

**Assistive Technology Advisory Council Meeting  
June 9, 2010  
Draft Minutes**

**Members Present:** Elizabeth Flaherty, Vice Chair; Margaret Fields, Ph.D., Secretary; Michael Behrmann, Ed.D.; Matthew Deans; Tom Dowling; Ben Garrett; Kelly Lum, OTR/L; Joseph Wallace, Ph.D.; Joann Willis; Mary Wilds (representing John Eisenberg, Department of Education).

**Present by Teleconference:** Rose Pruden, representing Senator Yvonne Miller; Catherine Burzio and Matha Macais representing State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

**Members Absent:** Brenda Wickard, Chair; Melanie Brunson; John Eisenberg; Tony Gentry, Ph.D., OTR/L; George Scott Higdon; Senator Yvonne Miller; Shawn Utt

**Guests:**

Clayton Bowen, Patricia Banks, Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH)  
Erica Lovelace, Mary Nunnally, Department of Rehabilitative Services  
Barbara Seymour, Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)

**Staff Present:**

Kathy Hayfield, Director, Technology and Employment Support Services (TESS/DRS)  
Robert Krollman, Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) Central Office  
Barclay Shepard, VATS Central Office  
Elin Glass, VATS Central Office  
Janice Austin, VATS Central Office  
Emily McKeough Fallings -VATS Northern Regional Site-George Mason University  
David Netherton, Sharon Davis, Joann Ervin, VATS Southeast Regional Site-Old Dominion University  
Rick Barrow, VATS Southwest Regional Site-Virginia Tech  
Sonja Schaible, Executive Director, Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment & Endowment (F.R.E.E.)

**Call to Order:**

Elizabeth Flaherty, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. All members of the Advisory Council, VATS staff and presenters/guests introduced themselves.

Bob Krollman announced that in May 2010, DRS Commissioner Jim Rothrock appointed two people to serve as members of this Advisory Council. They are Shawn Utt, representing the Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council and Melanie Brunson, representing Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) Statewide Rehabilitation Council.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

**A motion was made by Joey Wallace, Ph.D., seconded by Peggy Fields, Ph.D. and passed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2010 ATAC meeting.**

### **Public Comment**

Ben Garrett, speaking as a citizen, stated that the Governor has appointed a Commission to study the state and no attempt seems to have been made to find out if a program is valid, reliable, ramifications if eliminated or of benefit. He further stated that no cost analysis is being done. Mr. Garrett requested Council members to make known that this organization (VATS) is of extreme benefit to the tax payers of Virginia.

**Old Business:** There was no old business brought forward for discussion.

### **Assistive Technology, Director's Update:**

Kathy Hayfield, Director, Technology and Employment Support Services (TESS), announced the recent reappointments by Governor McDonnell of James A. Rothrock, Commissioner, DRS, Ronald Lanier, Director, Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Ray Hopkins as Commissioner of the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired.. Polly Franks Sweeney was appointed to the position of Special Advisor to the Governor on Disability Issues.

Ms. Hayfield reported on some of the last quarter accomplishments by VATS which included an Assistive Technology (AT) Fair held at the Virginia Transition Forum in March and AT Training held at WWRC in April. The Virginia Reuse Network has also been active as they proceed to provide durable medical equipment to qualified residents in the Commonwealth. VATS staff from the DRS Central Office and Regional Sites attended the National AT Act Conference held in Arlington, Virginia, and along with the New Well Fund , were responsible for providing the welcoming at the Conference.

Ms. Hayfield explained that the AT Act of 1998 as amended in 2004, which funds VATS, is due to be reauthorized in 2010. The reauthorization of the AT Act took place in 2004 and the allocation of money was provided in formula grants for six years, with a one year extension. The AT Act will be addressed in 2011.

### **Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) Update:**

Kelly Lum began her presentation by reminding the Council that in October 2009, Rick Sizemore, Director, WWRC, had asked ATAC members to look at and endorse the WWRC Blueprint. The Blueprint runs from October through September and they are beginning to develop a new Blueprint for the next fiscal year. Council members were asked to let WWRC know if they have any recommendations for AT related issues to be addressed by the Center.

Ms. Lum reported on activities such as WWRC providing mobile clinics in Southwest Virginia, seminars held to share AT Resources, and a project for a centralized loaner library at WWRC.

WWRC has a research grant for persons with neurologic impairments. You may contact Ms. Lum if you know of someone who may be interested in participating as part of the study related to the grant.

Ms. Lum reported that the new DRS AT Specialist (Occupational Therapist) position has been filled in Southwest Virginia and that DRS is recruiting for the new position that is open in the DRS Northern Region

### **Report on AT and Transition**

Erica Lovelace, Education Services Manager, presented a report on behalf of Susan Asselin, Director of VATS Southwest on the special project dealing with issues associated with Assistive Technology and Transition. A final report on this project, along with recommendations, will be presented to the Advisory Council at the September 2010 meeting

Mr. Krollman suggested to the Council that the Fall 2010 newsletter cover the topic of Assistive Technology and Transition.

Ms. Hayfield reminded the Council that John Eisenberg had asked VATS and the ATAC to consider recommending a change in legislation or policy as a result of the study being prepared by the Committee on AT and Transitioning.

### **Report on New Well Fund**

Joey Wallace, Ph.D., Director, New Well Fund provided an historical overview of the New Well Fund during its 15 years in existence. The New Well Fund provides low interest, guaranteed loans for people with disabilities who qualify for AT equipment such as wheelchair accessible vans, vehicle modifications, hearing aids, home modifications, athletic equipment or if they want to start a business at home (telework).

The New Well Fund will provide staff to assist with completing a loan application at no cost to the applicant and, if needed, go to the home of the applicant as well as provide an evaluation.

### **Review of Document from the Virginia Department of Education**

Mary Wilds, attending for John Eisenberg, presented a new planning document produced by the Virginia Department of Education entitled "Infusion of AT for Learning Planning for Effective AT Consideration".

The Board of Education maintains a detailed comprehensive, six-year plan to integrate educational technology into the Standards of Learning and the curricula of the public schools in Virginia. The plan presents a vision for the use of technology in schools and classrooms, and it serves as a blueprint for school divisions by identifying the necessary components of an effective technology program and can be reviewed at the following link-

[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents\\_memos/2010/123-10.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2010/123-10.shtml) .

## **Virginia Reuse Network Update**

Barclay Shepard presented an update on two pilot programs VATS is coordinating: the VR DME Reuse Pilot and the DME Sticker Pilot.

Mr. Shepard began the Power Point presentation with a review of VATS' role as the contract administrator of the Virginia Reuse Network (VRN). Mr. Shepard reported that the Virginia Reuse Network is supported by funds from a variety of sources including: the AT Act; the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA); and the Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative Trust Fund Board (CNI). Mr. Shepard discussed the structure as well as goals and objectives of the VRN.

Mr. Shepard reviewed the VR DME Pilot Program goal to increase assistive technology (AT) / durable medical equipment (DME) reuse activities within the Department of Rehabilitative Services' (DRS) vocational rehabilitation (VR) program. Mr. Shepard explained that VATS and the FREE Foundation have been participating in DRS field office staff meetings to connect field office staff with the local FREE Foundation reuse chapter / program. Mr. Shepard reviewed the project timeline, preliminary data of VR participants served, and two success stories.

Mr. Shepard reported on the planning and kick-off of the DME Sticker Pilot. Mr. Shepard reported that four DME providers in the Roanoke area agreed to apply "DME equipment stickers" to new rehabilitation equipment issued to Medicaid recipients, to educate Medicaid recipients on the benefits of reuse, and to collect data on equipment tagged using a "DME Provider Report." By doing so, Pilot Program participants anticipate that Medicaid recipients and or family members will use the contact information on the sticker to donate their gently used rehabilitation equipment to the VRN. Mr. Shepard reported that the Pilot is a collaborative effort among the following state agencies, non-profits, and DME Providers: the Department for Medical Assistance Services (DMAS); Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS); the Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment & Endowment (F.R.E.E.); Medi Home Care; Advanced Home Care; Horizon Medical; and Sun Medical. Mr. Shepard reported that the Pilot Program will take place for six months: June – December 2010.

## **FREE Foundation Update**

Sonja Schaible reported on statewide FREE Foundation reuse activities. Ms. Schaible updated Council members on the FREE Foundation's expansion of reuse programs into Richmond and South Hampton Roads areas. Ms. Schaible also reported that the FREE Foundation recently purchased the first of four automated sanitization and processing units for DME. The unit was purchased from the HUBSCRUB company and is capable of cleaning and sanitizing DME such as: wheelchairs; walkers; canes; bedside commodes; transfer benches etc. Ms. Schaible reported that the FREE Foundation participated in the Spring AT Training.

## **Telecommunications Presentation: Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

Clayton Bowen and Patricia Banks, Virginia Dept for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, conducted a presentation of video telecommunications equipment and the TAP program. a report and demo

on the i800 Captel and Z-phone. Financial assistance may be available toward the purchase of equipment.

DD/HH will work with VATS Regional Sites to provide phones and information as part of their complement of demo equipment.

### **Regional Site Updates**

The VATS Regional Sites (ODU, GMU and VA Tech) reported on current events and activities. The ODU site recently held "Say Yes to College" and it was very successful. VA Tech Regional Site is preparing for "College Bound" , June 23-25 at Virginia Techs. Emily Fallings, GMU will offer the Comp-U-Write camp this summer which is a program that promotes better communication by assisting students with writing technology.

### **Discussion of Election Process for the next quarterly ATAC Meeting**

Robert Krollman provided information on the requirement to hold an election of new officers for the Advisory Council in September. A Committee was named to develop a slate of nominees for new officers and members. Dr. Wallace and Joann Willis will form this Committee and will report on this charge at the next meeting.

### **Planning for future ATAC meetings**

**A motion was made by Elizabeth Flaherty, seconded by Peggy Fields, Ph.D., and passed by unanimous vote to hold the next meeting in the Richmond area, place to be determined.**

### **Adjournment**

**A motion to adjourn this meeting was made by Elizabeth Flaherty, seconded by Peggy Fields, Ph.D., and passed by unanimous vote. The meeting stood adjourned at 2:30pm.**