

## From the Director's Chair

- Jill Pleasant, MA, OTR/L



### It's the People Who Make a Program Shine

AzTAP has a relatively small staff responsible for carrying out a broad range of assistive technology services. Our success and effectiveness is underscored by the high level of knowledge, skills and commitment of everyone on our staff. As the program director, I always appreciate it when the people we serve take the time to let us know how our staff and services have been beneficial to them. I recently received a letter from a school-based speech language pathologist who had borrowed equipment from the AT Lending Library that AzTAP operates for the Arizona Department of Education.

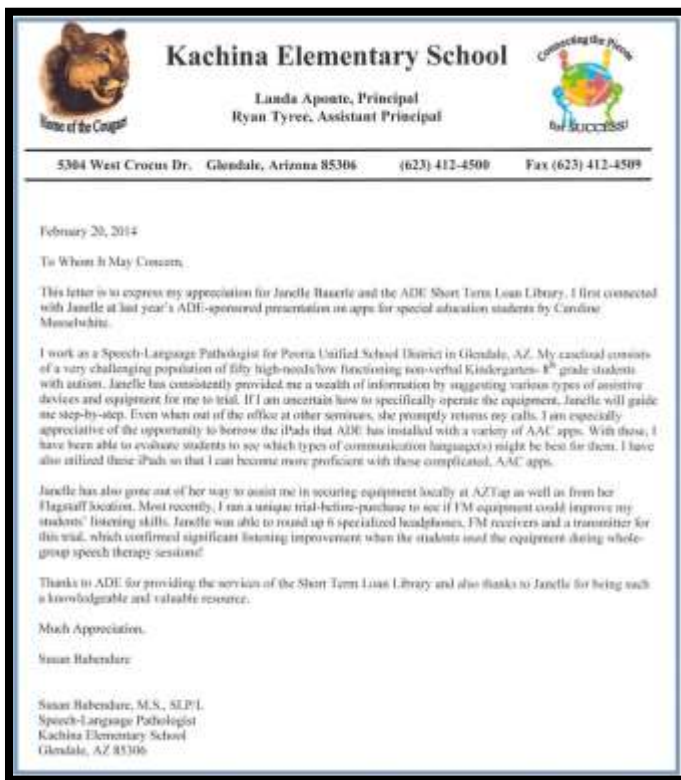
Device Loan Programs really do help people make decisions about the usefulness of assistive technology for their needs, and secondly, that staff dedication makes a program shine.

## Art Without Limits by Zot Artz



Now that spring is almost here, this is the time of year to enjoy outdoor events that take advantage of Arizona's mild weather before the summer

heat begins to blaze down on us! UCP, in collaboration with AzTAP and Ryan House is sponsoring two events on Saturday, March 29, 2014 focusing on adaptive arts:



1. **Art Without Limits** will offer a fun afternoon for individuals with disabilities (children & adults and their families) to express themselves through art, using adaptive art tools. This event will take place from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. It is FREE for everyone, but registration is appreciated. For more information and to register see our website <http://aztap.org/at-education/trainings/> or call Adi Kalika 602.728.9534.

2. During the morning of March 29th from 8:30 to noon, Dwayne Szot, MFA, artist and founder of Zot Artz is offering a **workshop for service providers** who would like to gain experience using the Zot Artz adaptive equipment, creating large and small works of art. Participants will learn how to engage children and adults in the creative process, allowing them to make decisions about shapes, colors, and placement. This workshop is designed for OTs, PTs, SLP's, recreational and art therapists, general, art and special education teachers and other interested service providers. The \$25 workshop registration fee will be waived

NOTE: See full text at <http://eepurl.com/ON56X>.

I hope that you come away with two things after reading this letter. The first is that our AT

for those who agree to volunteer at the community event following the workshop (1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.). For more information and to register see our website at <http://aztap.org/at-education/community-events/> or call Adi Kalika 602.728.9534.

Both events will be held (rain or shine) at UCP of Central Arizona, 1802 W. Parkside Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85027

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## Spreading the Word

Our goal is to make sure that the community knows about our programs and assistive technology expertise. We extend our reach by doing presentations at community events and by speaking at disability - specific conferences. Our webinars give us the capacity to reach anyone in Arizona with Internet access – no travel required. We have also developed new print resources including brochures that succinctly explain our services. Our new AT topic sheets focus on how AT is relevant in specific situations: young children, seniors, employment, creating an accessible home, emergency preparedness, etc.



The brochures and topics sheets are accessible on our website in both PDF and Word formats. Find them on our website at <http://aztap.org/resources/publications/>.

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## Integrating Technology into AzTAP's Everyday Activities

As noted in the “Spreading the Word” article above, during the past few months we have started offering educational programs in WEBINAR formats. These have been very popular because they are available to anyone

with on-line computer access and allows learning to take place without the time and expense associated with traveling to a training.



However, just like the consumer who needs to learn how to use a new piece of assistive technology: first learning how the device works, then figuring out how to use it during a daily activity, our staff has also experienced a learning curve with our new webinar platform. We had to learn the basics of setting up and delivering a presentation in an unfamiliar format. The next step was to be able to integrate captioning so that the webinars were accessible in real time to persons with hearing loss who requested captioning.

Our final step in this process was to be able to place an archived, captioned video on our website so that anyone could view it at a time of their choosing. Although we are still tweaking the live webinar process, we are pleased to report that the first archived, captioned webinar is available for viewing on our website. Visit <http://aztap.org/resources/publications/> to view the “Arizona Loan\$ for Assistive Technology” webinar which originally ran on Dec. 11, 2013.

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## Spotlight on AT

AzTAP recently purchased two mechanical feeding systems – the **Meal Buddy** and the **Mealtime Partner**. These devices assist people who have a hard time bringing food to their mouth due to limitations in arm mobility and coordination. The products are switch activated and feature robotic arms to transfer food from a bowl onto a spoon and then up to the person’s mouth.

The **Meal Buddy** features single switch operation with a sip – n - puff option for hands - free operation. The cycle of bowl



selection (up to three), speed settings and mouth position are programmable. The arm can be paused anytime and also wipes the spoon to prevent drips. For additional information and a video, check out the Patterson Medical website.

The **Mealtime Partner** has flexible mounting / positioning, quantity control, a touch sensor for the spoon, shatterproof spoons and single or double switch access. As with the other device, the



spoon is wiped at the bottom to minimize dripping and the quantity of food and speed of eating can also be adjusted. With both systems, the bowls and spoons are dishwasher safe. For more information and a video about the Mealtime Partner, view [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R27e\\_qzaOok](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R27e_qzaOok).

Information about all of our devices is available online. To view our inventory, please use the following link:

[http://azatdemoloanprogram.org/search\\_inventory.php](http://azatdemoloanprogram.org/search_inventory.php)

### "App"-ealing Technology

With so many people embracing mobile technology as their preferred assistive technology (AT) device, "apps" are a buzzword in the assistive technology community. The AzTAP Loan Library includes an extensive list of AT related apps designed to assist mobile device users in areas of speech communication, vision and hearing impairments, and educational and cognitive development, just to name a few. We have created a list of the apps that AzTAP owns and can load onto one of our mobile devices for demos and/or loans. The list is available on our website at <http://aztap.org/at-devices/loan-libraries/>. Please note that not all of the 130 apps are available on each device. However, you may speak with an Assistive Technology Specialist and request that a particular app be available on the item you are borrowing.

In this issue, we are highlighting two apps that are available on AzTAP devices:

**Prizmo:** This app benefits people who may have vision and/or print related impairments, making it difficult to see or read printed material. Prizmo allows you to scan text documents, business cards, and images and then exports them as PDF/Text, vCard, or JPEG/PNG. Prizmo even provides voice guidance to help position your iPhone when taking document pictures, and finds text orientation automatically. Another important key feature is text-to-speech for reading scanned text in 26 languages! This app also allows you to take pictures on your iPhone and then edit them on an iPad or Mac. Prizmo is compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch (iOS 7.0 or later).



**Proloquo4Text:** This is a text-based communication app that has a customizable single screen layout for easy conversation, voices in 15 languages, word and sentence prediction, social media sharing, and more. Proloquo4Text allows you to communicate with ease, is customizable to fit your needs, and speaks your language. Users can send emails, messages, tweets and Facebook posts from Proloquo4Text using their iPhone, iPod touch, iPad or iPad mini without an Internet connection. This is a possible Augmentative and Alternative Communication option for literate people of all ages, including people with autism, cerebral palsy, development disabilities, apraxia, ALS/MND, laryngectomy, stroke, or traumatic brain injury.



### Hold the Date - Assistive Technology Conference

If you haven't done so already, mark your calendars! The 16th Annual Assistive Technology Summer Institute will take place

July 20 – 22, 2014 at the Arizona Grand Resort and Spa in Phoenix. This year's theme is "Assistive Technology: Multiple Perspectives, Multiple Solutions". Our featured speakers - Haben Girma and Carolyn Phillips – were selected because their experiences and connections to assistive technology truly capture the diversity in AT needs, products and how they are used to support real life success in education, employment and living independently in the community.

**New at the conference this year:**

- ✓ A full day, preconference workshop presented by Mike Marotta and Kirk Behnke on Sunday, July 20th. This is an exciting opportunity to immerse yourself in an "AT Boot Camp" experience for intensive (but fun) training in AT basics.
- ✓ More sessions - 40 educational presentations plus up to 16 Exhibitor Spotlight sessions.
- ✓ Expanded Exhibit Hall hours on Monday from 1:30 – 6:00 pm for greater consumer and family member participation – Free Exhibit Hall passes will be available during this time period.

**Value:**

We are pleased to be able to offer the same economical early bird registration rate of \$165 for the regular conference. The preconference workshop will be \$99. For persons who register for both the preconference workshop and the conference, a small discount will be applied to their total registration. The room rates – all the rooms are suites – also remain at \$89 per night. Keep in mind that the Arizona Grand Resort & Spa has



a wonderful on site Water Park – rated as one of the best “for those seeking the most variety and biggest thrills” by azcentral.com’s Best of 2013. If water thrills are not your cup of tea, consider taking advantage of the golf, the fitness center or treating yourself to an indulgent massage or facial...

**Coming Soon ... AzTAP - The Video**

As the old saying goes: a picture is worth a thousand words ... Coming soon to our website is a brief video showcasing our services and highlighting consumers and service providers who have benefitted from our program!

**Contact Us**

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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.*