

CommunicATor



Fall 2010

601 East 18th Ave.
Denver, Co 80203
303-315-1280
assistivetechologypartners.org

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.

Colorado Assistive Technology Awareness Week October 10th - 16th, 2010



With technology, the impossible becomes possible –adapted big wheel bike

Governor Ritter has proclaimed Colorado Assistive Technology (AT) Awareness week for October 10-16, 2010. Organizations are gearing up to remind people about the tools and resources that are available to improve the quality of an individual's life. AT comes in

The public is invited to attend one of three Open Houses in Grand Junction at the WestAC office, Colorado Springs at the SETAC office, or the Denver center on October 12th.

STEMapalooza 2010

STEMapalooza is a two-day event presented by the University of Colorado Denver, which is free and open to the public, featuring exhibitors from around the state of Colorado that support Science, Technology, Engineering and Math programs for students and educators and employ hundreds of thousands of jobs in STEM related careers. The event will draw together more than 10,000 students, families, educators, corporations and policy-makers to celebrate and showcase STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) innovations, education, careers and partnerships. STEMapalooza will take place on Friday, October 8th from 9:00-4:00 and Saturday, October 9th from 9:00-2:00 at the Colorado Convention Center.

Assistive Technology Partners will present an interactive display of assistive technology devices at STEMapalooza including a power wheelchair with several different types of drive controls, a computer with adapted access methods, a switch adapted version of Guitar Hero and numerous examples of ways that technology can help people with physical, sensory and communication disabilities. Come see how assistive technology can help those with disabilities improve their quality of life at home, school, work and play. For more information, visit www.stemapalooza.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Assistive Technology Week	1
STEMapalooza 2010	1
Clinic Spotlight	2
California Adopts the AT Finder	3
AAC Devices Under the Microscope	3
On My Honor	4
Learning Labs	4
SETAC & WESTAC	5
Playing Our Way Through 2nd Annual Able	6
Kudos	6
SWAAAC	7

many shapes and forms and can be as simple as pencil grips, a talking alarm clock, knee braces or manual and power wheelchairs, or as sophisticated as voice-activated computer systems and stair climbing wheelchairs. AT tools can assist in dressing or cooking as well as help people stay in communication with friends and family through adaptations to electronic devices such as computers or the telephone. People need this technology for the workplace, to be independent in their homes, and in the community. The tools and services are necessities, rather than luxury items.



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CommunicATor: Fall 2010



Clinic Spotlight: Meet Jeffrey



Jeffrey Chesley

Jeffrey Chesley is a 10 year old boy with hydroencephalus and bilateral shunts. Hydroencephalus is a buildup of fluid inside the skull, leading to brain swelling. It means “water on the brain.” It is the leading cause of brain surgery for children in the United States. One of the most performed treatments for

hydrocephalus is cerebral shunts, which consist of a pump or drain connected to a long catheter. Jeffrey is nonverbal but is very social. Jeffrey and his mother, Carol, came to Assistive Technology Partners’ Southeast Technical Assistance Center (ATP-SETAC) in Colorado Springs to see Heather Lyons, M.S., CCC-SLP, for an augmentative alternative communication (AAC) evaluation. Jeffrey’s primary need was a means to communicate functional information, such as wants and needs, and a way to communicate with teachers and peers at school as well as healthcare providers and caregivers. Increasing his receptive and expressive vocabulary was another goal for Jeffrey.

In 2006, Jeffrey started using a Tech Talk 6x8, a multi-level low tech speech-generating device that



offers up to 48 custom messages to be programmed. Jeffrey’s mom, Carol used Boardmaker software

(Mayer-Johnson) to create overlays which she inserted into the device to provide a picture symbol paired with a written word/phrase. Jeffrey learned to press the appropriate button to request objects. This communication device had become too lim-

ited for Jeffrey’s expressive language needs and too time-intensive for his mother to create, print, and laminate overlays for Jeffrey’s expanding vocabulary.

After completing an AAC evaluation with Heather Lyons, at ATP-SETAC, Jeffrey tried a few speech-generating devices, including the iPad with Proloquo2Go communication software by Assistiveware. Unlike all the other devices Jeffrey had used, the iPad does not come with a keyguard which Jeffrey needs to access the buttons on the software. Amy Kunstle, RD, MA, CCC-SLP of Bellwether Nutrition & Rehabilitative Services in Pueblo provides ongoing speech-language intervention to Jeffrey and has been working with Heather to implement device



trials. Amy sought help from the Machining Technology Program located in the Gorsich Advanced Technology Center at Pueblo Community College. Bill Hardwick, machining instructor, and his students were happy to help and created a prototype of a keyguard for the iPad.

Jeffrey can now access the Proloquo2Go communication software on the iPad and as shown by the picture below, is having fun requesting his favorite books and toys!





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CommunicATor: Fall 2010



California Adopts the AT Finder, Assistive Technology Search Engine

The California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) has chosen to license the AT Finder search engine developed at Assistive Technology Partners to power their in-state searches for adaptive technology. The AT Finder site which has been available to Coloradans for over a year, offers one stop, local searches for AT products across Craigslist, eBay, Kajiji (eBay classifieds), and Oodle websites.

The popularity of services like Craigslist and Ebay have made finding used goods easier than ever and there is a significant amount of Assistive Technologies listed on these sites. AT Finder simplifies the process of finding what you need by doing the hard work for you. Enter a search term such as "Communication Device" or "Power Wheel Chair", your zip code and how far you are willing to travel to pick an item up and AT Finder will then search each site for your "local" results and return them alongside national listings in an easy to read list. With AT Finder there is no need to search these sites separately.



For more information or to use the AT Finder web-search tool, go to Assistivetechologypartners.org. Statewide Assistive Technology Programs interested in adding in-state listings for their state to the AT Finder search engine should email Jim Sandstrum: jim.sandstrum@ucdenver.edu.

To be added to the CommunicATor distribution list or to request a hard copy, contact <http://medschool.ucdenver.edu/atp> or 303-315-1280

Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) Devices under the microscope at ATP!

The field of Augmentative Alternative Communication has yet to conduct research examining which AAC technology has the greatest impact, or what interventions are most effective for these populations. ATP in cooperation with the University of Buffalo and the University of California Davis will be the first to pioneer a comparative AAC device trial for children with Down's syndrome or Fragile X.

This past summer brought initial enrollments for participants in the AAC, National Institutes of Health research study at Assistive Technology Partners (ATP). Currently, Chatbox 40 and AltChat devices are being randomly assigned to 60 eligible children between the ages of 5 and 20 years, who have a diagnosis of either Down's syndrome or Fragile X syndrome. Once they have their device, they return to ATP to participate in 32 intervention sessions with one of our Speech-Language Pathologists. A wide variety of games and activities have been planned to teach the children how to functionally communicate using their devices. Once all of the participants complete their interventions, researchers will analyze the learning outcomes of each group to determine if one device worked better than the other for this particular population of children.

If you would like more information on this research study or know someone that might benefit from enrollment, please visit our website at: <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medschool/programs/atp/Research/NIH-AAC/Pages/NIHAACComparativeDeviceStudy.aspx>





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CommunicATor: Fall 2010



On my honor....

In 2010, two Boy Scouts from Troop 645 exercised their leadership skills in hopes of earning the rank of Eagle Scout by serving kids with disabilities in the second annual Ablegames, see article on page six.

The leadership expectations placed on those attempting to earn the rank of Eagle are high. They begin by writing a work plan and proposal, which includes details similar to those found in written proposals in the business world. Once approved, they begin execution: 1) fund raising; 2) recruiting help; 3) building; 4) recruiting more help; 5) final delivery; and more.

This past year, one of those scouts, Anthony Kutcher was responsible for space planning, equipment setup and usage, and providing lunch for all the participants at Ablegames. He attended numerous meetings with the planning committee, diagramed the various areas of games, borrowed six Wii's from other scouts, and ran the free concession stand. The concession stand was



Anthony Kutcher

fully stocked with typical lunch items (sandwiches, hot dogs, chips, etc.), a few healthy choices (bananas, apples, etc.), and the good stuff...a cotton candy machine and a snow cone machine. At the end of the day, participants had cherry and grape smiles from ear-to-ear, and a few parents remarked, "I haven't had a snow cone since I was a teenager." Anthony did an excellent job and displayed the leadership skills necessary to earn the rank of Eagle. Nice Job, Anthony. Also, Anthony said that he had so much fun that he would like to volunteer for future events.

The second Life Scout, William Magrogan decided to build switch interfaces that would adapt a child's switch to a computer. This device, called a switch interface allows a child with a severe physical disability

to have access to a computer through a switch which is adapted to his/her physical abilities. The special switch can be used to play computer games. This is an alternative for someone who is unable to use a keyboard and mouse. In the middle of William's work, his dad was transferred to Texas which complicated William's efforts to receive troop and district approval for his proposal. However, William was still committed to the project. He indicated that he had given his word and he would follow through, whether it counted toward Eagle rank or not. William raised the money to build 10 switch devices at a cost of about \$45 each, built & tested the devices, and delivered them a week before the event. Even though it is highly unlikely that this will earn him the Eagle rank, it is clearly a display of unselfish commitment to helping others. "On my honor" are the first three words of the Boy Scout Oath, and William's unselfish act embodies these words regardless of the outcome. William, in my eyes, I can see you soaring amongst the Eagles.

Story contributed by:

Mike Melonis, Eagle Scout, Assistant Scoutmaster for Troop 645

Remaining Learning Labs for 2010:

- October 14th Do-It-Yourself Toy and Game Modification
Presented by Gavin Phillips, M.S.E.E.
2:00-5:30pm, Denver Location Only
- November 11th Smart Pen for Struggling Students
Presented by Becky Breaux, MS,
OTR
- December No Learning Lab

Visit our website to find the details of all our educational offerings at www.assistivetechologypartners.org or call for more information at 303-315-1280.



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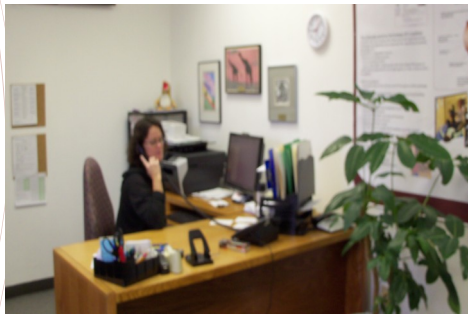
CommunicATor: Fall 2010



SETAC Happenings

SETAC Office Moves

It's official! The Southeast Technical Assistance Center (SETAC) has moved across the street into the Pikes Peak BOCES administrative offices building at 4825 Lorna Place. Please make a note of our new address. The telephone number and fax number are the same: (719)380-6229 and (719)380-6230, respectively. Please stop by and see the new office. Our open house to celebrate Assistive Technology Awareness Week will be on Tuesday, October 12th, from 3:00-5:30 p.m. We look forward to seeing you soon!



SETAC attended the Special Needs Information Fair sponsored by the Air Force Aid Society and the Airman and Family Readiness Centers of Schriever and Peterson Air Force Bases on Saturday, September 18th at the Youth Center on Peterson AFB. The fair was well-attended by families in our community and over 30 on- and off-base agencies were present with information and resources for parents.

We have many events coming up throughout the month of October to raise awareness about Assistive Technology, as detailed throughout this newsletter. We hope that you'll join us for one or more of these events to see how assistive technology can help individuals with disabilities reach their full potential.

For more information, go to
www.assistivetechpartners.org

WESTAC Office

Accessible Home Exhibit, Grand Junction, CO

Two-hundred and thirty people attended the first Accessible Home Exhibit (AHE) in Grand Junction from September 2-4, 2010. This event was sponsored by Assistive Technology Partners University of Colorado,



Mesa County ARCH, Area Agencies on Aging of Northwest Colorado, and Home Care of the Grand Valley. Many other local agencies to numerous to mention collaborated to

make this a dynamic event. Local vendors loaned appliances and furniture to make the AHE feel more like home. Thirty-four RSVP One-Time Project volunteers helped assemble and staff the AHE.

AHE is a twelve hundred square foot adaptive home display consisting of six rooms: living room, office, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, playroom and a resource room. All rooms are filled with adaptive devices to help people with disabilities and the elderly stay independent.

Most of the home was transported from the Denver ATP office to the Mesa County Fairgrounds. The office was furnished with devices from the ATP/WesTAC office which is located in Grand Junction.



Jeremy Kuebler, of ARCH, Matt Lanning and Denice Roberts of ATP



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CommunicATor: Fall 2010



Playing Our Way Through the 2nd Annual AbleGames

The 2nd Annual AbleGames was held on Saturday, August 21, 2010. There were twenty-one participants between the ages of three and eighteen that attended the event. Families and friends also attended and cheered on each of the participants. Over 20 Assistive Technology Partners faculty and staff volunteered to work the event. We also had professionals volunteer from the UC



Denver Physical Therapy School, Adams 12 School District, Denver Public Schools, Mountain BOCES, Wyoming schools and State House Representative Cheri Gerou, district 25. Each one of our gaming participants had their own professional

coach working with them to maximize their gaming experience. Games included: accessible games on iPad devices, switch adapted Guitar Hero, specially engineered seating systems for access to Wii Fit Board games, the Splatball machine, and much, much more! A highlight of the event was having Irvin Johnson and Walter Davis from the Denver Nuggets stop in to play the switch adapted computer game, "Hoops" against the gaming participants. We are planning on having this event again next year with additional games and hopefully twice the participants!



For pictures of the event, go to <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschoo/programs/atp/Events/AnnualEvents/AbleGames/Pages/AbleGames.aspx>

KUDO'S

"The Use and Application of Assistive Technology to Promote Literacy in Early Childhood: A Systematic Review" was accepted for publication in *Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology*. Authors are Brian Burne, Valerie Knafelc, Maureen Melonis and Patricia Heyn.

Greg McGrew was awarded the RESNA Fellow award "for his many efforts in the field of Rehabilitation Technology, and commitment and significant contribution to RESNA" at the annual conference awards ceremony in Las Vegas in June.

Sarel VanVuren, Clinical Research Associate, on the Boulder Campus has been recently jointly appointed to Assistive Technology Partners, Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation.

Greg McGrew was elected to the Board of Directors of FalconWorks. FalconWorks works with the engineering department at the Air Force Academy, supporting capstone student design projects and aiding technology transfer expertise to move projects into market.

Assistive Technology Awareness Week October 10-16, 2010

Visit the AT site near you on October 12!

Assistive Technology Partners
601 East 18th Avenue, Suite 130
Denver 80203
Open House 3:00 to 7:00 PM

Grand Junction -WesTAC
2897 North Avenue, Modular 3A
Grand Junction 81501
Open House 3:00 to 5:30 PM

Colorado Springs - SETAC
4825 Lorna Place
Colorado Springs 80915



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CommunicATor: Fall 2010



The SWAAAC project serves as an Assistive Technology resource and liaison for related service providers, educators and parents of children K-21. Hundreds of AT resources cross our desks every month. Here are just a few that we think you might appreciate and/or enjoy.

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) and the IEP

The National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials website is a resource to educators, parents, and other stakeholders interested in learning more about AIM and NIMAS (National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard). This link offers some guidance on how to include AIM in student IEPs. You may want to spend some time exploring other areas of the website as well.

http://aim.cast.org/learn/policy/local/accessible_iep

WatchKnow

This website features a library of over 19,000 educational videos organized and searchable by age and topic.

<http://www.watchknow.org/>

NCiP article, creating interactive picture symbol boards

This material was developed by the [National Center to Improve Practice \(NCIP\)](#) in collaboration with the Center for Literacy and Disabilities (CLD) at Duke University. The link below offers tips and examples for creating picture symbol boards that facilitate interactive reading experiences.

<http://www2.edc.org/NCIP/tour/r-ps-createtime.html>

My First Week with the iPhone

Behind the Curtain is a website hosted by Austin Seraphin and includes topics such as "...technology, politics, spirituality, blindness-related issues, reviews," and a variety of "rants." The link below will take you to a blog published in June that describes his initial experiences using the new iPhone, its accessibility features, and several downloadable apps. Be sure to read the last three paragraphs describing his experience with the *Color Identifier* app.

<http://behindthecurtain.us/2010/06/12/my-first-week-with-the-iphone/>

Contact Assistive Technology Partners

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