ATK brings Assistive Technology to Topeka

More than 700 people interested in assistive technology devices, services and solutions attended the 2011 Assistive Technology Expo: Active Living, Learning, and Working with AT - Conference and Exhibit Hall at the Expocentre, Topeka, September 8-9. This year’s AT Expo, hosted by Assistive Technology for Kansans, offered a conference with 39 local and national presenters sharing their expertise over a wide range of topics. The Exhibit Hall brought together more than 70 vendors demonstrating a variety of cutting edge technology with the time and desire to talk to attendees about their personal technology needs.

Over and over, people found solutions. A security guard working the door at the Exhibit Hall asked one of the AT Staff, garbed in signature blue shirts, if there was an AT solution for his problem, needing help to put on his socks. The technology solution was named “sock aid”, and at last report, he had filled out the paperwork to try out a sock aid at no cost from the ATK Loan Program based in Salina.

A mom and dad came with their son to tour the Exhibit Hall and met Ed Bell, Indiana strawberry farmer, Expo Keynote speaker and a representative of the standing wheelchair. With some help, the young man stood for the first time in ten years. The family photo that was snapped showed the son taller than the father, an unexpected pleasure for all.

Another family came to the Expo with the

In the picture, Ed Bell, Indiana strawberry farmer, talks about how he adapts his farm routines and equipment. Ed’s wheelchair also allows him to stand and on the screen he is using a lift to transfer to his tractor.

In this issue...
1. ATK brings AT to Topeka
2. Just the STATS
3. Two New Grant Awards
4. Training Spotlight: KITS
5. Presentations
6. Staff News: Ibari Ezekwe; Yusuke Hayashi
7. Community Service: Rock Chalk Jaywalkers
8. ATK Film Series Premieres
9. ATK brings AT to Topeka - continued
**Just the STATS**

**Parsons E-waste Event Proves Sustainable**

On August 20, 2011 fourteen volunteers representing 7 organizations including the LSI at Parsons, collected more than 20,000 pounds of electronic waste – enough computers, television sets, microwaves and other unwanted e-waste to fill 2 semi-trailers.

Participants from 5 counties and 18 communities hauled their e-waste to the Parsons event. The area-wide effort has become sustainable through the generosity of corporate sponsors and free-will donations from individuals that totaled $988.85 for the Saturday event. Each event costs about $1000. Kari West, public relations director for the city of Parsons said, “Since the beginning of our e-waste project, we have filled & recycled 10 semi-trailers of electronic waste. That’s roughly 100 tons of recyclables.” (Excerpts from Colleen Surridge’s article, E-waste event finds success, *The Parsons Sun, Sept. 1, 2011.)*

**Volunteers wanted!** The next E-waste Collection Event is October 8 from 9 AM to 1 PM at the parking lot at the corner of Wisconsin & North Street, in Oswego, KS. As always, acceptable items include: televisions, computer systems, monitors, VCRs, CD players, DVD players, printers, scanners, microwaves, stereo systems, cell phones, digital cameras, video cameras, and other types of audio/visual equipment, etc.

In the picture, front row, Dean Williams, back row, Kate Saunders, Kari West, Kat Streml Thomas, Kathy Olson, Katin Rhodenbaugh, Laura Hanigan. Event mascot reclining on the discarded console tv: Xena, the standard poodle. Not pictured, Patty Black Moore.

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**TWO NEW GRANT AWARDS ANNOUNCED**

**Kathryn Saunders, Dean Williams, Yusuke Hayashi and Kat Streml Thomas** received a new 2-year award, *Phase 1, Improving outcomes for young children with hearing impairment and other disabilities: Technology for audiometric assessment* from Steppingstones that starts this fall.

**Dean Williams** received notification that his pilot grant application *Bio-behavioral Measure of Aversive Transitions in Children* has been selected for funding by the Kansas Center for Autism Research and Training.
To ensure that Kansas early childhood special education professionals have the most current guidance regarding early childhood outcome (ECO) reporting, the Kansas Inservice Training System (KITS) has designed a variety of training activities and materials for 2011 – 2012. On August 31st and September 2nd, more than 135 sites participated in the Kansas Early Childhood Outcome Update webinar. This webinar was designed to provide early childhood special education professionals with an overview of the Kansas requirements for completing ECO ratings using the Child Outcome Summary Form (COSF), and entering rating information into the Outcome Web System (OWS). A recorded version of the webinar will soon be posted on the KITS website (http://kskits.org/ta/ECOOutcomes/Index.shtml), along with the PowerPoint slides and a written questions and answer document based on the questions that were asked during each webinar.

In October, KITS will provide 3 regional trainings entitled, Early Childhood Outcomes: Using the Child Outcome Summary Form (COSF) to Report Progress. These half-day regional workshops will be held in Topeka (Oct. 13th), Newton (Oct. 18th), and Garden City (Oct. 28th), and are designed to be an introduction to the team process for completing ECO ratings using the COSF. They were designed specifically for staff new to the ECO rating process or those who would like to review the requirements for completing a COSF.

The KITS website is the official repository for Kansas ECO resources and training information. There is a direct link to the Kansas ECO webpage (http://www.kskits.org/ta/ECOOutcomes/Index.shtml) from the KITS home page. This rich resource includes a section for Hot Topics where new information is posted, and a link to the OWS Login and User Guide. There are pages specific to administrators, data entry personnel, direct service providers, and those who are training new staff. Training materials are posted for both individual and group training, as well as case studies that include example COSFs.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) and KITS are developing written guidance and training related to understanding and using ECO data. A document is planned that will provide local networks and districts with information, investigative questions, and strategies for understanding and looking at patterns in ECO data. A future webinar and/or training sessions will be held in the spring of 2012 to introduce the data-drill-down document and strategies.
PRESENTATIONS


**STAFF NEWS**

Ibari Ezekwe accepts new job with NECC

**IBARI EZEKWE**

Teacher II
New England Center for Children
Southborough, MA

My experience as a Research Assistant with the Life Span Institute at Parsons has been invaluable. Training with Drs. Kate Saunders, Dean Williams, Yusuke Hayashi, and Katie Hine has enriched my repertoire developing skills that are beneficial for future positions, such as my new position as a Teacher II with the New England Center for Children (NECC) in Massachusetts.

Learning about stimulus control (conceptually and procedurally), through the lab projects — from reading to rich-to-lean and to the treatment generalization projects — have comprised training that money can’t buy; for this, I am grateful. I strongly value the ways in which data was analyzed (case by case), manipulation of stimuli to either address the subjects’ response errors or in an effort to reinforce a target response, and the implementation of varying/additional procedure(s) to better focus on the objective of a particular study. The range of flexibility of methodology in this field (as in my previous mention of stimuli manipulation and procedural revisions) is essential to establishing methods that are functional in clinical/applied settings.

The New England Center for Children (among others) was recommended by Kate and Dean, based on my interest in obtaining a strong clinical experience. Prior to my acceptance of this position, I interviewed with both Kennedy Krieger Institute, as well as NECC; these organizations are regarded as prominent for their research based works in Applied Behavioral Analysis. NECC is primarily a school for children with autism. It features an individualized and integrative structure, international outreach, and upward mobility. These characteristics were significant to my acceptance.

This decision was bitter-sweet; I was sad to leave my Life Span Institute at Parsons team, but also glad to join my new team at the New England Center for Children, hoping that we (Parsons crew and I) all keep in touch.

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Yusuke Hayashi

Accepts new position as Assistant Scientist

"Following a national search, we are pleased to announce that Yusuke has joined the LSI at Parsons as an Assistant Scientist. He has quickly reinforced our decision by being a part of a team in securing a new and exciting project," Dave Lindeman, Ph.D., LSI at Parsons Director said. The new grant award titled, Phase 1, Improving outcomes for young children with hearing impairment and other disabilities: Technology for audiometric assessment, starts this fall at the Parsons Research Center with Kate Saunders, Ph.D., Dean Williams, Ph.D., Dr. Hayashi and Kat Streml-Thomson, M.A., consultant."
Kathryn Saunders has been invited to serve as a reviewer in an NICHD-sponsored evaluation of the institute’s T32 training award applications in a pilot session in October. Traditionally T32 training applications have been distributed to various review groups in the institute according to scientific expertise, and this pilot session is to determine if a dedicated annual panel of focused experience in the T32 mechanism as well as in the scientific foci of the proposed training would assure a more consistent and meaningful evaluation of merit for this institutional training program's applications. In addition to her role as reviewer, Kate will also provide feedback and advice on the process guidelines and evaluation procedure.

Sara Sack, Director, Assistive Technology for Kansans, hosted the first ATK film series in Parsons on August 17 for more than 25 staff and invited guests. Both videos featured people with disabilities in starring roles. The short films are part of an International Film Series that Sara attended at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. A lively discussion among attendees followed over tasty Subway sandwiches. A second series is planned for the later this year.

Rock Chalk Jaywalkers

Monthly Lunches Raise Funds

The Rock Chalk Jaywalker team continues to raise funds for the 2012 Labette County Relay For Life. The first lunch on July 26th raised $166, the August 31st cookout raised a whopping $322, and the September 20th soup kitchen raised the bar again to $329.25. These monthly lunches combine great food for a minimal donation with a chance for campus co-workers to mingle.

Mark your calendars for the next lunch date on Thursday, October 20 (Hallosagna) and Wednesday, November 16 (Spud Bar). If you would like to receive notification of upcoming lunches or other events by email or through the campus mail or if you are interested in joining the team, please contact Karen Lawson, team captain, at klawson@ku.edu or Extension 1618.

Rock Chalk Jaywalkers – Holiday Cookie Bazaar

As a fund raising event for the 2012 Labette County Relay For Life, the Rock Chalk Jaywalkers will host a Holiday Cookie Bazaar on Tuesday, December 13th, from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM in the UCDD Media Studio. A variety of homemade cookies will be available to purchase – just in time for your holiday parties and family dinners.
singular purpose of seeing the new adjustable Rifton feeder seat (pictured above). In her conference session, Rhonda Etter, Southeast AT Access Site, Parsons, demonstrated the device and the parents were able to determine that this seat would be a good solution for their young daughter.

Sharon Morton, ATK KEE reuse coordinator, talked with a couple after they had toured the Hall. The wife said that her husband had resisted using a C-PAP device for years even though his doctor had recommended it for his health. After talking with a vendor and getting his questions answers, her husband said their next stop would be to purchase one.

Parsons was well represented at the Topeka AT Expo. Two ATK staff from the Southeast Assistive Technology Access Site, Parsons, were speakers at the Conference. Rhonda Etter presented AT Solutions for Early Childhood and Vicki Souter presented AT for Memory, Organization & Safety.

Sheila Simmons, ATK program coordinator, spoke on Physiatrist Services for Farmers and Ranchers and Kansas AgrAbility, a program to help keep farmers, ranchers and their families in business after an accident or health condition.

Sandy Hill and Tammy Schoenhofer (LSI at Parsons) and Jasper Schoenhofer handed out ATK complimentary cloth bags, programs and name badges and monitored the popular door prize giveaways. Additionally, more than 25 ATK staff representing the statewide program gathered to talk about what they do every day, helping Kansans of all ages identify and obtain the assistive technology devices, services and solutions they need.

Sara Sack, ATK program director, looks forward to the next AT Expo scheduled in Wichita in September 2012. She noted that planning for the 2012 AT Expo promises an even stronger Exhibit Hall and Conference. We can hardly wait!