WIND Assistive Technology Advisory Committee Meeting
May 16, 2013
Meeting Notes

In attendance - committee members: Chele Porter, Chairperson; Kendall Corbett, Mary Lee Egnaczak, Brent Heuer (phone), Gary Olson (phone), Stacie Fagerstone (for Ken Hoff) Sandy Hubert, Bill MacLean, Jo Otterholt (distance), Chele Porter, Sandy Root-Elledge (ex-officio), Leo Urbanek (phone), Janine Cole (for Jo Otterholt), Billie Wortham

In attendance – WATR staff: Wendy Alameda, John Paul Harris, Gisele Knopf, Barb Locke, Darcy Regan, Sandy Root-Elledge

Guests: Chelsea Hampton, Wyoming AgrAbility; Susan Wager, Data Driven Enterprises

Absent: Joan Evans, George Garcia, Mark Greene, Sue Jezek, Katie Lancaster, Jim McIntosh, Kelly Thornbury

Chele Porter: Welcomed attendees, introduced Mary Lee Egnaczak, new member, facilitated introductions and provided an orientation to the meeting booklet that included revised council bylaws as amended.

Sandy Root-Elledge: Provided faculty/staff and program updates. She provided reference to the copy of the FY 2013 Wyoming State Plan for Assistive Technology included in the book and identified the revisions from prior years: ongoing collaborations with University of North Dakota at Casper College occupational therapy program, Wyoming Life Resource Center, and with the Wyoming Department of Education. She referenced the Annual Report for FY 2012, also in the meeting book and identified highlights that include:

- Savings to consumers through device reutilization solely through the collaboration with the Wyoming Life Resource center @ $79,297
- Performance measures with the goal of 75 were: 97.83 for device reutilization, 97.14 for device loans, 94.39 for device demonstrations
- 417 device loans of 756 devices
- 107 device demonstrations provided to 175 people, including 57 individuals with disabilities and family members and 75 representatives of education
- Training to 408 individuals
- Public awareness reached 39,551 people
- Information and assistance to 962 individuals

Sandy presented the background, purpose and structure of the Demo Days and Professional Learning Communities activities, provided through contracts from the Wyoming Department of Education.

Susan Wagner, Data Drive Enterprises reviewed the data related to assistive technology that was collected by the Wyoming Department of Education, including use by students and the evaluation of WATR Demo Days and the WATR Professional Learning Community. [Copies of the reports are provided in the meeting booklet.] Of specific note were:

- AT usage for students with disabilities increased from 2.456% in 2006-07 to 14.80% in 2011-12.
Participants rated Demo Days positively and that 93% reported they will “Probably” or “Definitely” use the information they learned at Demo Days.

Members of the Professional Learning Community “found the experience to be positive”; 100% rated the week-long training in June as “Very Useful”; 88% of the members reported that they implemented a new procedure/policy related to AT and 100% of those reported the new procedure/policy is a result of their participation in the PLC; 75% reported they provided assistive technology devices or services to more students and 83% of those reported it was a result of their participation in the PLC.

An evaluation of the members’ supervisors, to determine the degree to which the members’ work has positively impacted the districts is in progress.

Barb Locke reported about the Demo Days events and explained that most of the attendees did not simply browse the range of devices but came to learn about specific needs or devices.

Barb also reported that most districts who have contracted or AT assessments on behalf of students have opted or the comprehensive (WATR provides technical assistance throughout the academic year) and not simply for the hourly evaluation rate.

Darcy Regan invited everyone to attend the 2013 Vendor Venue, scheduled for next week in Laramie and described the AAC Listserv that is now available for participation.

Wendy provided a presentation about the Smart Home project development: it is at an initial stage of consideration and information gathering. This will allow for the building of a demonstration home in Laramie for training and device/independent living demonstrations.

Wendy described the I Can Connect Wyoming project that provides communication equipment for individuals who have vision and hearing loss. She passed out posters for members to hang.

Barb and the staff provided device demonstrations through the lunch break.

Chelsea Hampton, Wyoming AgrAbility provided a presentation about the importance of health prevention for farmers and ranchers as well as information about the Wyoming AgrAbility program.

Chele announced that Mike Massie, former Wyoming senator and one of the founders of the WYTAP is willing to meet with the council to discuss potential state legislation and funding for assistive technology. Members would like know how we should proceed and also why Wyoming Vocational Rehabilitation is not drawing down the full share of federal VR funds that could be available to WY VR.

Chele facilitated a discussion to identify ways in which WATR can provide more information/services in the domain of employment. Following are some of the ideas that were generated from this discussion:

- Collaborate with BLN and the successful employment program at Lowe’s
- Provide outreach to agencies for community development to increase knowledge about AT to employers, administrators, businesses, and employees
- Connect with Society of Human Resource Managers to provide them with information/presentation
- Collaborate with UW College of Business, internship program
- Collaborate with DD Council’s marketing campaign to increase employment and link AT to one of the campaign elements
- Provide recognition/award, perhaps in collaboration with Vocational Rehabilitation, to recognize outstanding employers
- Collaborate with Project Search toward planning prior to job placement
- Explore OSERS rants
- Collaborate with Wyoming Business Council
- Collaborate with McMurray Training Center in Casper to introduce them to the concept of assistive technology
- Whenever discussing AT in employment, talk about continuum of devices, it is the right thing to do, and it is financially responsible
- Encourage large employers to purposefully hire individuals with disabilities
- Examine and incorporate AT for individuals with job shadowing and job placement in the cases in which college may not be the best placement
- Provide information to Wyo Tech
- Consider collaboration with Wyoming Department of Correctors/Wyoming Honor Farm; They have a bicycle repair shop, machine shop and can do metal fabrication and perhaps they can repair devices for durable medical goods reutilization
- Provide information to Leadership Wyoming and encourage a project related to AT in employment

Chele will contact council members who have been inactive for the past year or so. It was recommended that membership should include people who can be helpful: legislative, BLN, business council representatives.

Stacie Fagerstone, WILR, reported that WYTAP provided 12 loans last year and 100% of the borrowers reported being “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with the process. WYATP is seeking more funding and looking at increasing marketing.

**John Paul Harris provided an update on Accessible Instructional Materials project activities:** 6 webinars are available for viewing or downloading from the WIND website; 6 more are being developed; and school districts are starting to contact the clearinghouse for files and conversion on behalf of students or the fall semester.

Chele adjourned the meeting at 3:15 and members were invited to look at Kendall Corbett’s new accessible van.