

Fall, 2014

## From the Director's Chair



- Jill Pleasant, MA, OTR/L

### Falling into Place

It's that time of year when things start "falling" into place; the brutal summer heat is gone, school is back in session, days are shorter and thoughts of upcoming holidays begin to swirl around in our minds. Although fall typically signals the end of the year, at AzTAP it is actually the start of a new fiscal year and a time when we plan for upcoming events and program changes and this year is no exception.



successful conference to date with more than 500 persons participating. There were 55 educational sessions, the Exhibit Hall was packed with 50 exhibitors and community members had complementary access to the Hall on Monday afternoon. We received lots of positive feedback from attendees including comments such as:

- "Great topics and presenters"
- "Great resources, reinforcing knowledge base and introducing wonderful and helpful new information"
- "This is always one of the BEST conferences I get to attend!"
- "I was able to see new technology, some for the first time that would help facilitate students in our schools"

And to continue the momentum, we are very excited to announce that next summer's conference: "Putting Assistive Technology to Work" will be held **July 12-14, 2015** at the luxurious (but very affordable) **Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort and Spa**.



**Make sure to mark those dates on your calendars!**

The Call-for-Presenters form will be available online on November 1st. For more conference information or to submit a proposal for a presentation, go to <http://aztap.org/conference/>

## Arizona Loan\$ for Assistive Technology



We are very pleased to announce that AzTAP was recently awarded a \$663,000 grant from the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services

Administration to expand Arizona Loan\$ for Assistive Technology (AzLAT), our financial loan program. The new funding will allow AzLAT to increase the number and size of its loans, enhance outreach efforts to increase consumer awareness of the program beyond Maricopa County and develop credit building resources to help potential loan applicants manage finances and improve their credit. For more information, contact Martha Lewis at 602.776.4670 or [Martha.Lewis@nau.edu](mailto:Martha.Lewis@nau.edu).

## Mark Your Calendars:

Join Us for AzTAP's 20th Anniversary Open House Celebration!



## Assistive Technology Conferences – Past & Upcoming

Last summer's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Assistive Technology Summer Institute was our most

AzTAP will be hosting an open house in recognition of 20 years of providing assistive technology services on Thursday, November

20th from 2:00 – 6:00 p.m. Come to our offices and meet our staff, see new equipment, and learn about our programs and services while enjoying some tasty refreshments. To RSVP, go to <http://aztap.org/at-education/register-online/> or call 602.728.9534!

## ADE Assistive Technology Loan Library



If you work in public education and provide services to students with disabilities attending a public or charter school, the ADE AT lending library is a wonderful - **FREE** statewide resource. AzTAP operates this device loan program for the Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Services. More than 2000 assistive technology items, including mobile devices and hundreds of apps, are available for loans of up to four (4) weeks. This is an excellent way to explore assistive technology with your students to determine what will actually meet their educational needs. In order to use the service, a district's Special Ed Director or other administrator must complete the simple agreement form for the current school year. To learn more about the program go to <http://www.adeatloan.org/>.

## A Technical Assistance Project – Case Study

AzTAP provides technical assistance to help a business, agency or organization improve its capacity to address assistive technology and accessibility needs of its employees, customers or the general public.

A few months ago, TJ, an individual with a learning disability, contacted AzTAP because he needed accommodations at his worksite in order to be able to carry out his job functions. Although we began by working directly with

him, this also became a technical assistance project with his employer.

TJ received an initial consultation to determine his assistive technology needs, followed by device demonstrations and equipment loans that allowed him to try out devices make sure that they were useful for him. Based on the information gathered and the devices he explored, a list of possible assistive technology solutions and strategies was sent to him, which he then shared with his employer. Recommendations included the use of a mobile device (iPAD) with a screen reading app and a blue tooth headset so that the audio component would be private and not disturb co-workers. He would also need internet capability to electronically access online training manuals and complete required forms while he was on the job.

AzTAP was contacted by the employer to assist with implementation of the items requested by TJ as reasonable accommodations for the workplace. However, during the first meeting at the work site, it became apparent that there were communication issues between the employer and employee that needed to be addressed.

While the employer did purchase the assistive technology for TJ, there were some problems that had to be resolved before TJ could begin to effectively use the items on the job. Although the employer had downloaded the necessary web browsers and apps onto the iPad, access to the internet was disabled, because the employer was concerned about non job-related internet use; however this made the web browser and apps useless. The Bluetooth headset that had been purchased was not the model recommended by AzTAP and it was not iPad compatible. To correct the situation, information was sent to both parties from AzTAP regarding iPad-compatible Bluetooth headsets and an explanation was included that explained why internet access was essential for TJ during work time. A third meeting was held to make sure both parties

understood how to implement the tools. With practice and support from the employer, TJ should be able to use his new assistive technology devices to complete his work accurately, efficiently and independently.

As this case study illustrates, it is important that both the employee and employer have good communication to ensure that both parties understand why and how the technology is to be used before buying and using it. Every effort should be made to pinpoint technology options matched to the person's specific needs and the setting in which it will be used. Finally, training resources should be identified so that the person has good support for learning and using the devices. In addition to our face-to-face trainings, AzTAP now has the capability to provide webinar-based educational programs and trainings that can be viewed anywhere. It's easy to participate via the AdobeConnect system; all you need is an internet or WiFi connection and a computer, tablet (IOS or Android) or a smart phone!

### Update: ZOT Artz

As a follow up to the Zotz Community Art event held last spring on the UCP Phoenix campus, AzTAP purchased a number of the Zot equipment



including the Chalk Drawer with Wheelchair Bridge and Push Handle, Little Art Roller with Wheelchair Bridge, Little Pogo Paint Poles, one Mighty and three Mini Rollo devices, Pogo Paint Pods with attachments, the Man/Woman Board and the Push/Pull Table Top Printer with Paint Tray. Now that Fall is here with cooler temperatures, this would be a good time to consider borrowing the equipment for a school or community art event, birthday party or other

celebration. Designed to be accessible and inclusive, the Zot products allow everyone to be creative participants in art activities. There is no charge to borrow the equipment; borrowers are only responsible for the consumable supplies (paper, paint, chalk, etc.) Call or email us to learn more: 602-728-9534, [askaztap@nau.edu](mailto:askaztap@nau.edu).

### “App”-ealing Technology

Our extensive list of apps assists users in many areas, such as learning/cognitive development, computers, hearing impairments, and daily living. However, in this issue, we are highlighting two apps to assist people with vision impairments and/or speech communication disabilities. AzTAP's list includes many, many apps that are free; however, the two highlighted this month must be purchased. But, please remember that you can borrow one of our iPads, with these apps already downloaded. This allows you to try them out before you buy them.

**KNFB Reader:** This app allows users to convert printed text into high quality speech for the iPad and iPod touch. Tapping a button on your iPhone will provide accurate, fast and efficient access to both single and multiple page documents. Use your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch to capture pictures of printed text, including mail, receipts, class handouts, memos and other sources of text. Then, through document analysis technology, the words are read back to the user with text-to-speech and Braille access. Individuals with print disabilities will benefit from the synchronized speech and text highlighting capabilities. All this is accomplished with a single hand-held device and the **KNFB Reader** app. This app retails for \$99.99, requires iOS 7.0 or later, and is optimized for the iPhone 5, but is also compatible with iPhone 6 and 6 Plus



**ChatAble:** If you are looking for a way to create and use symbol-based grids or photos to make a visual scene display, then this is the Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) app that may be for you. **ChatAble** is a new app for people with communication difficulties who benefit from symbol and photo support. Users can speak their message with a range of English voices (American, Australian, and British accents). Emoticons may also be used to add laughter, surprise or anger. Input options include either handwriting or keyboard. Switch scanning is also available using an iOS 7 framework. To limit the impact of tremor or mis-hits, you can enable the force delay setting. This app retails for \$49.99, requires iOS 6.0 or later, and is compatible with iPad.



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Visit our website at [www.aztap.org](http://www.aztap.org) or scan  
 this QR Code into your mobile device



## Upcoming AzTAP Trainings and Events:

- **AzTAP Services & Website Demo WEBINAR** - November 19, 3:00-4:00 pm!
- **AzTAP's 20th Anniversary Open House** - November 20th, 2:00-6:00 pm!
- **Microsoft Accessibility Training (Windows 8)** – December 10, 10:00 am-12:00 NOON!
- **New Products at AzTAP WEBINAR** - December 12, 3:00-4:00 pm!

Sign up for these, and other trainings and events at <http://aztap.org/at-education/register-online/>

Share your thoughts and communicate with AzTAP friends and fans



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*AzTAP is a Phoenix-based program of the Institute for Human Development at Northern Arizona University*

*This document is available in alternative formats. Call 602.728.9534.*