

TECHNOLOGY TODAY

ODP Technology Taskforce Newsletter

● Assistive Technology Awareness Month ●

Welcome to the second edition of Technology Today!

Did you know that November is Assistive Technology Month in Pennsylvania? Last year Governor Wolf proclaimed November to be Assistive Technology Awareness Month, highlighting Pennsylvania as a leader in the development and implementation of assistive technology programs of its citizens with disabilities and older residents.

In honor of that, this newsletter will continue to highlight the work being done by people across the Commonwealth as well as promote ways in which assistive technologies can contribute to the lives of our families, friends and neighbors. We hope you enjoy this latest edition of the newsletter!

2022 Disability Summit

On 9/22/22, the 2022 Disability Summit highlighting enabling technologies was held at the Temple University Student Center in Philadelphia, PA.



The Summit was made possible through a partnership between State Representative Joe Hohenstein, KenCrest Services, The Arc of Philadelphia, Temple University's Institute of Disabilities, and Comcast NBCUniversal. Dr. Shea Tanis, Associate Research Professor at the Kansas University Center on Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, delivered the keynote. Breakout sessions featured leading experts in enabling tech innovation, education, and policy. The Summit concluded with a public legislative hearing. To view selected recordings of the summit, use the links below.

- [Keynote address](#)
- [Exploration and Innovation-Comcast's Take On Tech First Supports](#)
- [Speech Recognition for Everyone-Behind the Scenes of an AAC Start up](#)
- [Public Legislative Hearing](#)

Success Story

Shermare is putting out forest fires. Though she has a physical disability with limited range of motion, Shermare is able to use an iPad for the first time, thanks to an adaptive switch that she can activate with her hand, forearm or even her cheek. Each time she taps the switch, the animated helicopter on the screen drops a bucket of water onto the cartoon fires below. Shermare squeals with delight as the last fire is doused.

To read more about Shermare and how she's learning to use assistive technology in her daily life, visit:

<https://www.jevshumanservices.org/removing-barriers-with-assistive-technology/>

This story was shared by JEVS Human Services. If you have a story you would like to share, please reach out to the ODP Technology Task Force by emailing Ho-Jung Mardorff at hmardorff@deloitte.com



Announcements and Events

ARPA Funding Applications due at end of October. For more information, click [here](#).

Virtual Road Shows are coming soon! We're talking with people across the state to share their experiences in technology integration, person-centered planning, and new and exciting opportunities for independence through technology. You'll hear from Self-Advocates, Families, Supports Coordinators, Residential Providers and Technology programs!

Workshop: What is Life Sharing and How Can Technology Increase Independence.

A Peer-to-Peer interactive workshop facilitated by The PA Family Network to: Learn about the Life Sharing service definition and develop a greater understanding of how utilizing technology can better foster independence.

When: October 20, 2022 from 12-1p or 7-8p

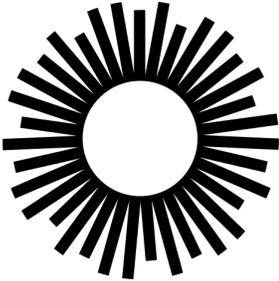
[Click here for more information.](#)

Getting to Know TechOWL

Did you know that every state has a program to help people with disabilities to explore, find, and get the tools and technology they need? In Pennsylvania that program is TechOWL, part of the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University. To learn more about TechOWL and the 9 Assistive Technology Resource Centers across the state, click [here](#).



Mobile Application Resources



be my eyes

Connects sighted volunteers with individuals who are blind or have low vision. Sighted volunteers help with guided problem solving such as reading food labels, assisting with shopping, and describing pictures. The app is free to download and use and is available for iOS and Android devices. You can also register as a sighted volunteer to begin assisting those who need help. For more information, click [here](#).

Operating with the motto “Every voice should be heard,” CoughDrop uses software to “fill the gaps” in communication and make every voice heard. CoughDrop is an open source, cloud based app that allows for automatic updates across all devices being used. For more information, click [here](#).



Spoken

Spoken uses predictive technology to simplify communication for people with aphasia and other speech and language disorders. Instead of limiting users to simple phrases and icons, the app predicts the next words you’re likely to use so you can quickly build complete sentences. Spoken also learns your patterns and improves over time so users can communicate in their unique voices. For more information, click [here](#).

Access Now is a community-driven app that pinpoints accessible locations on an interactive map. You can look up places like restaurants, museums and attractions and view their accessibility ratings: accessible, partially accessible, patio access only and not accessible. You can also rate locations and even add your own to help others in the community. For more information, click [here](#).



Technology and Voting

Voting is an important tool for self-advocates to have their voices heard on important topics, but having a disability can sometimes make the voting process difficult.

With the upcoming mid-term elections in November, we wanted to highlight some ways that self-advocates use assistive technology to make their voices heard, as well as give some other examples in which technology can be used.

Staff at SAU-1 shared these ways in which they use different types of assistive technology to help them vote:

- Hearing aids, enlarging/highlighting key points of candidates in digital materials, and access to plain language materials in learning political platforms
- Mail-in ballots or absentee ballots
- Using a stamp to sign name in the voting register
- Wheelchair accessible vehicle, tables/voting booths that lower to wheelchair height
- Large print and high contrast reading materials
- Plain language resources to research the candidates

For more information and resources on voting and the voting process visit:

www.paautism.org/voting



Tech Corner: Smart Kitchens

Being able to safely get yourself a drink, snack, or even cook a full meal can allow for a new level of independence for many people. “Smart” kitchen appliances can be one way to help people achieve greater levels of independence in their own homes. From “high tech” devices such as smart plugs, Alexa or Google enabled devices, smart appliances like refrigerators and ovens, to “low tech” devices like pot minders, ring tab can openers, and adapted knives, there are a range of options to help people be more independent in the kitchen. To read more visit: home.myodp.org



Want to get involved?

For more information about the ODP Technology Taskforce or to get involved in one of the workgroups, please contact: Ho-Jung Mardorff at hmardorff@deloitte.com