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State of Wisconsin

Assistive Technology Advisory Council

Web: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/atac/index.htm>

Assistive Technology Advisory Council

Quarterly Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2022

9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Join via [Zoom](#):

<https://dhs.wi.zoomgov.com/j/1611454481>

Join via Phone:

Phone: 1-669 254 5252

Meeting ID: 161 145 4481

Action Items and Motion

Approved February 16, 2023

A. Action Items

1. No action items.

B. Motion Items

1. **Motion Item:** Jim Denham made a motion to approve the November 9, 2022, ATAC quarterly meeting agenda. Cassie Frost seconded the motion. Motion carried.
2. **Motion Item:** Rick Ziller made a motion to approve August 24, 2022, ATAC quarterly meeting minutes. Jim Denham seconded the motion. Motion carried.
3. **Motion Item:** Mike Hipple made a motion to appoint Dawn Merth-Johnson to the Assistive Technology Advisory Council as the representative from the

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/atac/index.htm>

Department of Public Instruction. Jason Ostrowski seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. **Motion Item:** Jim Denham made a motion to elect Jenesis Lindbo at the Chairperson. Motion seconded by Jason Ostrowski. Motion carried.
5. **Motion Item:** Rick Ziller made a motion to elect Jim Denham as the Vice Chairperson. Motion seconded by Deen Amusa. Motion carried.
6. **Motion Item:** Debra Remmel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim Denham seconded the motion. Motion carried.

C. Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome and Introductions by Jason Ostrowski, Vice Chairperson

Council Members Present: Alison Peetz; Dawn Merth-Johnson, Cassie Frost; Jason Ostrowski; Jim Denham; Mike Hipple; Debra Remmel; Rick Ziller, Nurudeen Amusa; Debra Remmel.

Guests Present: Abygail Marx, Waisman Center; Calvin Options, Options for Independent Living; Cindi Pichler, Independence First; Ian Kastner, Options for Independent Living; Suzanne Walter, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; Andrea Klahn, AgrAbility; Ramsey Lee; Pang Lai Lor; Jennifer Schubring; Jeremy Trautlein, Eau Claire Area School District.

DHS Staff Support Present: Laura Plummer, Department of Health Services (DHS), Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources (BADR); Karen Potneck, DHS, BADR; Ashley Walker, DHS, BADR; Lisa Sobczyk, BADR.

II. Jason Ostrowski, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:05 A.M.

III. Review and Approve Quarterly August 24, 2022, Meeting Agenda

Jim Denham made a motion to approve the November 9, 2022, ATAC quarterly meeting agenda. Cassie Frost seconded the motion. Motion carried.

See Motion Item 1.

IV. Review and Approve August 4, 2022, Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Rick Ziller made a motion to approve August 24, 2022, ATAC quarterly meeting minutes. Jim Denham seconded the motion. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 2.**

V. Public Comment on Issues Affecting Assistive Technology Users (9:10 A.M. – 9:20 A.M.) or on the State Plan on Assistive Technology, 2021-2023 (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/state-plan-assistive-technology-2021-2023.htm>)

- Jennifer Schubring shared an experience in her school district with a child in the early childhood education program who she was working with on an augmentative and alternative communication evaluation. The child is non-verbal. The family had applied for a TEPP voucher and was solicited by a vendor for a specific app. The voucher was then utilized to purchase an iPad and the app from the vendor. This happened midway through the evaluation period with the school district and was not specifically the app which was going to be recommended. The family has now utilized their TEPP voucher for a product that will not meet the child's needs. She is trying to tread carefully in her communication with the family so they do not feel bad about their decision, but she wants it recognized that a TEPP vendor did act outside of their boundaries in soliciting this family to purchase their app.

VI. Assistive Technology Program Partner Updates

- Jim Denhman from the Wisconsin Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired shared that he will be hosting a training on the new accessibility features with the new iOS 16 operating system for iPhones. This includes people and door detection but only for the Pro and Max models with the advanced cameras. The agency also just hosted an annual gallery night where art is shown that was created by blind artists.

- Cassie Frost has been working with various school districts and presented at the Closing the Gap conference a few weeks ago. It was a very well attended conference since it was the first time back in person following the pandemic. Last week she visited the Indiana AT program.
- Debra from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation shared that the AsTec team has undergone some staff changes and a new lead supervisor.
- Deen Amusa from the Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired shared that there are two new specialists on staff which brings the office to a total of twelve specialists. OBVI wrapped up the Adventures in Vision Loss training at Wisconsin Lions Camp with approximately 14-20 participants that are new to vision loss.
- Dawn Merth Johnson from the Department of Public Instruction provided an update on the AT Forward project. The Community of Practice has an enrollment of over 900 which includes 200 school districts and 87 private school represented. As of last month, they have issued 145 micro credential badges with the largest area being AAC and Communication. AT Forward has done some outreach at conferences and presented to CESA. Next will be training on AEM and a decision tree for including AT in the IEP process.
- Jason Ostrowski is just finishing up working for DVR on National Disability Employment Awareness Month and handled 15 employers who received awards from the Governor.
- Rick Ziller from ATR mentioned some new developments with the iOS improvement. An added feature will allow for handing up for phone calls just using your voice.
- Mike Hipple shared that Closing the Gap was an amazing event. The WATRn newsletter will go out around Thanksgiving and he is open to submissions. The Chat group will be starting up again and if you want to

receive it, please contact Mike Hipple. National AAC membership is open for joining and there is a speaker connection website.

- Suzanne Walter from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is the new supervisor lead for the AsTech program.
- Cindi Pichler from Independence First has seen an increase in device reuse activity. She has been working with Mt. Mary College with the PHD OT and Rehab Counselor students. She conducted a training with TMG on the home modification process. Doors Open Milwaukee was held and is an opportunity for people to visit historic buildings so it was an example of how a historic building can be made accessible since Independence First is considered a historical building. This event reached a large segment of people learning about disabilities and accessibility. Former staff working in Nebraska collaborated with Independence First and they did a training “exchange” with their programs. Cindi serves on the Milwaukee County Aging and Disability Board and has been working on a committee related to vendor issues.
- Calvin Richtig shared information about an upcoming Sled Hockey activity on Saturday which is an opportunity for people to show up, try it and learn about this recreational event. Options is also working to develop a bowling program for people who are blind. Staff has visited seven bowling locations to check for ADA accessibility. Last month there was a wheelchair walk/hike event in Marinette County. Over the six-day period there were seventy-five wheelchair users and two-hundred participants overall. Options has a new Independent Living Coordinator starting and this person is already an AT user. Options has received one of the ARPA Home and Community Based grants and will be using this to fund a home modifications navigator program. Calvin continues to work with the Department of Natural Resources and the last advisory meeting was held in Door County to spotlight the accessible tower, beach access, and amphitheater.

- Abygail Marx from the Waisman Center provided a few updates. They have recently hired a new occupational therapist so their evaluation capacity will increase. They did however have two speech therapists recently leave their program. This may impact referral and evaluation times.

VII. WisTech Program Update (Annual Progress Report, Quarterly reporting, State Plan development, and general updates)

- The training survey to plan for 2023 events is currently available and all members are encouraged to take the survey. Sharing with other stakeholder groups is appreciated.
- Data collection ahead of the Annual Progress report has been going smoothly and ILCs have been contacted for any updates or corrections needed.
- WisTech continues to present to the DVR New Staff Orientation sessions.
- The FFY23 WisTech budget was reviewed. The budget is based upon the FFY22 award amount until we receive the new grant award notification from the Administration for Community Living.
- Amber Mullet from the Department of Health Services shared an update on the new telehealth services available for COVID-19. Telehealth services are available for those who test positive on a home test. Individuals can then connect with a telehealth provider to receive information about antiviral medication options.
- Amber Mullet also provided an update on the Independent Living Pilot program through DHS which is designed to provide assistance for individuals before they need to enroll in long term care services. This is a pilot program for Wisconsin residents over the age of 18 who are at risk of entering long term care programs. Funding is limited to the pilot areas at this time.

VIII. Assistive Technology Advisory Council Member Officer Elections, Appointments, and Vacancies

- Mike Hipple made a motion to appoint Dawn Merth-Johnson to the Assistive Technology Advisory Council as the representative from the Department of Public Instruction. Jason Ostrowski seconded the motion. Motion carried. See Motion Item 3.
- **Motion Item:** Jim Denham made a motion to elect Jenesis Lindbo as the Chairperson. Motion seconded by Jason Ostrowski. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 4.**
- **Motion Item:** Rick Ziller made a motion to elect Jim Denham as the Vice Chairperson. Motion seconded by Deen Amusa. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 5.**

IX. AgrAbility Update; Andrea Klhan, Outreach Specialist with AgrAbility of Wisconsin

- Presentation from Andrea Klhan about the AgrAbility program and services available.

X. LEND by Options Presentation; Options for Independent Living

- Presentation by Calvin Richtig and Ian Kastner from Options for Independent Living on how they are operating the Lend by Options device reuse program.

XI. Assistive Technology Advisory Council 2023 Meeting Dates Adjourn

- Tentative dates were discussed and selected by the AT Council for 2023.

XII. Debra Remmel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim Denham seconded the motion. Motion carried. See Motion Item 6.

The purpose of this meeting is to conduct the governmental business outlined in the above agenda. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to provide advice and guidance to the WisTech Program and assure that it is in compliance with the provisions of the

Assistive Technology Act (Tech Act) of 1998, as amended. Specifically, the Advisory Council will provide advice and guidance on the following:

- Submission of Wisconsin's State Plan for Assistive Technology (AT) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (ACL);
- Monitoring the WisTech program according to the State Plan for AT;
- Developing and maintaining collaborations with other agencies, organizations, and bodies providing AT services and devices throughout the State; and
- Monitoring of program data and outcomes.

The Council is administratively attached to the Department of Health Services. If you need an interpreter, alternate formats, or other accommodations to participate, please contact Laura Plummer at 608-514-2513 or laura.plummer1@dhs.wisconsin.gov.

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