Connecting Oklahomans with Disabilities to Assistive Technology

2013 Oklahoma ABLE Tech Annual Report

ABLE Tech

Oklahoma State University

www.okabletech.okstate.edu

2013 Key Activities

About Oklahoma ABLE Tech

Oklahoma ABLE Tech is the statewide Assistive Technology Act Program proudly located at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. ABLE Tech is funded through the Rehabilitation Services Administration, U.S. Department of Education, which is made possible through the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 as amended in 2004 (ATA 2004).

ABLE Tech's **mission** is to improve access to and acquisition of assistive technology (AT) for individuals with disabilities of all ages.

ABLE Tech provides AT through comprehensive statewide programs and services, which include:

- Device Demonstrations
- Device Short-Term Loans
- Device Reuse and Exchange
- Low-Interest Bank Loans
- Programs for Children & Youth
- Information Technology Accessibility

2013 Activity

Device Demonstrations: 2,038

ABLE Tech and its partners provided AT device demonstrations to Oklahomans across the state, including **570** demonstrations to children receiving services from SoonerStart.

Device Short-Term Loans: 1,304

Through the short-term loan program, individuals were able to try AT devices to help them with the decision-making process.

Device Reuse and Exchange: 873

The Oklahoma Equipment Exchange (OEE) facilitated the exchange of **289** AT devices from seller to buyer for a savings of **$272,047**. The Oklahoma Durable Medical Equipment Reuse Program (OKDMERP) provided **415** Oklahomans with **584** pieces of AT for a savings of **$388,569**.

Low-Interest Bank Loans: 84

The Alternative Financing Program (AFP) made loans totaling **$383,136** to help Oklahomans obtain needed AT. The Access to Telework Funds Program (ATF) provided loans totaling **$80,368** to help individuals achieve their employment goals.

Information and Referral: 2,320

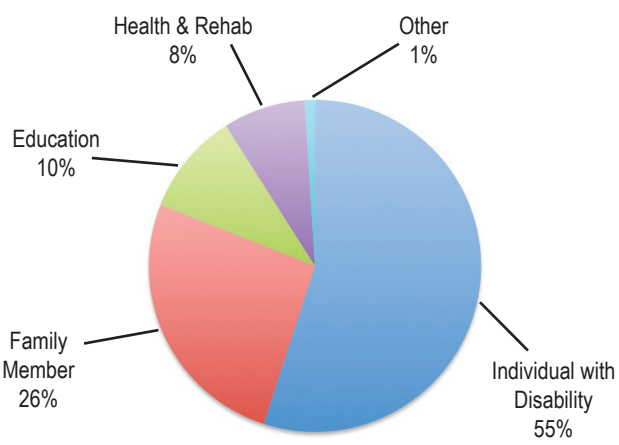
ABLE Tech helped Oklahomans receive information and referral sources on needed AT devices and services, including how to obtain funding for AT.

Training: 2,667

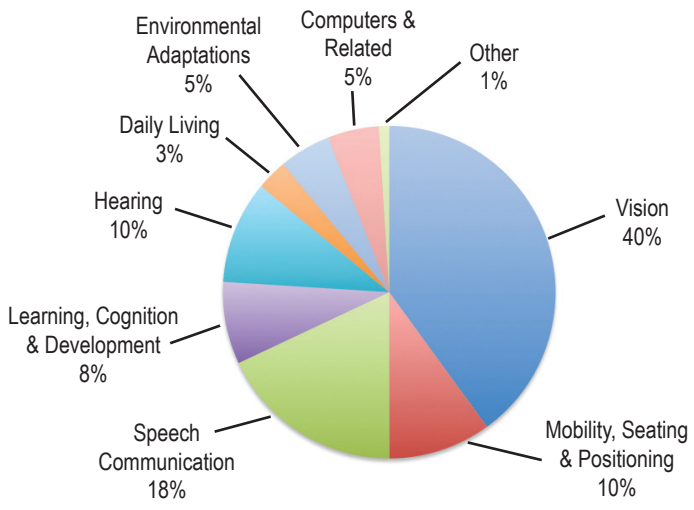
ABLE Tech served Oklahomans with disabilities, family members, service providers, advocates, and educators throughout events statewide.

Demo & Loan Program

TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL



AT CATEGORY



Coordination & Collaboration

Service Delivery Highlights

AT Demonstration Centers

ABLE Tech and its partners provided **11** AT loan and demonstration sites to give Oklahomans an opportunity to touch, try, and borrow AT devices to help improve independence in the community, school, and workplace.

Device Short-Term Loans

ABLE Tech provided **316** assistive technology device and software short-term loans to Oklahoma schools and students; **133** AT loans were specifically for individuals with print disabilities.

Information Technology Accessibility

ABLE Tech provided training on accessible information technology including web access, telecommunications, software accessibility, and procurement to **460** state agency and post-secondary personnel.

AT Device Training

ABLE Tech provided training on AT devices and services to individuals, disability-related organizations, state agencies, and higher education students.

Special Education Resolution Center

13 Special Education Due Process hearings were resolved by the Special Education Resolution Center (SERC) - keeping state dollars in the classroom educating students. Due Process proceedings can cost the state an average of **$300,000**; therefore, resolved hearing requests saved Oklahomans approximately **$3,900,000**.

Fire Safety

Through the Smoke Alarm Project, ABLE Tech partnered with the Oklahoma Assistive Technology Foundation and Fire Protection Publications to professionally install **1,742** smoke alarms and alert devices in **263** households of Oklahomans who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Accessible Voting

ABLE Tech partnered with the Research Alliance for Accessible Voting (RAAV) to assess the effectiveness of Oklahoma's accessible voting machines. Demonstrations were provided to **52** Oklahomans in an effort to help improve access to and allow individuals with disabilities to vote independently and privately in all polling locations.

State Contracts

ABLE Tech maintains coordination and collaboration efforts that provide funding to help enhance the opportunities for individuals to access and acquire assistive technology.

Oklahoma State Department of Education

OkAT

oklahoma health care authority

DRS Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services

ilru Southwest ADA Center

A Great Return on Investment

FY'13 Federal Investment: $396,864

Savings & Benefits for Oklahomans: $4,688,915

Empowering People with Disabilities

This 41 year old male has diagnosed amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). ABLE Tech's assistive technology partner, the Mary K. Chapman Center for Communicative Disorders at the University of Tulsa, recommended he try a speech-generating device to allow him to overcome his communication barriers in daily life. Activities, such as controlling the television or sending an email, became easier for him to perform. The device allowed him to become more independent, and gave him greater access to communicate with the outside world.

Community Living

This young female has diagnosed multiple sclerosis and vision loss. She needed the ability to see and access a computer from her adjustable power wheelchair. Due to the advancement of her multiple sclerosis, she was unable to touch, type, or see standard textbook print. With a desktop computer, 36-inch adjustable wall mounted monitor, magnification software, large print keyboard, Dragon voice recognition software, and wireless setup, she can remain in her wheelchair or sit anywhere in her living room to access her computer. The assistive technology allowed her to overcome her vision loss and inability to type due to lack of strength in her fingers. She also borrowed an iPad in order to download Bookshare digital books, which allowed her to enlarge the text, as well as hear the text through text-to-speech. She uses her headset microphone to talk to Dragon and type with her voice. Through the use of AT devices and digital textbooks she can successfully attend school, read textbooks, and complete assignments.

Information Technology

This professional works for a call center. With her range of motion limitations, learning disability, and hearing impairment, she faces many challenges at her job. She works at an intake call center, where her duties include talking on the telephone and documenting emergency and critical information. She was struggling with accuracy and success. She learned about the ABLE Tech demo and loan program through an outreach seminar. She made an appointment with ABLE Tech to try devices that would help with her barriers. After exploring her options, Dragon voice recognition software seemed to meet all of her needs. She borrowed a laptop with Dragon software to try at her job through ABLE Tech's short-term loan program. The device loan helped increase her productivity at work and increased her confidence level.

Employment

Empowering People with Disabilities

This 15 year old Oklahoma student and parent contacted ABLE Tech for a demonstration appointment to learn about a variety of technology to assist with his educational and reading needs. ABLE Tech demonstrated a variety of devices and software to support his reading skills and provided information about digital textbooks through Bookshare, a program funded through the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Bookshare is an online service for students with print disabilities. A person with a print disability may be someone with a visual impairment, physical impairment, or learning disability which may make reading and handling traditional textbooks and curricular material difficult or impossible. The Oklahoma Equipment Exchange, an ABLE Tech assistive technology device reutilization website, had a few first generation iPads available for donation. The student was able to receive one of the iPads after ABLE Tech helped determine it would meet his needs. The iPad allowed him to independently download textbooks and novels from Bookshare. He can listen to books in a variety of voices, enlarge print, and change colors of the text and background. With a learning disability, text-to-speech digital books make a world of difference. Studies show readers who are able to read a book with audio synchronized text actually increase their comprehension of the content while increasing their reading ability and word recognition.

Education

Through the state financing program, ABLE Tech partnered with the Oklahoma Assistive Technology Foundation and BancFirst to assist this Oklahoman with the purchase of AT. After being diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), he soon realized his need for specialized assistive devices. This necessity caused a real financial burden for him and his family. He was in need of another vehicle, and was referred to ABLE Tech and the Alternative Financing Program. Through the program, he was able to apply for and finance a wheelchair accessible van. The purchase of the modified vehicle has allowed him greater freedom of movement and to be able to access places while still in his wheelchair. The AT has also given him the ability to continue working and to travel with his family.

State Financing

This young boy has developmental delays due to severe malnutrition where he was raised in West Africa. His adoptive family was referred to ABLE Tech's Durable Medical Equipment Reuse Program to seek help locating an assistive mobility device. Through the program, they were able to obtain a wheelchair for their son. The assistive device has added greater mobility to his daily life. The wheelchair has brought joy to his life, and has allowed him to become more involved in daily activities and has increased his interaction with his brothers and sisters.

Device Reutilization

Oklahoma ABLE Tech Staff

Kent Bunker, Director, OSU Department of Wellness

Linda Jaco, Director of Sponsored Programs
OSU Department of Wellness

Brenda Dawes, Program Manager

Milissa Gofourth, Program Manager

Kimberly Berry, AT Teacher

Rob Carr, Accessibility Coordinator

Shelley Gladden, Loan Coordinator

Tammie Honeyman, Human Resources Coordinator

Lindsay Love, Marketing Coordinator

Allyson Robinson, SLP, AT Specialist

Shelby Sanders, AT Specialist

Diana Sargent, Senior Administration Support Specialist

Lisa Croston, Fiscal Officer

Jo Anne Pool Blades, SERC Program Manager

Shannon Esmeyer, SERC Administrative Assistant

Katie Woodward, OKDMERP Program Manager

Kimberly Dunn, OKDMERP Administrative Assistant

Brian Sargent, OKDMERP Site Coordinator

ABLE Tech

Oklahoma State University — Department of Wellness

Oklahoma ABLE Tech
Oklahoma State University
Department of Wellness
1514 W. Hall of Fame | Stillwater, OK 74078

Ph: 405.744.9748 | Fax: 405.744.2487
Toll-free: 888.885.5588 (V/TTY)
Web: www.okabletech.okstate.edu
Email: abletech@okstate.edu

Oklahoma ABLE Tech Partners

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Stillwater | 405.744.6021

SoonerStart Early Intervention Program
Oklahoma City | 405.521.4880

Mary K. Chapman Center for Communicative Disorders
Tulsa | 918.631.2913

Oklahoma City | 405.232.4644

Bethany | 405.789.6711

Oklahoma City | 405.717.9820

Tulsa | 918.832.8742

Department of Rehabilitation Services
Visual Services Center Division
Vocational Rehabilitation Division
Oklahoma City and Tulsa | 800.845.8476

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