



Texas Technology Access Program 2022 Annual Report Summary

Assistive technology (AT) helps people with disabilities and those who are aging access education, vocation, recreation/leisure, and their community.



**296
devices
loaned**

When individuals with disabilities, their families, and qualified professionals who serve them are able to borrow AT devices and assess them in the individual's typical environments, they are then better able to determine if the devices meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and those who are aging.



**3,030
individuals
trained**

TTAP provided in-person/virtual training on topics including: AT devices and services, funding, and Information and Communication Technology Accessibility (ICTA), or a combination of any/all of the above.



**3,242 devices
refurbished**

The project is a multi-organizational initiative bringing together expertise from Easter Seals, Project Mend and the Texas Technology Access Program, by whom the project is made possible. This project promotes increased independence for people with disabilities through the acquisition of refurbished dedicated medical devices and computers at a low cost. This project saved consumers over \$536,000.



**\$420
in device
financing**

State Financing Activities provide consumers with resources and services that result in the acquisition of AT devices and services.

Participants gained financial loans to fund 30 assistive devices. Additionally, TTAP was able to provide 3D printed adapted items at limited to no cost.



**304 devices
demonstrated**

TTAP and our affiliated Demonstration Centers throughout the state provided AT demonstrations to 380 consumers with disabilities, their care givers and the professionals that serve them. Opportunities to try devices in a hands-on environment with guidance from a trained professionals assists in purchase decisions to meet the need of the consumer. This ensures responsible purchases from a variety of federal, state, local, private, and personal funding sources.

TTAP Collaborations



Texas Partners for Inclusive Access is spearheaded by Disability Rights Texas and The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities. It began during COVID-19 as a support for information and vaccine/testing access for people with disabilities. It has continued in this capacity and expanded. Many of the collaborative partners received the ACL public health grants. We have decided to use this group to network those public health employees focusing on people with disabilities. TTAP's public health staff is continuing to participate in the group and bring assistive technology and accessibility issues to the forefront. The group's current focus is addressing the home health staffing shortages. In Texas, the average pay rate is \$7/hr. Agencies have had a difficult time hiring and keeping competent employees. During the upcoming legislative session, we are gearing up to focus on this crisis. Additionally, the group is hosting an Emergency Preparedness "clinic" in Houston in 2023.



TTAP partnered with the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities and other stakeholders on a Task Force to develop policy recommendations, information, and training on the critical need of power back up for dedicated medical equipment and assistive technology in emergencies. Three relevant outcomes occurred as a result:



- 1.) conducted and archived virtual training of solutions for DME/AT during power failures (Recorded training can be found here: <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/disabilities/webinar-archive-emergency-management>),
- 2.) participated in a Public Utility Commission Hearing on responses and concerns to power loss for individuals with disabilities during Winter Storm Uri to guide future policy changes, and
- 3.) provided feedback to Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) on the funding of generators for people with disabilities and our input expanded the types of generators supported. The task force continues to tackle this challenge and would eventually like to see high capacity back up batteries also funded by a variety of state sources.



TTAP paired our funds with the University of Texas' University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDD) to be able to fund the public health position for two years. Our goals are intertwined and focus the intersection of disability and other at-risk groups- most specifically minorities and Texans with low socioeconomic status. The position engages in outreach for the UCEDD and TTAP programs in general and more finitely for TTAP in supporting technology and assistive technology tools, and skills needed to engage in successful telehealth experiences.



Eventually, they will create training and technical assistance materials to support telehealth that will be published on our YouTube channel. There are other obligations under the UCEDD grant that the position will also fulfill. The position was only recently filled and only a portion of the salary/fringe/travel/overhead is covered by TTAP.



Success Stories



Ms. C. is a 62-year-old who is homebound due to macular degeneration. The COVID-19 Pandemic has further isolated her from family, friends and interacting in her community. While Ms. C. is eager to learn how to shop online for needed goods and supplies, she lacked a computer at home with a larger monitor so that she could easily read and connect with resources and family through email.

The Double Click Computer Project has provided Ms. C with the means to retain her self-sufficiency and to adjust to the changes in her routines and life.



A family attended a demonstration of AAC devices and apps for a child with verbal apraxia that was about to enter Kindergarten. After viewing several AAC devices and AAC apps on an iPad, they checked out the iPad for 35 days and were eventually able to decide on the TD Snap App.

He was in private speech therapy over the summer and was up and ready to go in a general education classroom by the time school started. Parents reported his frustration levels decreased and he was much calmer, even when communication was challenging.





“Upon the success of the use of the LAMP program, we started the process of wondering what device to get. TTAP was so wonderful, that they allowed us to use a smaller tablet to see if my son would be as interested as he had been with the iPad tablet.



Thanks to TTAP, we were able to freely try LAMP in 2 different devices in order to find out which one worked best for him and give him a communication tool. Now, we purchased a device for him and installed the Lamp program. We wouldn't have tried this because of the concern of spending money and not working. Instead, TTAP program allowed us to focus first on the tool he needed.”



S is a young adult in her 20's who suffers from Hemiplegia. Her medical condition causes paralysis to one side of her body, which makes daily tasks of living difficult. S's occupational therapist referred her to Project MEND for a transport wheelchair, drop arm commode, tub transfer bench, and a semi electric hospital bed.



Thanks to our equipment donations received from the community, Project MEND was able to provide Samantha with all the equipment requested for her to regain her mobility and independence back. S says the equipment has made it “easier to be mobile with less trouble”.

She notes that the transport wheelchair has specifically helped her caregivers transport her to doctor appointments with more ease.

