

Activity Description

The Minnesota System of Technology to Achieve Results (STAR) is federally funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration in accordance with the Federal Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended (P.L. 108-364). The mission of the STAR program is to help all Minnesotans with disabilities gain access to and acquire the assistive technology (AT) they need to live, learn, work, and play. An AT device is any piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of a person with a disability. The governor appoints the advisory council members; 68% of the members are individuals with disabilities or have a family member with a disability.

STAR works with consumers and providers to develop a statewide network of resources related to AT and assures that Minnesotans have access to AT for demonstration and loan prior to selecting the most appropriate device for purchase. STAR also provides AT training, technical assistance, public awareness, and statewide information and referral services.

Activity at a Glance

- ◆ More than 40 individuals received awards for excellence for their work with Assistive Technology at an April 2008 Award Ceremony.

During SFY 2008:

- ◆ A total of 43,151 individuals visited the STAR website.
- ◆ A total of 85 individuals borrowed assistive technology to determine whether or not a piece of assistive technology would meet their needs.
- ◆ The website www.mnstarte.org was developed to exchange assistive technology between individuals.

Population Served

According to the 2000 Census, nearly one in six, or 15.8%, of Minnesota's population has at least one form of disability. Approximately 426,000 Minnesota adults between the ages of 18 and 64, representing 14% of this age group, had one or more disabilities and approximately 240,000 Minnesota adults 65 years old or older, representing 40.4 % of this age group, had one or more disabilities. These individuals need some assistance in performing daily activities or participating in community life. STAR conducts activities promoting the availability and benefits of AT devices and services for these populations.

Services Provided

STAR works to build collaborative relationships in the AT community. STAR, along with its nonprofit partners, is working to assure statewide coverage of services. In addition, STAR works with state agencies and others in serving as a central clearinghouse for AT information.

Device loan, device demonstration, device reuse:

- ◆ During SFY 2008, STAR's nonprofit partners loaned 85 AT devices to anyone in Minnesota with a disability, regardless of age or diagnosis. Individuals with cerebral palsy, autism, cancer, or stroke survivors benefited from using the loan programs.
- ◆ Over 30 individuals received a demonstration of AT equipment in order to make a decision regarding the appropriateness of a piece of AT.
- ◆ In November 2006, STAR launched a website, www.mnstarte.org, where individuals may post AT for sale, donation, or exchange. In SFY 2008, there were 17 pieces of equipment listed for sale. Four individuals purchased or received equipment listed on the website and saved \$1,850.

Collaboration, training and technical assistance:

- ◆ STAR participated in collaborative efforts to increase awareness and access to AT. STAR's collaborative efforts include working with the Minnesota Department of Education, Assistive Technology Leadership Team; the Minnesota Disability Law Center Advisory Council; and the Minnesota Regions Assistive Technology Collaborative.
- ◆ In SFY 2008, STAR attended ten community events and provided information to over 1,430 individuals.

ADMINISTRATION DEPT

Program: GOVT AND CITIZEN SERVICES

Activity: STAR

Narrative

- ◆ STAR conducted five training sessions for 125 individuals on the use of specific work related AT and software.

Public awareness and information and referral assistance:

- ◆ STAR provided information about AT to over 250 individuals who contacted STAR.
- ◆ STAR publishes a bi-annual statewide directory of AT funding resources and services. Over 2,000 directories were distributed in SFY 2008.
- ◆ During an award ceremony in April 2008, more than 40 Minnesotans were recognized for their commitment to removing barriers to independence for people with disabilities through the use of AT.

Key Goals

- ◆ To be recognized for innovation and efficiency, STAR provided leadership in AT reuse by hosting a conference on reuse, refurbishment, and recycling. In addition, STAR created www.mnstarte.org as a resource for individuals buying, selling, exchanging, or donating AT.
- ◆ Under the Drive to Excellence, STAR provided technical assistance to the Accessibility/Usability Workgroup that was created to improve accessibility and usability of E-government services. STAR was a sponsor of www.MNDisability.gov, a first-stop for all state level disability services and programs.
- ◆ To improve customer service and the products created by STAR, a focus group reviewed and recommended improvements to the STAR Funding Directory.

Key Measures

STAR monitors the satisfaction level of individuals participating in device loan and demonstration programs, as required by the federal government.

- ◆ There were 43,151 visitors to the STAR website.
- ◆ Of the 85 individuals who borrowed communication devices, 66% were satisfied with the loan program.
- ◆ There were 2,000 individuals who received funding directories; 190 people were surveyed and, of that number, 74% said the directory met their needs.

In accordance with federal law, the Assistive Technology Advisory Council has established measurable goals for improving access to and acquisition of education, employment, community living, information technology, and telecommunications.

Activity Funding

Funding for the STAR Program is obtained from the Rehabilitation Services Administration under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended by P.L. 108-364. Funding is currently \$456,418 per federal fiscal year. STAR does not receive a general fund appropriation.

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ADMINISTRATION DEPT
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Budget Activity Summary

<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>					
	Current		Forecast Base		Biennium 2010-11
	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>					
Statutory Appropriations					
Federal	414	456	456	456	912
Total	414	456	456	456	912
<u>Expenditures by Category</u>					
Total Compensation	178	208	208	208	416
Other Operating Expenses	135	188	188	188	376
Local Assistance	101	60	60	60	120
Total	414	456	456	456	912
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	2.6	3.1	3.0	2.8	