Denise stated that there were no objections to the bill, and everyone thought it was a good idea. The ATEL committee felt that there were probably no objections to the bill but probably were too busy to discuss.

New FCC rules for Captel- effective august 28th there was changes to IP Captel: the captioning button can now be defaulted to stay on, and the requirement of the last 4 digits of a users social security button and dob.

New devices: Captel 2400i and Clarity Alto – the Captel 2400i does not replace any of the other Captel models: 840, 840i and 880i; it is just another offering. The Captel 2400i is for a more tech savvy individual that is familiar with touch-screen technology. The clarity alto is a new phone device from clarity that was tested by TEDPA and found to have better clarity and ease of use then the Clearsounds csc600d. The volume wheel controls the ringer volume, handset volume and speaker volume.

Respectfully submitted:

Denise Corson

RICAT Meeting: October 23, 2014
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 this quarter: **17**

Anecdote: Early Intervention program at Hasbro is borrowing a “Twitch Switch” for a young child who has limited use of his extremities. They are using this switch on his head location to assess whether it will be an access point for this child to engage in play and cause-effect operational learning in home environment.

Device Demonstration: 9

Anecdote: A Transition Academy student is receiving vocational services and social skills training. Spending a portion of her day @ RWU Roger Williams University and at an on-site apartment in Bristol. She is using an I pod touch for communication to peers and educators during her program day. Future goals include; integrate the technology skills for GPS, organization and time management at a work site.

Device Training: 36

Number of Participants: 32

- I PAD Accessibility for students and educators
- AAC communication Apps for High School age students
- Literacy reading and writing skills- device features to learners

Info. & Assistance: 35

Social Media twitter relay of information to audience of educators, therapists and professional working in Disability fields/AT (71 followers) to date.

Respectfully submitted: Lisa Labitt 10/23/14



**OCEAN STATE CENTER FOR
INDEPENDENT LIVING**

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Report for October 23, 2014 RICAT Meeting

Highlights from Quarter: July 2014 – September 2014

- **Demonstrations**

With the closing of the PARI Independent Living Center, requests for home visits and assessments for AT and/or home modifications increased significantly at the end of the fourth quarter. Funding to respond to these requests and make purchases is still available with grants from Tufts Health Plan Foundation & RI Foundation through December 31.

- **Public Awareness, Information & Assistance:** OSCIL participated in presentations on Assistive Technology at senior high rises (Sparrows Point II & Sparrows Point III in Warwick and Scituate Vista Apartments in Cranston). OSCIL participated in the annual health/wellness fair at Salvatore Mancini Resource and Activity Center in North Providence staffing an exhibit table (100+ attendees). OSCIL also staffed an informational display at the annual Southern NE Rehabilitation Conference, which was attended by over 150+ rehab professionals (occupational, physical and speech therapists).

This quarter, Corrine O'Donnell was hired as OSCIL's new Information & Referral Specialist, replacing Sue Eleoff who retired in July. Corrine responds to requests for information on AT from consumers, family members and service providers by phone, email, via OSCIL's website and from occasional walk-ins. She will also be responsible for continuing OSCIL's quarterly newsletter, *Signs of Independence*.

- **Transition Services:** During the last quarter OSCIL provided assistance to eight (8) individuals through its *Community Living Options Program (Nursing Home Transition)*. No consumers transitioned this quarter; however, several consumers are either in process for receiving home modifications to address barriers to access or are awaiting the availability of subsidized apartments in the community.

Under the direction of Sage Neto, OSCIL's IL/Transition Specialist, plans are underway for the next Young Adult Transition series to begin later this fall. The eight week program addresses the needs of young adults (18-24) transitioning into independent living, and incorporates the use of AT in discussions of money management & budgeting, social media & internet safety, exploring housing options, and preparing for real life situations.

- **Reutilization.** During the quarter OSCIL was able to recycle eleven (11) pieces of AT through reassignment or open-ended loans. AT included tub seats, tub transfer benches, transport chair, alert systems, bed rails, rollator, baby sound monitor and toilet safety frame to enable consumers to address home safety issues and eliminate the necessity of having to purchase these items.
- **Other Activities.** OSCIL's AT Specialist (Melissa Rosenberg) is participating in meetings of the AT Conference Planning Committee and the ATEL Advisory Committee.

Case Study

Consumer is a 64 year old female residing in a subsidized apartment. She has Multiple Sclerosis and ambulates with various devices from an electric scooter, cane, to a bariatric rollator. She stated that her hand strength has been diminishing lately and she has great difficulty trying to cut, chop, and

grate fresh foods. She feels very passionate about cooking with fresh foods because of the MS. She has purchased herself several kitchen gadgets that haven't worked. She also mentioned having issues with balance and stamina while standing at the bathroom sink. Her goal for this year is to find a part time job to help supplement her income because she has been running out of food by the end of the month. Her friends have been buying her groceries to help out. She really wanted to focus on the kitchen and devices that would help her cook.

OSCIL recommended that she use her food processor to help prep her vegetables and fruits. We provided her with a step stool with a hand rail attached to assist her while standing for long periods of time in the kitchen or the bathroom. We also provided her with a one-handed cutting board, rocker knife and wide-handled utensils. Community resource information was given to her -- a list of food pantries in her area and a list of temporary employment agencies to assist her in finding part-time work. She has reported that meal prep has gotten a lot easier for her and she is able to spend more time in the kitchen.

Lezlee Shaffer
OSCIL Program Director