Summer Happenings at ATP

- ATP's Dr. Mary Ellen Buning and Julia Beems, and Alison Montana from Adams 14 School District, taught a four-week course in June at Western State College in Gunnison on the types of assistive technology used in special education. Sixty current and future special education teachers attended.

- Would youngsters with disabilities learn to read more quickly and easily if they had a “virtual tutor”? This was one of the questions ATP set out to answer in a three-month pilot project that included 12 children at Peiffer Elementary School in Jefferson County. The young people loved their animated “tutor,” and parents and teachers were similarly enthusiastic, reporting improvements in students' confidence levels. The next step is a larger study to determine the effectiveness of the “tutor.”

- Post-graduate student Jueng-Eun Lee, post-doctoral fellow, completed her year at ATP on July 22 and has returned to Korea. Dr. Lee came to us from EWHA Womans University and worked on assistive technology research projects during her stay at ATP.

New Assistance for SWAAAC Teams

Elizabeth Rusch, PT, DPT, holds a clinical doctorate in physical therapy. She will consult with the 550 educators involved in 65 StateWide Augmentative and Alternative Communication (SWAAAC) teams across Colorado, providing technical assistance and support to the teams as they work with children who have disabilities.

Conference, continued from previous page that with a master's degree in criminal justice, “I am a catalyst for change,” he said. “I have chosen the attitude that while I possess a disability, it does not possess me.”

The conference featured more than 65 presenters and 52 exhibitors, who demonstrated their latest technology to the professionals, people with disabilities and family members who attended the conference.

Meet Mark and Eric Stahlman

Three-year-old twins, Mark and Eric Stahlman, were among the people who enjoyed exploring ATP's Adapted Home in June. Their mother, Kelly Stahlman, says that ATP has been especially helpful to the family, evaluating the boys and ensuring that they have wheelchairs that allow mobility and also reduce scoliosis (curvature of the spine). “It has been a long process of finding just the right chair and seating,” she says, “but ATP’s staff has the expertise to make it happen.” The boys are delighted with the electronics that allow them to drive their own power chairs. “For them, that’s a big success,” she adds.

The computer software prescribed by ATP also allows the twins to use the computer to work on expressive language and to surf the Internet. Assistive Technology has “given them access to the world,” she says. “ATP has literally opened up their world.”
Coming Events

October 14
Mark your calendars for ATP’s next open house, to be held at 5:30 p.m. Bring a friend! This is a great way to introduce others to the important work being done by ATP for people who have disabilities.

October 24
The Coleman Institute for Cognitive Disabilities’ annual conference will be held in Boulder. Up to 350 researchers, disability leaders, the heads of federal agencies and prominent scientists and engineers are expected to attend.

October 25-26
The Coleman Institute’s conference will be followed by a meeting of the 12 partners involved in ATP’s Research Center for the Advancement of Assistive Technologies (RERC-ACT). The National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation Research and the Coleman Institute for Cognitive Disabilities are providing $5.5 million over five years to support the work of the Center.

November 12
ATP will host a “Boot Camp” for Advisory Council members. This fun-filled afternoon at ATP will provide Council members with a greater understanding of the work of ATP and how it makes a difference in the lives of people with disabilities. Anyone interested in attending the “Boot Camp” and joining the Council is encouraged to contact Dr. Cathy Bodine at 303-315-1281.

Twelve Personnel Prep Graduate Students

Twelve graduate students who come from school settings are spending a year studying at ATP. They are the first of 60 students who will be trained to use assistive technology with children with low-incidence disabilities. The students are part of a grant that addresses the shortage of trained personnel to meet the technology needs of children, and that will enable ATP to develop Masters and Doctoral programs in Assistive Technology at UC-Denver.

From left to right, Nan Butler, SLT; Sue Losteff, SLT; Karin Taylor, OTR; Gloria Jorgensen, PT; Becky Thomas, Ed; Elisha Huskes, SLT; Tom Spiers, AT; Connie Lane, OTR; Rose O’Donnell, OTR; Rosemary Bogart, OTR. Not pictured: Julie Bennett Brown, SLT; and Angela Runyon, SLT.

Four Summer Interns

ATP is delighted to have had the services of four interns this summer. Left to right, they are:

Kara Gosch, a second-year doctoral student in UC-Denver’s physical therapy program, worked at ATP on an exercise study for people with disabilities.

Eric Elleroff, who will enter Stanford University in the fall, developed a website that will allow clients to order items through ATP’s assistive technology “loan bank.”

Lauren Rogers, sophomore mechanical engineering student at the Colorado School of Mines, was involved with a number of projects at ATP, including revisions to books that show parents (or grandparents) how to make adapted equipment for children.

Tyler Giddings is a computer information systems major from Metro State College. He also worked on organizing ATP’s loan bank.

Jason Dorwart represented the Home Builders Foundation at the Adapted Home display.

New Director of Biostatistics for ATP

Sung-joon (Max) Min, PhD, has joined ATP as director of biostatistics. Coming to ATP from the Division of Health Care Policy Research, University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center, he will review all research protocols to ensure correct methodology is used and will help write grants to further ATP’s research efforts.

Dr. Min’s responsibilities at ATP as Director of Biostatistics include providing expertise in statistics and economics in joint collaborative research, mentoring ATP students, staff, and junior faculty in the use of statistical methods, and conducting research in applied statistical methods and in clinical, economic, and policy aspects of assistive technology.

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A sassistive Technology Partner’s annual Adapted Home and Accessible Classroom, and the Collaborative Assistive Technology Conference of the Rockies, drew record crowds in June. More than 600 people toured the Adapted Home, which featured technology for living room, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, a child’s playroom and home office.

The technology on display was for people of all ages and with cognitive, physical, vision, hearing and speech disabilities. The items ranged from simple devices that can be purchased at any hardware store to extremely high-tech items such as talking microwave ovens, accessible security systems, and software programs that allow persons with visual impairments to use a computer and surf the Internet. Refrigerators and dishwashers that are accessible to people in wheelchairs were also among the items featured.

This was the eighth year for the conference and Adapted Home, and the second year for the Accessible Classroom display, which was sponsored by the Colorado Department of Education.

Darren Jernigan was the conference’s inspirational keynote speaker. He described the auto accident that left him with paraplegia, and how he overcame terrible injuries to earn double majors in political science and public relations. He followed

Jason Donwart represented the Home Builders Foundation at the Adapted Home display.

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Please see Conference on next page
Summer Happenings at ATP

- Thirteen-year-old twins, Mark and Eric Stahlman, were among the people who enjoyed exploring ATP's Adapted Home in June.

- Their mother, Kelly Stahlman, says that ATP has been especially helpful to the family, evaluating the boys and ensuring that they have wheelchairs that allow mobility and also reduce scoliosis (curvature of the spine). "It has been a long process of finding just the right chair and seating," she says.

- Would youngsters with disabilities learn to read more quickly and easily if they had a "virtual tutor"? This was one of the questions ATP set out to answer in a three-month pilot project that included 12 children at Peiffer Elementary School in Jefferson County. The young people loved their animated "tutor," and parents and teachers were similarly enthusiastic, reporting improvements in students' confidence levels. The next step is a larger study to determine the effectiveness of the "tutor."

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