

Minnesota STAR
Program
A System of
Technology to
Achieve Results



*Minnesota's Assistive Technology
Act Program*

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Program Manager
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AT Resource Specialist



Constellations

Winter 2009

Assistive Technology (AT) Works!

Celebrating our Assistive Technology Champions!

For the past three years, STAR and its Advisory Council—with your help—have recognized individuals in our communities who help Minnesotans with disabilities obtain and use assistive technology. These dedicated AT Champions actively promote successful use of assistive technology at home and school, as well as, the workplace and community. And now STAR is preparing for year four. If you know of someone who deserves to be recognized for his or her hard work and dedication to promote the use of assistive technology, here is your chance to nominate that person for a STAR Award of Excellence in Assistive Technology. Nominations in the following categories will be accepted through March 15, 2010.

- ◆ **Consumer**
- ◆ **Advocate**
- ◆ **Educator**
- ◆ **Employer of Excellence**
- ◆ **Innovator Award**
- ◆ **Life Time Achievement**
- ◆ **Service Provider**

For more information or to request a nomination packet, contact STAR at 651-201-2640 or visit our Web site at www.starprogram.state.mn.us.

Focus on Minnesota

Between August 31 and September 10, 2009 STAR contracted with Management Analysis and Development and held six focus group sessions in Duluth, Bemidji, Alexandria, Mankato, Rochester and St Paul. The purpose of the focus groups was to gather input from consumers, family members and professionals on ways STAR could improve the statewide delivery of AT services to persons with disabilities. Focus group participants included consumers of assistive technology, consumers' family members, service providers, state employees representing the Department of Employment and Economic Development, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, State Services for the Blind and MnSCU; and agencies who have contracted with STAR. Participants were asked about their experiences with STAR AT device demonstrations, AT device loans and access to information and service relating to the reutilization of AT. To read the full report check out the STAR web site at www.starprogram.state.mn.us or contact STAR at 651-201-2640.



STAR Spotlight

Discover what activities STAR and its partners are working on around the state.

STAR is proud to announce that in December 2009 it entered into a one-year contract with five partners—three returning partners and two new partners—to provide device demonstrations and loan to Minnesotans statewide. We hope you will contact our partners to schedule a demonstration or borrow a device during 2010.

Ability Building Center - People Achieving Change Through Technology

Malachi Bjorngaard
310 Elton Hills NW
Rochester, MN 55901
(507) 535-7101
(507) 529-4607 (TTY)
<http://www.abc-pactt.org>

Center for Independent Living of Northeastern Minnesota

Pamela Parson, ATP
2104 6th Avenue East
Hibbing, MN 55746
(218) 262-6675 V/TTY
<http://www.accessnorth.net>

PACER – Simon Technology Center

Paula Goldberg
8161 Normandale Blvd
Minneapolis, MN 55437
(952) 838-9000
<http://www.pacer.org/stc>

United Cerebral Palsy of Minnesota - Minnesota Assistive Technology Loan Network (MATLN)

Maxine Slobaf, MA, CCC/SLP, FASHA
1821 University Avenue W.
Suite North 180
St. Paul, MN 55104
(651) 646-7588
877-528-5678(Toll Free)
<http://www.ucpmn.org>

United Cerebral Palsy of Central Minnesota

Matthew Koob
510 25th Avenue North
St. Cloud, MN 56303
320-243-0765
888-616-3726 (MN Toll Free)
<http://www.uccentralmn.org>

Transition

A notice of cosponsorship funds available for transition training was issued in December. The purpose of the notice was to invite eligible candidates to apply for cosponsorship funds for transition training to be held in Minnesota. Trainings funded through this contract will focus on transition and the use of Assistive Technology to assist students with disabilities who receive transition services under IDEA or adults with disabilities who are maintaining or transitioning to community living and/or employment. A list of trainings receiving cosponsorship funds will be announced in the May 2010 issue of Constellations. Information will also be posted on STAR's Web site in February 2010.



AT a Glance

Here is a quick glance at some assistive technology (AT) that can help employees gain and retain employment.

Amigo (Enhanced Vision) - Handheld video magnifier provides 3.5 to 14X magnification. Features include multiple screen contrast settings, ability to freeze screen image, and video port to connect the Amigo to TV or other external display.

Pocket Talker (Williams Sound) - Personal sound amplification system. Ideal for one-to-one and group conversations, as well as, TV and radio listening.

X-Keys Stick (PI Engineering) - Sixteen programmable function keys to reduce need for redundant keystrokes. Assign shortcut keys and macros for one-key access to favorite programs, documents, Web sites, and to perform repetitive tasks.

To learn more or to borrow these items contact STAR or one of our loan program partners.

Regional Updates

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (Metro)

From September 2009 through June 2010, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Metro will offer several free training seminars. Trainings are approximately two hours in length and cover a variety of topics such as deaf culture, acquired hearing loss, survival sign language, laws and sign language interpreters, adaptive technology and mental health issues within the Deaf Community. For more information call (651) 431-5940 or (888) 206-6513 or email dhhs.metro@state.mn.us.

STARTE
Reusing Assistive Technology!
www.mnstarte.org

2010 Census

In mid-March of 2010, every household in Minnesota will receive a 2010 Census Form. The 2010 Census consists of 10 basic questions and should take the average family 10 minutes complete. You will only be asked your name, phone number, race, ethnicity, home ownership, number of occupants, and other administrative questions. Filling out this form is required by law and your answers are protected. The information you provide will determine how over \$400 Billion in federal funds are distributed to the states each year and will help ensure that we get our fair share of representation in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Census Bureau reminds us, "Accurate representation and funding are especially important to people with disabilities because this population relies on many government, community and social service programs. However, without an accurate count, vital community services such as health care, transportation and other assistance programs may not be adequate." You may view the 2010 Census form online at <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/how/interactive-form.php>.

Census staff will be available to assist anyone unable to read, understand or complete the census form. Assistance guides will be available in Braille and large print, as well as, 59 languages. Organizations that serve people with disabilities can download a free Disability Toolkit at <http://2010.census.gov/partners/toolkits>.

If you have questions about the 2010 Census, you may call (651) 201-2473 or (651) 201-2474. Deaf and hard of hearing persons who do not have access to Video Relay Service (VRS) can call 1-866-783-2010 via FedRelay, a free and confidential federal government communication services.

Mark Your Calendar

January

STAR Advisory Council Meeting, January 19, 2010. Location to be determined.

For more information, contact STAR.

March

CSUN - The 25th Annual International Technology & Persons with Disabilities Conference, March 22-27, 2010, Los Angeles, California.

(<http://www.csunconference.org>)

April

Assistive Technology Expo, April 15, 2010, Fargo, North Dakota.

(<http://atexpo.eventbrite.com/>)

Charting the Cs, April 25 (pre-conference), 26 & 27. For more information contact Dennis Ceminski at dceminski@lscs.org or visit <http://www.lscs.org>.





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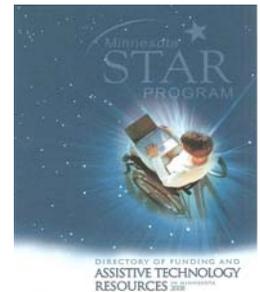
Department of Administration
STAR Program
358 Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St Paul, MN 55155

Did You Know?

The history of assistive technology is a vibrant tale full of passionate innovators, visionaries, and advocates. Learn all about these remarkable people at the **AT Oral History** Web site <http://atoralhistory.uconn.edu>.

Let STAR Help You Stay Informed!

- Request a free copy of our 2008-2009 Funding and Assistive Technology Directory
- Subscribe to STAR Point and receive emails on assistive technology news and events
- Subscribe to Constellations, our quarterly newsletter
- Visit our Web site www.starprogram.state.mn.us
- Become a registered user of STAR Technology Exchange at www.mnstarte.org



For more information, contact STAR by calling 651-201-2640, 888-234-1267 (toll-free) or send an email to star.program@state.mn.us. Minnesotans with a hearing or speech disability may call us through the Minnesota Relay Service at 711 or 800-627-3529.

When you are done reading this newsletter, please share with others or recycle. Thank you!

All STAR materials are available in alternative formats

This document can be made available in alternative formats, such as large print, Braille, audio tape or disk by calling 651-201-2640 or 888-234-1267 (toll free). Consumers with a hearing or speech disability may call us through the Minnesota Relay Service at 711 or 800-627-3529, or by sending an email to star.program@state.mn.us.

¡FOLLETOS EN ESPAÑOL! STAR ha empezado traducir folletos en Inglés a Español. Actualmente, STAR tiene dos folletos en Español: "Directorio de Recursos de Financiamiento para Tecnología Asistiva en Minnesota" y "El Programa STAR: Un Sistema de Tecnología para Lograr Resultados."

The System of Technology to Achieve Results (STAR) program is Minnesota's Assistive Technology Act Program, located within the Minnesota Department of Administration. STAR receives funds from the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended. The contents of this newsletter are educational in nature. It should not be assumed that the identification of any product, individual, or agency implies endorsement by the State of Minnesota, STAR, or the U.S. Department of Education. This newsletter was financed with federal money.