

Washington Assistive Technology Act Program 2014 Annual Report



Technology for Independence



This report is available in alternative formats by request.

Thank You

Assistive technology empowers people to achieve their goals and overcome barriers to independently learn, work, live, and play. Both low and high tech solutions offer alternative ways to participate in the activities that matter most. We would like to thank our partners for their on-going work and dedication to the people of Washington State. Collaborative efforts with partners and Advisory Council Members have helped us reach individuals with all types of disabilities across the state.

Partners

- Washington Access Fund
- Easter Seals Washington
- Bridge Disability Ministries
- Hearing, Speech, and Deafness Center
- Timberland Regional Library System
- Special Education Technology Center
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Department of Services for the Blind
- Office of Deaf & Hard of Hearing
- UW Center for Technology and Disability Studies
- UW Center on Human Development and Disability, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disability
- UW Department of Rehabilitation Medicine
- State Independent Living Council
- Washington Education Association

Advisory Council

Consumer Members

- Sue Ammeter
- Julie Peddy
- Aditya Ganapathiraju
- Meka White
- Brittany Casey

Agency Representatives

- John Bresko, *Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction*
- Naomi Namekata, *Dept. Services for the Blind*
- Vicki Gilleg, *Div. of Voc. Rehabilitation*
- Lucille Walls, *Centers for Independent Living*



Program Activities

About WATAP

WATAP provides assistive technology (AT) resources and expertise to all Washingtonians with disabilities, their families, and their support network. WATAP is funded through Rehabilitation Services Administration, U.S. Department of Education, (grant #H224A140046) to assist in making decisions and obtaining the technology and related services needed for employment, education and independent living.

WATAP points the way to assistive technology solutions through comprehensive and statewide programs including:

- Device Demonstration
- Short Term Device Loans
- Device Reuse and Exchange
- Alternative Financing
- Training for Professionals
- Workshops
- Technical Assistance
- Information and Assistance

2014 Activities

Device Demonstrations: 382 demos

With guidance from experienced AT Specialists, 604 individuals made informed decisions about AT that will help them live, work, play, and learn independently.

Device Lending: 424 devices

Through short term loans, 257 individuals were able to try devices in the environments where they will be used.

Alternative Financing: 73 loans

Through the Washington Access Fund, individuals obtained low-interest loans totaling \$237,070 to purchase the AT they need for everyday life.

Device Reuse: 2,388 devices

Through the Evergreen Reuse Coalition, 1,701 individuals received equipment and a cost savings of \$1,089,560.



Collaboration & Coordination

Activity Highlights in 2014

Assistive Technology Training

WATAP conducted a series of five trainings around the state for 233 participants on Making Your Own AT. The hands-on trainings included participation from individuals with disabilities, family members, educators, and community employment professionals. Participants explored materials and created unique solutions for common challenges to writing, computer access, and positioning.

Evergreen Reuse Coalition

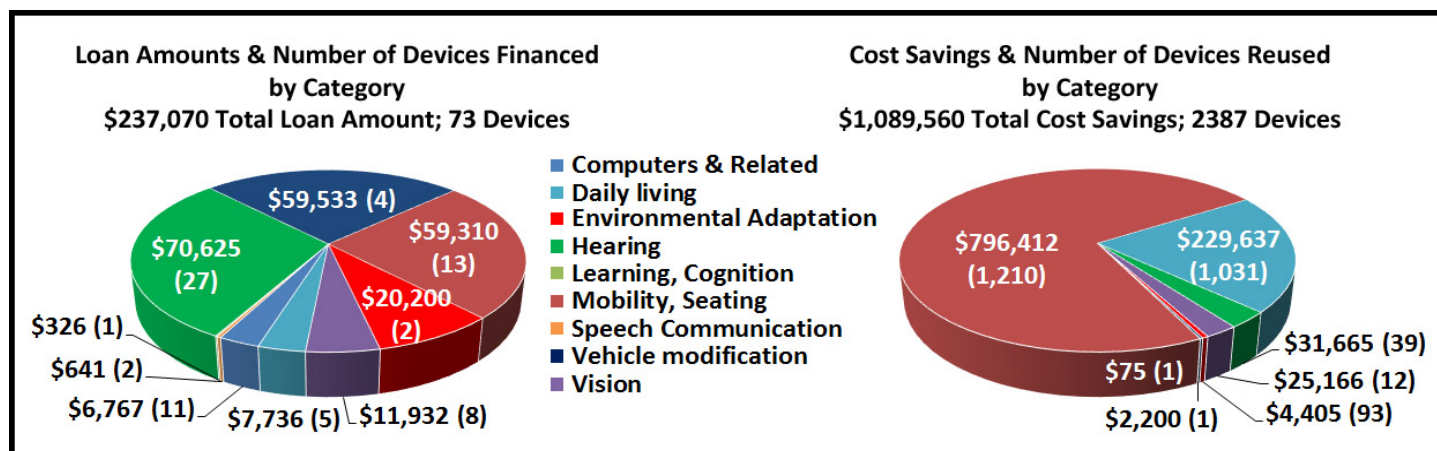
WATAP created an online inventory database for reuse organizations to better track donated and distributed equipment. The system allows users to request equipment online and administrators to gather meaningful information about who their services reach. The system was launched with Bridge Disability Ministries who provided insight and testing of the new database.

AT Provider Network

The Assistive Technology Provider Network (ATPN) was formed to connect service providers across WA from multiple disciplines. Four quarterly in-person/video conference meetings were held with an average of 85% attendance from the group. Providers stated that being a part of the Network provided them with peer support to solve problems they wouldn't have achieved on their own.

Individual Development Accounts

In addition to low interest loans, the Washington Access Fund provided Individual Development Accounts for purchasing assistive technology. These matched savings accounts help those in greatest financial need acquire AT they couldn't otherwise afford. Savings goals were reached by 53 individual, and \$60,427 was distributed primarily for devices to support community living.



Achieving Success

Device Demonstration



After graduating from high school, Alan wanted to buy a Braille display for his personal use in order to read books and keep up with correspondences. He was planning to open an Individual Development Account with the Washington Access Fund to purchase the equipment but first he needed to find out what device would be the best option. He contacted WATAP for a free demonstration and was able to explore several Braille displays with the guidance of an AT Specialist. Being able to ask questions about his specific interests helped Alan make a decision about what device would be the best fit for his needs.

Short Term Device Loan



Jon is pursuing a doctoral degree and has begun teaching classes but a spinal cord injury makes projecting his voice across the classroom difficult. His counselor at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation referred Jon to WATAP to borrow voice amplification devices. He tried two different devices in the lecture halls and asked his students for feedback about which one was easier to hear. He also used the devices on the bus and while ordering lunch in the cafeteria. Having access to multiple options meant Jon was able to choose the device that worked best in all the situations where it would be used.

Empowering People

Alternative Financing

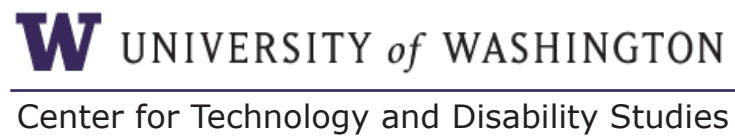


Eddie is a wheelchair user and is dependent on others to transport him to appointments. Eddie and his wife needed to obtain a modified van so his wife wouldn't have to lift him from their vehicle anymore. Without a modified van his wife was beginning to injure herself and Eddie was unable to use his \$15,000 power chair and propel himself. They were unable to obtain financing elsewhere but the Washington Access Fund was able to work with them and approved a \$10,000 loan for a used modified vehicle. The purchase of the vehicle gave Eddie and his wife freedom to leave the house and travel with greater ease.

Device Reutilization



James developed a hematoma on his spine which left him a paraplegic overnight. He came to Bridge Disability Ministries in an older model powerchair with small drive wheels which got stuck in the unpaved terrain of his rural community. James wanted to be able to keep up with kids outdoors and family chores around the house. He received a donated chair with large drive and front wheels, a lift seat, and the ability to raise a person to a standing position. Now James is able to navigate uneven terrain and cook from a standing position, enabling him to engage in the family activities that he missed.



Washington Assistive Technology Act Program

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