



WYOMING
INSTITUTE FOR
DISABILITIES

2014

ANNUAL REPORT

Wyoming Assistive Technology Resources



ABOUT WATR



WATR is Wyoming’s Assistive Technology Act program and a resource for assistive technology (AT) needs in Wyoming. AT may be a device or solution that enhances an individual’s ability to live, play, or work independently. AT can take the form of a device, tool, or adaptation that supports a person when participating in everyday activities and settings.

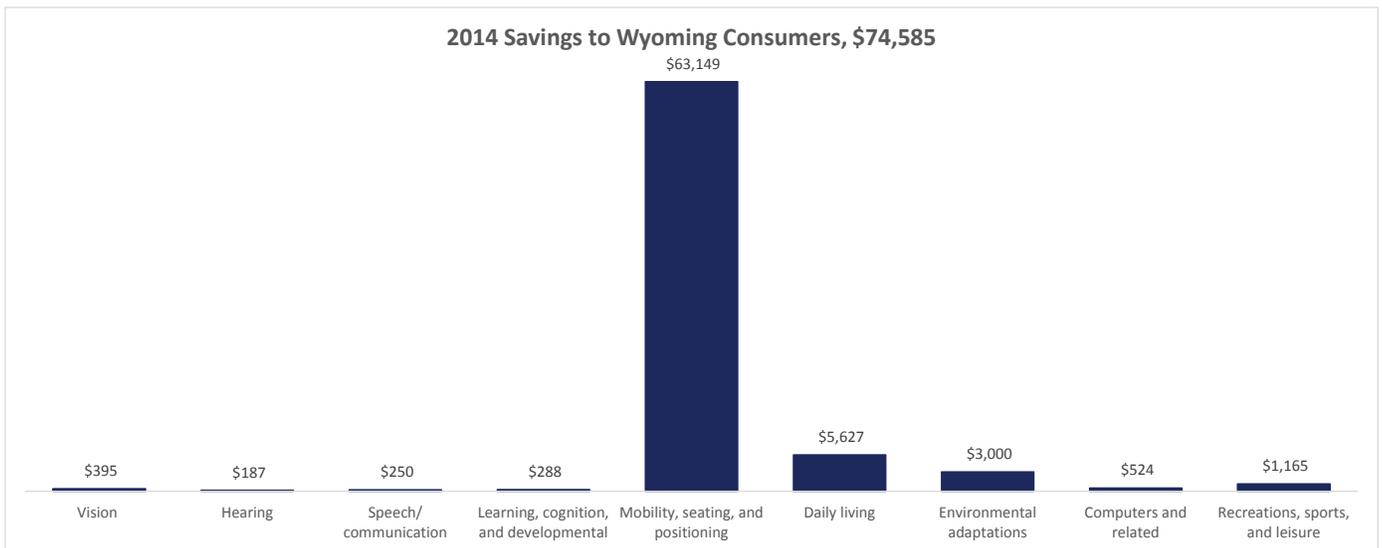
WATR is staffed by University of Wyoming faculty and staff who hold credentials in assistive technology as well as in their areas of expertise. WATR provides a continuum of activities that can help increase appropriate AT implementation and integration that include:

- Information and assistance
- Device Demonstrations
- Device Loan Center
- Device Reutilization
- Alternative Financing
- AT Assessments and Evaluations
- AAC Assessments and Evaluations
- Training and Technical Assistance
- Public Awareness Activities
- Coordination and Collaboration

WATR, along with Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND), offers statewide assistive technology-related assistance through coordination and support of multiple activities. Our staff is dedicated to providing current and high quality information about assistive technology devices and services to increase knowledge and to facilitate participation in life activities. WATR is a member of the Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP). WATR receives technical assistance through the Catalyst Project of the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA).

ACQUISITION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEVICE EXCHANGE AND OPEN-ENDED LOANS

WATR provides significant savings to consumers who wish to acquire their own AT devices. Individuals can purchase used AT devices listed by other users through our loan website, AT4ALL. Individuals may also receive devices through WATR directly as an open ended loan.





ACCESS TO ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION

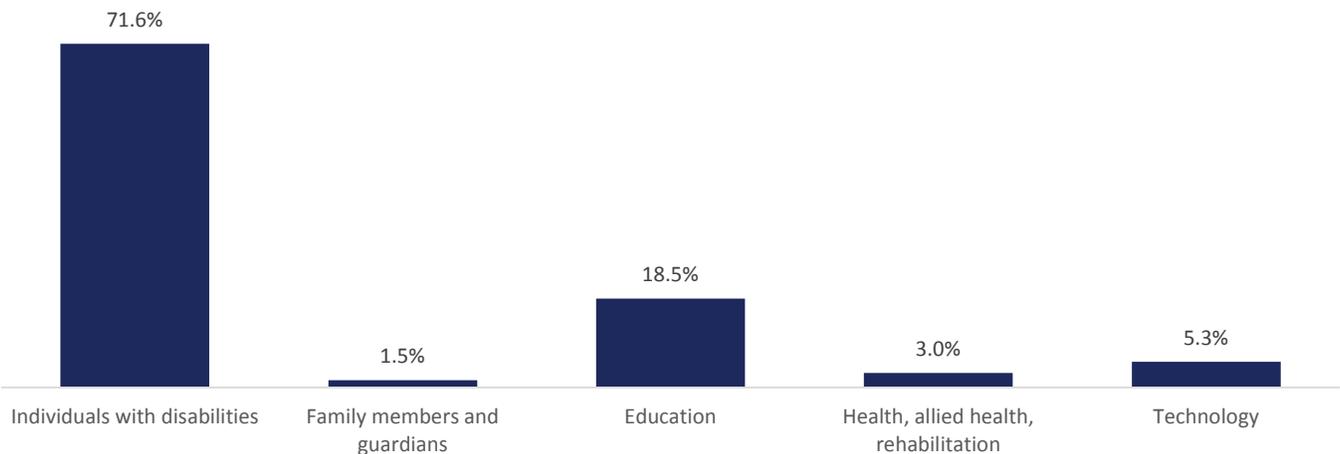
DEVICE LOANS

WATR’s device loan center offers a wide variety of assistive technology for Wyoming residents interested in borrowing a device for trial. Loan periods are typically six weeks and offer people the opportunity to try devices so that they may make educated decisions prior to purchase. All loans are made at no-cost; the borrower is only responsible for return shipping fees. WATR loans devices to individuals as well as school districts. All our devices are listed on the AT4ALL website, www.wy.at4all.com. In 2014, WATR loans 349 devices.

SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

A woman with a visual impairment was working with her occupational therapist (OT) to borrow several magnification devices to use for knitting and reading. She enjoyed using the OKolux LED magnifier and the chest worn magnifier the best. With the assistance of her OT, she purchased a chest worn magnifier and also was sent a 5X hand held magnifier from the WATR reutilization program to continue to enjoy her hobbies.

2014 DEVICE LOANS
Loans by type of borrower, 349



DEVICE DEMONSTRATIONS

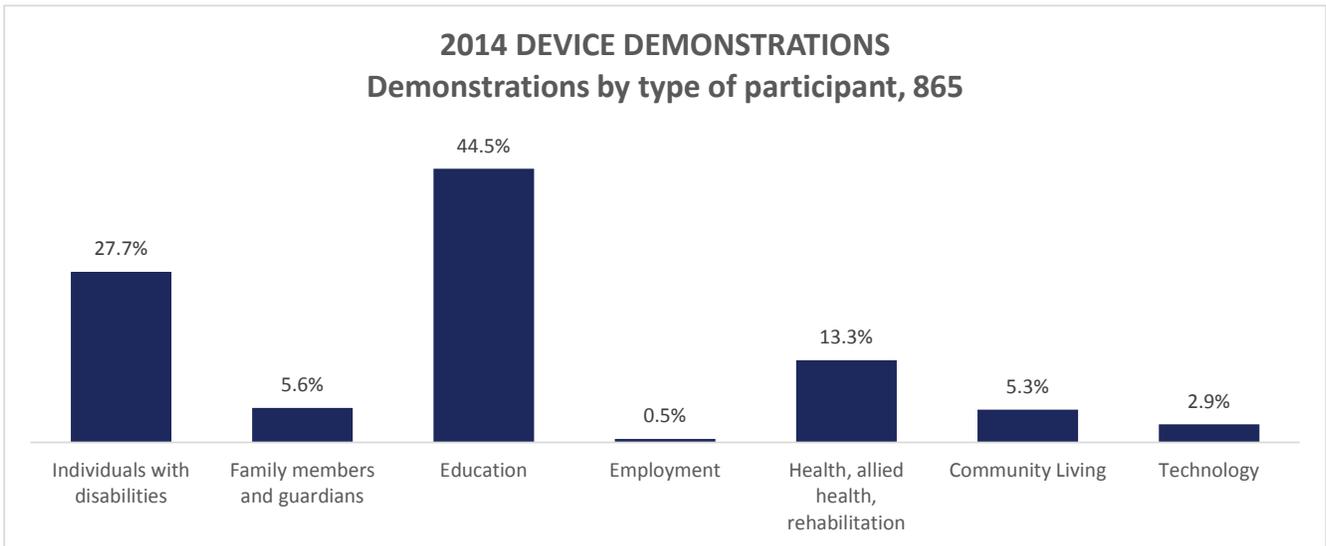
One of our most valuable services is the demonstration of assistive technology devices. Many individuals who could benefit from assistive technology are not aware of specific solutions or maybe are not sure what is available. WATR arranges customized demonstrations of potential solutions on an individual basis.

WATR hosted several Demo Days events around Wyoming each year. Demo Days is a chance for individuals with disabilities, caregivers, professionals, employers, or anyone with a curiosity about assistive technology to see a wide range of devices in one

location. WATR faculty and staff set up several devices from the loan library and are on hand to answer questions and show how each device or system works.

In 2014, WATR hosted three Demo Days events in Newcastle, Cheyenne, and Sundance. Through these demonstration events, WATR reached 106 individuals who were 100% highly satisfied or satisfied.

WATR now has weekly open lab hours in the WATR lab for individuals to visit and learn about devices and solutions for a wide range of disabilities.



INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

WATR provides information regarding assistive technology devices and services, funding, and other disability-related topics by E-mail, to walk-in visitors, on our website, through our toll-free phone number, at disability conferences, and through our various publications.

WATR publications are one of the most effective ways we reach individuals in Wyoming--over 2,180 individuals receive our mailings. *DispATch*, WATR's electronic bulletin goes out to readers monthly. *DispATch* includes links to upcoming WATR events, quick project updates, and regional activities. WATR's biannual publication, *WATR Waves*, is Wyoming's only assistive technology magazine for AT users and professionals. This is an 8-page publication features AT success stories, book reviews, articles on current policies, and featured devices. WATR also publishes *Stories of Success*, a biennial printed program report for assistive technology advocates. All our publications are available in accessible electronic formats. To be added to our WATR mailing list E-mail watr@uwyo.edu.

Through an informational video series, WATR is better able to support access to the WYAT4ALL device database, the loan and assessment processes, and the Assistive Technology Act. These videos are available on the WATR website and have received 300 views.

WATR developed a guide to help individuals in Wyoming pay for assistive technology. Now available by requesting a printed copy or online at: www.uwyo.edu/wind/watr



SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE), Services of the Visually Impaired borrowed the VoiceNote mPower QT and GPS to show a client. After working with the client, it was determined that the HumanWare Trekker Breeze will meet his needs better. A Montgomery Trust Fund Grant was written to obtain the equipment and was purchased from a Wyoming Vendor (Nibbles & Bytes). Through the loan and information provided, WDE was also able to demonstrate the device at a workshop to make others aware of the technology.



STATE LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

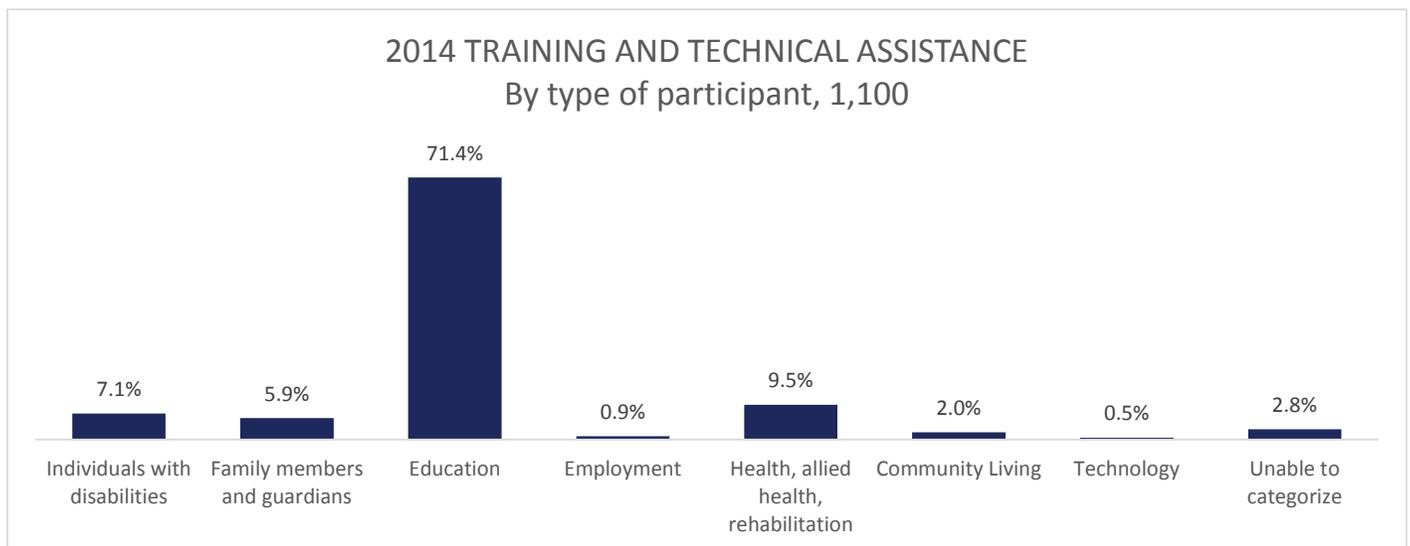
WATR offers statewide trainings for individuals in the areas of education, early intervention, adult service, health care, higher education, and businesses. Trainings are facilitated by WATR's accredited staff and faculty, and we frequently host nationally renowned trainers.

WATR began offering an online assistive technology curricula targeted to professionals who are interested in learning more about or improving their skills in assistive technology use and implementation. In 2014, 42 of students were enrolled in three AT courses for either continuing education or University of Wyoming graduate credit. WATR now offers four courses in the series.

In 2014, Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) launched a translation of the ECHO model from health care to education. The University of Wyoming ECHO in Assistive Technology (UW ECHO in AT) project builds capacity for assistive technology in education. Through ECHO technology, an interdisciplinary team of individuals working in education connect weekly to learn more about AT to apply in their schools and with their students.



Four key components of the successful Project ECHO model were applied to the UW ECHO in AT design for use in education: the use of technology to leverage scarce resources, improving outcomes by reducing variations in AT services and sharing 'best practices', case-based learning, and the monitoring of outcomes. Each week, educators from across Wyoming gather to participate in a topical didactic training provided by national experts and WATR professional staff and faculty and also to present cases to the group for discussion. The results of the strategies recommended during the session are reported regularly.



AFFILIATED PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

PROJECTS

WYOMING INSTITUTE FOR DISABILITIES

Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) is Wyoming's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), located in the College of Health Sciences at the University of Wyoming. WIND works to assist individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, professionals, and University of Wyoming students through education, training, community service, and information.

WYOMING ACCESSIBILITY CENTER

The Wyoming Accessibility Center provides fee-for service training, technical assistance and assessments to improve the access of individuals with disabilities to education, training, and employment. Services include assistive technology assessments, transcription and conversion of conference materials to braille formats, conversion of books and materials to audio and digital text formats, tactile graphics, closed captioning, website and course accessibility review, and conversion of materials to meet Section 508 compliance.

WYOMING ACCESSIBLE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS CLEARINGHOUSE

The Wyoming Accessible Educational Materials Clearinghouse (WY AEM) coordinates the requests and provision of accessible instructional materials for eligible Wyoming students with disabilities. Through a contract with the Wyoming Department of Education, the Clearinghouse works with districts to meet the requirements of the 2004 Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. WATR assists with the provision of AT devices and strategies to access digital and other specialized formats.

WYOMING AGRABILITY

Wyoming AgrAbility is a program of the University of Wyoming's College of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service. The program works with WATR to provide on-site assessments, assistive technology expertise, and outreach. Wyoming AgrAbility focuses on promoting independence and success in agriculture, so that individuals with disabilities and their families may continue to ranch and farm.

WYOMING ICANCONNECT PROGRAM

Wyoming's iCanConnect program provides communications technology free of charge to low-income people of all ages who have combined vision and hearing loss. This program distributes communication equipment to qualified individuals and provide equipment installation, training and support to help recipients make the most of this technology.

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING ECHO IN ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

University of Wyoming ECHO in Assistive Technology (UW ECHO in AT) builds capacity for assistive technology in education. Through ECHO technology, an interdisciplinary team of individuals working in education connect weekly to learn more about AT to apply in their schools and with their students.

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WYOMING TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WIND, Wyoming Independent Living Rehabilitation Inc., and First Interstate Bank of Laramie partner to offer people with disabilities an opportunity to finance assistive technology devices and services. Wyoming Technology Assistance Program (WYTAP) loans make it easy to borrow money for an AT device that will improve mobility, accessibility, or quality of life. Loan counseling and assistance are available at no cost throughout the application process as well as throughout the life of the loan.



PARTNERSHIPS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA AT CASPER COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM

Through a partnership with University of North Dakota at Casper College, WATR works with the Occupational Therapy program to provide instruction to students about specific assistive technologies. Once the students understand the uses and potential application of devices, they demonstrate a select number of devices to individuals in the community.

WYOMING LIFE RESOURCE CENTER

In 2010, WATR collaborated with the Wyoming Life Resource Center and the Anna Marie Weston Lending Library to inventory assistive technology devices at multiple sites. The combined collection of technologies is listed on the WATR reutilization website and are available for long-term lending to any Wyoming resident.

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCES

The College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS), through funding from a National Science Foundation grant entitled “Undergraduate Design Projects to Aid Persons with Disabilities,” collaborates with WATR to design unique or low-cost assistive technology devices for people throughout Wyoming. Additionally, CEAS works with WATR to offer hands-on, single switch construction workshops that teach caregivers and professionals how to modify toys or equipment with switches.

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) is committed to working with WATR to ensure students receive the assistive technology they need.



WYOMING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES (WATR)

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