

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

MINUTES

Attendees: Chair Michael Matraccia, Teresa O'Brien, Monica Dzialo, Tara Townsend, Ying Sun, Robert Pires

Guest: Pat Robert

Partners: Denise Corson, ATEL; James Litvack, OSCIL; and Kelly Charlebois, TechACCESS; Lisa Labitt, EBEC

Excused: Kathleen Grygiel, ATAP Program Director, Kim Wennermark, Melanie Sbardella, Becky Wright, Courteney Petrarca, Flo Adeni-Awosika, Elisabeth Hubbard, Colleen Poliselli

Welcome: Meeting was called to order by Chair Michael Matraccia at 2:30 pm. Introductions were done by all attendees.

Approval of Minutes from April 23, 2015: Michael Matraccia made motion to approve minutes with no changes. Teresa O'Brien seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

New Business: Dr. Cathy Stern was not able to make the meeting but sent her resume. She is a doctor of optometry and maintains a private practice in Canton, MA limited to the diagnosis of developmental and behavioral vision problems in treatment in adults and children for vision therapy and vision rehab. She has extensive experience working with children and adults with learning problems, ADD, ADHD, non-verbal learning disabilities, cerebral palsy, autism and multiply challenged, and is involved in vision rehab following head trauma and stroke.

Received a letter of resignation from Daniel Pieroni. He is on several forums and being a substitute teacher, it is hard and he feels bad he has been missing meetings. Sharon DiPinto will be writing a letter on behalf of the council thanking him for his time and service.

The new draft of the ATAP brochure was passed around. It briefly explains who the partners are and what services are provided. The partners are welcome to share their comments and ideas with Sharon DiPinto. Once it is finalized, the brochure will be available at ORS, at the conference, distributed to the partners, and on the website. There was a suggestion to place some at the One Stop offices, local libraries and other DHS offices.

Program Director: No formal report was provided.

New Members Needed: Continuing to look for and recruit new members.

Currently there are approximately six vacancies. There should be more consumer AT users on the board. Right now there are six consumers, five agencies required by law, one relative/consumer and two professionals. Suggestions for promoting the board or soliciting new recruitment included: TechAccess distribution list which consists of mostly professionals and families and reaches just under a 1,000 people; AT Conference; members at the MS Treatment Center/ARI; and Gary Baletto – Sharon DiPinto will draft a letter and forward to TechAccess and Gary Baletto.

Michael Matraccia made a motion to vote Dr. Cathy Stern as a new member. Monica Dzialo seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

ATEL: Denise Corson stated for the 3rd quarter Device Demonstrations, ATEL did 78 demos to 119 participants. She spoke of a 98-year old man whom she installed an internet CAPTEL. He lived by himself, had internet and was completely deaf. He was going to be moved out of the apartment unless he learned to communicate better. He was very excited to use it and picked up on it very well.

In the category of Public Awareness, over the last quarter ATEL participated in 20 different outreach activities, including three Wednesday nights at TechACCESS and the new “Lunch and Learn” at OSCIL.

In State Financing, ATEL serviced 85 clients and issued 99 devices with a retail value of approximately \$13,159. ATEL was able to provide a Freedom Alert for a lady who was scared living alone. Her children said if she obtained an emergency

device she could remain in her home. Her daughter called and she is very excited with the device and is able to continue living on her own.

Legislative update: Wireless passed in the House but did not continue on to the Senate. Senator Gallo represents ATEL on our board. Looking for a one word change in the bill to allow for wireless technology. This will help expand the program for wireless devices not just landline devices.

OSCIL: James Litvack reported – OSCIL is still in transition and continues to expand their services, trying to identify additional needs and exploring avenues for opening a satellite office. OSCIL continues to see an increase in requests for services including home visits and assessments, for technology and home modifications.

There were 45 AT device demonstrations done during this quarter. The majority were in the Community Living category.

Public Awareness: There was a recent report on Channel 10 Health Check by Barbara Morse Silva. The feature was OSCIL's Home Modification Program.

The information referral specialist reported over 100 calls for general information on AT most were from consumers, family members and service providers.

Congressman James Langevin visited OSCIL and spoke about how Rhode Island went from one small state with two big independent living centers to one independent living center trying to meet everyone's needs, additional consumers, and the expansion of services, as well as general conversation on some of the different legislations being looked at.

Transition Services: Provided assistance to eight individuals through its Community Living Options Program.

Reutilization: During the quarter OSCIL gave out 46 pieces of AT equipment as open-ended loans.

AT Inventory: Kathy Murtough, Equipment Coordinator, recently completed cataloging all of the equipment and has been uploading into the NATADS system.

Other Activities: OSCIL continues to be involved with the ATEL demonstrations. Melissa Rosenberg, AT Specialist, as well as James Litvack provide these demos.

Case Study: A 71 year old female with multiple diagnoses and in a wheelchair, initially contacted OSCIL seeking assistance with an independent living goal for obtaining accessible, affordable housing. She already applied for subsidized housing and a unit became available. OSCIL was able to work with her and the building manager to make sure the unit was completely accessible.

TechACCESS: Continues to offer monthly technology demonstrations. The focus of those has not changed but Kelly noted she continues to see a decrease in attendance. TechACCESS has decided to develop a survey to try and identify what the issues may be so as to enhance or revamp the program in order to increase the attendance.

Public Awareness: Held two *Introduction to AT* workshops for graduate SPED students from University of RI and one for Providence College. Will hold a workshop for each of the state colleges throughout the year.

TechACCESS continues to offer professional development for teachers, parents and therapists. The spring workshops were better attended than the fall workshops.

Conference website is fully operational. Currently there are between 80-100 new hits per week.

TechACCESS developed a new brochure and is currently being printed. Will look to the partners to help get out the information.

Kelly noted that they are active on Twitter with over 600 followers. They have been using Twitter as a mechanism for getting information out about the

conference as well as other relevant information or activities going on. Will be looking into linking Twitter with Facebook or vice versa.

During this quarter, completed Cohort 2 of Project AT with RIDE. This project brings in teachers and therapists and takes them through 12-15 hours of sessions that discusses AT, offers opportunity to do group work, and get them prepared so they are better at addressing the needs of their students in their classrooms. There will be a Fall Cohort at TechACCESS as well as a Spring Cohort at EBEC with Lisa Labbitt.

Updates: Recently purchased several AAC devices including one eyegaze to use in the loan library. Also looked at expanding the way TechACCESS can provide alternate access and supports for people with more significant motor disabilities for both Ipad and computer access. She is feeling good about the inventory and ability to assess individuals more quickly than in the past.

The AT Conference of New England currently has 31 workshops being offered over the two days and 19 vendors. Nearly 50 attendees are registered. Reaching out to local businesses for sponsorships. If anyone knows of any business, please notify TechACCESS so they can reach out. The program added this year is called *The Bringing Access to Life Expo*. That is going to be a space that has 17 individual agencies, entrepreneurs, and people with disabilities that are going to be there showcasing what they do to give individuals a full life not only in the workplace and education but beyond that. They have reached out to agencies that have service animals or adaptive outdoor activities and unique ways to address life in general. The Conference is scheduled for November 19 & 20. November 19th is pre-conference including full day workshops, seven total. November 20th there will be 24 presentations at 75 minutes per session, total of 24 presentations on day two. This year they did take an additional space for lunch so they can now accommodate up to 550 people.

RIPIN was nice enough to change the date of their conference in order to accommodate the AT Conference of New England. RIPIN is scheduled for Friday, November 13th.

AT School Share is a program through the Department of ED. Currently working in Warwick. They are starting to gather the school's inventory and upload into a database so schools within Rhode Island can loan to each other. This program is affordable because it is being piggybacked with the Massachusetts website which, for all intents and purposes, is being replicated for Rhode Island. Interns were used for the summer to gather the data, but are not available during the school session. They are hoping to get more bodies to continue the process as part of a work study program.

EBEC: This quarter Lisa Labbit reported that it has been busy, but finds it has been slower in the summer. She noted there were a lot of digital oriented conferences going on as well as a lot offered for professional development.

Device Loan: Reported about 16 loans which is a bit slow but more teachers/educators are using the devices during the summer for their summer school students. Allows a more relaxed environment to choose and learn the technology needed when September comes around. It is a nice time for teachers to learn the technology even if it is not the perfect technology for that particular student.

Device Demonstrations: Participated in 22 this quarter. Doing more with the Maher Center and Transition Academies which are young adults with disabilities ages 18-24. They are using more mobile devices such as phones and mini tablets to work with students so they can take the bus, get bus schedules, go into the community or use the device in employment settings for their scheduling. Noticing the use of technology with young adults is for a more purposeful use.

Roundtable: TechACCESS or Michael Matraccia will reach out and try to contact Barbara Morse Silva to do a piece about the conference and possibly plug the partners and plug the fact the council is seeking new members.

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

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm

Attachments: Partner Reports

ATEL Partner Report for 7/30/15 RICAT Meeting

Device Demonstrations

We did 78 device demonstrations and had 119 participants from 4/1/15 – 6/30/15.

Anecdote –

I installed an internet Captel in a 98 year old man's home, who lost his wife a year ago and wanted to remain in his apartment. He was so excited when I showed him how it works. He said thank you, you just don't know how much this means to me to be able to call my family.

State Financing

We serviced 85 clients and issued 99 devices with a retail value of approximately \$13,159.

Anecdote –

I installed a Freedom alert for an elderly lady living alone. Her children told her she could continue to live alone as long as she got an emergency device in case of a fall. She was very hesitant to want this device, but really didn't want to go into a nursing home. Her daughter called me the next day saying that her mom is so thrilled with the device, and the family is comfortable now to let her to continue to live independently.

Public Awareness/Information & Assistance

We did Technology Demonstration programs on **Technology and Communication Strategies for Persons with Hearing Loss**: 4/8/15, 5/13/15 and 3/11/15. Also, the new demonstration from 12-2 PM at OSCIL, **Lunch and Learn, Removing Barriers to Independence**: 4/29/15 and 5/27/15.

Presentations and Expos/Conferences:

- 4/2/15- Presentation for the Cranston Senior Center
- 4/16/15 -TTY/Captel presentation for West Warwick Network RI
- 4/29/15- Seniors Rule Meeting at Winslow Gardens
- 4/30/15- Semi Annual Prime Time Expo at Warwick Mall
- 5/6/15 - Scituate Police TTY Presentation
- 5/6/15- Presentation at W Warwick Network RI
- 5/7/15 - Presentation for the seniors of Temple Emmanuel
- 5/14/15- Monthly NW Links meeting in Johnston for Senior Care providers
- 5/15/15- Booth at the RIHAP (RI Hearing Assessment Program) Conference
- 5/19/15- Booth at the RISHA (RI Hearing and Speech Association) Expo at the State House
- 5/21/15- Booth at the CDHH Hearing Loss Expo at the Administration Building
- 5/22/15 - Booth at the RIALA (RI Assisted Living Association) Conference
- 5/26/15 - Presentation at the Peace Dale House in Wakefield

6/9/15- Monthly networking meeting for senior providers in South County

6/10/15- Attended a RISILC Meeting to discuss resources for independent living

6/17/15- Attended RI Deaf Blind meeting at the CDHH

6/19/15- Both at the annual RIRSCC (RI Resident Service Coordinator Collaboration) Conference

Legislative update - Representative Naughton refiled last year's wireless bill H7068, and it PASSED in the House- H5068. This bill would include wireless telephones in the adaptive telephone equipment loan program that services the needs of persons who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, severely speech impaired, or those with neuromuscular impairments. We are waiting to find out from Representative. Naughton on the process to get passage from the Senate.

Respectfully submitted:
Denise Corson



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Report for July 30, 2015 RICAT Meeting

Highlights from Quarter: April – June 2015

- **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.

- **Public Awareness, Information & Assistance:**

- In April, Health Check 10 Reporter, Barbara Morse Silva did a report which appeared on local newscasts and on the Turn to 10 Website featuring OSCIL's Home Modification Program which results in many new referrals.
- In June, Congressman James Langevin attended a small reception on his behalf at OSCIL and discussed various IL and disability issues. An article about this event appeared in the Warwick Beacon newspaper and on their website.
- OSCIL's Information & Referral Specialists responded to 100+ 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.

- **Technical Assistance - Transition Services:** During the quarter OSCIL provided assistance to 8 individuals through its Community Living Options Program (Nursing Home Transition). Three consumers were successfully transitioned and 2 are in the process. OSCIL also provided post-transition services to 2 consumers; one who received additional AT and 1 for a home modification.

Cheryl Walason, OSCIL's IL/Transition Specialist, took part in an ILRU training entitled "The ABC's of Nursing Home Transition" in June.

- **Reuse - Open Ended Loans.** During the quarter OSCIL gave out 46 pieces of AT through open-ended loans. AT included bed rails, Rollators, swivel shower seat, Shake-Awake Vibrating Smoke Detectors, commodes and AlertMaster Signal Alert system. These items enable consumers to address home safety issues and eliminate the necessity of having to purchase these items.
- **AT Inventory:** OSCIL's Equipment Coordinator, Kathie Murtough completed the cataloging of OSCIL's inventory of AT. OSCIL's inventory has now been uploaded into the NATADS system.

- **Other Activities.** OSCIL's AT Specialist is continuing to participate in ATEL Advisory Committee and ATEL's Technology Night training. Melissa Rosenberg continued to oversee the Lunch and Learn Program as well as the Walk-In Tuesday AT Try-out sessions.

Case Study

Consumer is a 71 year old female with multiple diagnoses, and wheelchair mobile who contacted OSCIL seeking assistance with her independent living goal of obtaining accessible affordable housing. Consumer was living in substandard housing that presented many barriers to the consumer living as independently as possible, and was unsafe and socially isolating.

Soon after OSCIL staff began working with the consumer, she was contacted by a facility that she had previously applied to that they now had an opening for her. OSCIL staff worked with consumer and other community agencies to plan the move to this facility, including contacting the Veterans Administration for needed documentation. Staff also worked with consumer to organize her belongings and arranging for a mover. Consumer now reports increased independence and safety in her new home.

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RICAT Meeting: July, 2015 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: devices loaned this quarter: **16**

Anecdote: Middle School students using low tech tools & mid tech tools to focus their learning i.e. self determination while exposure to technology/Assistive technology. Choice making for the correct tool for a task, problem solving, and self management for technology is critical in gaining independence using any tech tools. Summer school is a prime time for exploration of multi technology tools for access to curriculum.

Device Demonstration: 22

Anecdote: I pod touch and I pad mini devices used to incorporate communication enhancing visual supports Talk Rocket App is used for social and communicating needs while at a vocational worksite(s) and in the community. Staff Demonstration at Maher Center. Rhode Island Transition Academy also using I pad mini for video recording and pictorial representation of work routines, breaks, and schedules for bus transportation.

Device Trainings: 9

Number of Participants: 48

- Para Educators: AT 101 for Students with disabilities
- Dragon Naturally Speaking Voice recognition App/software
- Literacy tools for writing proficiency using low tech tools
- Communication in the vocational environment and community
- I pad uses for regular Science and Social Studies integration for students with Autism

Info. & Assistance

- EBEC has a newly designed website sections of ATAP partners program and events highlighted.
- Social Media & Twitter relay of information to educators, therapists, students & administrators daily with special events highlighted. Over 95 followers receive several messages and AT news feeds.
- 25th ADA Celebration was held at the Eisenhower House in Newport RI 7/23/2015.
- Vendor connections during this summer have been on-going i.e. planning for Fall school events: scheduled for Vision Teachers, and hearing impaired RISD Rhode Island School for the Deaf Transition age students.
- *Submission for the ATIA Conference 2016 to present with colleagues on "Work Technology Tools" and video vignettes for Assisitive Technology uses on the Job.

Respectfully submitted: Lisa Labitt 7/24/2015

RICAT MEETING
Thursday, July 30, 2015
ATAP Partner Reporting: TechACCESS of RI
Highlights from Quarter: April, May, June 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 *Introduction to AT* workshops for graduate SPED students from the University of RI and for Providence College.
- We continue to offer Professional Development for RI teachers, parents and therapists. Spring workshops were well attended.
- Our Conference website is fully updated and operational. This website gets between 80-150 new "hits" a week.
- We have developed a new brochure, which is currently being printed.
- We are now active on Twitter. To date, we have just over 600 Followers.
- During this quarter, we completed Cohort 2 of our Project AT with RIDE. 15 teachers/therapists participated in 5 sessions about AT, preparing them to support students in the classroom and in accessing online curriculum/testing.

Updates

- We recently purchased several AAC devices for use in our loan library (including an eyegaze device). We have also purchased several alternate access supports for the iPad (i.e. for people with motor or BLV needs).
- The Assistive Technology Conference of New England has a full program. There are 31 workshops being offered over the 2-day Conference. We currently have 14 vendors and nearly 50 attendees registered. We are reaching out to local businesses for sponsorships. We are in the process of securing agencies/individuals to participate in the *Bringing Access to Life Expo*.
- The third cohort of our AT Project with RIDE will begin in September. We will also be developing Cohorts for OT/SLP's and for Teacher Assistants, with a plan to deliver them in the Spring/Summer of 2016.

Respectfully Submitted: Kelly Charlebois

