

# CommunicATor



September 2008

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 assistivetechpartners.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.

## Governor Proclaims Assistive Technology Awareness Week in Colorado

Governor Ritter has proclaimed October 12- 18, 2008 as Assistive Technology Awareness Week in Colorado. Assistive technology is any device or item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities or older citizens.

Assistive technology services are defined as any service that directly assists an individual in the selection, acquisition, installation, or use of an assistive technology device. Assistive technology devices and services are necessities, not merely luxury items, for people with disabilities and older citizens. These essential tools empower people to control their lives and their future.



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Examples of assistive technology range from simple tools to assist in dressing or cooking to highly technical tools that help people stay in communication with friends and others through the use of electronic devices such as computers or the telephone.



Supporting Learning Through Assistive Technology

During Assistive Technology Awareness week agencies and organizations that serve people with disabilities and the aging population will be highlighting technology in a variety of ways including: open houses, demonstrations on the use of assistive technology, participating in poster sessions and other events. For more information on events in your area contact: Assistive Technology Partners at 1-800-255-3477 or 303 315-1280 or <http://assistivetechpartners.org>.

**Assistive Technology Partners**  
 BREAKING BARRIERS, CHANGING LIVES



# Assistive Technology Partners

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## New Assistive Technology Satellite Center Coming to Southeast Colorado



Assistive Technology Partners will open a satellite center in the Colorado Springs Pueblo area fall of 2008. Assistive Technology Partners,

a program within the University of Colorado Denver, School of Medicine, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation is seeking up to two experienced Occupational Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists, or other related discipline for this new center.

### **Job Responsibilities include:**

- Clinical practice, teaching, service, scholarship and research
- Service delivery of assistive technology devices and services to people with disabilities and their families, professionals, and paraprofessionals
- Evaluation and assessment of technology needs for people with disabilities

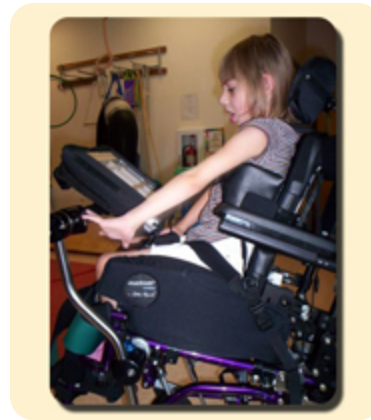
### **Required Qualifications:**

- Masters in Speech Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy or related field
- At least 5 years of Assistive Technology clinical experience and teaching along with excellent communication and computer skills

For more information, visit our website:  
<http://www.assistivetechpartners.org>,  
call 303 315-1280 or 1 800 255-3477,  
or contact [ATP@ucdenver.edu](mailto:ATP@ucdenver.edu) .

## Assistive Technology Partners CLINIC

Assistive Technology Partners' (ATP) clinic program provides evaluation, consultation and training services to individuals in the following technology areas: Wheelchair Seating and Mobility, Communication, Computer Access, Environmental Controls, Job Accommodation and Ergonomics, and Nighttime Positioning. The

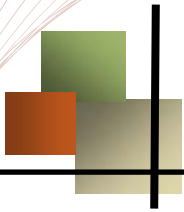


clinic specializes in assessing the unique needs of each individual, taking into account their personal goals and priorities, to assist the individual in making a decision regarding the most appropriate technology to help maximize their function. With the client and family or caregivers as essential members of the team, the first step is a comprehensive review of the client's needs in every environment in which they are engaged. The cross-disciplinary faculty has extensive experience and expertise in highly specialized areas to meet the assistive technology needs of each individual, regardless of functional limitation or complexity. For more information on evaluations call 303 315-1280 or 1 800 255-3477 or visit [ATP@ucdenver.edu](mailto:ATP@ucdenver.edu)

## Wheelchair Seating Institute

In April 2008, Assistive Technology Partners hosted "Wheelchair Seating for Postural Control and Function", an intensive 3 day course covering wheelchair seating principles, assessment and intervention. The course was taught by ATP faculty member Kelly Waugh, PT, MAPT, ATP, and drew

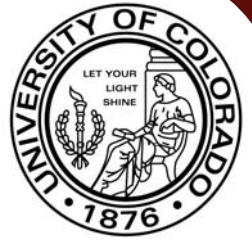
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45 participants, including therapists, physicians, rehabilitation technology suppliers, engineers and manufacturers' representatives from across the country. This unique course included a full day practicum, during which the participants were able to perform a comprehensive assessment on 4 individuals with complex wheelchair seating needs using ATP's seating simulators. We plan to offer this course once per year, so watch your inbox and our website for upcoming dates!

### **New Colorado AT Network Serves Senior Population**

The newly established Colorado Assistive Technology Network evolved out of the Colorado Assistive Technology (AT) Coalition which was formed in 2001 when several leaders in State agencies recognized the importance of assistive technology but also had limited resources to address the issues of awareness, training, and acquisition of technology. Currently the AT Coalition has a goal to get resources to the aging population in Colorado. As a result several members of the AT Coalition are collaborating to create a statewide training program that will place Assistive Technology Specialists in centers serving the senior population in locations across the State.

The collaborators on the Colorado Assistive Technology Network are the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), Assistive Technology Partners (ATP), Independent Living Centers (ILC), and the Senior Community Service Employees Program (SCSEP). The goal for ATP is to get information about assistive technology to the community members who need it and in this case specifically the senior population. The SCSEP funds the training of seniors 55 years and up for future employment. ATP will assist in training these seniors on becoming information and referral resources on assistive technology. The AAAs and the ILCs serve the senior popula-

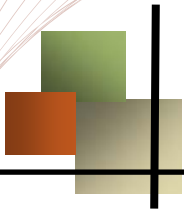
tion and have sites where the training of the seniors can take place. The worksite will provide the training on administrative skills and job seeking skills to assist in future job placements. Clearly, this is a win-win opportunity for all involved.

The AT Network will ultimately support aging Coloradans in finding employment; learning and acquiring devices to support their independence at home, work, or in their community; and building capacity of service organizations to better serve their communities.

### **Early Childhood Training on AT**

Through a partnership with Early Childhood Connections, Colorado Department of Human Services – Division for Developmental Disabilities, ATP is providing support to expand the delivery of assistive technology devices and services for children up to age 3. The goal is to increase AT resources for early intervention teams at the local level. Those who complete the training have access to a statewide assistive technology loan bank where equipment can be checked-out to try with children and families. The equipment is delivered throughout the State and provides families professionals the opportunity to determine what items are most beneficial on an individual basis.





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### **Patricia Cristine Heyn, PhD, joins the Assistive Technology Partners Research Team.**

She brings a wealth of experience to ATP, with a PhD in Exercise Physiology/Gerontology followed by two post-doctoral fellowships in 1) neuro-rehabilitation supported by the National Institute of Disability and Rehabilitation Research (US Dept Education), and 2) geriatric medicine research supported by the National Institute on Aging (NIH). Her current research interests include 1) developing and evaluating interactive technologies for cognitive and physical rehabilitation, and 2) investigating the effects of behavioral interventions on cognitive function. Dr. Heyn was recently awarded with the prestigious and selective NIH Office of Behavioral Science and Social Research Summer Institute on Randomized Clinical Trials Involving Behavioral Interventions, Virginia, and July 13-25, 2008. She has been with the University of Colorado Denver since 2004, but has just recently joined Assistive Technology Partners as an Assistant Professor.



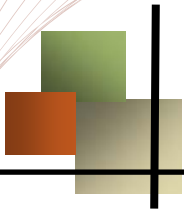
Dr. Heyn will support current ATP research efforts, including The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center for the Advancement of Cognitive Technologies (RERC-ACT) which is the nation's first Center to conduct research and development on assistive technologies for people with cognitive disabilities. Twelve universities and private companies throughout the United States are involved in assistive technology projects that will improve the lives of people with cognitive disabilities such as traumatic brain injuries, intellectual disabilities, and Alzheimer's disease.

### **Reaching the Rural Areas of Colorado through Video-Teleconferencing**

One of Colorado's challenges is the shortage of trained assistive technology professionals, particularly in rural areas of the state. To address this, a pilot project was initiated in 2008 called "Teaming through Technology". Through video teleconferencing, assistive technology consultation has been provided to families and professionals in more rural areas of the state.

One example of this consultation in practice is when ATP staff supported a family whose child was unable to travel because of health challenges. The staff consulted with the local team for this toddler via video from the Denver ATP office, brainstorming assistive technology solutions for play, positioning and computer access. The child, his family and the early intervention team participated from the child's home. Together, some low tech strategies were identified to help the toddler interact with his family. In addition, the participants explored the possibility of the child video conferencing with other toddlers his age. All who participated thought the remote consultation was a huge success!

Video-teleconferencing allows for more efficient and timely access to professional consultation which benefits the consumer. Reducing the time and costs associated with travel to rural areas allows ATP to be more responsive to a greater number of clients more quickly. Vide-Teleconferencing does not replace all of the needs for face to face training/evaluations and support, but it is one more effective strategy to support the rural areas of Colorado.



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### SWAAAC News

The Colorado Department of Education's SWAAAC (Statewide Assistive technology Augmentative Alternative Communication) Project recently wrapped up a very busy and highly productive 2007-08 school year. The school-based SWAAAC teams provide multi-disciplinary Assistive Technology services to enable students with disabilities full access and participation in all educational opportunities. This past year over 60 school districts and 500 SWAAAC team members from across the state participated in a wide variety of professional development activities. These included SWAAAC 101, Literacy Strategies for Children with Moderate to Severe Disabilities, Every Move Counts with Jane Korsten, MakeIt TakeIt, and The Collaborative Assistive Technology Conference of the Rockies. SWAAAC members also enjoyed a multitude of new state-of-the-art technology additions to the AT equipment loan bank including communication devices such as the ECO-14, Tango and FLASH. The new SWAAAC website is scheduled for reveal early this fall which will include an exciting new web-based data collection tool designed to track SWAAAC activities and their direct impact on student achievement. New monthly teleconferencing provides members with opportunities to share success stories, collaborate and problem-solve individual AT challenges.



October 6-9 will kick off the 2008-09 professional development schedule with an extended, return visit from Jane Korsten. Every Move Counts, Clicks and Chats Assessment and Intervention will be offered October 6 & 7 at the Anschutz Medical Center and broadcast to five distance locations throughout the state. October 8 & 9 will focus on Advanced Applications with on-site participation only.

If you would like more information about the SWAAAC project and/or activities, please visit the website at <http://www.swaaac.org>.

### Upcoming Events

#### **Every Move Counts, Clicks and Chats**

The Every Move Counts, Clicks and Chats seminar presents non-traditional assessment and intervention strategies that are appropriate for the development of communication in individuals having severe multiple differences, developmental differences and/or autism. The information presented is relevant to the needs of those individuals who are perceived as unable to communicate their wants and needs spontaneously in their environment, regardless of age or severity of physical and/or communicative differences. Techniques incorporate current research in the areas of communication, sensory integration and learning theory.



The seminar will take place October 6-9, 2008 at the Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora and will also be broadcast to five distance locations including Colorado Springs, Craig, Durango, Grand Junction and Greeley on October 6 & 7. Continuing education credits are also available.

For more information or to register for the seminar, visit <http://www.assistivetechologypartners.org> or call 303 315-1280 or toll-free 1 800 255-3477.

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## Learning Labs

Learning Labs are free and provide participants an opportunity to speak with the knowledgeable staff at Assistive Technology Partners about a variety of assistive technology devices. These labs include device demonstrations and provide hands-on exploration. Participants receive a certificate of completion with the number of contact hours completed. Due to space limitations, participants must register to attend. Upcoming Learning Labs include:

- October 2008: AT for Writing: An Overview of Low to High Tech Strategies
  - Denver: October 9, 2008
  - Grand Junction: October 15, 2008
- November 2008: Home Accessibility Design
  - Denver: November 13, 2008
  - Grand Junction: November 19, 2008

For more information visit our website:

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

## Assistive Technology Partners Open House

Governor Ritter has proclaimed October 12-18, 2008 as Assistive Technology Awareness Week in Colorado. In celebration, Assistive Technology Partners is hosting an Open House. It will occur at our Denver office on Wednesday, October 15 from 3-6p.m., at our WesTAC office in Grand Junction on Tuesday, October 14 from 3-6p.m. and at our new SETAC office in Colorado Springs on Tuesday, October 14 from 2-5p.m. Please join us to see some of the many devices and equipment that are available for individuals with disabilities and the aging population to support independence at home, at work and in the community! There will be light refreshments, tours of the center, and demonstrations on the latest technology!

To RSVP for an Open House please email [ATP@ucdenver.edu](mailto:ATP@ucdenver.edu) or call 303 315-1280 or toll-free 1 800 255-3417.

## Contact Assistive Technology Partners

**Assistive Technology Partners  
Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
School of Medicine  
University of Colorado Denver**

**<http://www.assistivetechologypartners.org/>**

### **Denver Office:**

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601 East 18th Avenue, Suite 130  
Denver, CO 80203

MAIN: 303.315.1280  
CLINIC: 303.315.1282  
TOLL-FREE: 800.255.3477  
TTY: 303.837.8964  
FAX: 303.837.1208

### **Satellite Office: Western Slope Technical Assistance Center (WesTAC)**

Mesa County Workforce Center  
2897 North Avenue, Modular 3A  
Grand Junction, CO 81501

MAIN: 970.248.0876  
TOLL-FREE: 800.255.3477  
TTY: 970.248.0877  
FAX: 970.248.0877

### **Satellite Office: Southeast Technical Assistance Center (SETAC)**

828 Wooten Road  
Colorado Springs, CO 80915

MAIN: 719.380.6220  
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