



# The AT Messenger

bringing technology to you

Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI) • Volume 16, No. 3 • Summer 2008

## Mandatory Hearing Aid Coverage Becomes Law

Linda S. Heller  
State President  
Hearing Loss Association of Delaware

The Hearing Loss Association of Delaware (HLADE)—which gives help and hope to children and adults with hearing loss through information, education, advocacy and support—was pleased to be a part of a three-year coalition effort. The coalition’s efforts fulfilled an important legislative and advocacy agenda to pass House Bill 355, Delaware’s Health Insurer Coverage for Hearing Aids Bill for Children. HB355 helps ensure that no child need go without a hearing aid!

Governor Ruth Ann Minner signed HB355 into law on June 18, 2008 in Legislative Hall, making Delaware the eleventh state to pass a hearing aid insurance law. With Computer Assisted Real Time (CART) reporters, sign language interpreters, parents, consumers, advocates, and legislators standing by, the Governor announced she was pleased to support this bill and stated, “Why didn’t we do this a long time ago?” This was the first time that CART was used in the Governor’s office. The Governor handed pens to two children with hearing loss after she signed the bill.

Primary sponsor of the bill, Rep. Gerald Brady

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(Democrat-4th District), expressed thanks to advocates and said

how sponsoring this bill as a freshman legislator would always be very special to him. Senator Nancy Cook (Democrat-15th District) was delighted to play a key role in the bill’s passage. Rep John Viola (Democrat-26th District), an early supporter, was also there to emphasize how important this bill was for children, and Matt Denn, Esq., Delaware’s Insurance Commissioner who helped with technical advice on the bill’s crafting, spoke with passion about how children would benefit from this law in years to come.

HB355 mandates that every health insurance contract that covers children as dependents provides \$1,000 toward a single hearing aid, \$2,000 for two. Furthermore, they are to provide, as an optional rider, coverage for hearing aids. The insurer has sole discretion as to the provider of the hearing aids. The insured will be reimbursed for the cost of each hearing aid up to \$1,000 each, subject to deductibles and a review by the insurance company.

What exactly does House Bill 355 include?

- Provides \$1,000 towards the cost of hearing aids at \$1,000 per ear, every 3 years
- Covers children from birth to 24 years of age
- Coverage will begin on January 1, 2009

Hearing loss is the sixth most common medical condition in the U.S. (NINDS, 2005) and the average lifetime cost for one person with a hearing loss

## Hearing Aid Coverage (continued)

is \$417,000 (Center for Disease Control, 2003), with about 30% (\$125,100) of that amount spent on special education costs. The \$417,000 *excludes* hospital visits, interpreters, assistive listening devices, hearing aid batteries, and other out-of-pocket expenses. About 37% of kids with hearing loss fail at least one grade. Based on Center for Disease Control estimates, about 10-12% of Delaware children have a temporary or permanent hearing loss. Children with a permanent hearing loss commonly benefit from hearing aids and children with temporary losses sometimes need hearing aids or assistive listening devices.

HLADE is grateful for the advocacy coalition that consisted of many people across the community spectrum, including HLADE board members and the following:

- State Council on Persons with Disabilities
- Developmental Disabilities Council
- Council for Exceptional Children
- Public Information Officer, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Delaware Newborn Hearing Screening Committee
- Lions Clubs of Delaware
- Rotary Clubs of Delaware
- The International Order of Rebekah Assemblies
- Parent Information Center
- Delaware Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- Audiologists, speech/language pathologists, teachers of the hearing impaired
- And, many more!

HLADE, a state association of the **Hearing Loss Association of America** (HLAA), is a non-profit all-volunteer organization. HLADE will continue to lead efforts to advocate for kids to be able to hear teachers and coaches as well as TV, radio, in movie theaters, at art and sporting events, as well as cell phones, iPods, videos, CD's, and so much more! Kids with hearing loss experience social and language isolation at home, work, school, and play when they can not hear well. So, it makes sense for insurance companies to pay for hearing aids as soon as a child is found to need them. This coverage will more than pay for itself when you compare the cost of hearing aids—\$3,000 for one, \$6,000 for two—with the thousands of dollars likely to be spent throughout a child's life for hearing loss-related therapies and services (for example, speech and language therapy, extra reading assistance, tutoring, and other supports). We also know that kids who don't get hearing aids are more likely to be at least one year behind in school and, as a result, some need behavioral intervention. HB355 is a critical first step in making sure that every child who can get a hearing aid will have a better chance to learn and keep up with their peers without hearing loss. We know that some parents will still need more money to buy a hearing aid, but HLADE will work with other organizations to fill funding gaps. HB355 will not just help kids hear, it will help kids succeed in life!

For further information on HB355 or hearing loss, please contact HLADE at 302-292-3066 (voice/relay), by email [hlade@comcast.net](mailto:hlade@comcast.net), or on the web at [www.hlade.org](http://www.hlade.org). ■

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## What's New at CSUN?

Dan Fendler

Sussex County AT Specialist

DATI

For me, one of the draws of the California State University at Northridge's (CSUN) Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference is the opportunity to hear Ray Kurzweil speak. In case you've never heard of Ray Kurzweil, he is known as a fairly prolific inventor and visionary who created the first **Optical**

**Character Recognition (OCR)** reading machine in 1976—the precursor of many of the text-to-speech software packages that are sold today. The title of the keynote this year was *The End of Handicaps*, which focused “on the accelerating pace of technology, the handicaps associated with disabilities, and the role of technology as a great leveler in bridging

## CSUN (continued)

the communication and mobility challenges associated with sensory and physical disabilities” (excerpt from Business News Wire). If you’re interested in learning more about Ray Kurzweil, check out the *Kurzweil Technologies* website (<http://www.kurzweiltech.com>).

There’s a lot of chatter about how fast technology is changing, but one of the devices that Mr. Kurzweil developed and introduced at the conference this past March clearly demonstrates the incredible pace of development. Kurzweil, teamed with the *National Federation for the Blind*, introduced the **knfb Reader** ([www.knfbreader.com](http://www.knfbreader.com)) in June 2005 as a portable reading device prototype for people with visual impairment. The **knfb Reader** hit the market shortly after that with a price tag of approximately \$4,000. It was the size of a PDA (personal digital assistant) with an external camera attached that was used to “scan” text and convert the text into speech. While quite remarkable, the device was expensive and bulky to carry around. This year, the same functionality of the original reader was packed into a **Nokia N82 mobile phone** for about half the original price. It’s portable, fits into many pockets, and can also be used as a mobile phone with a camera. If you would like to see a demo of the **knfb Reader**, please call your local ATRC to set up an appointment.



*Nokia N82 phone with knfb Reader installed*

There were a number of other products on display at CSUN designed to help people with low vision. The **Clarity Lynx** (found at [www.clarityusa.com](http://www.clarityusa.com)) is a portable magnifier featuring a camera that swivels (for both close-up and distance use), and a camera mouse that can be used for reading. The **Lynx** folds into an easily portable form and, with its rechargeable battery, can be used practically anywhere.



*Clarity Lynx*

The portability factor of the **Lynx** is nice, but it limits the size of the viewing screen, which measures about 8.5 by 6 inches. If you are interested in a de-

vice that can be used with large screen televisions, you may be interested in the **Acrobat** by *Enhanced Vision*. This magnifier is designed as a camera on a long, adjustable swivel arm that can be attached to any LCD-type screen, including large-screen TVs (provided they have a VGA-type connector). If you have a large screen LCD or plasma television with a VGA connector, you can magnify to the size of your display screen. If you have a 50-inch display, you can magnify anything to a grand (and very legible) scale.

If you need a device that can be attached to a laptop computer, you may be interested in the **Optelec ClearNote+** (go to [www.optelec.com](http://www.optelec.com), click on US, then products, electronic-low-vision, and clearnote).



*Optelec ClearNote+*

Designed with a classroom setting in mind, this portable magnifier can be attached to a computer and used to magnify close-up or to view objects in the distance (a blackboard, for example).

Some additional features of the **ClearNote+** include:

- Reading and writing support
- Near and distance viewing
- Compatible with laptops and VGA monitors
- Compatible with **ZoomText** and other software
- Color, black & white, and negative viewing modes
- Auto-Focus
- Runs on battery or AC power
- Picture-in-Picture capability

Last, but not least, is an unusual device called the **Zoom-Twix**, by *ABISec, Inc.*, which can be used for close-up or distance magnification, and it can be used as a text-to-speech reader. The manufacturer claims that the **Zoom-Twix** can scan 20 pages of a book per minute by simply turning pages. It is portable, attaches to a computer through a USB port, and draws power from the USB connection.

All of the devices discussed above are now available for demonstration at our resource centers. If you’re interested in learning more about any of these items, or anything else that may help make your life a bit easier, please give us a call. We’re here to help. ■

# Telecommunications Access for People with Disabilities in Delaware

Daniel Atkins

Legal Advocacy Director

Disabilities Law Program of Community Legal Aid Society, Inc.

Closed captioning and telephone relay for the hearing impaired and audio announcements of the written word have become so ubiquitous that they no longer seem fanciful or exotic. But, what about internet websites which rely on extensive graphics—must they be accessible to people with visual impairments? How about video clips on the internet—must large content providers such as *YouTube* make sure that their videos are accessible to consumers who are deaf or blind?

In 1990 the **Americans with Disabilities Act** required for the first time that private businesses (places of public accommodation) reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities. In 1990 the internet was neither world-wide nor a web. Did Congress intend to require that *Southwest Airlines* make its website fully accessible to people with disabilities when it began offering discounts to consumers who booked reservations on-line in the late 1990's? Federal courts have not been in complete agreement about that point. Some courts, like a federal court in Florida, held that **Title III of the ADA** (the title regulating private businesses which are open to the public) did not cover internet websites. Apparently, to one court at least, only businesses with buildings were places of public accommodation. Bricks and mortar were regulated by the ADA, but not internet websites.

In 1996, Congress extended civil rights protection for people with disabilities into the more futuristic realm of communications by passing the **Telecommunications Act of 1996** ("Section 255"). Section 255 requires that manufacturers of telecommunications equipment (e.g., TTYs, closed captioning devices) and services (e.g., video relay services) be accessible to people with disabilities if readily achievable. If not readily achievable, manufacturers of equipment or service providers must ensure (again, if readily achievable) that their equipment or services are compatible with peripheral devices that facilitate access. What does readily achievable mean? Companies must incorporate accessibil-

ity features if they are easily accomplishable without much difficulty or expense. This is a contextual—rather than a bright-line—test in that companies are able to consider their resources on a case-by-case basis. What is expected of a large corporation will be quite different than what is required of a small business. The law also gives a safe harbor to businesses when providing an access feature would so fundamentally alter the product that it would substantially reduce the product's functionality, make some features unusable, substantially deter use of the product by other individuals, or substantially and materially alter the shape, size, or weight of the product.

In 2008, a bill was introduced in the United States House of Representatives that would move disability rights into cyberspace. **The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2008** would amend the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to ensure that new internet-based telephone and television services are accessible to people with disabilities. Just as closed captioning makes television programs accessible for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, captions and video description (verbal depiction of key visual elements inserted into natural pauses in dialogue) would ensure that internet videos are accessible for the visually impaired.

It cannot be overstated how internet video content has become so fundamental in our entertainment landscape, especially for people under 30 years of age. Televisions may soon be obsolete for everyone born after the year 2000. Imagine a teenager today who cannot hear and how cut-off from her peers she is because so much of the content on the internet is not fully accessible to her. Similarly, consider how it might improve the lives of workers or students who are blind or impaired visually, for instance, if they would have access to text messaging services on



# Telecommunications Access

their phones and would be able to receive important emergency alerts. Given how fundamental to business people PDAs (personal digital assistants such as BlackBerries, Treos, iPhones) have become, and how central to teenagers' lives text messaging has become, consider how isolating they are to those with visual impairments if they are not equipped with audio accessibility.

Full accessibility for people with disabilities has not yet been realized, but technology holds the promise of closing the gap very quickly. And, incrementally, the law brings the promise closer to reality. ■

## FYI...

*The AT Messenger* is available in fully accessible HTML format. Go to [www.dati.org](http://www.dati.org), click on the "news" button then on "accessible web version."



## Homegrown in DELAWARE

About 15 years ago, Tom Strab, a Delaware resident, set out to automate the doors to his sister's new home addition. You see, his sister had MS and was rapidly losing her independence. This was an unacceptable future for a former executive secretary! Unfortunately, automatic door operators for residential use did not exist, but the family trait of independence triumphed. With the assistance of a neighbor who was an electrical engineer, Tom put together a low-cost, simple operator that gave his sister the independence she so desperately desired. That first mechanism, which is still working, is an air-powered, linear "robot" with a patented valve assembly, all controlled with a garage door remote. Barbara, the sister, was so proud of her brother's invention that she immediately began to show off her new doors. Intrigued with the simplicity of the system, Wayne Carter, of the Colonial Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc., and Beth Mineo, of DATI, nominated Tom for an Architectural Accessibility Award, and the rest is history.

Requests to automate other types of doors and even windows were submitted. Over the years, the **Gentleman Door Company** has increased its line of products but continues to offer operators that are simple, rugged, and especially low cost, compared to the rest of the market. It is remarkable that out of adversity ingenuity resulted, and not just for Tom's sister but for the public-at-large.

Tom is still happy to discuss your automation challenge, and assist in any way possible. He can be reached at the **Gentleman Door Company**, 800-525-7078, and you can check out the products he has developed at <http://www.gentlemandoorcompany.com>. The website will link you directly to the *Terryco* website. Simply click on the "Residential" door and you will be able to see pictures and read about openers for hinged and sliding doors as well as window openers.

Long-time readers may remember this story because a similar version appeared in *The AT Messenger* back in 1995. It warrants another look, however, as the company's products have expanded, and the owner, Tom Strab, continues to dedicate his work to provide practical products to Delawareans and those beyond the borders of the first state. ■



# The AT Bargain Basement

Marvin Williams

New Castle County AT Specialist

DATI

**H**ello, True Believers, and welcome to yet another fun-filled edition of the *AT Bargain Basement*. I am Marvin Williams, your host through this wonderful world of assistive technology bargains! For those of you who are regulars to the *Basement*, welcome back. If you are new, welcome to our Assistive Technology party! We're glad you could join us. As usual, the house rule is that I try to bring you AT bargains costing \$100 or less that I find or that you bring to me. Do keep in mind that prices certainly do change and, unfortunately, I'm not in charge of setting everyone's price on stuff. If that were the case, the world would be even more "bargain-full" than it is currently! So make sure you check out the price of a bargain before you buy. Also, check out the shipping charges, as they can make a bargain seem like less of one. That brings me to something else. If you're not comfortable with shopping for items online, you can usually call the company and place your order on the phone as if you are catalog shopping. If you need assistance in finding the number for any of the companies mentioned here, feel free to call your local ATRC for help.

I wanted to take a moment to thank you, the readers, for the wonderful response I have been getting about the *Bargain Basement*. I wondered for the longest time if anyone was really reading this, but you have more than shown me that not only are you reading, but you are also buying the bargains. So I thank you all for your support, and please keep sending the feedback. And now...the bargains!



Big Digital LED Calendar Clock

Our first bargain is one of many I've found in the *Dynamic Living* catalog ([www.dynamic-living.com](http://www.dynamic-living.com)). It's the **Big Digital LED Calendar Clock**, and it's a handy item. The display is easy to read with large red letters and numbers on a black background. The time displays with numbers 2.25-inches tall and the letters and numbers in the calendar display are

1.5-inches tall. The only thing I would change to improve on this would be to also make it talk, but at \$64.99, it's a nice bargain. If you do need a talking clock that also gives you the date and has reasonably-sized numbers, the



**REIZEN Talking Atomic Alarm Clock** is a nice

piece. While the numbers are only 1 inch tall, it does have the great feature of being able to automatically set the time and date. It sells for only about \$38 (not including shipping) from *Maxi-Aids* and *Amazon.com*. The *Reizen* clock is currently available for loan through the ATRCs if you would like to borrow it to see if it's right for you.



Bonaire Remote Twin Window Fan

Our next bargain is the **Bonaire Remote Twin Window Fan**. The unit fits in a window and can be used to blow air into or out of a room via the intake, exhaust, or

exchange settings. It comes with a remote control and has three speeds so you can get as much or as little air as you would like. The remote is infra-red so if you use a communication device that can perform environmental controls, you can program it to control the fan. The twin window fan is available at *Bed, Bath & Beyond* for \$59.99. If you do not need the remote control, you can get a non-remote controlled version made by *Holmes* for \$39.99 at *Bed, Bath & Beyond* or \$54.99 at *Sears*. Be sure to check with your local stores for availability. If you order online or over the telephone, watch out for those shipping charges!



Holmes twin 9" window fan

## The AT Bargain Basement (continued)



*Bed Rail Advantage*

Our next bargain is the **Bed Rail Advantage**, and it's a great low-cost way to assist you in getting up and out of bed. It's made of heavy-duty steel so it can take some use. It even has a two-pocket covering that can hold magazines and/or a TV remote, and it folds up making it easy to take with you when you travel. While it is portable, it takes a bit of effort to set up—fitting it between the mattress and box spring, then locking it into place with the strap. It is only 23-inches high by 16.5-inches wide, so it's a pretty low-profile device that won't keep someone from rolling out of bed. It normally retails for about \$70, but you can order it from *Dynamic Living* for \$59.99 and *Amazon.com* has it for \$49.95. If you need a full-sized bed rail, I recommend consulting a therapist as this may be covered by your funding source. You never know unless you ask!



*Bed Rail Advantage, set-up and carry*

Our final bargain proves that simplicity is the best way to go. The **Tek-Pal** TV remote is simplicity at its best. At a time when TV remotes can have as many as 20 buttons on them, the **Tek-Pal** offers a remote with just 6 buttons—on/off, mute, volume-up, volume-down, channel-up, and channel-down.



*Tek-Pal TV remote*

The buttons are also much larger than on a standard remote control. You can get it from *Independent Living Aids* ([www.independentliving.com](http://www.independentliving.com)) for \$14.95 or from *Dynamic Living* for \$14.99. Just don't forget those shipping and handling fees.

And that will bring to a close this installment of the *AT Bargain Basement*. I would like to thank you for joining me here. Don't forget, keep that feedback and those bargains coming! Join me here next time for even more bargains and fun. And remember, just because something's a bargain doesn't mean it's cheap. ■

## Telework, Telecommute, Telewhat?

*Eileen M. Mapes*

*Information and Outreach Coordinator*

*DATI*

**T**elework and telecommute may be unfamiliar words, but they may be of interest to you or someone you know. They are interchangeable terms used to describe the full- or part-time work of people who are self-employed as well as those who are employed by a company or organization but who work from a location remote from the employer. Increasingly, people with disabilities are seeking such opportunities because they offer the potential for a more favorable work environment. DATI is available to assist Delawareans with disabilities who may be interested in teleworking.

DATI offers the Delaware Telework Equipment Loan Program (DTELP)—a reduced interest,

federally funded loan program established with several Delaware financial institutions—to qualified applicants. Equipment related to employment will be considered for funding. In addition, DATI provides several resources related to our telework loan program. Referrals to agencies and organizations that assist people with business development are available, and consumer counseling is provided to potential applicants in an effort to make sure each person's best interests are considered. Referrals to other funding mechanisms might also be offered.

Eligibility for the DTELP is multifaceted. Applicants must be either Delaware residents with a disability or a family member or caregiver of an

# Telework, Telecommute, Telewhat? (continued)

adult Delawarean with a disability. Eligibility is also determined by the nature of the telework to be performed. Telework must enable the individual to overcome a specific barrier to employment. An explanation of the barrier and how telework would enable the applicant to overcome the barrier must be provided. Employers are eligible borrowers **only** when the loan results in ownership of the equipment by the person with a disability.

Federal guidelines determine the types of equipment that are eligible for purchase using the DTELP. The loan funds must be used for items that become the personal property of the borrower and are directly related to telework goals, processes, and/or products. Equipment may include mechanical or electronic devices or equipment, software or telecommunications systems, the cost of training needed to use the equipment properly, maintenance agreements and extended warranties for the equipment, as well as maintenance and repair expenses for the equipment. Specifically, equipment may include, but is not limited to: computers, printers and related peripherals, software, fax machines, scanners, office machines (e.g. calculators), telecommunication devices, telecommunication system installation charges (e.g. telephone, DSL, high speed and internet hookup fees), office furniture, home modifications for accessibility and/or to create a home office, motor vehicles, and assistive technology. In addition, funds made available through a telework loan may be used to purchase raw materials and/or inventory if there are no other means to acquire the necessary materials or inventory and the purchase is approved by the DATI Loan Review Committee.



There are currently 33 U.S. states and territories offering telework loan programs, and they have provided loans for a wide variety of purposes. For example, a mobile wood worker

purchased a trailer to transport his wood working equipment that had been paid for by his state's vocational rehabilitation service. A hot dog vendor obtained a cart and the inventory to be sold. A person starting a transportation service for medical patients bought a modified van. A dog groomer purchased the necessary tools-of-the-trade. A medical transcriptionist purchased a computer and software. Numerous farmers have purchased modified farm equipment. An engraver bought a laser engraving system. A person opening a pizza parlor purchased kitchen equipment. A real estate agent purchased office equipment. A person who operated a customized motorcycle shop had his garage modified. A photographer bought cameras and mounting equipment. A videographer purchased a camcorder and the necessary accessories. As you can see, the possibilities are vast.



Please contact me if you would like additional information about the DTELP. I would be happy to be of assistance. You are welcome to call, 302-651-6869, or email me, [emapes@udel.edu](mailto:emapes@udel.edu). ■

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## Transitioning to Digital TV Programming

The following information was excerpted from the *FCC Consumer Advisory: Video Descriptions and the Digital Television Transition* document.

The imminent transition from analog to digital television transmission may change the way people with vision disabilities enjoy TV. Video descriptions will no longer be transmitted via an SAP channel (secondary audio program, an alternative to standard audio). Televisions with digital tuners should

be able to process the audio services associated with the digital TV signals. However, consumers should confirm with their TV manufacturer, owner's manual, or retailer that they will be able to access video descriptions with their current or yet-to-be-purchased television.

Video descriptions are a way to inform people who are blind or have other vision disabilities of what is happening on the television screen. It is the inser-



# Transitioning to Digital TV Programming (continued)

tion of verbal descriptions about the setting and/or action in a program when information about these visual elements is not contained in the audio portion of the program. These descriptions supplement the regular audio track of the program.

Things to be aware of regarding the transition to DTV programming include:

- Broadcast television stations will broadcast only in digital format beginning February 17, 2009.
- A greater number of audio channels will be available to broadcasters with which they may provide *voluntary* video description.
- Digital-to-analog converter boxes are not required to process all associated audio services broadcast by a DTV station.
- Consumers using cable or satellite services should ask their service provider for additional

information regarding the availability of video descriptions. To the extent that such providers receive programming with video descriptions, those video descriptions should be delivered to consumers.

To find out more about the digital television transition, visit [www.dtv.gov](http://www.dtv.gov). For more information about telecommunications issues, visit the *FCC's Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau* Web site at [www.fcc.gov/cgb](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb), or contact the FCC's Consumer Center by e-mailing [fccinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:fccinfo@fcc.gov); calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY; faxing 1-866-418-0232; or writing to: Federal Communications Commission, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division, 445 12th Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20554. ■

## Save the Date: January 22, 2009

### LIFE Conference XI

Delaware's premier conference for persons with disabilities and those who support them.

Sheraton Dover Hotel  Dover, Delaware  8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Featuring Keynote Speaker:  
**Matt Salo**  
National Governor's Association

**Featured Topics Include:** Guardianship Issues; Resources for Caregivers; DDS Waivers - Supports for Living Independently; Latest on Vision Technologies; Positive Behavior Support; Inclusive Recreation Opportunities; Creative Funding for Augmentative and Alternative Communication, and **MANY MORE!**

Register Online beginning November 1<sup>st</sup>

[www.LIFEconference-de.org](http://www.LIFEconference-de.org)

For more information, visit the website, email: [info@LIFEconference-de.org](mailto:info@LIFEconference-de.org)  
call Advances in Management at (302) 645-1490 or the  
Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council at (302) 739-3333.

**Sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities are available!**

## Study Seeks Participants with Sensory and/or Mobility Impairments

If you have a sensory impairment and/or mobility impairment, you may be eligible to participate in a new research project. This research aims to understand what people with sensory and/or mobility impairments do in their daily lives, how their environments affect their community participation, and what, if any, help they need to complete activities.

Eligibility requires that you:

- Are between the ages of 18 and 75
  - Live in the community
  - Have access to a computer
  - Can read at or above the 6th grade level
  - Can enter responses into a web-based survey or direct another individual to enter your responses into a web-based survey
- AND
- Have either a mobility impairment, a visual impairment, or a hearing impairment.

If eligibility is established, you will receive a code

to log on to the survey site and complete the study. All information will be kept confidential and no connection between you and your survey answers will be made. Participants will be reimbursed by either a personal check or by a gift certificate to either Target or Walgreens, and may choose the method of reimbursement they prefer. The web-based assessment contains a set of two surveys and will take approximately one hour to complete.

Please go to the following link and you will be directed to a short pre-survey to determine eligibility: <http://emc.wustl.edu/Nscr/Nscrlogn.htm>.

This study is conducted by the Washington University Program in Occupational Therapy in collaboration with Paraquad, Inc. The research is funded by the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research at the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research at the US Department of Education. ■

## Delaware Passes "Gold Alert"

Following Colorado's example, the Delaware legislature recently passed S.B. No. 227, establishing a "Gold Alert." It serves the same purpose as the "Amber Alert," expanding the scope to senior citizens, suicidal individuals, and those with disabilities. Governor Minner signed the provision into law on July 17th. Kudos to the **Developmental Disabilities Council**, which took the lead in advocating for the passage of this legislation.

The bill reads as follows:

This bill creates a program for local, regional, and statewide notification of a missing senior citizen, missing suicidal person, or a missing person with a disability. The bill defines a missing senior citizen as a person who is over 60 years of age, whose domicile is in Delaware at the time that he or she is reported missing, whose whereabouts are unknown, and whose disappearance poses a credible threat to the health or safety of the person. The bill further defines a missing person with a disability as a person who has a disability, whose domicile is in Delaware at the time that he or she is reported missing, whose whereabouts are unknown, and whose disappearance poses a credible threat to the health or safety of the person. The bill further

defines a missing suicidal person as a person whose disappearance is voluntary, whose whereabouts are unknown, whose domicile at the time that he or she is reported missing is Delaware, and whose actions, statements, or conduct indicate that he or she may cause or inflict harm upon himself or herself. The bill expands the communications network area to provide greater assistance to investigating law enforcement agencies in their searches for missing persons. This program is similar to the Amber Alert for abducted and missing children. For more information, please see:

<http://legis.delaware.gov/LIS/LIS144.nsf/vwLegislation/SB+227?Opendocument> ■



## DATI Equipment Loan Policy

DATI has a wide variety of equipment at the Assistive Technology Resource Centers (ATRCs) for the primary purpose of demonstration and short-term loan. The policy for equipment loans is as follows:

The standard loan period is two weeks, defined as the day borrowed (e.g., Monday the 10th) to the same day two weeks later (e.g., Monday the 24th). Loans may be extended provided there are no names on the waiting list and/or that an extension will not interfere with an existing reservation. The maximum loan period is four weeks.

A maximum of four devices may be borrowed during any single loan period. However, combinations of devices may be treated as a single device if the components are interdependent—either operationally, or because one component is required for the borrower to use another. Equipment loans across state lines are not permitted. Equipment must also remain in Delaware throughout the loan period. ■



### Please Keep Us Posted!

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