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A National Data Summary of State Assistive Technology Programs: Fiscal Year 2019

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AT Act Data Brief

USING AT ACT DATA TO UNDERSTAND, PLAN, AND IMPROVE PROGRAMS

CATADA
THE CENTER FOR ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT DATA ASSISTANCE

A National Data Summary of State Assistive Technology Programs: Fiscal Year 2019

by John Shepard and Daria Domin

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended (AT Act) authorizes grants to support programs that increase knowledge about, access to, and acquisition of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for individuals with disabilities and older Americans. These programs include 56 statewide AT programs that provide device demonstrations, device loans, device reutilization, training, technical assistance, public awareness, and assistance with obtaining funding for AT.

Statewide AT programs are required by law to collect data on their activities and provide annual progress reports to the Administration on Community Living in the US Department of Health and Human Services. This report is a compilation of data from these programs for FY 2019 and contains information about the activities of the statewide AT programs.

INTRODUCTION

State and Territory Assistive Technology Programs (AT Programs), authorized under Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, focus on improving the provision of AT through comprehensive, statewide programs that are consumer-responsive. The goal of these programs is to increase access to and acquisition of AT through an integrated set of state-level activities and state leadership activities.

What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

AT is any item, piece of equipment, or system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

(Source: AT Act of 1998 as amended, 29 USC §3002)

Section 4 of the AT Act provides 56 formula grants, administered by the Administration on Community Living, to support an AT Program in each state, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The 2004 reauthorization of the AT Act required a common set of activities to be provided by all AT Programs (with some limited exceptions) to create consistency among grantees. Required state-level activities include state financing and device reutilization that support acquisition of AT, and short-term device loans and device demonstrations that support access to AT. Required state leadership activities also support access to AT. This includes training, technical assistance, public awareness, information and assistance, and coordination and collaboration activities. All the state-level activities and the major state leadership activities will be described in greater detail later in this brief.

AT Programs are required to serve people with all types of disabilities, of all ages, in all environments, and to provide a wide array of activities to meet AT needs. Programs must also serve family members, service providers, educators, therapists, employers, health and rehabilitation professionals, AT vendors, procurement officials, and other interested parties throughout all versions of the law. Section 4 of the AT Act requires specific data reporting on services provided via the required state-level and leadership activities (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2020). These data, found in the Annual State Grant for AT Progress Report submitted by all 56 grantees, are the source used in this brief.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES FLOW: How Consumers Access Information About and Acquire AT Devices

The AT Act authorizes state leadership and state level activities designed to provide an integrated continuum of AT services for people with disabilities and older adults. The service flow begins with the individual learning about AT through public awareness, training and information and assistance; then exploring AT through device demonstration and/or borrowing AT to try-out and make informed decisions about what AT will work best. When the individual has made an informed decision, the individual can acquire AT for little or no cost through reuse programs or, if eligible, through financial loan programs or other financing options available. Each activity within the continuum provides critical access or acquisition to AT.

Device Demonstrations

Device demonstrations compare the features and benefits of a particular AT device or category of devices for an individual or small group of individuals (U.S. Department of Education [ED], 2011). Device demonstrations allow individuals and groups to make informed choices about an AT device prior to acquiring it. Along with providing demonstrations, AT Programs are required to offer comprehensive information about state and local AT vendors, providers, and repair services.

During the FY 2019 reporting period, 56 AT Programs conducted device demonstrations as part of their state-level activities. State AT Programs classify device demonstrations into 10 device categories. There were 33,799 device demonstrations in FY 2019. Speech and communication was the largest category, comprising 18% of all demonstrations. Nine additional device categories comprised between 1% and 16% of all demonstrations (see Table 1).

Table 1: Number of Device Demonstrations by Device Type

Type of AT Device	Number of Demos	Percent
Speech communication	6,019	18%
Mobility, seating	5,412	16%
Vision	4,770	14%
Daily living	4,713	14%
Learning, cognition	3,773	11%
Computers and related	3,307	10%
Hearing	3,301	10%
Environmental adaptations	1,320	4%
Recreation, sports, and leisure	615	2%
Vehicle modification and transportation	569	1%
TOTAL	**33,799**	**100%**

As illustrated in Table 2, individuals with disabilities (46%) comprised nearly half of those participating in device demonstrations in FY 2019, followed by family members, guardians, and authorized representatives (25%). AT demonstrated to consumers was primarily used for community living (67%), education (23%), and employment (10%).

Table 2: Number of Individuals Who Participated in Device Demonstrations

Type of Individual	Number of Participants	Percent
Individuals with disabilities	29,783	46%
Family members, guardians, and authorized representatives	16,159	25%
Representatives of education	6,823	11%
Representatives of health, allied health, and rehabilitation	5,480	8%
Representatives of community living	3,434	5%
Representatives of employment	2,035	3%
Representatives of technology	954	2%
TOTAL	**64,668**	**100%**

Ken: Choosing the Right UTV

Ken, a farmer in western Kansas who is a double lower leg amputee, needed to figure out what utility vehicle (UTV) would work for him so he could continue to spray weeds on his farm, check fence line, and monitor his livestock. Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) staff wanted to demonstrate multiple UTVs without requiring Ken to make trips to different vendors.

ATK staff organized an event with commercial dealers of four different types of UTVs. At the event, ATK staff and Ken compared features of the different vehicles, their load beds, and spraying options. This information will be part of the recommendations to Ken's vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselor.

Six other ATK customers, four VR counselors, a VR regional manager, and 50 community members attended the event, along with 11 vendors from four states. Several vendors noted that this opened a new market for them as they learned to discuss features of their products that are relevant to people with disabilities. One presenter told ATK staff that having the support of the sign language interpreters helped him interact with all members of his audience.

Ahmed: AT for Gaming

Making video games accessible allows young people with disabilities to engage with their peers in new ways. A team from the New England AT Center (NEAT Center) worked with Ahmed, a 15-year-old who was looking for better ways to game despite the challenges of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

Ahmed uses a power wheelchair and has limited mobility in his arms. He can hold a typical game controller and access all of its buttons, but experiences hand fatigue when playing for long periods or physically demanding games.

As part of the demo, NEAT Center staff looked at Ahmed's physical positioning when he plays and tried a few low-tech solutions to make playing more comfortable and ergonomic. They explored in-system accessibility features to revamp Ahmed's controller. Lastly, they did a demo of a specialized adapted controller and it completely changed his game play.

Ahmed agreed that the adapted controller would meet his needs and he was referred to our lending library to borrow the device until he can get one of his own.

Device Loans

Device loan programs allow AT consumers and professionals who provide services to individuals with disabilities to borrow AT devices for use at home, at school, at work, and in the community. The purpose of a device loan may be to assist in decision-making, to fill a gap while the consumer is waiting for device repair or funding, to provide a short-term accommodation, to facilitate self-education by a consumer or professional, or to provide other training (ED, 2011).

During FY 2019, 56 AT Programs reported providing 36,198 short-term loans of 54,018 AT devices to individuals or entities. 44% of borrowers were individuals with disabilities, the largest group to whom devices were loaned, followed by family members, guardians, and authorized representatives (20%), and representatives of education (16%). Table 3 shows a more detailed breakdown.

Table 3: Number of Device Loans by Type of Borrower

Type of Borrower	Number of Device Borrowers	Percent
Individuals with disabilities	15,926	44%
Family members, guardians, and authorized representatives	7,161	20%
Representatives of education	5,703	16%
Representatives of health, allied health, and rehabilitation	4,951	13%
Representatives of community living	1,160	3%
Representatives of employment	663	2%
Representatives of technology	634	2%
TOTAL	**36,198**	**100%**

Both devices for computers and related devices (18%) and speech and communication devices (18%) were the most common types of AT devices loaned in FY 2019, followed by mobility and seating devices (13%) and devices for learning and cognition (13%). Seven additional device categories accounted for the remaining 40% of the device loans made (see Table 4). 66% of device loans (n=23,860) were made to individuals for the primary purpose of decision-making. Other reasons borrowers cited for wanting a short-term device loan included for accommodation (20%), for training/personal development (8%), and as a loaner during repair/waiting for funding (6%).

AT acquired through device loan programs was primarily used for community living (64%), education (30%), and employment (6%).

Table 4: Number of Devices Loaned by Type

Type of AT Device	Number Loaned	Percent
Computers and related	9,529	18%
Speech communication	9,529	18%
Mobility, seating	7,222	13%
Learning, cognition	7,205	13%
Daily living	6,577	12%
Vision	5,746	11%
Environmental adaptations	3,524	6%
Hearing	2,540	5%
Recreation, sports, and leisure	2,021	4%
Vehicle modification and transportation	125	<1%
TOTAL	**54,018**	**100%**

Emma and the Double Robot

Emma is a 13-year-old who is not able to attend her local public school and interact with her peers because of her disability. Bartlesville Public Schools (BPS) borrowed the Double Robot from Oklahoma ABLE Tech. The robot is a telepresence tool that allowed Emma to have access to the classroom and her peers while at home.

The Double Robot enabled Emma to attend and participate fully in her core classes and receive live instruction. It has been so well received that BPS Foundation submitted a grant proposal to pilot a Double Robot for the next school year.

Device Reutilization Programs

Device reutilization involves transferring a previously owned device from someone who no longer needs it to someone who does. Device reuse falls into two activity categories. The first one, device exchange, usually occurs through an online forum where sellers and buyers can connect. Recycling, refurbishment, and repair (RRR) and/or open-ended loan is the second category. In RRR, devices are typically obtained from individuals who no longer need them, are refurbished, and then provided to new owners.

Open-ended loan programs use the same process as RRR, collecting previously used devices and refurbishing them as needed, and then loaning them to individuals who can use them as long as they are needed. The expectation is that the devices would be returned to the program at some point. For the purposes of this brief, the second category—RRR and/or open-ended loan—will be referred to as device refurbishment.

In FY 2019, 57,588 consumers received a total of 78,412 reutilized devices from 52 AT Programs, resulting in an overall savings of $30.4 million. Mobility, seating, and daily living AT comprised 88% of all devices provided through reuse programs (see Table 5).

The most common device reutilization activity was device refurbishment (as described previously). Ninety-seven percent of recipients received devices through a device refurbishment program, saving over $29 million. Of the services provided through reutilization programs, device refurbishment activities provided the greatest savings to recipients (see Table 6).

AT acquired through device reutilization programs was primarily used for community living (95%), and was also used to support education (3%) and employment (2%).

Table 5: Device Reutilization Summary by Device Type

Type of AT Device	Number of Devices	Percent of Devices	Total Savings	Percent of Savings
Mobility, seating	39,344	53%	$20,646,285	71%
Daily living	25,913	35%	$4,602,606	16%
Environmental adaptations	4,209	6%	$1,303,353	4%
Computers and related	2,111	3%	$616,558	2%
Vision	806	1%	$405,563	1%
Speech communication	660	1%	$833,629	3%
Learning, cognition	613	<1%	$102,384	<1%
Recreation, sports, and leisure	543	<1%	$367,437	1%
Hearing	481	<1%	$127,716	<1%
Vehicle modification and transportation	47	<1%	$57,094	<1%
TOTAL	**74,727**	**100%**	**$29,062,626**	**100%**

Table 6: Number of Recipients, Devices, and Savings by Type of Reutilization Activity

Activity	Number (Percent) of Device Recipients	Number (Percent) of Devices	Total Savings to Recipients	Percent of Savings to Recipients
Device refurbishment	55,826 (97%)	74,727 (95%)	$29,062,626	95%
Device exchange	1,762 (3%)	3,685 (5%)	$1,385,916	5%
TOTAL	**57,588 (100%)**	**78,412 (100%)**	**$30,448,542**	**100%**

Luis Finds the Right Walker

Luis is a 7-year-old boy who underwent surgery due to his motor disabilities. He was discharged from the hospital in a wheelchair. After several weeks, his doctor authorized him to walk again using a mobility device to help maintain stability.

Luis' parents contacted the Puerto Rico AT Program (PRATP) to inquire about a walker that would fit his particular needs. They could not afford to buy the options offered by suppliers. Through PRATP's AT reuse program, Luis was fitted with a walker appropriate for his size and needs.

As soon as the fitting was finished, Luis started walking with the device and he did not let it go for the duration of the service. When he left, he was happy getting around with his walker and PRATP staffers were overjoyed to see him moving again.

State Financing

State financing activities assist individuals with disabilities to acquire AT through 3 types of programs:

1) Financial loan programs that provide cash loans that borrowers can use to purchase AT
2) Other financing activities that directly provide AT
3) Additional financing activities that allow consumers to obtain AT for a reduced cost

Financial loan programs can include low-interest loan funds, interest buy-down programs, revolving loan funds, loan guarantees, or other cash borrowing options. Other programs use external funding provided to the AT Program by another agency, and directly provide that AT to eligible recipients. These programs are frequently limited in focus, only providing a particular type of AT (such as telecommunications), are restricted to individuals with a specific kind of disability, or require that individuals be eligible for a specific funding source (such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, vocational rehabilitation, or Medicaid).

State financing activities that reduce the cost of AT include cooperative buying programs, equipment lease programs, and device design and fabrication programs. Funds authorized under the AT Act of 1998, as amended, cannot be used to purchase AT devices or services directly for individual consumers (ED, 2011).

CASH LOAN PROGRAMS

Thirty-five state AT Programs reported data on financial loans made. These programs issued 945 loans for AT devices, totaling $8,532,521. The average annual income of loan recipients was $49,606, and the national average interest rate was 4.3%.

Out of 945 loans issued, 15% were made to applicants with annual incomes of less than $15,000, and another 23% were made to applicants with annual incomes between $15,001 and $20,000. The overwhelming majority of total loan dollars issued (65%) was for vehicle modification and transportation technologies, averaging $20,580 per loan. Hearing AT ranked first in number of devices financed, averaging $4,064 per loan. For a more detailed breakdown of loans by device type, see Table 7.

Table 7: Types and Dollar Amounts of AT Acquired with Financial Loans

Type of AT	Number of Devices Financed	Device Percent	Dollar Value of Loans	Dollar Percent	Avg. Loan Amount
Hearing	475	49%	$1,930,580	23%	$4,064
Vehicle modification and transportation	271	28%	$5,577,157	65%	$20,580
Mobility, seating, and positioning	59	6%	$245,794	3%	$4,166
Daily living	56	6%	$173,687	2%	$3,102
Environmental adaptations	38	4%	$326,778	4%	$8,599
Vision	28	3%	$65,441	1%	$2,337
Computers and related	23	2%	$20,006	<1%	$870
Recreation, sports, and leisure	16	1%	$163,673	2%	$10,230
Learning, cognition	9	1%	$29,405	<1%	$3,267
Speech communication	0	0%	$0	0%	$0
TOTAL	**975**	**100%**	**$8,532,521**	**100%**	**$8,751**

OTHER STATE FINANCING PROGRAMS THAT DIRECTLY PROVIDE AT

Twenty states reported data on other financing activities that resulted in the acquisition of AT devices and services. In FY 2019, these programs served 2,724 individuals and provided 6,224 AT devices. Evironmental adaptations, computers and related devices, and hearing devices 70% of the technologies funded. Environmental adaptations made up 27% ($1,024,325) of the total value of AT provided ($3,860,279), and 40% of total devices funded. For a more detailed breakdown, see Table 8.

Table 8: Types and Dollar Amounts of AT Funded

Type of AT	Number of Devices Funded	Device Percent	Dollar Value of AT Provided	Value Percent	Avg. Amount Per Device
Environmental adaptations	2,508	40%	$1,024,325	27%	$408
Computers and related	929	15%	$583,029	15%	$628
Hearing	907	15%	$266,155	7%	$293
Vision	732	12%	$734,253	19%	$1,003
Daily living	392	6%	$238,543	6%	$609
Learning, cognition	305	5%	$161,413	4%	$529
Speech communication	191	3%	$357,465	9%	$1,872
Mobility, seating, and positioning	185	3%	$92,304	2%	$499
Vehicle modification and transportation	70	1%	$395,947	10%	$5,656
Recreation, sports, and leisure	5	< 1%	$6,845	< 1%	$1,369
TOTAL	**6,224**	**100%**	**$3,860,279**	**100%**	**$620**

OTHER STATE FINANCING PROGRAMS THAT REDUCE THE COST OF AT

Ten states reported data on other state financing activities that allowed consumers to obtain AT at a reduced cost. In FY 2019, these other financing activities served 6,638 individuals, and 8,009 devices were acquired at a total savings of $880,567.

Out of all the AT categories, vision AT resulted in the highest savings to consumers ($446 per device). Devices for learning and cognition (2,988 devices) and daily living (1,748 devices) combined made up 59% of acquired devices. This resulted in moderate savings per device ($55 for each device for learning and cognition, and $47 for each vision device). For more information, see Table 9.

Table 9: Types and Dollar Amount of AT Devices Acquired

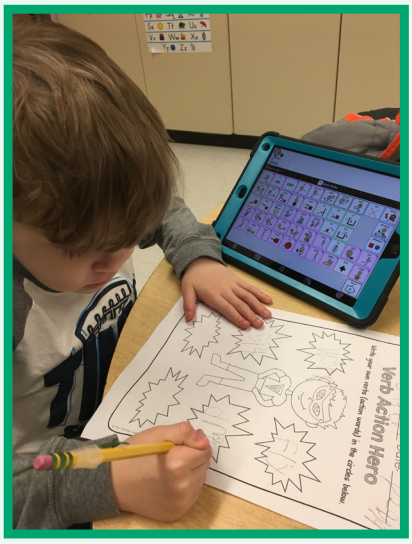
Type of AT	Number of Devices Acquired	Device Percent	Current Retail Price	Sale Price	Savings	Savings Percent	Avg. Amount Saved Per Device
Learning, cognition	2,988	37%	$273,284	$107,902	$165,382	19%	$55
Daily living	1,748	22%	$99,152	$16,372	$82,780	9%	$47
Speech communication	1,217	15%	$117,209	$85,872	$31,337	3%	$26
Vision	1,130	14%	$569,811	$66,396	$503,415	57%	$446
Hearing	305	4%	$57,390	$3,161	$54,229	6%	$178
Mobility, seating, and positioning	290	4%	$39,573	$16,535	$23,038	3%	$79
Computers and related	224	3%	$19,538	$3,372	$16,166	2%	$72
Recreation, sports, and leisure	59	<1%	$6,604	$3,661	$2,943	<1%	$50
Environmental adaptations	44	<1%	$10,850	$9,774	$1,076	<1%	$24
Vehicle modification and transportation	4	<1%	$201	$0	$201	<1%	$50
TOTAL	**8,009**	**100%**	**$1,193,612**	**$313,045**	**$880,567**	**100%**	**$1,028**

AT acquired through state financing activities was primarily used for community living (66%), education (30%), and employment (4%). Additional data on other state financing programs can be viewed under Aggregate APR data in the State Financing Other table on Catada.info.

Cutler Shares His Words

Cutler received his device through the AT reimbursement program that provides supplemental funding for schools to purchase AT needed by students. Cutler quickly learned how to independently navigate his device installed with the Prologue2Go app. He wasted no time adding phrases to help him express his thoughts.

His device helped Cutler shine as a writer. He is now completing worksheets he previously didn't do and proudly displaying his work along with his classmates' in the hallway. Cutler's parents and educators report that he made gains this year that would not have been possible without this assistive technology.



State Level Activities Performance

ACQUISITION PERFORMANCE

After obtaining services from state AT programs, consumers are surveyed about the primary purpose for the device's use and why they sought out state AT Program services. Consumers are surveyed after they participate in state financing activities, device reuse activities, and/or short-term device loan activities that are not for a decision-making purpose.

Key data highlights:

- 69% of consumers stated that they could only afford AT through these programs.
- Community living was by far the most common purpose for AT, at 83%.

ACCESS PERFORMANCE

After participating in a device demonstration and/or short-term device loan for a decision-making purpose, consumers are asked about the kind of decisions they were able to make as a result of these programs, and about the primary purpose for these devices. These services have overwhelmingly contributed to individuals with disabilities or their representatives making an informed decision about AT.

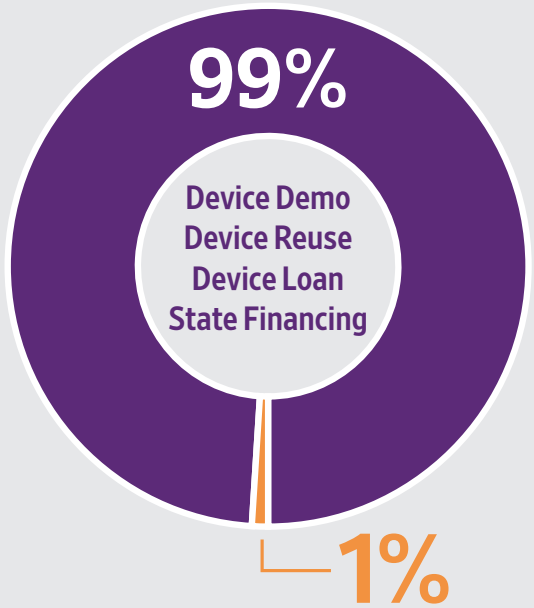
Key data highlights:

- 88% of respondents stated that an AT device would meet their needs, or those of someone they represent.
- 61% of consumers stated that community living was the main purpose for their AT use.

Comprehensive data on aggregate performance measures can be viewed under Aggregate APR data in the Performance Measures table on Catada.info.

Consumer Satisfaction

AT Program consumers were asked to report their satisfaction with the services they received from four state-level activities. Device reuse, state financing, device loan, and device demonstration programs **all received customer satisfaction ratings of 99% percent!**



Highly Satisfied or Satisfied

Satisfied Somewhat or Not at all Satisfied

State Leadership Activities

TRAINING

Training activities are instructional events for a specific purpose or audience that are designed to increase participants' knowledge, skills, and competencies around AT. Examples include large or small group classes, workshops, and presentations, and training can be delivered in person or via a variety of distance education mechanisms (ED, 2011).

Out of 103,182 trainees, 25% were representatives of education, and a close second (24%) were individuals with disabilities. There was a 4% decrease in the number of people trained from FY 2019. More detailed training data can be viewed under Aggregate APR data in the Training table on Catada.info.

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Information and assistance (I&A) activities are those in which state AT Programs respond to requests for information or put individuals in contact with other entities. These other entities can provide individuals with information and intensive assistance on AT devices/services or AT funding.

In FY 2019, a total of 179,451 individuals received I&A. Out of those, 50% were individuals with disabilities and representatives of health, allied health, and rehabilitation. 81% of recipients requested information about specific AT products/devices/ services. More detailed I&A data can be viewed under Aggregate APR Data in the Information and Assistance table on Catada.info.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance (TA) is provided by state AT Programs to help public agencies and other organizatons improve their, policies, programs and outcomes. As a result of TA and other activities, some AT Programs report improved outcomes with policy, practices, or procedures that resulted in increased access to and acquisition of AT in the state.

In FY 2019, the 56 grantees reported providing a majority of TA to community living agencies (28%) and education agencies (28%).

Table 10: Percentage of Agencies that Received Technical Assistance

Percentage of Participants that Attended Trainings by Topic		Definition of Training Topic
55%	AT products and services	The focus is on increasing skills and competencies in using AT, and integrating AT into different settings.
25%	Combination of topics	AT products/services, AT funding/policy/practice, and information technology/telecommunication access.
7%	AT funding/ policy/practice	Funding sources and related laws, policies, and procedures required to implement and deliver access to AT devices/services.
7%	Information technology/ telecommunication access trainings	Accessible information technology and telecommunications, including web access, software accessibility, and procurement of accessible IT.
6%	Transition	Education transition (school to work or post-secondary education and Part C to Part B), community transition (institution to community living), and other transitions.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Public awareness activities provide information on the availability, benefits, appropriateness, and costs of AT devices and services, including a statewide information and referral system. Public awareness activities can include public service announcements, internet outreach and social media, radio talk shows and news reports, newspaper stories and columns, newsletters, brochures, and public forums.

The exact number of people who receive information through these public awareness activities is large, but is often difficult to quantify, and estimates must be reported. Due to the difficulty of quantifying, FY 2017 was the first year that data for public awareness activities were submitted as anecdotes. The following stories highlight some innovative outreach and awareness efforts conducted by AT programs during FY 2019:

THE AMERICAN SAMOA AT PROGRAM has continued its ad campaign on both the English and Samoan radio stations on the island. It also placed many ads in the local newspaper. Staff have been going to the outer islands and communities to educate and inform the public about the program's many different services.

Specialists from **THE DELAWARE AT PROGRAM** hosted an awareness session for seniors and individuals with disabilities enabling them to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies at home and disasters in their communities. The 75 attendees learned about a wide variety of equipment supporting hearing, vision, communication, and self-care. Their homework was to assemble a "go bag" appropriate to their own needs in preparation for an emergency. These events were popular, prompting invitations for three similar sessions in the coming year.

THE HAWAII AT PROGRAM had a segment on statewide KITV news in January 2019. The focus was on AT for seniors and people with disabilities including a home-automation program. The executive director also discussed the value of personal independence and advocacy efforts related to AT availability. This segment aired on three separate broadcasts, was shared on the news program's website, and is available on YouTube. Across these platforms, it has been viewed by an estimated 10,000 individuals and lead to new service inquiries.

It had been years since the **ILLINOIS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM (IATP)** last exhibited at the Illinois State Fair 10-day event. In summer 2019, IATP was asked to take part in the fair for two days only: Senior Day and Veterans' Day. IATP staff took AT devices geared for each of these audiences to the fairgrounds and spoke with 400 individuals over two days. This led to an increase in calls for information and assistance as well as foot traffic into the AT Demonstration Center.

THE INDIANA AT PROGRAM produces a weekly TechTip YouTube video highlighting various AT devices, how they work, and where they can be found. The INDATA YouTube channel has over 2,200 subscribers and a library of over 500 videos. (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC82mLdQHkc8qNUOkhvRvIhA)

THE KENTUCKY AT PROGRAM and its Regional AT Center in Owensboro co-sponsored a special needs expo in downtown Owensboro. The 400 families attending learned about the services and programs offered in this community. Vendors shared information on adult day services, advocacy and support, behavior supports, and early childhood. The event was advertised in local newspapers and on Facebook, with a reach of about 48,000 readers and subscribers. https://www.owensborotimes.com/features/non-profits/2019/07/wendell-foster-hosting-second-special-needs-expo/

THE NORTH DAKOTA AT PROGRAM created an initiative to reach out to rural seniors to provide education on their services and the benefits of AT. They traveled to 21 senior centers across rural ND and presented to about 600 seniors. These presentations resulted in numerous referrals for services through their three equipment distribution programs, as well as their AT Act-related programs.

A national AT Maker's Fair Conference and Expo was organized by one of **PENNSYLVANIA AT PROGRAM'S** regional centers housed in a Center for Independent Living in southwestern Pennsylvania. This two-day event brought together participants from 20 states as well as two Canadian provinces. Attendees took part in 24 different workshops focused on fabrication of AT.

THE IDAHO AT PROGRAM uses its Facebook and Pinterest pages, as well as the Tater Tech Notes newsletter, to share information with consumers. Facebook followers learn about a weekly featured device available in the program's lending libraries, project events, and new and innovative devices. Pinterest is used to share device information and ideas on mobility, environmental adaptations, and recreation. The program has over 10,000 followers on Pinterest, and its Facebook posts have reached over 17,400 people.

The **KANSAS AT PROGRAM** and Kansas AgrAbility collaborated on an interactive display of technology solutions to help farmers, ranchers and their families to be involved in agriculture at the Four State Farm Show. The farm show annually attracts over 1,200 from Missouri, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Arkansas. The display focused on technology for hearing, vision, and fine motor needs, but accessible recreation was the primary draw. Adapted fishing poles, western saddles, and automatic water guns on a switch-operated mount drew attention from children and adults.

Initiatives from the Field

This section highlights coordination and collaboration of activities among public and private entities responsible for policies, procedures, or funding for the provision of AT devices and services.

COMMUNITY LIVING

During California's Public Safety Power Shutoff events in October 2019, 10 Independent Living Centers received over 800 calls urgently requesting power for oxygen equipment, CPAP/BiPAP machines, and power wheelchairs. The **California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC)** collaborated with Pacific Gas and Electric to assist people with disabilities and older adults before, during, and after an emergency. Through many of the Independent Living Centers and several community partners, CFILC launched a pilot disaster readiness program, Disability Disaster Access & Resources. This program assists those who use electrical medical devices to access backup portable batteries and charging stations in their region.

EDUCATION

The **Idaho AT Program** developed 5 modules of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) training for speech/language pathologists and education professionals. This training was conducted face to face in 3 locations across the state, made available online, and offered for professional development credit. The AAC in the classroom practices and procedures were developed and distributed through the trainings and made available online.

TECHNOLOGY

The **Colorado AT Act Program**, in collaboration with the University of Colorado Denver's Dept. of Bioengineering and the College of Engineering, developed six courses for undergraduate and graduate bioengineering students. The courses train these students to become designers of AT and/or rehabilitation/bioengineers and prepare them to enter the AT workforce. Course descriptions can be found here: www1.ucdenver.edu/centers/center-for-inclusive-design-and-engineering/education

EMPLOYMENT

Hawaii's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) partnered with the **AT Resource Center (ATRC)** to provide four individuals with disabilities a workplace experience for two months. ATRC's employees work with the Aging and Disability Resource Centers and the Disability and Communications Access Board to promote partnerships with employers to empower individuals with disabilities to live independent and self-sufficient lives.

Ohio's AT Program helped the new governor, Mike DeWine, craft a set of executive orders, signed minutes after being sworn in, that foster independence and employment for people with disabilities. These initiatives call for the Department of Administrative Services to appoint an ADA coordinator. They also mandate that state employees undergo regular training, including training on AT related to employment, to increase hiring opportunities within state government.

HEALTH, ALLIED HEALTH, REHABILITATION

The Kansas Health Policy Authority (KHPA, Kansas Medicaid) requested assistance from **AT for Kansans** to develop a telehealth service delivery policy for occupational therapy. Staff from the AT Program reviewed the Occupational Therapy Association's position and guidelines on telehealth service delivery and obtained state Medicaid contacts in rural states with a similar population distribution. This information was shared with the KHPA contacts. A telehealth practice policy and guidelines were developed and adopted by the state legislature in the 2018–2019 session.

LEVERAGED FUNDING

Leveraged funding is frequently secured by state AT Programs and is used to expand and maximize services. In FY 2019, state AT Programs leveraged $23.9 million from federal, state, local, and private sources. These dollars were used to supplement $28 million in Section 4 AT Act formula grant funding for FY 2019, and to expand program reach in all AT Act-authorized activities. This brief highlights $67.5 million in savings and benefits delivered by state AT Programs in FY 2019 to almost 500,000 service recipients.

CONCLUSION

State and Territory Section 4 AT Act Programs have empowered individuals with disabilities of all ages to fully engage in education, employment, and community living, propelling their chances to advance socioeconomically and achieve optimal self-sufficiency. State-level and state leadership activities provide a continuum of services that reach a wide variety of individuals and provide access to a broad range of technologies.

AT Programs enable individuals with disabilities, their representatives, and others working with them to make informed decisions about accessing and acquiring technologies. The streamlined process allows consumers to receive information about a device and become familiar with it through loan and demonstration programs prior to making a costly purchase. When consumers are ready to acquire a device, the reuse and state financing programs provide an affordable purchasing avenue.

REFERENCES

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The names of some individuals in the stories have been changed to protect their privacy.

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RESOURCE INFORMATION

Contact and other information on each State AT Program can be found on the new CATADA website under State Program Information. View Key Summary Tables under DATA that provide data on the major AT Act activities by state. This publication is available in accessible digital format on ACL's website and on the CATADA website at https://catada.info/catada-publications