

AT KEY Newsletter
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What's New with IPAT?!

Judie Lee, IPAT Director

The 2007 North Dakota Legislature appropriated state dollars to IPAT for the very first time. Many citizens across the state let their legislators know the importance of IPAT's services and your voices were heard. This funding will help to offset federal cuts and will make it possible for IPAT to maintain the AT services that have been established. The need for assistive technology can only be expected to increase as our population ages and demands to be productive and independent. This investment by the State will help to ensure the rapid advances in technology are not leaving hundreds of North Dakotans with disabilities and those experiencing the effects of aging behind at work, school, home, and in their community. Two new coordinators are being sought to fill openings in Fargo and Bismarck (check www.ndipat.org under News).

The Bismarck Technology Access Center (TAC) moved to a new location in March. The address is 400 East Broadway Ave. – Suite 612. The demonstration center hosts a wide array of assistive technology to see and try-out. The Fargo and Bismarck Centers have video conferencing capabilities so you can see equipment in both places from either site! Stop in and check them out. It is always a good idea however, to call ahead to ensure someone is there, as the IPAT staff is also very involved with training, public awareness activities, and other assistance which takes them out of their offices.

IPAT's Webmaster Bob Puyear, created www.ndipat.org 10 years ago, prior to many websites. He has always maintained standards to keep it accessible and informative. The site was re-vamped this past year, utilizing graphics and other features to increase the ease of use. It is a dynamic site with information being added or updated on a regular basis. Please make it one of your favorites and visit it often.

If it has been awhile since you visited the IPAT Equipment Loan Library, you may be missing some new additions. New equipment has been added, particularly in the area of augmentative communication, vision, and computer access. The Equipment Loan Library is a very affordable way to try out a device in your own setting before purchasing or pursuing funding avenues.

IPAT continues to be a robust assistive technology program delivering services so people with disabilities can get the technology they need for work, school, and home. Call 1-800-265-4728 or visit www.ndipat.org for more information.

IPAT Partners with Protection & Advocacy Program

It is widely recognized that older individuals with disabilities and/or long term illnesses who wish to remain in their own home need various types of support. The North Dakota Protection & Advocacy Program realizes that assistive technology (AT) is one of the essential support services for this population, and has entered into a contract with IPAT to provide AT services.

Over the next few months, IPAT staff will be providing training to consumer groups involved with in-home care for persons with dementia to increase their awareness and use of assistive technology (wandering alerts, medication dispensers, automatic shut-offs) to promote safety and care-giver peace of mind. In addition to the training, IPAT will also be conducting a limited number of AT assessments to determine specific AT equipment needs. Upon completion of the AT assessment, IPAT will provide the AT recommendations to the P&A staff; they will then work to identify funding avenues for the purchase of the AT equipment. For more information about this partnership call 1-800-265-4728 or e-mail your questions to ipatinfo@integra.net.

Exploring Assistive Technology

The 21st century is the age of technology. Every day, we use new technology to check-out at the supermarket, pay bills online, or place orders through automated call centers. The 21st century is also the age of assistive technology (AT). Every day, people with disabilities and those experiencing the effects of aging use a wide array of AT devices to help them perform work, school, and home related tasks. How can one explore the range of AT devices in our fast-paced, technologically savvy society?

One way to explore the range of AT is to organize a visit to one of IPAT's Technology Access Centers (TAC) located in either Fargo or Bismarck. These centers provide a place to try-out a variety of devices and software specific to computer access, environmental control, sensory loss, telecommunications, activities of daily living, and communication. To set-up a time to explore, call 1-800-265-4728 or visit www.ndipat.org.

Another way to expand your AT horizons is to explore the numerous opportunities offered online or through toll-free numbers. Some of these opportunities may include:

- 1) requesting a free CD demo disk from the manufacturer that allows you to try out the program for a limited time in the environment where it will be used;
- 2) checking out the "ask us" tabs available on many websites; e-mail questions about specific devices and the site expert will respond privately via e-mail – often questions of particular interest will then be posted on the corresponding website;

- 3) linking to the technical support staff listed to teach you how to use a particular product or troubleshoot problems with your product;
- 4) participating in an online “tutorial” on a specific device or software product, these typically can be done at any time;
- 5) searching for “webinars” that focus on devices or software that you are interested in exploring – pre-register and sign in the day of the session, these are frequently first-come-first-serve and at no cost;
- 6) checking out “blogs” relating to AT you are curious about; read the interactive online journal and post your questions or comments;
- 7) setting up a 1:1 or small group “web” training directly with the manufacturer; and
- 8) viewing video clips of device set-up and use provided on individual websites.

The means of AT exploration are many; it is up to you to take that first step in exploring options. If you are unsure of how to take that step, contact IPAT at 1-800-265-4728 or ipatinfo@integra.net.

CONSUMER CONNECTION

The IPAT Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) has been an integral part of assistive technology service delivery in North Dakota since 1994. The membership consists of individuals with disabilities or family members/guardians of such an individual, along with required agency representatives. Together the CAC represents a spectrum of disabilities, ages, services, geographical diversity and AT use. They meet six times a year, and are led by Chairperson Bob Puyear, and Vice-chairperson Bob Vandal, who work closely with the IPAT staff.



CAC membership from front to back: Deanna Bakken, Charlet Bohl, Jillian Schaible, Shirley Brennan, Cornelius Grant, Bob Vandal, Bob Puyear, Mary Wahl, and Chuck Hanson.

Meet the CAC's Newest Members . . .

Jillian Schaible is a Bismarck native, having graduated from Bismarck High School and the University of Mary. She has a Bachelor of Science in computer information systems. While pursuing gainful employment, Jillian is currently volunteering with IPAT and St. Alexius Medical Center, which has led to a strong desire to work in healthcare. She believes in following one's dreams, and is a strong supporter of AT. She has used a variety of AT throughout her life, and knows the positive role it can play in achieving goals, hers and anyone else's.

My name is Deanna Bakken, I am a person with a disability. I am a believer in equal and fair treatment for all people and have written a number of editorials to that end. I became acquainted with IPAT through joint service on the Red River Human Services Board. I have used IPAT's Fargo TAC to try-out various computer track balls. I then used the Equipment Loan Library to rent the track ball I felt best met my needs before making a purchase. I ended up buying the track ball and it works wonderfully for me. AT is something I believe in and look forward to providing what input I can to the IPAT CAC.

FUNDING NEWS

The North Dakota Association for the Disabled, Inc., (NDAD) is pleased to announce that as a result of recent legislation, there is funding available for 2007. NDAD will consider applications for direct financial assistance in the following categories:

- Personal Attendant Care
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Home accessibility
- Limited medications
- Limited medical travel

Restrictions may apply and NDAD guidelines will be followed. NDAD will continue to provide information, advocacy and referral services as always.

Grant money is also available for individuals with disabilities. NDAD received a grant through Dakota Medical Foundation for small pieces of durable medical equipment. NDAD also has grant money available for travel for children who need out of town medical care. Additionally, a generous donation was received to provide medical travel assistance for residents of the counties of Williams, Divide and McKenzie.

Please contact NDAD at (701) 775-5577 or 1-800-532-6323 for more information or to request an application.

Faye Gibbens
Chief Program Officer
NDAD

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

13th Annual Escape to the Lake

The North Dakota Association for the Disabled, Inc., (NDAD) sponsors an annual water skiing event for people with disabilities known as "Escape to the Lake". Participants from around the state come for this opportunity to discover the thrill and excitement of water skiing at the second largest adaptive water skiing event in the nation. Professional instructors from Texas Adaptive Aquatics provide training. Specialized water skiing equipment for those participating has been purchased by NDAD. NDAD and Sporting Chance in Bismarck donate time and other equipment for the weekend.

Escape to the Lake 2007 will be **June 9th and 10th.**

For more information contact NDAD at 1-701-775-5577 or 1-800-532-6323.

Technology Talk

June 12 7:30 pm

June 19 1:30 pm

St. Alexius Medical Center

Alzheimer's Family Group Meetings

Bismarck, ND

Contact: Peggy Shireley 701-355-4615

Anne Carlsen Center for Children – TechnoCamp

July 22-27, 2007

Individuals 13-21 years old

Elk's Camp Grassick, near Dawson, ND

Contact: Theresa Hanson 1-800-568-5175 ext. 169

Application: www.annecenter.org

2007 Children and Family Services Conference

July 24 – 26, 2007

Ramkota Inn – Bismarck, ND

Contact: Pete 1-701-777-3442

Brochure: www.cfstc.und.edu

Parent Tips for Autism

August 3, 2007

Contact: NDCPD 1-800-233-1727

EQUIPMENT SPOTLIGHT



Adesso Smart Cat Pro® Touchpad-USB

Having trouble using a standard mouse? One alternative that may help is the **Smart Cat Pro® Touchpad**. Just move your finger around on the touchpad to move the cursor. Tap your finger or use the buttons to click and double click. This versatile pointing device comes with software to activate the scroll, zoom and 4 button hot-link features. These 4 programmable hotlink buttons can be programmed to perform a variety of tasks such as: launch programs, open files, and control browser functions. This touchpad is available for rent from the IPAT Equipment Loan Library and for a hands-on demonstration in both of our Fargo and Bismarck Technology Access Centers. Please call 1-800-895-4728 to arrange a loan or a demonstration. This device is available for purchase through many retailers or it can be purchased directly from the manufacturer: www.adesso.com or by calling 1-800-467-1195.