



Assistive Technology Partners envisions a world where all persons with cognitive, sensory and/or physical disabilities are engaged in life at home, school, work and play, without barriers and without boundaries.

Spring 2011

SETAC Expands Services to Pueblo (*The Southeast Technical Assistance Center (SETAC) is a satellite site to Assistive Technology Partners and is located in the Pikes Peak BOCES in Colorado Springs*)

A recent collaboration between SETAC and Bellwether Nutrition & Rehabilitative Services, Inc. has created new options for individuals with disabilities in southeast Colorado. Previously, individuals in Pueblo and its surrounding communities had to travel to Colorado Springs



Jeanie Benfield

to receive AT services. Now, one day a week AT Specialist, Heather Emery-Lyons, M.S., CCC-SLP, is able to evaluate and provide AT training for clients.

Scheduling evaluations for Department of Vocational Rehabilitation clients has become easier as well as scheduling clients who need regular (weekly or biweekly) AT training. Special thanks to Amy Kunstle, RD, M.A., CCC-SLP, owner of Bellwether for providing this space to ATP. Inquiries should be made to Heather Emery-Lyons at the SETAC office, (719)380-6229, or via email at heather.lyons@ucdenver.edu.

Switch It Up! Formerly known as AbleGames

AbleGames has changed its name to Switch It Up! This annual event offers a fun filled day of adapted gaming for children with disabilities, 3 - 21 years of age and their families. Participants with significant challenges will enjoy the Wii, computer games, pinball and an assortment of games and activities designed and modified to be accessible. The 3rd annual event will take place August 20, 2011 at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. Come and experience the possibilities of what accessible gaming and assistive technology can do to enhance the quality of life for children with disabilities.

We are **Switching Things Up** so that everyone can play and be fully included! Space is limited, so call to register: 303-315-1278.

To view pictures from last year's event, go to www.AssistiveTechnologyPartners.org and click on the Events tab.

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Assistive Technology Partners
BREAKING BARRIERS, CHANGING LIVES

Clinic Spotlight: Meet Princy

Princy loves books. She also happens to have Cerebral Palsy, a condition which makes moving her arms and legs difficult or impossible. Despite this challenge, she manages to read more books in a month than most people do in an entire year. It is rare indeed to find her without a novel open on the tray of her wheelchair.



Princy Jensen

Cerebral Palsy is an umbrella term that describes a group of conditions that can involve the brain and body functions such as moving, seeing, hearing and learning. It is caused by an injury to the brain which typically occurs in the womb but can also occur during the first two years of development. Princy has Spastic Cerebral Palsy, a sub-type which results in muscles which are very tight. She is unable to use her legs and only has a small amount of movement in her left arm and hand.

It is this movement that enables her to operate a specialized wheelchair using a small joystick and the first finger on her left hand. She can also press, with some difficulty, the buttons on a remote control placed nearby on her tray. Princy lives independently with the help of her technology and daily attendant care services. She also has the support of a large and caring family.



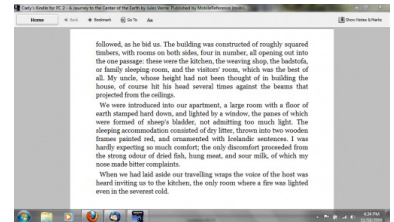
Assistive Technology Partners began working with Princy several years ago when she was referred by

the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to find ways to enable her to use a computer. Since that time Princy has worked with several staff members to learn and use speech recognition technology for basic "hands-free" control of her computer.

More recently, Princy worked with Kelly Waugh, PT to obtain a new wheelchair. Over the years, her muscles had tightened causing her spine to curve. This made sitting in her old chair very uncomfortable. Everything about Princy's new chair is custom including the headrest, footrest, molded seat cushions and backrest. The new chair also came with newer electronics which opened up several possibilities including the chance for us to help Princy feed her passion for books.

Therapists at Assistive Technology Partners collaborate closely to identify opportunities to use technology to its fullest. For Princy, this meant taking advantage of her new chair to help control her computer, television, stereo, and DVD. Jim Sandstrum, MA CCC-SLP, worked closely with Kelly and United Seating and Mobility, the company that sold Princy her new chair, to program these capabilities. They started with activating the Bluetooth feature on Princy's wheelchair which effectively turned her joystick into a computer mouse.

Once Princy had full access to her computer, ATP staff turned their attention to Princy's love of reading. Her biggest challenge was turning the pages of a book due to the tightness in her hands. Princy also shared that she would like to be able to buy her own books instead of waiting on others for assistance. Electronic books were proposed as an ideal **Continued on Page 3 ...**



Princy can click on either side of the text to change pages

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solution to each of these problems. They can easily be manipulated using Princy's joystick and can be purchased directly over the Internet for almost instant delivery. After downloading Kindle for PC software from Amazon.com, Jim added Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice* to her bookshelf. A day and half later he checked in with her only to find that she had already finished the book.

After modifications to improve visibility of the print, everyone was happy. Princy can now read on the computer to her heart's content and Amazon.com has a new revenue stream (we are expecting a thank you card from them any day now).

Assistive Technology Across the Curriculum

Do you work with individuals who have severe multiple disabilities, developmental differences and/or autism? Have you been looking for a systematic way to address integrating assistive technology into the classroom? Are you wondering what the buzz is about regarding iPods, iPhones and iPads? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you should think about attending this year's SWAAAC Summer Symposium. The symposium is June 7th, 8th, and 9th at the Conference Center at Adams 12 Five Star Schools. This year's focus is Assistive Technology (AT) Across the Curriculum. We are welcoming Jane Korsten back for a 2-day Every Move Counts, Clicks and Chats. Eric Sailers and Kelly Fonner will also be providing full-day workshops at this year's symposium. There will be over 20 different breakout sessions to choose from. The exhibit hall will be open on June 9th to provide all attendees with the opportunity to experience the latest innovations in hardware, software, educational materials and AT devices and services. Registration closes May 31st! For more information go to www.assistiveTechnologyPartners.org. Click on the events tab to learn more.

Product Testing Lab Evaluates Smartphones

The Product Testing Lab is evaluating cell phones and smartphones used by people with disabilities. The International Telecommunication Union estimates



there are over 5.3 billion cellular phone subscriptions worldwide. That is around 77% of the world's population. Use of cell phones, and increasingly, smart phones has become so prevalent that the tools and ser-

vices these products provide are shaping the way we interact with not only our friends and co-workers, but with other products and services that help us in our everyday lives. People are using these products to get real time bus schedule information; find out where the closest pizza is in a strange city; and look for traffic problems they'll encounter on their drive home.

For people with cognitive disabilities or other impairments, mobile phones can play roles of heightened importance by helping people manage their lives more independently. Easily accessible calendars and contact lists can be very important to people that have memory problems. Features such as voice recognition and text to speech, available on many of these products, can facilitate access to a wealth of information, services and resources that would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible to obtain for persons with intellectual and/or sensory impairments.

But how easy is it for someone with a cognitive disability to use a product that has so many features and options? The more things you can do with your phone, the more complex the user interface can become, and the more difficult can be the process of availing yourself of some of these features. What types of phones (and the software platforms on which they operate) are more user-friendly for people with cognitive disabilities, and what makes them so? Conversely, what kinds of barriers to effective phone operation do some phones present to users with cognitive disabilities? These are questions the Product Testing Lab is exploring. Stay tuned.

Tech for Tykes!

In January of 2010 Assistive Technology Partners received an e-mail from a mom who was looking for an assistive technology (AT) evaluation for her little boy. She said, "I would really like for this process (finding an AT evaluation) to be easier in the future for other families than what I've been through at other places. I wish I had known so much more about AT and how to get Brian, our son, hooked up through the early intervention (EI) system much sooner than now... he turns 3 next month". She then went on to say, "The ironic part of this is that I'm a nurse with a background in information technology and this has been very confusing. I cannot imagine how difficult this must be for families who don't have experience in either of those areas".

Unfortunately, this is an all too common scenario for the parents of young children with disabilities. Because of numerous myths and misperceptions on the part of early intervention providers and service coordinators, kids who need assistive technology services or devices either don't get them until they are ready to transition into pre-school or kindergarten, or don't get them at all.

Fortunately, this e-mail was the start of Assistive Technology Partner's relationship not only with an absolutely delightful young man, but with his wonderful parents as well. Brian Quayle is a great example of a young man who can greatly benefit from AT. He is a handsome, bright-eyed, curious three year old with a great sense of humor and an infectious laugh (he thinks the sound of Velcro pulling apart is hilarious!). He also has his share of challenges, including physical challenges, visual impairment and difficulty communicating. Brian likes to play with lots of toys, play with his friends, and go on walks. Oh, and he also likes to swim, go down the water slide, and has just started skiing in a sit ski with his Dad guiding.

Brian has a growing list of AT he uses, including lots of low tech devices and adaptations, as well as a Dynavox V Max communication device, an Otto Bock

Kimba stroller, and a Permobil Koala power wheelchair. Because of his assistive technology, Brian is now interacting with his family and the world around him by moving around, sometimes on his own, communicating, and making choices. His mother's e-mail message when he was almost three begs the question of the potential impact this technology would have had on his development if it had been available to him a year, or even two



Brian Quayle

years earlier. We may never know, but research is seeking to find the answers to those questions. I would guess things would have felt quite different to Brian had he learned earlier that he could communicate his wants and needs and make choices for himself, even at a tender age. We certainly know the parents of typically developing two year olds are constantly dealing with the choices their child chooses to make!

Brian is lucky to have parents like Ed and Christine Quayle. They are speaking out about finding ways to remove the barriers to children receiving the AT services they so richly deserve. Brian is also lucky because his parents are, like any other parent, trying to find ways to help their child achieve his full potential. In Brian's case, that consists of finding technology that helps him accomplish that goal. So at first glance, the Quayle family's activities are much different than those of families with typically developing children...but at second glance, maybe not!

Brian Burne

Early Intervention Program Coordinator for ATP

WesTAC Client Success Story (*The western slope technical assistance center is a satellite site for Assistive Technology Partners and is located in the Workforce Center in Grand Junction*)



Lanae Squires was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy at a young age. She is from Rifle, Colorado and has lived in Grand Junction for the past five years. Before moving to Grand Junction she owned a scrap booking store in Rifle for two years. She likes the

Grand Junction community, and says it's just the right size for her. She has a service dog named Friday and a cat named Roz.

Lanae is 34 years old now and working for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) in Grand Junction. Coincidentally, in 2006 this same agency utilized the services of Assistive Technology Partners (ATP) on a couple of occasions to complete an evaluation of Lanae's assistive technology (AT) needs to assist her in continuing her schoolwork. Denice Roberts, AT Specialist at WesTAC went to Lanae's home to help her learn the ins and outs of Dragon NaturallySpeaking.

Lanae uses several different AT devices including Dragon NaturallySpeaking which helps her to type her reports and a Live Scribe Pen to take notes during her interviews with clients. The pen records the conversation as she is taking notes and then plays the recording back later as she is writing the report. She also uses a wheelchair and a wheelchair lift for her car. At home she has a desk that raises and lowers to the height she needs and also a lightweight laptop for school. Lanae stated that having appropriate accommodations is essential for her work in the office. DVR has provided her with a higher desk to accommodate her wheelchair, a printer for her desk to make her printed reports accessible, as well as an automatic hole punch and stapler.

In 2008 Lanae earned her BA in Counseling and Psychology at Mesa State College and in 2010 completed her Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling from Utah

State University. While she was a junior at Mesa State College, her DVR counselor convinced her to become a DVR counselor. She completed her Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling and started her position on January 3, 2011 as a Rehabilitation Counselor 1. Her duties include interviewing and evaluating clients to determine their employment needs. She is currently using a lapel microphone that allows her to answer the phone and also to write on the computer using her voice. When asked what she likes about her job, she responded "helping people with disabilities overcome barriers, and becoming integrated into society through work and education." Her future plans include becoming a homeowner, traveling, and enjoying her life in Grand Junction.



Spotlight on Bill Caile

Bill Caile has been the energetic leader of Assistive Technology Partner's (ATP) Advisory Council for a number of years. He is truly

Assistive Technology Partner's best advocate and has recruited many exceptional community leaders to the Council. Currently, some exciting changes have been introduced through the creation of four committees. Michael Harms, GE Johnson, is chairing the Déjà vu Rendezvous committee. The Council's fourth annual Déjà vu Rendezvous event for the construction industry is coming up in May and 100 sponsors have already stepped forward pledging over \$200,000 to the AT Endowment fund to support the work of ATP. Bill was one of the pioneers for this successful fund raiser. Mike Dino is at the helm of the Resource Development committee and Sam Simpson is the lead for the Business Services committee. The Marketing committee includes Amy Hume from the Communications Department at CU, as well as Lisa Heppner and JC Bourque from Heppner and Bourque. Bill has supported the Advisory Council's growth, evolving our group of volunteers into dynamic supporters and advisors creating an essential leadership role in the growth and development of Assistive Technology Partners.



KUDO'S!

A Special Thanks to Variety of Colorado! - The local Colorado chapter of Variety recently supported one of ATPs clinic patrons with communication and literacy support technologies. Their generous contributions are now facilitating Augmentative Alternative Communications, access to grade level print materials, and invaluable written language supports. After unsuccessful attempts to fund equipment through insurance and public resources, Variety of Colorado and their Miracles in Motion program came through in a BIG way to make a TREMENDOUS difference for one child. Thank-You!

"For over 75 years, Variety – The Children's Charity has been serving children with special needs. These children want to be active members in their communities and get a chance to just be a kid. In order to achieve this, they need what most of us take for granted: access."

www.varietycolorado.org/programs.html.

Thanks to the Community Preparedness Program within the Governor's Office of Homeland Security for funding two emergency preparedness demonstration kits to be added to the AT Network Loan Bank. One kit will be used to educate individuals with disabilities about the types of items they should include in their 72 hour disaster kit. The second kit will educate shelter employees on what each shelter should have available to assist individuals with disabilities who may need their services.

Kelly Waugh, PT and Clinic Coordinator at Assistive Technology Partners has been Nominated by the officers of the RESNA Standards Committee on Wheelchairs and Related Seating to serve as an expert on ISO's (International Organization of Standards) ISO TC173/SC1/WG11 (WG-11 is part of ISO Technical Committee 173 - Assistive products for persons with disability / Subcommittee 1 – Wheelchairs/Working Group 11 – Wheelchair Seating.)



On March 10, Heather Lyons, SETAC, presented information on Assistive Technology Partners to Penrose Hospital's Outpatient Rehabilitation Team at their downtown Colorado Springs location.

Assistive Technology Partners received \$45,000 from the Daniels Fund to purchase equipment to fill gaps in availability of assistive technology devices in the loan bank for children with disabilities.



Alex Mihailidis, who is on sabbatical with ATP from the University of Toronto, is a new father to Bennett Jacob Alexander - born on March 28th at 11:48 m. Everyone is doing well and he is growing more and more each and every day!

Assistive Technology: An Essential Component of Health Care Reform

(Written for the Colorado Assistive Technology Coalition - the advisory council for the Assistive Technology Program of Colorado, a federally funded program under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, P.L. 105-394, 03/11)

The following is the first paragraph of a paper written to inform policy makers and the general public about the importance of assistive technology for cost effective health care practices and for the quality of life for people with disabilities: "Assistive technology (AT) is an essential part of any health care program, because access to these tools, both low tech and high tech devices and equipment, can result in improved health and quality of life for the recipient and ultimately, significant savings in health care costs. For multiple reasons, people do not always get the technology they need. If a person does not have access to the needed technology, they are often dependent on others including paid professionals to care for them. In many cases this care is only available in a nursing home, hospital, or other health care facility at increased overall costs. The cost of providing care to someone in a nursing home is five times the cost of providing that same level of care in a person's home."

To read the complete document go to:

www.assistivetechpartners.org

Colorado Assistive Technology Network

In today's market there are more than 4,000 assistive technology devices available on the market. The Colorado AT Network supports Coloradans in learning about and acquiring these devices or tools to assist them in maintaining or increasing their functional capabilities, independence, and safety at home, work, or in their community. The AT Network also assist agencies in building their local capacity to better serve their clientele and communities by providing an additional resource and service to them.

Reasons to join the CO AT Network?

- FREE** monthly webinars on specific assistive technology topics that will expand the ability of an agency or organization to provide information about AT devices and services to their consumers.
- FREE** Demonstration Kit loans that allow individuals to learn about and try a piece of equipment before purchase.
- FREE** assistance in locating funding to purchase AT devices and services for consumers through training on the AT Funding Sources database and AT Finder search engine.
- FREE** access to the AT needs assessments to identify individual assistive technology needs.
- FREE** training on advocacy and benefits counseling to agencies to provide consumers, increasing their access to, and purchase of, AT devices and services.

Trainings and Demonstration Kits are continually being developed by the staff at Assistive Technology Partners with a new one introduced each month. Topics include: AT for the Bathroom, Bedroom, Kitchen, Living Room, Office, Cognition, Hands, Hearing, Medical Needs, Multiple Sclerosis, Seniors, Vision, Dressing, Garden, Grooming, Recreation, and Telecommunications.

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