

# South Carolina Assistive Technology Program

CENTER FOR DISABILITY RESOURCES  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Annual Report 2020

## **IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**



# South Carolina Assistive Technology Program

## Annual Report 2020

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### MISSION

Our mission is to enhance the independence, productivity and quality of life for all South Carolinians through access and acquisition of assistive technology.

### OVERVIEW

The South Carolina Assistive Technology Program (SCATP) uses technology devices and services to help people with disabilities live, work and learn more independently. We are federally funded and part of a national network of technology-related assistance programs that provide the devices that increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities.



Dear Friends,

What an unusual year! COVID-19 introduced many new challenges for all of us. The South Carolina Assistive Technology Program responded and found new ways to meet the needs of people with disabilities while keeping everyone safe. For instance, we began to offer online training sessions with closed captions for accessibility. Participants could join a live session or later watch a recording on demand.

Our staff also provided device demonstrations to parents, children and therapists through Zoom. Seeing participants in their home setting helped us to better understand their needs and tailor our recommendations. In addition, we processed many device loan and reuse equipment requests. We have continued to serve South Carolinians throughout the pandemic. In fact, we have grown our skillset and made our services more accessible, more meaningful and safer.

Deepest regards,

**Carol Page, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, ATP, CBIS**  
Program Manager, South Carolina Assistive  
Technology Program

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## DEVICE DEMONSTRATIONS

Our Assistive Technology (AT) professionals guide individuals with disabilities and their support providers through demonstrations of various adaptive devices to help them make informed AT purchases. Support providers may include speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, vision itinerant specialists, teachers, service coordinators, parents, spouses or other family members.

We do not charge for demonstrations, and we do not write reports. Because we do not sell products, our demonstrations are impartial. To schedule a demonstration, call 803-935-5263.

# 160

SCATP provided **160 AT device demonstrations** to 420 South Carolinians.



### The Wilks Family Story

**Christa Wilks** has lived with ADHD her entire life. She is a successful wife, mother and business owner in Chapin, South Carolina.

Both of her sons also have attention deficit disorders and, like Christa, take medication to control their symptoms. Cooper, 16, was diagnosed with ADHD at age 5. Hampton, 14, was diagnosed with ADD at age 12.

In March 2020, Cooper and Hampton suddenly started attending school virtually because of the coronavirus pandemic. Christa knew she needed to find resources to help her children navigate this unknown school environment. She reached out to the S.C. Assistive Technology Program to learn about assistive technology that could help her children.

Program coordinator Tammy Wallace scheduled a Zoom demonstration to show the family various AT devices that might help with

### Texana Burton's story

"When I first started attending college, I encountered many challenges. I called the South Carolina Assistive Technology Program for assistance. I met with staff members for equipment demonstrations and borrowed several pieces of equipment to try out before I considered buying something for myself.



Texana Burton

During one of the meetings, an SCATP staff member and I had a long discussion about the mobility device I was using. It was a wagon that had been adapted for me so that I could lay on my stomach.

When I used the wagon, I had to rely on many kind friends and staff members at the college to assist me. I needed help gathering and carrying my supplies, pushing the door access buttons and carrying my computer.

I started to adjust to my surroundings at college, but it became apparent after my first semester that I needed to increase my independence. The SCATP staff suggested that I go to a wheelchair vendor for a seating

evaluation for a power wheelchair. I had tried power wheelchairs when I was younger, but I always preferred my wagon.

When I received my new wheelchair, though, I could do more than ever! I could raise the chair to be level with a desk and have a better view of the whiteboard. I could have my computer and textbook open simultaneously.

Navigating through campus became much easier, and I had plenty of room to carry my computer, books and other materials without the worry of dropping them. In the wheelchair, I can raise my chair to the level I need to reach the door access button on my own.

I will graduate from Aiken Tech in 2021 and hope to attend the University of South Carolina in Columbia to study psychology to learn about mental health and be a therapist or student counselor. My pursuit of education has brought many challenges, but I have learned so much. I can't wait for what comes next."

specific challenges they were having with organization, note-taking and time management. She also told them about Google extensions that could help them with school-work.

They also looked at the Echo LiveScribe Pen. Christa borrowed the pen from the device loan program for the children to try out at home.

Christa has also taken advantage of SCATP's services to learn about tools that could help her with personal organization at work and about how to use Zoom to communicate with her clients during the pandemic.

Christa and her sons say they all feel like they are able to perform at a higher level based on the information they have received from the S.C. Assistive Technology Program. They are grateful for the program's free services.

## Colleton Medical Center

Dear Dr. Page,

Thank you so much for helping me with my patient. Once we figured out which app was best, he was talking up a storm! His mood has improved greatly now that he does not have to give single word responses to his fiancée via Qwerty board (and she says the first thing he told her was "I love you!").

Thank you so much for giving him a voice. I have also been telling anyone who will listen about your assistance and your program so expect a lot more calls from Walterboro!

Thanks,

**Lauren Boyette, MS, CCC-SLP**  
Colleton Medical Center

## Sherry's Story

"I just can't say enough good things about the Assistive Technology Reuse program! They have helped us several times in the past but have been especially valuable in the last 18 months when my daughter Shelby lost most of her mobility.

Alli quickly helped to set us up with a wheelchair, bath seat and walker for our home that made things so much easier. We are still using them every day!

I love this program because it is a way for families to access needed durable medical equipment quickly and at no cost. It is also a wonderful opportunity for families and individuals to donate their no longer needed equipment and supplies and know that they will go to someone who is able to use them!"

**Sherry Larson**



Shelby at home

# 319

SCATP helped **319 South Carolinians with information and referral sources** on needed AT devices and services, including how to obtain funding for AT.

## DEVICE LOANS

We believe it is important to try a device in the environment where it will be used before making the decision to buy. That is why we offer free AT device loans for up to four weeks with a signed agreement. To borrow a device, call 803-935-5337.

# 297

SCATP provided **297 short-term equipment loans** to 176 individuals, allowing them to test AT devices as part of their decision-making process.

## DEVICE REUSE

SCATP has two ways to help you get the assistive technology you need, the South Carolina Assistive Technology Exchange and the SCATP Reuse Service.

### SC ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EXCHANGE

The South Carolina Assistive Technology Exchange is a free online reuse database that helps individuals connect with each other to find, give away or sell used equipment. You can list items on the database that you need or would like to sell or give away. Any individual, agency representative or family member can participate in the exchange. If you need help using the site, call us at 803-935-5273.

# \$29,481

The SCATP Equipment Exchange facilitated the exchange of a handicapped accessible van from one individual to another for a **savings of \$29,481**.

### AT REUSE

The SCATP Reuse Service can help individuals acquire free used assistive technology items, including durable medical equipment. Call 803-935-5273 to learn if we have what you are looking for or to donate used equipment.

# \$221,738

The SCATP ReUse provided 98 South Carolinians with 208 pieces of equipment for a **savings of \$221,738**.

## 2020 KEY ACTIVITIES

### TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

Assistive technology professionals provided free or low-cost workshops and hands-on trainings about functional strategies and the latest devices, along with information on accessible web and information technology. SCATP partnered with the S.C. Department of Education AT staff to provide trainings for parents and school staff to increase knowledge of assistive technology. Early in the year, trainings were held at the SCATP office and at other locations by request. Most trainings in 2020 were offered online because of the pandemic. Call us at 803-935-5276 to learn about upcoming training sessions or to schedule a training at your location.

# 3,212

SCATP assistive technology **trainings reached 3,212 individuals.**

### SC ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EXPO 2020

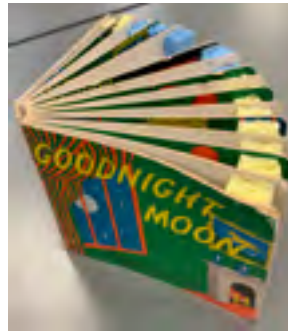
This free event is the go-to source for people with disabilities, their families, seniors, veterans, healthcare professionals and educators. Each year, the event opens individuals' eyes to new technologies, new possibilities, new solutions and new opportunities to change their life. It is the only event of its kind in South Carolina where attendees can discover ability-enhancing products and services, learn about adaptive sports and attend informative workshops.

More than 70 exhibitors showcased the latest products and services for people with a wide range of disabilities. Attendees could see and test mobility products, devices for people with developmental disabilities, medical equipment, home accessories, daily living aids, products for seniors, equipment for people with sensory impairments and much more.

Attendees also had the opportunity to participate in a series of compelling workshops that address pressing disability issues.

# 816

**816 people attended** the 27th annual S.C. Assistive Technology Expo hosted by SCATP.



### York Technical College

“Thank you for teaching us about a variety of assistive technology

devices. The Introduction to Special Education professor and students learned about the AT and how they could use AT devices in their classrooms..

Two students had an “ah-ha” moment when they saw how simple modifications, such as adding a sponge piece or hair ties, could make a book accessible to children with fine motor challenges. They planned to immediately adapt books for their students.”



### UPCOMING EVENT

## Expo 2021

The 2021 Expo will be a virtual event on Tuesday, March 2. The day-long program will include 20-minute demonstrations of various assistive technology devices for individuals with different disabilities.

To register, visit [scatp.med.sc.edu](http://scatp.med.sc.edu).

# VIRTUAL EXPO



## 2020 KEY ACTIVITIES

### TRANSITION SERVICES

Transition services prepare students for future education, employment and independent living. Assistive technology helps every child with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meet their transition goals. Our organization helps assess and provides loaner devices and training in the use of assistive technology. SCATP also collaborates with AbleSC's S.C. Youth Leadership Forum for young adults with disabilities.

The Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC) helps young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities make a successful transition from high school to adult life. SCATP serves as a partner agency and collaborates on transition activities.

### ADAPTED TOY PROJECT

Children with disabilities often have difficulty interacting with toys. To help them experience the joy of toys, the S.C. Assistive Technology Program offered its second adapted toy workshop.

Families, professionals and school staff were invited to bring battery-operated toys to the S.C. Assistive Technology Resource Center where the toys were adapted for switch use. To be adaptable, the toys had to have an on/off switch and only one action. For instance, the Flappy the Elephant toy only flaps its ears when turned on.

S.C. Assistive Technology Program staff created switches to operate the adapted toys. Parents received the toys adapted for switch use and switches to operate them. SCATP will continue to host the adapted toy workshop as an annual event to help meet the overwhelming need for these toys.

SCATP has many switches and toys adapted for switch use available for demonstration and loan. For more information, call 803-935-5301.

## 48

**48 people participated** in the Adapted Toy Workshop.

## 58

SCATP participated in transition activities that **reached 58 individuals**.

### NEW PROJECT

### S.C. Assistive Technology Program Website



The S.C. Assistive Technology Program decided in 2020 to move its website to the University of South Carolina website platform. The SCATP website is currently under construction and will roll out in 2021.

It will have a new look and will be more accessible for people with disabilities. SCATP staff members aim for the site to be compatible with all types of assistive technology that could be used to access the site.

THANK YOU

## YOU FUEL OUR SUCCESS

The S.C. Assistive Technology Program has a long history of providing hope and support to families and professionals.

### OUR PARTNERS

Thank you to all of the agencies and organization that we partner with throughout South Carolina. The work we do is made possible and maximized by working with agencies and organizations that have a similar mission.

### YOU CAN HELP

You can help us improve lives through assistive technology. It's easy!

- **Make a referral.** Do you know an individual with a disability who could benefit from using assistive technology? If the answer is yes, refer them to 803-935-5263.
- **Share your personal story** with a photograph of how the program has helped you! Send an email to [Carol.Page@uscmed.sc.edu](mailto:Carol.Page@uscmed.sc.edu).

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**Center for  
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