

Effective Use of Congressional Funding in FY 2016

All 50 states, 4 US territories, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico receive formula grant funding under the Assistive Technology (AT) Act of 2004. These 56 grantees are required to carry out a continuum of specified state level and state leadership activities that promote the ability of people with disabilities to know about, have access to, and ultimately be better able to obtain assistive technology (AT). The continuum of services includes device demonstration, device loan, reutilization, state financing, training and information and referral activities.

The Assistive Technology (AT) Act received a \$1 million funding increase from Congress in Fiscal Year 2016 bringing the federal program's allocation to \$32 million. Below are specific examples of how the additional federal dollars State AT programs received in FY 2016 are being spent.

- The **Missouri** State AT Program will add two additional demonstration sites, where consumers may interact with various AT devices. These additional locations are Nevada in western Missouri and another in Hannibal in eastern Missouri.
- In **Washington**, the additional funds will be spent on broadening the reach of the program's in-person device demonstration program in order to reach rural areas of the state that were previously unreachable due to a lack of funding.
- In the state of **Oklahoma**, the program was able to purchase a high-end eye-gaze AAC device which has been on the waiting list for consumers to borrow from the loan library. The Oklahoma program is now able to demonstrate and provide short-term loans to consumers whose only access and independence for speech is through eye-gaze.
- The State of **Iowa** was able to add a new focus to their device demonstration and loan programs by being able to purchase devices for fitness, health and recreation to align with Iowa Health Department/CDC efforts to decrease health disparity of people with disabilities. Similarly, **West Virginia** was also able to purchase assistive technology for the demonstration and loan program to support West Virginia Paralympic Committee and CAMC Para-Athletic Sports Program.
- Funding was used to expand **Kentucky's** reutilization program and will allow the state's program to add two more collection and distribution centers in Louisville and Paducah, KY.

Other states and territories like **Connecticut, Puerto Rico, Arkansas, Illinois**, and **Minnesota** used the funds to support the purchase of updated assistive technologies for their device demonstration and loan programs. Furthermore, states with rural areas like **Oregon, Michigan, Arizona**, and **Montana** used the funds to support services in these hard to reach areas of the state.

Overall, the majority of State AT Programs reported using the additional funds for critical need device demonstration and device loan activities. State AT Programs thank Congress for this increase and appreciate their support helping people with disabilities in need.