

A National Data Summary of State Assistive Technology Programs: Fiscal Year 2017

by Daria Domin and Diane Golden

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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 ACL. This report is a compilation of data from these programs for FY 2017 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.

Section 4 of the AT Act provides 56 formula grants, administered by the Administration on Community Living in the US Department of Health and Human Services, 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, 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 (Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs [ATAP], 2011). Section 4 of the AT Act requires specific data reporting on services provided via the required state-level and leadership activities (ATAP, 2011). These data, found in the Annual State Grant for AT Progress Report submitted by all 56 grantees, are the source used in this brief.

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)

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. The service flow begins with 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 an informed AT decision has been made, gently used AT can be acquired for little or no cost through reuse programs, 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.



80,096

Number of people who participated in device demonstrations



\$2,400,000

National savings projected because of device demonstrations*



90%

Percentage of device demos that resulted in positive decisions, ensuring a consumer–equipment match and avoiding inappropriate device acquisition

During the FY 2017 reporting period, 56 AT Programs conducted device demonstrations as part of their state-level activities. State AT Programs classify device demonstrations into 10 categories. There were **49,056 device demonstrations** in FY 2017. Daily living was the largest demonstration category, comprising 18% of all demonstrations. Six additional device categories comprised between 7% and 17% of all demonstrations (see Table 1). Since FY 2016, there has been a 2.4% increase in the number of devices demonstrated. As illustrated in Table 2, individuals with disabilities (42%) comprised nearly half of those participating in device demonstrations in FY 2017, followed by family members, guardians, and authorized representatives (24%). There was a **10% increase** in number of individuals who participated in device demonstrations since FY 2016. AT demonstrated to consumers was primarily used for community living (66%), education (23%), and employment (11%).

Table 1: Number of Device Demonstrations by Device Type

Type of AT Device	Number of Demos	Percent
Daily living	8,606	18%
Mobility, seating	8,498	17%
Speech communication	7,391	15%
Computers and related	6,087	12%
Vision	5,280	11%
Learning, cognition	4,793	10%
Hearing	3,649	7%
Recreation, sports, and leisure	2,030	4%
Environmental adaptations	2,092	4%
Vehicle modification and transportation	630	>1%
TOTAL	49,056	100%

Table 2: Number of Individuals Who Participated in Device Demonstrations

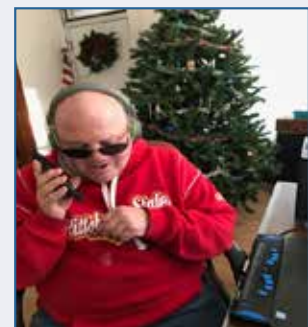
Type of Individual	Number of Participants	Percent
Individuals with disabilities	33,845	42%
Family members, guardians, and authorized representatives	19,220	24%
Representatives of education	10,845	14%
Representatives of health, allied health, and rehabilitation	7,647	10%
Representatives of community living	4,854	6%
Representatives of employment	2,410	3%
Representatives of technology	1,275	1%
TOTAL	80,096	100%

Device Demonstration and Employment

Kirk needed the right technology to work from home. Since he is blind and has arthritis, he worked with the Kansas AT Program and Kansas Rehabilitation Services to determine what technology he needed. After receiving device and software demonstrations as well as short-term loans, Kirk received a laptop with JAWS, Duxbury, and Open Book; a scanner; a smart phone with tactile markers; and a Braille Focus 40 for Braille display.



These new devices and technology have enabled Kirk to study for an exam to work as a vision specialist with rural Kansans.



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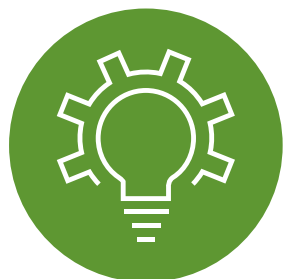
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Device Loans

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).



52,374

Number of devices loaned by AT programs nationally



\$15,000,000

National savings projected through using device loans*



93%

The percentage of device loans that resulted in positive decision-making that ensured a strong consumer–equipment match and avoided inappropriate device acquisition

During FY 2017, 55 AT Programs reported providing 37,239 short-term loans of AT devices to individuals or entities. **36% of borrowers were individuals with disabilities**, the largest group to whom devices were loaned, followed by family members, guardians, and authorized representatives (22%). Please refer to Table 3 for a more detailed breakdown.

Devices for computers and related devices (17%) were the most common types of AT devices loaned in FY 2017. This was followed by speech communication devices (16%) and devices for daily living (15%). Seven additional device categories accounted for the remaining 52% of the device loans made (Table 4). **68% of device loans (n=25,320) 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 (18%), as a loaner during repair/waiting for funding (6%), and for training/personnel development (7%).

AT acquired through device loan programs was primarily used for community living (54%), education (39%), and employment (7%).

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Table 3: Number of Device Loans by Type of Borrower

Type of Borrower	Number of Device Borrowers	Percent
Individuals with disabilities	13,299	36%
Family members, guardians, and authorized representatives	8,128	22%
Representatives of education	7,652	21%
Representatives of health, allied health, and rehabilitation	5,341	14%
Representatives of community living	1,671	4%
Representatives of technology	575	>1%
Representatives of employment	573	>1%
TOTAL	37,239	100%

Table 4: Number of Devices Loaned by Type

Type of AT Device	Number Loaned	Percent
Computers and related	9,010	17%
Speech communication	8,305	16%
Daily living	7,844	15%
Mobility, seating	7,492	14%
Learning, cognition	7,126	14%
Vision	4,166	8%
Environmental adaptations	3,562	7%
Recreation, sports, and leisure	2,432	5%
Hearing	2,384	4%
Vehicle modification and transportation	53	<1%
Total # of Devices Loaned	52,374	100%

Device Loan and Education

A 9-year-old student, Brian, needed assistance with reading. His family contacted the Oklahoma AT Program to borrow the C-Reader Pen before purchasing it. With the use of the pen, Brian was able to read without

assistance. Having this device was a big boost to his confidence. Brian is now able to read with independence and enjoy it!



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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, 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.



\$30,000,000

Money that consumers saved via reused devices



82%

Percentage of consumers who would not be able to obtain the AT they needed due to cost or availability without reuse programs*

In FY 2017, 57,782 consumers received a total of 74,205 reutilized devices from 55 AT Programs, resulting in an overall savings of \$29.9 million. **Mobility, seating, and daily living AT comprised 86%** of all devices provided through reuse programs (Table 5).

The most common device reutilization activity was device refurbishment (as described previously). Ninety-six percent of recipients received devices through a device refurbishment program, saving over \$25 million. Of the services provided through reutilization programs, device refurbishment activities provided the greatest savings to recipients.

AT acquired through device reutilization programs was primarily used for community living (92%), and was also used to support education (5%) and employment (3%).

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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	34,638	47%	\$19,787,763	66%
Daily living	28,259	38%	\$5,108,330	17%
Environmental adaptations	4,190	6%	\$860,471	3%
Computers and related	2,182	3%	\$573,952	2%
Hearing	1,638	2%	\$233,581	<1%
Speech communication	901	1%	\$1,409,107	5%
Learning/cognition	835	1%	\$150,545	<1%
Vision	833	1%	\$597,541	2%
Recreation, sports, and leisure	442	1%	\$130,872	<1%
Vehicle modification and transportation	287	<1%	\$1,146,622	4%
Total	74,205	100%	\$29,988,784	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	55,773 (96%)	69,995 (94%)	\$27,969,789	93%
Device exchange	2,009 (3%)	4,540 (6%)	\$2,018,995	7%
Total	57,782 (100%)	74,205 (100%)	\$29,988,784	100%

Device Reutilization and Employment

Graziela, a 32-year-old elementary school teacher with spina bifida, was referred to the Puerto Rico AT program by her co-workers. She used a manual wheelchair for mobility. However, one of the casters was badly damaged, resulting in an unsafe ride. Graziela had been waiting for a new wheelchair from a local agency, but it was uncertain how much longer she would have to wait, or even if she would finally get the wheelchair at all.



Through Puerto Rico's reuse program, Graziela received a wheelchair that met her needs at home and at school. Now she is back to teaching classes and performing her regular duties in and out of the classroom.

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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, and
- 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 financing activities that directly provide AT typically purchase AT using 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 IDEA) to obtain the AT.

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).



\$7,665,522

Amount consumers received in cash loans to purchase AT devices and services

\$3,836,113

Dollar value of AT directly provided to consumers at no cost

\$1,573,345

Dollar savings to consumers who purchased an AT device



93%

The percentage of consumers who would not be able to obtain AT they needed due to cost or availability without state financing programs*

CASH LOAN PROGRAMS

Thirty-five state AT Programs reported data on financial loans made. These programs issued 853 loans for AT devices, totaling \$7,665,522. The average annual income of loan recipients was \$43,231, and the national average interest rate was 3.68%. Out of 853 loans issued, 23% 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 (72%) was for vehicle modification and transportation technologies, averaging \$21,450 per loan. Hearing AT ranked first in number of devices financed, averaging \$3,746 per loan. For a more detailed breakdown of loans by device type, refer to Table 7.

OTHER STATE FINANCING PROGRAMS THAT DIRECTLY PROVIDE AT

Seventeen states reported data on other financing activities that resulted in the acquisition of AT devices and services. In FY 2017, these programs served 4,357 individuals and provided 5,768 AT devices. Almost half (48%) of the technologies funded were hearing devices. Environmental adaptations constituted 23% (\$892,391) of the total value of AT provided (\$3,836,113), but made up only 4% of total devices funded.



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	350	40%	\$1,311,221	17%	\$3,746
Vehicle modification and transportation	257	29%	\$5,512,541	72%	\$21,450
Computers and related	66	8%	\$46,043	1%	\$697
Mobility, seating, and positioning	65	7%	\$287,048	4%	\$4,416
Daily living	44	5%	\$130,235	2%	\$2,960
Vision	43	5%	\$107,241	1%	\$2,494
Environmental adaptations	34	4%	\$238,897	3%	\$7,026
Learning, cognition	14	2%	\$6,250	<1%	\$446
Recreation, sports, and leisure	3	<1%	\$26,055	<1%	\$8,685
Speech communication	0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0
Total	876	100%	\$7,665,522	100%	\$8,751

OTHER STATE FINANCING PROGRAMS THAT REDUCE THE COST OF AT

Nine states reported data on other state financing activities that allowed consumers to obtain AT at a reduced cost. In FY 2017, these other financing activities served 2,093 individuals, and 3,735 devices were acquired at a total savings of \$1,573,345.

Out of all the AT categories, hearing AT resulted in the highest savings to consumers (\$6,184 per device). Devices for learning and cognition (1,083 devices), speech communication (888 devices), and vision (582 devices) combined made up 68% of acquired devices. This resulted in moderate savings per device (\$93 for each device for learning and cognition, \$37 for each device for speech communication, and \$711 for each vision device).

AT acquired through state financing activities was primarily used for community living (77%), education (19%), and employment (4%).

Additional data on other state financing programs can be viewed in the State Financing Other table on Catada.info.

State Financing and Community Living

In 2013, Peter experienced a stroke. As a result, it was difficult for him to move his upper and lower extremities, requiring him to use a motorized scooter. However, this option did not address all of his mobility needs.

Peter was connected to the Guam AT Program, where he expressed interest in purchasing an accessible vehicle. When he met with AT staff in March 2017, he was given information on various AT options and got help applying for an Akudi Loan to help finance the purchase. When Peter's loan was approved, he received additional assistance in purchasing an accessible van, which involved working with an off-island vendor and shipping company, with the whole process taking six months.



After just a few weeks of using the vehicle, Peter shared that his quality of life significantly improved, and going around the island was much more enjoyable and stress-free. He is able to participate in day-to-day activities, run errands, and do things with his wife, 26 grandchildren, and 15 great-grandchildren. An accessible vehicle has given Peter a renewed feeling of independence.



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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:

- 68% of consumers stated that they could only afford AT through these programs.
- Community living was by far the most common purpose for AT, at 86%.

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:

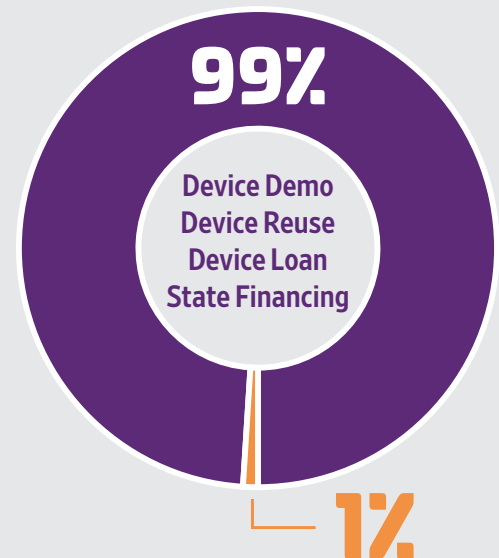
- 87% of respondents stated that an AT device would meet their needs, or those of someone they represent.
- 62% of consumers stated that community living is the most commonly reported purpose for AT.

Comprehensive data on aggregate performance measures can be viewed 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



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State Leadership Activities

TRAINING

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

125,783

Number of people who received training through AT programs

Percentage of participants that attended trainings by topic	Definition
44% AT products and services	The focus is on increasing skills and competencies in using AT, and integrating AT into different settings.
29% Combination of topics	AT products/services, AT funding/policy/practice, and information technology/telecommunication access.
11% Information technology/telecommunication access trainings	Accessible information technology and telecommunications including web access, software accessibility, procurement of accessible IT, and telecommunications.
9% 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 ¹ .
6% AT funding/policy/practice	Funding sources and related laws, policies, and procedures required to implement and deliver access to AT devices/services.

Out of 125,783 trainees, 27% were individuals with disabilities, and a close second (24%) were representatives of education. There was a 7% increase in the number of people trained from FY 2016. More detailed training data can be viewed 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 2017, a total of **324,688 individuals received I&A**. Out of those, 51% were individuals with disabilities and family members, guardians, and authorized representatives. 81% of recipients requested information about specific AT products/devices/ services. More detailed I&A data can be viewed in the [Information and Assistance table on Catada.info](#).

¹States are required to spend five percent of their state leadership funds specifically to provide AT-related training and technical assistance to assist students with disabilities who are getting ready to move from school to adult life, including employment, post-secondary education, or independent living, or students who are moving from IDEA Part C infant and toddler special education early intervention services to Part B pre-school special education services, or adults who are transitioning from congregate or institutional services to community living.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical Assistance (TA) is provided by state AT Programs to help programs and agencies improve their services management, policies, and outcomes.

As a result of TA and other activities, some AT Programs report improved outcomes with policy, practice, or procedure that result in increased access to and acquisition of AT in the state.

In FY 2017, the 56 grantees reported providing a majority of TA to educational agencies (33%) and community living agencies (26%).

Table 8: Percentage of Agencies that Received Technical Assistance

Program/Agency Type Receiving TA	Percent
Education	33%
Community living	26%
Employment	15%
Technology (IT, Telecom, AT)	13%
Health, allied health, and rehabilitation	13%
TOTAL	100%

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 precisely, and estimates must be reported (ED, 2011). Due to the difficulty of quantifying, FY 2017 was the first year that data for public awareness activities were submitted as anecdotes. The following are a handful of many exciting and innovative outreach and awareness efforts conducted by AT programs:

▶ *Indiana's 3 widely distributed and popular podcasts have highly engaged audiences in over 160 countries! Staff has created over 400 "Tech Tip" videos on YouTube that have been viewed over 500,000 times.*

▶ *Louisiana's AT program hosted an exhibit at the Louisiana State Fair's "Senior Day at the Fair" to raise awareness among seniors about the benefits of AT with regard to functional limitations related to aging. The exhibit attracted many people picking up literature, with over 250 people signing up to receive targeted information. Over 2,500 people from across the state attended the fair.*

▶ *North Dakota's blog "Assistive" is in its 5th year. With its focus on user anecdotes, general AT information, and funding, it has attracted people from all over the world. In 2017, the blog had 134,870 visitors! Due to the blog's visibility, the AT program has received many calls and emails from people with disabilities, their family members, and the professionals that work with them.*

▶ *In 2017, the Ohio State AT Program reached out to school districts more than they ever had in the past. To familiarize schools with services and promote new programs directed at schools, AT staff mailed annual reports to all 612 school superintendents in the state. The efforts were productive, generating numerous referrals, and expanded the program's reach.*

▶ *Educating just one individual can have a significant impact. The Vermont AT program coordinated a visit with Congressman Peter Welch and his team. AT staff shared several consumer stories about how AT improves their independence. A demonstration was performed to show how someone with paralysis might be able to navigate an iPad using switch control. With some training, the congressman was able to take a selfie using just the switches. It illustrated the determination that someone with a disability has to have to perform everyday tasks that many take for granted.*

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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

North Dakota (ND) ASSISTIVE Program staff commented on the proposed renewal of the Medicaid 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid waiver. The AT program requested that the waiver be amended to include AT evaluations under the Specialized Equipment (SE) and Environmental Modifications (EM) portions, and requested that the qualifications for professionals providing AT evaluations under the EM portion of the ND HCBS waiver be comparable to the Minnesota Elderly Waiver and Alternative Care Program. The comments also contained research with comparisons to other states' services and other North Dakota waivers.



Due to these efforts, North Dakota Aging Services agreed to amend the ND HCBS Waiver. The waiver now includes a provision for AT evaluations under SE and EM. In addition, the requirements to be able to provide AT evaluations under the EM provision have changed to be similar to Minnesota's Elderly Waiver and Alternative Care Program. The documentation for the ND HCBS Medicaid Waiver for the Aged and Disabled is available at: www.nd.gov/dhs/policymanuals/52505/52505.htm

HEALTH CARE

Michigan AT Program staff worked with people in the mental health recovery community to provide technical assistance on how to include AT in their recovery work. Staff assisted in creating a short video on the importance of AT and other supports for people in recovery. AT staff engaged in a general discussion on threats to funding of supports for non-Medicaid-eligible persons with severe mental illness and substance abuse issues and the importance of AT.



EMPLOYMENT

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act outlines service delivery with special attention to AT. The act specifically mandates collaboration between State AT Programs and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services.



Iowa State AT Program collaborated with Iowa VR, outlining how lives would be impacted by additional referral and engagement with one another's services. This advocacy resulted in the creation of an AT leadership team at Iowa VR, comprised of ten staff members from across Iowa. AT staff provided AT training in the Assistive Technology Demonstration Center to the Iowa VR leadership team.

EDUCATION & TRANSITION

Arizona's AT Program's program director met with representatives from the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. The goal was to explore strategies for strengthening collaboration between the organizations, and to ensure that Employment First initiatives address AT issues for high school students with disabilities as part of the transition process into post-secondary education, employment, and independent living. The AT program director now attends monthly Employment First meetings to provide input and recommendations.



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACCESSIBILITY

As part of the implementation of Local Law 238, an AT specialist on information technology and computer access from Puerto Rico's AT program conducted a series of training sessions on creating accessible documents at the University of Puerto Rico's various campuses around the island. Additionally, AT staff provided individual support to professors, webmasters, and librarians on how to improve the accessibility of web pages and other online documents such as syllabi and presentations.



VOTING ACCESSIBILITY

In collaboration with the Protection & Advocacy for Voter Access Program, the Wyoming AT Program hosted a training on voting and accessibility. The training provided information on voting rights for individuals with disabilities, and hands-on training on two voting machines that are used throughout Wyoming. Also demonstrated were AT devices used in the voting booth.



AGING

Due to demographic shifts, the Florida AT program adjusted its service delivery model to focus more on delivering services to an aging population. The staff developed senior kits for each Regional Demonstration Center to provide device loans, demonstrations, trainings, and public awareness activities. A wide range of devices are included in the kit, such as rescue and locate devices, home automation units, medication reminders, and simple vehicle modifications.



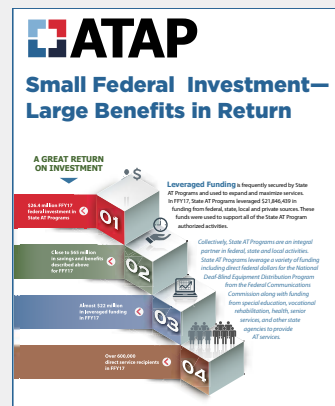
LEVERAGED FUNDING

Leveraged funding is frequently secured by state AT Programs and is used to expand and maximize services. In FY 2017, **state AT Programs leveraged \$21.8 million from federal, state, local, and private sources.** These dollars were used to supplement \$26.4 million in Section 4 AT Act formula grant funding for FY 2017, and to expand program reach in all AT Act-authorized activities. This brief highlights close to \$65 million in savings and benefits delivered by state AT Programs in FY 2017 to over 600,000 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.



* For more information about Return on Investment of AT activities, view the ROI report here:
www.atap.org/docs/QuickLinks/FFY17_ATAP-ROI_accessible.pdf

REFERENCES

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Prepared by:

Daria Domin & Diane Golden
Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts Boston

RESOURCE INFORMATION

Contact and other information on each State AT Program can be found on the CATADA website. The website also provides an [overall summary data report](#) for Fiscal Year 2017 that provides 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 www.catada.info/publications.