



# Spud Tech Notes



The official newsletter of the Idaho Assistive Technology Project, Moscow, Idaho.

Volume 10 Issue 1

September 2006



## AgrAbility Helps Farmers with Disabilities

When one family member has a disability, it impacts the whole family. This is especially true on farms and ranches where the work is often physically demanding. The Idaho AgrAbility Project offers farmers, ranchers, and members of their families with disabilities the opportunity to work with an Assistive Technology Practitioner (ATP) to determine what steps can be taken to adapt their tasks, facilities, or equipment to better meet their needs. The project also offers training to help families meet the challenge of farming or ranching with a disability. For more information about the Idaho AgrAbility Project, contact United Cerebral Palsy in Boise at 208-377-8070 or 888-289-3289.



## Airport Security Screening for Persons with Disabilities

With all the air traffic security measures being implemented these days, it's hard to keep track of what can and can't be taken on an airplane! The Department of Homeland Security's Security Screening Procedures for persons with disabilities, individuals with medical conditions, and the mature have not

changed as a result of the recent threat situation. More information for people with disabilities or medical conditions can be found at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov). **All disability-related equipment, aids, and devices continue to be allowed through security checkpoints once cleared through screening.** People with disabilities, those with prosthetic devices, and those with medical conditions DO NOT have to remove their shoes during this heightened security level, although they may be subject to additional screening as a result. It has been recommended that those with medications only take the amount of medication essential to sustain them until arrival at their final destination.

For more info on transportation security, the TSA Contact Center may be reached at 1-866-289-9673 (Voice/Relay) or visit their website at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov). For info about overall air travel accessibility, contact the Air Carrier Access Act Hotline of the Department of Transportation at 1-800-778-4838 (Voice), 1-866-754-4368 (TTY), or visit <http://airconsumer.ost.dot.gov>.

## Idaho AT Project Submits Amended State Plan

The Idaho Assistive Technology Project submitted its revised State Plan to the federal government on August 1, 2006. If all goes well, the State Plan will be approved by September 1. In 2005, the IATP submitted its first State Plan under the re-authorized Assistive Technology Act of 1998 as amended. Under the new federal law, the IATP is no longer a grant project but a permanent federal program. The IATP is administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration in the U.S. Department of Education.

Idaho Assistive Technology Project

1-800-432-8324 v/ttd

[www.idahoat.org](http://www.idahoat.org)

Administered by the Center on Disabilities and Human Development, University of Idaho - Moscow, ID

## Idaho Launches Scholarship Program for Veterans

In June 2006, the University of Idaho launched the Operation Education Scholarship, a pioneering program designed to help veterans severely or permanently wounded as a result of service since September 11, 2001. The spouses of wounded veterans will also be eligible for the scholarship. It is the first such program in the nation.

The University will provide wounded veterans with financial support and resources – such as tuition, fees and books, on-campus housing, transportation, medical assistance, child care, adaptive equipment, tutoring, and mentorship – at its main campus, to assist veterans and their families as they re-enter civilian life. The University also has plans to partner with corporations around the country to offer internships and assist in job placement.

For more information or to obtain an application, veterans should contact John Sawyer at 208-885-7979 or email [johns@uidaho.edu](mailto:johns@uidaho.edu). Gifts may be made in support of Operation Education by calling 208-885-7069 or visiting [www.uidaho.edu/givetoidaho](http://www.uidaho.edu/givetoidaho).

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## IATP Resource Centers

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### United Cerebral Palsy of Idaho

5420 West Franklin Rd, Ste. A  
Boise, ID 83705  
(208) 377-8070  
1-888-289-3259  
(208) 322-7133 fax




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### Coeur d'Alene Hand Therapy & Healing Center

2448 Merritt Creek Loop  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
(208) 884-2901  
(208) 667-9266 fax



## Annual Training Reinigorates ATPs

On August 1-2, the Idaho Assistive Technology Project (IATP) conducted a training in Boise for Assistive Technology Practitioners (ATPs) and those professionals studying for the ATP exam. The IATP relies on these ATPs to bring AT expertise to school districts and the agricultural community by conducting assessments and trainings. The instruction covered sessions on the Fundamental Assessment Process, the new AgrAbility Project, the continuum of AAC devices, feature matching, computer access (switches and keyboards), accessing the curriculum (read/write software), and AT for students with autism.



The IATP will continue to support and add to the network of ATPs in Idaho. Scholarships are available to sponsor a limited number of professionals with at least

two years experience in a rehabilitation science (OT, PT, special education, SLP, audiology, nursing, vocational rehabilitation, etc.) towards receiving credentials as an ATP from RESNA (Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America). Scholarship priority will be given to professionals who can perform at least three assessments or trainings for the IATP yearly. For more information, contact Nora Jehn at 1-800-432-8324 or [noraj@uidaho.edu](mailto:noraj@uidaho.edu).

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## 2006 Summit on Aging

The Idaho Commission on Aging will be hosting the "2006 Governor's Summit on Aging" on September 12-13 at the Boise Centre on the Grove. The title of this year's summit is *The Coming of Age: A Dialogue on the Dynamics of an Aging Population*, and it will seek to provide participants with a clearer perception of how our lives can be improved if we focus on adapting public policy and planning for the years ahead. Registration is \$110, and you may contact Bettina Briscoe at 208-334-3833 or go online to [www.idahoaging.com](http://www.idahoaging.com) for more information.

## Need a Loan for Assistive Technology Equipment?

The Idaho Assistive Technology Project offers alternative financing (loans) for the purchase of assistive technology for persons with disabilities in the state of Idaho. Any person with a disability residing in Idaho - or any person acting on their behalf - can apply. The loan purpose must be for the acquisition of assistive technology for the person with a disability. There is no income threshold.

Loan applications are available on our new website, [www.idahoat.org](http://www.idahoat.org). The Project's Loan Program Manager, Irene Lunsford, is available to assist you in answering questions and filling out your application over the phone. Please call Irene at 1-800-432-8324 if you have any questions about our loan services. Not comfortable with computers? Ask us to send you a loan packet with an application and instructions in the mail!



## Task Force and Advisory Council Update

Both the Assistive Technology Information Technology Task Force (ATIT Task Force) and the Idaho Assistive Technology Project (IATP) Advisory Council have kept busy during these beautiful summer days. Both committees held day-long meetings in Boise at the end of August, and were excited to welcome several special out of town guests. Deborah Buck, Director of the Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs, was a guest presenter at both gatherings, and was able to offer fresh insights into both information technology and a new data collection instrument for AT programs. New information was also offered by Andy Winnegar of the New Mexico AT Project concerning employment, and by Leslie Clement, Medicaid Administrator, regarding many of the new steps being taken in Medicaid Reform. The groups were able to glean valuable information and make important recommendations as they continue to move forward in these areas.

## HHS Approves Historic Medicaid Reform Plans in Idaho

*News Release from U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, May 25, 2006*

Medicaid beneficiaries in Idaho will be among the first in the nation to have benefits designed to meet their needs based on age and health status – changes allowed by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA), HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt announced. Prior to enactment of the DRA, states could not target benefits to one certain group of enrollees. The DRA, signed into law on February 8, granted states sweeping new options for designing their Medicaid programs – the first major revision to the program since its inception.

“Idaho is on the cutting edge in crafting Medicaid benefit packages to the needs of its residents,” Secretary Leavitt said.

Under the plan, Idaho will offer three benefit packages aimed at meeting the health care needs of different groups – children, people with disabilities, and beneficiaries who are eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare. All of these packages are voluntary. Any enrollee who chooses one of the new plans can “opt out” at any time and return to standard Medicaid.

Medicaid enrollees can choose to sign up for the most appropriate benefit plan based on their needs:

- ◆ The **Benchmark Basic plan** will serve healthy children and adults and will cover most of the traditional Medicaid benefits, except long-term care, organ transplants and intensive mental health treatment. Children under age 19, however, will continue to receive all of these and other benefits through the mandatory Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment feature of the Medicaid program.
- ◆ The **Enhanced Benchmark plan** will serve individuals with more complex health care needs, such as the elderly and disabled. The Enhanced plan will cover all the traditional Medicaid benefits, including long-term or institutional care. Persons enrolled in the Basic plan who need benefits not covered there will be transferred to the Enhanced plan.
- ◆ The **Coordinated Benchmark plan** will include all the benefits of the state's traditional Medicaid program and will serve Medicaid enrollees who are also eligible for the Medicare program – the so-called “dual eligibles.” This group will be required to enroll in the Medicare outpatient coverage plan, or Part B, as well as the new prescription drug benefit, Medicare Part D.

## Tools for Rett Syndrome

by Nora Jehn, Training Coordinator

The kindergarten classroom was a cheerful place with bins full of colorful supplies, small tables and chairs, student artwork draping the walls, a bank of computers, and a picture book library with bean bags and pillows. On this particular winter day, the class was gathered in the common area, all sitting on the floor with their attention riveted to the teacher giving a phonics lesson. The student to be observed for an assistive technology assessment was not instantly identified in the sea of small faces and light hair.

The observer, an Assistive Technology Practitioner (ATP), knew from background information that the student, Molly, had Rett Syndrome (RS), a unique neurodevelopmental disorder which begins to show its effects in infancy or early childhood. It is seen almost exclusively in girls. The most readily identifiable symptom of RS is the inability (or reduced ability) to program the body to perform motor movements. It can interfere with every body movement, including eye gaze and speech, making it difficult for the girl with RS to do what she wants to do.

Molly's loving family includes parents and an older brother. Molly's brother attends a small, private school where Molly attended preschool and half of her kindergarten year. The private school was a perfect match for Molly's brother who learns easily through the arts and active exploration, and fit well into the family's low-tech style. By Christmas break, Molly's mother began to wonder if Molly would benefit more from their neighborhood public school utilizing more technology. Molly's family did not own a computer or have electronic toys, but Molly's mother noticed that Molly was fascinated by lights and music. Since Molly's symptoms were unique to the special education teacher, she requested an assistive technology assessment from the *Idaho Assistive Technology Project* for her new student.

Scanning the students carefully, the ATP sighted Molly, a small, blonde, rosy-cheeked girl leaning on a classmate for support and comfort, her hands moving constantly in rhythmic motions and in and out of her mouth. Molly's attention also moved constantly, but she refocused her concentration intermittently on the teacher and the lesson. Since Molly could not speak or use her hands functionally, she had no easy way to make a choice, request, or show her understanding.

After an observation of Molly, the classroom, and kindergarten tasks, the ATP decided to see if Molly could activate an adapted electronic musical toy with big, easy-to-push, colorful buttons. The ATP activated the toy which emitted a short burst of music and then watched Molly's face for a reaction. Molly's look of pleasure and surprise gave the ATP hope that Molly could learn to activate the toy on her own. Although Molly's hands were in constant motion, wringing and wringing, and in and out of her mouth, the ATP gently lifted Molly's elbow and depressed the button with it. One more prompted movement and then Molly had it, activating the toy on her own with her elbow. Another toy was tried, this time one with bright confetti which swirled around inside when the switch was activated. Only one prompt was needed to get Molly to activate the toy with her elbow. Encouraged, the ATP loaded a simple software program that would allow Molly to color an electronic coloring book page with switch activation, and again, success. Molly was able to color for the first time.

Molly had been working relatively hard for more than an hour when she started to cry. Her mother and classroom assistant knew that Molly was hungry and proceeded to feed her small, bite-sized fruit by popping each piece into Molly's mouth since she was unable to feed herself. Seeing that Molly communicated clearly by crying, the ATP seized the opportunity and recorded a single message speech output device (*Big Mack*) to say, "more snack, please." Again, the ATP showed Molly how to depress the five inch activation switch with her elbow and the message played. Molly's classroom assistant hesitated for the next bite. Molly scrunched her face as if to cry and then instead, activated the message with her elbow. The room exploded with excitement, and Molly received her snack.

After Molly's snack, Molly was back at the computer. Ideas were flying around the room for shared activities with Molly's peers, programs to access learning, speech opportunities using simple communication devices, and then Molly, absorbed in and stimulated by her puzzle on the computer, sighed and relaxed, her hands dropping to her side for a quiet moment, coaxed fleetingly out of their constant movement by active engagement.



# Tools for Life 2007



**Save the Date!**  
March 5-6, 2007

Mark your calendars now for the next "Tools for Life" Secondary Transition and Technology Fair on March 5-6, 2007 at the Doubletree Riverside Hotel in Boise!

"Tools for Life" is for anyone who has an interest in supporting individuals with disabilities as they transition from school to life. This includes secondary educators, post-secondary educators, therapists, counselors, service providers, job developers, and especially secondary students with disabilities and their families.

During this two-day event, there will be a special keynote speaker, panel discussions, and presentations by experts on issues surrounding secondary transition and assistive technology.



CENTER ON DISABILITIES AND  
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
*live learn work play*  
University of Idaho  
College of Education



For more information,  
call the Idaho Assistive  
Technology Project at  
**1-800-432-8324.**

Sponsored by the Idaho State Dept. of Education, the Idaho Assistive Technology Project, and the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition.

## Free AT Workshops Coming to Southern Idaho!

This September and November, the IATP will be hosting several seminars in southern Idaho on some of the popular issues surrounding assistive technology. Project Director Ron Seiler will conduct these seminars through a combination of oral presentation, videos, handouts, and interactive case studies. The workshops are completely FREE of charge; refreshments and detailed handouts will also be provided. The seminar schedule is as follows:

September 25	Boise	J.R. Williams Building - West
September 28	Twin Falls	Best America Suites
September 29	Pocatello	Holiday Inn

Each seminar will offer two independent workshops – a morning and an afternoon session. You are welcome to attend one or the other, or both. The morning workshop entitled "Funding for Assistive Technology" will be from 8:30am – noon, and the afternoon session entitled "Assistive Technology & Cognitive Impairments" will be from 1:30pm – 4:30pm. Additional seminars will be scheduled in Lewiston and Bonners Ferry during the month of November. Please visit our website or call our office for more details on these locations.

The workshops are designed for persons with disabilities, family members, caregivers, and professionals alike. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. For more information or to register, please go online to [www.idahoat.org](http://www.idahoat.org) and click on "Trainings and Events," or register by phone by calling Kristen Hagen at 1-800-432-8324.

Idaho Assistive Technology Project    1-800-432-8324 v/ttd    [www.idahoat.org](http://www.idahoat.org)

Administered by the Center on Disabilities and Human Development, University of Idaho - Moscow, ID

## School-Based Assistive Technology Assessments

At the heart of every assistive technology (AT) procurement is an AT assessment. In cooperation with the State Department of Education, the Idaho Assistive Technology Project's Assistive Technology Technical Assistance (ATTA) Project provides AT assessments to the schools at no cost. At the close of the 2005-06 school year, the ATTA Project had performed 41 school-based assessments, up from 28 assessments achieved in 2004-05.

Of the 41 AT assessments performed for schools, four were for high school students, four for junior high students, and 33 for elementary students. Communication was the most requested area of assessment (54%), with computer access (15%), reading/writing (15%), and cause and effect, adaptive recreation, and listening (16%) as additional areas of concern. Although the majority of assessments were requested for elementary school students, the ATTA Project goals for the 2006-07 school year include increasing the overall number of assessments, assessing more students with learning disabilities, and increasing the number of assessments done at the junior high and high school levels.

In order to meet the schools' need for assessments, the ATTA Project contracts with Assistive Technology Practitioners (ATPs) credentialed through RESNA (Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America) to ensure assessments of the highest quality. The ATP provides assessments that follow the Fundamental Assessment Process utilizing a team approach. The ATP looks at the student, environment, and tasks through observation and input from Individual Education Plan (IEP) team members. Through a feature-matching process, potential assistive technology devices are identified and tried before purchasing. The continuum of devices and software are considered to ensure cost effectiveness and identification of the most appropriate device.

Please visit the IATP website at [www.idahoat.org](http://www.idahoat.org) for more information regarding school-based assessments and an online assessment application form, or contact Nora Jehn at 800-432-8324 or [noraj@uidaho.edu](mailto:noraj@uidaho.edu).

### NEW!! Request a Training from the "AT Lunch Series"

The Idaho Assistive Technology Project, in partnership with the State Department of Education, is proud to present a new series of **FREE** trainings on assistive technology.

- ◆ Each training requires two hours – an extended lunch for your special education professionals.
- ◆ Trainings are conducted by professionals with Assistive Technology Practitioner (ATP) credentials from RESNA (Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America).
- ◆ Raise your school district's general knowledge of assistive technology (AT).
- ◆ Two training topics are currently available: Communication and Computer Access.

To schedule a training, please contact Nora Jehn, Training Coordinator for IATP, at 1-800-432-8324 or [noraj@uidaho.edu](mailto:noraj@uidaho.edu).



### Computers for Sale!!

High-grade used computers available at great prices! Call George or Amy Cheeseman at (208) 457-1627 in Post Falls, ID for fantastic, low-cost deals on computers. Some specialty keyboards are also available!



Idaho Assistive Technology Project  
**Used Equipment Exchange**  
 for People with Disabilities  
*As of September 2006*



1978 Chevy Van .....	\$2,500
1997 Ford Van .....	\$5,000
Aspirator Motor/Pump .....	Negotiable
Bed, Electric/Adjust. (7) .....	Neg. to \$1,500
Bed, Manual (3) .....	Free to \$50
Bench - Bath/Shower (6).....	Neg. to \$50
Bicycle (3-wheel) .....	\$1,000
Brace, Neck.....	Negotiable
Cane (2) .....	Negotiable, \$10
Cervical Collar .....	Free
Chair - Bath/Shower(4) .....	Neg. to \$300
Commode Seat (6) .....	Negotiable to \$40
Communication Device (6)...	Free to \$5,600
Crutches (2) .....	Free; \$70
Feeding System/Pump (3).....	Free to \$300
Feeding Pump Stand .....	\$35
IV Stand .....	Free
Lift,Chair (2) .....	\$500; \$600 OBO
Lift, Hoyer (3).....	\$600 to \$1,500
Lift, Porch.....	\$2,500
Lift, Scooter .....	\$750
with Bruno Scooter .....	both for \$1,495
Lift, Seat (2) .....	\$225; \$1,000
Lift, Van/Vehicle (5) .....	Neg. to \$1,500
Nebulizer (2) .....	Negotiable; \$75
Oxygen Cart .....	Free
Oxygen Machine .....	\$200
Oxygen Supply Console .....	\$100
Prone Stander .....	\$500
Ramp (folding wheelchair).....	\$150
Respirators (2).....	Best Offer
Respirator Machine .....	Best Offer
Scooters (18) .....	\$495 to \$4,000
Stair Climber/Lift (5) .....	Neg. to \$4,400
Stander, Trapeze .....	\$275
Standing Frame.....	\$1,300
Stroller (Running type) .....	\$200 OBO
Stroller (Wheelchair type).....	Free

Suction Machine .....	Negotiable
Table Tray .....	\$30
Therapeutic Aids (Compression Wraps)...	\$500
Toilet Grab Bars with legs .....	\$20
Toilet Rails .....	\$15
Toilet Riser (2) .....	\$20; \$30
Trapeze (2) .....	\$75; \$150
Walker (13) .....	Free to \$200
Wheelchair Arm Rests (2) .....	Free; \$25
Wheelchair Seat Cushion (3)..	\$100 to \$225
Wheelchair, Electric (39) .....	Free to \$8,000
Wheelchair, Manual (18) .....	Free to \$2,700

*Do you need assistive equipment at a low cost? Do you have equipment that you no longer need? Buy and sell used equipment through our no-cost exchange!*

Please check our website  
**[www.idahoat.org](http://www.idahoat.org)** and click  
 "Used Equipment Exchange"  
 for details on the recycling  
 items listed here.

# Spud Tech Notes

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO  
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Idaho Assistive Technology Project  
Center on Disabilities & Human Development  
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Moscow, ID 83844-4401

EDK435



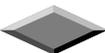
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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 2006 Governor's Summit on Aging**  
September 12-13, 2006                      Boise, ID
- IATP Presents FREE Assistive Technology Workshops**  
September 25, 2006                      Boise, ID  
September 27, 2006                      Twin Falls, ID  
September 29, 2006                      Pocatello, ID
- Council on Exceptional Children Conference**  
October 5-6, 2006                      Sun Valley, ID
- "It's All About.....RELATIONSHIPS" Conference**  
October 19-21, 2006                      Boise, ID
- IDVR In-Service Training Conference**  
October 24-25, 2006                      Idaho Falls, ID
- 2007 Independent Living Conference**  
February 5-8, 2007                      Boise, ID
- Tools for Life: Secondary Transition & Tech Fair**  
March 5-6, 2007                      Boise, ID

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## NEW WEBSITE & BROCHURES!!

The IATP is pleased to announce the launch of our brand new website! The new site, located at [www.idahoat.org](http://www.idahoat.org), offers a more user-friendly layout, a cleaner look, and more information than before. You can use our website to download loan applications, look up used equipment, and even register for conferences and trainings!

The IATP also recently produced a new brochure that provides an updated and comprehensive overview of our Project and the services we offer. If you would like a copy - or would like a supply of copies to distribute through your office - please contact Kristen Hagen at 1-800-432-8324 or [kristenh@uidaho.edu](mailto:kristenh@uidaho.edu).

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