

Heading with information:
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The Quarterly Journal of the Texas Technology Program
TTAP

Art of a fall auburn leafed wreath and in the center reads "Fall 2016".
Image of a dry field with bales of hay one to the left is very close and the others fade away in the background getting further and further away with an overcast sky. On top of the sky reads: National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

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Welcome to TTAP (Texas Technology Access Program) and our Newsletter! This issue we have some new things to share that may interest, or benefit you. We thank you for your support of our services. If you have any ideas or suggestions that you'd like to see us publish please feel free to let us know and email: Olivia Rains orains@austin.utexas.edu

It's National Disability Employment Awareness Month!

Awareness for NDEAM

(source: What Can You Do Campaign) Are you ready for National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)? Held every October, NDEAM is an opportune time to educate about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The 2016 NDEAM theme is #InclusionWorks.

"By fostering a culture that embraces individual differences, including disabilities, businesses profit by having a wider variety of tools to confront challenges," said Jennifer Sheehy, deputy assistant secretary of labor for disability employment policy. "Our nation's most successful companies proudly make inclusion a core value. They know that inclusion works. It works for workers, it works for employers, it works for opportunity, and it works for innovation."

NDEAM is led by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), but its true spirit lies in the many observances held at the grassroots level across the nation every year. The Campaign for Disability Employment encourages organizations of all sizes and in all industries to participate in NDEAM.

For specific ideas on supporting NDEAM, visit www.dol.gov/ndeam. Suggestions range from simple, such as putting up a poster, to comprehensive, such as implementing a disability education program. Regardless, all play an important part in fostering a more inclusive workforce, one where every person is recognized for his or her abilities—every day of every month.

Taking advantage of the hashtag theme, the Campaign for Disability Employment will be encouraging our followers to stimulate discussion on social media about the many ways “inclusion works.” Stay tuned to learn more, and start thinking now about ways to incorporate the #InclusionWorks theme into your own activities this fall!

Employment Accommodation

Some employees do not want to give their employers a lot of details about their disability. If you prefer not to give a lot of information, you may want to limit the medical information you initially give to your employer when you request an accommodation. For example, you may want to tell your employer what you are having trouble doing, that the problem is related to a disability, and what your accommodation ideas are. Some employers will not ask for more information. However, employers have the right to request additional medical information when an employee requests an accommodation and if you do not provide it, the employer can deny your accommodation request. When an employee requests an accommodation and the disability or need for accommodation is not obvious, an employer may require that the employee provide medical documentation to establish that the employee has an ADA disability and needs the requested accommodation. For more information, visit Medical Inquiry in Response to an Accommodation Request at <http://askjan.org/media/medical.htm>. The [Texas Technology Access Program \(http://tatp.edb.utexas.edu/loan.php\)](http://tatp.edb.utexas.edu/loan.php) can assist with providing assistive technology and other devices that you can borrow to try at your place of employment.

Our loan program provides a large variety of assistive technology for all disabilities and you can borrow up to a month! When you go to our website and request a device to borrow we will ship it out and include a shipping label to return it so that you can make an informed decision on the technology that best meets your needs. See how we can help you today and go to our link at: <http://tatp.edb.utexas.edu/loan.php>

Abilities Expo 2016

(A photo close up shot of the TTAP Booth at Abilities Expo conference shows the tables with technology equipment displayed on the table for attendees and a large display sign in color for TTAP. To the left of the table stands from left to right, Darlene West, Ed Hammer and Roger Levy.)

The TTAP is a proud annual sponsor of Abilities Expo Houston. Abilities Expo is about bringing necessary products and services together under one roof for the community of people with disabilities, their families, caregivers, seniors, and healthcare professionals. It's about introducing opportunities that can enrich your life...especially opportunities you never expected. Now scheduled yearly for seven cities across the nation, each Abilities Expo offers three days of free access to the latest technologies and

resources for ALL disabilities, informative workshops on issues that most resonate with the Community, and fun activities like adaptive sports, dance, assistive animal demos, and more. This year, 4,500 including adults and kids, attended the Houston Abilities Expo held Aug 4-7 at the NRG Stadium. Director Roger Levy, Technology Specialist Darlene West, Olivia Rains and Ed Hammer represented the TTAP. It was a great experience for all of us and we look forward to the next Abilities Expo Houston coming August, 4-6, 2017.

A Success Story of Aging in Place

While working at Abilities Expo, we meet many of people and hear a lot of stories! They are all moving and inspiring. This Abilities Expo we met a man who was looking through our technology displayed when he asked about our program and services. I explained our program and all that we do and he was delighted to know we are covering all of Texas for these reasons. He began to tell me his story about utilizing his construction skills and expertise to change the lives of his own family members and it was very moving. Here is his story:

Our Certified Aging in Place Home: Building Peace of Mind
by Kurt and Shannon Ivison
Ivisonconstruction.com

(Photo of senior man and woman in recliner chairs with blankets on them in a living room with light wood floors and furniture around them.)

Nellie and Cleatus, whom we know as Grandma and Grandpa, had lived on their own for decades. Over the years, time was catching up, and they began to show signs of needing more help. It wasn't as easy to get up and down the steps to the porch or to keep their aging home cool in the Texas heat. Even the shower and bathroom fixtures were more difficult to utilize. Although their home no longer met their needs, they weren't ready to accept the changes in their situation. They loved their home and had no desire to ever leave. Home is home, right?

But last year, their health worsened noticeably. It became clear they needed more help with their everyday tasks and medical situation. The average nursing home for two people ranged from \$8,000 to \$12,000 per month or more, depending on the intensity of care needed. There had to be a better way to take care of our grandparents. They had spent their lives working and saving to care for us. They were the ones who had loved and spoiled us—they deserved the best. It was our turn to give back to them what they had so lovingly shown to us over the years.

So our new journey with Grandma and Grandpa truly began here. They needed to be close to family and have a place that was easy to move around in—yet still feel like the home they were leaving behind. A Certified Aging in Place home was the answer.

We built an 1100 square foot, two bedrooms, one bath, open concept, barrier-free home for them to live in—just ten steps from their grandson's back door. This home includes every necessity for our aging grandparents: three foot doors, vinyl plank floors, and low pile carpet with high visibility transitions to reduce tripping hazards. Even the bathroom is large and open with a barrier-free walk-in shower and grab bars always within reach. And in the evening, Grandma and Grandpa are free to walk out onto their wraparound porch to sit and enjoy the night breeze while watching their great-grandchildren play in the backyard.

Since they've made the transition to their CAP home, Grandma and Grandpa have flourished by keeping their sense of independence while be close to family, friends, and caretakers. They are truly happy in their new home, having a revolving door with family visiting them on a daily basis.

Now, we have peace of mind knowing that Grandma and Grandpa are close by, as well as being loved and cared for in a dignified manner. And we are blessed to have had the opportunity to build them the CAP home that made this possible.

Kurt and Shannon Ivison
Ivison Construction.com

Many home access needs can be resolved by basic assistive technology devices. In instances where construction is considered, remodel or new build, Texas Technology Access Program recommends researching architects for knowledge of accessibility design as well as contractors. Contractors can obtain through National Association of Home Builders a designation for Certified Aging-in-place Specialists. For more information <https://www.nahb.org/en/learn/designations/certified-aging-in-place-specialist.aspx>

Autumn footer across bottom of the page of white and orange pumpkins with fall leaves in oranges and reds.

New Technology From TTAP

We have some awesome new technology in our loan program and our demonstration centers!

Colorino Color Identifier:

The Colorino Color Identifier can distinguish over 150 different shades, including colors as specific as Light Red and Vivid Red. Very accurate and easy to use, Colorino is perfect for people with low vision when picking out clothes, sorting laundry, and matching colors. This is in our loan program and ready to check out today. Go to link: <http://tatp.edb.utexas.edu/loan.php>

Features

Announces over 150 different color shades

3 volume settings

Light probe feature

Earphone jack for privacy (Not included)

(photo of the Colorino Color Identifier device with a swatch display of colors spread out like a rainbow beneath the device.)

I-Series by TobiiDynavox:

The I-Series+ has been specifically designed for individuals with Cerebral Palsy, Rett, ALS or Stroke/Aphasia, who rely on assistive and augmentative communication to make their voices heard in order to live more independent and integrated lives

Loudest voice on the market
Modern design
Scratch resistant capacitive screen
Automatic back up
Works with Microsoft Windows 10

(Photo of the I-Series by TobiiDynavox at a ¾ angle showing the stand holding the device upright and showing the screen of communication images.)

Autumn footer across bottom of the page of pine cones, red berries with fall leaves in oranges and reds.

Image of a dark black space with a bright blue spotlight shining down and over that reads:
Demonstration Center Spotlight. RISE Center for Independent Living, Beaumont. 755 S. 11th St. Ste. 101, Beaumont, Tx 77701.

Services

RISE Center offers seven core services and two additional services to consumers residing in Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange counties. (More information on all of our services is provided in our Core Services and Other Services tab located within our Services tab at the link: <https://risecil.org/services/>)
Eligibility: Our services are provided, at no cost, to persons residing in Jefferson, Orange, or Hardin counties, self-identifying as a person with a disability. A determination is made by RISE Center to make sure our services will contribute to a person's successful independent living.

Core Services:

Information & Referral
Independent Living Skills & Training
Peer Support
Individual & Systems Advocacy
Relocation – Facilitate transition from nursing homes and other institutions to home and community based residences.
Diversion – Provide assistance to those at risk of entering institutions.
Transition – Facilitate transition of youth to post-secondary life.

Other Services:

Assistive technology
Universal Wellness

Contact:

email: rise@risecil.org
web: www.risecil.org
Voice/tty: 409-832-2599
VRS: 409-242-6174
8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Monday - Friday

What's Coming Up?

Image of 5 photos in a row from left to right of images at past ATIA conferences and over the image as whole reads: ATIA 2017.

ATIA 2017, showcasing international excellence in the field. Come to expand your knowledge or professional development through expert educational sessions, discover the latest in products and systems, broaden your contacts in the community, and share your own expertise. ATIA 2017 is the place to learn about advances in assistive technology, stay on top of best practices and trends, and network with others who make, sell, deliver, support, test and use products and systems that enhance life for persons with disabilities.

Questions? Email info@atia.org or call 1.312.321.5172 <https://www.atia.org/conference/>

ATIA 2017 Caribe Royale Hotel and Convention Center, Orlando, Florida

Pre-Conference seminars: January 17-18, 2017.

Conference: January 18-21, 2017.

Image of looking down at a cropped desk view from left to right a leather bound notebook closed with a ballpoint pen on top then an open laptop with a pair of hands typing on the keyboard and far right top a back cup of coffee in a mug, and below that an iPhone. Above this photo reads: "Feedback".

"We visited your booth (at Abilities Expo) and were very excited to see all the apps that can help our granddaughter."

"Thank you so much for this opportunity. Darlene does a great job assisting customers. Will use this service again!"

"Thank you Darlene! When I was told about this program, I had my doubts about being able to get devices on such short notice. I never would have believed that the process would be so easy and fast. Thank you again!"

"Thank you so much, Darlene! It was great help and she is going to use the Hip talk as her communication device!"

"Thank you very much for allowing me for the consumer with one hand to use it. The consumer loved the keyboard. The consumer's VR Counselor in Dallas, Texas purchased it for her. The same type of keyboard. The consumer can continue working at her job as a receptionist and typist."

“It definitely helped!! That's the device we are going with and we are in the process of getting funding! Thank you in so many ways.”

“Well, you all are doing a wonderful job!! We try to have some equipment in stock, but of course it's nothing like the plethora of goodness that you guys have to loan. Love the program.”

“Thank you so much for having this program. It helped us when we were in a bind.”

Logo image of UT tower top, and reads: “What Starts Here Changes. The World The University of Texas at Austin”

Logo for TTAP blue rectangle and reads: “Texas Technology Access Program”
TTAP values your input.

If you have any suggestions, comments, or article you would like to have included in our newsletter, please contact us:

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TTAP Demonstration Centers

Brazoria County Center for Independent Living, Angleton
Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living, Bryan
Coastal Bend Center for Independent Living, Corpus Christi
Disability in Action, Abilene
Disability Connections, San Angelo
East Texas Center for Independent Living, Tyler
Easter Seals of Greater Houston
Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, Austin
Heart of Central Texas Independent Living Center, Belton
Helping Hands, Amarillo
Houston Center for Independent Living, Houston
Paso Del Norte Children's Development Center, El Paso
Project MEND, San Antonio
REACH of Dallas
RISE Center for Independent Living, Beaumont
VAIL – Valley Association for Independent Living, McAllen

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