

KATS Network Advisory Council Minutes

Date: Tuesday, December 15, 2020

Time: 9:40 am Eastern Standard Time

Place: Zoom

Welcome & Introductions – Co-chair, Bill Titus

Advisory Council Members

Rick Boggess, Gerry Gordon-Brown, Lisa McKeown, Nicole Maher, Lee Muncy, Winter Renfro, Andre Ryssemus, Duke Pettit, Samantha Farthing, Jessica Endler, David Dennis

KATS Network Coordinating Center and ATRC Staff

Jimmy Brown, Mike Karman, Elizabeth Thompson, Christina Espinosa-Bard, Joan Hudson, Darrin Breeding, Joe McCombs, Jana Billingsley, Cindy Houston, Keisha Hudson, Peggy Farmer, Julie Justice, Lisa Staub,

Others in attendance –

Camille Collins (P&A), Skylar Millay and Lauren Gerkins (OVR interns)

Interpretation services provided by Sarah Grubb and Missy Miller

CART provided by Tracy Lundergan

Approval of Minutes from past meeting (s)

Bill motioned to approve the minutes from the September 23, 2020 meeting. Rick provided a second, pending this suggested correction to the Aira reference of, "Aira is a subscription service which allows visually-impaired people to use their smartphones to assist with completing visual tasks to simplify daily life. Anyone can call for five minutes a day for free. All Walgreens, AT& T, Target, and Meijer stores are free. Through the end of 2020, the first 20 minutes at Walmart will be free". The council with this revision approved the minutes.

Updates from ATRCs:

enTECH- Joe McCombs

- In July, we saw an increase in activity for Project CARAT, up from the months of March-June
- Wednesday Lab remains closed at this time, we are unsure when this will reopen.
- AAC evaluations with adults and children that need communication devices resumed when school was back in session.
- The month of August had nearly 50 donations valued at about \$3200 and 18 assistive technology loans went out.
- During September, Allison Amshoff started a collaboration with the Down Syndrome of Louisville to provide a high school with strategies including how to be more engaged with the non-traditional instruction (NTI).
- Spalding will be on holiday break until January 4th, 2021

HDI-CATS- Christina Espinosa-Bard

- During the first quarter of 2020, July- we started as available again for drop offs. We have been open by appointment via curbside drop off and pickup through that quarter.
- In July, August and September, we hosted our four Thursday ADA talks via Zoom.
- We have been doing a virtual tour and presentation on the KATS Network and all the services that are provided.
- Items purchased for the Lending Library.
- In July, there were 44 loans and 54 items redistributed. The month of August was a bit slower.
- September saw a big jump with 63 CARAT items that went out and 21 items from the Lending Library.
- We did our quarterly presentation to the HDI Consumer Advisory Council on the project of HDI-CATS.
- Our Eagle Scout's project is creating pegboards for students with visual impairments. He will create enough for each of the regional centers to have one to two of those.
- We are now officially a First Steps vendor.

Redwood- Peggy Farmer

- We added two new members to our staff to replace two that took positions at the school, Alexa and Kelsey who are both speech therapists.
- Our ATRC is open for emails, phone requests, providing loans, reutilizations and accepting donations.
- With only staff and clients allowed inside, we continued to use a covered area outside for safe demonstrations.
- There were several reutilizations in July, August and September.
- RampUP work and First Steps rentals to families continues.

WKATC- Cindy Huston

- Our business did pick up over the last quarter, in July we had 41 loans.
- We participated in a virtual interview with Impact 100. We were actually a finalist; our grant for a Hubscrub was not awarded.
- Our Chief Financial Officer notified us funds from the provider relief fund could be used to purchase the Hubscrub.
- In July, our speech therapist provided two AAC assessments. We consulted with ResCare staff, in addition to working with a referral from the commission for a communication method.
- August was a variety of things, including 38 loans.
- September's loans were up to 54 items. We had a virtual reuse event on social media and were able to give away items valued at \$33,000.
- Jana consulted with OTs from Ohio and Henderson County Schools.

Carl Perkins- Darrin Breeding

- We are still on a hard shutdown, unable to do much of anything because of COVID with being a state facility.
- When people reach out, help get them what they need when they need it.

Discussion Notes:

Discussed Carl Perkins Center's First Steps provider status. Darrin may request some assistance from Christina at HDI-CATS

Project CARAT sites

CARAT Paducah – no site report provided

CARAT Hazard- Keisha Hudson

Since October, we have trained 17 new physical therapy students to assist to refurbish, sanitize and reutilize the equipment. We also have some social work student as well.

Equipment distributed in October (10 pcs), November (5 pcs), and December (1 pc).

We held an initial Zoom meeting with two Kentucky Home Place Community Help staff for the new Harlan and Rowan Counties hub sites where they will collect and process equipment.

CARAT-Louisville – Joe McCombs

We have only been on site Tuesdays and Thursdays, contributing to the lower numbers.

In July, one of our colleagues went to Supplies Over Seas (SOS) and picked up an enormous amount of equipment, thousands of dollars-worth of equipment.

RampUp work continues.

CARAT-Lexington – Christina Espinosa-Bard

Michael arranged for us to utilize Central Baptist Church's gym as overflow space.

CARAT-Paintsville/Carl Perkins Center- Darrin Breeding

Last quarter, reutilized 13 items, value of \$4725

We are waiting to fill the assistant's position until the center opens back up.

Coordinating Center Updates- Project CARAT – Mike

The Paducah site continues to have challenges in their property situation. They are now paying rent when previously the rent and utilities were provided for them.

During the period of July through September, the sites managed items valued at over \$130,000.

We are looking to hire a part-time staff to help address the transportation needs of Project CARAT, holding until post-COVID time. A big area of growth for us will be to grow volunteerism to help address transportation. We will also be adding storage space in Frankfort to serve as a centralized hub to hold items for pickup by other centers.

An initial meeting with Medicaid's DME team was held, which specifically called out the 2018 Appropriations Act. That act encourages state Medicaid programs to partner with state Assistive Technology Act Reutilization programs.

An annual report has been created on Project CARAT activities, starting this year and going forward. This year's annual report cannot be officially shared until it receives final approval within OVR.

We have been able to achieve several partnerships such as, Just Serve, Serve Kentucky, Americorps, and Supplies Over Seas (SOS). We are looking to grow and expand our partnerships.

Discussion:

Lisa suggested a map of the sites be included with the annual report or in some fashion for public distribution. Rick mentioned screen shares are not accessible and requests sharing any of those types of documents in advance of a meeting when possible.

Coordinating Center Updates- KATS – Jimmy

AT3, our national technical assistance provider, shared the document titled, '[Assistive Technology Toolkit](#)' on their website, AT3center.net. The website provides information on all aspects of the Tech Act programs.

Our sister program, the Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC), is the financial lending component of the Assistive Technology Act. KATLC will be ending its relationship with its current lending partner as of December 30, 2020. With guidance from OVR and cabinet leadership, a new lending partner will be identified, anticipating the program being down for six to nine months going into 2021.

The other financial comparability claimed, in addition to KATLC, is our Telecommunications Access Program or TAP service provided by the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

The KATS Annual Data report for the Administration on Community Living (ACL) was previewed with the council. The ACL includes our data to create their annual report to Congress, which also includes all of the Tech Act projects across the country. Our annual report is located on the KATS network website follow this link: <http://www.katsnet.org/FFY2020> to view all details and reports. The formula grant for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) of 2020, which runs from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020, has provided a federal allotment of \$512,837 to our program. Funding for FFY 2021 remains unchanged from FFY2020. To see the allotments for other states, visit <https://bit.ly/348RvKL>. To view ACL's most recent Federal Annual Report published visit <https://bit.ly/38iCbgf>.

During FFY 2020 and dealing with the pandemic, we were still able to reutilize and redistribute 2075 items that were valued at \$587,858. This included a large donation from the OVR Blind Services Division. These items were redistributed through KATs to a nearby Department of Correction Adult Education Program.

The Lending Library Programs are located at the KATS regional AT centers of Redwood, Wendell Foster, enTECH, Carl Perkins and HDI. Individuals can borrow AT to fill a short-term gap while waiting on funding, repairs to their devices, self-learning, or to help make a decision for their purchase. During the 2020 FFY, 730 individuals borrowed 1,111 items.

The Demonstration Programs provide an opportunity to allow individuals to compare and contrast different types of Assistive Technology.

Several anecdotal success stories from across the state were shared with the council.

State leadership activities across the state include trainings, providing technical assistance, and our annual AT conference. The virtual AT conference had more participants than in previous years' live events. There have been discussions with the Statewide Deaf-Blind Service Coordinator to seek funding on expanding the Lending Library of AT equipment to be utilized by deaf-blind individuals. There were also discussions of funding for students and/or caretakers to attend Expanded Core Curriculum, which is the weeklong intensive experience that is provided to deaf-blind consumers.

Public Awareness / Information and Assistance includes posting to Facebook, Twitter, sharing listserv information, newspaper, television, conferences, information fairs, presentations to college students during their units on assistive technology as part of their curriculum, and all contacts to the offices.

Lee Muncy motioned to accept the annual report as reviewed. Rick Boggess seconded the motion.

The report will now go to Jennifer Withrow, our Program Planning and Support Branch Manager and Cora McNabb, Executive Director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation for final approvals prior to submitting to ACL.

[Assistive Technology Spotlight- Cindy Huston](#)

Information and a virtual tour were provided of the new Wendell Foster Assistive Technology and Resource Center. This new space brings all components of the site together for the first time in 15 years. The purchase of a new Hub Scrub is also in process.

[Program Update: P & A – Camille Collins](#)

Information was provided on crisis care standards during the pandemic, reminding providers the ADA and Discrimination laws still apply to care of individuals. In addition, other documents created to help individuals know their rights to reasonable accommodations. Another document is the COVID-19 Disability Form individuals may have put on file with their local hospital. Vaccination plans were addressed in a letter to Governor Beshear, Dr. Stack and Secretary Friedlander to include individuals with developmental disabilities and their caretakers in the initial opportunity to have the vaccine.

[Concurrent Advisory Council Committee Breakout Sessions & Project CARAT site meeting](#)

[AT Conference Planning Committee](#)

Elizabeth, Jessica, Duke, Andre, Rick, Nicole, Camille, Joan, Sarah and Missy (interpreters)

[Andre provided the verbal report to the complete council when the meeting resumed.](#)

[Marketing and Awareness Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee](#)

Jimmy, Lisa, Gerry, Bill, Lee, CART reporter

[Jimmy provided the verbal report to the complete council when the meeting resumed.](#)

[The complete minutes for the two individual committee breakout sessions follow this minute report.](#)

[Project CARAT Quarterly ATRC Meeting –](#)

Mike, Christina, Darrin, Joe, Jana, Cindy, Keisha, Peggy, Julie, Lisa,

Mike provided the main topics discussed are the ATRCs' challenges dealing with COVID and funding options for Hub Scrubs at two sites as well.

[Announcements / New Business- none reported](#)

[Next council meeting date:](#)

Date: March 11, 2021

Time: 9:30 am-12:30 pm, Eastern Time

Location: Zoom link will be provided

[Tentative future council meeting dates/s:](#)

Additional dates and times are on hold due to some council members' terms ending in March.

The months for the quarterly meetings are March, June, September, and December.

Shared consensus is the day of the week for meetings to be held on a Monday or Thursday.

Adjournment:

Motion called to adjourn by Bill, with a second provided by Rick

Minutes submitted to Advisory Council Members for review on February 11, 2021

Reviewed by Advisory Council Members, suggested edits made by Jimmy Brown, KATS Network Program Coordinator

Finalized March 2, 2021 pending approval by Advisory Council

Kentucky Assistive Technology Service (KATS) Council Meeting

Sub-Committee 1: Strategic Planning / State Plan for Assistive Technology

Members: Lisa McKeown, Winter Renfrow, Gerry Gordon Brown

Goals for the committee: Assist grow and enhance existing programs of the KATS Network, including Project CARAT.

Sub-Committee 2: Program Marketing / Awareness

Members: Melissa Aguilar and Samantha Farthing

Goals for the committee: Assist with marketing The KATS Network as the statewide AT Act program, and Project CARAT as a component of the overall KATS Network.

Meeting Date: 12/15/2020

Time start: ~12:15pm

Time end: ~1:15PM

Members and others present: Lisa McKeown, Gerry Gordon Brown, Samantha Farthing, Lee Muncy, Bill Titus, Tracy Lundergan (CART Reporter)

Today's guidance topic:

Strategic Planning

- Ideas for developing new programs to reach targeted audiences.
- Grow volunteerism, donations, and consumer/ provider requests for DME.

Marketing/Awareness

- Ideas to grow include volunteerism, donations, and consumer/ provider requests for DME.
- Increase KATS Outreach and Awareness
- How can we best reach out to individuals w/ disabilities and service providers in the commonwealth?

Action plans (with member name, if applicable) before next meeting:

Due to limited staff available to moderate committee meetings, Strategic Planning AND Marketing/Awareness met together.

- 1) Ways to increase awareness of the array of services provided by the KATS Network of programs.
 - a) Lee suggested targeted outreach to each of the Cabinets within state government to provide awareness and get better word of mouth.
 - b) Jimmy described efforts by the Ohio AT Act program to reach out, familiarize schools with services, and promote programs directed at school. AT staff mailed annual reports to all school superintendents in the state. The efforts were productive, generating numerous referrals, and expanded the program's reach. KATS will explore ways to provide awareness, outreach and technical assistance to all KY schools and Co-Op's.
 - c) The group discussed having a YouTube channel that would include targeted videos promoting all services provided by KATS, spotlight videos on the AT Centers like the one shown today for Wendell Foster, and highlighting the work of CARAT.
 - d) Samantha mentioned that there is popular AT related YouTube channel, "The Blind Life" with Sam Seavey, a local Lexington based YouTuber. Samantha suggested reaching out to Sam Seavey to explore the possibility of having an episode focusing on the KATS Network.
 - i) Lisa expressed a need to reach out to the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA's) and doing some targeted outreach to those folks as well to increase awareness, Also the same with the Bluegrass Council for the Blind
 - ii) Jimmy suggested maybe KATS have a monthly at update or monthly AT awareness information that could go out on NFB NEWSLINE to folks that access to that service as well to keep them abreast of things going on in the KATS Network.

Is there any information or assistance needed to complete your goals / plans?

None to report at this time.

The following updates have occurred since the meeting:

- KATS has reached out to NFB NEWSLINE and will be providing a regular monthly KATS Update to the KATS channel that is already available on the service.
- KATS has incorporated a new blog feature to its website, see <https://blog.katsnet.org>.
- Prior to this meeting, KATS established a relationship with KY Skills University and will be providing outreach on digital accessibility geared towards schools.
- KATS is working on updating its Accessibility Quick Cards. A series of cheat sheets for creating accessible documents covering Word, Excel, PowerPoint and PDF. New additions will be for accessible Email, Adobe InDesign, and Social media.
- KATS spoke with School for the Blind Charitable Foundation reps on increasing awareness of AT and accessibility and exploring ways to work together including a possible VI lending library within the KATS AT centers to include VI related AT for students.

KATS will continue exploring all of the ideas that came from this committee meeting in the New Year.

Minutes by:

Jimmy Brown, KATS Network Program Coordinator

Kentucky Assistive Technology Service (KATS) Council Meeting

Sub-Committee: Assistive Technology Conference Planning Committee

Members: Andre Ryssemus, Duke Pettit, Christina Bard

Goals for the committee: Assist in the planning of the AT conference, sharing connections, and to suggest trainings.

Meeting Date: 12/15/2020

Time start: ~12:15pm

Time end: ~1:04PM

Members present: Jessica Endler Smith, Duke Pettit, Andre Ryssemus, Rick Boggess, Nicole Maher, Camille Collins, Joan Hagar, Sarah Grubb (int), Missy Miller (int)

Today's guidance topic:

The KATS Network hosts an annual AT Conference (typically in the summer). Last year's conference included sessions on 3D printing, Google Chromebook Accessibility using ChromeVox, Parenting Panel, Smart Home Automation, and Assistive Technology for Agriculture. Past sessions have included Ramps and Home Modifications, Emerging Assistive Technology, Google Chrome, DIY Assistive Technology using Arduino, Medicaid, AT Users Panel Discussion, etc.

Past partners have included UK HDI, AgrAbility, Protection and Advocacy, OVR Rehab Tech, Cardinal Hill among others.

Action plans (with member name, if applicable) before next meeting:

- 2) Topics you would like to see covered.
 - a) One innovative, high-impact training topic that is related to transition. Transition can include secondary to post-secondary education, transition to community living, or school to work.
 - i) Duke provided background from an educational standpoint including an idea for empowerment resources for students.
 - b) One innovative, high-impact training topic that IS NOT related to transition
 - i) Andre suggested agricultural topics and others such as Toyota manufacturing, digital internet access issues, referred to current Appalachia and Eastern KY programs. He offered to gather additional information. Joan expressed the concerns she sees with the aging population in farming/agriculture. Nicole mentioned their state plan includes rural areas.
 - ii) Duke suggested Superior Van and van modifications as a possibility. Rick added additional transportation options beyond vehicle modifications for consideration.
 - iii) Rick also mentioned recent governor's projects.
 - c) One innovative, high impact-training topic that is related to Information and Communication Technology accessibility
 - i) Andre suggested the idea to have someone from Comcast present.
 - ii) Nicole Maher-COVID brought out a lack of access to the internet, especially in rural areas.
 - iii) Rick presented the idea of virtual exhibitors who could interact with conference participants.
 - iv) Elizabeth shared the feedback of our KATS/CARAT sites who have expressed an interest in receiving additional training on repairs/trouble-shooting power wheel chairs and scooters.
 - v) Possible presenters include major wheelchair providers could present virtually or Q&A.
 - vi) Dr. David Beach was suggested as a presenter for transition topics.
 - vii) Possible partners include UK, which has an extensive array of people and information for training. Duke has connections with Superior and can reach out to wheelchair service person. Additionally, Mobile Rehab could be an option.

Is there any information or assistance needed to complete your goals / plans?

Camille Collins of Protection and Advocacy offered to discuss what her office might be able to provide in terms of training and law. If there is a topic the council members think might be a good fit, call her at 502-330-2691. Camille will also talk with their staff about current training regarding the law, AT, and education that are already in place.

Minutes by:

Elizabeth Thompson, KATS Administrative Specialist