Washington Assistive Technology Act Program Advisory Council Meeting
Wednesday, February 12, 2014

In attendance
Vicki Gilleg, Sue Ammeter, Debbie Cook, Aditya Ganapathiraju, Mark Harness, Naomi Namekata, John Bresko, Gaby de Jongh, Alan Knue, Sam Murphy, Meka White, Britney, Casey, Kurt Johnson, and Jack Brummell.
Absent: Julie Peddy and Lu Walls

Council and WATAP Staff Happenings, Updates, and Upcoming Events

Council

- Lou's update: new SILC executive director has been hired. Mr. Vela is looking forward to handling the challenges ahead of him. On 2/19 Advocacy meeting being organized by ARC. Lou is resigning as ED from the Alliance of People with disAbilities.
- Aditya: Gov. Committee on Employment and Disability is planning outreach event in Bellingham in May. It would be good for WATAP to join the town hall event. UW committee on accessibility performing an accessibility audit on campus for the past year; has proposal to improve accessibility and will present it to UW in 3 weeks.
- Meka: facilitates technology forum monthly via phone. Second Tuesday of month, 7 pm. Would like to invite someone from WATAP to join for one.
- John: can promote WATAP in Spec Ed. publication. Federation of the blind suing Smarter Balance/PARCC so he is working on how to roll out the AT tools needed for visually impaired students need for testing. WATAP should do a presentation for school administrators in August.
- Brittney: New member of the Hearing Loss Association Board. She is newly diagnosed and learning a lot about this world. Has lots of energy and looking for a place to direct it.
- Naomi: Planning on having another AT open house for parents and students. Looking to add presentations and hands on AT during the open house. Also a general AT open house in the fall. Naomi would like to get AT support for DSB clients who have LD issues. Would be useful to attend DSB AT regional meetings. Explore how we could do AT evals w/ DSB
- KJ: will be going to Gates Foundation; he will be talking to them about libraries and AT in under resourced environments.
- Sue: WATAP should submit another article the WCB newsletter. WATAP exhibits at the WCB conference every year and seems to be a hit. Deb and KJ have presented in past years and those workshops are always well attended.
- Vicki: DVR now has a permanent director. Best employee will now be head of SRC, state rehab council, Trisha Kirshbaum. Hiring a chief of field services. Vicki has sent an email to contracts person about WATAP contract. Waiting for response.
- Alan: we want to provide to council members talking points about WATAP.
  - John asked about AT provider network and the regional school AT meetings and the relationship.

WATAP FY2013 Highlights

See document *FY 2013 Highlights* below for details

Tech time

Aditya shared adaptive door knobs by Brinks that users can push, pull or rotate in order to open doors.

Committee Updates

Reuse Coalition Committee

- Julie attended Evergreen Reuse Coalition meeting to plan next steps towards creating a structured system for the ERC including partnership agreements, shared policies and procedures, and joint ventures in collecting donations.

Website Committee

- Gaby and Sam remapped the website in an attempt to give users multiple ways of accessing content. The content will be the same as discussed with the committee Mark is helping with Tour of AT. He will be writing the intro for the LD section which will be the model for the other sections.

Executive Committee

- Selection of the next Executive Committee Chair, Vice Chair, and Member-At-Large
    - Electing new members: per by-laws Aditya as Vice Chair will move into Chair position if he agrees, he has. Sue volunteered for member at large; Vicki volunteered for vice chair. Everyone agrees on new positions.
- Council Member Recruitment Update and Next Steps
    - We are now in compliance. We would like at least one more consumer member.
        i. Debbie suggested talking to Steve at ODHH.
        ii. Vicki suggested asking Francisco to find E. WA council member.
        iii. KJ is going to use connection with Aging RRTC grant to looks for potential veteran or 65+ members.

State Plan Discussion

State Level Activities Overview

See document *WATAP State Plan Discussion* below for more details.

- Plan is due June.
- Reuse, Library project, and making demos statewide will be the focus for braining storming at next in-person meeting.
- Any changes to projects will take place in FY2015

Reuse

- Benefits: our current partnerships with the Access Fund, Bridge, and HSDC have created capacity at those organizations.
- Issue: we are currently providing direct support to only three organizations for reuse but we started a Coalition with multiple members.

- Options:
    - we can discontinue direct support to the organizations and put money towards supporting a paid volunteer (like an AmeriCorps VISTA) if that position can crate capacity across all member organizations;
    - we can look at shifting funding to continue direct support to organizations plus fund paid volunteer;
    - we can just continue direct support of organizations and look for funding for paid volunteer outside of AT Act dollars.
- Next Steps: WATAP will pull together pro/cons and costs of options for discussion at next meeting.

Library Program

- Benefits: people have very easy, free access to AT right in their communities and it is low cost for WATAP to maintain.
- Issue: We want to expand this program around the state. However, WATAP doesn't have direct contact with patrons and don't receive consistent performance measure. Therefore, can only assume having access to this type of equipment in this manner is befitting people. How do we get data back consistently?
- Options:
    - require reporting from library or we take away program;
    - we stop reporting it as a lending activity (we are on the cusp of not meeting our federal performance goal b/c of lack of data).
- Brainstorming:
    - Jack knows head of Timberland Regional Library Services, will talk with her this weekend.
    - Vicki knows a librarian at Olympia library and will find out what difficulty they have in getting cards back (is it reasonable to ask patrons questions at the desk).
- Next Steps: continue brainstorming solutions in email instead of waiting until next meeting continue conversation.

Statewide demonstrations

- Issue: Easterseals, our partners for demos in Spokane closed that center last month.
- Options:
    - Find a similar community partner;
    - remote demo options;
    - road show in various communities.
- Next Steps: WATAP will pull together pro/cons for different options and costs associated with set-up and on-going support of program.

Action Items
- **Sam** will work on WATAP talking points for council members – by end of March
- **Sam** will finish and email out annual report – date CHANGE: March 12th

- **Jack** will talk with Timberland Director about data collection on Aids for Better Living project – this weekend
- **Vicki** will talk with librarian at Olympia Library about data collection issues they face – by mid-March
- **Entire council** will continue to brainstorm options for Aids for Better Living Project (library project) – on-going
- **WATAP** staff will put together pro/cons and costs for suggested solutions to statewide demos and reuse – by two weeks prior to next in-person meeting
- **Meka** will contact Sam to coordinate WATAP staff presenting on technology forum
- **Sue** will contact WCB Newsline about WATAP submitting another article
- **Alan** will follow up with **Naomi** about conducting outreach with DSB regarding co-occurring disabilities
- **John** will contact organizer of School Admin conference about having WATAP present
- **Alan** will contact Steve at ODHH about joining the WATAP Advisory Council
- **Kurt** will have announcement for WATAP Advisory Council position announced in Aging RRTC newsletter

2013 Activity Highlights

Device Demonstrations

- 637 participants in demonstrations this year, a 23% increase from last year. 83% (531) are people with disabilities and their family.
  - This increase was due to continued collaboration with DVR. The creation of "go-kits" of common technology they demonstrate in the field decreases lag in service delivery to their clients.
  - Computers and related continues to account for over almost 50% of demonstrations (43%). Followed by mobility, seating, and ergonomics; and learning and cognition at 22% and 20% respectively.

Device Lending

- 304 loans, up 21 from the previous year
  - 129 were through the Aids for Better Living Project at Timberland Regional Library System, we received only 8 responses for the performance measure back from consumers.
    - Note <the performance measure, besides indicating whether they have made a decision if AT is a solution for them through hands on trial, it is also how we demonstrate to the Feds that individuals were actually served. Without the data we lack proof.>
  - 17 were for accommodation which is up from 11 last year as more people are using the program as a stop gap while equipment is on order or being repaired.
    - Note <In the past there hasn't been a performance measure to capture this although it has always been a need of AT users.>
  - We saw an increase in loans to DVR clients after we completed the last three trainings with DVR counselors and partners last October.

Training

- Reps of employment went up 41% due to trainings with DVR and their community partners.
- Reps of education went up 121% due to training we conducted with K-12 educators at the SW Special Ed conference and AT Regional educators meetings on tablet comparison and accessibility features.

Reuse

- Full years data for 2013. 510 devices redistributed with an overall cost savings of $172,571
  - WATAP was able to leverage funding through DSB's Independent Living for Older Blind project to increase the inventory of CCTV's for lease through the Washington Access Fund. (12 devices)
  - HSDC saw more people being able to make a financial commitment to the purchase of their reused hearing equipment due to serving some of the highest need people through this program last year who had been waiting for assistance. (16 devices)

- Bridge Disability Ministries' increased capacity to redistribute equipment after purchasing the HubScrub lead to them using this year's funding to hire a part time administrative person. She assists in the Mobility Center with inventory management and client intakes. (494 devices)

Financing

- 58 loans for $151,816 (56 for $190,650)
    - 65% had an income of less than $30,000, 90% of people had an income under $45,000
    - Although the highest number of loans were made for hearing 25 for $66,826, the highest value per loan was for environmental adaptations with 2 loans for $17,265: an average of $8,632 per loan.
- 27 IDAs last year resulting in $9,607 distributed in matched funding.

Technical Assistance

- The majority of our technical assistance continues to be with community living related projects (80%)
    - These include the WSU aging program
    - Roads to Community Living
    - And the Evergreen Reuse Coalition
- The percentage of TA in education and employment has increased due to the creation of the AT Providers Network.

Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP) State Plan

Overview

The University of Washington Center for Technology and Disability Studies (UWCTDS) is both the Lead and Implementing Agency as designated by the Governor of Washington State. As such, the UWCTDS controls and administers the funds made available through the grant awarded to the state and carries out responsibilities under the Act. WATAP is located at the University within the University Center For Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) at the Center on Human Development and Disability (CHDD).

Key Components of implementing the AT Act:
- The purpose and goal of the AT Act Program is to increase access to and the acquisition of AT across all ages & all disabilities in 4 functional areas of life: Education ,Employment, Community Living, and Information Tech & Telecommunications
- Statewide: The program must geographically reach the entire state
- Comprehensive: The program must serve all disability types and AT needs
- WATAP must provide an assurance that the funds received through the grant will be used to supplement, and not supplant, funds available from other sources for technology related assistance, including the provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services.
- Funds cannot be used for direct payment of an AT device.
- Advisory Council: State AT Programs are required to establish an advisory Council to provide "consumer-responsive, consumer-driven advice" for the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs.
    - Specified Composition of Advisory Council:
        - individuals with disabilities that use assistive technology or the family members or guardians of the individuals;
        - a representative of the State Vocational Rehabilitation agency;
        - if separate, a representative of the State Blind Vocational Rehabilitation agency;
        - a representative of a State center for independent living
        - a representative of the State workforce investment board;
        - a representative of the State educational agency; and,
        - representatives of other State agencies, public agencies, or private organizations, as determined by the State.
    - A majority (51%) must individuals with disabilities that use assistive technology or the family members or guardians of the individuals
    - Individuals appointed to represent the above agencies cannot count towards the majority requirement.
    - The advisory council shall be geographically representative of the State and reflect the diversity of the State with respect to race, ethnicity, types of disabilities across the age span, and users of types of services that an individual with a disability may receive.

Total Annual Budget
Total Annual Budget for FY2014: $512,350. $438,026 Grant from RSA, $74,324 Program Income including DVR Contract. Of this, 465,772 is direct program costs.

- The University takes 10% of the total direct costs as facility and administration costs (indirect costs), roughly $46,577.
- **Note:** Many of the activities required by the AT Act blend into one another as services are provided. The numbers indicated above are or best estimate of the time spent by staff and resources allocated to each activity but that there is some overlap.

Reporting

State Level and State Leadership Data to be collected and reported
- State Level Data - State Financing, Reuse, Device Loan, and Device Demonstration
- State Leadership Data – Training, Technical Assistance, Public Awareness and Information, State Improvement Outcomes, and Additional and Levering Funds

Performance Measures
A. **Access Goals (for Device Demonstration and Device Loan):** An increase in the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service for the **(1) educational, (2) employment, (3) community living, and (4) IT/telecommunication** (this will be removed in FY2015) purposes as a result of the assistance they received.
   a. Based on the answers to this question: What kind of decision about AT devices or services were you (or someone you represent) able to make after your device demonstration or device loan?
      (1) Decided that an AT device or service will meet my needs (or the needs of someone I represent).
      (2) Decided that an AT device or service will not meet my needs (or the needs of someone I represent). (or)
      (3) Have not made a decision.
B. **Acquisition Goals (for Device Reuse and State Financing):** An increase in the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who obtained devices or services from state financing activities or reutilization programs for **(1) educational, (2) employment, and (3) community living** purposes who would not have obtained the AT device or service.
   a. Based on the answers to this question: Why did you chose to obtain an AT device/service from our program?
      (1) I could only afford the AT through this program. (I could not afford it through other programs.)
      (2) The AT was only available to me through this program. (I am not eligible or don't qualify for other programs, the AT is not covered by other funding sources or the specific device I needed is not provided by other programs.)
      (3) The AT was available to me through other programs, but the system was too complex or the wait time was too long.
      (4) None of the above
   b. Additionally starting in FY2015, we will be collecting performance data on device loans that were not for decision purposes (providing loaner equipment during device repair or while waiting for funding and for providing an accommodation for a time-limited event). The data collected will be based on the answers to this question: Why did you chose to borrow an AT device/service from our program?

   (1) I could only afford to borrow the AT through this program. (I could not afford to rent or borrow it through other programs.)

   (2) The AT was only available to me through this program. (I am not eligible or don't qualify for other rental or device loan programs or the specific device I needed is not provided by other programs.)

   (3) The AT was available to borrow from other programs, but the system was too complex or the wait time was too long.

   (4) None of the above

C. Starting FY2015, an **IT/Telecommunications Training Performance Measure:**

 a. Based on the answers to the question: What do you anticipate will be the primary outcome of your participation in this training on Information Technology/ Telecommunications Access?:

   (1) Website and/or software development policies, procedures, or practices will be improved or better implemented to ensure accessibility.

   (2) Training will be developed/implemented to ensure accessibility of websites, software and other IT and telecommunications.

   (3) IT and Telecommunications procurement policies, procedures, or practices will be improved or better implemented to ensure accessibility.

   (4) Unknown outcome at this time

WATAP Program Activities

State Level Activities:
All are required although subject to Comparability and Flexibility. These activities are:
- Acquisition:
  - State finance systems (includes alternative finance programs)
  - Device reutilization (reuse) programs
- Access
  - Device loan (lending) programs
  - Device demonstrations

Comparability
- The act allows states not to fund a state-level activity if that activity is supported comparably with nonfederal funds. There are two conditions:
  - Financial support is provided from state or other non-federal resources or entities for that category of activities; and
  - The amount of the financial support is comparable to, or greater than, the amount of the portion of the funds made available through the grant that the State would have to expend to conduct that category of activities.
- Additionally the State Level Activity being conducted/provided by an entity other than the AT Act Program must also be comprehensive across age, disability, and geographic areas of the state.
- WATAP could not claim Comparability for any of the State level activities because there are no comparable programs supported by non-federal funds in WA for any of these activities.

Flexibility
- States do not have to conduct all of the state level activities. However that decision to limit the number of state level activities then carries budget limitations on state leadership activities that the state conducts. The act provides states with the "Flexibility" to carry out only two or three of the state-level activities. However, states that carry out only two or three of the state-level activities are only allowed to use up to 30 percent of their funds for state leadership activities.
- Things to think about when contemplating Flexibility:
  1. If we flex out of providing one State Level Activity will we have sufficient data to report?
  2. If we elect to flex out of two activities under the same category, either "Access" or "Acquisition," what data will we have to report?
  3. Our annual report to RSA is compiled into an Annual Report to Congress – what will happen if year after year the report shows WATAP's performance measures as "Not Met?"

Budgeting
We must spend no less than 60% of grant on these activities.

We budget about $310,550 or 68% of total direct costs. Actual spending in FY2013 is 72.7% of total direct costs on State Level activities. Note: The decrease in the budget ratio for State Level Activities vs State Leadership activities this year is due to the DVR contract which contains a provision for 15 trainings to be conducted by WATAP which will increase the amount we would typically spend on training activities.

I.   **State Financing** (~36,200 or 11.7% of State Level)
   A.   Contract to the Washington Access Fund (FY2013- 31,438.21 total (27,438.21 for State Financing); FY2014- 33,000 (29,000 for State Financing)). Funds support administration of the state financing activities. The WA Access Fund implements all of the State Financing activities reported by WATAP. These are:
       i.   Assistive Technology Revolving Loan Fund
       ii. AT Individualized Development Accounts (IDAs)
   Note: Although the Washington Access Fund recently received ~$1.2 million in new funding, nearly all of this is for loan capital and cannot be used for the administrative costs of running the AT Revolving Loan Fund and AT IDAs. WATAP is one of the Access Fund's few sources of support for its administrative costs. Thus, it is not in the State's interest for WATAP to claim flexibility on this activity.
   B.   Staff support: WATAP Director is a member of the WA Access Fund's Board of Directors. The Program & Community Relations Manager implements the contract and provides assistance and insures compliance of data reporting. Total FTE estimated at ~7,200.

II.   **Device Reuse** (~39,500 or 12.7% of State Level)
   Note: WATAP supports small contracts to community organizations to increase the capacity and hopefully the sustainability of these unique reuse programs. In the case of the CCTV Leasing Program and the Free Refurbished Hearing Aid Program, these programs would serve far fewer individuals or not exist without continued support from WATAP. For Bridge Mobility, the support provided by WATAP increases their capacity to serve more individuals. WATAP could take flexibility in Device Reuse, but at the expense of these important programs. We would still provide technical assistance to the Reuse Coalition, but would not have data to report in Device Reuse.
   A.   Contract to Washington Access Fund (FY2013- 4,000; FY2014- 4,000). Funds provided to the WA Access Fund supports the CCTV Leasing Program (long term device loan).
   B.   Hearing Speech and Deafness Center (FY2013- 9,500; FY2014- 9,500). HSDC provides the free refurbished hearing aid program.
   C.   Bridge Mobility Center (FY2013- 9,500; FY2014- 9,500). Bridge Mobility provides free or low cost reused durable medical equipment.
   D.   Staff support: Includes roughly a quarter of the Program & Community Relations Manager's time which is used to support the Evergreen Reuse Coalition. Total FTE estimated at ~16,500.

III.   **Device Demonstration and Device Short-Term Loan** (~234,850 or 75.6% of State Level).
   Note: WATAP's Device Demonstration and Lending Library is unique in the state. WATAP is strategic about implementing the device demonstration and device short-term loan activities including back-filling the lending activities of Special Education Technology Center (SETC) and managing, under contract, a large collection of devices for DVR clients. Lastly, we have placed a collection of devices within the Timberland Regional Library (TRL) System, which allows patrons to check out devices to try through their local library branch. We would like to expand this last program to other library systems, but there is a start-up cost (~$7-10,000) and some data-collection challenges that affect our performance in device lending and thus hamper our ability or willingness to expand this program.

A. Contract to Easter Seals WA (FY2013- 8,400; FY2014- 0). Sadly, WATAP's Demonstration center in Spokane that was supported under contract from WATAP closed in January after the resignation of the staff person who was providing the demonstration services. Currently we have no plan B. Options include (1) finding a similar community partner with qualified staff; (2) ramping up our capabilities to conduct demonstrations using video and web services; (3) conducting a "road show" where we have a schedule of dates where WATAP staff will be at various communities around the state to provide devices demonstrations by appointment; or (4) a combination of all 3. We actually state in our current state plan that we would do options 2 and 3 - our first attempts at option 2 were met with a lack of need from the community partner; and we have limited funds for option 3. However we could consider using the funds that would have supported Easter Seals to pilot option 3.
B. Demonstration and Device Lending Library; this is our largest expense as we need to cover all staffing, equipment, and administration of this library. Particular costs:
   a. FTE support is estimated at ~162,667, including administrative support for the TRL and DVR arrangements. We also provide some staff development funds for staff to attend classes and conferences (~3000).
   b. Equipment purchase, maintenance, shipment (for lending program), and insurance is estimated at ~43,000; note that the majority of the funds in the budget this year for purchasing AT will come through the contract from DVR.
   c. Rent for the Chase Bank location plus IT, telecommunications, security is ~24,783.
   d. Local travel to conduct demonstrations off-site is estimated at ~1500.