

**\$\$\$ for Assistive Technology Proposals**

**Judie Lee, IPAT Director**

Ten exciting assistive technology projects have been awarded funding through IPAT. An evaluation team from the IPAT Consumer Advisory Committee reviewed numerous quality applications. Their selections were based upon the qualifications, experience, and background of the proposer; technical analysis; cost analysis; and innovation of the proposed project. Congratulations to:

**Bismarck Public School System (BPS):** Watch for teacher and parent training in the areas of AT. They will also be implementing what they call the Dynamic Assistive Technology System (DATS) which will build and expand upon each school site's capacity to deliver AT services.

**The Dakota Center for Independent Living (Dakota CIL), Mandan, and Independence Center for Independent Living INC (Independence CIL), Minot:** Will collaborate to establish computer sites that will provide, training, support and appropriate accommodations to individuals with disabilities. These sites will link consumers/participants via web cams.

**KATS Productions:** Will produce a 15-18 minute informational video on the full range of assistive technology and its application by people with disabilities of all ages in all types of environments. Plan to borrow the finished product to share with others in your community.

**Red River Human Services Foundation:** Will create computer-based presentations/tutorials for current employees to review and study material in 9 core modules. These presentations/tutorials will provide these employees with learning disabilities an avenue to complete the required core modules by customizing the information to fit individual learning styles.

**Burleigh County Senior Adults Program:** Seniors will have the opportunity for training on the basic use of computers and how to access and explore the Internet. They will be able to sign up for individual e-mail accounts.

**Sitting Bull College:** Will sponsor a 2 day workshop for teachers and administrators on the Standing Rock Nation and for undergraduate students enrolled at Sitting Bull College (SBC). The workshop will

increase participants knowledge of assistive technology devices and their use within the classroom.

**University of Mary:** Students in the Occupational Therapy program will have adaptive computer access equipment available for hands-on experiences year round.

**Region 8 Vocational Rehabilitation:** Will develop a local assistive technology lab where opportunities for training, demonstrations, and hands-on trial use of equipment will be available to individuals. The Assistive Technology Focus Group, a group of professionals in southwestern North Dakota, will collaborate with this project.

**Disability Support Services, University of North Dakota:** Will sponsor a one day workshop for K-12 and post secondary teachers of students with learning disabilities on textHELP Read & Write software. Each participant will be provided a registered copy of textHELP software to use in their home district.

Visit [www.ndipat.org](http://www.ndipat.org) for more information about each of these projects.

### **Association of Tech Act Projects (ATAP)**

IPAT, as one of the 56 "tech act" projects in the United States and its territories, is a member of the association of Tech Act Projects (ATAP). This national organization was formed to collaborate with persons with disabilities and others at the national level to increase the availability and utilization of assistive technology devices and services for all individuals with disabilities in the US and its territories.

On a national level, ATAP's purposes are:

1. To promote public awareness of AT,
2. To provide training and education,
3. To develop positions on a full range of national AT issues,
4. To provide a forum for exchanging information and promoting the system change accomplishments and activities of the "tech act" projects,
5. To identify the need and opportunities for the development of nationally conducted activities, and
6. To develop and promote a national agenda.

Members of the ATAP Board of Directors are elected by the membership and represent the various geographic regions of the US and funding cycles of the "projects." IPAT Director, Judie Lee, served as the

Chairperson of the Interim Steering Committee during the organization of ATAP and has just completed her term on the board.

### **Upcoming training: *AT and Legal Issues***

The Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT), in conjunction with the North Dakota Assistive Technology Help-Line, will be offering a training session for legal professionals. It is designed for those who may be working with clients seeking increased inclusion and equal access to information and materials in the school setting. Technology allows all learners to expand their ability to gather, manipulate, understand and use information. The presenter will focus on issues regarding obtaining assistive technology through the special education system, and will cover such topics as: Overview of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Assistive Technology Requirements under IDEA, Obligation of School Districts under Section 504 of the Rehab Act, and Systematic Enforcement of Rights under IDEA and Section 504.

The training session will be presented over 8 Interactive Video Network (IVN) sites on April 26, 2000 from 12 noon to 3:50pm CST. Ron Hager, a staff attorney from Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc., Buffalo, New York will conduct the training. Cost to participants will be \$15. Additional workshop information and registration details will be sent out in early March. For specifics, or to pre-register, please call the North Dakota Assistive Technology Help-Line at 1-800-472-2911.

### **Hot Off the Press!**

The Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT) announces the availability of a new AT resource, **SOLUTIONS: Assistive Technology for Persons with Hidden Disabilities**. This 38-page document features assistive technology solutions to aid individuals experiencing difficulty with memory, attention, confusion, safety, task completion and socialization due to hidden disabilities. This publication is meant to serve as a springboard for new ideas and creative actions to meet the needs of individuals with less obvious disabilities through the use of assistive technology.

The document discusses the six areas identified above with regard to functional limitations, provides snapshot stories of individuals with hidden disabilities to further understanding, contains possible AT strategies and products to consider within each area, overviews AT funding sources, and lists manufacturers names and addresses for those products discussed within the text.

If you would find this document useful call the North Dakota Assistive Technology Help-Line at 1-800-472-2911 and request yours today. Copies are available in a variety of formats. Please note format at time of request.

### **Seeking Assistive Technology Answers?**

**Call the North Dakota Assistive Technology Help-Line at 1-800-472-2911.**

Technology Tidbits

Inspiration® has released Inspiration 6 – a software program to assist in idea development and organization. Inspiration 6 integrates an expanded set of tools for bringing the power of visual learning into classrooms and worksites. It includes enhanced graphics capabilities, Internet connectivity, and expanded support for using visual learning to create concept maps, webs and outlines. Get details and download a trail at:  
<http://www.inspiration.com/>

**AlphaSmart®** will soon introduce the AlphaSmart 3000, offering new features, more compatibility, and more power. Memory has been expanded to allow storage of up to 100 pages of text, and editing capabilities have been enhanced with Cut/Copy/Paste functions and an improved spell-checker. Battery life has been doubled. Ready for shipment in late February.

**PLUS** AlphaSmart is now offering a reduced price of \$149 on the AlphaSmart 2000 while supplies last. Details available at 1/800-274-0680 or <http://www.alphasmart.com>

### **Consumer Connection**

*Proper Medication Dosage Promotes Independence*

Dear Friends,

I would like to convey to you how an automated pill dispenser enabled my 87 year old father, who was experiencing short term memory problems to continue to live independently.

Dad was having some health problems because he was not taking his medication correctly, especially his diabetic pill prior to supper. I tried many different types of plastic dispensers available in drugstores, but none of them seemed to work. Then I heard about COMPUMED and it solved his medication problems. He never missed another dosage and the built in alarm was the secret. The alarm would go off when he needed to

take his medication and continue to ring until the drawer that contained his pills was removed from the COMPUMED dispenser. The machine also would dispense the correct dosage, which prevented Dad from over or under medicating himself. Dad would often miss his 4pm diabetic pill because he would be away visiting or having coffee with friends. But the alarm would still be ringing when he returned to his room, reminding him that he had missed his medicine. It may be one hour or so late but at least the medicine was taken before dinner.

When a person follows their medication schedule generally their health will remain stable or may even improve. Everyone's goal, young or old is to live independently and the automated dispenser will help them do this. It sure helped my Dad. Maybe you know someone it would benefit. This machine is available for trial use through the IPAT Equipment Loan Library.

Darlene Lysne, daughter

## **FUNDING NEWS**

### **A Funding Option for Home Modifications**

Finding funding sources for or accumulating the necessary monies to pay for home modifications to increase accessibility and safety can be challenging. A recent tool, called a reverse mortgage (RM), can be a funding option for older homeowners who are "house rich but cash poor." A reverse mortgage is a loan: where the lender pays you – in a lump sum, a monthly advance, a line of credit, or a combination of all three – while you continue to live in your home.

To qualify for a reverse mortgage, you **must** own your home. The amount you are able to borrow generally is based on your age, the equity in your home, and the interest the lender is charging. Funds received from a reverse mortgage may be used for any purpose. They could, therefore, be used to pay for remodeling bathrooms, kitchens, bedrooms, doorways, and stairs, for example, to improve accessibility and safety.

Reverse mortgages do not have to be repaid until the last surviving homeowner dies, sells the home, permanently moves from the property, or no longer occupies the home as their primary residence. At that time, the accrued interest plus any cash the lender has paid to the owner is due and payable.

For more information about reverse mortgages and other options, which may make necessary home modifications possible, contact the financial lending institutions in your community.

## **EQUIPMENT SPOTLIGHT**

### **Kurzweil 3000**

Kurzweil 3000 is an advanced yet easy-to-use-reading system that helps people with reading difficulties or learning differences to improve reading speed and comprehension. Ideal for school, work, or home, it provides a multisensory approach to reading by providing auditory and visual presentation of scanned text and images on the computer screen. Individuals can read along, take notes, and highlight text right on the computer screen. Language tools like a dictionary, thesaurus, and phonetic spelling tools provide additional support. With the click of a button, Kurzweil 3000 will also read web pages. System Requirements: Pentium Processor (166MHz or faster), Windows 95/98, or NT, CD-ROM Drive, 64MB Ram (color) or 32MB (black & white), Twain compatible flatbed scanner, SoundBlaster or compatible sound card. Base price: \$1995. Call Lernout & Hauspie (L&H) at 800-894-5374 or <http://www.lhs.com/kurzweil3000/> for more information and/or free demonstration software CD.

## **Mark Your Calendar**

February 9, 2000

- Sr. Community Wellness Adventure  
Belcourt Community Center  
Belcourt, ND  
Grace – 477-6111 ext. 176

*February 16, 2000*

- Winning Women's Workshop  
Lake Region State College  
Devils Lake, ND  
Audrey – 800-443-1313 ext. 510

*February 29, 2000*

Alternative Phone Users

- Dispatch Operators Workshop  
Bismarck, ND  
Becky – 265-4849

*March 8, 2000*

- Disability Awareness Day  
Cathedral School  
Bismarck, ND

*April 26, 2000*

#### AT and Legal Issues

- ND – Interactive Video Network  
Sites: Bismarck  
Devils Lake  
Dickinson  
Fargo  
Grand Forks  
Jamestown  
Minot  
Williston  
Sharon – 800-472-2911