# Missouri Assistive Technology Advisory Council

**10 March 2023**

**Virtual**

## 1. Call to Order

### A. Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:01AM by council chairperson Emily Hartley. Members in attendance: Aaron Luna, Shari LaRoussa, Andrew Lackey, Rachel Baskerville, Camille Anderson-Weddle, Pam Arbeiter, Samantha Marsicovetere, Chad Rohr, Sarah Becker, Shelly Summers and Paula Darr. Guests: Karen Klenke (for Beth Dauber) and Jennifer Boddicker. Staff in attendance: Stacy Brady, Brenda Whitlock, Felicia George, Eileen Belton, Scout Merry and David Baker

### B. Approval of March Agenda

The agenda for the meeting was approved as presented (Motion: LaRoussa; Second: Rohr).

### C. Approval of December Minutes

The minutes of the December meeting were approved as presented (Motion: Rohr; Second: LaRoussa)

## 2. Directors Report

### A. Council

1. Financial Disclosure

A reminder was made to the members that if they have been officially appointed by Boards and Commissions to the Council, the Personal Financial Disclosure form must be filed and submitted to the Ethics Commission by the May 1st deadline. A majority of members have already done so and were thanked for their prompt attention to this requirement.

### B. Administrative Issues

1. Reauthorization of the Technology Act

As part of the final passage of the National Defense Authorization Act, Congress agreed to reauthorize the Assistive Technology Act by including the [21st. Century Assistive Technology Act](https://ataporg.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/at-act-info/rom22634.pdf) (AT Act) in the final package. Its passage was spearheaded by a bipartisan quartet of legislatures. While there are no major changes in the new AT Act, there were several minor changes, including the grant award formula and revision to the composition of the state level advisory councils. The Act will go into effect on July 1st.

1. State Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Request

MoAT’s budget request for state fiscal year 2024 are weaving their way through the legislative process. Both the House and Senate recently concluded their budget hearings with no questions or apparent changes to what was submitted. A slight increase in capacity for the Show Me Loans program was made during this budget season.

### C. Current Initiatives

1. Power Up 2023

Considerable staff focus is on preparation for Power Up 2023, April 3rd and 4th in Columbia, Missouri. With roughly a month to go, things are trending in a very positive direction. Brenda shared that the latest check of registration showed there were 466 individuals signed up. In addition, a record number of exhibitors will attend the conference, with 71 thus far. This year’s conference will feature an endnote from Brendon Hilbretch, co-director of the Accessible Icon Project. We are also excited to welcome Sam Seavey, the creator of the Blind Life YouTube channel to this year’s conference as a featured speaker for two sessions. Council members were reminded that their attendance and costs will be covered and were encouraged to register if they haven’t yet done so. This year’s conference is also the 25th edition of Power Up, a noteworthy achievement in itself.

1. ICT: Learning Path & Accessible Communications in the Workplace (Eileen)

Improvement of knowledge and skills about accessible communication in the workplace has been a strong focus of MoAT’s Information Communication Technology Access efforts. Two exciting developments related to this focus are the recently created [Accessibility Guide: A Toolkit for Accessible Communications in the Workplace](https://disability.mo.gov/files/accessibility-guide-public.pdf) and the availability of a MO Learning Path titled [Accessible Communications in the Workplace](https://at.mo.gov/it-access/documents/Accessible-Communications-in-the-Workplace-Learning-Path-public.pdf). The guide and learning path provide tools and resources to ensure accessibility for all in terms of meetings, events, documents and email, multimedia, websites and social media content. These two resources were a collaborative effort involving Missouri Assistive Technology, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and the Office of Administration, Diversity and Inclusion Council.

1. Partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation

Roughly a year ago, Missouri Assistive Technology and Vocational Rehabilitation met to update its agreement and to find ways to increase our partnership. Since so doing, a considerable flurry of activities have ensued designed to increase AT knowledge among VR staff and to increase access to appropriate AT for VR clients. Several of the activities since undertaken include the development of a VR/MoAT referral form through which counselors can refer clients to MoAT for assistance, development of a multi-part assistive technology training series, virtual AT demonstrations and the development of AT boxes that are sent out to each office to enable them to explore and try a variety of AT devices. These boxes are then followed up with a presentation on AT and MoAT programs and services.

1. TAP-T Request for Proposal

Every 5 years, a request for proposal is put out to solicit bids for qualified vendors to provide the adapted phones offered by the TAP-T and TAP-W Programs. Staff are currently working with the Office of Administration on the development of the RFP content with anticipation that the RFP will be distributed by early summer.

1. AEM Cohort

Roughly 2 years ago, Missouri was one of seven states selected by the National Center on Accessible Educational Materials to be provided with 4-years of intensive technical assistance to develop a robust statewide infrastructure for the provision of Accessible Educational Materials and Assistive Technology. Missouri is now halfway through the 4-year project and is making considerable progress on raising interest in and improving access to accessible educational materials among school districts, early childhood providers and within workforce development. A Power Up Session (AEM: A District Perspective) will feature the 3 school districts participating in the TA project sharing how they addressed the issue of AEM and how they have begun to implement new thinking and methods for increasing the access to and provision of AEM for their learners.

1. Telepresence Robot Experiment

MoAT in conjunction with the Division of Developmental Disabilities and Support Innovations are exploring the use of telepresence robots to allow individuals to participate in their day habilitation programs though they may not be able to attend in-person due to complications due to health, transportation, etc. Telepresence robots are remote controlled wheeled devices that connect to the internet and allow individuals to participate virtually in school, work or other forums.

### D. Informational Items

1. 3D Printer

The use of 3D printers to create affordable and customizable assistive devices has been an area of emergence during the last few years. MoAT recently purchased two 3D printers, one housed at our office and the other located at one of the demonstration centers. Scout provided a brief overview of the printer and how it works, plus outlined some goals for its use and benefits to individuals.

1. AAC/SLP Community of Practice

Kara has created an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) community of practice (CoP) designed to increase understanding about and implementation of AAC devices, especially within school districts. AAC is the largest area of borrowing through ETC and the highest number of devices requested through the ATR program. It is also an area of challenge for school districts when it comes to understanding and implementing effectively. The CoP will meet quarterly. This first meeting was well attended.

1. Accessible Arts

Brenda and Eileen recently were invited to share information on MoAT, digital accessibility, and assistive technology at an accessible arts workshop hosted by ArtsKC.

### E. Program Data and Updates

1. ATR and ETC

The ATR program is beginning to wind down for the 2022-2023 school year. To date, 289 applications have been submitted with 260 having thus far being approved. The total dollar amount of approved applications is just a little under $550,000 dollars.

ETC, the device loan program, has been extremely busy with 2,062 devices being loaned to school districts, agencies and individuals thus far this state fiscal year. The number of devices loaned already exceeds last year's total with 4 months left in the state fiscal year. A variety of new items have been added to the program including sensory kits, switch toys, upgrading of the vision device inventory ,and addition of new iPads and laptop computers.

1. TAP for Telephone and Wireless

Stacy touched on two additions to TAP for Telephone. Specifically, she mentioned the addition of two simplified mobile phones, the RealSAMand the Blindshell. Both of which have been popular and fill a gap in terms of consumer needs.

1. TAP for Internet / DeafBlind Equipment Program (Brenda)

Brenda talked about the development of a centralized database for the program that was a change required by the Federal Communications Commissions (FCC). The process of adjusting our current system to align with the FCC’s new database for reporting has been a somewhat difficult and lengthy process but seems to be working now, as well as a time saver for reporting.

1. Show-Me Loans / KAT / MFP (Eileen)

Show-Me Loans has provided 23 loans totalling around $277,000 thus far this state fiscal year. Accessible vehicles and hearing aids being the two most often cited reasons for taking the loan. Eileen recently had to do a vehicle repossession, which was a new and rare experience for the program.

The KAT program was provided $100,000 this year through the Bureau of Special Health Care Needs. To date, the program has assisted 21 families obtain assistive devices and home modifications. There is about $11,000 left in the program with the expectation that those funds will soon also be spoken for.

Show-Me Homes (formerly known as MFP) has seen 11 individuals access our services for assistive technology and home modifications this quarter. Eileen also mentioned that we recently changed the application process to an on-line form that has been both easier and a time saver for applicants and staff.

1. Demonstration and Recycling

Scout noted that there have been some changes in staff at some of our current demonstration locations, which has necessitated bringing the new demonstration staff up to speed on the service, reporting, etc. He also shared a story provided by one location about an individual who had burned themselves while cooking, but was able to stop doing so after learning about a specially designed cooking utensil at one of the demonstration locations.

As for the recycling centers, they are tracking ahead of last year in terms of the number of refurbished devices put back out in the community and the dollars saved by individuals accessing them.

## 3. Action Items

None

## 4. New Business

None

## 5. Announcements

1. TechOwl (Pennsylvania) Super Bowl wager

With the Kansas City Chiefs facing off against the Philadelphia Eagles, Tech Owl, Pennsylvania’s AT Program, challenged Missouri Assistive Technology to a friendly Super Bowl wager.

1. Next meeting: June 9th - In Person - Columbia

## 6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35AM (Motion: LaRoussa; Second:Rohr)