

# 2017 Annual Report

Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP)



Technology for Independence



*This report is available in alternative formats by request.*

# Thank you!

Assistive Technology (AT) is a keystone for individuals with disabilities to learn, work, live, and play. We would like to thank WATAP's dedicated staff, who strive to provide needed services with professionalism and leadership. But we can not do it alone and we owe a great deal of thanks to our partners and Advisory Council members for their on-going work and dedication and whose collaborative efforts have helped us extend our reach to serve individuals with disabilities across the state.

## Partners

- Bridge Disability Ministries
- Department of Services for the Blind
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Hearing, Speech, and Deafness Center
- Northwest (formerly Washington) Access Fund
- Office of Deaf & Hard of Hearing
- Perkins School for the Blind
- Special Education Technology Center
- State Independent Living Council
- Timberland Regional Library System
- San Juan Island Library
- 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

## Advisory Council

- John Bresko - Representative from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Krista Buldger - Consumer Representative
- Mario Eiland - Representative from the Department of Services for the Blind
- Francisco Felan - Representative from the Division of Vocation Rehabilitation
- Kimberly Heymann – Representative from the Centers for Independent Living
- John Lemus - Consumer Representative
- Kamran Rasul - Consumer Representative
- Eric Rea - Consumer Representative
- Kenny Salvini - Consumer Representative



# About WATAP

WATAP is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (ACL) (#1701WASGAT) to provide AT resources and expertise to all Washingtonians with disabilities, their families, and their support network. Our services span a continuum of comprehensive and statewide programs, starting at information and assistance, moving through device demonstration and short term device loans to assist in better decision-making, and obtaining AT from alternative means including device reuse and exchange, or other financing programs. Wrap around services to professionals and the community include training, workshops, and technical assistance.

## Coordination and Collaboration

### ***Assistive Technology Training***

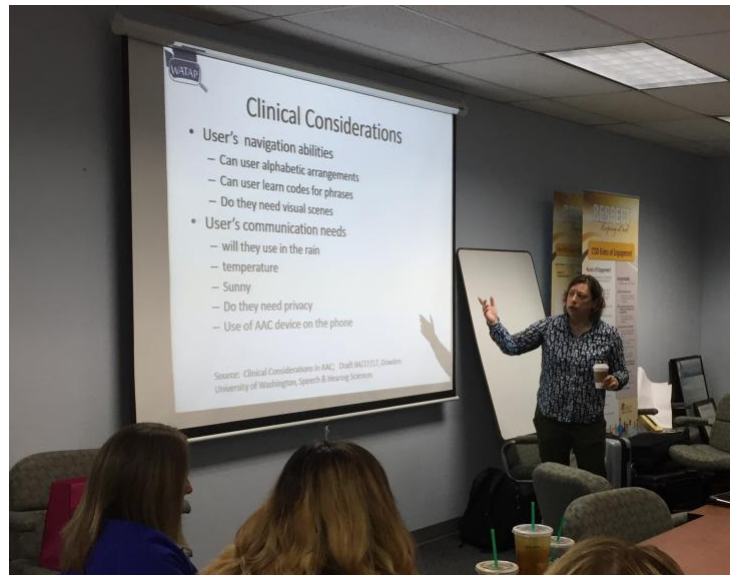
WATAP conducted trainings around the state for 725 participants. The trainings are designed to increase knowledge, skills, and competencies in AT devices and service delivery and often include case studies and hands-on learning labs.

### ***Individual Development Accounts***

In addition to low interest loans (see next page), the Northwest Access Fund provided 1:1 matched savings accounts (Individual Development Accounts) to help those in greatest financial need acquire AT they could not otherwise afford. Savings goals were reached by 26 individuals, who obtained 32 devices with \$26,066 in funds distributed.

### ***ICT Technical Assistance***

WATAP worked with King County to identify accessibility issues and prioritize improvements for the King County website, enterprise-level content management system templates, countywide accessibility governance, and web authoring training resources, focusing on the usability of these resources and systems for disabled users and all other users. We performed a comprehensive audit and provided recommendations compliant with the WCAG 2.0 AA guidelines. King County has been actively working to implement recommendations from the audit. We also provided high level trainings on accessible ICT principles to administrative staff and comprehensive workshops around accessible document creation to staff responsible for creating and managing content.



# 2017 Activities

## **Device Demonstrations: 348 demos**

466 individuals participated in hands-on demonstrations that focused on exploring AT options and features with guidance from an experienced specialist.

## **Device Lending: 358 devices**

252 individuals tried devices at home, work, or school to make an informed decision before purchasing and 16 were able to borrow for accommodation, professional purposes, or as a loaner during repair.

## **Telecommunications Distribution: 204 devices**

81 individuals obtained devices through the iCanConnect WA program for telecommunication and internet purposes totaling \$169,755.

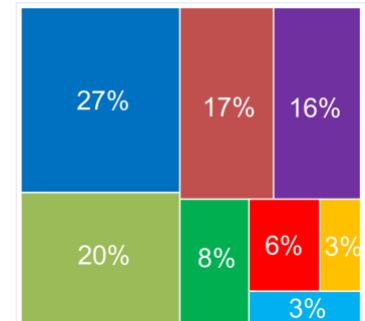
## **Low-Interest Loan: 81 loans**

81 individuals obtained low-interest loans to purchase AT through our community partner, the Northwest Access Fund, totaling \$400,769.

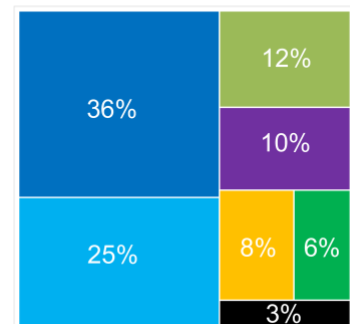
## **Device Reuse: 4,029 devices**

2,669 individuals received hearing, durable medical, and vision equipment at a cost savings of \$3,189,000 through the Evergreen Reuse Coalition and WATAP AT Exchange.

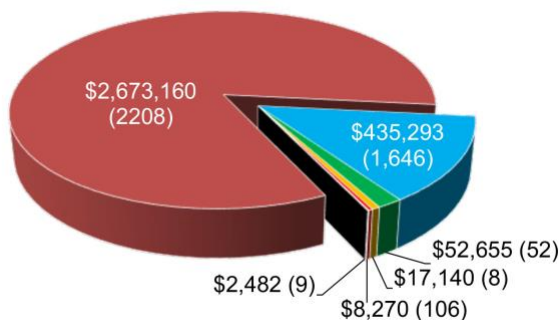
Demonstrations by Category  
348 Total



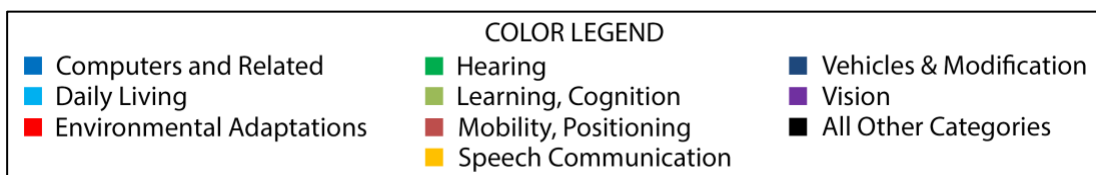
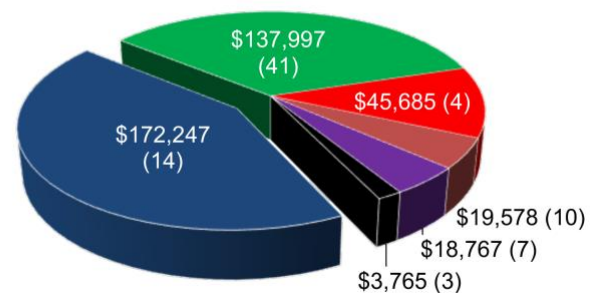
Devices Loaned by Category  
358 Total



Cost Savings & Number of Devices Reused  
by Category  
\$3,189,000 Total Cost Savings; 4029 Devices



Loan Amounts & Number of Devices Financed  
by Category  
\$400,769 Total Loan Amount; 81 Devices





# Stories of Achieving Success and...

## ***Device Loan***

Anni is a complicated young woman who experiences deaf-blindness, cerebral palsy, and several other challenging conditions, but these have never stopped her from living a full life. When she wanted to be a bit more independent and more successful in her communication with others, Anni and her mother contacted WATAP to see what the possibilities could be. Through several conversations and guided demonstrations of AT, WATAP staff were able to suggest an array of AT for Anni to try. Among the devices she borrowed from WATAP were video magnifiers, voice amplifiers, a GPS system, an adapted cutting board, iPod apps, a stylus ring, and television remotes. Following the loan of the equipment, Anni's family ended up purchasing an adapted cutting board, a video magnifier, a voice amplifier, and the stylus ring. WATAP staff also assisted Anni to complete the paperwork for the iCanConnect WA program and she is looking for the best solutions for telecommunication needs. Anni and her mother appreciated being able to try so much AT and thanked WATAP for helping make every day things more possible.



## ***Device Demonstration***

"Zora" is deaf-blind and developmentally disabled. Prior to contacting WATAP, she had no method of communicating except through caretakers or interpreters who know tactile ASL and this presenting significant barriers at work and connecting with friends and family. In partnership with the iCanConnect program, WATAP was able to provide an in-depth demonstration of several options to explore the best methods to communicate face to face and at a distance. It was determined that a tablet, braille display, and bluetooth keyboard would be the best solutions to meet her needs. Through the iCanConnect program, she was able to receive the tablet and braille display plus training for both herself and her caregivers on using an internet relay app for placing phone calls. WATAP was also able to coordinate services provided by the state Blind VR agency for Zora to obtain the keyboard and training for the face to face communication since it was necessary for employment. With the AT provided, Zora is achieving greater independence in communicating face to face at work and is using the new relay app to make phone calls for the first time in her life.

# Empowering People

## ***Device Reuse***

“Maria” came to the Bridge Mobility Center, a community partner of WATAP, carrying her 3-year old son, “Eduardo,” and with her teenaged daughter, “Rosa.” Maria did not speak English, so Rosa translated for her. They were looking for a pediatric stroller for Eduardo, who has cerebral palsy and had outgrown his infant stroller. The Mobility Center staff showed them what they had in their inventory and the family quickly settled on a very sturdy stroller that would adjust to fit Eduardo for years to come.



A few adjustments were needed to be made to the stroller before Eduardo would be positioned correctly, so the family was asked to return in a few days. When they arrived to pick up the stroller, there were several people in line ahead of them. While they were waiting, Eduardo could see his new stroller and before the Center staff finished with the clients ahead of the family, they already had him in his new stroller. Eduardo fit perfectly and was so happy he flashed a huge smile from his comfortable seat to all who were waiting in line. He made such an impression on everyone that another woman in line offered to help get the stroller home when the family realized the car they brought with them was too small to take the stroller home in. Although the stroller was free to the family, the impact the AT made, in even just the few minutes while waiting in line, was priceless.

## ***State Financing***

AC is an active young woman, including playing piano for personal enjoyment but also at her church's services and other functions. Recently, her refreshable Braille device stopped working, and she no longer was eligible for services and funding through the Department of Services for the Blind. She receives SSI, and although recently increased her work hours, she could not afford an expensive new piece of AT. Though her credit history is limited, she was able to qualify for a loan from the Northwest Access Fund to purchase a new refreshable Braille notetaker. She plans on using the new device as she pursues her avocation with the piano but also as she explores taking classes, volunteering in the community, and expanding her employment opportunities.



Center for Technology and Disability Studies

*CTDS Leadership*

Kurt Johnson, Director  
Mark Harniss, Co-Director

*WATAP Key Staff*

Alan Knue, Director  
Deb Cook, Technical Assistance Coordinator  
Maria Kelley, Senior Assistive Technology Specialist  
Curt Johnson, Assistive Technology Specialist  
Naomi Namekata, Assistive Technology Specialist  
Jacob Rourke, Lending Library Assistant  
Scott Canaan, Program Coordinator  
Yuanyuan Li, Web Computing Specialist

## Washington Assistive Technology Act Program

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