

AT Louisiana

2017 ANNUAL GUIDE

LEASING:
a new way
to pay for
Assistive Technology

INSIDE:

Coping with autism

Alzheimer's services

Supporting employment
...vertically?

published by





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Blind or low vision?
Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Deafblind?
Have a disability and want to work?

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Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network (LATAN) is a statewide 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that helps Louisiana residents of all ages with disabilities or functional limitations gain greater independence at home, at work, and/or at school through the use of assistive technology (AT). As an example, AT for an individual who is visually impaired can be as simple as a pair of eyeglasses, or as complex as computer software that enhances contrast and magnifies colors on computer screens. Through the use of device demonstrations, device loans, financial loans, and the AT marketplace, we service the entire state of Louisiana.

LATAN's Mission Statement

LATAN helps Louisiana residents of all ages with disabilities or functional limitations gain greater independence at home, at work, or at school.

LATAN's Vision

LATAN envisions a future in Louisiana in which individuals who use AT can achieve greater independence, are more satisfied with their lives, and have greater access to their communities. LATAN strives to bring that vision to fruition each day through its programs and services.

Questions or comments? Email info@latan.org.



2016-2017

Annual Reporting

LATAN Program Output, Outcomes, Impact, & Return on Investment

(All ROI's have been reported per the national ACT Report which is disseminated publicly by ATAP)

State Financing

Individuals with Dissabilities Statewide Have Access to AT

\$77,797

saved by consumers
through AT Reuse

+2,900

people gain access to AT
in device
demonstrations

\$52,500

saved in AT rental fees
through device loans



\$136,883

in cash loans assist
consumers in funding AT



1000+

people experience
high-impact AT
training

\$73,424

worth of AT devices
lost in disasters were
replaced



+1,700

AT devices accessed
and/or acquired



Assistive technology device demonstration program

By LATAN Staff

At LATAN, we offer Assistive Technology (AT) Device Demonstrations that give you the opportunity to try out and learn about AT devices first-hand with the help of one of our AT Specialists.

A device demonstration is a guided walk-through of an AT device, or devices, that will provide you with hands-on experience and knowledge of particular devices. This program can allow you to experience devices for the first time, compare features of different devices, and make more informed decisions about the devices' suitability for meeting your specific needs before making a large purchase.

We have two AT Demonstration Centers in Louisiana; one in Baton Rouge to serve South Louisiana, and one in Shreveport to serve North Louisiana. Although we do not have locations in every parish of the state, our devices and employees can travel to meet the needs of all Louisiana residents.

Each of our Demonstration Centers showcase a diverse selection of AT devices and equipment. We offer access to over 600 different devices from a variety of manufacturers. Our inventory includes, but is not limited to: vision, hearing, speech, learning and sensory, mobility, aids for daily living, and computer access technology.

Having two well-equipped



Demonstration Centers with such a large array of AT devices and equipment allows us to tailor a system of multiple devices and equipment specifically to you. We know your needs can be unique and complex, and we want our demonstrations to reflect that. ■

Not sure which devices are right for you?

Call us to schedule a demo.

800-270-6185

www.latan.org

demos@latan.org



Assistive Technology Device Loan Program

By LATAN Staff

Recognizing that our device demonstrations in our facilities cannot give you the same level of experience as the ability to use AT devices and equipment in your own environment, we also offer an AT Device Loan Program.

This program can provide you with the opportunity to borrow devices and equipment to try out in your own home, at work, and at school. Ideally, following a device demonstration, you would decide on an AT device that you think would work well in your environments, and then borrow it.

Any Louisiana resident with a disability or functional limitation, organizations that work with those residents, or

employers of those residents are eligible to use LATAN's Device Loan Program. For a small fee, devices may be borrowed for thirty-five (35) days.

Device loans can be used to try out a device, to temporarily replace a device that is being repaired, to be used while waiting for a new device to be delivered, or for other short-term accommodations. Our inventory includes, but is not limited to: vision, hearing, speech, learning and sensory, mobility, aids for daily living, and computer access technology.

Our device loans can be extremely helpful in the preliminary stages of purchasing a new device,

since many AT devices and equipment are only available through catalogs or from out-of-town vendors.

Having the ability to try out devices and equipment in your own environments will lead you to make more informed decisions about devices when it comes time to make the purchase.

Mistaken purchases can lead to frustration, unnecessary expenses, and even abandonment of devices and equipment, which can be devastating. We hope to save you hassle, time, and money with our device demonstrations and loans. ■



**Do you
need help
paying for
AT devices or
equipment?**

**Contact us to
find out more
about our
financial loan
program!**

**800-270-6185
www.latan.org
atflp@latan.org**

Assistive Technology Financial Loan Program

By LATAN Staff

Our Financial Loan Program is the only existing program in Louisiana that assists people with disabilities in acquiring a loan for the purchase of AT devices and equipment.

Over the years, the public's awareness of AT devices and equipment has increased. However, due to technological advancements, the costs continue to climb. Additionally, the number of people seeking funding for AT devices and

equipment is rising.

Our financial loans can empower you to take control of your funding needs. We involve our financial loan applicants in each part of our lending process.

At times, you may feel that the financial system is stacked against you. You may already be facing extraordinary medical expenses. We want to help alleviate the stress that financial hardships create.

We know the AT you need can be costly. After all, the majority of our applicants need funding for modified vehicles. Modified vehicles may be vital for your independence, and we want to make your independence affordable.

Our financial loans are low-interest, fixed-rate, and extended-term. Loans can range from \$500 to \$50,000. Applicants must be at least 18 years old. ■

Story of *success*

Jacob, a ranch owner and operator from Natchitoches Parish, developed *expressive aphasia* (difficulty speaking or producing language) following a traumatic brain injury. His speech-language pathologist recommended that he look into speech-generating devices and referred him to LATAN.

Through device demonstrations, he was able to try out several different brands and models of these devices. Device loans allowed Jacob to take some of the speech-generating devices home to use to help him make a final decision about which one would work best to meet his needs.

Jacob's family said that he now communicates successfully through his use of a speech-generating device, especially with people outside of his immediate family. He has greater social interaction with friends and colleagues and can again share in verbal conversations, something he had always enjoyed prior to his injury.



istock

AT Marketplace

By LATAN Staff

LATAN is devoted to helping people of all ages with functional limitations or disabilities to gain greater independence. The AT Marketplace is one way LATAN can achieve this goal by providing affordability of devices. The AT Marketplace is an online database that allows accessibility to new or gently used assistive technology to all Louisiana residents. The AT Marketplace is a host of assistive technology that has been carefully reviewed by LATAN staff and is in working condition to be reused by another client. Clients have the option of donating assistive technology devices to LATAN to be posted on the AT Marketplace or keeping the devices in their possession and listing it for free or for sale. Assistive Technology listed to the AT Marketplace for sale will be listed at a reduced cost. All assistive technology listed or to be listed on the AT Marketplace for availability must fall under one of the following categories: Daily Living, Environmental, Hearing, Vision, Mobility, Computer Access, Learning, Communication and Transportation (modified vehicles). This accessible platform specializes in helping those with different abilities gain access to affordable technology which leads to increasing their quality of life. The website can be accessed by visiting the main website www.latan.org or visiting www.atmp.latan.org. ■

Story of *success*

Gretta of West Monroe applied for our AT Financial Loan Program to purchase a modified van with a lift for her power wheelchair. As a single parent of two and a full-time student, Gretta had lots of driving to do!

Not having access to a van with a lift meant that she had to use her manual wheelchair and disassemble/reassemble it every time she needed to drive.

After Gretta applied and her loan was approved, she got her van! Gretta told us how much simpler driving had become: "I roll my wheelchair onto the lift and go right in the van. With a quick transfer, I'm good to go."

Gretta also shared that the van was more than just convenient transportation for her: "I can enjoy life. Without the LATAN program, I don't think I would have been able to finish school... It has truly changed my life."



Leasing: *a new way* to pay for **AT**

By LATAN Staff

Building upon 14 years of successful implementation of LATAN's Assistive Technology (AT) Financial Loan Program, comes a new way to pay for AT devices.

In September 2017, LATAN was awarded additional funding from the Administration of Community Living (ACL) to provide Alternative Financing for AT devices and equipment on a long-term lease. This new program provides an option to lease rather than purchase various types of AT.

We have learned that AT devices benefit persons with disabilities or functional limitations by helping them regain independence, improve their quality of life, enable him or her to communicate more effectively with family and friends and actively participate in community and social activities. However, for someone who has a terminal illness or elderly persons struggling with end-of-life issues, the high cost of AT devices may limit access.

While financial loans are currently available for many people, obtaining a loan for the purchase of a device may not be a viable option when considering the length of time the device is needed. What is more concerning is that many people with low or fixed incomes simply do not have the means to acquire devices beyond what Medicaid or Medicare provide for them. Therefore, acquiring devices through a long-term lease is more attractive.

The Long-term Leasing Program not only offers a new way to pay for AT devices and equipment but also builds upon LATAN's current reuse initiatives such as the AT Marketplace. Once the long-term leases are returned, other individuals will be able to lease or purchase those devices through the AT Marketplace. Ultimately, LATAN continues to strive to increase access to Assistive Technology for even more residents of Louisiana! ■

Share with LATAN

Upload your photos to *Facebook* or *Twitter* using the hashtag **#LouisianaAT** in the caption for a chance to see those photos published!

The photos published will be chosen from *Facebook* and *Twitter* randomly to give all participants a fair chance of appearing on this page.



The Cowleys' Cause

How One Family is Managing Autism

By Joy Holden

Every parent facing Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) quickly discovers that the diagnosis is a long journey. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 1 in 68 children is diagnosed on the autism spectrum, which contains multiple symptoms, skills, and levels of disability. Their parents become experts regarding education, therapy, sensory issues, awkward moments, and insurance. Mandy Cowley has a story of love and determination to share. Her passion for her six-year-old son, Joseph, to live his best life has overflowed into a cause for all neurodiverse children to have better options and more awareness.

At what age did Joseph start showing signs of autism?

He started showing signs very early. I noticed that he didn't respond to noises like other babies. He didn't track objects, and he didn't respond to his name. I really knew he had autism by the time he was two years old when his language wasn't developing like his peers.

What was your response to his diagnosis?

I was mostly relieved because I knew it would open doors that required a diagnosis. But I also grieved because it was confirmation that he would not have a "normal" life, the life I had imagined my kids having.



What particular aspects of autism does Jo exhibit or experience?

Joseph has sensory processing issues (overwhelmed when there is too much sound and visual stimulation), communication issues (has difficulty expressing wants and needs or maintaining appropriate conversation with others), difficulty with social interactions (can't read cues, has difficulty initiating social interactions or sustaining them), and repetitive and obsessive behaviors (things have to be done in a certain order).

What is your parenting philosophy?

When you know better, do better. I don't know everything there is to know about autism. I have plenty left to learn, and I know that as Joseph ages, his needs will change. There have been plenty of things we've done over the years that we thought were the best but weren't, but when we learned better we did better.

How do you discipline Jo with his unique tendencies?

We are big on making things right and for allowing for natural



consequences when appropriate. That means we spend time apologizing, replacing broken items, etc. Sometimes if the behavior has a natural consequence, like he's being too rough with a toy and we know it's going to break, instead of taking away the toy we just let him break it. Occasionally we use time out if we know the behavior was the result of sensory overload. Sometimes quiet time in a safe space is just what he needs to calm down.

We also use "time ins." If he's struggling, we invite him to sit calmly near us and try to express his emotions. Sometimes working through those feelings can help him learn to regulate them better. Finally, for minor behaviors, we give him an opportunity for a "do over." We tell him the behavior was inappropriate and ask if he would like to try it again. If he says no, then we apply another consequence.

What coping methods does he employ? Which coping methods do you as parents utilize?

We use a red/yellow/green chart and ask him how his engine is running. If his engine is running too hot, then he has some options—ask to take a break, go for a walk, take deep breaths. I meditate, do deep breathing, and write as my own forms of coping. We also go running and make art.

What tasks do you have to accomplish daily/weekly?

We have data sheets from the teacher we have to review each day specific to his autism. Three times a week he has ABA (behavioral) therapy after school. I also keep data for the ABA therapist, so that's journaling every day about problem behaviors. It's not that there are a lot of "extra" things to do. It's that lots of things a typical parent is doing requires more effort from us. We have more behavior charts, he requires more attention and hands-on parenting than most six year olds, he doesn't sleep regularly, and we can't just hop in the car and go anywhere. Everything requires planning and an exit strategy.

Can you describe his education and therapy?

Last year, Joseph was in an isolated classroom where all the kids had autism. He had



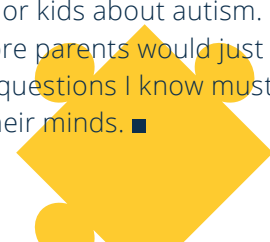
OT, Speech, and ABA therapy during his school day. He is now in an inclusive classroom with 17 peers, but only one of those kids has autism. There is one teacher, but she has the support of a special ed teacher and two aides throughout the day. Joseph spends 2 hours of his day in a special ed class. When he is in the typical class, he has an aide with him about 75% of the time.

What activities does he love and what do y'all like to do as a family?

He loves parks, being outdoors, and playing with cars, action figures, and trains. We love hiking as a family and being outdoors.

What do you want parents of neurotypical children to know or understand?

My son's success is at least in part reliant on how his NT peers receive him. It's very hurtful to him (and us) when peers call him weird or stupid. It's also heartbreaking to see him excluded when he is trying to interact with other kids the best way he knows how. Parents need to talk to their kids about disability and how to interact with people who are disabled. I think sometimes parents don't make an effort to understand kids with autism, and as a result, they judge us as parents and judge our son based on a lot of incorrect assumptions. I am always happy to talk to other parents or kids about autism. I wish more parents would just ask the questions I know must be on their minds. ■





Stand Up, Louisiana!

LATAN is committed to accessibility. Stand up, Louisiana! Is assisting Louisiana residence living with paralysis by loaning them standers to assist with injuries such as stroke, brain injury, or spinal cord injury. LATAN has a vision to create a more progressive Louisiana by assisting people of all ages with functional limitations have access to AT Devices for a better quality of life. Louisiana residents living with unique abilities can feel confident that LATAN is working hard to create more resources and better education for all of it's residents.

Just recently, LATAN assisted its residents living with paralysis by offering access to standers through the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation called Stand up, Louisiana. Research shows that the human body needs to stand and move around periodically throughout the day to promote circulation.

Survivors of strokes or spinal cord injuries living with paralysis need assistance on a daily basis from friends or family to stand up and circulate blood flow. Prolonged sitting leads to dozens of chronic diseases. Often times a family member might have difficulty lifting a person living with paralysis. LATAN is helping them with permanent standers known as an AT Device.

Standers may improve motor function, autonomy, and mobility by assisting someone from a lying position to a standing position. These standers can cost in excess of several thousand dollars and may be difficult to afford. Now, through the "Stand Up, Louisiana!" project, adults and older teens with onset of paralysis of 1 to 5 years are eligible for a temporary or open-ended loan of a standard or standing frame.

There are no limits to what people can achieve when technology is accessible and reflects the diversity of everyone who uses it. Discover how people at home, at school and at work are empowered to achieve more with accessibility capabilities with LATAN. ■



The *Power* in Wondering

By Julie McIsaac

We all wonder. *We wonder about the future and what it holds for us and for our loved ones. We wonder about our careers, our relationships, and our contributions to our community.*

Some of us wonder about accessibility: As a parent, how do I know if my son will be able to access the curriculum in school if he is overwhelmed with sound and light? As an individual with a disability, how do I know if I'm receiving the funding that I'm eligible for? As an employer, how can I be sure I am accommodating the needs of my employees? Some of us wonder about education and work: Will my child be able to sit through a day of school? Will I be able to find a job that suits

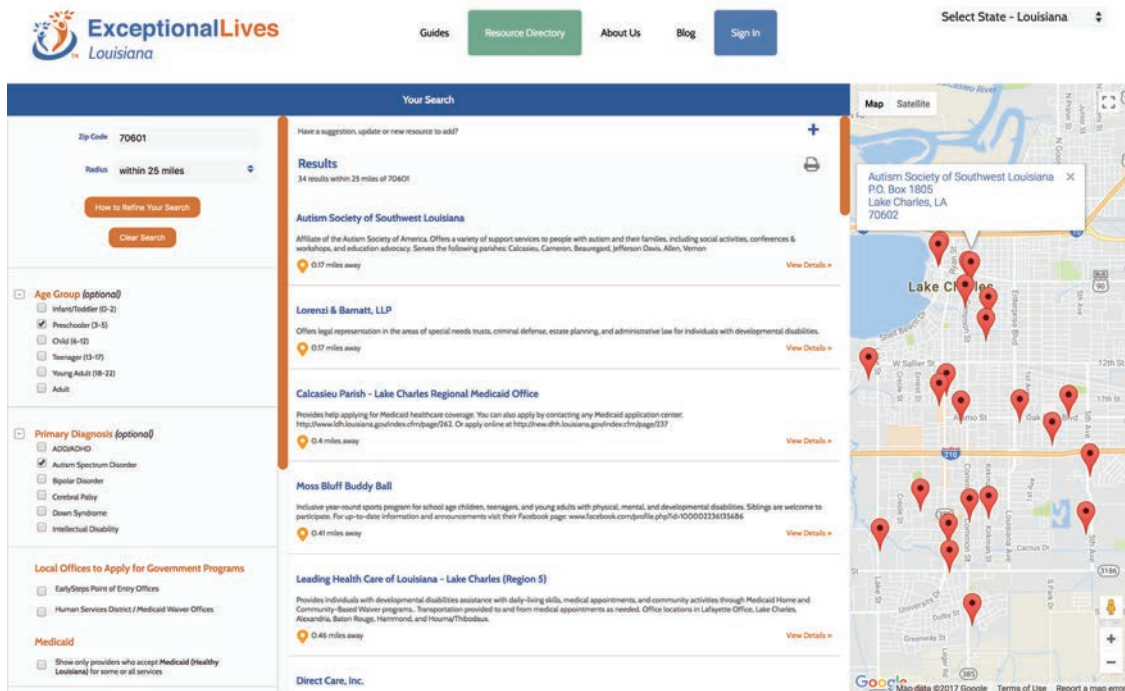
my skills and understands my needs? Some of us wonder about daily living and connections with others: Will my daughter be able to live independently? Will I be able to make friends? We wonder, and sometimes we worry. Yet with support, we keep moving forward.

For individuals with disabilities, wondering about the unknown can be scary. We need to advocate and research to find and create our own possibilities. We want to give ourselves and our family members the best options in life. But we don't need to go at it alone. When we have people in our corner and knowledge at our fingertips, wondering takes on new meaning. It feels less isolating

and more optimistic.

Let me introduce you to Exceptional Lives, a non-profit organization that provides free, easy to use resources for individuals with disabilities, their caregivers, and the professionals who work with them. Born from the lived experiences of its founders and contributors, Exceptional Lives Louisiana seeks to close the information gap and empower parents and individuals. In other words, if you haven't had your coffee and you need someone to tell you what to do, Exceptional Lives has you covered. The Exceptional Lives staff are doing the work for us: researching and making the calls, helping us connect to our communities. As a mom with

The screenshot shows the 'Exceptional Lives Louisiana' website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the logo, a 'Help' button, and a user profile for 'Exceptional Lives Louisiana' with the email 'jay.obrien@exceptionallives.org'. Below this is a breadcrumb trail: 'Dashboard / How to Get Started with EarlySteps 8/9/2017'. The main content area is titled 'Introduction' and features a 'Welcome to the Exceptional Lives EarlySteps Guide!' message. It states that the 'EarlySteps Guide' will help through the whole process and lists the topics to be explained: 'What is EarlySteps?', 'What can it do for us?', 'How would my child qualify?', 'What are the costs?', and 'Who can I call with questions?'. It also lists the steps to be walked through: '1. Connect with a local program', '2. Intake', '3. Evaluation', '4. The IFSP (plan of services)', '5. Getting the Services', and '6. Transition (when your child turns 3)'. The interface includes a sidebar with a progress bar showing '0% Complete' and a list of sections: 'Introduction', 'Welcome to the Exceptional Lives EarlySteps Guide!', 'A few things before we start', 'Learn the basics of EarlySteps', 'The EarlySteps process', 'Intake', 'The EarlySteps evaluation', 'Medicaid Waivers', and 'Wrapping up'. A 'Next' button is visible at the bottom right.



appointments, meetings, and a to do list that is 8 feet long, I'll take it!

So what are you wondering about? How to get started with Early Steps? Getting special education services from school? Whether you're eligible for a Medicaid Waiver? How to apply for SSI benefits? If any of these questions sound familiar, our Guides will walk you through each process and give you personalized information that applies to **you** or **your child**.

The Guides are written in plain language, which means we use wording that is easy to read and understand. We have plenty of graphics and additional resources to make sure you

are getting the information you need. You'll get a personalized checklist of action items based on your answers to questions we ask at the beginning of each Guide. The Guides also save your progress, so you can come back and update your information or finish the Guide at any time, on any web-connected device.

Maybe you know what you need, but you need help finding it. You need to know what is available and where, and if it's covered by insurance. Exceptional Lives can help with that, too! Searching on the Exceptional Lives free online Resource Directory for services in Louisiana will also provide you with a printable resource list

and visual map to show you your options. There's that word again: options! When we have options, we have power. We can take the information at hand and make the best decisions for ourselves and for our families.

It is a beautiful thing to wonder. As technology evolves, we have more opportunities to not only wonder but also connect with each other, our community, and available services and supports. We will continue to build relationships and gather knowledge. Together, we are better prepared to help each other push the limits of what is possible. ■

Julie McIsaac is a child development specialist with an interest in joining children and their parents to problem solve and connect through play. She has a Masters degree from Tufts University and is expected to complete her PhD in Infant and Child Development with an emphasis on Mental Health (Fielding University) in 2018. Certified in the DIR/Floortime relationship-based framework, Julie has found that her most meaningful work is connecting with families. Julie lives in Ottawa, Canada with her husband and three active boys. She has gained new insight into the experience of navigating life and services as a parent of a child with special needs and Julie brings this experience to her writing as a guest parent blogger for Exceptional Lives.



Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area

By Joy Holden

Memory loss is a terrifying thought for many of us. Yet, those who are diagnosed with dementia or Alzheimer's do not have to live in fear or despair. Enjoyment of life and socialization are possible, and an organization here in Baton Rouge is using technology, kindness, and creativity to meet those needs. Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area is the ultimate resource for hope and happiness while living with memory loss.

"The general population of affected persons just want to be appreciated for where they

are. Some people become frustrated, but most are very pleasant. They're not in any pain, just losing cognition," says Barbara Auten, the Executive Director of Alzheimer's Services. Auten devotes her days to bringing opportunities to individuals battling this heartbreaking diagnosis. Alzheimer's Services has created magnificent programs for affected people and their caretakers. The organization serves ten parishes in the capital area through support, education, and respite assistance.

Families and friends may be overwhelmed and discouraged while their loved one is battling Alzheimer's. The devastating diagnosis produces multitudes of questions about therapy, resources, and finances. That's exactly where Alzheimer's Services steps in. They offer Lunch-N-Learns monthly with guest speakers and helpful topics to educate caregivers. Alzheimer's Services also shares financial solutions with their Making Sense of Cents financial literacy class, which is three sessions. If a caregiver attends



tion is through their respite program, Charlie's Place, an award-winning service. Charlie's Place offers up to six hours of care each day for Alzheimer's affected individuals. Auten gleams with pride when discussing the success of Charlie's Place, "I work with such great people. We get very close to each affected person and their caregivers." Charlie's Place, now with two locations in Baton Rouge and in Gonzales, keeps their clients engaged

all three, Alzheimer's Services will pay for a caregiver's two-hour meeting with a financial planner or lawyer. "We also offer a Family Care Plan, and anyone can walk in and meet with a social worker or call the helpline," Auten adds.

When a caregiver is walking through the stages of Alzheimer's, they need a support system that understands. The Tender Loving Care functions or "TLC's" allow affected persons, caregivers, and families to socialize together as they relax to the sounds of a musician or vocalist in a low-pressure environment. While music is certainly therapeutic, art can be as well. Alzheimer's Services has a special partnership with the Manship through their Art and Alzheimer's program, which was modeled after the Meet Me, the MOMA Alzheimer's Project. Affected individu-

als and their caregivers go on gallery tours that integrate art appreciation into their lives. These events provide pleasant outings for caregivers and those with Alzheimer's. Auten describes the value of such fellowship: "Socialization is very important because people with Alzheimer's have a tendency to become isolated. When they are social, they use more cognition."

The greatest way Alzheimer's Service offers socializa-

with pet therapy, chair yoga, gardening, intergenerational activities, music therapy and much more. Auten says the most unique program is the IN2L interactive computer system which contains 3,000 apps and games. IN2L stands for "It's Never 2 Late," and it aims to enhance dignity through technology. The most popular games are "Price is Right" and trivia games about the cost of items through the decades, which work to stimulate memory. The computer program also features puzzles of family members' faces to aid in recognition. The technology even extends to virtual bike rides and virtual flights, which simulate the feelings of travel. Through technology, each person is able to stimulate their cognition and experience positive moments that would otherwise be unavailable to them. ■





Emergency Response and Preparedness

By LATAN Staff

LATAN HAS AN award-winning history of responding to the needs of AT users following natural disasters in Louisiana. Since 2005, LATAN has provided emergency response for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, Isaac, other smaller disasters, and most recently, the devastating floods of 2016. In the wake of these floods, LATAN was the point-of-contact for AT and DME needs of the survivors.

Through collaboration with state agencies and community organizations such as the Louisiana Emergency Management Disability & Aging Coalition (LA EMDAC), LATAN was able to serve as the hub for AT device and equipment replacement, technical assistance, training, as well as information and assistance. Ultimately, these critical partnerships created the opportunity for LATAN to secure additional funding from the

National American Red Cross to expand its response efforts to AT users and their families living in the Greater Baton Rouge area. Additional funding was provided by the Capital Area United Way (CAUW) to support LATANs immediate response to AT users following this flood.

For AT users and their families, the August 2016 Floods not only destroyed homes and communities, but equipment and life-saving/preserving medical supplies needed for daily living, health, and independence. Some medical insurance, including private plans and Medicaid/Medicare plans, do not always allow for the replacement of certain equipment or supplies destroyed by natural disasters; or, if they do, the wait time can be extensive. Many flood survivors without means to get the AT/DME they needed made the best with what they

could find, often placing themselves at great risk of injury through the use of incorrect, ill-fit, and makeshift alternatives. Yet, for them, the alternative was staying in a bed, a stationary chair, or inside a hotel room 24/7. Sadly, some flood survivors were doing just that! As a result, many people remained in hotel rooms for months suffering from new or worsened health problems. Loss of AT and DME impacted flood survivors' health, safety, and mobility. This greatly decreased their quality of life and often the quality of their immediate families and caregivers as well. Through this program, LATAN provided replacements directly to those who lost equipment and coordinated efforts to educate and prepare individuals, family members, caregivers, professionals, Disaster Case Managers, and other emergency personnel.

The devices you provided for my wife who has Alzheimer's have been a Godsend for me. I can now bring her places in the transport chair, and roll her around inside and outside. **I feel so much more confident knowing she is safe and secure** in her bed because of the rail. Thank you, LATAN and Red Cross!

Janet, a personal care attendant was very pleased with LATAN for replacing a mattress for one of her clients who has severe multiple sclerosis. The man's **damaged mattress was causing many health problems for him.** The client was not eligible for the mattress to be replaced by insurance and did not have the funds to replace it himself.



Ms. David lost her power wheelchair in the floods and badly needed it replaced because she had begun developing pressure injuries from sitting in chairs and manual wheelchairs. She was also unable to transport herself to perform any activities of daily living. **She couldn't receive a new chair through insurance** because she didn't meet all of the requirements set by her insurance company. **LATAN replaced her power wheelchair.**

LATAN's Board of Directors, President & CEO, Yakima Black, and staff extend sincere gratitude to the National American Red Cross, Capitol Area United Way (CAUW), EMDAC, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and the Louisiana Voluntary Organization (LAVOAO) for their invaluable support and partnerships!

LATAN sends its deep appreciation and a special thanks to Jamie Karam for her leadership of the Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response since 2005! Jamie's heart and compassion for survivors and all AT users is immeasurable! ■



Supporting Employment... Virtually?

"As a person with a disability, the first question I have is, 'Will I lose my health benefits and financial assistance received through Social Security once I am employed?' Next, I wonder if there are even businesses out there willing to hire me and make the accommodations necessary for me to be successful at work. It's not a secret that there are employers who are willing to hire people with disabilities, but they are not always certain as to how to make the appropriate accommodations. While we've made huge strides since 1990 with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other subsequent laws which have served as a foundation for ensuring equity and accessibility in public places and workplaces, accessing mainstream employment continues to be a challenge for many of us living with a disability in Louisiana. The fact is, we are a largely underutilized community of reliable, talented employees who simply need practical and collaborative efforts made by policy makers, human service providers, businesses, and even our families to create sustainable employment options."

—By Anonymous

NO MATTER THE industry or line of business, whether you volunteer or earn competitive pay, work is a central part of daily living. For many individuals with disabilities, accessing competitive employment or even opportunities to engage in volunteer activities, is often out of reach. Certainly, the use of AT increases independence at work, at school, and at home, but there are often other factors that individuals with disabilities and/or their caregivers face.

In 2018, LATAN will be launching the virtual **AT Work** employment center to proactively engage in being a part of the solution. Through the LATAN website, the **AT Work** employment center will create a continuous venue for training, technical

assistance, promote better employment outcomes and support transition from traditional employment settings to a more inclusive business model. The **AT Work** employment center can be accessed by consumers and family members, human service providers and community agencies that serve people with disabilities and functional limitations and businesses and potential employers.

The **AT Work** employment center will be promoted via LATAN social media outlets and through its community stakeholders upon the release date. Through the LATAN website, interested users will be able to request a "unique" registration login for access to specific portals. More to come in 2018! ■

The *ultimate* resource guide

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network

P: 800-270-6185

W: latan.org

Louisiana Assistive Technology Initiative

P: multiple locations

W: laticenters.org

Training, Resource, and Assistive-Technology Center

P: 504-280-5700

W: www.uno.edu/trac

AGING

Louisiana Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs

P: 225-342-7100

W: goea.louisiana.gov

Louisiana Councils on Aging

P: 571-527-3900

W: louisianacouncilsonaging.com

National Aging in Place Council

P: 202-939-1770

W: ageinplace.org

National Council on Aging

P: 641-715-3900, ext. 606151

W: ncoa.org

ALZHEIMER'S

Alzheimer's Association

P: 800-272-3900

W: alz.org/louisiana

Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area

P: 225-334-7494

W: alzbr.org

AUTISM

Autism Answers of Louisiana

P: 985-549-0836

W: autismanswersla.org

Autism Society Louisiana

P: 800-328-8476

W: lastateautism.org

Autism Speaks

P: 888-288-4762

W: autismspeaks.org

NHS Human Services

P: 888-647-0020

W: www.nhsonline.org

The Educational Center for Autism

P: 318-671-7100

E: autismoptimism@yahoo.com

BRAIN AND SPINAL CORD

Brain Injury Association of Louisiana

P: 800-444-6443

W: biala.org

Traumatic Head & Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund Program

P: 888-891-9441

W: dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/126

United Spinal Association

E: info@unitedspinal.org

W: unitedspinal.org

DISABILITY ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

Advocacy Center of Louisiana

P: 800-960-7705

W: advocacyla.org

The Arc of Louisiana

P: 866-966-6260

W: thearcla.org

Exceptional Lives Louisiana

P: 844-354-1212

W: la.exceptionallives.org

Families Helping Families

P: 866-216-7474

W: fhfgbr.org/families-helping-families-centers

Louisiana Answers

P: 225-342-7100

W: louisianaanswers.com

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

P: 800-450-8108

W: laddc.org

Muscular Dystrophy Association

P: 800-572-1717

W: mda.org

National Council on Disability

P: 202-272-2004

W: ncd.gov

People First of Louisiana

P: 225-383-1033

W: peoplefirstla.org

Southwest ADA Center

P: 800-949-4232

W: southwestada.org

Trach Mommas of Louisiana

E: trachmommas@gmail.com

W: trachmommas.org

DISABILITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Disability Care Center

P: 888-504-0035

W: disabilitycarecenter.org

Easterseals Louisiana

P: 504-523-7325

W: easterseals.com/louisiana

Launch Therapy Center

P: 225-380-1894

W: launchpeds.com

Louisiana Department of Education

P: 877-453-2721

W: louisianabelieves.com

Louisiana Department of Health

P: 225-342-9500
W: dhh.louisiana.gov

Louisiana's Achieving a Better Life Experience

P: 800-259-5626
W: www.able.osfa.la.gov

WRBH Reading Radio 88.3 FM

P: 504-899-1144
W: wrbh.org

REHABILITATION

Baton Rouge Rehab Hospital

P: 225-927-0567
W: brrehab.com

Children's Hospital

P: 504-899-9511
W: chnola.org/rehab

Louisiana Health & Rehab

P: 855-235-2490
W: lahealthandrehab.org

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services

P: 800-737-2958
W: www.laworks.net/workforcedev/lrs/lrs_main.asp

Touro Rehabilitation Center

P: 504-897-7600
W: touro.com/rehab

UpLIFTD

P: 225-928-1400
W: upliftd.org

Willis-Knighton Rehabilitation Institute

P: 318-716-4545
W: wkhs.com

SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

Baton Rouge Community College

P: 225-216-8643
W: mybrcc.edu/disability_services

Bossier Parish Community College

P: 318-678-6539

W: bpcc.edu/disabilityservices

Delgado Community College

P: 504-671-5161
W: dcc.edu/student-services/advising/disability-services

Louisiana College

P: 318-487-7629
W: lacollege.edu

Louisiana State University

P: 225-578-5919
W: lsu.edu/students/disability

Loyola University New Orleans

P: 504-865-2990
W: loyno.edu/success/disability-services

McNeese State University

P: 337-475-5916
W: mcneese.edu/ods

Nicholls State University

P: 985-448-4430
W: nicholls.edu/disability

South Louisiana Community College

P: 337-521-6915
W: solacc.edu/students/student-success-center/disability-services

Southeastern Louisiana University

P: 985-549-2247
W: southeastern.edu/admin/ds

Southern University

P: 225-771-3546
W: www.subr.edu/index.cfm/page/13

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

P: 337-482-5252
W: disability.louisiana.edu

Tulane University

P: 504-862-8433
W: accessibility.tulane.edu

Xavier University of Louisiana

P: 504-520-7315
W: xula.edu/counseling/disabled-responsibility.html

HEARING, SPEECH, AND VISION

Affiliated Blind of Louisiana Training Center

P: 800-319-4444
W: affiliatedblind.org

American Foundation for the Blind

P: 212-502-7600
W: afb.org

The Emerge Center

P: 225-343-4232
W: emergela.org

Lighthouse Louisiana

P: 888-792-0163
W: lighthouselouisiana.org

Louisiana Commission for the Deaf

P: 800-256-1523
E: ahsley.poché@la.gov

Louisiana School for the Deaf

P: 888-769-8111
W: lalsd.org

Louisiana School for the Visually Impaired

P: 225-757-3481
W: lsvi.org

Louisiana Speech-Language-Hearing Association

P: 225-922-4512
W: lsha.org

National Association of the Deaf

P: 301-587-1789
W: nad.org

National Federation of the Blind

P: 410-659-9314
W: nfb.org

The Stuttering Foundation

P: 800-992-9392
W: stutteringhelp.org

INDEPENDENT LIVING

National Council on Independent Living

P: 877-525-3400

W: ncil.org

New Horizons Independent Living center

P: 877-219-7327

W: nhilc.org

MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION

AmRamp

P: 888-715-7598

W: amramp.com

Baton Rouge Yellow Cab

P: 888-482-9427

W: brtaxi.com

Crescent Vans

P: 504-738-2634

W: crescentvans.com

FastServ Medical

P: 800-256-2601

W: fastservmedical.com

La. Department of Transportation and Development

P: 877-452-3683

W: dotd.la.gov

Scootaround Personal Transportation Services

P: 888-441-7575

W: scootaround.com

Superior Van and Mobility

P: 888-981-8267

W: superiorvan.com

Whealers Accessible Van Rentals

P: 800-456-1371

W: wheelersvanrentals.com

This is not a complete list of all resources throughout the entire state. If you would like to be included in, removed from, or placed in a different category in our Resource Guide next year, please email info@latan.org.



Donate today

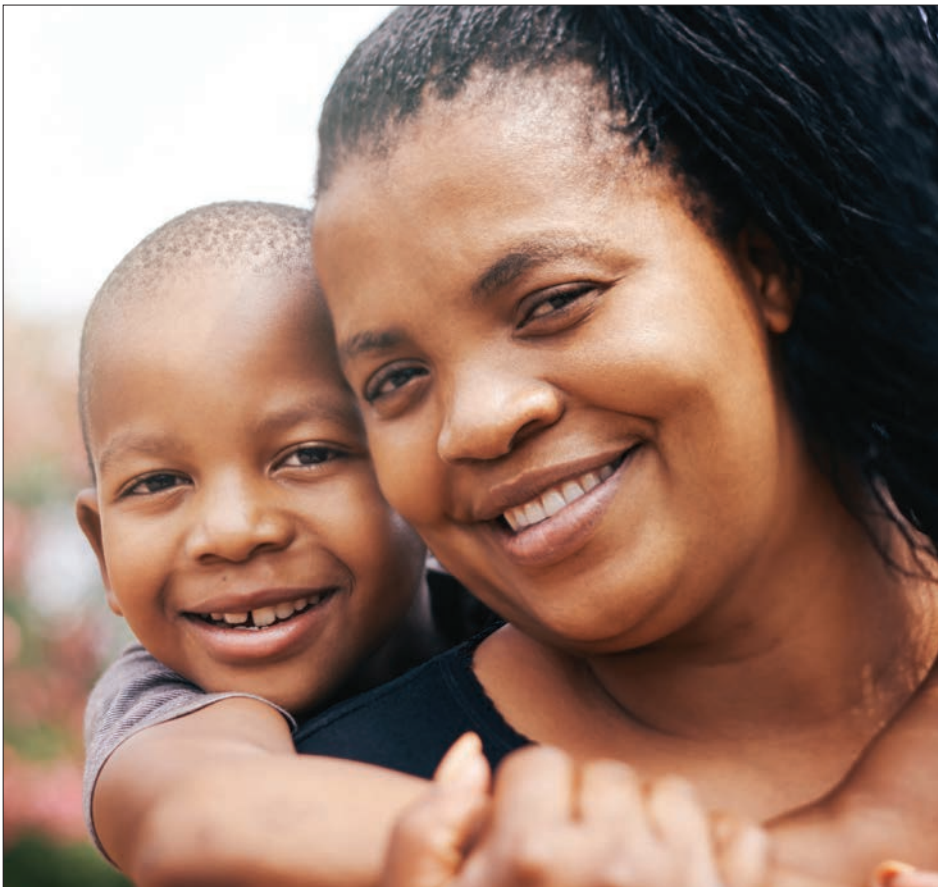
LATAN.ORG

1-800-270-6185

www.latan.org

response@latan.org





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