



The AT Messenger...bringing technology to you

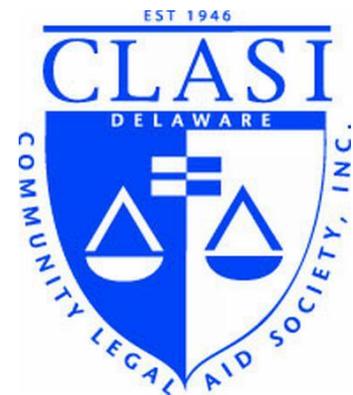
Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI) - Volume 19, No. 1 - Winter 2011

**Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008:
Broader Protections for Individuals with Disabilities**

Dan Lang and Dan Atkins

Disabilities Law Program, Community Legal Aid Society, Inc.

In 1990, with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Congress sent a powerful message to the country: discrimination by private and public entities against persons with disabilities would no longer be ignored. The ADA is composed of three main titles, each of which prohibits disability discrimination within a particular context. Title I addresses employers (generally employers with more than 15 employees), Title II extends to public entities (local and state governmental programs and services), and Title III reaches places of public accommodations (businesses open to the public such as stores, restaurants, doctor's offices, and hotels). The ADA protects only certain people with disabilities (PWD)—those who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of their major life activities, those with a record of such impairment, or those who have been regarded as having such an impairment.



Although the ADA has been a major step forward for PWD, many consumers and advocates were concerned that the ADA's definition of disability was too vague. They feared that narrow interpretations from courts could severely limit the number of PWD protected. Unfortunately, federal courts, including the Supreme Court of the United States, turned the fears of the disability community into reality.

The U.S. Supreme Court decided two major cases in 1999 that limited the scope of the ADA. In *Sutton v. United Airlines*, two applicants for pilot positions with poor vision brought disability discrimination cases to challenge United Airlines' minimum vision requirements. The Court determined that mitigating measures taken to alleviate the effects of a

physical impairment must be considered when determining whether an individual has a disability under the ADA. Noting that glasses or contacts could correct the job applicants' vision to 20/20, the Court determined that the pilots did not have a disability under the ADA and did not qualify for ADA protections.

In the second case, *Murphy v. United Parcel Service*, Mr. Murphy was fired from his position because he could not obtain health certification from the Department of Transportation to operate a commercial vehicle as a result of his high blood pressure. Because medication allowed him to engage in all major life activities, he was deemed to be not disabled under the ADA.

The effect of these cases on the reach of the ADA was profound. They were repeatedly cited by lower courts to dismiss ADA claims when the effects of a mental or physical disability were being mitigated through medications, prosthetics, or even assistive technologies (AT). For example, in the case of *Eckhaus v. Consolidated Rail Corp.*, Ruth Eckhaus was fired by her employer because of her use of hearing aids. Ruth filed an ADA based lawsuit, claiming that she had been discriminated against based on her hearing impairment. The court considered that her hearing aids helped to correct her hearing impairment and determined that, as a result, she was not disabled under the ADA and dismissed her case.

These cases illustrate how narrowly courts were interpreting the ADA. Courts used the ADA's definition of disability to dismiss cases as a preliminary matter, avoiding even having to consider the real issues—whether a PWD could perform the essential functions of a job, or whether an accommodation requested was reasonable.

This left many PWD in a classic conundrum: they were not disabled enough to qualify for protections under the ADA, but they were clearly being treated poorly because of their disabilities. For example, consider the bind the Suttons, Mr. Murphy, and Ruth Eckhaus were placed in when trying to plead their cases to the court. On one hand, they had to prove that they could perform the essential functions of the job. On the other hand, they had to prove that their medications or AT did not mitigate their disability to the point where they were no longer disabled.

In reaction to *Sutton*, *Murphy*, and countless lower court rulings like *Eckhaus*, Congress passed the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), which included two major revisions to the ADA. First, the ADAAA defined

several terms found within the definition of disability, such as “major life activities.” Second, the ADAAA mandated that courts follow specific rules when interpreting the definition of disability. Notably, one of these rules declares that “the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures” cannot be taken into account when determining if someone has a disability. The “use of assistive technologies” is also specifically included within a list of mitigating measures that cannot be taken into account when considering whether someone is a PWD (except for eyeglasses and contact lenses—people with ordinary near or far-sightedness are not intended to be protected by the ADA). To put this simply, the improvement of a limitation through the use of a device or medication is not to be considered when determining an individual’s disability.

For Ruth Eckhaus, these changes mean that if she had brought her case today, a court could not take into account the effects of her hearing aids when determining whether or not she has a disability. As a result, Ruth Eckhaus would qualify for the protections of the ADA, and a court would have to address the issues presented by her case. For all PWD, this represents an enormous benefit—no longer will PWD find themselves in an impossible “catch-22.” Instead, PWD can now take advantage of medications or technologies that improve their quality of life without worrying about losing the protections of the ADA. ■



Mary Ann Nolan
Co-Founder
Waggies by Maggie & Friends

Waggies by Maggie & Friends is a 501(c)(3) non-profit company founded in Wilmington, Delaware in November 2007 to employ persons with intellectual disabilities. Co-founders Leigh Corrigan and Mary Ann Nolan started this small business because of the inspiration and impetus gleaned from their daughters, Maggie and Elizabeth. Through the creation and selling of “healthy dog treats lovingly baked by persons with intellectual disabilities,” Maggie, Elizabeth, and others with intellectual disabilities participate in and enjoy the ever-growing world of gourmet dog treats as they bake, package, and market their all-natural specialty.



Maggie is placing Waggies on the counting board. She knows that she has the correct number of treats for a bag when she has filled the sheet.

It is an unfortunate fact that the job market is bleak for individuals who are over twenty-one, have a disability, and have aged out of a school system. Gainful employment is further hampered when job supports are necessary for an individual with a disability to be successful on the job. Employment opportunities for Maggie, Elizabeth, and other adults with disabilities are critical. **Waggies** helps fill the need while offering exceptional and healthy treats for dogs.

The success of *Waggies by Maggie & Friends* is due to the ingenuity, perseverance, and generosity of many. Purchasing or renting a kitchen was prohibitively expensive. Luckily, two local churches opened their commercial kitchens, providing much of the necessary equipment for the creation of **Waggies**. Of course, equipment had to be purchased and, ultimately, adapted before the dog treats hit the shelves of some local stores. The rolling boards are unique to **Waggies**—custom designed to enable the bakers to roll the dough to a consistent thickness. The cutters, too, have been adapted to provide stable handling, which prolongs their functional life. Counting boards were developed to help the bakers visualize the packaging process. All of the necessary tools and supports keep the goal of this small company at the forefront of their mission: train the bakers to become skilled in every stage of making and marketing peanut butter and chicken flavored dog treats. *Maggie is placing Waggies on the*

counting board. She knows that she has the correct number of treats for a bag when she has filled the sheet.

Volunteers guide and assist the young adults. Currently, there are seven bakers receiving an hourly compensation plus four interns from Delaware Autism's POW&R (Productive Opportunities for Work & Recreation) Program (<http://www.delautism.org/POW&R/powr.html>).



Maggie & Friends pose for a group photo around the Waggies they lovingly prepare each week.

Over forty volunteers are on the roster for the four-day per week baking schedule. The team works 3.5 hours a day, with two days spent at each church. Marketing is done via the *Waggies by Maggie & Friends* website, www.waggies.org, at local retail stores, and in veterinary clinics. In fact, Burns & McBride, a local home oil delivery company, has been a key supporter of **Waggies**; customers look forward to the sample of **Waggies** that comes with each oil delivery. The Burns & McBride order sustained employment through the summer. These all-natural dog treats are a popular item in Janssen's Market in Wilmington because of the quality of the product and the attractive packaging.

You can learn more about Maggie & Friends and their gourmet dog treats at www.waggies.org. The website also identifies locations where **Waggies** can be purchased, and on-line ordering is available. In addition to their baking duties, Maggie & Friends enjoy speaking with groups in the community to share their passion for the work they do in order to produce a marvelous product. Contact the group at 302-598-2867 or waggiesbymaggie@comcast.net to arrange a public speaking event.

When all is said and done, the employees at *Waggies by Maggie & Friends* love their jobs; the volunteers never miss a day; and dogs beg for more **Waggies**. It's a winning combination! ■



Pooch Power: Dogs for Independence

Darlene Sullivan
Executive Director
Canine Partners For Life



CANINE PARTNERS
For Life

George takes a hesitant first step away from his bed in the morning. His legs are weak, and the halting nature of his walk from Parkinson's disease has the potential to send him to the floor with a crash. It's tough for this veteran—who was always in shape and took pride in his physical abilities—to accept the challenges now facing him. However, he knows that the balance and support his canine partner provides will keep him safely on his feet. He grabs Smokey's handle and they begin to walk, together.

Smokey is a service dog. George no longer uses his cane and walker, now that Smokey is in his life. Smokey's assistance is much more stable and reliable. Smokey, who has learned George's gait, is able to adjust his support in order to provide counterbalance or stabilization as needed. George has regained a sense of security about walking on bumpy ground, up steps and curbs, or on angled surfaces. With Smokey, the job of walking is no longer so fatiguing or dangerous. George loves that people are not looking at him with pity anymore. Instead, people are fascinated by his canine partner and the help he provides.

George's story is not unique. For the past 20 years, *Canine Partners For Life* (CPL), <http://k94life.org>, located in Cochranville, Pennsylvania, has placed more than 400 full-service and home-companion dogs in 43 states with people who have a multitude of disabilities. *CPL*, an accredited member of Assistance Dogs International, focuses on creating independent person-dog teams and providing extensive follow-up support after graduation from its training program. *CPL* wants its dogs to make a person's life easier, happier, safer, and more independent. They form partnerships that are unique and life altering, both emotionally and physically. *CPL's* dogs give people the physical and mental strength to face life's challenges, big and small.

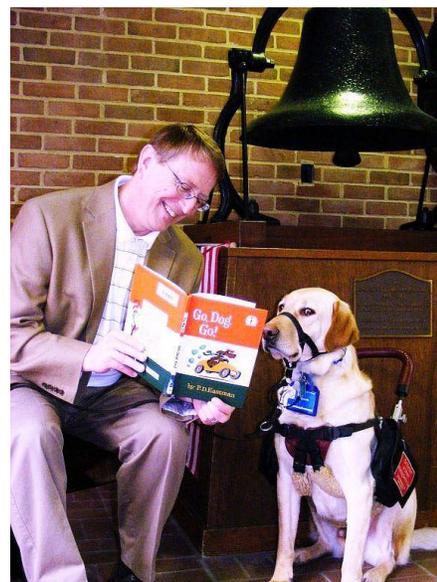
Smokey's help goes well beyond his walking support. He retrieves dropped items such as coins or keys; carries the newspaper, a lunch bag, or a brief

case; alerts family members in the house when George needs help; opens and closes doors; tugs off clothing such as socks, pants, and jackets; and more. As helpful as all that is, the unconditional love that Smokey offers is what gets George out of bed and through his day. Now that his wife has passed away, Smokey is the key to helping George maintain his independence. They are partners in everything—24 hours a day.

Service dogs go through a two-year training program. They spend their first year with volunteers (either community volunteers or inmates in local prisons) who teach them basic obedience and social skills. At the start of the second year, the dogs are returned to the *Canine Partners for Life* kennel to work with professional trainers who thoroughly evaluate each animal for physical health, behavior, and temperament to determine its potential to help recipients with a variety of disabilities such as paralysis, amputation, arthritis, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, stroke, and seizure disorders. Some clients are ambulatory, while others use wheelchairs, scooters, canes, or walkers. Once a dog is matched with a human partner, the *CPL* staff trains each dog to meet his or her partner's particular needs. The training is intense and wide-ranging. When it is complete, the dog is prepared to share the life of a human partner, increasing his or her independence, security, and health.

Anxiety, fear, and uncertainty often accompany disabilities. Service dogs can dramatically change these reactions. The presence of a canine partner can help ease stress and allow people to approach new things and no longer avoid difficult situations. In addition to their new emotional connection, people with service dogs notice a reduction in the wear and tear on their joints once their canine partner takes on physical tasks; this often allows them to walk and exercise long after doctors' projected timetables.

Here is another scenario: Tim received his service dog, Painter, more than a year ago, pictured on the right below. "The greatest feeling in the world since I got Painter, my yellow Labrador," he says, "is now people notice my dog and are not focused on my disability. Life has certainly changed since "Power Pooch" (that's what my students call him) came onto the scene. I no longer have



to worry about how I'm going to manage going up the steps at school and carry my briefcase at the same time, or negotiate the many curbs I encounter throughout the day. I also use a lot less energy because I do not have to exert as much picking up the many items I drop throughout the day. Yes, that's right: Painter is there to help me with all of this and so much more. One of the first things I tell everyone about my new best friend is that I have not fallen since Painter came to join me. Sure, I still trip because of my toe drop caused by my Multiple Sclerosis, but Painter has picked up on my condition—now when I do trip, he slows and braces himself so I don't go down. I can't tell you how much that means to know I have that kind of support along with me everyday."

"Besides the physical support I've been given with Painter, I have also been given a loyal, loving friend that accepts me for who I am no matter what. No matter how bad a day I'm having, he always seems to have a smile on his face and wag in his tail to cheer me up. He's always there right beside me to listen to my troubles; he somehow understands and knows just when to give me an encouraging kiss. He truly is a Power Pooch."

The application process to receive a service dog varies from organization to organization. *CPL* requires an application and an interview process. This is often done at the *CPL* campus, but it can be done by video or webcam. Applicants then complete a training course to help prepare for a service dog partner. Applicants attend a three-week team training at *CPL*'s campus to learn to work with, manage, and care for their canine partner. Teams receive extensive follow-up after graduation to ensure that they are meeting the goals they set out to achieve and remaining safe and independent.

If you want to learn more about service dogs, or you would like to apply for a service dog, make sure that you are dealing with an organization that is accredited by Assistance Dogs International. Visit assistancedogsinternational.org to ensure you are receiving a partner who has been trained to the highest standards and ethics within the industry. Click on "Member Program List & Links," and then click on "Accredited Members." Of course, we would be delighted if you visited us, as George and Tim did. For more information about our program, please visit k94life.org.

Canine Partners For Life (CPL) is a nonprofit organization located in Cochranville, Pennsylvania that trains and places dogs to assist individuals with a wide range of physical and cognitive disabilities. ■

Home Is Where You Hang Your Hat

Debra Young, MEd., OTR/L, ATP, CAPS
Occupational Therapist, Founder/Owner
EmpowerAbility, LLC

Think about what environmental qualities help you feel safe, secure, and comfortable. Whether you are indeed hanging your hat in your home or using various facilities—bathroom, kitchen, office space, entrances, exits—it can be helpful to think about the design and layout of the space. This article explores the purpose and benefits of an evaluation of commonly used spaces for individuals regardless of their physical, cognitive, and/or emotional limitations. Essentially, the goal of a home accessibility evaluation is to promote independence and safe access to maximize participation in meaningful activities inside and outside the home. (A similar assessment, a workplace evaluation, can be performed at your place of work.)

The Daily Routine

Many people simply wake up, get dressed, eat breakfast, and have their morning cup of coffee to get ready for work and school. Typical routines can go awry—oversleeping, the car not starting, or the kids not being agreeable—which cause adaptations to occur on the spot. Not surprisingly, an illness, disease, or disability adds another level of complexity to daily routines. Adaptations to the environment may simplify these routines. Existing research on environmental interventions, including the use of assistive technology and devices, demonstrates that alterations to living spaces can reduce a person's level of difficulty¹ and dependence, thus increasing safety in everyday life.^{2,3}

“Environmental Press”

According to the late Powell Lawton—a renowned research scientist and behavioral psychologist—a person has certain abilities at a given time and the environment has certain demands it places on a person's abilities.⁴ By examining abilities and level of demand (also known as *environmental press*), behavior can be better understood. Developing the ideal environment, suitable for each individual, is the goal.⁵ Changes in a person's physical skills impact the degree of *environmental press* that is tolerable. Such tolerance often decreases as age and illness progress.

Therefore, it is important that the individual learn about potential changes within the home that can optimize their living. The home accessibility evaluation is an invaluable tool.

Environmental Modifications

Individuals vary greatly in how they experience their home, work, and community environments. There are many factors to take into account regarding how an environment will be experienced by an individual with physical, cognitive, and/or emotional limitations. The question becomes *how to identify* necessary modifications to a given environment. Successful environmental modification recommendations are the outcome of a comprehensive evaluation of an individual and his/her environment. It is wise to have an experienced professional—often an occupational therapist (OT)—conduct an evaluation of the environment under consideration. OTs who specialize in environmental modifications bring a thorough knowledge of illness, injury, disease, and prognosis, as well as how different impairments affect an individual’s functional performance. These professionals assess the wants, needs, and limitations of people in concert with the environment to determine how they will perform necessary tasks. Health, wellness, and participation in all aspects of each individual’s life are considered.

Home modifications, however, require a team approach. As an OT who specializes in environmental modifications, I bring a unique perspective to the team. Nevertheless, a group of professionals—OTs, contractors, builders, interior designers, product vendors, and architects—is necessary to completely meet the needs of the client concerning home accessibility.

Safety

A home accessibility evaluation will help determine safe, accessible options for entrance and egress from a home. It is optimal to have at least two safe egress points during an emergency in case one is blocked. When this is not feasible, other strategies must be considered and put into place to maximize safety.



Second accessible egress point in rear of house

While making modifications to your home to allow for safe egress during an emergency is important, it is equally important to create and practice an emergency escape plan. *Second accessible egress point in rear of house*

Another facet of a home accessibility evaluation is to identify fall risks, with the goal of preventing injury. Most falls happen at home; every year approximately 33 million Americans are injured seriously enough to require medical attention. In fact, the most common cause of nonfatal injury in every age group is falling down. Furthermore, among people 65 years and older, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths, nonfatal injuries, and hospital admissions for trauma. Each year in the United States, nearly one-third of older adults experience a fall.⁶ The integration of environmental modifications can help decrease the risk of falls, creating a safer home environment.

Maximizing Independence

A home accessibility evaluation will provide recommendations to make a home more accessible to its residents, which increases independence in completing daily tasks. Being able to get in, out, and around one's house ultimately affords easier access to the community.

Aging-in-Place

Aging-in-Place design takes into consideration a person's current and potential needs and incorporates them into the design to allow people to remain in their homes for as long as possible. It considers the aging process and the impact of health on one's environment, with the goal of safety and independence.

Is a home evaluation right for you? You may benefit from a home accessibility evaluation if:

- You or a loved one currently has trouble getting around in the home
- You or a family member has physical or cognitive deficits limiting the ability to complete daily living tasks
- You are planning to live in your current home for as long as possible but are concerned your home environment may not meet your mobility needs down the road
- You are concerned about your parents getting older and their ability to live safely and independently as they age.

If one or more of these scenarios applies to you, you may want to look into obtaining a home accessibility evaluation. Your physician should be able to

offer a referral to an experienced professional who can perform the assessment.

References:

1. Gitlin, L. N., Winter, L., Dennis, M., Corcoran, M., Schinfeld, S., & Hauck, W. W. (2006). A randomized trial of a multicomponent home intervention to reduce difficulties in older adults. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, 54*, 809-816.
2. Roelands, M., Van Oost, P., Buysse, A., & Depoorter, A. (2002). Awareness among community-dwelling elderly of assistive devices for mobility and self-care and attitudes towards their use. *Social Science & Medicine, 54*, 1441-1451.
3. Sonn, U., & Grimby, G. (1994). Assistive devices in an elderly population studied at 70 and 76 years of age. *Disability and Rehabilitation, 16*, 85-92.
4. Lawton, M. P. (1986). *Environment and Aging*. Albany: Center for the Study of Aging.
5. Carstensen, L. L., & Edelman, B. A. (Eds.). (1987). *Handbook of Clinical Gerontology*. New York: Pergamon Press.
6. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. *Injury Prevention & Control: Home and Recreational Safety*. Retrieved July 28, 2010 from <http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/index-pr.html>. ■

Informed Consumers are Satisfied Consumers

Eileen Mapes
Information and Outreach Coordinator
DATI Central Site

We've all seen a commercial for a device or service that seems perfect for us or someone we know. In fact, many of us have purchased items only to find that they don't meet our needs. This seems especially true for individuals with disabilities. Marketing directed at this population is strong, which may lead to uninformed purchases. Buyer's remorse is real, but returning such items isn't always easy. As individuals with disabilities and their families know, there is often a quest for a device that is "just the right fit." Too bad we don't always choose the best item for its intended use.

Having an opportunity to “try before you buy” may eliminate costly mistakes. DATI’s device demonstration and loan services offer just such an opportunity. The DATI Assistive Technology Resource Centers (ATRCs), located in each county, are stocked full of devices that meet a wide range of functional needs. You don’t even have to know exactly what you’re looking for when you visit an ATRC. Just explain to the AT Specialist what you want to be able to do and he will show you a range of products that could possibly assist you. If one or two seem particularly promising, you can borrow them—at no cost—to try them at home, at school, at work...or wherever you intend to use them.

Let me introduce you to several individuals.

Blake is a young adult with learning disabilities who struggled to read from an early age. Over the years, his family purchased different devices with the hope that each item would open up the world of books and reading to him. In the past year, they landed on a device that provided him the access he needed to be able to read for pleasure—the *Amazon Kindle*. He

described his experience to us: “I have never been able to read a book, or anything for that matter, all the way to the end and call it fun. My family got me a **Kindle**. I had no idea what it was. At first, I was sure it would be like the other things they got me to help me read and it wouldn’t work. I used it and was happy when I got asked what I was reading and was able to tell what the book was about. Learning disabilities or not, it is an awesome tool to have if you’re on the go for work, and the best thing is it reads to you



so you don’t have to look at the screen. I didn’t know it before, but I have so many different books I have wanted to read for so long that sometimes I have trouble picking a new one to start. I would like to thank Mom & Dad for the gift and everything they have done to help me read. You guys rock!”

Trinity is a school-age child with an auditory processing disorder as well as hearing loss. She and her mother came to the New Castle County ATRC in search of a device that would help Trinity perform to her potential in school. They borrowed an FM system—a personal auditory amplification system used in conjunction with headphones or hearing aids to increase the volume of voices. Such a system was ultimately donated to her, providing

access to a device that would not otherwise have been readily available. With the help of the FM system, her mother reports that Trinity made noticeable improvements during the past school semester. Trinity's concentration increased, which helped her overall performance in school. Specifically, her ability to follow the teacher's instruction



increased, as did her ability to stay on task. In fact, Trinity's reading skill advanced by an entire grade level soon after she began using the FM system in the classroom. Her verbal skills and spelling improved markedly, too. Trinity often says that she can concentrate better and hear the teacher "so I can follow the directions. The FM lets me hear." Trinity's mother went on to say, "With decreased distractibility and improved understanding, my daughter has gained confidence in her abilities. A child without this service would have been labeled an at-risk student. I thank you for this opportunity. It has changed her self-perception to a positive one, which helped to improve Trinity's academic achievement. Because of her experience with the FM system, Trinity now says that school is fun and that she loves the system."

Tom, a gentleman who has been legally blind for over forty years, learned the value of assistive technologies over the past twenty years. Two devices have been essential for him in the workplace: a CCTV for reading print materials (pictured below) and **Zoomtext** for screen magnification as well as screen reading. Despite having these aids, Tom has found that he still does very little pleasure reading (too arduous) or listening (too expensive). He turned to DATI for guidance and received "some terrific advice" from Dan Fendler, AT Specialist in the Sussex County ATRC, who has a wealth of knowledge about all types of assistive technologies. Dan introduced Tom to the many options now available for persons with visual impairments. Tom reports that it is "nice to know that there



are experts like Dan who keep up with the changes and can help sort through the options.” Tom has since visited the New Castle County ATRC where he met Marvin Williams, AT Specialist. Based on his DATI experiences, Tom purchased a **VictorReader Stream**, made by *Humanware*, which is an MP3 player designed for use by individuals who are visually impaired. He also obtained two very nifty 7X magnifiers with brilliant LED illumination through the BOLD program. Tom went on to say, “Now I know that there are many devices available on-loan through DATI. The program allows me to get hands-on experience before making a purchasing decision. I look forward to working with DATI in the future as I continue to explore what assistive technologies are available to help me in my everyday life.”



These stories illustrate the importance of finding the right AT device for the individual, and how equipment demonstration and short-term loans can really “seal the deal.” To that end, our AT Specialists encourage our readers to make an appointment at their local office and try devices that will be the best AT match for their need. ■

The AT Bargain Basement

Marvin Williams

AT Specialist

DATI New Castle County ATRC

Hello, True Believers, and welcome to another action-packed installment of the *AT Bargain Basement (ATBB)*! I am Marvin Williams, your guide in the land of assistive technology (AT) bargains. As usual, if you are a regular to the *Basement*, welcome back! If this is your first trip with us, I’m glad you could join the party. Before we get started, we need to look at the rules. The rules of the *Basement* are simple—I find AT bargains costing \$100 or less and share them with you. I will be sure to let you know if you can find the bargains locally or if you need to order them over the telephone or Internet. Simple enough, right? So without further adieu, let’s get to those bargains!

Our first bargain is the **Scotch Paper Cutter**. This alternative to scissors is a great way to cut accurately without having to move more than your hand around the shape you want to cut out. Originally used for quickly cutting wrapping paper, this handy little device has become useful to people with fine motor difficulties that make using scissors difficult. To use the cutter, you place the paper you want to cut in the mouth of the cutter then push the cutter by the handle. It's as simple as that! The **Scotch Paper Cutter** is widely available—from *Walmart* to *Walgreens/Happy Harry's* to *Kmart*. You can also order the device online. The price ranges from \$6.50 to \$7.50. Do make sure to check your local store for availability. So, if you're finding scissors are becoming harder to use, this may be an alternative for you.



Our next bargain is the **Good Grips 6-Piece Kitchen Essentials Set** from OXO. If you have never used **Good Grips** before, you haven't had the pleasure of using some of the best ergonomically designed kitchen tools readily available on the market. The handles of **Good Grips** tools are larger than typical kitchen tools. They are also soft and made of a material that won't slip if your hands or the tools are wet. The set includes a swivel peeler, tongs, balloon whisk, grater, ice cream scoop, and can opener and lists for \$44.50. I was able to find it on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) for \$34.64 with free shipping and handling. *Macy's* also has the set available for \$39.99. Of course, you can purchase individual OXO tools at retail stores or online.



The next bargain is a “return guest” to the *Basement*—*GE's Reveal* light bulb. You might remember them from the last time they made the *ATBB* cut. Great little bulbs that, while not claiming to be full-spectrum, behave like a full-spectrum bulb for much less money than standard full-spectrum light systems. Well, they're still around, but now you can get them as a compact fluorescent bulb. That's right! Now you can get a nice, clean light and save on your power bill, too! In case you don't know about compact fluorescent (CFL) bulbs, they use a fraction of the power of regular light

bulbs while giving off as much or more light. For example, a regular, incandescent 40-watt light bulb uses 40-watts of power. The **GE Reveal** CFL bulb gives off the same light as that 40-watt bulb while only using 10-watts of power, and it lasts up to ten times longer than an incandescent bulb. That's a full 75% savings on power alone! The bulbs are available at most hardware stores, *Home Depot*, and *Lowes*. They retail for between \$6.50 and \$10 each, and my colleague Sandi in Newark found them at *Walmart* in a 4-pack for around \$16. Now, I know that seems a bit pricey, but the cost savings in your energy use helps to balance that out very nicely.



Our last bargain comes to us from Eileen in Wilmington who found a beauty! It's the **D-Grip Handle** by *Motus*. It's an add-on, adjustable handle that easily attaches to your favorite garden tool so you can get a better grip. This can be a big help if you have arthritis, back problems, or want an easier way to lift a shovel or use a rake or hoe. The **D-Grip** sells for between \$16 and \$20. I haven't seen it for sale in stores, but you can get it online from *Motus*, <http://motus.ca/>, or from *Green Heron Tools* in New Tripoli, PA. You can call *Green Heron Tools* at 484-294-2278 or visit their website, www.greenherontools.com. DATI also has this nifty device for you to borrow so you can try it out, making sure it works for you, before purchasing it.



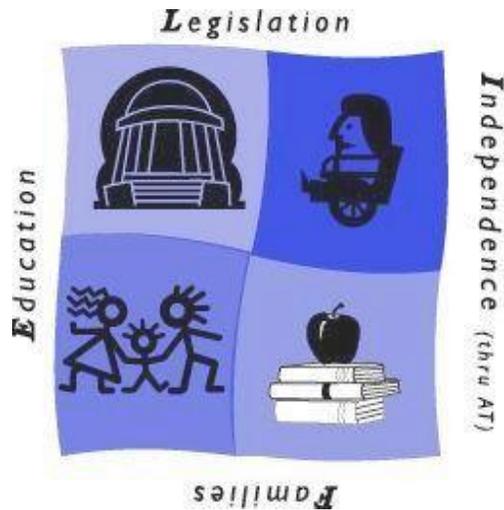
That does it for this episode of the *Basement*. Thank you all for stopping by and to my contributors. If you have a bargain to share with everyone, please call, write, e-mail, fax, smoke signal, or carrier pigeon them to me, Marvin Williams, at DATI. Not only will I give you credit here for everyone to see, but I will send you a free commemorative DATI gripper! Until our next party, may your bargains and your dollars be plentiful. ■

Save These Dates

LIFE Conference XIII

January 19, 2011

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



Online registration now available at
www.lifeconference-delaware.org

For more information, visit the website, email info@LIFEconference-delaware.org, or call the Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council at 302-739-3333.

Sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities are available!

Featuring Keynote Speaker:

Kim E. Musheno

Director of Legislative Affairs
Association of University
Centers on Disabilities
(AUCD)

Featured Topics Include:

Healthcare Reform, AT in the Workplace, Aging & Disability Resource Center Grant and Consolidation of Waivers, Independent Living in the Home, Americans With Disabilities Act Update, Behavior Interventions and many more!

Conference Location:
Sheraton Dover Hotel
Dover, Delaware
8:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Inclusion Conference
March 15, 2011
Sheraton Dover Hotel, Dover, DE

The Inclusion Conference is designed to address the needs of educators, parents, policymakers, service providers, and childcare providers involved with or interested in promoting inclusion for ALL from birth to 21.



Transition Conference
March 31, 2011
Sheraton Dover Hotel, Dover, DE

The Transition Conference is designed for high school students, parents, educators and professionals who are interested in issues affecting students with disabilities as they transition from high school into the adult world. The conference will offer workshops for students, parents and professionals in topics ranging from legal considerations, school and parent partnerships, job seeking strategies and employment, and post-secondary opportunities for youth with disabilities.

Note: If you are looking for items not on the AT Exchange, contact the DATI's Sussex County ATRC at 302-856-7946 or 800-870-DATI (3284). If you call the 800 number, you will interact with an automated system. In order to reach the Sussex ATRC, press 1 after the first prompt and 6 after the next prompt.

New items are added regularly. If there has been no activity or interaction with the contributor to the list within six months, items are automatically removed from the list.

Note on liability: The DATI does not warrant the condition or terms of sale of any device offered for reutilization by an existing owner or borrower under the AT Program. The DATI shall not be liable for any claims, liabilities, damages, losses, costs, expenses (including but not limited to settlements, judgments, court costs and reasonable attorney's fees), fines and penalties, arising out of any actual or alleged injury, loss or damage of any nature whatsoever in connection with the sale or use of any device purchased or sold under the AT Program. It shall be the responsibility of the seller to provide accurate and detailed information about the device's specifications and condition to any buyer. The DATI functions solely as an information-sharing communication channel. ■

To Contact DATI's Central Site office or the ATRC closest to you, call 800-870-DATI (3284)

Press

#1 for English or
#2 for Spanish,

then press

#3 for the Central Site office
#4 for the New Castle County ATRC
#5 for the Kent County ATRC
#6 for the Sussex County ATRC

TDD callers: Do not press #1 or #2 and your call will be answered on a TDD line at the Central Site office. ■

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!

Has your address changed? Are you receiving duplicates? Would you prefer to receive the newsletter via email?

If your mailing or email address is incorrect, please type or print your correct information on the form below and forward it to DATI along with your current mailing label or the first page of your electronic newsletter. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, visit www.dati.org/news/unsubscribe.html or contact our central office.

Do you know a friend or family member who would be interested in receiving the newsletter? Please provide him/her with the subscription form below. ■



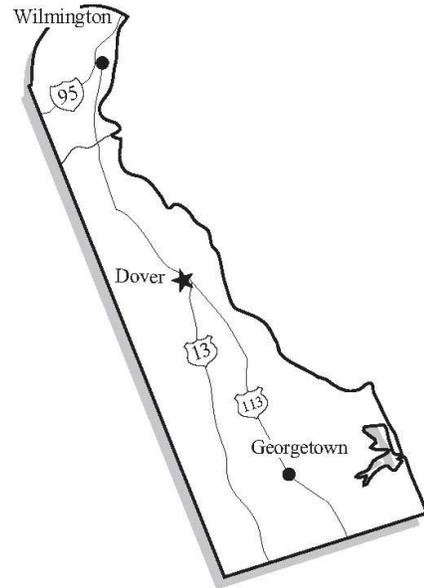
DATI RESOURCE CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE STATE...

800-870-DATI (3284)
dati@asel.udel.edu

New Castle County ATRC
Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children
203 Administration & Research Bldg.
1600 Rockland Road
Wilmington, DE 19803
302-651-6790
302-651-6794 (TDD)
302-651-6793 (fax)

Kent County ATRC
Easter Seals Kent County Center
100 Enterprise Place, Suite One
Dover, DE 19904-8200
302-739-6885
302-739-6886 (TDD)
302-739-6887 (fax)

Sussex County ATRC
20123 Office Circle
Georgetown, DE 19947
302-856-7946
302-856-6714 (voice or TDD)
302-856-6990 (fax) ■



The AT Messenger is published quarterly by the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI). Dissemination of this newsletter to other people, association newsletters, and electronic mailing lists is encouraged. Information contained in this publication may be reprinted without permission, although attribution to the author and DATI is required.

Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative
Center for Disabilities Studies
University of Delaware
Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children



P.O. Box 269
Wilmington, DE 19899-0269
Phone: 800-870-DATI (3284) or 302-651-6790
TDD: 302-651-6794; fax: 302-651-6793
Email: dati@asel.udel.edu
Web address: www.dati.org



DATI is funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) of the U.S. Department of Education, Grant #H224A050008 to the University of Delaware. This publication does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of RSA/ED, and no official endorsement of the materials should be inferred. The University of Delaware is an equal opportunity employer and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, age, national origin, marital status or disability in conformity with applicable laws. ■

The AT Messenger Subscription Form



I am a Delaware resident; please sign me up to receive *The AT Messenger*

Please cancel my subscription to *The AT Messenger*

Name: _____ Title: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address (check one): ___ Business ___ Residence _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email (check one): ___ Business ___ Residence _____

Format:

_____ I have provided my email address above, please send me an electronic version

_____ I prefer to receive a print version of *The AT Messenger* through the mail.

Indicate if an alternate format is needed:

_____ audio tape _____ Braille _____ large print

I am a:

_____ person with a disability (please specify) _____

_____ family member of a person with a disability

_____ friend/advocate/colleague of someone with a disability

_____ professional (please specify) _____

_____ interested citizen

_____ other (please specify)