

# 2011 Annual Report



**Washington Assistive Technology Act Program**

The **Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP)** is funded by grants #H224110046 and #H224A120046 through the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and is a program of the Center for Technology and Disabilities Studies located within the Center on Human Development and Disability (CHDD) University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) at the University of Washington.

WATAP's mission is to promote assistive technology to enhance independence for every Washington resident with varying abilities. To that end, WATAP provides assistive technology (AT) resources and expertise to all Washingtonians with disabilities, their families, and their support network to aid in making decisions and obtaining the technology and related services needed for employment, education and independent living. Specifically, WATAP offers low cost and free services including Device Demonstrations, Device Lending, Public Awareness Activities, AT Training and Technical Assistance, Alternative Financing through a partnership with the Washington Access Fund, and Device Reuse through collaborations with community organizations. Besides finding innovative ways to strengthen internal operations and programs to better serve our customers, WATAP strives to facilitate communication and knowledge among organizations and supports collaborations and partnerships that expand the capacity to meet the AT needs of Washingtonians. Additionally, WATAP has remained committed to working with other organizations to supplement their services and support both their mission and mission of WATAP to enhance and expand AT services to all who will benefit.

This 2011 Annual Report is a summary of the WATAP's activities and programs to highlight some exciting new relationships and to tell the stories of just a few of the people we have served.

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

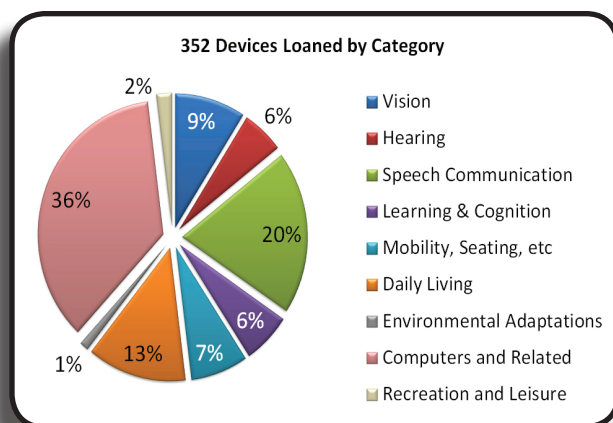
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# Device Lending

The opportunity to try a device in the environment where it will be used empowers individuals to make independent decisions about what device will fit them best before making a financial commitment. There has been exciting growth to the Demo and Lending Library collection this year. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds through the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has increased the WATAP Demo and Lending Library inventory by 106 products. WATAP will be managing and maintaining the DVR collection to support their work of increasing employment outcomes for Washington residents with disabilities. A total of 352 devices were loaned to 216 consumers.

- 197 for the purpose of decision making
- 9 for short term loan
- 1 for short term accommodation
- 9 for training and education



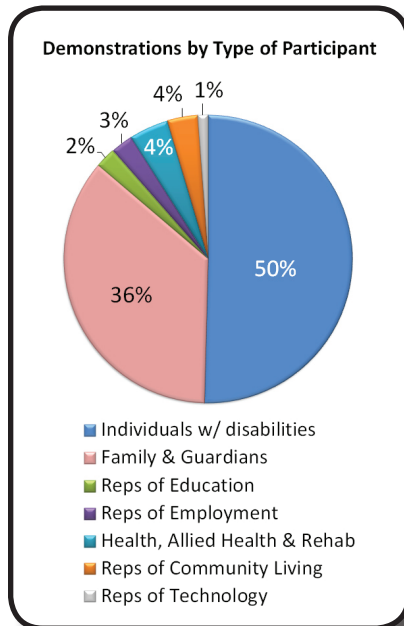
“Thank you for the opportunity to trial this keyboard, while it did not prove to be an effective accommodation for my student, it allowed us to trial alternatives. This service is awesome!”

*This experience illustrates the direct benefit to consumers when they are able to try before they buy.*

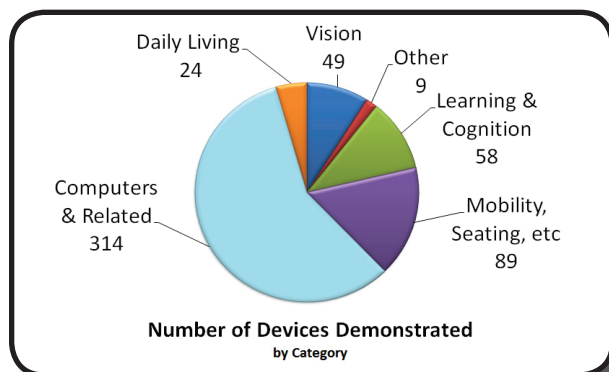
Although the following story has a sad ending, it illustrates the impact computer access and access to adaptive devices has on patients and their families. Our AT Specialist received a request to meet with a man named “Marcus” hospitalized for approximately 4 months due to total hip replacement, diffuse active bleeding and depression. Marcus had many friends and family in Alaska whom he was unable to communicate with due to financial limitations. Based on information from the initial meeting, WATAP was able to provide an adjustable workstation, LCD monitor on adjustable arm, laptop and input devices appropriate for bed use. Marcus was also provided a web cam used for Skypeing with family and friends in Alaska.

Several weeks after installation of equipment, his left leg had to be amputated at the hip and his condition was considered terminal. From that time, until time of his death, he was able to use his computer and adaptive equipment to intimately communicate with friends and family members in Alaska, write final requests and use media options for comfort. Without the use of equipment from the WATAP Device Lending Library, he would not have been able to experience this level of final quality-of-life options.

# Device Demonstration



Through the hands-on guidance of knowledgeable and experienced Assistive Technology Specialists, consumers receive impartial demonstrations of product features that will help accomplish tasks at school, work, home and in the community. An increase to the Demo and Lending Library inventory in 2011 has seen an increase of device demonstrations from 306 in 2010 to 543 in 2011.



“Pam” was referred to WATAP by the MS Society. She was returning to Community College and seeking alternative ways of accessing her computer due to her increased inability to use a keyboard efficiently. After a demonstration of speech recognition software through WATAP’s device demonstration program, Pam was confident this software would be very helpful for her course work. However, she was concerned about her ability to afford any software due to limited income. Our AT Specialist then demonstrated the built-in speech recognition feature of the Microsoft Windows operating system. Pam was delighted to learn about this feature, as she already had Windows on her home computer. The AT Specialist also showed Pam how to launch and set up the program, including basic commands so she could begin using the program when she got home. At the conclusion of the demonstration, Pam gave the AT Specialist a hug and shared how delighted she was with WATAP’s services and with being able to begin dictating her homework assignments right away without having to purchase additional software.



# Alternative Financing

WATAP collaborates with the Washington Access Fund to promote access to technology and financial opportunities to people throughout Washington. In 2011, 37 new revolving loans were made to individuals who would not have otherwise been able to purchase the assistive technology they needed. The average low interest rate of 5% makes the loans affordable to people of any income level.

The Washington Access Fund also operates a CCTV Leasing program. The program served 12 new individuals who wouldn't otherwise be able to afford access to a CCTV for employment, education and community living. A total cost saving to consumers was \$19,467 through the open ended loans of CCTVs.

"Thank you everyone, for making the process so easy and quick and for helping me regain my hearing. It truly was an unexpected blessing!"

*Mary is so thankful for her Washington Access Fund loan, since without it, she honestly believes she would have lost her job.*

**"Mary" describes being without hearing aids as almost like turning on the T.V. with the "mute" button engaged- not quite like, but its close! Mary has worn hearing aids for the past 20 years and recently both quit working at the same time and were not repairable. She went without hearing aids for two months because she didn't have the money to replace them. Mary is a commercial property manager and she negotiates with tenants, vendors, and owners daily both in person and on the phone. Without her hearing aids, Mary could hear every third word at best and it made it impossible to be an effective communicator and negotiator. It also made facing work each day a little frightening knowing that she could see people's mouths moving, but did not know what they were saying. Working with her audiologist Mary determined that Oticon hearing aids would be perfect and at her audiologist's suggestion, she filled out an application for a loan through the Washington Access Fund to help pay for the aids. To her surprise, she found the paperwork to be less complicated than what you fill out for a car loan and within ten days she found out that she was approved.**

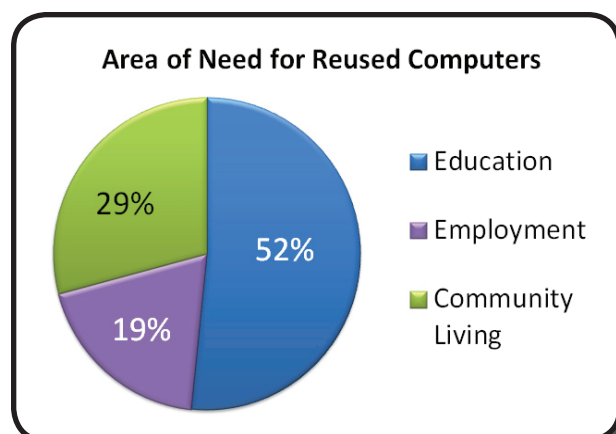
Type of AT	Hearing	Daily Living	Mobility/Seating	Vision	Computers & Related	Vehicle Mods	Speech Communication
# of Devices Financed	10	9	9	7	6	3	2
\$ Value of Loans	\$24,281	\$12,008	\$26,015	\$14,777	\$6,147	\$21,499	\$1,961

The reuse, refurbishment and redistribution of assistive devices is not just an activity that helps the environment. Device reuse helps individuals who are not able to obtain a device through other means. - In 2011, Easter Seals Washington in Spokane through a contract with WATAP made refurbished computers available to people with disabilities throughout Washington for use at home, school and everyday life.

Easter Seals refurbished and redistributed 151 computers at a total estimated purchase price of \$81,100. Through donations of equipment and support from WATAP, consumers were able to obtain computers at no cost.



**“Edmund” was experiencing barriers at school due to a mobility disability and a diagnosed learning disability. Edmund completed assignments either by hand or by visiting a computer lab on campus. Some days his physical condition hindered his ability to leave his home, so using a school’s computer lab was difficult at best and he also stated that he was also afraid of computers. However, since obtaining a refurbished computer through the reuse collaboration between WATAP and Easter Seals Washington, Edmund now has more confidence in his keyboarding skills and knowledge of assistive software products he uses for spelling and grammar checks. The ability to do school work from home saves him time traveling, leaving him more time in the day for studying and for hobbies. He reports that he turns his assignments in on time, and is able to type notes during class lectures using his laptop. Edmund is able to maintain a higher GPA and now feels more self-sufficient and confident in his quality of work. He says that having his own computer changed his life and he is very grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the computer reuse program.**



# State Leadership Activities

Through statewide leadership activities, WATAP promotes the use of assistive technology to increase individual's access to public services and personal independence. WATAP strives to increase knowledge, skills and competencies in assistive technology devices and service delivery, funding sources and strategies, transition, and legal issues through integrated training and educational opportunities, technical assistance and public awareness.

## Public Awareness

In 2011 WATAP began providing quarterly webinars in partnership with the Washington Access Fund on AT topics. WATAP also continued expanding social media efforts begun in late 2010 to enrich engagement with the public. Further WATAP and partners reached 1313 participants through in-person presentations provided across the state to individuals, family member, health care workers and service providers.

## Technical Assistance

Defined as direct problem solving service provided by staff to assist programs and agencies in improving their services, management, policies and/or outcomes as they relate to assistive technology devices and services, WATAP provided over 100 hours of technical assistance to state agencies and disability organizations.

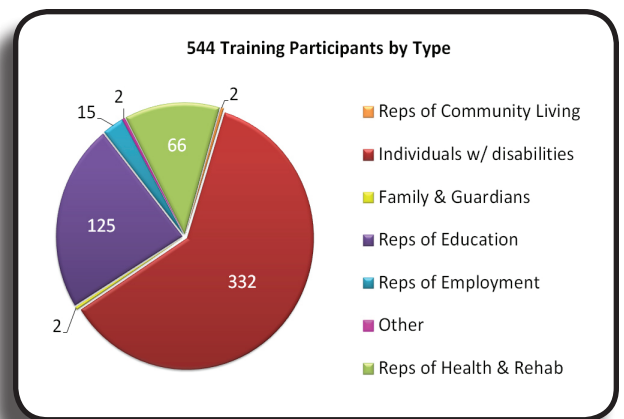
## Trainings

WATAP conducted trainings to 544 individuals with disabilities and their family members as well as service providers in health care, employment, education, and community living.



"I really got a sense for all sides of the issues we discussed, especially after having a chance to speak with the presenter one-on-one."

*Hands on training and individual attention ready participants in their work and AT use.*



# Coordination & Collaborations

WATAP launched the Aids for Better Living program in August 2011 with Timberland Regional Library System which serves Thurston, Mason, Grays Harbor, Pacific and Lewis counties. The program enables library patrons to checkout and trial devices from a small collection intended to get people thinking about how assistive technology can enhance independence in everyday life. In the first three months of operation, 55 loans were conducted. A big thank you to Timberland staff who are proactively working with WATAP to promote the program in their community and increase individual's experience with assistive technology for everyday life.



In 2011 WATAP organized the Washington State Reuse Summit that brought together employees, volunteers and boards members from state agencies and community base organizations to brainstorm how to increase assistive technology Reuse Activities in the State. The Evergreen Reuse Coalition was formed as a result of the Summit and work is being organized to engage more organizations and expand the collaboration around the state to serve Washington residents who need alternative access to assistive technology.

# Advisory Council and Staff

WATAP would like to thank its partners, since without these valuable collaborators our reach and influence would not be as great. University of Washington Center for Technology Disability Studies, Center on Human Development and Disability (CHDD) – the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), University of Washington Medical Center Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Washington Access Fund, Easter Seals Washington, Pass It On Center (PIOC), Microsoft Accessibility Resource Center (MARC) Network, Timberland Regional Library System, Special Education Technology Center (SETC)- at Central Washington University, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Department of Services for the Blind (DSB), State Independent Living Council (SILC), and Washington Education Association.

## **2011 Advisory Council**

Don Brandon, *Consumer*

Kathy Neely, *Consumer*

Sue Ammeter, *Consumer*

Kathy Troyer, *Consumer*

Julie Peddy, *Consumer*

Aditya Ganapathiraju, *Consumer*

Rob Honan, *State Independent Living Council*

John Bresko, *Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction*

Bill Youngman, *Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*

Naomi Namekata, *Department of Services for the Blind*

## **Staff**

Kurt Johnson, Ph.D., *Director of the UW Center for Technology & Disability Studies*

Alan Knue, *Director of WATAP*

Deb Cook, *Technical Assistance Coordinator*

Pat Brown, *Transition Specialist*

Maria Kelley, OTR/L, ATP, *Senior Assistive Technology Specialist*

Gaby de Jongh, *Training Coordinator and AT Specialist*

Curt Johnson, MS, CRC, ATP, *Rehabilitation Counselor*

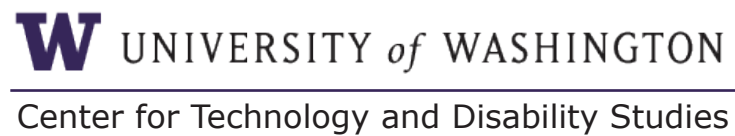
Samantha Murphy, *Program Specialist*

Kim Canaan, *Program Coordinator*

John Hanna, *Technology Support*

Thad Jackson, *Office Assistant*





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