National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research
Program Directory 2003

Produced by the
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Introduction

The mission of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) is to generate, disseminate and promote knowledge that will improve the lives of persons with disabilities in their communities. NIDRR conducts comprehensive and coordinated programs of research and related activities to assist in the achievement of the full inclusion, social integration, employment, and independent living of people with disabilities. This edition of the NIDRR Program Directory lists all projects funded by NIDRR during the 2003 fiscal year.

NIDRR’s Long-Range Plan, announced in the Federal Register, December 7, 1999 (http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/NIDRR/#LRP), provides background on NIDRR’s conceptual base. It describes the “new paradigm of disability,” which posits that disability is an interaction between the individual and the environment. NIDRR’s research focus includes such areas as: employment outcomes, health and function, technology for access and function, independent living and community integration, associated disability research areas, knowledge dissemination and utilization, and capacity building for rehabilitation and international activities. For detailed descriptions of these areas, consult the Long-Range Plan.

NIDRR’s Research Program

NIDRR’s research is conducted via a network of individual research projects and centers of excellence throughout the country. Most NIDRR grantees are universities or providers of rehabilitation or related services. NIDRR’s largest funding programs are the Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs) and Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs). NIDRR also makes awards for information dissemination and utilization centers and projects, field initiated projects, research and development projects, advanced research training projects, Mary E. Switzer fellowships and NIDRR scholars, small business innovative research, and model systems of care. NIDRR also administers the State Technology Assistance Projects, the Assistive Technology Loan Funds, and the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers.

Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects

The Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) program allows for projects with special emphasis on research, demonstrations, training, dissemination, utilization, and technical assistance. Projects may include combinations of these activities. True to the mission of NIDRR, these projects may develop methods, procedures, and rehabilitation technology to assist in achieving the full inclusion and integration into society, employment, independent living, family support, and economic and social self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities, especially individuals with the most significant disabilities, or to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act.

Model Systems

NIDRR administers programs that have become world-renowned model systems of care for persons with spinal cord injuries, burns, and traumatic brain injuries. The Model Systems establish innovative projects for the delivery, demonstration, and evaluation of comprehensive medical, vocational, and other rehabilitation services. The work of the Model Systems begins at the point of injury and ends
with successful re-entry into full community life. These projects collect and contribute data on patient characteristics, diagnoses, causes of injury, interventions, outcomes, and costs to a uniform national database; participate in collaborative research with other Model System centers; and coordinate research efforts with other related grant recipients.

**Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects**

The Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training (ARRT) Program (formerly known as the Research Training Grants Program) expands the capacity of the field of rehabilitation research by providing advanced training opportunities. These projects provide rehabilitation research training for persons with clinical or other experience, who may be lacking certain formal research training. Grants are made to institutions to recruit qualified persons with doctoral or similar advanced degrees with clinical, management, or basic science research experience, and prepare them to conduct independent research on problems related to disability and rehabilitation. This research training may integrate disciplines, teach research methodology in the environmental or new paradigm context, and promote the capacity for Disability Studies and rehabilitation science. These training programs must operate in interdisciplinary environments and provide training in rigorous scientific methods.

**Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers**

NIDRR’s Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs) conduct coordinated and integrated advanced programs of research targeted toward the production of new knowledge, which may improve rehabilitation methodology and service delivery systems, alleviate or stabilize disabling conditions, or promote maximum social and economic independence for persons with disabilities. Operated in collaboration with institutions of higher education or providers of rehabilitation or other appropriate services, RRTCs serve as centers of national excellence in rehabilitation research. Also, they are national or regional resources for research information for individuals with disabilities and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of the individuals. These centers also conduct related training programs, including graduate, pre-service and in-service training. The centers also disseminate and promote the utilization of research findings.

**Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers**

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs) conduct programs of advanced research of an engineering or technical nature designed to apply advanced technology, scientific achievement, and psychological and social knowledge to solve rehabilitation problems and remove environmental barriers. Each center is affiliated with one or more institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations. The RERCs’ work in a rehabilitation setting provides an environment for cooperative research and the transfer of rehabilitation technologies into rehabilitation practice. Involved at both the individual and systems levels, RERCs seek to find and evaluate the newest technologies, products, and methods that ultimately can benefit the independence of persons with disabilities and the universal design of environments for all people of all ages. The centers also exchange technical and engineering information worldwide and improve the distribution of technological devices and equipment to individuals who need them.
State Technology Assistance Projects

This program supports statewide, consumer-driven, technology-related assistance networks for individuals of all ages and disabilities. States and territories are eligible to apply for one grant per entity which spans a total of ten years of Federal funding. The first phase is a development grant and lasts for three years. The second phase is known as the first extension and can last for two more years. The third and final phase is known as the second extension and lasts for five additional years. The Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (AT Act) authorized three additional years for States that have completed ten years, at a reduced funding level. Several states have received one-year alternative financing projects aimed at providing financial assistance in the purchase of assistive technology. Projects work with public and private lenders in their states.

Fellowships

Fellowships, named for the late Mary E. Switzer, give individual researchers the opportunity to develop new ideas and gain research experience. There are two levels of fellowships: Distinguished Fellowships and Merit Fellowships. Distinguished Fellowships go to individuals of doctorate or comparable academic status, who have had seven or more years of experience relevant to rehabilitation research. Merit Fellowships are given to persons with rehabilitation research experience, but who do not meet the qualifications for Distinguished, usually because they are in earlier stages of their careers. Fellows work for one year on an independent research project of their design.

NIDRR Scholars

The Scholars program attempts to build research capacity by recruiting undergraduates with disabilities to work in NIDRR-funded Centers and projects and introduces them to disability and rehabilitation research issues. Scholars gain work experience and participating centers receive a small stipend. This program is an innovative approach aimed at generating interest in research careers for persons with disabilities.

ADA Technical Assistance Projects

NIDRR administers a network of grantees to provide information, training, and technical assistance to businesses and agencies with responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Ten regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs) are funded to provide information and referral, technical assistance, public awareness, and training on all aspects of the ADA. Several National Training Projects target particular groups, organizations, or subject areas for ADA training and the ADA Technical Assistance coordinator contract assists all of the grantees with their activities.

Small Business Innovative Research

Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) grants help support the production of new assistive and rehabilitation technology. This two-phase program takes a product from development to market readiness.
**NIDRR Contracts**

Through its contracts, NIDRR seeks improved methods, systems, products, and practices to add to its work. The contracts are for specific activities related to management, research, and information dissemination.

**NARIC and the NIDRR Program Directory**

The *Program Directory* is compiled by the National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC). NARIC functions as NIDRR’s library, providing the rehabilitation community with information and referral services to help locate pertinent research related to specific areas of expertise. Since 1977, NARIC has been the primary source of rehabilitation and disability information generated by NIDRR funds, with special priority services to NIDRR staff and NIDRR-funded project staff.

NARIC also produces a companion to the *Program Directory*, which is the *Compendium of Products by NIDRR Grantees and Contractors*. Copies of NIDRR-supported research products are received by NARIC and added to the reference collection and Compendium database. Information about holdings are available online at http://www.naric.com.

Neither NARIC nor NIDRR assumes liability for the *Directory’s* contents or the use thereof. NARIC does not evaluate or certify the programs or products of the organizations listed in the *Directory*.

This *Directory* is not intended for use as a fiscal document to show how NIDRR funds are allocated; its purpose is to display the range of programs that NIDRR supports. This listing is current as of January 15, 2004. This directory may include projects that have passed the indicated extension date.

NARIC operates under U.S. Department of Education contract ED-02-CO-0002.
Employment Outcomes

NIDRR seeks to improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities by funding research into a wide spectrum of employment and disability issues, including economics; Federal, State, and community employment programs; accommodation; technology; education; and ergonomics and the work environment.

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Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Arkansas

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Improving Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

University of Arkansas/Little Rock
College of Education
4601 West Markham Street
Little Rock, AR 72205
dwatson@uark.edu
www.uark.edu/deafrtc

Principal Investigator: Douglas Watson, PhD
Public Contact: 501/686-9691; Fax: 501/686-9698

Project Number: H133B010501
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $600,000; FY 02 $600,000; FY 03 $600,000
Abstract: This program conducts coordinated research and training to enhance the rehabilitation outcomes of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing who are served by VR and related employment programs. When appropriate, the unique needs of specific subgroups within this diverse and heterogeneous population are investigated. The ultimate goal of these efforts is to improve the capacity of the VR system and related programs to address the career preparation, entry, maintenance, and advancement, as well as the community living needs, of the target population. Research activities include: investigating the impact of changes in federal employment and rehabilitation legislation and policy on the delivery of services to the target population; investigating the impact of business practices that contribute to accessible work and workplace supports to enhance the employment of the target population; and identifying, developing, and assessing rehabilitation-related innovations that enhance employment and community living outcomes of the target population.
National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports: A Rehabilitation Research and Training Center

University of Hawaii at Manoa
Center on Disability Studies/University Affiliated Program
1776 University Avenue/UA4-6
Honolulu, HI 96822
stodden@hawaii.edu; huap@hawaii.edu
www.rrtc.Hawaii.edu

Principal Investigator: Robert Stodden, PhD, 808/956-9199
Public Contact: Juana Tabali Weir, Administrative Assistant; Valerie Shearer, Pacific Rim and Grants Coordinator, 808/956-3975 (Tabali-Weir); 808/956-2673 (Shearer); Fax: 808/956-5713

Project Number: H133B980043
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $595,000; FY 99 $605,000; FY 00 $600,000; FY 01 $600,000; FY 02 $600,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 4/30/2004)

Abstract: The research this project conducts on educational supports is designed to increase access to postsecondary education programs and improve outcomes for people with disabilities. The research includes: (1) examining and evaluating the current status of educational supports, including (a) individual academic accommodations, (b) adaptive equipment, (c) coordination of supports and services, (d) self determination, and (e) personal counseling and career advising; (2) identifying effective support practices and models of delivery that contribute to successful access, performance, and retention and completion of postsecondary programs; (3) identifying specific barriers to the provision of disability-related services, including policy and funding requirements; (4) assessing the effectiveness of promising educational practices and disability-related services that are important to career mobility and success in the workplace; (5) testing the effectiveness of specific models of delivery that are believed to increase the accessibility of educational supports and innovative technologies; (6) identifying the types of educational and transitional assistance that postsecondary programs provide to improve educational and subsequent labor market success; (7) providing training, technical assistance, and information to support personnel, public and private rehabilitation personnel, career placement specialists, and students with disabilities and their families based on the findings and implications of the research program; and (8) implementing a consumer-driven empowerment evaluation plan for assessment of the Center’s progress in achieving its goals. Additional goals include conducting national surveys and field studies within diverse postsecondary educational settings, and implementing an innovative and integrated training, technical assistance, and dissemination model to ensure the application and sustainability of research-proven policy and practice.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Iowa

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workforce Investment and Employment Policy for Persons with Disabilities

University of Iowa College of Law
Law, Health, Policy, and Disability Center
100 Gilmore Hall
Iowa City, IA 52242
mmorris@ncbdc.org
www.its.uiowa.edu/law/lhpdc/rrtc/index.html

Principal Investigator: Michael Morris, JD; Peter D. Blanck, PhD, JD; Michael Collins; Robert Silverstein
Public Contact: Michael Morris, JD, Project Director, 202/521-2930; Fax: 202/218-7297

Project Number: H133B010102
Start Date: November 1, 2001
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $588,756; FY 03 $224,981
Abstract: This Center helps expand, improve, and modify disability policy and other more general policies in order to improve the employment status of Americans with disabilities and increase their independence and self-sufficiency. Based on research from this project and other NIDRR-funded projects, this project establishes an information and technical assistance resource to government leaders and decision makers at state and federal levels, individuals with disabilities, parents and family members, and other interested parties, offering new and revised approaches to workforce development and employment policy. Studies conducted by this project include: (1) an analysis of the relationship between select federal and state policies upon the employment of people with disabilities, (2) an analysis of the policy-based implications of outcome-based reimbursement on the delivery of employment and rehabilitation services to people with disabilities, and (3) an analysis of the effect of civil rights protections and multiple environmental factors on promoting or depressing the employment status of people with disabilities. The Center actively seeks to be outcome-focused and involve individuals with disabilities, parents, and family members in all facets of project activities, including training, research, information dissemination, and technical assistance.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Massachusetts

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on State Systems and Employment

Institute for Community Inclusion
University of Massachusetts/Boston
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125
ici@umb.edu
www.communityinclusion.org/rrtc

Principal Investigator: William E. Kiernan, PhD
Public Contact: John Butterworth, PhD, 617/287-4357; Fax: 617/287-4352

Project Number: H133B980037
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $700,000; FY 99 $700,000; FY 00 $700,000; FY 01 $700,000; FY 02 $700,000; FY 03 $350,000

Abstract: This Center identifies effective practices in coordinated employment efforts and facilitates such development at local, regional, and state levels. It also influences policy, practice, and perceptions on the national level. Project activities include investigations, technical assistance, and public policy reviews focused on: (1) examining state service systems, including VR, mental health, mental retardation, employment and training services (including one-stop career centers and welfare-to-work programs), and education to document promising policies and practices reflecting integrated and coordinated approaches to employment of people with disabilities; (2) documenting actual employment outcomes for people with disabilities through the analysis of national, state, and local data collection systems; (3) documenting strategies state agencies use for overcoming barriers to employment at the state and local levels; (4) examining, documenting, and disseminating practices at the state level that respond to the employment and support needs of SSI and SSDI beneficiaries; and (5) reviewing and evaluating strategies and approaches to develop a more integrated employment approach at the federal and state levels, in order to enhance the employment of people with disabilities.
RRTC on Improving Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Severe Visual Impairments

Mississippi State University
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Mississippi State, MS 39762
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www.blind.msstate.edu

Principal Investigator: J. Elton Moore, EdD, 662/325-2001
Public Contact: Kelly Schaefer, 662/325-7825 (V); 662/325-8693 (TTY); Fax: 662/325-8989

Project Number: H133B010101
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $600,000; FY 02 $600,000; FY 03 $670,000
Abstract: This program includes a variety of research and training activities that focus on improving VR services for individuals who are blind or have severe visual impairments. Activities include: (1) investigating and documenting the impact of changes in disability and employment legislation on the unique employment-related needs of individuals who are blind or have visual impairments, as well as their impact on service delivery options and policy; (2) investigating, documenting, and analyzing existent state and federal data sets to determine different employment outcomes for persons who are blind or have visual impairments and the relationship of the outcomes to client and service provider characteristics; (3) investigating and documenting how state VR agencies, other public agencies, and private service providers overcome environmental barriers in order to improve employment outcomes for individuals who are blind or have visual impairments; (4) developing a national information and resource referral database for the training needs of state business enterprise program facilities, developing and delivering training programs to meet the identified training needs, and developing measures that can be used to evaluate the efficacy of the training; (5) conducting three conferences to train VR staff on state-of-the-art information and computer technology for individuals who are blind or have visual impairments; and (6) conducting a coordinated and advanced program of training in rehabilitation research focusing on blindness and low vision, including training in applied research methodology that is designed to increase the number of qualified doctoral-level researchers working in the area of blindness rehabilitation.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Montana

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities

University of Montana
The University of Montana Rural Institute: A Center for Excellence in Disability Research, Education and Services
52 Corbin Hall
Missoula, MT 59812-7056
rural@ruralinstitute.umt.edu
rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu

Principal Investigator: Tom Seekins, PhD, 406/243-2654
Public Contact: Diana Spas, 888/268-2743 (V, information service only); 406/243-5467 (V); 406/243-4200 (TTY); Fax: 406/243-2349

Project Number: H133B030501
Start Date: December 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Joyce Y. Caldwell
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $600,000

Abstract: The research conducted by this project improves the employment status of people with disabilities in the rural U.S., enhances their ability to live independently, and advances the science of rural disability studies. Four core areas comprise eleven research projects in rural employment and economic development; rural health and disability; rural community transportation and independent living; and rural policy foundations. Projects include: (1) develop scientific methods to measure how rural environments influence an individual’s community participation; (2) collaborate with very small rural businesses to employ people with disabilities; (3) improve rural transportation options; and (4) create programs to prevent or improve secondary conditions. Other projects explore ways for new partners, including faith-based organizations, to be involved in improving rural services. A training program disseminates research findings, trains students, and sparks the creative engagement of policymakers and social advocates. The innovative STATE (Same-Time Availability to Everyone) policy requires that the project provide standard print publications to the general public only when at least two alternative formats are also available to individuals with disabilities.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
"New York"

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center for Economic Research on Employment Policy for Persons with Disabilities

Cornell University
Program on Employment and Disability
School of Industrial and Labor Relations
331 Ives Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853-3901
smb23@cornell.edu
www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped/dep/rrtc.html

Principal Investigator: Susanne Bruyère, PhD; Richard Burkhauser, PhD; David Stapleton, PhD
Public Contact: Susanne Bruyère, PhD, 607/255-9536 (V); 607/255-2891 (TTY); Fax: 607/255-2763

Project Number: H133B980038
Start Date: December 16, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $700,000; FY 99 $700,000; FY 00 $700,000; FY 01 $700,000; FY 02 $700,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 4/30/2004)

Abstract: Using principles of economics, this project conducts policy research on how environmental factors influence the work outcomes of people with disabilities. Research also addresses critical aspects of employment outcomes, recognizing the heterogeneity of people with disabilities, and explains the importance of interactions among the multiplicity of programs intended to meet the employment needs of people with disabilities. Components include: (1) a comprehensive analysis, using existing panel data, of the current employment status of people with disabilities; (2) a longitudinal analysis of the effects of labor market change on the employment and earnings of people with disabilities; (3) a longitudinal analysis of return-to-work after the onset of a disability; (4) a longitudinal analysis of the impact of civil rights protections on the employment and earnings of people with disabilities; (5) identification and analysis of policies that foster or impede the participation of transitioning students in rehabilitation or employment service programs; and (6) analysis of emerging and important issues affecting the employment of people with disabilities.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Virginia

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports

Virginia Commonwealth University
Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports
1314 West Main Street, Box 842011
Richmond, VA 23284-2011
tcblanke@vcu.edu
www.worksupport.com

Principal Investigator: Paul Wehman, PhD
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Project Number: H133B980036
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $699,992; FY 99 $699,992; FY 00 $699,992; FY 01 $699,992; FY 02 $699,992; FY 03 $1,089,773
Abstract: This Center helps to increase the national employment rate among people with disabilities by identifying factors in the work environment that inhibit or enhance employment outcomes and by sharing the results with the business community. Researchers: (1) analyze existing or new financial incentives to find those that encourage enterprises to hire or retrain workers with disabilities; (2) measure the effectiveness of disability management and return-to-work strategies; (3) assess employers’ need for information, training, and resources; (4) conduct, in business settings, interventions that respond to employer needs; (5) analyze the interventions to determine their effectiveness; and (6) determine the impact of changes in work structures such as telecommuting and self-employment on the employment outcomes of people with disabilities. Stakeholders who benefit from these research, training, technical assistance, and dissemination efforts include business personnel; rehabilitation service personnel; federal and state policy-makers; people with disabilities; their guardians, advocates, and authorized representatives; students; and the general public.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Wisconsin

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Community Rehabilitation Programs to Improve Employment Outcomes

University of Wisconsin/Stout
Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
College of Human Development
220 Tenth Avenue East
Menomonie, WI 54751
rtc@uwstout.edu
www.rtc.uwstout.edu

Principal Investigator: Fredrick E. Menz, PhD
Public Contact: 715/232-1389 (V); 715/232-5025 (TTY); Fax: 715/232-2251

Project Number: H133B980040
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $700,000; FY 99 $700,000; FY 00 $700,000; FY 01 $700,000; FY 02 $700,000; FY 03 $421,983
Other funding: FY 03 $33,724 (Social Security Administration), $63,627 (NIDRR)

Abstract: This project engages community-based rehabilitation programs (CRPs) and state rehabilitation programs in an effort to open multiple funding sources for rehabilitation and habilitation services and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The project includes a series of interrelated studies directed toward changing outcomes and determining CRP capacities to affect the economic status of people with disabilities in their communities, and it develops a complementary methodology for achieving utilization and application of the new knowledge. Primary research tasks: (1) examining how CRPs are serving people with disabilities from alternate sources of funding; (2) determining the extent to which consumers pursue and receive services, compared to the intentions of the Rehabilitation Act; (3) exploring what funding, service, and strategy capacities exist to address those intentions more coherently at the community level; (4) devising and demonstrating practice-program alternatives that materially improve outcomes from CRPs; and (5) clarifying how CRPs as an industry can be enjoined as a complementary resource to improve the economic and community integration status of people with disabilities. The project establishes a publicly accessible national database of core information on CRPs, and includes training, technical assistance, and dissemination activities.
Model Distance-Learning Computer Training Program for Blind and Visually Impaired Individuals

Iowa Department for the Blind
524 Fourth Street
Des Moines, IA 50309
assist@blind.state.ia.us
www.blind.state.ia.us/assist

Principal Investigator: Curtis Chong
Public Contact: 515/281-1256; Fax: 515/281-1263

Project Number: H133A010104
Start Date: December 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Joyce Y. Caldwell
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $299,565; FY 02 $299,463; FY 03 $599,028
Abstract: This project creates a model distance-learning program that delivers computer training to people who are blind or who have visual impairments. The purpose of this program is to increase IT educational opportunities and employability in the IT field. Project objectives include: (1) developing a model distance-learning computer training program for people who are blind that results in employment in the IT field; (2) developing 13 distance-learning computer training courses for individuals who are blind or who have visual impairments and VR professionals; (3) training and preparing 150 individuals who are blind or who have visual impairments for Microsoft Office certification and thus prepare them for entry-level IT positions; (4) training 50 people who are blind and VR professionals to provide computer training to job seekers who are blind, thus increasing future IT educational opportunities for people who are blind and those who have visual impairments; and (5) disseminating training materials and research results to agencies serving individuals who are blind or who have visual impairments.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Iowa

I.T. Works

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Law, Health, Policy, and Disability Center
431 Boyd Law Building
Iowa City, IA 52242
james-schmeling@uiowa.edu
disabilities.law.uiowa.edu

Principal Investigator: Peter D. Blanck, PhD, JD, 319/335-9043
Public Contact: Michael Morris, JD; James Schmeling, JD, 202/521-2930 (Morris); 319/335-8459 (Schmeling); Fax: 319/335-9098 (Blanck)

Project Number: H133A011803
Start Date: November 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $299,935; FY 02 $299,724; FY 03 $299,908

Abstract: The goal of the I.T. Works project is to identify barriers to and facilitators of the hiring, retention, advancement, and wages of individuals with disabilities. Research shows that the percentage of working-age individuals with disabilities in full- or part-time positions is substantially lower than the percentage of working-age people without a disability, and there is a demand for trained IT workers. Increasing the employment of individuals with disabilities in IT-related jobs would increase the employment of individuals with disabilities overall and reduce the shortage for trained IT workers. Research activities for this project include a theoretical model in which predictive measures include environmental factors, organizational factors, attitudinal factors, and individual characteristics. Outcome measures in the model include hiring rate, advancement rate, retention rate, and wages of individuals with disabilities. Training activities allow for the distribution of the research findings to diverse target audiences, including employers, IT trainers and professionals, persons with disabilities in diverse employment settings, other researchers, and relevant policy-makers. Target audiences also include IT employers; IT training certification bodies; human resource managers; community colleges and university continuing education programs; and Centers for Independent Living and other disability-related organizations.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Mississippi

Persons Aging with Hearing and Vision Loss

Mississippi State University
P.O. Box 6189
Mississippi State, MS 39762
bjlejeune@colled.msstate.edu
www.blind.msstate.edu

Principal Investigator: B.J. LeJeune, RTC, CRC
Public Contact: 662/325-2001; Fax: 662/325-8989

Project Number: H133A020701
Start Date: November 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $500,000; FY 03 $500,000

Abstract: This project investigates strategies to improve outcomes for persons who have a sensory disability and acquire a second as a result of the aging process. The project conducts a variety of research, development, training, and dissemination activities and evaluates both technology and model service delivery approaches for improving employment and community integration options. A Participation action research team provides guidance and direction. The project solicits direct input from key stakeholders as part of the ongoing planning, development, and implementation of research activities. These activities include the use of focus groups, a panel of experts, and a study sample that includes a nationally representative sample of older individuals who are blind or visually impaired and losing their hearing, and those who are deaf or hard of hearing and losing their vision. This is a collaborative project of the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Blindness and Low Vision at MSU, the RRTC on Persons Who Are Hard of Hearing or Late Deafened at the National University, and the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults.
Preventing Avenues for Competitive Employment in Information Technology (PACE-IT) Project

University of Missouri/Columbia
Educational and Counseling Psychology
205 Lewis Hall
Columbia, MO 65211
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paceit.missouri.edu

Principal Investigator: Greg Holliday, PhD, 573/882-8329
Public Contact: Lee Henson, Project Coordinator, 573/884-7278; Fax: 573/884-3399

Project Number: H133A011802
Start Date: November 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $293,183; FY 02 $290,191; FY 03 $297,480
Abstract: Preparing Avenues for Competitive Employment in Information Technology (PACE-IT) develops a comprehensive, person-centered system that assists local students with disabilities in their transition to professional employment in IT-related careers following graduation. The project ensures that students with disabilities at the University of Missouri-Columbia engage in experiential opportunities in IT-related work settings with appropriate support. Participants also receive individualized accommodations, electronic portfolios, and professional mentoring in their chosen fields to enable them to be competitive in the IT job market upon graduation. The partnership involves university student services; departments of state government, agencies, government officials; and area businesses (totaling 21 entities).
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Arkansas

Reaching Hard of Hearing Workers in the Mainstream: Implications for Consumers and Service Professionals

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Project Number: H133G010156
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project investigates career and work-related life experiences of persons who are hard of hearing, including the utilization of rehabilitation services by hard of hearing individuals. Most existing studies of this population have been limited to convenience samples, a methodological approach that is likely to present a fragmented and potentially inaccurate picture of these workers and their VR needs. Research with representative samples of hard-of-hearing workers is critically needed so results can be obtained that are more valid. Additionally, the project studies the existing practices and policies used by VR professionals as they deliver rehabilitation and employment services to hard-of-hearing adults. These professionals can offer valuable insights into their abilities to serve this population.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Illinois

Comparison of Two Employment Models for Consumers with Severe Mental Illness

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Project Number: H133G990155
Start Date: July 1, 1999
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $150,000; FY 00 $150,000; FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 (No-cost extension through 7/1/2003) FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2004)

Abstract: This project conducts a randomized controlled trial comparing supported employment with well-established, comprehensive psychiatric rehabilitation approaches. It also investigates interactions between consumer characteristics and employment approaches, toward an understanding of the best VR strategies for people of color, especially people from the African American community. This study compares the effectiveness of two important, popular employment models for people with Severe Mental Illness (SMI). The Diversified Placement Approach (DPA) offers a gradual, stepwise preparation for competitive employment, including prevocational training, agency-run business opportunities, group placements, individual placements, and ultimately movement into independent employment, all available on a flexible, individualized basis without fixed time limits. The second model is a supported employment model developed in New Hampshire, known as Individual Placement and Support (IPS). IPS is a supported employment approach for individuals with SMI. As a consumer-oriented approach, key features of the IPS model include individualized planning with careful attention to consumer preferences in the job matching process, close coordination between rehabilitation and treatment, and rapid job search.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Illinois

LET’S ROLL: Understanding and Responding to the Needs of People with Disabilities and the Ticket-To-Work Program

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Project Number: H133G030165
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: The mission of the project is threefold. First, the project builds scientific knowledge regarding the needs of people with disabilities as they pertain to the Ticket to Work program and more generally vocational rehabilitation services. Second, there is a concentrated emphasis on examining the diversity of needs based on racial/ethnic background and type of disability. Lastly, the project aims to understand and address the capacity of employment networks and offices of rehabilitation services in terms of their outreach and delivery of services.
An Exploratory Study of the Factors Determining the Vocational Recovery of People with Psychiatric Disabilities

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Project Number: H133G010113
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $148,989; FY 02 $149,932; FY 03 $149,865

Abstract: This project studies factors that determine the vocational recovery of persons with psychiatric disabilities. Vocational recovery is examined as an important aspect of recovery from serious mental illness and is defined as preserving, regaining, or acquiring competitive employment despite being affected by a disabling psychiatric condition. The project seeks to explore the major factors that promote vocational recovery from serious mental illness based on the experiences of individuals who made the transition from severe work dysfunction, measured through the receipt of Social Security income (SSI/SSDI), to full-time or part-time sustained competitive employment. Activities include: (1) studying the major subjective and objective factors influencing mental health consumers’ capacity to overcome severe work dysfunction and sustain vocational recovery; (2) studying the indicators for consumers’ readiness for financial self-sufficiency examined as an essential factor determining vocational recovery from serious mental illness; and (3) disseminating the results of the study to various vocational and psychosocial rehabilitation programs, self-help groups, the broad mental health community, employers, and the general public.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Massachusetts

Job Retention Factors for Homeless People with Significant Disabilities

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Project Number: H133G020092
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $149,999
Abstract: This project studies the major factors that promote or limit job retention and sustained employment for approximately 200 homeless individuals with significant disabilities who have successfully transitioned from unemployment to competitive employment and permanent housing. Unemployment rates, wage levels, benefits, and educational levels for individuals with disabilities are unacceptably low when compared to the general population and access to quality jobs with decent wages is lower still for individuals with disabilities who are homeless, or who reside in supported or subsidized housing. The goals of this project are: (1) to study the relationship between successful job retention and the individual characteristics and coping strategies of homeless people with significant disabilities; (2) to study the relationship between successful job retention and different workplace supports, program services, and homeless resources used by homeless people with disabilities; (3) to study how specific individual characteristics, and different workplace and program supports and resources, interact to influence job retention and sustained employment; and (4) to disseminate results of the study to employment and vocational rehabilitation programs, homeless resources, workforce development programs, advocacy groups, and interested stakeholders.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Massachusetts

Exploratory Study of the Relationship Between Stigma at the Workplace and the Vocational Recovery of People with Psychiatric Disabilities

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Principal Investigator: Zlatka Russinova, PhD
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Project Number: H133G030190
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,985

Abstract: The purpose of this project is to study the relationship between stigma of mental illness at the workplace and the vocational recovery of persons with psychiatric disabilities. More specifically, the project focuses, on one hand, on operationalizing the traumatic negative impact of stigma on mental health consumers’ capacity to obtain and sustain competitive employment, and, on the other hand, on the objective and subjective factors (i.e., supportive work environment, effective coping strategies, etc.) that minimize the interference of stigma with the vocational recovery of persons with psychiatric disabilities. In addition, the study explores the pivotal role of disclosure at the workplace in understanding the complex, multi-faceted relationship between stigma and the vocational recovery among persons with serious mental illness whose disability is often invisible.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)  
New York

Measuring Employer Openness to Hiring People with Disabilities:  
Development of Expanded Labor Market Survey

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Project Number: H133G000028  
Start Date: October 1, 2000  
Length: 36 months  
NIDRR Officer: Joyce Y. Caldwell  
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,306; FY 01 $147,650; FY 02 $148,892; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2004)

Abstract: This project works to understand the labor market in regards to people with disabilities. The first goal is to identify the key factors that distinguish employers that are authentically open to people with disabilities throughout the human resource management process, including recruitment, selection, training, supervision, accommodation, and promotion. The second goal is to develop a simple interview protocol (and supportive training materials) that rehabilitation consumers and counselors can use as part of an enhanced labor market survey to target employers for placement, employer development, and consulting efforts based upon that employer’s level of openness. Five objectives help to achieve these goals: (1) develop and convene a consumer advisory panel; (2) conduct focus groups and interviews with employers in key labor markets; (3) analyze the data to identify key components of openness; (4) present the data to a consumer advisory panel and a practitioner panel to help develop enhanced labor market survey questions, protocols, and training materials; and (5) disseminate the project results to consumers, practitioners, educators, and employees. Consumers and rehabilitation professionals can use the enhanced labor market survey to understand the openness of employers. The web and CD-ROM versions of the labor market survey illustrate the key aspects of employer openness with Quicktime movies of employer statements.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
North Carolina

Resolving ADA Employment Discrimination Charges

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Project Number: H133G000132
Start Date: October 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,925; FY 01 $149,591; FY 02 $149,933; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 8/31/2004)

Abstract: The project’s purpose is to assess the impact of the ADA employment discrimination service system on the lives of people with disabilities, using data from the computerized charge data system of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in employment on the basis of a disability may file an administrative charge with either the EEOC or a state or local Fair Employment Practice Agency (FEPA). During the statute’s first decade of operation, the EEOC and the FEPAs have become a significant service system for people with disabilities, handling an average of 30,000 Title I claims each year. Recently, landmark Supreme Court decisions interpreting the ADA, the EEOC’s implementation of a new charge processing policy, and their ambitious new mediation program have significantly changed the Title I charge process and considerably altered the landscape in which EEOC offices and FEPAs process Title I charges. The aims of the project, therefore, are as follows: (1) to monitor the evolving implementation of Title I of the ADA by the EEOC and the FEPAs, (2) to monitor the evolving implementation of the EEOC’s new mediation program, and (3) to design and disseminate useful and accessible information about the Title I charge process for people with disabilities and persons who support them.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Oklahoma

Development and Distribution of an Accessible E-Learning Authoring System Software and Model Course for Vocational Rehabilitation Services Personnel

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Project Number: H133G030063
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,991

Abstract: This project develops and distributes two products that improve e-learning accessibility options and increase employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities. These products directly benefit two groups: (1) Instructional designers, trainers in government and industry, and educators receive an accessible e-learning authoring system. This customized authoring tool integrates Section 508 accessibility standards into an engine that delivers multimedia content from an external database. User-friendly templates and reusable interactive models have built-in accessibility options, thus enabling non-programmers to develop accessible courseware with less time and expense. (2) Vocational rehabilitation services and supported employment personnel receive The Job Development Hour, an accessible model course on CD-ROM that teaches basic strategies of marketing and job development for people with severe disabilities.
Strategies People with Psychiatric Disabilities Use to Maintain Employment and Build Careers

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Project Number: H133G020116
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project investigates the strategies individuals with psychiatric disabilities use to maintain employment over time. The majority of individuals with psychiatric disabilities who are working find their work independently, without the help of specialized employment programs. Little is known concerning the strategies they use to maintain employment over time. Research that has focused on psychiatric disability and employment has looked solely at those populations who are currently attending or have attended vocational rehabilitation or specialized employment programs; individuals who have been most successful at maintaining employment have not been consulted regarding the strategies that worked best for them. This project explores a number of domains, including: (1) coping with stigma in the workplace, (2) managing symptoms as well as medications and their side effects, (3) making decisions regarding disclosure of psychiatric disability in the workplace, (4) negotiating workplace accommodations, (5) developing a social support network, (6) coping with relapse or re-hospitalization with regard to employment, and (7) obtaining education or training (career development). In addition, the project examines whether those who have found work with the help of professionals and those who have found work independently use differing strategies to maintain employment. Researchers ascertain the prevalence of various strategies in each group as well as their importance to participants in maintaining employment over time.
Self-Employment Development for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury

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Project Number: H133G020215
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,985; FY 03 $149,965

Abstract: This project creates self-employment opportunities for individuals with traumatic brain injuries through inventive, replicable capacity building approaches coupled with high-quality and cost-effective technical consultation and program redesign. The research, conducted by the Brain Injury Association of America and The Rural Institute at the University of Montana, addresses consumer self-determination, staff development, dissemination, and capacity building, with significant attention to consumer choice, minority enrollment, and local collaboration. Staff focus on systemic community-wide capacity building for self-employment, with the assistance of a broad-based culturally, geographically, and disability diverse Advisory Council. Each of the two development communities receives on-site and distance technical training and consultation on business planning, SSA Work Incentives, financing/alternative funding, and specific supports (assistive/universal technology, self-management regimens, etc.) for individuals with TBI. The project builds capacity with local community rehabilitation programs, VR and Work Force Investment Act offices, medical providers, families, self-advocates, economic development entities including business incubators and Small Business Development Centers, and Tribal Business Information Centers.
Telework as an Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities:
Developing Prediction Models for Successful and Satisfying Careers

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Project Number: H133G020158
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,998; FY 03 $149,996

Abstract: This three-year project develops research models to predict successful entry or reentry into employment using telework options. The models include: (1) functional, demographic, and experiential characteristics of participants; (2) telework options, such as telecenters, home-based work, and combinations of home- and office-based duties; (3) types of work performed, such as telephone or on-line technical support, telemarketing, remote data entry, writing, reservations, etc.; (4) support and training provided by the employer and public and private agencies; and (5) monetary factors such as earnings and fringe benefits. “Success” is defined in terms of both sustained labor force involvement and satisfaction with one’s job, earnings, benefits, and career path.
Piano Tuning Device for the Blind

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Project Number: H133S030154
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Joseph A. DePhillips
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $39,775

Abstract: This project explores the feasibility of an audio interface to allow blind piano technicians to use an electronic tuning device (ETD). Currently available ETDs provide only visual interfaces, and very little research has been done to identify an ideal audio interface for those with visual impairment. The design of a practical piano tuning interface presents specialized challenges, including the requirements for a wide range of content at high speed. Through study with professional piano technicians, the project determines the best approach to satisfy the unique requirements of an audio-based ETD interface.
Development of a Career Guidance System for Students with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133S030132
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $72,385

Abstract: This project develops a user friendly computerized career guidance system that takes advantage of available career information, includes accurate, efficient person assessment capabilities and state-of-the-art person-job matching features, and helps students navigate the occupational information effectively. This system provides high quality information concerning available career options and the ways in which students can make the most of their abilities. It is built on a foundation of innovative basic research focused on developing unique aspects of the system, those not available in existing occupational information systems, and those likely to be useful to individuals with disabilities. Research for this project includes development of procedures to efficiently, accurately estimate students’ abilities and procedures for matching student traits with occupational requirements.
Virtual Interview Exercises for Workplace Success (VIEWS)

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Project Number: ED-01-Q-0003 (3-7)
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Judith Fein
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project conducts research to develop a prototype computer software program that provides the opportunity for job seekers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to practice employment interviewing skills. This software incorporates SigningAvatar technology that uses 3D animated characters who sign in variants of American Sign Language. The software presents an accessible virtual interview scenario with interacting characters and the ability to respond to interview questions that are asked frequently. If the user selects a certain number of the best responses to the interview questions, the employer offers the interviewee the job. This software not only provides the opportunity to practice interviewing skills independently, it may boost the confidence and intrinsic motivation of the user.
NIDRR’s research focus for health and function addresses problems in individual care, services, and supports for people with disabilities. Research topics include: medical rehabilitation; health and wellness programs; service delivery; short and long-term interventions; systems research; and new and emerging disabilities.

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Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
California

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center in Neuromuscular Diseases

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Project Number: H133B980008
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $650,000; FY 99 $650,000; FY 00 $650,000; FY 01 $650,000; FY 02 $650,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 11/30/2003)

Abstract: This project conducts research designed to enhance the quality of life of people with neuromuscular diseases. Through multidisciplinary research and a comprehensive program of training and information services, the Center serves consumers, physicians, and health care workers. Program areas include: interventions to preserve functional capacity including management of weakness and respiratory insufficiency due to muscle wasting, exercise interventions, treatment of exercise related fatigue, pain interventions, and dietary interventions; interventions to enhance community integration, including incorporating goal-based approaches to community integration, facilitation of healthy adaptation through development of stress management and coping skills, and resource training for acquisition of disability-related information through the Internet; ethical issues related to genetic testing; and training and information services.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
California

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center in Neuromuscular Diseases (RRRTC/NMD)

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Principal Investigator: Craig McDonald, MD
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Project Number: H133B031118
Start Date: December 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $800,000

Abstract: The purpose of the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center in Neuromuscular Diseases (RRRTC/NMD) is to enhance the health, function, and quality of lives of persons with neuromuscular diseases (NMD). The goals of this project are to: (1) develop a program for multicenter rehabilitation research in NMD through the Cooperative International Neuromuscular Research Group (CINRG); (2) conduct research that continues to address rehabilitation needs, particularly related to exercise, nutrition, pain, secondary conditions, and the quality of life of individuals with neuromuscular diseases; (3) develop and evaluate new or emerging technologies and interventions that provide the information needed to improve employment, community integration, and quality of life outcomes for this population of individuals with disabilities; (4) develop and evaluate appropriate health promotion and wellness programs that enhance the ability of individuals with neuromuscular disease to be physically active and participate in recreational activities; and (5) conduct a comprehensive program of training, dissemination, utilization, and technical assistance activities that are well-anchored in the research program and address the needs of stakeholders.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
California

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Aging with a Disability

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Project Number: H133B980024
Start Date: September 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $700,000; FY 99 $700,000; FY 00 $700,000; FY 01 $700,000; FY 02 $700,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 8/31/2004)

Abstract: This project assists people who are aging with a disability by conducting a series of research studies using a database of more than 1,000 people who represent a variety of disabilities (for example, cerebral palsy, rheumatoid arthritis, stroke, SCI, polio). Research projects include: (1) the natural course of aging with a disability, (2) assisting family caregivers of people aging with a disability, (3) improving community integration and adjustment, (4) preventing secondary complications such as diabetes and thyroid disorders, (5) improving bone density through a regimen of exercise and vitamins, and (6) understanding the role of AT and environmental interventions in maintaining functional performance. Training, dissemination, and technical assistance activities focus on students and professionals in the health, allied health, and rehabilitation fields, as well as people aging with a disability and their families. Goals include training rehabilitation researchers knowledgeable about aging with a disability, improving the adoption and utilization of RRTC-developed assessment and treatment regimens by health and rehabilitation professionals, and disseminating information about aging with a disability to people with disabilities and their families. Training and dissemination occurs through advanced and continuing education courses; local, national, and international conferences; workshops; publications in professional- and consumer-oriented journals; and the Internet.
Aging-Related Changes in Impairment for Persons Living with Physical Disabilities

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Project Number: H133B031002
Start Date: August 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $700,000

Abstract: This project is a combined effort of Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center and the University of California at Irvine, with other collaborators including the Center for Disability in the Health Professions at Western University and two Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers. This project evolves from the fact that persons who have a disability are now living into middle age and late life in ever-increasing numbers. However, many of these people appear to be experiencing premature age-related changes in health and functioning. The project tests a model for improved understanding of these problems and interventions to help alleviate them. Persons who are experiencing these kinds of problems and their families are included in all center projects. The training, dissemination, and technical assistance activities include clinical training of current and future health providers, current and future researchers, persons with disabilities, their families, and policy makers. Both traditional methods of one-on-one and group training as well as technology-based distance training techniques are used to reach national audiences and under-served populations.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)  
District of Columbia

The Consortium for Children and Youth with Disabilities and Special Health Care Needs.

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Project Number: H133B001200
Start Date: July 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $699,956; FY 01 $699,947; FY 02 $699,926; FY 03 $699,981
Abstract: The Consortium improves rehabilitation outcomes for children and youth with disabilities and special health care needs by increasing the effectiveness of service system. Using an integrated, multifaceted research approach and related training, dissemination, and technical assistance activities, the Consortium targets five areas: (1) access issues in pediatric rehabilitation, (2) characteristics of health plans and access to services, (3) promising practices in transition from pediatric to adult health care, (4) effective telehealth strategies for interdisciplinary service delivery in remote areas, and (5) training issues in Assistive Technology. Building on this research program, the consortium utilizes a variety of strategies to provide training and technical assistance to the target audience of families, consumers, providers, researchers, policymakers, and managed care organizations to improve rehabilitative services to this population in order to enhance their quality of life and that of their families. The RRTC is run by the Georgetown University’s Center for Child and Human Development in collaboration with Brandeis University’s Heller School, the University of Florida’s Institute of Child Health Policy, and Family Voices.
Access to Rehabilitation and Empowerment Opportunities for Minority Persons with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133B000903
Start Date: October 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $600,000; FY 01 $600,000; FY 02 $600,000; FY 03 $600,000
Other funding: FY01 $39,375 (NIDRR)

Abstract: The Howard University Research and Training Center for Access to Rehabilitation and Empowerment Opportunity (HURTC) is implementing a RRTC on Access to Rehabilitation and Empowerment Opportunities for Minority Persons with Disabilities to help them achieve self-determination, economic independence, and full participation in American life. The program of the Center is designed to attain the following objectives: identify methodological problems determining the rehabilitation needs of persons with disabilities from minority backgrounds (including sub-populations within these groups) and propose strategies to address these methodological problems; based on research findings, identify implications for rehabilitation research, training, policy development, and services; assess the outcomes of rehabilitation for persons with disabilities from minority backgrounds as measured by two or more variables (such as functional abilities, wellness, employment, health/wellness, and psychosocial status); analyze the affects of minority status on rehabilitation outcomes; and identify, develop, and evaluate rehabilitation methodologies, models, and interventions for specific minority groups. The HURTC collaborates with the Center for Disease Control, the Center for Minority Health, and a variety of stakeholders including consumers with disabilities, state agencies, continuing education programs, and community-based organizations.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Illinois

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Stroke Rehabilitation

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Principal Investigator: Elliot J. Roth, MD, 312/238-4637
Public Contact: Linda Lovell, Project Coordinator, 312/238-6197; Fax: 312/238-6998

Project Number: H133B980021
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $800,000; FY 99 $800,000; FY 00 $800,000; FY 01 $800,000; FY 02 $800,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2004)

Abstract: This project tests the effectiveness of several stroke rehabilitation strategies and tactics, trains stroke survivors and professionals, and disseminates knowledge relevant to stroke care. In order to extend the knowledge base of stroke rehabilitation, produce changes in clinical practice, and enhance the quality of life of stroke survivors and their families, the Center: (1) identifies, develops, and evaluates rehabilitation techniques in order to address coexisting and secondary conditions and improve outcomes for all stroke patients; (2) develops and evaluates standard aerobic exercise protocols; (3) identifies and evaluates methods to identify and treat depression and other psychological problems associated with stroke; (4) determines the effectiveness of stroke prevention education provided in a medical rehabilitation setting; (5) evaluates the impact of changes in diagnosis and medical treatment of stroke on rehabilitation needs; (6) evaluates long-range outcomes for stroke rehabilitation across different treatment settings; (7) evaluates the impact of stroke practice guidelines on delivery and outcomes of rehabilitation services; (8) provides training on new approaches, innovations, and the specialized principles and practices of rehabilitation care of individuals with stroke; (9) provides applied research experience and training in research principles and methods; (10) disseminates information of new developments in the area of stroke care and research to people with stroke and their families, rehabilitation professionals, and service providers; and (11) conducts a state-of-the-science conference. The Center has a large database of information regarding stroke rehabilitation patients and continues ongoing systems and activities to collect and analyze data concerning stroke impairment, disability, and social functioning. This project participates in the NIDRR Scholars program, providing motivated undergraduates with internship experience in disability research.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Illinois

**RRTC on Technology Promoting Integration for Stroke Survivors:**
Overcoming Social Barriers

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**Principal Investigator:** Elliot J. Roth, MD, 312/238-4637
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**Project Number:** H133B031127
**Start Date:** October 1, 2003
**Length:** 60 months
**NIDRR Officer:** Thomas Corfman
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $800,000

**Abstract:** This project develops and evaluates a sequence of robotic training and assistive devices that are designed with the idea of promoting efficient function in the workplace or at home, and with the further intent that they form a basis for the development of appropriate technologies to allow people with disabilities ready access to existing facilities in the community. At each stage the project engages engineering students as a means to provide intensive effort for development of novel designs, but also to provide valuable opportunities for training students in the themes related to recovery of function and community integration of people with disabilities. Other projects at this center include: the use of emotionally expressive and narrative writing to facilitate coping and adaptation after stroke, computerized training for conversational scripts that facilitate access to the community and work force, and a consumer-directed, dynamic assessment methodology for evaluating community living and work participation environments and technologies for use by people who have a stroke. In addition to these projects, the RRTC develops and evaluates a comprehensive plan for training directed to stroke survivors and their families, students, researchers, clinicians, and service providers. These approaches are implemented through a variety of mechanisms, including continuing education courses, web-based presentations, and intensive training in our research facilities.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Secondary Prevention Through Exercise: A Participatory Approach for People with Spinal Cord Injury

National Rehabilitation Hospital/MedStar Research Institute
102 Irving Street, NW
Washington, DC 20010

Principal Investigator: Suzanne L. Groah, MD, 202/877-1196
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Project Number: H133B031114
Start Date: December 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $800,000

Abstract: This project systematically and comprehensively addresses the role and impact of physical activity in the prevention of secondary conditions in people with spinal cord injury (SCI). Initially, the project establishes critical, yet undefined physiological responses to exercise in SCI and comprehensively examines cardiovascular disease risk in individuals with SCI applying accepted guidelines used in the able-bodied population. The project develops exercise formats specifically designed according to severity of SCI and chronicity of SCI to address the prevention of and knowledge regarding osteoporosis and other secondary conditions. In addition, the project determines whether regular exercise is related to fewer secondary conditions. These research findings feed into four training activities that include a peer mentoring program for newly injured people with SCI, a consumer-driven education curriculum for physical therapy and medical students, a state-of-science and training conference, and the development of a virtual resource network on exercise and prevention. The RRTC is a collaborative effort of clinical and disability researchers, SCI consumer organizations, and independent living advocates.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Missouri

Missouri Arthritis Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (MARRTC)

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www.muhealth.org/~arthritis

Principal Investigator: Jerry C. Parker, PhD
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Project Number: H133B031120
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $800,000

Abstract: The purpose of the Missouri Arthritis Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (MARRTC) is to provide leadership at the national level in support of three key objectives: to reduce pain and disability, to improve physical fitness and quality of life, and to promote independent living and community integration for persons with arthritis of all ages in the United States. State-of-the-science rehabilitation research addresses the needs of persons with arthritis in the following areas: (1) home and community-based self-management Programs, (2) benefits of exercise and Physical fitness, and (3) technologies available to the broad populations of persons with arthritis in the environments where they live, learn, work, and play. The MARRTC conducts training and capacity-building programs for critical stakeholders within the arthritis disability arena, including consumers, family members, service providers, and policy makers. Additionally, the MARRTC provides technical assistance for persons with arthritis and other stakeholders in order to promote utilization of arthritis-related disability research. The MARRTC also provides widespread dissemination of informational materials to persons with disabilities, their representatives, service providers, and other target audiences (e.g., editors and reporters).
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Oregon

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center: Health and Wellness Consortium

Oregon Health and Science University
Oregon Institute on Disability and Development
Child Development and Rehabilitation Center
707 Southwest Gaines
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Portland, OR 97207-0574
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Principal Investigator: Gloria Krahn, PhD, 503/494-8364
Public Contact: Laura Hammond, Interim Coordinator, 503/494-3882; Fax: 503/494-6868

Project Number: H133B990019
Start Date: October 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $700,000; FY 00 $700,000; FY 01 $700,000; FY 02 $700,000; FY 03 $700,000

Abstract: The Center has a comprehensive program of research, training, technical assistance, and dissemination with primary attention given to the physical and mental aspects of health for people with long-lasting disabilities such as cerebral palsy, SCI, multiple sclerosis, amputation, and post-polio. Interconnected research areas include evaluating health assessment definitions, practices, policies, and measurement, and their impact on health promotion and investigating the relationship between selected health maintenance strategies and the incidence and severity of secondary conditions and other functional outcomes. Center projects examine the practices of exemplary generic and specialized health promotion programs; analyze the health behaviors and related functional outcomes of individuals with disabilities; examine the relationship between health definitions, practices, and secondary conditions to develop a screening tool for health and wellness for people with disabilities; and investigate the association between disability and differential detection of cancer. The Center’s third area of focus centers on identifying and evaluating best practices in health promotion. These include an Internet-delivered reproductive health promotion package, strategies for enhancing the participation of individuals with disabilities in self-directed physical activity, the accessibility of alcohol and drug treatment programs to people with disabilities, and methods for culturally responsive health promotion. An additional research focus is the use and efficacy of complimentary alternative medicine among people with these specific long-term disabilities.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Texas

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Rehabilitation Interventions Following Traumatic Brain Injury

The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (TIRR)
Brain Injury Research Center
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Principal Investigator: Walter M. High Jr., PhD
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Project Number: H133B990014
Start Date: September 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $650,000; FY 00 $650,000; FY 01 $650,000; FY 02 $650,000; FY 03 $650,000
Abstract: The Center promotes the scientific advancement of rehabilitation research by focusing on several areas identified as needing further research. These include areas of weakness in the current knowledge and future research regarding TBI recovery and rehabilitation effectiveness: improvement of the diagnosis and treatment of persons with mild TBI; development of interventions to assist school-age children with TBI; the needs of minority groups members with TBI; evaluation of the effectiveness of rehabilitation interventions; and treatment for the family members of people with TBI. Activities include publishing an informational and technical assistance resource for consumers and professionals; training for medical and neuropsychological fellows in rehabilitation research; coordinating a state-of-the-science conference on mild TBI; and producing an educational videotape to train family members in effective coping skills. Through representation on the advisory committees, consumers are involved in all aspects of planning and evaluating research and training activities.
Multiple Sclerosis Rehabilitation Research and Training Center

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Principal Investigator: George H. Kraft, MD, 206/543-7272
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Project Number: H133B031129
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $800,000

Abstract: This center conducts rehabilitation research that: (1) Develops new interventions and practice in the areas of disease suppression, strength enhancement, identification of medication responders, depression management, and pain control. In addition, the project develops and evaluates a series of strategies to promote participation in desired roles, directed toward assisting individuals with MS and their families. (2) Promotes pathways to participation utilizing survey methodology and in-depth qualitative interviews to explore complex interaction among multiple variables with a modeling of factors that predict differing levels of participation and identifying early interventions that can improve a deteriorating course. (3) Facilitates enhanced participation through training, technical assistance, and dissemination through professional meetings, publications, and a State-of-the-Science conference. In addition, a web-based knowledge base provides technical assistance to individuals with MS and healthcare providers.
Lifetime Outcomes and Needs: Refining the Understanding of Aging with Spinal Cord Injury

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Principal Investigator: Daniel P. Lammertse, MD, 303/789-8220
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Project Number: H133A011108
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $350,000; FY 02 $350,000; FY 03 $350,000
Abstract: This project explores the incidence and prevalence of several health and psychosocial conditions that accompany living many years with SCI. Also studied in this comprehensive, longitudinal, multicenter effort are the services available to individuals with SCI as they attempt to address these conditions throughout their lives. The study expands the longitudinal database, addressing emerging issues of aging with SCI in greater detail, and expands efforts to share findings with a variety of constituents. The eight areas of focus include: (1) secondary conditions from five to 25 years post-injury, (2) new analytic techniques with longitudinal datasets, (3) chronic pain, (4) access to and satisfaction with health services, (5) personal assistance services, (6) spirituality and its effects on health outcomes and quality of life, (7) the role of perceived stress and self-reported problems on the presence or absence of secondary conditions and in relation to one’s overall well-being, and (8) trends in quality of life and health. This longitudinal study builds on two previous data collection points. It includes a broad, comprehensive examination of secondary conditions, both physical and psychosocial, and several new areas of inquiry investigated in-depth.
Pharmacological Management of Dyslipidemia and Cardiovascular Disease in Persons with Chronic Cervical SCI: A Multicenter Collaborative Trial

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Project Number: H133A011115
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $344,023; FY 02 $340,953; FY 03 $271,952

Abstract: This project researches strategies that reduce cardiovascular disease risks after onset of tetraplegia by increasing high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C) levels. The research examines the ability of a pharmaceutical therapy to improve the lipid profiles and forestall cardiovascular disease progression in persons with tetraplegia. Previous research on persons without SCI has shown extended-release niacin effective for elevating HDL-C, lowering total cholesterol, lowering low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C), lowering triglycerides, slowing cardiovascular disease progression, and reducing cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. The ability of this drug to improve lipid profiles has never been examined in persons with tetraplegia, although drug benefits similar to those reported in persons without SCI would be of great health benefit to those with tetraplegia.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects  
Illinois  

Health Services Research DRRP on Medical Rehabilitation  

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Center for Rehabilitation Outcomes Research  
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Principal Investigator: Allen W. Heinemann, PhD  
Public Contact: 312/238-2802; Fax: 312/238-4572  

Project Number: H133A030807  
Start Date: July 1, 2003  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty  
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $300,000  

Abstract: This research addresses the need to improve the delivery of health services to persons with disabilities by (1) evaluating the impact of inpatient rehabilitation (IRF) and prospective payment system (PPS) on access to rehabilitation services in terms of settings, services, and length of stay; and (2) identifying the impact of comorbidities on how patients are classified and reimbursed and the new IRF PPS. Medicare’s new PPS for IRF may limit effective access to care because facilities will take fewer risks with patients deemed to be “high cost outliers,” hire more “therapy extenders” rather than licensed professionals, and discharge patients at a higher rate to nursing facilities rather than to community settings. The four specific aims of the research are: (1) examine changes in the organization of medical rehabilitation in response to prospective payment; (2) examine changes in patient access to medical rehabilitation settings and services resulting from organizational changes and organizational responses to the change in reimbursement; (3) examine the impact of PPS-related changes in service delivery on patient outcomes; and (4) identify the impact of comorbidities on classification and reimbursement in medical rehabilitation PPS.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Maryland

Medicaid Quality Indicators for Individuals with Disabilities

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Principal Investigator: Susan E. Palsbo, PhD
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Project Number: H133A030804
Start Date: July 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $300,000

Abstract: This project develops and validates health service quality indicators for people with disabilities. The target population to be served is people with disabilities enrolled in managed Medicaid programs. The goal is to develop and field test quality measures for people with disabilities in managed care organizations. The specific aims are: (1) Case Identification: Improve the computer algorithm for Medicaid plans to identify beneficiaries who have disabilities. (2) Plan-reported indicators: Select a subset of existing HEDIS Medicaid measures that are appropriate and statistically meaningful for indicating the quality of care for the people identified in Aim#1. (3) Consumer-reported indicators: Assess the content validity of the Axis-CAHPS survey. (4) Develop comparative reporting tools of the quality of care between and within health plans. This is a combined qualitative and quantitative study with three interrelated segments. (1) Extend previous research on using routine health claims data to identify beneficiaries who are at risk of needing modified help to access their Medicaid benefits and services. (2) Review and refine the two most widely used Medicaid quality indicator tools, CAHPS and HEDIS; and extend work on refining the CAHPS instrument for people with physical disabilities; and (3) Explore how people with disabilities, payers, and providers can use the indicators to improve practice and report outcomes using comparative reporting tools.
A Multicenter Prospective Randomized Controlled Trial of the Effectiveness of Amantadine Hydrochloride in Promoting Recovery of Function Following Severe Traumatic Brain Injury

JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute
Center for Head Injuries
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Edison, NJ 08820

Principal Investigator: Joseph T. Giacino, PhD
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Project Number: H133A031713
Start Date: January 1, 2004
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $599,862

Abstract: In this study, eight facilities (three of which are also Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Model Systems), join with a Data Coordinating Center at Columbia University, to conduct a prospective double blind randomized controlled trial of amantadine. More than 180 patients who remain in vegetative state (VS) or minimally conscious state (MCS) 4-16 weeks post-TBI are randomized in a stratified fashion to 4 weeks of amantadine (200-400 mg/day) vs. placebo, followed by a 2-week washout period. The Disability Rating Scale is the primary dependent variable with the Coma Recovery Scale-Revised serving as a supplementary measure. The project also explores whether treatment response differs by time post-injury and by diagnosis (i.e., VS or MCS) at treatment onset, and whether specific outcomes of importance to caregivers are achieved more often in the amantadine group.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Pennsylvania

Collaboration of Upper Limb Pain in Spinal Cord Injury

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Principal Investigator: Michael L. Boninger, MD
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Project Number: H133A011107
Start Date: December 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $349,998; FY 02 $349,950; FY 03 $349,954
Abstract: This collaborative studies project provides an opportunity to gain further insight into the cause and prevention of upper limb repetitive strain injuries in SCI. For the approximately 200,000 individuals with SCI, upper limb pain and injury is very common; some studies find prevalence rates above 70 percent. Prolonged wheelchair use and transfers have long been thought to cause these repetitive strain injuries. The consequences of upper limb pain are so significant that some researchers have suggested that damage to the upper arm may be functionally and economically equivalent to a spinal cord injury of higher neurological level. This collaboration includes the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Spinal Cord Injury project, the Northern New Jersey Spinal Cord Injury System (NNJSCIS), and the Northwest Regional Spinal Cord Injury System (NWRSCIS).
Model Burn Injury Systems
Colorado

UCHSC Burn Model System Data Coordination Center (BMS/DCC)

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School of Medicine
Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics
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Denver, CO 80262
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Principal Investigator: Dennis C. Lezotte, PhD, 303/315-6873
Public Contact: Rebecca Sloan, Database Administrator, 303/315-0320; Fax: 303/315-3183

Project Number: H133A020402
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $249,997; FY 03 $249,995

Abstract: The BMS/DCC establishes a data management and analytical support facility for Burn Model Systems clinical and outcomes research projects. Objectives include: (1) to serve the clinical, research, and public communities to which it is responsible; (2) to serve the needs of good scientific procedure in multi-institutional outcomes research; and (3) to support the needs for patient safety and data confidentiality as required by Federal regulations when conducting collaborative clinical studies. The BMS Project is structured as a set of interacting, observational, randomized, and quasi-experimental clinical studies run at different centers that share the common purpose of acquiring and disseminating knowledge about burn injury care and rehabilitation. The project offers support in four important areas: project management, data management, analytical support, and dissemination. Support is provided in developing appropriate integrated systems to affect national data collection, project management, data coordination, technical support, collaborative clinical projects, scientific conduct, scientific publication, and effective dissemination. The UCHSC BMS/DCC continues to accumulate and integrate a central repository of data from the Model Systems to enhance their abilities to make sentinel statements and change the way burn injury rehabilitation is done. While the main function of the DCC is to integrate and manage these data, it also needs to be responsive to the technical and analytical needs of these individual clinical centers. In addition the DCC provides and coordinates statistical support among the clinical and statistical groups from each Burn Center and is prepared to expand this support, adding several new protocols and/or clinical studies where appropriate.
Model Burn Injury Systems  
Maryland

Johns Hopkins University Burn Injury Rehabilitation Model System  
(JHU-BIRMS)

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Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center  
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Principal Investigator: James A. Fauerbach, PhD, 410/550-0894  
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Project Number: H133A020101  
Start Date: October 1, 2002  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD  
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $298,928; FY 03 $299,995

Abstract: This project tests interventions targeting three common postburn secondary complications affecting health and function: generalized deconditioning, muscle atrophy, and acute stress disorder. Testing the effectiveness of these interventions holds promise for improving the health and function of burn survivors as well as enhancing their options for workplace and community reintegration. The JHU-BIRMS includes several projects: (1) testing the efficacy of its augmented exercise program in rehabilitating people with generalized deconditioning, (2) testing the efficacy of enhanced cognitive-behavioral therapy in treating individuals with acute stress disorder and preventing the development of chronic posttraumatic stress disorder, (3) developing a new measure that quantifies the degree of social stigmatization experienced by burn survivors and its impact on emotional adjustment and integration into the workplace and the community (this project involves the Phoenix Society, the largest foundation supporting burn survivors and their significant others), (4) a collaborative effort with the University of Washington on a workplace integration study identifying and quantifying those factors interfering with early and complete return to work, and (5) a collaborative study on health and function with the University of Texas.
Model Burn Injury Systems
Texas

North Texas Burn Rehabilitation Model System (NTBRMS)

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Project Number: H133A020104
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $300,000; FY 03 $300,000

Abstract: This project conducts five research projects, two collaborative and three site-specific: (1) barriers to return-to-work following major burn injury; (2) long-term outcome following major burn injury; (3) outcome following deep, full-thickness hand burns; (4) the evolution over time of burn-associated neuropathy; and (5) the socioeconomic determinants of disability in individuals with burn injury. The North Texas Burn Rehabilitation Model System (NTBRMS) is a collaboration of Parkland Health and Hospital System (PHHS) and the University of Texas, Southwestern Medical Center (UTSW). Collaboration occurs on many levels at the NTBRMS. Clinical collaboration is the hallmark of the burn team, which includes individuals from several institutions who work together seamlessly, as well as collaboration with rural care providers through rural clinics and a biannual seminar. Research collaboration occurs locally with the surgeons and academic computing staff, and nationally with the other model systems.
Model Burn Injury Systems
Texas

Pediatric Burn Injury Rehabilitation Model System

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Project Number: H133A020102
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $300,000; FY 03 $300,000

Abstract: This program conducts independent and multi-center projects focusing on evaluating and improving the rehabilitation provided to the burned child, striving to decrease disability and improve reintegration into society. The project continues longitudinal assessments of patients, expanding the database that includes measures of cardiopulmonary function, physical growth and maturation, bone density, range of motion, activities of daily living, scar formation, reconstructive needs, and measures of psychosocial adjustment. This data is used to identify areas that require improvement and provide functional outcome measures that can be used in the evaluation of treatment methods. Research activities include: (1) a multi-center project assessing the efficacy of the long-term administration of oxandrolone in the treatment of burn injury with endpoints of improved strength, lean body mass, bone density, and growth; (2) improving rehabilitative outcomes for children by instituting and evaluating major modifications to current treatment for children with large burns; (3) evaluating the use of pressure garments in controlling scar following burn injury; (4) a multi-center study evaluating the relationship between treatment, injury, patient characteristics, and patient outcome in those patients sustaining full thickness hand burns; and (5) evaluating acute stress disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder, including its occurrence, predictive elements, and efficacy of treatment.
Model Burn Injury Systems
Washington

University of Washington Burn Injury Rehabilitation Model System

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Project Number: H133A020103
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $300,000; FY 03 $300,000

Abstract: This model system conducts five research projects: (1) A New Approach to the Etiology of Hypertrophic Scarring: develops an increased understanding of hypertrophic scarring. (2) Effect of Virtual Reality on Active Range-of-Motion During Physical Therapy: uses distraction via immersive virtual reality as an adjunctive non-pharmacologic analgesic. This study tests the hypothesis that virtual reality allows patients to tolerate greater stretching during physical therapy compared to no distraction, and that in spite of achieving greater range-of-motion, patients still experience lower pain levels while in virtual reality. (3) Determination of Reasons for Distress in Burn-Injured Adults: identifies reasons behind a burn survivor’s distress at various time-points after hospital discharge. (4) Barriers for Return to Work: identifies specific barriers to return to work for burn survivors. (5) Acute Stress Disorder Among Burn Survivors: evaluates the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral therapy, relative to a non-directive, supportive therapy control group, and a national comparison sample in reducing the prevalence of posttraumatic stress disorder diagnosis and symptom severity. Projects 4 and 5 are collaborative. In addition this project participates in the national database.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems
Alabama

UAB Model Spinal Cord Injury Care System

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Principal Investigator: Amie B. Jackson, MD, 205/934-3330
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Project Number: H133N000016
Start Date: October 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $340,000; FY 01 $340,000; FY 02 $340,000; FY 03 $340,000
Abstract: The purpose of the University of Alabama at Birmingham Spinal Cord Injury Care System (UAB-SCICS) program is to provide cutting edge, cost effective, comprehensive care from the moment of injury across the life span for persons who incur an SCI; to investigate ways of improving aspects of that system of care through clinical research; and to disseminate project research findings to persons with SCI, their family members, and professional care providers. UAB-SCICS includes two research projects: (1) investigating musculoskeletal/spine changes in post-menopausal women with SCI; and (2) completing a longitudinal investigation of the processes involved in coming to terms with disability over the first year post-injury. UAB-SCICS maintains linkages with emergency medical service agencies throughout the state, with state and local VR and long-term follow-up programs, with clinically oriented research activities within the UAB-SCICS itself, with UAB’s companion Medical RRTC on Secondary Conditions of SCI, as well as with clinical research programs being conducted at other Model SCI Systems. The UAB-SCICS currently maintains the National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center.
Regional Spinal Cord Injury Care System of Southern California

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Project Number: H133N000029
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $345,000; FY 01 $345,000; FY 02 $345,000; FY 03 $345,000

Abstract: The Regional Spinal Cord Injury Care System of Southern California’s primary mission is to collect initial and follow-up data on persons who have sustained spinal cord injuries and submit it to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Another component of the project focuses on literacy in individuals with SCI. Also, the project identifies, evaluates, and eliminates environmental barriers, particularly cultural and social barriers, to enable people with SCI to reintegrate fully into their community, and thus improve their lives. The project has been designed to meet the needs of the approximately 75 percent minority and underserved populations that comprise its clientele, and has samples sufficient for achieving adequate statistical power in the relevant designs and producing meaningful research. Finally, the System contributes new and useful information to the current collection of SCI literature. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems  
California  

Model Spinal Cord Injury System  

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Rehabilitation Research Center  
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Project Number: H133N000007  
Start Date: October 1, 2000  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD  
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $340,000; FY 01 $340,000; FY 02 $340,000; FY 03 $340,000  
Abstract: The system of care at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (SCVMC) that extends from the scene of the accident to community reintegration has been developed through a program encompassing services, teaching and demonstration, and clinical research activities in its northern and central California and Nevada catchment area. This effort continues to include community agency staff and consumers and has produced a network of services addressing the needs of individuals with SCI. Based on input from consumers and their family members, community organizations, rehabilitation health professionals, and the rehabilitation literature, the research program studies: (1) the efficacy of peer support, both group and one-on-one mentoring, to improve quality of life, physical and psychosocial status, and community participation and integration; (2) if a regular exercise program can improve the above mentioned community outcomes; (3) the effect of high personal attendant turnover on the above mentioned variables and whether an intervention can decrease that turnover and improve outcomes; and (4) the provision of SCI-specific education and whether improving knowledge improves outcomes. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems
Colorado

The Rocky Mountain Regional Spinal Injury System

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Principal Investigator: Daniel P. Lammertse, MD; Gale G. Whiteneck, PhD, 303/789-8220
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Project Number: H133N000001
Start Date: October 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $375,000; FY 01 $375,000; FY 02 $375,000; FY 03 $375,000

Abstract: The Rocky Mountain Regional Spinal Injury System emphasizes research and significant contributions that have been made in the areas of SCI costs of care, aging, outcome assessment, high tetraplegia, neurorehabilitative surgery, and program evaluation, as well as participation in randomized controlled multicenter clinical trials. An integrated research agenda includes a controlled clinical trial of therapy for shoulder pain and evaluations of longitudinal outcomes of surgery for spinal cord myelopathies, recovery from pressure sore surgery, perimenopausal symptoms and treatments in women with SCI, the issues of women who provide assistance to a partner with SCI, and the impact of environmental barriers on the full participation of people with SCI. The project includes two highly regarded Level I trauma centers with specialized acute neurotrauma care facilities (St. Anthony Hospital and Swedish Medical Center) and the rehabilitation and lifetime follow-up services of Craig Hospital. These facilities bring together a full complement of disciplines and specialists, medically directed by six full-time physicians specializing in SCI acute and rehabilitation management, to provide all components of a model system of care. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems  
Florida  

South Florida Regional Spinal Cord Injury Model System

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Project Number: H133N000017  
Start Date: October 1, 2000  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD  
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $375,000; FY 01 $320,000; FY 02 $320,000; FY 03 $320,000

Abstract: The South Florida Spinal Cord Injury System (SFSCIS) is a cooperative effort between the University of Miami School of Medicine, The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, Jackson Memorial Hospital, and the Miami VA Medical Center. The SFSCIS is a multidisciplinary system of care providing comprehensive rehabilitation services specifically designed to meet the special needs of individuals with spinal cord injuries. The clinical components of the SFSCIS include emergency medical services, acute care, vocational and other rehabilitation services, community and job placement, and long-term community follow-up and health maintenance. A comprehensive prevention program is included in the program. A significant and substantial research program focuses on the maintenance of health and function; three clinical trials and five major research projects are included. Each of these projects centers on studying interventions to improve outcomes in the preservation or restoration of function following SCI. In addition to these research projects, this project contributes to the National Spinal Cord Injury Database. A program designed for widespread dissemination of research and demonstration findings is included. In addition, culturally appropriate methods of education, training, and outreach are interwoven throughout the projects. Finally, the program includes a comprehensive evaluation program.
Georgia Regional Spinal Cord Injury Care System

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Project Number: H133N000005
Start Date: September 30, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $374,992; FY 01 $374,992; FY 02 $374,992; FY 03 $374,992
Abstract: The Georgia Regional Spinal Cord Injury Care System admits approximately 200 individuals annually with acute onset paralysis secondary to spinal cord injury, and collects post-discharge data on 600 individuals each year. Its patient population comes primarily from Georgia, the rest of the Southeast, and the Eastern Seaboard. The continuum of care begins at injury and continues through transport, assessment, acute care, rehabilitation, emotional adjustment, community reintegration, and lifetime follow-up. The program is involved with site-specific research projects on incomplete spinal cord injuries, enhanced long distance technological communications with patients, and the determination of early predictors of secondary complications. As part of the clinical research activity sponsored by the facility’s Crawford Research Institute, the program is responsible for ongoing referrals of individuals with acute injury, as well as long-term follow-up and data collection. This project contributes to the national Model Spinal Cord Injury System (SCIS) national database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems
Massachusetts

The New England Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center

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Project Number: H133N000024
Start Date: October 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $374,514; FY 01 $300,000; FY 02 $300,000; FY 03 $300,000
Abstract: The New England Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center (NERSCIC) operates through a joint partnership between the Boston Medical Center (BMC) and the Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH). While acute care and rehabilitation are administered at BMC, BUSPH plays an equally important role in developing research, education, and training projects to meet the needs of people with SCI. Additionally, NERSIC maintains a research partnership with Boston’s Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital. The Model SCI System includes multiple projects: (1) a pilot study on the effects of Internet access upon the health and social interactions of people with SCI; (2) a study of building accessibility in eastern Massachusetts; (3) the development of a consumer-rated Internet guide based on input from individuals with SCI; (4) an employment study, providing comprehensive services to chronically unemployed individuals with SCI; (5) a study of the relationship between pain severity and participation in paid employment and/or education for persons with SCI; and (6) evaluation of a pilot, Internet training program for SCI patients during acute inpatient rehabilitation. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. NERSCIC also publishes a quarterly newsletter.
University of Michigan Model Spinal Cord Injury Care System

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Project Number: H133N000009
Start Date: November 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $320,000; FY 01 $320,000; FY 02 $320,000; FY 03 $320,000

Abstract: The University of Michigan Model Spinal Cord Injury Care System provides comprehensive care and services to both children and adults, and is the only facility in Michigan to care for ventilator-dependent persons of all ages with SCI. The project objectives are to: (1) provide a continuum of comprehensive, multidisciplinary services for persons with SCI, from emergency medical services to long-term community follow-up, with a focus upon maintaining health; (2) demonstrate the effects of the continuum of comprehensive services, focusing on its efficacy in promoting employment, health maintenance and wellness, independent living, and community reintegration; (3) conduct significant research, using a participatory action research approach involving consumer input from inception through implementation; (4) operate an efficient service system; and (5) develop and demonstrate methods of community outreach and education in collaboration with the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living (AACIL) to reach professionals, consumers, and their families in other rehabilitation facilities and Centers for Independent Living in Michigan. These objectives emphasize community reintegration as a key outcome. The Model System is in collaboration with the AACIL, with the goal of promoting community reintegration. This partnership ensures a coordinated approach to clinical care, training, and research that integrates consumer empowerment with comprehensive lifelong follow-up, bringing a consumer-professional synergy to the project that serves as an example for other Model SCI Systems. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems
Missouri

Missouri Model Spinal Cord Injury System

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Project Number: H133N000012
Start Date: October 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $300,000; FY 01 $300,000; FY 02 $300,000; FY 03 $300,000

Abstract: The Missouri Model Spinal Cord Injury System is committed to developing, implementing, and evaluating innovative research that promotes independent living and community integration among persons with spinal cord dysfunction. The two studies focus on the effect of a consumer-directed personal assistance services training intervention on consumer satisfaction, independent living, and community integration. The purpose of Study 1 is to develop, implement, and evaluate the in-person Individualized Management of Personal Assistant/Consumer Teams (IMPACT) workshop. The purpose of Study 2 is to assess whether this workshop can be implemented as effectively via video teleconferencing as in person, thereby increasing dramatically its dissemination potential. The objectives of the studies are: (1) to determine the effect of the IMPACT workshop on consumer satisfaction, the incidence of secondary conditions, activity, and participation (as defined by the ICIDH-2); (2) to determine the effect of the IMPACT workshop on personal assistant’s job satisfaction, job stress, and attrition; (3) to test for differences in outcomes between the participants who attended the workshop in-person and those who attend the workshop via video teleconferencing; and (4) to develop, evaluate, and refine a web version of the interactive IMPACT workshop. Data from this research provides valuable information for future studies seeking to document changes in personal independence and community integration. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
Northern New Jersey Spinal Cord Injury System

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Project Number: H133N000022
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $345,000; FY 01 $344,724; FY 02 $345,000; FY 03 $345,000

Abstract: The Northern New Jersey Spinal Cord Injury System (NNJSCIS) attempts to improve outcomes for persons with SCI through novel interventions and expanded service delivery options. The NNJSCIS is composed of Kessler Medical Rehabilitation Research and Education Corporation, Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation, and University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-University Hospital. The NNJSCIS has an interdisciplinary system of rehabilitation care specifically designed to meet the needs of individuals with SCI. It includes emergency medical services; acute care; psychological, social, and vocational services; peer support; independent living services; community and job placement, long-term community follow-up; and health maintenance. Some of the research and demonstration projects target three of the most common secondary conditions (pressure ulcers, shoulder pain, and urinary tract infections). Other studies promote wellness by reducing obesity, examine the relation between health literacy and outcomes, and identify risk factors and prevent potential problems. One project operationalizes the newly developed Clinical Practice Guidelines. The NNJSCIS contributes to the National Statistics Data Center.
Mount Sinai Spinal Cord Injury Model System

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Project Number: H133N000027
Start Date: October 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $320,000; FY 01 $320,000; FY 02 $320,000; FY 03 $320,000

Abstract: The Mount Sinai Spinal Cord Injury Model System (MS-SCI-MS) of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine of Sinai Hospital (MSH) and the Mount Sinai School of Medicine (MSSM) in New York City provides comprehensive care to meet the diverse needs of persons with SCI in its catchment area. There are four components of the system: (1) comprehensive clinical care; (2) research (both center-specific research and contributions to the national statistics database); (3) dissemination, education, and training; and (4) injury prevention. The comprehensive clinical program stresses interdisciplinary care, and employs a primary team model to enhance coordination among caregivers. Comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation services and long-term follow-up at MSH are also included. Rehabilitation services include an evaluation program for a high-tech wheelchair and seating system, a lower-extremity functional electrical stimulation ergometry program, psychosocial services, extensive VR services, a consumer-directed program to promote community reintegration (DO IT!), and a women’s peer group. Specialty medical and surgical services include a fertility program for males with ejaculatory dysfunction, intrathecal pumps for treatment of spasticity, upper extremity reconstruction, and cutting-edge technology. A preventive health care demonstration project for screening and early intervention of secondary medical conditions is included as a collaborative effort of the MS-SCI-MS and the Spinal Cord Damage Research Center at the Bronx Veterans Affairs Medical Center. The research program of MS-SCI-MS consists of two studies relevant to one of the most disabling secondary conditions of SCI, chronic pain: (1) meta-analyses of pain reports and pain treatments; and (2) a prospective study of pain. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems
Pennsylvania

Demonstration of a Model Spinal Cord Injury System Center

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Project Number: H133N000023
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $370,000; FY 01 $370,000; FY 02 $370,000; FY 03 $370,000

Abstract: The Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center of Delaware Valley (RSCICDV) is a comprehensive program of coordinated patient care, education, and research activities. The RSCICDV: (1) conducts on-site research focusing on improved outcome measures to meet Federally established objectives; (2) refines and improves the RSCICDV’s operational services and demonstration projects; and (3) conducts four development projects including development of an SCI web site, implementation of an SCI Care Path, development of a Pressure Sore Program, and employing persons with SCI through hireAbility. The on-site research includes four experiments: (1) validation of the Walking Index of Spinal Cord Injury (WISCI) scale in a clinical setting for severity and hierarchical ranking; (2) validation of WISCI scale for elements of a disability measure for distance, speed, and endurance into WISCI levels; (3) demonstration that the WISCI scale is responsive to change in a clinical trial setting; and (4) demonstration of consumer preference for walking. The four development projects include: (1) improved access to information via the web site; (2) implementation of a critical pathway for more efficient healthcare delivery; (3) increased employment and advancement of employment through hireAbility; and (4) increased monitoring of pressure sores and strategies for prevention. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems
Pennsylvania

University of Pittsburgh Model Center on Spinal Cord Injury

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Project Number: H133N000019
Start Date: December 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $320,000; FY 01 $320,000; FY 02 $320,000; FY 03 $320,000

Abstract: The University of Pittsburgh Model Center on Spinal Cord Injury (UPMC-SCI) represents the efforts of dedicated consumers, clinicians, and researchers. The UPMC-SCI’s research focus is on innovations in AT. The research projects evaluate the impact of selected innovations in technology on service delivery and on outcomes such as function, independence, and employment. One project is addressing a shortcoming in AT research through the use of a new dynamic outcome measure developed by David Gray PhD. Researchers are also testing an innovative pushrim-activated, power-assisted wheelchair that has great potential to improve mobility for individuals with tetraplegia. An additional project is investigating the impact of a new mobility device known as IBOT, which is capable of balancing on two wheels, climbing curbs, and going over uneven terrain. This represents the first study of the IBOT in a real world environment. In addition to this research, the center provides a model of care for individuals with SCI. SCI care at the University of Pittsburgh is provided in a multidisciplinary manner with a high level of communication among the constituent services. The fully implemented system of continuity of treatment begins with the emergency response at the scene of injury and continues with comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation from medical/surgical- to acute-stage rehabilitation through utilization of AT services and VR.
Texas Model Spinal Cord Injury System

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Project Number: H133N000004
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $330,000; FY 01 $330,000; FY 02 $330,000; FY 03 $330,000

Abstract: The Texas Model Spinal Cord Injury System (TMSCIS) provides services along the entire continuum of care from emergency medical service to long-term follow-up and management of secondary conditions. TMSCIS performs an analytic longitudinal investigation of disability models to explore and quantify the interaction among various individual and environmental variables. TMSCIS operationalizes the Institute of Medicine model of disability utilizing state-of-the-art measurement techniques and comprehensive statistical approaches to test hypotheses about dynamic interrelations of persons with SCI and their environment. This investigation involves following newly injured persons with SCI for two years after injury. Measurements are taken of pre-injury life conditions, enabling processes, as well as personal, psychological, and physical environments. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. In addition, the project develops and tests theoretically derived structural models from the national database and other existing data sources.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems
Virginia

VCU Model Spinal Cord Injury Center

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Project Number: H133N000015
Start Date: October 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $310,000; FY 01 $310,000; FY 02 $310,000; FY 03 $310,000
Abstract: This project develops and implements a Model Spinal Cord Injury System at Virginia Commonwealth University/Medical College of Virginia (VCU/MCV), with a concentrated emphasis on employment. Researchers monitor and assess the impact of interventions, advancing technology, and policy changes on employment following SCI. Collaborating partners include VCU/MCV’s Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports, the Virginia Department of Rehabilitation Services, and the other SCI Model Systems delivery of care. Additionally, the project partners with the Mid-Atlantic Paralyzed Veterans Association in several training, dissemination, and other mutual outreach activities. Research studies involve use of the national statistics database, a major employment policy study across 18 states, a major study with the Virginia Department of Rehabilitation Services on employment outcomes (e.g., earning histories), and an evaluation of technology training on employment outcomes. Involvement of SCI mentors in training new vocational mentors with SCI is also an important component of the work. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
The University of Washington’s Northwest Regional Spinal Cord Injury System (NWRSCIS) serves a critical mass of patients with SCI and has all the necessary disciplines to provide state-of-the-art medical, surgical, and rehabilitation care. NWRSCIS has four objectives: (1) examine interventions to improve outcomes in the preservation or restoration of function or the prevention and treatment of secondary conditions; (2) contribute to the national database; (3) maintain specialized clinical programs; and (4) develop and maintain education programs for consumers and families, especially for those who belong to minority and disadvantaged groups. In addition, the Center provides for the widespread dissemination of research and demonstration findings through its publications and web site. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
UAB TBI Model System

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Project Number: H133A020509
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000
Abstract: The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is maintaining and further developing a Traumatic Brain Injury Model System (TBIMS) that improves rehabilitation services and outcomes for persons with TBI. This project provides a multidisciplinary system of rehabilitation care specifically designed to meet the needs of individuals with TBI, and, as demonstrated over the past four years as a TBIMS, adequately enrolls subjects to complete research projects successfully. In addition to contributing data to the TBI National Database, the UAB TBIMS conducts two research projects: (1) an examination of the use of a serotonin agonist medication (sertraline) to lessen the incidence and severity of depression during the first year of recovery following TBI. (2) a study of the impact of a training program in problems solving for caregivers.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
California

Northern California Traumatic Brain Injury Model System of Care

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Project Number: H133A020524
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $364,038; FY 03 $364,588

Abstract: This project conducts two studies to better characterize the type and impact of fatigue on the TBI population: (1) a cross-sectional study of people up to ten years post-TBI and (2) a longitudinal study that focuses on the evolution of fatigue over the first two years post-injury. Both studies utilize standardized measurements of fatigue, as well as those for depression/affective disorders, sleep disturbance, activity scales, and measurements of hormone levels reflective of the health of the neuroendocrine system. Two additional studies characterize the impact of late posttraumatic seizures on recovery: (1) a study utilizing data already in the TBIMS National Database that compares the functional, vocational, and medical complication outcomes of those with and without late posttraumatic seizures; (2) a study in collaboration with Denver Hospital Medical Center that interviews individuals at both sites who participated in a previously funded NIDRR grant on seizure risk identification. This study further evaluates barriers to the environment, transportation, and challenges in control of their seizures.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
Colorado

The Rocky Mountain Regional Brain Injury System (RMRBIS)

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**Project Number:** H133A020510
**Start Date:** October 1, 2002
**Length:** 60 months
**NIDRR Officer:** Theresa San Agustin, MD
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000

**Abstract:** The Rocky Mountain Regional Brain Injury System (RMRBIS) conducts three research projects: Study 1 examines the effects of Modafinil on fatigue and excessive sleepiness after TBI. Study 2 assesses the effectiveness of a group therapy intervention for social pragmatic communication. Study 3 uses the unique database assets of Craig Hospital and investigates the environmental and clinical factors that influence outcome over a 40 year time frame to understand the process of living and aging with a TBI. In addition to clinical research and service, Craig Hospital, as the RMRBIS, documents an outstanding record of dissemination, for all customers including clinical consumers, community agencies and advocacy groups, other clinical service centers and systems, and professionals engaged in the treatment of persons with TBI.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems  
Massachusetts

The Spaulding/Partners TBI Model System at Harvard Medical School

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Project Number: H133A020513  
Start Date: October 1, 2002  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD  
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000

Abstract: The Spaulding TBI Model System (TBIMS) provides a comprehensive spectrum of care for people with TBI through the collaborative efforts of three hospitals that are part of Partners Health Care System, Inc., and four organizations that operate a variety of postacute rehabilitation programs. Research at the center includes development of functional neuroimaging as a tool to guide cognitive rehabilitation treatment for people with TBI, and use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), with both a cross-sectional and longitudinal component. The cross- sectional component assesses regional brain activation during the memorization of word lists, both under undirected (spontaneous) conditions and following training and cueing to use a categorization strategy. The longitudinal component studies the ability of the fMRI findings to predict outcome among people with TBI who participate in community integration program with a cognitive rehabilitation focus.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems  
Michigan  

Southeastern Michigan Traumatic Brain Injury System (SEMTBIS)  

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Project Number: H133A020515  
Start Date: October 1, 2002  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins  
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $364,996; FY 03 $364,995  

Abstract: The Southeastern Michigan Traumatic Brain Injury System (SEMTBIS) program conducts projects developed with the help of SEMTBIS consumers, as well as other members of the Detroit community. Three studies evaluate: (1) a peer-mentoring intervention, (2) a dynamic system of survivor and significant-other well-being, and (3) resumption of driving after brain injury. Study 1 is a randomized controlled trial of a peer-mentoring program for both survivors and their caregivers. Study 2 studies 250 community-dwelling adults with TBI and their caregivers/significant others, exploring the relationship of survivor-caregiver situations with survivor distress and family dysfunction. It also studies whether or not social support acts as a moderating influence upon the well-being of persons with TBI. Study 3 examines correlates of driving after brain injury: barriers, fitness to drive, and community rapport. Participatory action is a central component of project implementation, evaluation, and dissemination. SEMTBIS participates in clinical and systems analysis studies of the TBI Model Systems by collecting and contributing data to the uniform, standardized national database.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
Minnesota

Mayo Clinic Traumatic Brain Injury Model System

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Rochester, MN 55905
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www.mayo.edu/model-system

Principal Investigator: James F. Malec, PhD
Public Contact: Anne Moessner, 507/255-3116; Fax: 507/255-7696

Project Number: H133A020507
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $364,891; FY 03 $364,738

Abstract: This Traumatic Brain Injury Model System (TBIMS) focuses on three local research projects: (1) decision-making and outcomes of inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation pathways, (2) very-long-term (5-15+ years postinjury) process and outcome for people with TBI, identified through the Rochester Epidemiology Project, and (3) telehealth-based (Internet) cognitive rehabilitation. Telehealth is a potentially important innovation in this system’s region, where distance limits access to medical and rehabilitation services and many consumers have limited access to health care, insurance, employment, and viable political representation. In addition to professional publications and presentations, continuing dissemination efforts include the Mayo Clinic TBIMS web-site, the TBI Hotline, the Messenger newsletter, contributions to the COMBI web site and COMBI and TBIMS newsletters, and regular participation by Mayo Clinic TBIMS staff at all annual state BIA meetings in the extended five-state geographical region. During the next five years, the project plans to develop an advocacy training program to help people with TBI and their families and significant others in the region learn self-advocacy skills. Members of the Mayo TBI Regional Advisory Council were proactively involved in developing this project.
Traumatic Brain Injury Model System of Mississippi (TBIMSM)

Methodist Rehabilitation Center
Brain Injury Program
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Jackson, MS 39216
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Principal Investigator: Mark Sherer, PhD
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Project Number: H133A020514
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000

Abstract: The TBI Model System of Mississippi (TBIMSM) is a collaborative project of Methodist Rehabilitation Center and the University of Mississippi Medical Center. This project involves three studies. The first study investigates two medications in a parallel group, double blind, placebo controlled, randomized assignment design. The drugs under investigation have differing neurotransmitter effects, although each drug has been reported to have therapeutic benefit. The target population for this study is persons with TBI who are in a state of posttraumatic confusional state (PCS). This is considered a state of the art approach to PCS given the severe lack of controlled research to measure medication usage in PCS. The second study develops and conducts a trial of an intervention to improve the therapeutic alliances between persons with TBI and family members and professional staff serving persons with TBI in a post-acute brain injury neurorehabilitation program (PABIR). The third research project investigates the use of transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) to improve the characterization of motor disorders after TBI. Current research suggests that improved use and better understanding of TMS technology will lead to new intervention trials to improve motor function after TBI.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
New Jersey

JFK-Johnson Rehabilitation Institute TBI Model System

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Principal Investigator: Keith D. Cicerone, PhD
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Project Number: H133A020518
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000

Abstract: This project implements and evaluates innovative rehabilitation interventions that address the spectrum of severity and needs of persons with TBI. The first research study investigates the relationship between neurobehavioral (i.e., standardized rating scale) and neurophysiologic (i.e., functional MRI data) indices of brain function in persons with traumatic minimally conscious state (MCS). The second study addresses current clinical and methodological concerns over the effectiveness of cognitive rehabilitation on cognitive functioning, community integration and social participation, return to school and work, and quality of life after traumatic brain injury. The third study uses qualitative inquiry to describe the quality of life after TBI from the perspective of persons at various stages after their injuries. These findings are triangulated with quantitative indices of community integration and satisfaction with functioning, which should provide a richer and more authentic understanding of what it takes to live a fulfilling life after traumatic brain injury.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
New York

New York Traumatic Brain Injury Model System (NYTBIMS)

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Project Number: H133A020501
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000

Abstract: This project advances the understanding of TBI and its consequences and improves rehabilitation outcomes. The research projects focus on depression and fatigue, impairments that limit participation in community, and vocational activities: Treatment of Post-TBI Depression is a randomized clinical trial to examine the efficacy of sertraline (Zoloft) in the treatment of depression and anxiety after traumatic brain injury. Study of Post-TBI Fatigue and its Treatment investigates the components, consequences, and correlates of post-TBI fatigue, and in a randomized clinical trial, evaluates the benefits of modafenil (Provigil) to treat fatigue in individuals with TBI.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
North Carolina

Carolinas Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation and Research System (CTBIRRS)

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Principal Investigator: Flora M. Hammond, MD
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Project Number: H133A020522
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000

Abstract: This project investigates posttraumatic irritability, its relationship to the caregiver as a component of the environment, the reaction to amantadine hydrochloride, and the nature of the problem as experienced by those in the community. The mission of CTBIRRS is to improve care and outcomes for survivors of TBI through medical treatments, services, research, and dissemination to expand and enhance services throughout their lifetime. The system begins with prevention and emergency medical services and extends through intensive care, acute care, and comprehensive medical rehabilitation to long-term follow-up, community reintegration, and vocational rehabilitation.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
Ohio

Ohio Regional TBI Model System

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Principal Investigator: John D. Corrigan, PhD, 614/293-3830
Public Contact: Gary Lamb-Hart, 614/293-3802; Fax: 614/293-8886

Project Number: H133A020503
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $364,995

Abstract: This model system includes two local research projects on substance abuse and persons with TBI. Study 1 is a randomized clinical trial testing interventions to promote retention in substance abuse treatment. This study employs intervention strategies found effective for clients with TBI when first engaging with a treatment program. Study 2 tests the concurrent validity of an instrument that documents the extent of a person’s prior history of TBI objectively. This instrument is intended for research on TBI as a mediating factor in substance abuse treatment. This model system utilizes innovative community integration programs: Team Brain Injury (follow-up case management), the TBI Network (substance abuse treatment), and Community Capacity Building (education and advocacy operated in conjunction with the Brain Injury Association of Ohio).
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
Oregon

Oregon Traumatic Brain Injury Model System

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Project Number: H133A980027
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 48 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $345,000; FY 99 $345,000; FY 00 $345,000; FY 01 $345,000; FY 02 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2003) FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/30/2003)
Abstract: This model system compares treatment and outcomes among people with TBI cared for within the model system versus those who follow alternative care paths. The sample: (1) includes trauma system patients who remain in Portland and those who return to rural homes after discharge, allowing for a comparison of care paths as determined by environment; (2) assesses outcomes based on the type and extent of care by evaluating payer programs by level and type of funding; and (3) develops and validates two key predictors of outcome: a measure of acute care and a social adjustment scale. This understanding of outcomes as determined by care path (model versus alternative), environment (rural versus urban), and payer program (level of funding) is used to address the three primary needs of Oregon residents with TBI and their families: information, access, and quality. Ancillary demonstration projects implement and evaluate caregiver training and home-based multidisciplinary rehabilitation as an alternative to postacute treatment interventions. This project contributes to the national statistics database at the Kessler Medical Rehabilitation Research and Education Corporation.
The Moss Traumatic Brain Injury Model System

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Project Number: H133A020505
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000

Abstract: This project provides cutting-edge care for persons with TBI, conducts research on treatment of TBI in three key areas, and disseminates new knowledge to consumer and professional audiences, using an extensive collaborative network. Seven Trauma Centers and two nationally renowned rehabilitation facilities, MossRehab and Magee Rehabilitation, collaborate in the clinical component of the Moss Traumatic Brain Injury Model System. The Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute administers the research component, which includes collaborative longitudinal data collection, as well as three local research projects on: (1) the use of assistive technology for cognitive and behavioral disabilities, (2) validation of an observational rating scale of attention dysfunction in a psychostimulant treatment trial, and (3) use of botulinum toxin for treating severe spasticity caused by TBI. The Moss TBIMS emphasizes consumer involvement in clinical program improvement, research design, and dissemination via collaboration with the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania and other consumers.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
Pennsylvania

University of Pittsburgh Brain Injury Model System (UPBI)

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Project Number: H133A020502
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $364,484; FY 03 $360,375

Abstract: The research focus of the University of Pittsburgh Brain Injury Model System is on innovation in rehabilitation technology for persons with TBI. The project evaluates the impact of selected innovations in technology on service delivery, functional outcome, and as a therapeutic intervention. It addresses the shortcoming in wheelchair design for persons with brain injury by evaluating a unique, personalized powered mobility system. Collaboration with the Robotics Institute at Carnegie Mellon University allows researchers to perform a randomized trial evaluating the efficacy of virtual reality and robotics for persons with TBI. Finally, the project uses intelligent navigation technology to implement and evaluate a web-based virtual case manager support structure for persons with TBI and their families.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
Texas

North Texas Traumatic Brain Injury Model System (NT-TBIMS)

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Project Number: H133A020526
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $364,999; FY 03 $365,000
Abstract: The North Texas Traumatic Brain Injury Model System (NT-TBIMS) provides a comprehensive continuum of care for TBI patients from the time of arrival at the emergency department through the intensive care unit, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, and long-term follow-up after community integration. Additionally, the NT-TBIMS conducts two research projects aimed at obtaining predictive information regarding outcome after TBI, which is important to the goal of developing novel therapies and tailoring these therapies to individual patients: (1) to determine whether the inheritance of particular alleles in certain candidate genes is associated with a greater risk of poor outcome after TBI; and (2) to determine whether functional magnetic resonance imaging of the brain (fMRI) is predictive of functional recovery after TBI.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
Virginia

Traumatic Brain Injury Model System

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Project Number: H133A020516
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000
Abstract: This project, utilizing rigorous scientific methods, examines the benefits of intervention during the acute and post-acute periods after brain injury. TBIMS and other researchers have primarily focused on delineating outcomes. Until recently, concerns about survivors’ emotional well-being and adjustment to injury received scant attention. Yet, recent studies have identified a high prevalence of depression, with many survivors reporting feelings of hopelessness, diminished self-esteem, and social isolation. Brain injury also affects the family system; family members commonly describe emotional distress, lack of respite, financial stress, and lack of community support. Projects in three major research areas focus predominantly on survivors. One study examines pharmacological approaches to the treatment of depression, while another examines a structured approach to the treatment of acute cognitive and neurobehavioral problems. Examining the benefits of intervention programs for family members is the third major research area.
Model Traumatic Brain Injury Systems
Washington

University of Washington Traumatic Brain Injury Model System

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Principal Investigator: Kathleen R. Bell, MD
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Project Number: H133A020508
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $365,000; FY 03 $365,000
Abstract: This program conducts research relevant to TBI, enhances services to consumers, and furthers the National Database and intersystem collaboration. The program’s three research projects are: (1) a randomized controlled intervention study examining the effect of exercise on depression after TBI. This low-cost, community intervention seeks to combat depression and emotional distress in persons with stable TBI by employing exercise as a positive approach to improved emotional and physical functioning and socialization (2) An examination of the characteristics of TBI survivors who are able to return to employment and hold jobs that are stable and complex in nature, utilizing both the UW TBI longitudinal database and the Model System database. (3) An examination of the impact of the Medicare prospective payment system for inpatient rehabilitation on TBI survivors receiving access to acute rehabilitation efforts. The program also contributes to the National Database.
Use of Propranolol to Manage Behavioral Dysfunction and Agitation in Persons with Postacute Brain Injury

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Project Number: H133G000072
Start Date: August 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $123,967; FY 01 $123,967; FY 02 $112,313; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 7/31/2004)

Abstract: This project conducts research to confirm the empirically reported efficacy of the beta-adrenergic receptor blocker propranolol in managing behavioral dyscontrol following brain injury (BI) in the postacute phase (greater than one year). The study builds on published case reports of propranolol’s effectiveness. It implements the first-ever randomized double-blind crossover trial of propranolol with placebo control in 50 individuals who are more than one year post-BI, in an outpatient setting. The project establishes whether propranolol decreases the behavioral dyscontrol and agitation commonly seen in postacute BI; despite widespread empirical use of propranolol, such decreases have never been established conclusively. It also provides for detailed measurement of possible neurocognitive side effects of propranolol, which were not evaluated in previous studies. The study utilizes the Agitated Behavioral Scale for valid and reliable measurement of agitation. The project utilizes functional brain imaging techniques to provide preliminary insights into possible sites and mechanisms of action.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Arkansas

Developing a Rehabilitation Service Delivery Model for Minority Farmers with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133G000192
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $150,000; FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2003)
Abstract: This project gathers data from farmers and service providers in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Using the survey data, the project constructs a model of rehabilitation service delivery for minority farmers with disabilities based on their needs, perceptions, disabilities, and the most effective methods of reaching and communicating with them. The main thrust of the project is active participation by minority farmers in research and model building. Project objectives are to: (1) identify and interview minority farm households that have members with disabilities; (2) identify and interview nonminority farm households that have members with disabilities; (3) interview rehabilitation counselors and county extension agents; (4) build a service delivery model based on analyses of responses of the farmers, rehabilitation counselors and county extension agents; and (5) disseminate model and research findings.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
California

Improving Muscular Use and Cardio-Respiratory Demand in Spinal-Cord-Injured Patients Performing Functional Electronically Stimulated Leg Cycle Ergonometry

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Project Number: H133G020137
Start Date: January 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,971; FY 03 $146,330

Abstract: This project develops new stimulation patterns for a functional electrically stimulated (FES) leg cycle ergometer (LCE) that enable persons with spinal cord injuries to exercise with greater benefit. Greater benefit is defined as exercising for a longer period of time and at a higher work rate while involving more leg muscles than is possible with existing ergometers. To reach the general aim, the research is divided into three phases, each directed towards testing a specific hypothesis: (1) normal recumbent pedaling can be simulated using a computational musculoskeletal model of the leg; (2) minimizing muscle fatigue in a forward dynamic simulation of recumbent pedaling yields computed stimulation patterns that enable an individual with SCI to pedal the FES-LCE for longer periods of time, and at higher work rates, than is possible with current stimulation patterns; and (3) using neural stimulation patterns computed from a forward dynamic simulation of recumbent pedaling in which selected muscles of both the upper and lower leg are activated, an individual can pedal the FES-LCE to obtain a greater cardio-respiratory workout than when only upper leg muscles are stimulated.
Cardiovascular Disease in Women with Spinal Cord Injury and Its Effect on Participation in Community Activities

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Project Number: H133G010160
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $141,470; FY 02 $145,835; FY 03 $149,709
Abstract: The goals of this project are: (1) to profile cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors in women with SCI, (2) to assess the relationships between CVD risk factors and “observable” CVD in this group, (3) to assess the associations of CVD risk factors and observable CVD with quality of life and with participation in community activities among women with SCI, (4) to evaluate standard interventions for lipid abnormalities and CVD in women with SCI, and (5) to assess the impact lipid and CVD interventions have on the quality of life and community activity participation of women with SCI. For these goals “observable” CVD refers to atherosclerotic burden by carotid arterial intima-media thickness.
Quantified Custom Inserts: An Amputation Prevention Program for Diabetic Patients

Rancho Los Amigos
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larei.org/pk-overview.htm

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Project Number: H133G020002
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,999; FY 03 $146,589

Abstract: This project identifies footwear factors which reduce plantar pressures experienced during walking and decrease the incidence of skin ulceration in individuals with diabetes mellitus. Reduction of skin ulceration is critical for ensuring maximum independence in living and employment and for decreasing the emotional and financial consequences associated with managing the disease process and subsequent disability. Preservation of the patient’s limb depends on reducing the injurious pressures experienced by the foot during walking. Today’s techniques of shoe and insert production, however, are inconsistent because no objective criteria for an effective shoe system have been developed. This may result in persons with diabetes mellitus receiving custom footwear that does not effectively reduce their plantar pressures. All subjects in this project are at risk for ulceration due to a history of partial foot amputation or previous foot ulcers. Walking plantar pressures, in newly delivered custom footwear are measured using pressure localization and quantifying insoles (PEDAR System) placed under each foot. Subjects are randomly assigned to one of two, 80-person groups for orthotic management. For the PEDAR control group, the pressure data are discussed with the subject and then stored for later reference. Data for PEDAR intervention group are discussed with the subject and then are used to correct the custom inserts to reduce plantar pressures below 21 N/cm2. The orthotist is given the plantar pressure plot and modifies the insert as indicated, and planter pressures during gait are reassessed interactively until the protective threshold is attained.
Daily Living Context and Pressure Sores in Consumers with Spinal Cord Injury

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Principal Investigator: Florence Clark, PhD, OTR, 323/442-2875  
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Project Number: H133G000062  
Start Date: September 1, 2000  
Length: 36 months  
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD  
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,942; FY 01 $147,834; FY 02 $149,837; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 8/31/2004)

Abstract: This project examines the beliefs and practices underlying the activities, habits, and daily routines of 18 ethnically diverse consumers with SCI. The intent is to document how personality, lifestyle patterns and choices, and environmental context mutually interact within the individually constructed lives of consumers to influence the development of pressure sores. The problem of recurrent, medically serious pressure sores represents a key challenge to the ability of individuals with SCI to experience a full and satisfying life. Although prior research has documented that the development of pressure sores is in general linked to psychosocial and environmental variables, there is a need to obtain new, consumer-centered information about how pressure sores can be minimized through personally tailored adaptive strategies that are responsive to the opportunities and difficulties embedded in the unique sets of everyday circumstances that characterize individual lives. A variety of data collection procedures, including participant observation as well as interviews with consumers, their caregivers, and other associated persons, are analyzed to generate results that are comprehensive and trustworthy. These results are used to develop a series of applied products, including: (1) a consumer-oriented self-help manual; (2) a set of guidelines for rehabilitation practice; and (3) a lifestyle-oriented occupational therapy treatment model. Consumer representatives contribute to all aspects of the project to ensure that it is relevant and maximally useful to the target population.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)  
California  

**Development and Evaluation of a Quality of Life Instrument for Individuals with Adult-Onset Hearing Loss**  

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**Principal Investigator:** Carren J. Stika, PhD  
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**Project Number:** H133G030191  
**Start Date:** October 1, 2003  
**Length:** 36 months  
**NIDRR Officer:** Carol Cohen  
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $149,980  

**Abstract:** This project develops a standardized, psychometrically rigorous quality of life instrument for individuals with adult-onset hearing loss that is conceptually linked to the full range of functional domains commonly impacted by hearing loss, and which quantifies respondents’ perceptions of domain satisfaction and subjective well-being. Further, the quality of life instrument integrates the new paradigm of disability, whereby environmental, cultural, and personal variables are considered in relation to the individual’s disability. The enhancement of quality of life has recently been recognized as the essential purpose of health care and rehabilitation. Research is showing that it is the individual’s subjective well-being rather than the objective health condition or functional status that determines treatment-seeking behavior, compliance with treatment, and treatment outcome. Individuals with hearing loss represent the single largest disability group in the United States, with prevalence rates rising. Despite the fact that hearing loss often has a profound influence on personal and social adjustment, employment status, and general well-being, few psychological measures currently exist to help assess these effects or evaluate intervention outcomes.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Colorado

Mortality and Life Expectancy After Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation

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Project Number: H133G020182
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project investigates mortality, life expectancy, causes of death, and risk factors for death in individuals with TBI receiving inpatient rehabilitation and surviving beyond one year post-injury. This research tests the following hypotheses: (1) that TBI increases mortality and decreases life expectancy among survivors completing rehabilitation, (2) that causes of death do not match the general population, (3) that the risk of death is greater in certain subgroups, and (4) that survival has increased over the decades of improved care. Products of this project include: (1) a consumer and professional publication on TBI mortality and life expectancy in the TBI Model Systems, (2) a consumer and professional publication on TBI mortality and life expectancy changes over four decades at Craig Hospital, (3) an interactive web site allowing entry of basic individual and injury characteristics that reports probabilities of various life expectancies, and (4) a report on the most effective strategy for expanding the TBI Model Systems mortality study to include all TBI cases rehabilitated at Model System facilities, even before they were designated as a Model System. This study, lead by the Rocky Mountain Regional Brain Injury System at Craig Hospital, involves the 17 TBI Model Systems funded by NIDRR.
Investigation of the Dynamics of Spasticity in Children with Cerebral Palsy

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Project Number: H133G010041
Start Date: November 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,708; FY 02 $144,023; FY 03 $148,284

Abstract: This project creates a new assessment tool for spasticity in cerebral palsy that quantifies both the long-term changes in muscle structure and the short-term effects of the hyperexcitable stretch reflex. The result is a comprehensive testing protocol that can be used in a wide range of therapeutic interventions. The new device can apply torques about the knee and ankle of a limb with spasticity in such a way that velocity, acceleration, and the third derivative, jerk, can be varied and resistance of the limb to movement measured. The device can be used (1) to investigate the reflex resistance to movement elicited by constant velocity, constant acceleration, and constant jerk; and (2) to define the passive biomechanics of the limb by applying short duration pulses of torque to the limb combined with the limb’s position, velocity, and acceleration. This work is unique in the recognition of the limb with spasticity as a closed loop system consisting of the biomechanics of the limb and the reflexes (due to motion) feeding back on that limb. As a result of using the new tool, many therapy protocols such as hippotherapy, stretching, hydrotherapy, range of motion exercises, and others may be found to be of significant benefit to one component of spasticity over the other.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Georgia

Development of Valid and Reliable Measures of Postural Stability

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Project Number: H133G020240
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $85,000; FY 03 $232,171

Abstract: This project validates four clinical measures of seated stability. An unresolved biomechanics problem for wheelchair users is maintaining functional trunk stability during upper extremity movement while achieving functional trunk mobility, when needed. Trunk stability is provided by the wheelchair backrest, but this trunk support is in direct conflict with trunk mobility. Back or trunk supports, which envelop the trunk, also restrict mobility. For wheelchair users, balancing sufficient trunk support with adequate trunk mobility has important functional and medical consequences. Better understanding of the posture-function relationship is needed to permit seated stability during activities of daily living while not hindering function by restricting trunk mobility. Assessing postural stability should be integral to every seating evaluation; however, clinicians have not been provided with valid measures of stability. This project tests three measures of stability previously defined in the literature (functional reach, sitting balance, and reach area) and introduces a fourth measure (bilateral reach). The predictive validity of all four measures is determined by correlating the respective measurements to results of a series of functional tasks. Concurrent validity is determined by correlating the results of the four clinical stability measures to each other. In addition, the measures undergo reliability testing. The outcome of this project is clinical measures of functional postural stability that have construct, concurrent, and predictive validity.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Georgia

The Impact of Cognitive Impairment and Outcomes Following SCI

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Project Number: H133G030004
Start Date: September 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,642

Abstract: This project is designed to determine whether moderate to severe neurocognitive impairment secondary to comorbid (brain injury) and/or premorbid cognitive disorders (learning disability/attention deficit disorder) negatively impacts functional, health, quality of life, and participation outcomes following SCI. Participants are followed (1) to determine the base rate of neurocognitive disorders in persons with SCI and (2) to establish the relative effect premorbid/comorbid neurocognitive impairment has on functional skills, health status, quality of life outcomes at discharge from inpatient rehabilitation, and participation outcomes at six months and one year following discharge.

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Project Number: H133G80063
Start Date: August 1, 1998
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $124,992; FY 99 $124,923; FY 00 $124,957; FY 02 (No-cost extension through 10/31/2003) FY 03 (No-cost extension through 10/31/2003)

Abstract: This study investigates use of a novel computer-assisted isometric training regime to overcome abnormal movement synergies following hemiparetic stroke. In most stroke patients, these synergies are reflected, in part, by the existence of abnormal coordination between the activations of shoulder and elbow muscles. These stereotypic movement patterns found in stroke survivors are functionally disabling and often debilitating, yet are not well understood in the rehabilitation setting. Current neurotherapeutic approaches to the amelioration of these abnormal patterns have produced, at best, limited functional recovery. Therefore, the objectives of this investigation are to evaluate and demonstrate the usefulness and effectiveness of a novel static training regime to enhance the quality of life of consumers with stroke. The effect of 2 training regimes on functional arm movement are being investigated in 40 hemiparetic stroke subjects. The first protocol uses a general, classical strengthening regimen to increase torque production in specific directions. The second approach strengthens subjects using torque combinations that require the subject to deviate progressively from their abnormal torque synergies. Assessment of the effectiveness of these two protocols is based on quantitative comparisons of voluntary upper limb movements performed pre- and post-training.
The SPIRATE Project (Spinal Injury Risk Assessment for ThromboEmbolism)

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Project Number: H133G990046
Start Date: July 1, 1999
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $135,244; FY 00 $139,362; FY 01 $143,645; FY 02 (No-cost extension through 6/30/2003) FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2003)

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to develop a risk assessment methodology to guide the intensity and duration of antithrombotic prophylaxis. The study is performed in two parts: a retrospective analysis of 500 patients treated by the Midwest Regional Spinal Cord Injury Care System over the past decade, and a prospective analysis of 100 patients admitted for care of spinal cord injury. In the first part, archival data on the 500 patients is analyzed to identify risk factors for thromboembolism. In the second part, the 100 patients all receive prophylaxis consisting of compression leggings and Heparin, they are examined daily for clinical evidence of thrombosis, and they have bilateral contrast venography prior to discharge. Three risk scoring systems are tested. The first is based on the retrospective study. The second is expanded to include additional factors such as functional measures and emotional well-being assessments. A third risk scoring system, to be developed, includes the data from the second system as well as the day-to-day changes in the symptoms recorded over the course of the study for individual patients. The cross- generalizability of the systems is assessed, and the final instrument is used to assign patients at high risk to more intensive prophylaxis.
Secondary Prevention Trial of Exercise and Diet for Improvement of Physical Fitness, Independence, and Overall Health in Adult Paraplegics

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Project Number: H133G990143
Start Date: September 1, 1999
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $149,959; FY 00 $149,988; FY 01 $149,659; FY 02 (No-cost extension through 5/31/2003) FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2003)

Abstract: This project investigates the impact of an exercise intervention coupled with nutrition education on the strength and fitness of a sample of overweight paraplegics with chronic illnesses. This intervention improves cardiovascular fitness and strength leading to improved independence and improved overall health. The research objectives are to recruit adult paraplegics with chronic disease for involvement in the program and then to compare the effects of the program on physical fitness in participants who have completed the program to physical fitness in those participants randomized but waiting, during the same 12 weeks, to begin the intervention. The impact of the program is assessed using changes in strength and body composition, levels of independence, dietary knowledge and intakes, blood pressure, the total-to-high-density lipoprotein cholesterol ratio, bone mineral density, and fasting glucose concentrations.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Illinois

Development of an Intelligent Therapeutic Stretching Device for Stroke Patients

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Project Number: H133G010066
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $148,822; FY 02 $148,571; FY 03 $145,955
Abstract: This project develops a useful and practical ankle stretching device with advanced control features that can be used by therapists and individuals who are post-stroke. Project activities include: (1) developing a portable stretching device with intelligent control to stretch an ankle joint with spasticity/contracture safely and repeatedly throughout the ankle range of motion (ROM) to reduce spasticity/contracture, (2) evaluating the outcome quantitatively, and (3) comparing it with a continuous passive motion machine. The device stretches the joint safely to extreme dorsi- and plantar-flexion until a specified peak resistance torque is reached with precise control of stretching velocity, based on resistance torque. Outcome is evaluated quantitatively in multiple aspects during each of the stretching sessions. Changes in joint-intrinsic properties are quantified by the passive ROM, joint stiffness, viscous damping, and energy loss during the controlled passive stretching, while the reflex changes are quantified by reflex gain and threshold. Functional changes induced by the stretching are evaluated through the active ROM, plantar and dorsi-flexor co-contraction, and foot-drop and walking speed during locomotion. In general, similar stretching devices can be developed to treat spastic joints other than the ankle and other neurological disorders troubled by spasticity/contracture. Finally, the stretching device is portable and has a relatively low cost, making it convenient and economical for patients to use in a clinic or at home.
Development of a Pressure Ulcer Prevention Beliefs Instrument for Persons with Spinal Cord Injury

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Project Number: H133G010058
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $148,101; FY 02 $149,996; FY 03 $149,987
Abstract: This project develops a measure that clinicians can use to assess the health beliefs of persons with SCI regarding pressure ulcer (PU) prevention. The goals of the study are to: (1) develop an instrument to measure PU-prevention health beliefs that is reliable by collecting qualitative data on perceptions about PU risk and seriousness, barriers to and benefits of preventive skin care, and confidence in performing skin care; (2) develop a health beliefs instrument that is structurally and theoretically valid; and (3) describe the pressure ulcer prevention beliefs of 375 persons with recent or chronic SCI. Findings facilitate the development of health belief-based interventions that address the multifactorial basis of risk for PU development. The addition of skin care health beliefs to risk prediction instruments should increase the predictive power of such instruments.
Three Dimensional Assessment and Rehabilitation of Arm Function Following Stroke

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Project Number: H133G030204
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,957

Abstract: The goal of this project is to develop and evaluate the Multi-Axis Cartesian-based Arm Rehabilitation Machine (MACARM) - a new device for the quantitative assessment and rehabilitation of three dimensional arm movements following stroke. As a cost-effective alternative to robotic arm technology, the MACARM utilizes a geometric arrangement of relatively simple, single degree of freedom “Active Modules” to achieve a large workspace and high force and positional performance. The MACARM is founded on the Multipurpose Multiaxial Isokinetic Dynamometer (MMID) originally developed as an exercise system for NASA. The objectives of this project are as follows: (1) to modify the MMID hardware to achieve the force and positional accuracy required for upper limb rehabilitation, (2) to develop MACARM software for upper limb assessment and rehabilitation, (3) to validate the static and dynamic force and positional performance of the MACARM, and (4) to test the MACARM with human subjects, including stroke survivors.
Consumers’ Participation in Nursing Home Decision-making
Preferences and Perceptions

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Project Number: H133G000068
Start Date: June 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Margaret Campbell, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,556; FY 01 $149,067; FY 02 $147,015; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2003)

Abstract: This project examines decision-making about long-term care, as it relates to institutional admission and discharge, viewing these decisions as having a critical influence on the opportunities individuals have to attain valued long-term care goals. The study explores the decision-making process of a nursing home population for which little information is available—working-age residents. Current research has focused on acute care for the most part; limited attention has been given to consumer values and preferences in long-term care and the role, if any, these play in long-term care decisions. Specific objectives and analyses include describing the level of consumer participation in the nursing home admission decision and describing the perceived adequacy of participation in decision-making by consumers.
Increasing States’ Allocations of Medicaid Dollars to Community-Based Care: Where Might Policy Intervene?

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Project Number: H133G010023
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $148,706; FY 02 $130,519; FY 03 $58,309

Abstract: This research project features two related studies. First, the project examines factors that influence community-based care expenditures for different subgroups of individuals with disabilities. Analyses focus on Medicaid 1915(c) waiver expenditures, examining the effect of a set of state-level variables shown in previous work to be related to state fiscal effort, on expenditures for five segments of the population: the frail elderly, individuals with developmental disabilities, younger people with disabilities, persons with AIDS, and children with a variety of disabling conditions. Research identifies the extent to which variables amenable to policy influence are either shared, or differ across segments of the population with disabilities. Second, the project examines the relationship between increased use of 1915(c) waiver services and total, as well as institutional, long-term care expenditures. Research examines the extent to which states can redirect institutional dollars to community-based care without increasing total long-term care expenditures. Community-based care services are, on average, noticeably less costly than institutional services; if the site of care is the community rather than the institution more individuals are able to access care. Providing greater access to long-term care in preferred community settings, without increasing total long-term care costs, is viewed as evidence of cost effectiveness. Cost concerns have repeatedly been raised in discussions to expand community-based care. By focusing on Medicaid 1915(c) waiver programs, this project provides important cost effectiveness information not presently available.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Maryland

Bilateral Arm Training in Patients with Chronic Hemiparesis

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Project Number: H133G010111
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $148,579; FY 02 $148,742; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project uses a randomized controlled study to test the validity of low intensity repetitive bilateral arm training with rhythmic auditory cuing to improve upper extremity (UE) motor function. This training program is based on principles of motor learning and control. A long-term objective of this research program is to understand the principles and mechanisms underlying UE stroke rehabilitation and to provide a scientific basis for planning treatments for stroke rehabilitation.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Massachusetts

Development of Methods to Monitor Functional Tasks

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Project Number: H133G020108
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project develops a method to identify functional activities based on combined surface-detected electromyographic and accelerometer signals. This capability provides an ability to discriminate between various functional activities such as feeding, grooming, dressing, ambulating, toileting, and transfers solely on the basis of information from wearable biosensors. Self-report methods currently in use are subjective or are clinically based and do not accurately portray a patient’s functional status throughout the day in their home or community. Existing monitors rely solely on accelerometers to provide continuous activity monitoring in remote locations, but they are limited to general activity assessment. This method can be combined with commercially available data loggers for a portable system that continuously and unobtrusively monitors the functional abilities of a patient in their home or community. Such objective and quantitative information can improve the effectiveness of rehabilitation services by establishing realistic goals, monitoring home-based therapy, and establishing the need for transition to other levels of care.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Michigan

Functional Assessment and Treatment of Neurogenic Hypotension Due to Spinal Cord Injury

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Project Number: H133G020128
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $116,835; FY 03 $116,118

Abstract: This project characterizes hypotensive phenomena associated with SCI and evaluates the effects of midodrine, an alpha-sympathomimetic medication, on them. Specifically, cardiovascular autonomic insufficiency due to SCI is manifested by (1) orthostatic hypotension, which impedes early rehabilitation efforts and causes subjective distress, and (2) exertional hypotension, which contributes to pathological fatigue and limited exercise performance. Thus, two corresponding protocols are employed to evaluate the effects of anti-hypotensive treatment with midodrine on each impairment, using two methods of hemodynamic challenge: head-up tilt table testing is used to elicit orthostatic hypotension, and arm-crank ergometry to elicit exertional hypotension. In each protocol, a randomized crossover within-subjects design allows for comparison of the effects of three interventions (compression garments, midodrine 10mg, and placebo) on subjective and objective responses. Ability to tolerate head-up tilt is assessed by heart rate, blood pressure, and symptoms during inclination; exercise tolerance is evaluated by oxygen consumption and perceived exertion in addition to the latter. Similar cardiovascular autonomic insufficiency in non-paralyzed populations responds dramatically to treatment with the midodrine, with increased ability to engage in physical activity. This project is the first controlled trial of midodrine in SCI.
Effect of Electrical Stimulation on Brain Reorganization in Subjects with Stroke

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Project Number: H133G010077
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,995; FY 02 $149,993; FY 03 $149,985

Abstract: This project studies the effects of training finger movement control in subjects with stroke using a finger movement tracking paradigm on manual skill and also on brain reorganization, as measured by functional magnetic resonance imaging. Although brain imaging studies show evidence of brain reorganization in individuals who have recovered from stroke, these studies have not examined the subjects before and after their rehabilitation. Electrical stimulation has been found to be effective in helping recover hand function in many but not all individuals with stroke. This project instructs subjects with stroke in aggressive (six hours per day) electrical stimulation treatment to be done in their own home. Furthermore, it explores whether the sensory bombardment that occurs centrally with electrical stimulation causes an expansion of cortical activity and whether this might be the mechanism for improved manual control following treatment. Subjects with stroke are assigned randomly to either an electrical stimulation group or a control group. Appropriate tests of manual performance as well as brain imaging using a 4 Tesla magnet are conducted at pretest, post-test, and follow-up. This research has the potential of uncovering important information on recovery from stroke that invites many more studies in the future.
Personalized Health Care for Individuals with Physical Disabilities: Satisfaction with Services and Outcomes

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Project Number: H133G010064
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Dawn Carlson, PhD, MPH
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,834; FY 02 $149,178; FY 03 $149,539

Abstract: This project demonstrates both the direct and indirect effects of the AXIS approach to health care on the lives of adults with physical disabilities. AXIS Healthcare, a joint venture of Sister Kenny Institute and Courage, Inc., was formed to bring knowledge of physical disability to the application of managed care. When dealing with health issues, people with physical disabilities often find themselves battling not only illness but also the health care system itself; this project works in partnership with persons with physical disabilities to coordinate a high-quality, cost effective network of specialized services spanning the continuum of care. Over the course of the project, the health outcomes and satisfaction levels of individuals with physical disabilities taking part in this program are monitored on a regular basis. The health outcomes and satisfaction of a comparison group of individuals receiving care through traditional plans are also followed during this time. The project is conducted with the understanding that programs similar to this one are not likely to be established on a wide-scale basis until it can be empirically demonstrated that such programs have a significant impact on the quality of life of the people they serve. The project is a collaborative effort of The University of Minnesota, Courage Inc., AXIS Healthcare, and The Metropolitan Center for Independent Living in Minneapolis.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)  
Minnesota

Home-Based Tracking Training to Stimulate Neuroplasticity and Improve Function in Stroke

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Project Number: H133G020145  
Start Date: September 01, 2002  
Length: 36 months  
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD

NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,929; FY 03 $149,989

Abstract: This project examines: (1) whether home-based joint movement tracking training is effective in promoting improved hand function and brain reorganization in subjects with chronic stroke, and (2) whether the mechanism of any such improvement is learning-dependent or use-dependent. Recent research has shown that repetitive efforts by subjects with chronic stroke using their paretic hand at a finger movement tracking task produced significant improvements in hand function and brain reorganization. The training technique requires patients to learn how to create precision movements of the index finger to track target waveforms on a computer screen. This project investigates whether home-based tracking treatment using a laptop computer and telecommunication technology can be as effective as earlier work with clinic-based treatment. Equally important, this project determines whether it is the motor learning or the repetitive movement that serves as the mechanism of improvement.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
New Hampshire

Project PATH (Promoting Access, Transition, and Health)

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Project Number: H133G000150
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,996; FY 01 $149,996; FY 02 $149,996; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/01/2003)

Abstract: This project performs a randomized, controlled trial of Project PATH (Promoting Access, Transition, and Health), a community-based health promotion wellness program for people with new spinal cord injuries (SCIs). This health-promoting program involves a variety of interventions including wellness education, an individualized fitness program, recreation skill development with family and friends, community accessibility and advocacy, and peer advising. Working in conjunction with consumers, family, friends, and health and rehabilitation professionals, Project PATH is designed to empower people with new SCIs to make prudent and appropriate use of recreation and leisure resources and in that way, to reduce the incidence and intensity of some the most prevalent and destructive secondary conditions of SCI: e.g., pressure sores, upper respiratory and urinary tract infections, and depression. The project is a coordinated effort among the University of New Hampshire, Northeast Passage, a group of private proprietary rehabilitation hospitals, a private, nonprofit hospital, university-based research, and the New England Regional SCI Center.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
New Hampshire

Catecholaminergic Modulation of Working Memory in Traumatic Brain Injury: An fMRI Study of the Effects of D2 Dopaminergic and Alpha-2 Adrenergic Agonistics

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Project Number: H133G000136
Start Date: July 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $150,000; FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 6/30/2004)

Abstract: This project determines the role of dopaminergic (DA) and alpha-2 adrenergic (A2A) mechanisms in the memory deficits experienced after a TBI. Many of the 1-2 million individuals who sustain a mild-to-moderate TBI (MMTBI) each year suffer deficits in working memory in the first several weeks after the injury. This project uses neurocognitive and (functional MRI) measures in two populations, one with normal working memory (healthy controls), and one with low working memory capacity (individuals with MMTBI) to: (1) characterize baseline working memory deficits in two domains (verbal and spatial) within one month of MMTBI, and (2) test and compare the ability of DA and A2A agonists to ameliorate working memory deficits in the two domains within one month of MMTBI. The study predicts that relative to healthy controls, individuals with MMTBI have greater deficits in verbal and spatial working memory, show greater improvement in working memory while on D2 and A2A agonists, and that DA and A2A agonists result in different profiles and degrees of working memory improvement. Furthermore, relative to controls, the fMRI of individuals with MMTBI should show less activation associated with low and high working memory load conditions, should normalize when acquired while on DA and A2A agonists, and should show selective prefrontal increased activation in response to increased working memory load.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
New York

Randomized Controlled Trial of Anti-Fatiguing Exercise to Improve Function in Multiple Sclerosis Patients

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Project Number: H133G010132
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: The goals of this study are: (1) to measure the changes in fatigue that result from a simulated workday and the next morning (incomplete recovery and residual fatigue); and (2) to study the effectiveness of a 12-week program of anti-fatiguing resistance exercises. Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a demyelinating disease of the central nervous system; the most common symptom of MS is a generalized sense of fatigue and reduced function. Few studies have considered the role of exercise as a treatment for fatigue in people with MS. Subjects with MS are randomly assigned an exercise group and receive an individualized progressive resistance training program of anti-fatiguing exercises to perform three days per week in the lab or at home.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
New York

Acupuncture as an Adjunctive Treatment in Stroke Rehabilitation

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Project Number: H133G000120
Start Date: July 1, 1999
Length: 36 months

NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD

NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $149,556; FY 00 $149,343; FY 01 $149,655; FY 02 (No-cost extension through 6/30/2003) FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2003)

Abstract: This project designs and evaluates safe and efficacious ways acupuncture may be used to benefit the functional recovery of survivors of stroke when used in addition to standard rehabilitation. The project directly addresses the medical, cognitive, and psychological sequelae of stroke, and addresses which acupuncture points and model to use, when to start acupuncture, and the use of electroacupuncture. The project also compares acupuncture with and without electrical stimulation in stroke treatment. The aim of the study is to use rigorous research methods to determine: (1) whether acupuncture has a beneficial effect on activities of daily living, motor and cognitive functioning, and quality of life in post-stroke survivors above and beyond standard rehabilitation; and (2) if so, whether the length of time after stroke, before acupuncture is begun, affects the extent to which acupuncture is effective, and optimal time to begin acupuncture therapy. In addition, it is important to determine whether there is any benefit to initiating acupuncture treatment in stroke survivors who are well past the subacute stage and who have apparently reached a plateau in their recovery.
Muscle Strength, Physical Work Capacity and Functional Performance in Individuals with Down Syndrome

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Project Number: H133G030150
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,046

Abstract: This project evaluates the minimal muscle strength and endurance thresholds required for daily functional performance, such as rising from a chair, ascending or descending stairs, the ability to walk fast enough to cross a street in the time allotted at signaled intersections, and general walk/run performance. The project also evaluates the effect of resistance training on the ability to perform these daily tasks and on quality of life in individuals with Down syndrome. This project is built on the premise that most individuals with Down syndrome have low levels of muscle strength which substantially contribute to functional limitations, poor work capacity and reduced quality of life. Although many other factors contribute to functional limitations and decreased quality of life in people with disabilities, muscle strength is a consistent major contributor, and muscle strength can easily be addressed in intervention programs.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Ohio

Empowering Persons with a Spinal Cord Injury Through a Shared Decision-Making Program

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Project Number: H133G020029
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,759; FY 03 $149,759

Abstract: This project systematically summarizes information concerning the various aspects of bladder management and SCI and prepares it in a format that allows persons with SCI to make more informed decisions about this issue. A panel of clinicians, experts in the care of persons with SCI, meet to develop a table of estimates concerning costs, complications, long-term risks, and effects on other aspects of care for each of the four commonly used approaches to bladder management and two emerging technologies. This panel is supported by a team that abstracts relevant literature and assists with decision analysis, when needed. These clinical estimates are shared with three focus groups of persons with SCI. The focus groups discuss the clinical findings and add relevant information about how the clinical aspects integrate with personal, vocational, and preference issues for individuals with SCI. The investigators use these two sets of information to develop a script for a multimedia presentation tailored to address the specifics of any individual’s clinical situation. The multimedia presentation is evaluated for its ability to enhance informed decisions among persons with SCI concerning bladder management.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Oregon

Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation: The Argentina Project

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Project Number: H133G000154
Start Date: August 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,905; FY 01 $149,645; FY 02 $149,038; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 7/14/2004)

Abstract: This project compares a cohort of 200 TBI patients from Argentina with a matched sample of 200 cases from the National TBI Model Systems Database. The Neurotrauma Group of the Argentina Society of Intensive Medicine (SATI) has instituted, at a group of trauma hospitals in Argentina, a level of TBI acute care equal to that found in U.S. hospitals. However, TBI patients in Argentina are discharged from this excellent acute care to no further formal treatment. This affords an opportunity to test two groups of TBI survivors who have equivalent levels of acute care but radically different postacute rehabilitation care. In the U.S. sample, all cases have had at least postacute, inpatient rehabilitation. Some have had outpatient treatment as well. Patients in both groups are case-matched for major predictive variables and are compared with respect to short- and long-term mortality and morbidity, to investigate the influence of postacute care on outcome. Additionally, the influence of acute care management practices on outcome is evaluated and regression analysis is used to establish the major predictive variables in this patient population. This project is the first to address integrated TBI management under the conditions of significant resource limitations that exist in many areas of the world.
Opening the “Black Box”: The Content and Process of Learning in Inpatient Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation

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Project Number: H133G020052
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $144,312; FY 03 $147,355

Abstract: This project aims to perform a systematic study of the content and process of learning events and teaching strategies in inpatient TBI rehabilitation, and to develop reliable tools by which they may be characterized. Much of the content and process of rehabilitation for TBI remains within a “black box” of unspecified therapy approaches and modalities. This project uses a variety of innovative strategies to open the “black box,” to collect and analyze data on content and process variables for both qualitative and quantitative purposes. Following a participatory action research model, the project utilizes a project team composed of experienced clinicians in the field of TBI rehabilitation. The team uses converging task analysis methods including group process, interviewing, and field observation to develop a systematic, hierarchically organized classification of learning events used in inpatient TBI rehabilitation, and a classification system and operational definitions of key therapist behaviors in the areas of task setup, task guidance, and task feedback/reinforcement. Particular attention is devoted to aspects of content and process relevant to errorless learning, on the assumption that this strategy will be particularly valuable to future research efforts. The team is assisted throughout by distinguished consultants with expertise in TBI and cognitive rehabilitation, errorless learning, and rehabilitation research methodology.
Naturalistic Action Impairment in Left Hemisphere Stroke: Cognitive Predictors and Consequences

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Project Number: H133G030169
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,936

Abstract: This project: (1) provides a detailed analysis of the cognitive and neuroanatomical predictors of naturalistic action (NA) performance in well-characterized individuals who have suffered left hemisphere stroke; (2) clarifies the relationships between left hemisphere apraxia and the performance of NA; (3) identifies the left hemisphere neuroanatomic structures associated with NA impairment; (4) improves the construct validity of the Naturalistic Action Test, a published measure of NA developed by the investigators, by establishing its relationship to tests of apraxia, and extending what is known of its relationships to measures of attention and executive function; and (5) educates rehabilitation professionals and caregivers about results these research goals. Acquired impairment in activities of daily living and instrumental activities of daily living such as meal preparation, dressing, and shopping is a common and persistent consequence of stroke, affecting approximately 50 percent of the nearly four million Americans living with the effects of stroke. Impairment in these NA activities has important consequences for caregiver burden and independence, and predicts future risk of failure to return to work, nursing home admission, and death.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Rhode Island

Shake It Up for Alcohol and Substance Use Reduction! Health Promotion and Capacity Building for Persons with Traumatic Spinal Cord Injuries

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Project Number: H133G010094
Start Date: January 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,783; FY 02 $148,927; FY 03 $149,939
Abstract: Project Shake It Up provides individualized and self-directed supports in the areas of physical activity, recreation, life skills, health promotion, and prevention, including alcohol and substance use reduction, for people with SCI. The project attempts to motivate positive life changes and build the capacities of individuals with SCI through the development of peer support networks and self-advocacy. Project Shake It Up also builds the capacity of two local nonprofit organizations controlled and staffed primarily by individuals with disabilities: Shake-A-Leg, Inc., whose focus is recreation and rehabilitation, and PARI, a center for independent living. Project objectives include: (1) developing a culturally competent training and recreation program, including a manual that addresses independent living issues such as disability rights, self-advocacy, education, employment, transportation, sexuality, alcohol and substance use, and health promotion; (2) implementing and evaluating the Shake It Up program for health promotion, physical activity, and alcohol and substance use reduction; (3) establishing peer-support networks to provide long-term support for intervention participants; (4) increasing the capacity of Shake-A-Leg and PARI to promote alcohol and substance use reduction through health promotion and empowerment; and (5) disseminating the program nationwide by making the manual the Shake It Up model widely available.
Aging After Spinal Cord Injury: Three Decades of Longitudinal Research

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Project Number: H133G020239
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,858; FY 03 $149,998

Abstract: This study performs a sixth data collection in the ongoing Minnesota longitudinal study in order to identify how the life situation of people with SCI has changed over the past three decades, with an emphasis on evaluating the roles of aging and environmental change. This study has used a revolving prospective panel design that follows participants longitudinally over time, adding new samples at different times to counteract attrition. The study was initiated in 1973, with three subsequent follow-ups carried out over a 25-year period (1984, 1988, 1993, and 1998). A Southeastern sample was added in 1993 to add a more diverse participant sample with a larger portion of women and minorities. The 699 respondents from the 25-year follow-up and a new sample of 500 individuals with SCI are asked to complete materials. This sixth study stage is the most extensive follow-up yet performed, with the addition of several new measures that include: (1) portions of the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS); (2) expanded assessment of employment history; (3) a measure of depression that was specially designed to avoid items that are confounded with health conditions (the Older Adult Health and Mood Questionnaire; and (4) a standardized measure of environment, the Craig Hospital Inventory of Environmental Factors. This study also has the added benefit of greater consumer involvement at each step of the study. Results of the study enhance both rehabilitation professionals’ and consumers’ understanding of the consequences of aging with SCI and lay the foundation for future interventions.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
South Carolina

Risk for Early Mortality After Spinal Cord Injury

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Project Number: H133G030117
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,984

Abstract: This project identifies the relationships of life adjustment, quality of-life, activities, fitness, and secondary conditions with length of survival and causes of death after SCI. Two studies utilize distinct prospective data sets. The data for study 1 was collected from 362 participants in 1990/1991, whereas the data for study 2 was collected from 597 participants in 1995/1996. Similar, but not identical, measures were obtained from each of the two study samples. Current mortality status is identified using the National Death Index and the Master Beneficiary Record and Summary Earnings files from the Social Security Administration. The most basic biographic and injury related variables are entered as a block first as statistical controls. The general life adjustment and health variables and the more specific secondary conditions variables, none of which have been the focus of previous studies, are investigated in more detail in relation to mortality, as they hold the greatest promise for intervention.
Health Promotion for Women Aging with Disability

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Project Number: H133G000226
Start Date: July 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,940; FY 01 $149,998; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 6/30/2004)
Abstract: This project studies whether an intervention to improve self-efficacy and connectedness improves health-promoting behaviors, which is related to improved physical and psychological health. The research is based on two hypotheses: First, regarding the effectiveness of the intervention, women aging with physical disabilities who participate in a health promotion workshop intervention report higher levels of connectedness and self-efficacy in disability management after the intervention and at a three-month follow-up, than women aging with physical disabilities who do not participate in the intervention; and second, regarding predictors of health outcomes and the mediating effect of health promoting behaviors, connectedness in social and intimate relationships and self-efficacy in disability management significantly predict health promoting behaviors, which predict physical and psychological health outcomes among women aging with physical disabilities, when severity of disability and socioeconomic status are controlled.
Assessment of Social Communication Abilities Following Traumatic Brain Injury

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Project Number: H133G010152
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 36 months

NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,657; FY 02 $146,203; FY 03 $149,968

Abstract: This project is guided by a model of social communication that includes cognitive components, awareness, the social environment, and receptive, processing, and expressive components. Activities include: (1) adapting social skills measures used with other populations to test the receptive, processing, and expressive social communication abilities of persons with TBI and comparing the results to those of a group of matched control subjects; (2) assessing the relationship between social communication ability and functional outcome for persons with TBI and their family members; and (3) investigating the relationship between executive functioning abilities and social communication skills, in an effort to determine the cognitive functions underlying social skills impairment. The study is expected to result in a clinically feasible and meaningful way to assess social communication abilities, which can be a guide to clinicians in developing empirically driven interventions to improve social skills.
Cost Effectiveness Of Rehabilitation Following Traumatic Brain Injury

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Project Number: H133G030144
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project researches the effectiveness of rehabilitation on two new cohorts of persons with TBI who have either received or not received comprehensive inpatient rehabilitation. At one year post injury, costs for services the persons with TBI are likely to receive and vocational losses are calculated and adjusted for demographic, socioeconomic, and neurological variables. The differences between the costs and vocational losses between the two groups are then compared to the actual reimbursements for comprehensive inpatient rehabilitation services.
Quantitative Study of Anterior and Posterior Walker Usage Dynamics in Children with Cerebral Palsy

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Project Number: H133G010069
Start Date: November 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,995; FY 02 $149,991; FY 03 $149,997

Abstract: This study enables caregivers to make more informed decisions regarding proper walker selection and follow-up by comparing the effects of anterior walkers versus the effects of posterior walkers among ambulatory patients with spastic cerebral palsy. It also provides a quantitative foundation for improving future pediatric walker designs. A hallmark of this study is the acquisition of functional performance data using standardized mobility test instruments. Each child entered into the study is evaluated using the Gross Motor Function Measure, in addition to the Pediatric Outcomes Data Collection Instrument at each stage of the study. The children also undergo standardized spasticity testing with the Ashworth and Tardieu assessment scales. Final statistical comparison/correlation of the quantitative (biomechanical) and functional assessment test results is used to streamline the walker evaluation process and offer a more practical tool for assessment and walker prescription.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Wisconsin

Enhanced Upper Limb Motor Control by Reduced Synergistic Muscle Patterns and Spasticity After Chemodenervation

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Project Number: H133G020112
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,995; FY 03 $149,995

Abstract: This research project assesses the impact of chemodenervation treatment on motor control in patients with spastic hemiparesis. Moreover, the project examines the neurophysiological mechanisms of improved motor control following chemodenervation treatment by utilizing state-of-the-art biomechanical analyses of motor abilities in combination with clinical measurements and consumer feedback related to patient-specific goals. The research targets hemiparetic stroke patients with functional limitations attributed to spasticity. The study identifies changes in spasticity, limb synergy, and functional reaching tasks using clinical and biomechanical measurements. This project aims to improve chemodenervation techniques through the knowledge imparted by the research.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I  
Delaware

A Low Cost, High Resolution Pressure Mapping System for the Prevention of Pressure Ulcers

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Project Number: H133S030163  
Start Date: October 1, 2003  
Length: 6 months  
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD  
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $74,437

Abstract: This project investigates a novel optically based pressure mapping system for the prevention of pressure ulcers as well as other medical applications. If successful, this sensor system can be inexpensively produced and provide high resolution pressure maps. Both caregivers and patients can receive important feedback regarding physical position history and the necessity to change position.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase II  
Oregon

An Innovative Dialysis Regeneration Cartridge for Portable Hemodialysis

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Project Number: H133S030019  
Start Date: October 1, 2003  
Length: 24 months  
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD

NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $275,219

Abstract: Many end-stage renal disease (ESRD) patients are severely limited in their mobility and freedom of life due to the time and effort involved in receiving life-sustaining hemodialysis treatment several times a week at clinics or hospitals. The overall objective of this project is to develop an innovative portable hemodialyzer based on a highly efficient dialysis regeneration cartridge (DRC). This portable hemodialyzer greatly improves the quality of life for ESRD patients and their families by allowing hemodialysis in any location. The technical objectives for this phase of research are: (1) to perform scale-up production of the DRC and to construct the full-scale DRC, (2) to test the biocompatibility and stability of the DRC, (3) to construct a prototype portable hemodialyzer that contains the DRC and test in vitro, (4) to construct a mini-DRC and test its efficacy and quality in vivo using animal models, and (5) to summarize Phase II work and evaluate the process.
Technology for Access and Function

Rehabilitation, biomedical engineering, and assistive technology research has produced results that have helped people with disabilities to achieve and maintain maximum physical function, live in their own homes, attain gainful employment, and participate in and contribute to society. NIDRR’s research addresses a broad range of technology, including systems of public technology, such as telecommunications and the built environment and orphan technology for individuals. The research program also encourages universal design practices.

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Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
California

Technologies for Children with Orthopedic Disabilities

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Project Number: H133E003001
Start Date: November 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $650,000; FY 01 $760,000; FY 02 $915,172; FY 03 $1,560,000

Abstract: The goal of this RERC is to improve the lives of children with orthopedic disabilities. Activities include: (1) conducting research to advance the state of knowledge; (2) disseminating this information to children and their parents, clinicians, and research investigators; (3) developing and testing prototype devices that are useful and efficacious; (4) transferring prototypes that have proven value to the marketplace; and (5) educating engineering students about the special needs of children with orthopedic disabilities. The research and development program is focused on three of the most important life activities of children: manipulation, mobility, and play and recreation. Three projects address the manipulation needs of children with upper limb deficiencies; one documents current fitting practices of children’s prosthetic clinics throughout North America, while a second develops improved elbows and prehensors for young children. A third project adds a power assist to the mobile arm support, a product developed and commercialized during the current grant period. The mobility projects address the needs of children with cerebral palsy, spinal bifida, SCI, muscle disease, and other chronic conditions that affect the child’s ability to ambulate. The RERC develops lightweight orthotic components, evaluates the effectiveness of functional electrical stimulation to correct gait abnormalities in children with cerebral palsy, and determines the appropriate time to provide children with wheeled mobility. The RERC program conducts clinical trials at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, Shriners Hospital LA, and Children’s Hospital LA. This project participates in the NIDRR Scholars program, providing motivated undergraduates with internship experience in disability research.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
California

RERC on Spinal Cord Injury: Keep Moving: Technologies to Enhance Mobility and Function for Individuals with Spinal Cord Injury

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Project Number: H133E020732
Start Date: November 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $899,974; FY 03 $899,932
Abstract: This RERC improves the lives of individuals with SCI by promoting their health, safety, independence, and active engagement in daily activities. Activities include: (1) monitoring trends and evolving product concepts that represent future directions for technologies in SCI, (2) conducting research to advance the state of knowledge, (3) disseminating the information to the population, (4) developing and testing prototype devices that are useful and effective and transferring them to the marketplace, (5) advancing employment opportunities for individuals with SCI, and (6) developing ways to expand research capacity in the field of SCI. The R&D program is focused on a key issue for individuals with SCI, the need to maintain mobility for as long as possible in order to enhance independent function. A survey of the user population determines where areas of greatest need exist. An active Mobile Arm Support for adults allows those with limited arm function greater independence. The shoulder-preserving wheelchair, gait training robotic assist device, and adaptive exercise equipment are all specifically geared to preserve or enhance mobility in individuals with SCI. A project on optimized wheelchair suspension keeps people mobile by increasing comfort and reducing tissue loading.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
California

Smith-Kettlewell Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center

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Project Number: H133E001002
Start Date: August 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $650,000; FY 01 $650,000; FY 02 $650,000; FY 03 $750,000
Abstract: This RERC conducts research and development for persons who are blind or who have visual impairments. For infants, the project explores a new objective means of identifying and differentiating vision and cognitive impairments using visually-evoked potentials (VEPs), facilitating the design of optimal rehabilitation plans for each child. For individuals who have co-existing disabilities (in addition to blindness or a visual impairment), the project explores new solutions for wheelchair travel and various technologies for wayfinding. It also investigates independent travel technology for those with combined visual and cognitive impairments. For the older age group, the project explores practical tools allowing lay personnel to screen and assess visual impairments affecting problems unique to this age group, so they can be identified and referred to appropriate clinical or rehabilitation specialists quickly. For consumers who are deaf-blind, the project develops a new generation of communication devices to expand the functions performed by existing products. It also explores novel approaches to graphics access by persons who are blind or who are deaf-blind, using virtual reality, sonification, and force feedback technologies. An innovative program of vocational and daily living technology development includes intensive interaction with service providers and applications of computer vision.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
District of Columbia

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Hearing Enhancement

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Project Number: H133E010107
Start Date: August 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $900,000; FY 02 $900,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 7/31/2004)

Abstract: This RERC develops and evaluates technology to accommodate the needs of people with hearing loss, and disseminates related information in a form that is understandable to consumers, service providers, employers, and community leaders. These goals are accomplished by: (1) developing and evaluating improved, cost-effective technological aids for each of the target populations identified; (2) developing and evaluating instrumentation for detecting hearing loss at an early age; (3) providing improved access to modern telecommunications; (4) developing and evaluating specialized technology for community, home, and work environments; and (5) pursuing an active program of dissemination and training to ensure effective utilization of AT. This project participates in the NIDRR Scholars program, providing motivated undergraduates with internship experience in disability research.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
District of Columbia

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Telerehabilitation

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Project Number: H133E990007
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $890,000; FY 99 $950,000; FY 00 $950,000; FY 01 $950,000; FY 02 $950,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2004)
Other funding: FY 01 $1,040,000 (Assistive Technology Research Center, U.S. Army Medical and Material Command)

Abstract: This RERC conducts research on various models of delivering rehabilitation services at a distance: telerehabilitation. Its development activities focus on exploiting promising technology to benefit people with disabilities. Research projects encompass the areas of: Telehomecare—telesupport to caregivers of stroke victims; Telecoaching—remote jobsite coaching of persons with mental disabilities; Telehealth pain management—psychological intervention at a distance; and Behavioral Virtual Reality—investigation and training of social and attending behaviors using virtual environment technology. Further research efforts explore integrating telerehabilitation into today’s health care delivery system and finding effective means for extending rehabilitation services to the peoples of the Pacific Rim. The center is also engaged in development projects focusing on Telemonitoring, passive sensing of functional performance and health parameters using unobtrusive instrumentation; HomeTelerehab, interactive systems for remote delivery of therapy, assessment, teaching, and demonstration at home; and Teleplay, therapeutic play, including embedded telesessment for children with disabilities. The Center establishes the following National Resource activities: (1) a Home Care and Telerehabilitation Technology Center; (2) a Home Care and Telerehab Education/Training Center; and (3) a Virtual Library on Telerehabilitation that serves as the focal point for information dissemination on telerehab-germane practice, policy, and technology. The work of the Center spans three institutions: The National Rehabilitation Hospital, The Catholic University of America, and Sister Kenney Rehabilitation Services.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Hearing Enhancement

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Project Number: H133E030006
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $949,999

Abstract: The activities of this RERC can be divided into five major component projects each consisting of multiple research and/or development projects with clearly stated objectives. Component A: (1) develops and evaluates new methods for field evaluation and fitting of hearing aids; (2) develops and evaluates techniques to enhance auditory self-monitoring; and (3) develops methods for predicting the speech-to-interference ratio and intelligibility of speech for a hearing aid when used with a wireless telephone. Component B conducts a needs assessment survey of people who use hearing technologies and evaluate the use of Bluetooth technology as a means of improving and expanding wireless connection to a hearing aid. Component C investigates environmental factors affecting children’s speech recognition abilities in classroom settings. Component D investigates the use of distortion product otoacoustic emission and reflectance for diagnosis of hearing loss and tinnitus; and creates and standardizes sets of synthesized nonsense syllables for use in hearing aid research. Component E develops a new, innovative model for the delivery of aural rehabilitation (AR) services to adults with hearing loss. In addition the RERC conducts a program of training and dissemination that will reach a diverse audience of people, both consumers and professionals.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)  
Florida

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology for Successful Aging

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Principal Investigator: William C. Mann, PhD, 352/392-2617  
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Project Number: H133E010106  
Start Date: October 1, 2001  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Margaret Campbell, PhD  
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $900,000; FY 02 $900,000; FY 03 $899,999

Abstract: The RERC-Tech-Aging conducts research, development, education, and information dissemination work on technology for successful aging. Projects of the RERC focus on the closely related areas of communications, home monitoring, and “smart” technologies. The technology driving the focus for this RERC is developing rapidly and requires an understanding of current and emerging technology areas, including wireless technology, computers, sensors, user interfaces, control devices, and networking. Successful integration of this technology into products and systems for older persons requires an understanding of their complex health, independence, and quality-of-life issues. The RERC-Tech-Aging tests currently available home monitoring products and demonstrates their effectiveness in relation to independence, quality of life, and health related costs. The RERC-Tech-Aging also identifies needs and barriers to home monitoring and communication technology, and addresses needs of special populations including rural-living, elders, and people aging with disability. The RERC-Tech-Aging brings together national expertise to meet this challenge, including major universities, industry leaders working in this area, major aging or aging-related organizations, major federal agencies that relate to funding or services in this area, other NIDRR-funded RERCs and RRTC, and service-related organizations that assist in identifying study participants.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Georgia

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Mobile Wireless Technologies for Persons with Disabilities

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Principal Investigator: Helena Mitchell, PhD; Michael Jones, PhD (Shepherd Center); John Peifer (Georgia Tech), 404/894-0058 (Mitchell); 404/352-2020 (Jones); 404/894-7028 (Peifer)
Public Contact: Saliman Zook, 404/385-4075; Fax: 404/894-1445

Project Number: H133E010804
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $1,000,000; FY 02 $1,000,000; FY 03 $1,000,000
Abstract: This RERC develops appropriate and effective applications of wireless technologies that enhance the independence of people with disabilities. With an overall goal of promoting independence and autonomy of people with disabilities, the RERC has two primary aims: (1) ensure equitable access to mobile wireless products and services by people with disabilities of all ages and abilities; and (2) investigate promising applications of mobile wireless technologies in support of employment, independent living, and community integration of people with disabilities. To accomplish these aims, the RERC is organized into three main sections: (1) the Research Section investigates needs, policies, and promising applications of mobile wireless technologies to promote independence. Research initiatives include assessment of user needs, evaluation of emerging technologies, and policy initiatives that influence the practices, policies, and regulations that affect accessibility of wireless technologies, (2) the Development Section includes projects that address universal access, investigation of new applications of wireless technologies, and innovative design solutions to support independent living of people with disabilities, (3) the Training and Dissemination Section promotes the synthesis of new knowledge into practice.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Georgia

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Workplace Accommodations

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Project Number: H133E020720
Start Date: November 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $899,997; FY 03 $900,000

Abstract: This RERC identifies, designs, and develops devices and systems to enhance the workplace productivity of people with disabilities. Universal design is a primary focus of the Center—making the design of products and environments usable by all workers to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The RERC’s research projects evaluate existing workplace products and services and determine areas where further product development is needed. The Center also studies archival materials to identify factors that contribute to successful or unsuccessful outcomes, and analyzes policies and practices that may influence the nature and availability of workplace accommodations for persons with disabilities. The RERC’s development activities focus on Remote Services and Universal Design in the Workplace. The Remote Services projects investigate ways that remote technologies such as videoconferencing and telework can be used to facilitate employment and provide technical support services to people with disabilities. The Universal Design projects work with manufacturers to develop new generations of universally designed and accessible products. Digital human modeling tools developed by the project provide visualizations of products or systems with human interaction and movement and reduce the need for preliminary physical prototypes. Products are developed for workers in office, manufacturing, retail/sales, service industry, and other environments. Finally, training, technical assistance, and dissemination activities on workplace accommodations and universal design promote the transfer of new knowledge into practice.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Georgia

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Wheeled Mobility

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Principal Investigator: Stephen H. Sprigle, PhD; Randy Bernard, 404/385-4302 (Sprigle); 404/385-4691 (Bernard)
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Project Number: H133E030035
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $949,988

Abstract: The goal of this RERC is to undertake a major shift in the way wheeled mobility is conceptualized and understood, from the design of assistive devices that enable some individuals to perform some activities, to the design of a broad range of interventions that enable as many individuals as possible to actively engage and participate in everyday community life. Research activities include: (1) User Needs and Design Input uses participatory focus groups to identify needs of wheelchair users; (2) User Needs of Older Adults assesses the needs of older adults living at home and in other residential settings; (3) Effects of Environment and Mobility Technology on Participation and Activity measures the influences of environmental barriers and specialized wheelchair technology on participation and activity in everyday life; (4) Efficacy of Animation and Visualization Training uses computer simulation techniques to investigate their efficacy in improving mobility training; and (5) Clinical and Functional Implications of Seating Standards and Guidelines studies the relationship between standardized measures of cushion performance and actual impact on wheelchair users. Development efforts include: (1) development and marketing of new mobility devices in collaboration with industry design partners; (2) development of a wheelchair for frail elders that can be used in any residential environment; (3) interventions to overcome barriers to participation including guidelines and technologies to help wheelchair users overcome environmental and technological barriers; (4) development of animation and visualization training through computer simulations to improve training in transfers and outdoor mobility; and (5) development of valid wheelchair cushion test methods which enables clinicians to prescribe appropriate wheelchair cushions based on positioning and load distribution.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Illinois

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Prosthetics and Orthotics

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Principal Investigator: Dudley S. Childress, PhD, 312/238-6500
Public Contact: Resource Unit Help Line, 312/238-6524 (V); 312/238-6530 (TTY); Fax: 312/238-6510

Project Number: H133E980023
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $900,000; FY 99 $900,000; FY 00 $900,000; FY 01 $900,000; FY 02 $900,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2004)

Abstract: This RERC studies human performance as assisted by prosthetic and orthotic systems with the aim of engineering improved prostheses and orthoses through deeper scientific understanding of their function. Research and development activities include: (1) development of automated alignment methods for prostheses and orthoses, based on characterization of foot rocker shape during walking; (2) investigations of shock absorption properties of the human locomotor system and of prosthetic/orthotic systems; (3) mechanical considerations for improved crutch ambulation; (4) studies of standard human walking; (5) determination of prosthetic foot roll-over shapes and other characterizations; (6) examination of the effects of shoes on kinematic and kinetic parameters of gait; (7) development of a portable, real-time, 3-D gait evaluation system (3-D Direct Ultrasound Ranging System) that is able to provide estimates of walking quality (outcomes) using a simple technology; (8) development of a computer-based visualization aid that displays prosthetic arms on the human body before the arms are fabricated, to assist with decision making and fitting; (9) study of factors affecting reach when using a trans-humeral prosthesis; (10) development of humeral rotators, particularly for persons with bilateral trans-humeral limb loss; (11) advancement of design of prosthetic and orthotic (P & O) components and systems to technology transfer and utilization; (12) development and delivery of validated data-gathering instruments and a prototype database for collection, storage, and processing short and long-term information concerning outcomes of P & O fitting; (13) collaboration with the RERC on Land Mines and others engaged in related research; (14) graduate education (including persons with disability) in biomedical engineering, concentrating in prosthetics and orthotics; and (15) publication of research work in scholarly journals; presentations at conferences; and interaction with consumers, clinicians, engineers, scientists, and the general public through a quarterly newsletter, telephone, Internet, and through personal meetings.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center: Improved Technology Access for Land Mine Survivors

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Principal Investigator: William Kennedy Smith, MD; Dudley S. Childress, PhD
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Project Number: H133E980031
Start Date: November 1, 1998
Length: 60 months

NIDRR Officer: Robert J. Jaeger, PhD

NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $850,000; FY 99 $850,000; FY 00 $850,000; FY 01 $850,000; FY 02 $850,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 10/31/2004)

Abstract: This RERC is active in research, development, and demonstration; consumer surveys; education and training; utilization activities; technical assistance; and dissemination relating to improved technology access for land mine survivors. To accomplish these activities, the project: (1) maintains a database of rehabilitation service providers and assessments of current prosthetic technologies; (2) develops or adapts technical advances in the design, production, and delivery of appropriate assistive devices; (3) designs and disseminates education, training, management, and outcome programs; (4) acts as a clearinghouse, providing researchers, educators, administrators, and funders access to resources that have been developed to facilitate service delivery to amputees in the United States and other countries; (5) disseminates information through an international newsletter and international journals, telecommunications, presentations at international meetings, training programs, consultations, open discussions, and other types of communication; and (6) develops and disseminates specific programs and products that address the needs of amputees and service providers in low-income countries where the vast majority of land mine survivors live. The RERC also establishes an Advisory Council that includes consumers and practitioners.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Illinois

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Recreational Technologies and Exercise Physiology Benefiting Persons with Disabilities (RERC Rec-Tec)

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Principal Investigator: James H. Rimmer, PhD
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Project Number: H133E020715
Start Date: November 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $899,536; FY 03 $899,725

Abstract: This program researches access to recreational opportunities and physical endurance of people with disabilities, targeting four primary areas: (1) increased access to fitness and recreation environments; (2) interventions to increase physical activity and recreation participation; (3) adherence strategies to reduce physical activity relapse and dropout rates; and (4) randomized clinical trials to evaluate improvements in health and function. Research and development projects include: (1) a comprehensive needs assessment that involves ongoing assessment of consumer needs as they pertain to existing and emerging recreational and fitness technologies; (2) research on the use of information technology and a newly designed environmental accessibility instrument for facilitating access to recreational and fitness environments and promoting improved health and function; (3) exercise physiology research on the use of “teleexercise” for promoting participation and for monitoring intensity and physiological/psychological outcomes of home-based exercise programs; (4) development of broadly applicable modification kits for retrofitting cardiovascular exercise equipment and determining the efficacy of the new adaptations in improving fitness, development of virtual exercise environments to promote exercise participation and adherence and to facilitate monitoring of health outcomes; (5) development of technology to allow users adaptive control of exercise machines; and (6) development of an online Rec-Tec solutions database on currently available recreational and fitness technologies allowing the RERC to produce a rapid and sustained impact by using information technology to make available solutions more accessible to consumers. Two training projects promote capacity building for future recreation, fitness, exercise physiology, engineering, and rehabilitation professionals, and two additional training projects support professional development.
RERC on Rehabilitation Robotics and Telemanipulation: Machines Assisting Recovery from Stroke (MARS)

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Principal Investigator: W. Zev Rymer, MD, PhD
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Project Number: H133E020724
Start Date: November 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $805,453; FY 03 $874,845
Abstract: This program centers its research and development on restoring function in hemispheric stroke survivors. Five projects assess five different approaches that have the potential to improve performance of the upper extremity, and one project attempts to restore locomotion. These projects include: (1) robotic therapy for force training of the upper extremity in chronic hemiparetic stroke; (2) gait restoration in hemiparetic stroke patients using goal-directed, robotic-assisted treadmill training; (3) development of a robotic system with an augmented reality interface for rehabilitation of brain-injured individuals; (4) rehabilitation of finger extension in chronic hemiplegia; and (5) a home-based telerehabilitation system for improving functional hand and arm movement recovery following stroke. In addition to these projects, the RERC develops tools for training research and development of a variety of client populations including medical students, physician residents, graduate students in engineering and neuroscience, and allied health clinicians, including physical and occupational therapists. The broad intent is to develop devices that assist the therapist in providing treatments that are rationally based, intensive, and long in duration. This project is a collaboration of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Washington, D.C., Catholic University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the University of California at Irvine.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)  
Illinois  

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center in Prosthetics and Orthotics  

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Principal Investigator: Dudley S. Childress, PhD, 312/238-6500  
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Project Number: H133E030030  
Start Date: October 1, 2003  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman  
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $949,998

Abstract: This Center conducts ten research projects, three of which are pilot studies. In the area of human locomotion the objectives are to conduct quantitative studies that include non-disabled gait, modeling of gait, roll-over shape influence on transtibial amputee gait, gait initiation, shock absorption studies, the role of the spine in walking, transfemoral socket design studies, and evaluation of stance-control orthotic knee joints. Pilot studies, where preliminary data is not available, are proposed on partial foot prosthesis/orthosis systems, on evaluation of Ankle Foot Orthoses (AFOs) and on the design of a Shape & Roll foot for children. Six developmental projects include a simple gait monitoring instrument (Direct Ultrasound Ranging System), a new prosthetic ankle joint that adapts to inclines, and a manual through which individuals in low-income countries can make their own artificial feet. In addition, two upper-limb prosthetics development projects are proposed that deal with reaching, manipulation, and grasping. Finally, an outcomes measurement tool is developed for prosthetics and orthotics (P&O) facilities in their reporting to the American Board of Certification (ABC). The vision for this RERC is to improve the quality of life for persons who use prostheses and orthoses through creative applications of science and engineering to the P&O field. The goal is to uncover new knowledge and understanding in P&O and to bring more quantification to the field, which will enable them to develop new concepts and devices to improve the quality, cost-effectiveness, and delivery of P&O fittings.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Illinois

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology Access for Land Mine Survivors

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Project Number: H133E030017
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Robert J. Jaeger, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $950,000

Abstract: The Center strives to improve the quality and availability of amputee and rehabilitation services for landmine survivors by focusing on the development of “appropriate technology”, i.e. technology that is most suitable to the limited technical and human resources available in most mine-affected regions through the application of research methodologies, the development of mobility aids, and the creation of educational materials, all of which are designed specifically for mine-affected populations and disseminated through a network of rehabilitation service providers in mine-affected regions. Laboratory-based research projects investigate issues of importance relating to transtibial (TT) alignment, ischial containment socket trim lines as they relate to the gait of transfemoral (TF) amputees, and the evaluation of a non-toxic resin for the direct lamination of prosthetic sockets. Field-based research evaluates an anatomically based transtibial alignment methodology and a wheelchair prototype manufacturing and dissemination strategy. Development projects, many of which contain research components, can be classified into two areas: those that improve the service delivery through improved fabrication techniques, and those that develop appropriate prosthetic components and mobility aids. In order to promote the successful transfer of techniques and technologies that are developed, the RERC creates training materials that describe the manufacture, assembly, and use of the technique or devices developed under the research and development program. Additionally, because the current number of trained prosthetic technicians in developing countries is far from sufficient to adequately meet the needs of landmine survivors, the center produces education and training materials covering the basic science of prosthetics and orthotics. All materials are adapted to the specific languages, culture and needs of the mine-affected regions served by the RERC and distributed through a blended distance learning network.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)  
Michigan

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Ergonomic Solutions  
for Employment

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Project Number: H133E980007  
Start Date: August 1, 1998  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson  
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $800,000; FY 99 $800,000; FY 00 $800,000; FY 01 $800,000; FY 02 $800,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 1/31/2004)

Abstract: This RERC combines ergonomic interventions, work and worksite modifications, assistive technologies, and medical interventions to facilitate placement of workers with disabilities, and helps prevent development of subsequent musculoskeletal illnesses and injuries. The Model System establishes a database to include information on a broad range of interventions and case examples as well as procedures for assessing workers, analyzing jobs, identifying accommodation needs, and selecting interventions, including ergonomic technologies. The comprehensive approach involving rehabilitation medicine and ergonomics culminates in a web-based Model System that can be used by rehabilitation professionals, employers, consumers, and organizations.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
New York

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology Transfer

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Project Number: H133E980024
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $900,000; FY 99 $900,000; FY 00 $900,000; FY 01 $900,000; FY 02 $900,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2004)

Abstract: This RERC improves the quality of life for people with disabilities by: (1) advancing the methods of technology transfer through research, (2) transferring technologies into products through development, and (3) facilitating the commercialization of new and improved assistive devices. These three outcomes are accomplished through collaborations with academic, industrial, consumer, and government stakeholders. The Center, a partnership of technical, marketing, and consumer expertise and networks: (1) conducts research on the technology transfer process as it is applied to the field of assistive technology, and develops, validates, and disseminates comprehensive models of technology transfer; (2) applies the research results by implementing the technology transfer process through a development program; (3) identifies and transfers breakthrough technologies to industry through a demand-pull model, transferring at least three technologies annually; (4) identifies and transfers useful new inventions to the marketplace through a supply-pull model, transferring three to five products annually; (5) delivers training, dissemination, and technical assistance programs to stakeholders in the field; and (6) develops an online technology transfer course consisting of eight training modules accessible through the project’s web site. The dissemination program includes a state-of-the-practice conference and the development of a technology transfer program to be offered for presentation in year three. The Center functions as an intermediary and a catalyst, improving the process while expanding the network of stakeholders involved with the field. The end result: new and improved AT products available in the marketplace that benefit professional service providers, family members, and people with disabilities.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
New York

Rehabilitation Engineering and Research Center (RERC) on Universal Design and the Built Environment at Buffalo

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Project Number: H133E990005
Start Date: November 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $599,965; FY 00 $599,952; FY 01 $599,932; FY 02 $799,835; FY 03 $799,953

Abstract: The RERC on Universal Design and the Built Environment promotes the adoption of universal design. Research programs include the Prototype Anthropometric Database Project, a research database on anthropometrics of wheelchair users for application to ergonomic design, and The Buildings in Use Project that demonstrates the benefits of universal design by conducting post-occupancy evaluations of buildings currently in use. Product development efforts include development of prototypes for innovative universally designed products, evaluation and testing of these prototypes, and commercialization assistance to facilitate bringing each prototype to market. The Visitability Initiative conducts training and action research in eight cities to develop visitability demonstration projects, and is a collaboration with Concrete Change, a consumer advocacy organization focusing on making housing “visitable” by people with disabilities. The RERC’s activities also include universal design education and technical assistance, along with publication and dissemination of universal design resources.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
New York

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology Transfer
(T2RERC)

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Project Number: H133E030025
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $949,999

Abstract: The activities of this project transfer and commercialize new and improved assistive devices, conduct research to improve technology transfer practice, and support other stakeholders involved in the technology transfer process. Four research projects investigate innovative ways to facilitate and improve the process of technology transfer for all stakeholders: (1) Identify Innovative Technology Transfer Practices - draws critical success factors from examples of retrospective and prospective AT transfer case studies in various sectors; (2) Identify Innovative Technology Transfer Policies - traces the outputs and outcomes of Federal transfer programs supporting AT related projects and assesses their efficacy; (3) Facilitate AT Industry Innovation through Focused Market Research - provides a context for transfer opportunities involving the AT industry and for public policy decision making; and (4) Assess the Efficacy of Transferred Products - determines the extent to which products previously transferred through the T2RERC impact the functional capabilities of consumers. Four development projects increase the number and quality of successful transfers from RERC’s and other sources: (1) Transfer Products through a Supply Push Approach - facilitates the movement of new or improved prototype inventions to the marketplace through licenses, sales, or entrepreneurial ventures; (2) Transfer Technologies through a Demand Pull Approach - validates technology needs within the AT industry and introduces advanced technology solutions to address those needs; (3) Improve the Accessibility of New Mainstream Products - extends participatory research to integrate consumers’ functional requirements into the design of new mainstream products; and (4) Facilitate RERC Transfer Activity Through Informatics - establishes a pilot informatics infrastructure and assesses its utility for increasing communication, collaboration, and transfers between RERC’s.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)  
North Carolina

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Communication Enhancement

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Project Number: H133E980026  
Start Date: November 1, 1998  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson  
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $899,996; FY 99 $899,990; FY 00 $900,000; FY 01 $900,000; FY 02 $900,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 1/31/2004)

Abstract: This RERC uses innovative communications technologies to benefit researchers, engineers, rehabilitation service providers, developers, and users of alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) technologies. The project: (1) investigates attitudinal barriers toward technology use by elderly people with communication disorders, their listeners, and service providers; (2) studies the organizational strategies of adult AAC users to determine if preferences are predictive of performance using AAC; (3) studies how to improve AAC technologies for young children with significant communication disorders by evaluating learning demands and functional performance (also involves development of design specifications); (4) evaluates and enhances communication rate efficiency and effectiveness through the development of procedures and software technology that simulates and measures the performance of AAC technologies; (5) identifies barriers to employment, describes strategies to overcome them, documents design specifications for AAC technologies, and describes action plans to achieve successful employment outcomes; (6) increases employment opportunities for graduates of an employment and AAC program; and (7) develops a coordinated program that monitors and seeks out technology developments in both commercial form and prerelease development stages that affect the engineering and clinical AAC field.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
North Carolina

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Communication Enhancement

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Project Number: H133E030018
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $949,977

Abstract: The mission of this RERC is to assist people who use AAC technologies in achieving their goals across environments. The goals and objectives of the RERC are to advance and promote AAC technologies through the outputs and outcomes of research and development activities and to support individuals who use, manufacture, and recommend these technologies in ways they value. Research projects cover the following areas: (1) improving AAC technology to better support societal roles; (2) enhancing AAC access by reducing cognitive/linguistic load; and (3) enhancing AAC usability and performance. Projects address issues of literacy, telework, specialized vocabulary, contextual scenes and intelligent agents, improving interface performance, and monitoring and simulating communication performance. Development activities include: (1) technology and policy watch; (2) new interfaces; and (3) reducing the cognitive/linguistic burden on AAC users. Activities address monitoring emerging technologies, standards, and policies; technologies to supplement intelligibility of residual speech, dysarthric speech, and gesture recognition; brain interface; AAC WebCrawling; and enhancing the role of listeners in AAC interactions.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
North Carolina

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC) on Universal Design and the Built Environment at NCSU

North Carolina State University
Center for Universal Design
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Project Number: H133E990002
Start Date: September 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $399,989; FY 00 $399,967; FY 01 $399,955; FY 02 $599,914; FY 03 $389,965

Abstract: This RERC improves the accessibility and usability of the built environment and advances the field of universal design. To achieve its goals, the RERC conducts an integrated program of research and development programs, training programs, and a comprehensive program of information and referral and technical assistance. The major Center research project is developing multidisciplinary environmental assessment tools to evaluate the complex and dynamic relationship between the individual and the environment. Another research project is documenting a set of case studies of successful universal design implementations. Development projects include creating model architectural plans and products that demonstrate maximum universal usability. Training activities include postsecondary and continuing education and supporting the biennial international conference on universal design.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Oregon

National Center for Accessible Public Transportation

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Project Number: H133E030009
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $949,479

Abstract: This RERC addresses the need for improvements in the accessibility of public transportation. This center is both important and timely because of major changes in the travel industry, and the need to adapt to those changes in a way that provides safe and dignified travel for persons with disabilities. The transportation focus of this RERC is inter-city travel via air, rail, and bus. Air, rail, and over-the-road buses (OTRB) account for nearly all of the inter-city public transportation. Accessibility issues focus on persons with mobility, agility, and hearing disabilities and account for a large percentage of persons with disabilities. Two areas of research are addressed: (1) the biomechanics of wheelchair transfers in confined spaces; and (2) the perceptions, reactions, and attitudes of subjects towards existing and proposed accessibility solutions. The biomechanics studies include the use of a sophisticated six-camera motion analysis system in conjunction with force plates to determine the motions and forces involved in dependent and independent transfers in confined spaces, such as an aircraft aisle. The survey-based study includes comprehensive surveys of six different groups that are directly involved with accessibility issues including travelers with disabilities, non-travelers with disabilities, and employees of airlines and airports, OTRB operators, OTRB manufacturers, aircraft manufacturers, and rail operators. Drawing on results of their research, the RERC focuses on four development topics: (1) vehicle boarding technologies; (2) open caption communications systems; (3) single-aisle-vehicle accessible lavatories; and (4) passenger assistance training tools and techniques.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Pennsylvania

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Wheeled Mobility

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Principal Investigator: David M. Brienza, PhD; Clifford Brubaker, PhD
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Project Number: H133E990001
Start Date: January 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $900,000; FY 00 $900,000; FY 01 $900,000; FY 02 $1,064,561; FY 03 $115,743

Abstract: The RERC on Wheeled Mobility investigates the use of dynamic seating for reducing spasticity and enhancing seating comfort; investigates the biomechanical characteristics of soft tissue related to the risk of developing pressure ulcers and the relationship between pressure measurements and pressure ulcer incidence, develops and validates the use of outcomes measures for seating and mobility intervention; and investigates the use of the web as a seating decision support tool for consumers. This project also develops and evaluates a comparative data source for use in decision support of wheelchair selection, an interface for integrating external devices with powered wheelchairs; wheelchair seating standards, standardized postural measures, injury prevention wheelchair technologies, and enhanced controls for powered wheelchairs.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Wheelchair
Transportation Safety

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Project Number: H133E010302
Start Date: November 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $868,840; FY 02 $899,057; FY 03 $897,745
Abstract: This RERC aims to improve the safety of wheelchair users who remain seated in their wheelchair while using public and private motor-vehicle transportation. RERC tasks investigate and develop new wheelchair tiedown and occupant restraint system technologies, including wheelchair-integrated restraints and universal docking concepts, that enable wheelchair users to secure and release their wheelchair independently and quickly, and use an effective occupant restraint system without the need for assistance. The RERC also researches the issues and factors involved in providing improved occupant protection to wheelchair-seated drivers and passengers in rear and side impacts, and uses a multifaceted approach, including in-depth investigations of real-world accidents, to investigate the incidence, severity, and causes of injuries to wheelchair-seated occupants in different sizes of vehicles and in different types of crashes and non-impact incidents experienced during vehicle motion. In particular, this RERC explores the need for, and suitability of, using different levels of wheelchair securement and occupant restraint in larger public transit vehicles, with the goal of recommending and developing equipment and systems that provide for a safe ride and that are more compatible with the operational needs of the transit environment. The program includes a comprehensive research and development effort that involves consumers, manufacturers, students, clinicians, transport providers, and rehabilitation technology experts. The RERC also has active programs of information dissemination, training, and technology transfer using personnel, mechanisms, and facilities that have been previously established at the University of Pittsburgh/University of Michigan.
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Principal Investigator: Gregg C. Vanderheiden, PhD, 608/263-5788
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Project Number: H133E980008
Start Date: June 12, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $1,350,000; FY 99 $1,350,000; FY 00 $1,350,000; FY 01 $1,350,000; FY 02 $1,350,000; FY 03 No-cost Extension through 9/30/2003

Abstract: This RERC improves access by individuals with all types, degrees, and combinations of disabilities to a wide range of technologies, including computers, ATMs, kiosks, point-of-sale devices and smartcards, home and pocket information appliances, Internet technologies (XML, XSL, CSS, SMIL, etc.), intranets, and 3-D and immersive environments. As one component in a larger system of consumers, researchers, industry, and policy and public agencies, the Trace Center’s program is designed to work within the existing structure, supporting other components and coordinating its efforts to address the functioning of the whole. The program identifies strategies that can be used by industry to broaden the user base for their standard products, so individuals with as broad a range of abilities as possible are able to use standard products directly. Further, the Center targets specific compatibility and interconnection standards work to ensure that people who cannot use products directly are able to operate them using assistive technologies. The Center focuses on the use of targeted projects and collaboration, both national and international, to carry out the research, development, information dissemination, training, and standard-setting activities required. The approach is intended to be flexible, forward-looking, and broad in scope, yet focused on key access issues as defined by its consumer constituency and its research programs.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Wisconsin

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Telecommunication Access

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Project Number: H133E990006
Start Date: September 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $675,000; FY 00 $675,000; FY 01 $675,000; FY 02 $675,000; FY 03 $750,000

Abstract: This RERC identifies telecommunication access barriers in current and future technologies, work with others in the field to identify solution strategies, test them, implement any necessary standards, and assist industry in transferring the ideas into their commercial products. Activities of the Center include research, applied research and development, training and technical assistance, and dissemination and utilization. Technologies being addressed include: (1) customer premises equipment (CPE) of all types, including phones, video phones, pagers, messaging systems, etc.; (2) telecommunication systems and services, including voice mail, interactive voice response systems, etc.; (3) network topologies; (4) telecommunications standards; and (5) next-generation multimedia telecommunication systems, including telecollaboration, virtual meetings, etc. The primary focus is on making these systems directly usable by people with all types and degrees of disability. A secondary focus is ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies such as TTYs, assistive listening devices, alternative input devices, and devices with alternative displays.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Wisconsin

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Universal Interface and Information Technology Access

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Project Number: H133E030012
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $1,000,000
Abstract: The focus of this RERC is on both access to information (e.g., content) in its various forms, as well as access to interfaces used within content and by electronic technologies in general. The research and development program is carefully designed to provide an interwoven set of projects that together advance accessibility and usability in a fashion that takes into account, and supports, the full range of access strategies used by manufacturers and people with disabilities. These strategies range from enhancing the design of mainstream products that can be used by individuals with different ability sets to enhancing the ability of users to deal with the information and interfaces as they encounter them. Key to these projects are the development of new models and approaches for characterization of the functional requirements of current and future interfaces, and a better understanding of the type, diversity, and similarity of functional limitations across etiologies and disabilities. Research activities include: model generation and initial pilot studies for the characterization of interface requirements (current and emerging) and cross-disability user abilities; abstract user interfaces and human interface sockets; emerging technologies and future research needs; and accessible real-time visual information presentation in meetings and virtual meetings. Development projects include: tools to facilitate the incorporation of cross-disability interface features in public information technologies; tools to facilitate AT-IT interoperability; server-based and “virtual assistive technology;” and support for national and international standards and guidelines efforts.
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)
Wisconsin

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Accessible Medical Instrumentation

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Project Number: H133E020729
Start Date: November 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $901,131; FY 03 $899,614

Abstract: The RERC on Accessible Medical Instrumentation: (1) increases knowledge of, access to, and utilization of healthcare instrumentation and services by individuals with disabilities; (2) increases awareness of and access to employment in the healthcare professions by individuals with disabilities; and (3) serves as a national center of excellence for this priority topic area. Specific research projects include: (1) needs analysis for people with disabilities as both recipients and providers of healthcare services, and for manufacturers of healthcare instrumentation; (2) usability analyses to determine what makes certain medical instrumentation either exemplary or problematic yet essential to healthcare service delivery; (3) accessibility and universal usability analysis to identify classification and measurement approaches that could be used to explore metrics for accessibility of medical instrumentation; and (4) policy analyses to explore how medical policies affect healthcare utilization and employment in the healthcare professions of persons with disabilities. Specific development projects include: (1) development of tools for usability and accessibility analysis; (2) development of modified and new accessible medical instrumentation; (3) monitoring of, and involvement in development of, emerging, accessible healthcare technologies; and (4) development of design guidelines for accessible medical instrumentation and model policies for healthcare service delivery.
Wayfinding Technologies for People with Visual Impairments: Research and Development of an Integrated Platform

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Project Number: H133A011903
Start Date: December 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $449,065; FY 02 $449,895; FY 03 $449,444

Abstract: This project develops a hardware and software platform that provides accessible location and navigation information for people who are blind or who have visual impairments who are traveling in indoor and outdoor environments. Development activities focus on creating an effective user interface and developing a common hardware and software platform that exploits the Global Positioning System (GPS) and other current and emerging navigation technologies. Specific activities include integrating navigation aids that have been developed by Sendero LLC (GPS Talk) and by the University of California-Santa Barbara/CMU group headed by Jack Loomis (the Personal Guidance System, or PGS). The platform also accesses information from other devices, including Talking-Signs® type devices, intersection signalization controls, an indoor digital sign system to be developed during this project at the University of Minnesota, a spatialized tactile stimulator to be developed at UCSB, a dead reckoning pedestrian navigation system, and cellular phones with GPS capabilities. For navigating in outdoor environments, a system could aid pedestrians who are blind at complex intersections and roundabouts, and devices could assess and prevent veer.
California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC)  
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**Project Number:** H133A010702

**Start Date:** October 1, 2001

**Length:** 60 months

**NIDRR Officer:** Dawn Carlson, PhD, MPH

**NIDRR Funding:** FY 01 $299,910; FY 02 $299,893; FY 03 $229,150

**Abstract:** This project increases the capacity of the independent living community to work with its members and stakeholders to collect research data on access and use of AT to improve the lives of people with disabilities. Using a participatory research approach, the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) is using an ecological model to develop cumulative research data on the use of and access to AT by people with disabilities. University researchers train participants in research methods and assist with data collection and analysis. Community advocates conduct focus groups, surveys, and action research in their respective regions. Advocates also train university students in community-based research related to AT and independent living.
Information Technology Technical Assistance and Training Center (ITTATC)

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Project Number: H133A000405
Start Date: November 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $1,500,000; FY 01 $1,500,000; FY 02 $1,500,000; FY 03 $1,500,000
Abstract: This project provides information, training, and technical assistance to support the implementation of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act to industry, state officials, trainers and consumers. The Center promotes the benefits of universal design to technology manufacturers, product designers and engineers, technical writers, marketers, and purchasers of IT. It also works closely with federal regulatory agencies including the Federal Communications Commission, the Access Board, the Department of Justice, and the General Services Administration to advance understanding and knowledge utilization of approaches to the requirements of Sections 255 and 508 through training and technical assistance activities. The Information Technology Technical Assistance and Training Center is a collaborative project of the Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access, World Institute on Disability, University of Iowa Law, Health Policy and Disability Center in Washington DC, Trace Center at the University of Wisconsin Madison, NIDRR’s Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers, and ITTATC’s National Advisory Council among others.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Iowa

Technology for Independence: A Community-Based Resource Center
(TI:CBRC)

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Project Number: H133A021801
Start Date: November 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $299,965; FY 03 $299,945
Abstract: The CBRC builds and enhances the capacity of community-based and consumer-directed disability organizations to design, implement, and disseminate research activities and projects that promote environmental access and use of technology for independence. The CBRC uses a combination of implementation strategies such as leadership development, training, and technical assistance activities, web-assisted audioconference training, distance education, and three annual onsite symposia in Iowa City, Houston, and Washington, D.C. CBRC activities are directed to selected research teams, research centers, community-based disability organizations, and University research centers. Using multi- and inter-disciplinary models, the CBRC builds and enhances the capacity of these and other entities to conduct research that is both scientifically rigorous and relevant to real-world social, policy, and legal interests. The research team framework pairs researchers from community-based organizations with researchers from university-based research centers to improve existing and future collaborative relationships. The research pairs comprise individuals with diverse backgrounds, in terms of their disability type and severity, ethnicity, and socioeconomic experiences. The participants form close working relationships designed to advance knowledge in the areas related to technology for independence and environmental access. The project merges the national experience and expertise of ILRU regarding independent living and principles of choice and self determination, with the nationally recognized research expertise of LHPDC in the areas of technology access and use, employment policy, and civil rights.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Kansas

Mental Retardation and Technology Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project

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Project Number: H133A010602
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $299,871; FY 02 $299,778; FY 03 $299,715

Abstract: This project increases the ability of people with mental retardation and other cognitive disabilities to use electronic and information technology as well as assistive and universally designed technologies. It examines current technology design features, gaps that exist in its utilization, what state-of-the-art technology exists or is emerging that would provide benefits, and what modifications to existing or new technology would enhance this population’s inclusion in the community and integration into the workplace. The project includes two national consensus conferences, in conjunction with the national conferences held annually or semi-annually by American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR) and The Arc of the United States, to address these issues. Additional activities include reviewing and synthesizing the extant literature, canvassing existing disability-related technology advocates and associations (including Tech Act Centers and related entities), and conducting focused interviews of key stakeholders. The project also includes a Special Interest Group on Technology and Mental Retardation through the AAMR, which allows stakeholders in the field the opportunity to participate in all project activities. A national expert advisory panel consisting of representatives from national disability organizations, manufacturers, people with mental retardation, experts in the field, and parent/family representatives are involved in all consensus-building activities and advise the project through its duration. The project is a collaboration of the Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas, The Arc, the AAMR, AbleLink Technologies, the Coleman Institute on Cognitive Disabilities, the Self-Advocate Coalition of Kansas, and the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Missouri

**Assistive Technology in the Community**

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**Project Number:** H133A010701
**Start Date:** January 1, 2002
**Length:** 60 months
**NIDRR Officer:** Bonnie Gracer

**NIDRR Funding:** FY 01 $300,000; FY 02 $300,000; FY 03 $300,000

**Abstract:** This project promotes AT as a means of increasing participation in major life activities by people with disabilities. Project activities include: (1) assessing the use, disuse, injury, and effects that AT has on the participation of people with disabilities in major life activities, to determine what technologies are of the most benefit in community settings; (2) implementing a community-based AT program in collaboration with Paraquad, a nationally recognized Center for Independent Living, to improve the satisfaction of participants in their self-chosen life activities; (3) educating consumers, independent living staff, educators, health care professionals, AT industry leaders, and public policymakers about the influence AT has on major life activities.
Advancing Assistive Technology Outcomes

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Project Number: H133A010401
Start Date: November 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $449,787; FY 02 $449,932; FY 03 $449,967

Abstract: This program advances the field of AT outcomes measurement. Research activities include: (1) performing a critical analysis of existing approaches to measurement and further developing instruments that are promising; (2) identifying unmet needs and assessing barriers to AT outcomes measurement; and (3) undertaking a prospective longitudinal study of factors associated with assistive device adoption, use, and discontinuance. Development activities include: (1) developing and evaluating independent electronic data collection or computer-assisted systems for the capture, analysis, and interpretation of AT outcomes information; (2) developing and evaluating improved methods and systems for communication of outcomes information among significant stakeholders; (3) automatic log file performance data-capturing for AT outcomes assessment; and (4) development of new or improved AT outcomes tools.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Ohio

Assistive Technology and Cognitive Disabilities

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Project Number: H133A030810
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $375,132

Abstract: This project assesses the use of several types of information technologies by children and adults with cognitive disabilities, specifically individuals with TBI and mental retardation. Outcomes include: (1) a catalog of existing portable devices for memory and organization (2) a list of features that enhance or inhibit use of these general purpose and special-use technologies, (3) results of needs surveys regarding use of these technologies, (4) white papers describing project findings, (5) tip cards to assist families in purchasing devices, (6) stronger partnerships between the consumer and research and development communities, and (7) recommendations for memory and organization device modifications and features for individuals with brain injury and mental retardation. The Brain Injury Association, Inc. leads and administers this collaborative partnership, which includes the Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems Projects at Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, the Institute on Disabilities/Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities at Temple University, and the University of Akron.
Think and Link: Email for Individuals with Cognitive Disabilities

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Project Number: H133A010610
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $300,000; FY 02 $300,000; FY 03 $300,000

Abstract: This project improves the access and use of electronic mail by individuals with cognitive disabilities resulting from brain injury. The Internet’s email component has created an unparalleled communication network linking people for commercial and social purposes. It holds tremendous potential for lessening social isolation, one of the most pervasive and devastating consequences of brain injury. However, virtually nothing is known about what modifications are required to provide successful access to this technology to people with cognitive disabilities that result from brain injury. In addition, the diverse cognitive impairments confronting people with brain injury render an enormous challenge to the development of assistive devices that could improve accessibility to email. Activities of this project include: (1) identifying the wide range of issues critical for long-term, effective use of email by people with cognitive disabilities; (2) developing a diagnostic protocol, a cyber-evaluation of the potential of a person with cognitive disabilities to use electronic communication; (3) developing a software toolkit that allows caregivers, support persons, and professionals to fit an individual user with a customized email system; (4) creating a virtual clinic that supports widespread dissemination and use of these materials by cognitive rehabilitation professionals. An open-source software site on the web allows other worldwide researchers to use the new tools and contribute tools of their own.
Information Technology for Independence: Community-Based Research

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Project Number: H133A021916
Start Date: January 1, 2003
Length: 60 months

NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $299,945; FY 03 $299,534

Abstract: This project explores methods and technologies to mitigate barriers to computer and Internet use encountered by people with visual impairments. These barriers include limited computer ownership and Internet availability, difficulty in obtaining accommodations for functional limitations (including cost issues), psychological barriers arising from inadequate coaching or mentoring, and the limited accessibility of most Web sites to individuals with visual impairments. Accessibility can be promoted through computer ownership, Internet availability, assistive technologies, and knowledgeably-staffed public computer stations, such as at independent living centers. Evaluation of these barriers and identified accommodation strategies is the first research task of this project. Preceded by focus groups and a widely-disseminated survey, the match of correct assistive device(s) to the individual and appropriate coaching and mentoring will be tested at community-based computer laboratories. The second research task is to develop and evaluate a new approach to Internet accessibility—a Gateway server. This Gateway delivers the contents of any Web site, whatever its level of accessibility, by transforming these contents into the most accessible format for any user, as Google does for personal digital assistant (PDA) users. The Gateway will promote Internet accessibility without requiring that commercial Web sites follow promulgated guidelines or standards for users with disabilities, something that Web developers often seem to resist. Additionally, this project develops innovative metrics that promote a scientific approach to the analysis of Web accessibility and is conducting large-scale studies of webpage accessibility to measure progress in accessibility over time and to identify the impact(s) of new technologies.
ACCESS: Assisted Cognition in Community, Employment, and Support Settings

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Project Number: H133A031739
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $297,127

Abstract: Project ACCESS investigates the use of assisted cognition as a tool for caregivers in supporting individuals with disabilities in living, working, and fully participating in community activities. The use of assisted cognition devices has the potential to increase an individual’s independence and decrease their reliance on the family/friend/caregiver network and community support staff. Devices in development include the activity compass and the ADL Prompter. The activity compass meshes several technologies (Palm Pilot, GPS receiver, and wireless modem). Over time, the device learns a user’s typical daily routines, monitors for variations, and then decides whether a prompt is necessary when a routine is unexpectedly changed. The ADL prompter monitors data collected by sensors embedded in a living or work environment. Using artificial intelligence software, the data from these sensors are interpreted and decisions made based upon the needs of the user. Although initially designed for people with Alzheimer’s, these devices have applications as support tools for caregivers and people with disabilities since they potentially support “distributed caregiving” wherein the caregiver or family member monitors, prompts and/or supports from a distance.
**Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects**  
**Wisconsin**

### AToms Project: Assistive Technology Outcomes Measurement System

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**Project Number:** H133A010403  
**Start Date:** October 1, 2001  
**Length:** 60 months  
**NIDRR Officer:** Carol Cohen  
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 01 $450,000; FY 02 $450,000; FY 03 $450,000  
**Abstract:** The ATOMS Project (Assistive Technology Outcomes Measurement System) targets the definition and pre-development phases of a next-generation AT outcomes measurement system. A comprehensive needs assessment, prototype instrument development, and consensus building activities frame an integrated set of research and development activities to address urgent needs to identify components of a future AT outcomes measurement system. In addition, these activities generate information about the relationships of AT outcomes factors that produce a better understanding of AT use and abandonment.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
California

The Learning and Transfer of Prosthetic Control

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Principal Investigator: Stephen Wallace, PhD
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Project Number: H133G000024
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,011; FY 01 $149,011; FY 02 $148,900; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2003)

Abstract: By studying the use of a simulated body-powered upper-extremity artificial limb, this project hopes to reduce the learning time required to use a prosthetic limb effectively and to decrease the unusually high rejection rates for people with amputations fitted with a new prosthesis. Project objectives include: (1) describing how people learn to control and coordinate body-powered upper-extremity prostheses, by assessing tasks related to daily living, in regard to changes in movement strategies, the rate at which learning occurs, and the degree to which changes in performance are maintained over a retention interval; (2) understanding bilateral transfer of movement components used to reach, grasp, transport, and apply appropriate pressure to objects; and (3) determining whether the type of prosthesis (i.e., voluntary opening and voluntary closing) influences the rate at which an individual achieves functional control of activities related to prosthetic manipulation. After a thorough understanding of how people learn prosthetic control is developed, the simulator could be successfully employed after amputation, up to prosthesis fitting, to familiarize patients with prosthesis use and control skills. Findings could also provide therapists with new strategies for training people with amputations to regain functional independence with a newly acquired artificial limb. Finally, the experiments contribute to the development of a theoretical knowledge base for clinical practice.
Sound Localization with Multichannel Compression Hearing Aids

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Project Number: H133G030118
Start Date: September 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: The primary objective of this research is to evaluate and compare wide dynamic range multichannel compression (WDRMCC) and linear hearing aids on localization (and speech perception through the VA component) since there have been no studies of auditory localization using WDRMCC. The research uses innovative strategies and an extension of previous work, by taking WDRMCC outside of the laboratory to evaluate it in the complexities of the normal auditory environment and looking at effects of hearing aid experience on the ability to localize sounds. In addition to examining the general efficacy of a new wearable WDRMCC hearing aid in localization tasks, the research objectives include detailed study of the specific changes that occur in sound localization with WDRMCC and linear amplification as a function of time and the differences between the two platforms.
"Cross Watch": Development of an Intersection Information System for Blind Travelers Based on Computer Vision

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Project Number: H133G030080
Start Date: September 15, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: The goal of this project is to develop and evaluate a system, based on computer vision technology, to give a blind traveler more information about intersections than is obtainable through conventional orientation and mobility techniques. Urban intersections (the most dangerous parts of a blind person’s travel, and the places where most accidents happen) are becoming increasingly complex, making safe crossing ever more difficult. The project develops a system named “Cross Watch” to help the blind person find the crosswalk, learn about the shape and nature of the intersection, find the pedestrian signal button, determine when the “walk” light is on, and alert him/her to any veering out of the crosswalk while crossing. The primary input to the system is images from a small camera carried like a pendant around the user’s neck, analyzed by software to extract the desired information. The specific goals are to: (1) gather a database of real images taken by blind persons at a variety of different kinds of intersections; (2) develop algorithms to process the images and extract the desired information; (3) incorporate the camera and algorithms in a portable prototype; and (4) conduct user testing to establish design parameters and human interface optimization. The software is designed to be capable of integration as a module for the “SignFinder” system already in development for finding printed signs in the camera images and reading them aloud to the user. The combined system provides a quantum leap forward in independent travel for blind persons.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Colorado

Development of an Assistive Technology Outcomes Measurement System Utilizing the International Classification of Functioning (ICIDH-2/ICF)

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Project Number: H133G030187
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,939

Abstract: This project furthers the development of a secure, Health Insurance Privacy and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) compliant, multi-site, web-based assistive technology (AT) outcomes system designed to capture data that enables the measurement of the impact of AT devices and services for children and adults with disabilities. The project results in the design and development of a working prototype complete with instructional support for users. The project is designed for easy addition of data fields to support the ever-evolving schema for outcomes assessment in AT. The use of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICIDH-2/ICF) as the framework for development builds on initial pilot work already completed by faculty of Assistive Technology Partners, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, and collaboration with two NIDRR funded national projects focused on AT outcomes development (ATOMS/CATOR). Information gained leads to maximizing the full inclusion and integration into society, employment, independent living, family support, and economic and social self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities, especially individuals with the most severe disabilities; and will lead to improved information and research on the effectiveness of AT devices and evidence-based practices.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Delaware

Automatic Generation of Optimal Tactile Graphics

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Project Number: H133G020103
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,700; FY 03 $149,770

Abstract: This project develops and implements image manipulation algorithms optimal for generating binary tactile graphics. Specifically, the following methods are optimized for the automatic translation of images to binary representations appropriate for tactile display: (1) Edge Detection—boundaries in images often represent important context queues; extracting edges allows these queues to be tactiley represented. This can be accomplished in a multi-resolution approach allowing the user to control the detail level presented. (2) Region Segmentation—graphic content can often be separated into distinct regions, or objects. While edge detection operations frequently yield broken boundaries, resulting in confusing tactile representations; segmentation can produce closed boundaries optimized to retain object integrity that can be combined with texturing procedures. (3) Tactile Texturing—binary texturing can be introduced to yield tactile information on the image gray level or color; such texturing, or halftoning, methods can be adopted from the literature on visual halftones and optimized specifically for tactile representations. The efficacy of each method is tested utilizing human subjects and the results are utilized in the optimization of each algorithm. Software conversion routines and printing algorithms are also developed that allow the methods to be used with existing software packages, such as word processors and web browsers, and to enable direct printing on existing hardware, such as the TIGER printer and microcapsule paper.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Delaware

Specifying the Facilitative Effects of Animation on the Understanding of Action Word Representatives

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Project Number: H133G990115
Start Date: June 1, 1999
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $149,964; FY 00 $149,920; FY 01 $149,979; FY 02 (No-cost extension through 5/31/2003) FY 03 (No-cost extension through 5/31/2004)

Abstract: Using a customized computer-based assessment protocol, this project examines the differential ability of several types of graphics (static and animated) to convey the meaning of action word representations. Picture-based language representations afford access to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) options for many individuals who otherwise would be unable to benefit from communication enhancement approaches. Some new products in the AAC marketplace offer consumers the feature of animation. While it has been presumed that animation would make the meaning of verb representations more salient, this position has not been proven, and it may in fact be the case that the complexity of the linguistic task is affected by the complexity of the representation. Six varied representational types are investigated with children with typical development, children with disabilities, adults with developmental disabilities, and adults with acquired cognitive disabilities. Further, the investigators attempt to determine which characteristics of action representation positively affect performance.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Delaware

An Upper Limb Orthosis for People with Muscular Dystrophy

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Project Number: H133G000117
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $147,970; FY 01 $149,497; FY 02 $149,911; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 3/31/2004)

Abstract: This project develops an orthosis that provides a full range of movement for people with upper-limb weakness while still supporting their arms against gravity. For a person whose sensory system is intact, the orthosis uses their sensory system to augment their residual motor ability. It provides proprioception, an essential part of an effective interface between the human and the orthosis. Five prototypes are developed and clinical trials with twenty consumers are performed. Upon completion of the evaluation and analysis phases, the technology is transferred to a private company. The expected result is a relatively inexpensive, functional, and well-concealed assistive device that provides the opportunity for educational, vocational, and social interaction for thousands of individuals with upper-extremity motor disabilities.
The Development of a Tool to Enhance Communications Between Blind and Sighted Mathematicians, Students, and Teachers: A Global Translation Appliance

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Project Number: H133G010046
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months

Abstract: This project builds a translator for several mark-up notations used in scientific, mathematic, engineering, and technological fields. The primary difficulty encountered by students with visual impairments in pursuing studies in science, mathematics, engineering or technology is how to read and write mathematics. To overcome the limited expressiveness of six-dot braille characters, a plethora of notations for marking-up mathematics have been devised, including Nemeth Math code, Marburg code, the French standard, the Stuttgart standard, and others. These notations are braille-based and designed specifically for people with visual impairments, and are not known to sighted individuals; as a result, written technical communication between individuals who are sighted and individuals who have visual impairments is quite difficult. Further, communication between individuals who have visual impairments is also difficult when different notations are used. The new tool allows free conversion among the Marburg code, Nemeth code, Latex and MathML by developing a common intermediate format (CIF) for representing mathematics, and uses logic programming and denotational semantics to translate between supported notations and the CIF. The CIF is also used to develop a mark-up notation independent auditory browser for the understanding of complex mathematical expressions by users with visual impairments. The auditory browser conveys the structure of a mathematical expression as well as its content via speech output. The user also has the ability to navigate the expression interactively and focus on its subparts in order to understand the expression better.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Illinois

Tools to Help Web Developers Create more Universally Accessible Web Resources to People with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133G030079
Start Date: August 15, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,959

Abstract: The most popular tools used by instructors are non-traditional web authoring tools like Microsoft Office Applications including Power Point, Excel and Word (a recent survey of instructors found 99% use Microsoft Office to create at least part of their web based instructional materials). This project creates web authoring tools that integrate the creation of accessible markup into the default authoring process of publishing Microsoft Office documents to the web. The accessibility is integrated into the authoring process so the author does not need any special knowledge of HTML coding or accessibility techniques, nor to perform extra time consuming steps to add or edit accessible markup after a document is created. The integrated authoring tool does not require awkward post publishing accessibility evaluation and repair steps to determine what accessibility markup is needed for improved accessibility. The HTML generated by the Office plug-ins not only improves accessibility to people with disabilities, but the content is more accessible to everyone by supporting World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) web standards and the interoperability the W3C recommendations provide. The interoperability of W3C recommendations makes information available to any web browser and not just Internet Explorer (currently the default web publishing features of Office support web coding that can only be viewed in Internet Explorer).
Cost Effectiveness of a Computerized Oral Reading Treatment for Aphasia

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Project Number: H133G010098
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty

NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,470; FY 02 $149,892; FY 03 $149,732

Abstract: This study evaluates the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of an innovative, computerized treatment program for individuals with aphasia, a communication disorder and chronic condition. Aphasia requires long-term treatment to ensure that individuals can participate in a full range of vocational, recreational, and social activities. However, recent health care changes have seriously curtailed the amount of treatment received by patients with aphasia. In this environment effective treatments should be developed that can be easily administered and delivered at minimum cost. Oral Reading for Language in Aphasia (ORLA) was originally developed to improve reading comprehension in individuals with aphasia. Preliminary studies indicate that ORLA is effective in improving reading comprehension in patients with all types of aphasia. In addition to improvements in reading comprehension, cross-modal generalization occurs in some patients, with improvements in auditory comprehension and oral expression evident. The present study compares changes in communication performance for a group of aphasic individuals receiving ORLA from a speech-language pathologist and a group receiving a computerized version of the ORLA treatment.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Illinois

Selective Dynamic Strength Training to Enhance Upper Limb Coordination Following Stroke

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Project Number: H133G030143
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,998

Abstract: This study investigates the use of a novel selective dynamic strengthening protocol, which incorporates a two-joint robotic device to overcome gravity induced abnormal movement synergies following hemiparetic stroke. The specific objectives are the evaluation and demonstration of the usefulness and effectiveness of this selective dynamic robot-supported training regime for enhancement of quality of life of stroke survivors. The effects of the dynamic training regime on functional arm movements are being investigated in two groups of 20 subjects with chronic hemiparetic stroke. The control group follows an 8-week conventional upper extremity strengthening protocol consisting of shoulder abduction/flexion and elbow extension exercises. This conventional protocol represents an adapted exercise program is available for people with chronic stroke (4.5 million) whom no longer receive formal physical therapy due to a plateau in functional restoration. The experimental group follows a novel robot-supported training regime, which also strengthens subjects with chronic stroke but emphasizes performance of rapid reaching movements while increasing active support of their arm. This enables the subject to progressively deviate from their abnormal torque synergies. The evaluation and training paradigm provides quantitative outcome measures, which can be used to reliably track a patient’s progress using technology that is easy to implement with no risk of injury. The long-term goals of this study are the technological development and implementation of a simple, user-friendly robot-supported therapeutic intervention accessible to consumers in both in- and out-patient clinics.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Iowa

Computer Training Materials for Deaf-Blind Individuals

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Project Number: H133G020196
Start Date: August 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $148,870; FY 03 $147,870

Abstract: This project creates a comprehensive array of computer training materials tailored to the needs of people who are deaf-blind. Objectives include: (1) developing 45 computer tutorials written for people who are deaf-blind; (2) conducting three seminars to provide information and training to VR professionals and others regarding computer access by people who are deaf-blind; and (3) disseminating training materials to agencies serving people who are deaf-blind. The tutorials use an innovative approach that trains people who are deaf-blind or blind to use a computer with assistive technology. This includes a keyboard-only approach to the graphical Windows interface and information and step-by-step exercises that specifically address the screen reader-braille display combination the individual is using to operate mainstream or communications programs (each screen reader and braille display uses unique keystrokes, configurations, and feedback). This project provides people who are deaf-blind with computer skills they need to obtain and retain good jobs and to pursue computer-based communications and recreational activities. It also provides VR professionals, consumer organizations, and other private and public agencies with professionally developed tutorials they can give to clients for independent work or use in one-on-one or group computer training.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Kansas

Reusing AT/DME Acquired Through Public Funds: Developing a Cost-Neutral, Consumer-Driven Program

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Project Number: H133G010102
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,740; FY 02 $149,991; FY 03 $149,998
Abstract: This project builds a consumer responsive, cost-neutral program to reuse and redistribute durable medical equipment. The project addresses state and national needs in three critical ways. First, it increases access to durable medical equipment and AT (including previously used technology) that promotes the likelihood that people are able to reach personal goals related to independent living, employment, and improved social lives. Second, using previously owned equipment in good condition spreads the benefit of limited state and federal resources across more people. And finally, the reuse program reduces the consumption of natural resources such as aluminum, glass, plastics, and fuel. The reuse program is composed of four interrelated components, including a data tracking system, a consumer follow-up system, a reuse system through a network of statewide equipment providers, and marketing. This project is a collaboration of the Technology Act grantee for Kansas, the Assistive Technology for Kansans project (ATK), Kansas Medical Policy (Medicaid), durable medical equipment providers, and consumers.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Massachusetts

Access to Digital Television

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Project Number: H133G010170
Start Date: August 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: In the transition of the nation’s television system from analog to digital television (DTV) broadcasts, this “DTV Access” project represents the needs of people with sensory disabilities. Serious technical challenges may prevent Americans from participating in the pending transformation of communications and program delivery technologies if they are deaf, hard-of-hearing, blind or if they have low vision. This project leads the effort to ensure that the next-generation of DTV equipment does not replicate current problems or create new ones in the need to comply with the Federal Communications Commission-mandated digital transition. Project staff are working with broadcasters and standards-setting bodies to develop standards and open protocols, and to support implementation of captions and descriptions in DTV broadcasts. The DTV Access project addresses additional challenges that arise when broadcast programming is delivered via cable, satellite, Internet or wireless technologies. It also works to include people with sensory disabilities in the audience for the wealth of new program enhancements, interactive capabilities, and public and private data services that DTV promises to deliver. The project unites industry, standards-setting bodies, regulatory agencies, and consumers who have disabilities in a national, high-profile collaboration to provide equal access for people with disabilities to DTV programming, enhancements, interactive components, and data services.
Beyond the Text: Access to Images, Audio, and Multimedia in eBooks

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Project Number: H133G020091
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months

NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project researches, develops, and disseminates recommended practices and demonstration models that enable access to and understanding of images, audio, and multimedia presented within electronic book (eBook) formats for users who are blind or deaf. The eBook format offers online and portable access to all manner of traditional print products, including fiction, nonfiction, textbooks, professional journals, and other content, via personal computer, laptop, library systems, dedicated devices, and personal digital assistants (PDAs). Educators, trainers, and publishers are beginning to explore the learning potential of interactive web-based textbooks that include multimedia (audio and video) and study tools such as highlighting, note-taking, bookmarking, and direct Internet connections to references and other online learning resources. All of these features in the eBook format hold great promise to enhance and improve access to information for users with disabilities. Accessible eBooks could offer learners of all ages who are blind or deaf equal and ready access to trade, text, or scholarly books, training materials, online research libraries, and all manner of electronically published resources—a major leap forward in leveling the playing field for people with disabilities at home, at work, and at school. In order to accomplish this, eBook standards and systems must be designed to facilitate accessible navigation as well as caption and audio description displays, and eBook materials must be properly formatted for screen readers and/or refreshable braille displays. eBook content must include ancillary audio and text information to enable navigation, and to make images, audio, and multimedia accessible.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Massachusetts

Access to Digital Cinema Systems

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**Project Number:** H133G030104
**Start Date:** September 1, 2003
**Length:** 36 months
**NIDRR Officer:** Richard Johnson, EdD
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $150,000

**Abstract:** This project builds on NCAM’s experience and successes in developing and proliferating “MoPix” technologies to make digital cinema accessible to people with sensory disabilities. MoPix systems enable the 34 million Americans with hearing or vision loss to enjoy first-run films with their friends and families. As in all NCAM standards initiatives, open specifications are proposed that technology developers can use to enable myriad display options, including, but not limited to, MoPix systems. Project goals are to: (1) Work with standards organizations to ensure inclusion of captions and audio narration in industry specifications for packaging, identification, transport, retrieval and display of digital cinema content; (2) develop solutions and prototypes to support delivery and display of caption and description files, both in current first-generation and future d-cinema systems; and (3) promote review of project solutions and proposed standards through dissemination and high-profile demonstrations, and support implementation by digital cinema systems vendors.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Massachusetts

Word for Word: Developing an Enhanced Tool for Individuals with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133G000204
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,998; FY 01 $149,996; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 8/31/2004)

Abstract: This project creates, documents, and tests new speech recognition technology. Tasks include: (1) designing an innovative software product, Word for Word, that addresses the writing needs of people with a wide range of disabilities by integrating two powerful text entry modes, speech recognition and word prediction, in an interface based on principles of universal design; (2) working in collaboration with Don Johnson, Inc., a leading producer of special needs software, on the manufacture and marketing of this product, based on the prototype; (3) working in collaboration with a producer of speech recognition software (i.e., Dragon Systems or IBM Corporation) on the design and implementation of the proposed product based on the prototype; (4) developing materials to support the use and dissemination of the product; and (5) testing the educational outcomes associated with the use of the product.
Cued-Response to Stimulate Saccade-Step Planning and Mobility in Progressive Supranuclear Palsy

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Project Number: H133G030159
Start Date: September 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: Vertical gaze palsy and recurrent falls are cardinal features of progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP). These symptoms interfere with safe ambulation and functional mobility. The deficit in gaze control has a known pathoanatomical origin, but may also involve cognitive dysfunction manifest by a loss of executive cognitive abilities and visual attention. The purposes of this project are to: (1) determine whether a cued-response intervention is effective in promoting gaze saccade function during a step climbing task, (2) determine if improved gaze control leads to a reduction of falls and improved gait mobility, and (3) examine the neurocognitive mechanisms underlying any such improvements. Preliminary research suggests that vertical gaze palsy can be improved by cueing patients with PSP to initiate a new stepping pattern while the subject is under motion toward the object. The cue is presented in a stimulus-response compatibility paradigm, which requires the use of executive cognitive function (planning and problem-solving) to select the appropriate limb for stepping. Two groups of subjects with PSP will be randomly assigned to receive limb-cue plus eye movement training, or walking practice with no training in a cross-over design. A follow-up will evaluate retention and transfer of learning. Outcomes will be assessed using functional tests of mobility and a kinematic analysis synchronized with infrared oculography.
The Use of Virtual Reality Technology for Assessment of Driving Skills Following Acquired Brain Injury

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Project Number: H133G000073
Start Date: July 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $116,732; FY 01 $144,010; FY 02 $145,781; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2003)

Abstract: This project develops a virtual reality driving system (VRDS) for the assessment of driving ability in persons with acquired brain injury (ABI), specifically TBI and stroke, and examines the device’s efficacy and validity. The primary objectives are: (1) to evaluate the concurrent validity of a virtual reality driving protocol by comparing it to a traditional rehabilitation-hospital-based driving evaluation; (2) to examine the effects of the addition of complex and challenging driving factors, including nighttime and traffic congestion, on driving performance within a virtual reality environment; and (3) to elucidate the effects of demographic and medical factors that may impede or facilitate driving performance within a virtual reality environment. To achieve the first and third objectives, approximately 80 participants with ABI are administered both the traditional hospital-based driving evaluation and the VRDS. To address the second objective and allow comparison and interpretation of VRDS performance, an additional group of 20 age-and-education- matched, healthy control subjects are administered the VRDS.
Advanced Tissue Vascular and Biomechanical Studies for Improved Prosthetic Socket Design

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Project Number: H133G030069
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,993

Abstract: The objectives of this project are: (1) to establish the prevalence of prosthesis induced macro-circulatory occlusion; and (2) to determine if the degree of occlusion produced (if any) is of sufficient magnitude and duration to cause ischemia during walking and other physical activities, that can lead to chronic tissue atrophy. Preliminary studies have shown that patellar tendon bearing (PTB) prosthetic sockets occlude transtibial amputees’ residual limb circulation. Specifically, the project researches whether: (1) didactically taught and commonly clinically applied PTB sockets occlude transtibial amputees’ popliteal arterial circulation, and (2) the circulatory occlusion so produced causes ischemia in residual limb tissues during periods of moderate to strenuous exercise.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
North Carolina

ABC-Link: A Web-Based Literacy Assessment Tool for Students with Significant Disabilities

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Project Number: H133G020133
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,733; FY 03 $149,688

Abstract: This development project is designed to create a web-based assessment tool, ABC-Link, that provides accessible reading assessment tasks via an innovative interface that simultaneously supports students with severe speech and physical impairments (SSPI) and the adults who assess them. Through its use of state-of-the-art technology, ABC-Link is an interactive site that: (1) guides the assessment as it progresses based on a model of behavioral and test-administration efficiency, (2) feeds the assessment results back to an expert team for interpretation, (3) guides the adult in conducting further assessment as necessary, and (4) provides a suggested plan of intervention.
Information Technology Access for Adults with Cognitive Disabilities: Participatory Development of a Model for Software Accessibility, Training, and Support

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Project Number: H133G010162
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,996; FY 02 $149,994; FY 03 $149,738

Abstract: This project improves IT access for persons with significant cognitive disabilities through participatory development of a model incorporating accessible life skills software, effective consumer training, and innovative methods for ongoing technical support. Many persons with significant cognitive disabilities are excluded from the benefits of IT because software interfaces are too complex, the content is not relevant to their life management requirements, and not enough is known about their training and technical support needs. This project builds on previous efforts in development of life skills software to produce a field-tested and expanded array of applications along with a replicable model for training and technical support in home, community, and educational settings. Based on the project’s participatory development approach, persons with cognitive disabilities are integrally involved in research, development, and dissemination activities.
The Efficacy of Computer and Sense Wear Technologies for Promoting Health in Adults with Fibromyalgia: A Randomized Clinical Trial

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Project Number: H133G020159
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,996; FY 03 $149,966
Abstract: This study uses a cognitive-behavioral intervention to facilitate adoption of a wellness lifestyle in people with fibromyalgia. Specifically, researchers test the efficacy of an Internet-based health promotion computer program used in conjunction with a wearable sensor (SenseWearTM) for developing a wellness lifestyle and improving the quality of life of adults with fibromyalgia. Consumers are assisted in: (1) establishing goals in the areas of physical activity, nutrition, participation in meaningful, productive activities, sleep, stress-reducing activities, and emotional state; (2) monitoring progress toward established goals; and (3) assessing the relationship between these areas in one’s daily life. In addition, based on consumer input, the program offers suggestions for developing a wellness lifestyle. SenseWearTM provides objective data about activity level and stress level for consumers to use in combination with the self-assessment data provided by the Internet program.
Factors Affecting Directional Hearing Aid Performance in Children

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Project Number: H133G020097
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,576; FY 03 $149,844

Abstract: This project investigates quantification of the angular position of children’s heads in classroom environments and measurements of speech understanding and classroom performance in environments that simulate the most common listening situations children experience. Directional hearing aids represent one of the few technologies that have the potential to positively impact children’s speech understanding in classroom environments without requiring hardware external to the child. These instruments work by reducing amplification for sounds arriving from behind the child, relative to that provided for sounds arriving from the front. Therefore the intensity level delivered to a child’s ear for sound sources of interest will be greater than that of other sounds, if the assumption is made that the child will face the sound source of interest. Unfortunately, the angle at which children position their heads in classroom environments is unknown. In addition, the magnitude of improvement in speech intelligibility and classroom performance afforded by directional hearing aids in comparison to their traditional, omnidirectional counterparts in real classroom environments is unknown.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Utah

Bottom-Up Modeling Of Mass Pedestrian Flows: Implications for the Effective Egress of Individuals with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133G030013
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: The purpose of this research project is to improve the exit of individuals with disabilities from buildings and other settings in emergencies. The project researches the effect of the current and proposed Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) for the built-environment on the egress of individuals with disabilities during the mass pedestrian flows (MPFs) triggered by health-safety events, and the effect of security-oriented design methods on the egress of individuals with disabilities during health-safety event triggered MPFs. The objective of the project is to measure the emergent behaviors of the diverse sample populations of six representative built-environments (an airport, high school, conference center, multi-story office building, federal development, and secured federal development) during simulated health-safety events. An intervention (modification of the design character of the built-environment) is applied to eliminate conditions occurring during MPFs, which adversely effect the egress of individuals with disabilities.
The Braille Power Reader Program

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Project Number: H133G010028
Start Date: August 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,839; FY 02 $149,565; FY 03 $149,956

Abstract: This project develops hardware and software that provides people who are deaf-blind or blind with access to much of the digital media and technology that is available to sighted people in academic and employment environments. Development efforts include both newly designed hardware and software and improvements on legacy products previously designed by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) and Tactilics. These products integrate enhanced hardware and software and provide 40-character electronic braille access to computers and all forms of IT. Development of the braille Reader system is initially focused on the needs of people who are deaf-blind because of the close relationship between SAIC and the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC), but the display technology is also important to people who are only blind. The teaming arrangement of SAIC, Tactilics, and HKNC assures that the needs of all people who may benefit from using the system—blind and deaf-blind—are met.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I
Arizona

Development of a Collapsible Folding Manual Wheelchair

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Principal Investigator: Chris Willems
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Project Number: H133S020103
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson

NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $74,950; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 8/31/2003)

Abstract: This project creates and tests a prototype of a compact, forward-folding, ultra-light manual wheelchair. This wheelchair maximizes mobility in a variety of environments and eases the demands of travel on wheelchair users. The wheelchair improves access to and maneuverability in narrow environs such as those encountered in compact dwellings, offices, restroom facilities, and transportation means. The innovative design enables the wheelchair to fit down the aisle of airplanes, and be collapsed and stowed in the overhead compartment. It is more easily placed in the trunk of a car than standard wheelchairs. The wheelchair is designed with an adjustable axle, adjustable backrest and seat angle, a suspension element, and a rigid frame environment. The prototype is tested to insure that: (1) its dimensions meet targeted space constraints, (2) it meets or exceeds currently approved ANSI/RESNA Standards, and (3) it performs equivalently or better than other comparable manual wheelchairs on ANSI/RESNA tests.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I  
Arkansas

**Absolute Head Pointing for Accessing Assistive Devices**

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**Project Number:** H133S020106  
**Start Date:** October 15, 2002  
**Length:** 6 months  
**NIDRR Officer:** Kristi E. Wilson, PhD  
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 02 $75,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 8/31/2003)

**Abstract:** This research investigates the feasibility of a new “absolute” head-pointing strategy for people who require an assistive device to manipulate a computer cursor. This “absolute” system links the position of a computer cursor to the direction the user’s head is pointing, and stays aligned with the user’s head regardless of repositioning movements. This system enables a user to guide a cursor by aiming his or her head at a desired target location, potentially simplifying the task of learning and utilizing such a system. The design takes advantage of new, low-cost, infrared cameras, and requires only three passive sensors to be attached to the user.
Automated Closed Captioning

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Project Number: H133S030048
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $75,000

Abstract: The aim of this project is to develop an automated web-based system that accepts the electronic submission of video programming content and automatically and rapidly returns closed captioning for this content. This project applies automatic speech processing techniques to the automation of closed captioning, thereby significantly lowering costs and turnaround times. The limitations of speech recognition as commonly found in commercial applications, which must rely on pre-defined grammars that must try to anticipate anything that can be said or on training to individual speakers, are circumvented using program transcripts to focus on alignment and segmentation in closed captioning display. This research establishes a proof-of-concept prototype that makes captioning more accessible to educational institutions hit hard by budget restrictions, and makes incorporation of closed captioning more attractive to business.
Manual Wheelchair Utilizing Single Lever for Propulsion

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Project Number: H133S030134
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $74,760

Abstract: This project develops an innovative manual wheelchair design that utilizes a lever for propulsion. Use of a lever promotes a natural and efficient motion. Traditional pushrim wheelchairs require an awkward motion that leads to injuries of the shoulders, elbows, and wrists for the majority of users. The lever design utilizes a single lever for propulsion located between the user’s knees. Steering and braking is with a bicycle-style handlebar attached to the top of the lever. The flexibility of this approach has allowed a novel wheelchair frame design to be developed. Users and wheelchair experts have found that this design provides superior overall mobility and greater therapeutic physical conditioning.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I
Colorado

**Job Quest, an Internet-based, Self-directed Career Exploration and Assessment System For Students and Adults with Significant Intellectual Disabilities**

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**Project Number:** H133S030045  
**Start Date:** October 1, 2003  
**Length:** 6 months  
**NIDRR Officer:** Roslyn Edson  
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $75,000

**Abstract:** This project develops and evaluates Job Quest, an Internet-based, self-directed multimedia career exploration and assessment system for improved job placement of students and adults with mental retardation. The Job Quest system: (1) facilitates self-directed exploration of jobs and job tasks via a media-enriched computer environment using digital pictures, audio, and video; (2) enables job developers to identify jobs that match the individual’s job interests through automated searching of the Department of Labor’s O*NET jobs database; and (3) provides the ability for job developers and employment specialists to customize the content of the system to represent specific jobs which are available in the local community.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I  
Colorado

WorkRight: A Customizable Software System Providing an Interactive Training Environment for Social Skills in the Workplace

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Project Number: H133S030127  
Start Date: October 1, 2003  
Length: 6 months  
NIDRR Officer: Roslyn Edson  
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $75,000

Abstract: This project presents WorkRight, a state of the art computer based simulator application designed to provide personalized, self-directed social skills training for individuals with intellectual disabilities on community-based vocational social skills. Deficits in social skills is one of the greatest barriers to successful community-based employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Current methodologies for social skills training are generally very expensive, requiring one-to-one attention and a personalized curriculum to address the specific needs of different individuals. However, recent advances in computer-based simulation technology has created an opportunity to provide self directed computer-based social skills training that can be customized to reflect a trainee’s actual work environment and address a wide variety of social skills training needs.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I
Florida

Development of Virtual Pencil+ Algebra as a Teaching and Equation Processing Tool For Blind or Visually Disabled Students

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Project Number: H133S030198
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $74,000

Abstract: For this project, Henter Math takes its current product, the Virtual Pencil I (a program which makes arithmetic accessible to blind and disabled students through use of speech, Braille, and enhanced graphical interface) and extends it by creating a prototype Virtual Pencil Plus Algebra (VP+). The VP+ presents algebraic information in an audible or tactile format with interactive navigation tools. The student with visual disabilities can use this program to learn the process of solving algebraic equations and as a workspace for solving equations. The VP+ provides the user with verbal and non-verbal cues to read the equation and include programmable commands to allow flexibility in navigating and manipulating the equation. There is a serious need for educational software to help students with disabilities, particularly visual disabilities, who cannot use pencil and paper and therefore require an alternative environment for manipulation of numbers.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I
Maryland

**StoryTiles: Programmable Manipulatives to Improve Language, Sequencing, and Imaginative Play Skills in Children with Autism**

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**Project Number:** H133S030095
**Start Date:** October 1, 2003
**Length:** 6 months
**NIDRR Officer:** Shelley Reeves
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $75,000

**Abstract:** This project develops and field tests a manipulative device that fosters language, sequencing, and imaginative play skills among children with a diagnosis of autism. Children are able to use the device to experiment with picture sequencing, cause and effect, storytelling, and language structures as they manipulate programmable, tangible objects. This unique tactile context for the development of these skills addresses the concept that many children connect most strongly with their world through touch. Project objectives include: (1) design several sets of manipulatives to be used in case studies with children with autism, (2) extend IAI’s cradle technology to work with the new manipulatives, (3) manufacture and test manipulatives, (4) design activities for use of Storybuilder in field study, and (5) conduct case studies with children with autism to determine pedagogical feasibility of the device.
Development of a High Bandwidth Individualized Wireless Network

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Project Number: H133S020043
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $75,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 5/15/2003)

Abstract: This project researches the feasibility of a high bandwidth individualized wireless network that is personalized to maximize flexibility and capacity for individual users and minimize interference, crosstalk, and extraneous information. The system is developed in connection with experts on deafness and visual impairments. It is evaluated and tested in schools specializing in education of students with disabilities.
Independently Operable Device Mounting and Positioning Technology for Persons with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133S030118
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $74,990

Abstract: This project researches a modular mounting system, attaching to wheelchairs or tables, which individuals with limitations in strength, reach, and dexterity can access, reposition, and attach devices to independently. Accessible components allow the user to lock it into a stable position, unlock it, and change the tilt. Existing mounts require assistance to move, adjust, and attach or remove devices, reducing the user’s independence. This system may be safely and easily operated by people with significant limitations. Its dual linkage support arms allow flexible positioning and movement in a horizontal plane. It may be set to return to and lock in a specific location. Multiple devices may attach to the upright support post, making it possible to perform two tasks concurrently.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I
New Jersey

HARI: The Hand-Arm Rehabilitation Interface for Training the Hand Following Paralysis

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Project Number: H133S030197
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $75,000

Abstract: This project develops the Hand Arm Rehabilitation Interface, (HARI) a tool for re-training the hand and the arm after paralysis. HARI helps therapists and their clients guide the paralytic arm through the rehabilitation process by encouraging and monitoring prescribed exercises, while simultaneously serving as an assessment and record keeping tool. HARI is a computer guided motion feedback system. It prompts the user to make specific movements with the arm and/or hand, senses movements accomplished with the use of sensors placed in critical locations, informs the user through a visual display of his/her success at performing the movements, and keeps track of the user’s performance. HARI addresses an urgent need of the stroke population for a practical arm rehabilitator, focusing on fine motor control. The design of HARI has broad applicability to arm and hand re-training. It is adapted from technology that has been developed and patented by Nian-Crae, Inc. for restoring hand dexterity to amputees. Its commercial potential is large and it is affordable for home use.
A Feel-Beyond Fingers Device for the Blind

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Project Number: H133S030187
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Joseph A. DePhillips
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $74,980

Abstract: This project creates a miniature, non-intrusive device for blind individuals, to in effect, extend the sense of touch beyond the fingertips. At arm’s length, its resolution is high, and it has a maximum range of about ten meters. The device is most useful for newly or completely blind individuals, and most profound for navigation and for locating and manipulating nearby objects, especially in unfamiliar, hazardous, or unsanitary environments. Based on an innovative object-sensing technology, the Feel-Beyond-Fingers device has several significant advantages: it is significantly smaller than most sensing devices, it does not require the use of either hand, it has very low power requirements, and it is made of allow-cost parts. Evaluation of the device includes laboratory testing of accuracy and range, as well as preliminary usage and feedback from blind individuals.
Developing a Versatile, Affordable, Wheelchair-Mounted Robotic Arm Based on the Arlyn FeederBot Design

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Project Number: H133S020121
Start Date: September 30, 2002
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $74,096; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 5/15/2003)
Abstract: This project modifies the existing prototype Arlyn FeederBot and uses it as a test bed to investigate the use of that design as a general-purpose wheelchair-mounted robot arm. Researchers develop methods of handling objects in structured and unstructured environments and incorporate the ability to use many different control methods. The resulting product permits many people with severe paralysis to have greater independence and quality of life and to become employed or better employed.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I
Utah

**Practical Force Feedback System for Upper Limb Prosthesis Users**

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**Project Number:** H133S020006
**Start Date:** October 1, 2002
**Length:** 6 months
**NIDRR Officer:** Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 02 $75,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 6/30/2003)

**Abstract:** This project develops a practical grip-force feedback system for upper-limb prosthesis users that enables wearers to sense the grip force of their terminal device (TD). Prototypes of a grip force sensor and a method of direct force feedback to the wearer are developed, as well as a method for gravity compensation of a body-powered version of the Utah Arm. Previous experiments have demonstrated that force feedback can improve the prosthesis wearer’s control of an electric TD. By developing a practical system to implement force feedback into a myoelectric hand, the next generation of myoelectric hand wearers will potentially have greatly improved control, more natural sensation of their prehension, and reduced dependence on visual feedback to moderate grip force. Growing use of myoelectric devices by amputees is causing growth in the prosthetics market. Adding a practical feedback system will greatly enhance the prostheses for this population.
Development of Collapsible Folding Manual Wheelchair - Phase II

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Project Number: H133S030016
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $247,048

Abstract: In Phase I, this project designed, built, and conducted bench-top testing of a compact, forward-folding, ultralight manual wheelchair with an innovative design that incorporates “swing-down” access wheels for navigation in confined areas. This facilitates access to narrow environs such as those encountered in compact dwellings, offices, restrooms, and transportation settings. When using the access wheels, the wheelchair also fits down the aisle of airplanes and collapses to be stowed in the overhead compartment. The prototype has an adjustable axle, adjustable backrest and seat angle, and a folding design that acts like a rigid frame. Testing of the prototype confirmed that it met or exceeded ANSI/RESNA standards, and it performed equivalently or better than other comparable ultralight manual wheelchairs on those standards. In Phase II, the project: (1) continues to make design improvements to further maximize functionality and ease of use, (2) verifies that the new design meets ANSI/RESNA standards, (3) has wheelchair users evaluate the prototype after use in an Activities of Daily Living Course, and (4) has users take the chair home for an extended trial-use period that allows for an in-depth evaluation of the prototype wheelchair and allows users to compare the prototype with their personal wheelchair on a wide variety of dimensions.
Absolute Head Tracking for Accessing Assistive Devices

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Project Number: H133S030165
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $267,458

Abstract: This research develops a new absolute head-tracking strategy for people who require an assistive device to manipulate a computer cursor. This absolute system links the position of a computer cursor to the direction in which the user’s head is pointing, and stays aligned with the user’s head regardless of repositioning movements. This system enables a user to guide a cursor aiming his or her head at a desired target location, simplifying the task of learning and utilizing such a system. The design takes advantage of low-cost infrared camera, and requires only three passive sensors to be attached to the user.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase II
Maryland

CD-ROM to Teach Cued Speech

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Project Number: H133S030009
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $249,979

Abstract: This project develops a self-taught, self-paced, interactive computer program to teach Cued Speech. The instructional program is distributed on a CD-ROM. In the previous research phase, all of the content and planning for a Cued Speech instructional computer program was completed and prototype software that showed one introductory section and two classes of materials was created. The current phase involves the refining of the content and the completed design of software containing all introductory and background information and 15 classes. The software is then tested, revised, and prepared for formal production and distribution. This project results in complete development of a CD-ROM that contains a simple-to-use, 15-lesson instructional program in Cued Speech and background information about its history and the people who use it (e.g., professionals, family members).
**Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase II**

**Maryland**

**Web-Based Telerehabilitation for Home Assessment and Monitoring**

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**Project Number:** H133S030037  
**Start Date:** October 1, 2003  
**Length:** 24 months

**NIDRR Officer:** Roslyn Edson  
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $292,557

**Abstract:** This project aims to enhance functionality and clinically evaluate CosmoWebTM, a remote therapy monitoring and teleassessment system. Children with disabilities perform therapeutic exercises while playing interactive software games featuring CosmoBotTM, an alien robot. CosmoWebTM consists of: (1) games; (2) Mission Control, a child-friendly computer interface system with customized and off-the-shelf therapy sensors, designed to interact with CosmoBotTM’s games; and (3) video, audio, and data transmission capabilities for telerehabilitation purposes. Custom games address therapy goals more effectively than currently-existing, off-the-shelf games designed for entertainment more than educational or therapeutic purposes. While playing these games using body movement, or gestural interfaces, the child carries out exercises designed to meet therapy goals. CosmoWebTM allows the therapist to remotely monitor the therapy-game session during or after the session takes place. Data from many sessions can be viewed to evaluate the child’s progress in meeting therapy goals over time. Objectives are to finalize CosmoWebTM design and development and evaluate the system effectively in two telerehabilitation scenarios: between two clinics and between clinic and home.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase II
Massachusetts

Natural Language Speech Access of Computers by the Disabled

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Principal Investigator: Kenneth R. Ingham, PhD
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Project Number: H133S030005
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $219,595

Abstract: This project implements a natural language processor to facilitate complex interactions and to make the overall system readily usable by the computer non-literate or non-technical. The Phase I work confirmed that a speech-based set of complex applications, using automatic speech recognition for command and control, could be effectively used by people with visual impairments. Mechanisms were implemented and tested that allowed users to avoid becoming lost owing to any form of interruption. The work showed that, while simple commands could be successfully recognized, longer complex commands were more difficult because users tended to lose their place while assembling their precise syntax. Therefore, the design and implementation of a natural language processor to support the issuing of complex instructions was indicated. In this phase, the automatic speech recognition subsystem is improved in accordance with the results of the Phase I work and its vocabularies increased to approximately 120,000 words composed of dynamically variable 50,000 word language models. The resulting large vocabulary recognition system, supporting natural language interaction is evaluated through focus group and human subject testing. The Adept 1000, equipped with a natural language processor, can serve as a universal reading system for multipart documents (digital, analog, hypertext, etc.). As an integrated voice-based system, it can also support web access, e-mail, and word processing, thereby becoming a universal access tool for reading and writing. By providing very large vocabulary automatic speech recognition and natural language processing of commands, the technical nature of the computer system is minimized.
Development of an Audio/Tactile Atlas of the World for Use by Individuals Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

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New York, NY 10018
sl@touchgraphics.com
www.touchgraphics.com

Principal Investigator: Steven Landau
Public Contact: 646/515-3492; Fax: 212/375-6341

Project Number: ED-01-CO-0125
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 24 months

NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $148,907; FY 02 $148,907; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/16/2003)

Abstract: This project creates a new and innovative Atlas of the World that is fully accessible to readers who are blind, who have visual impairments, or who have other print disabilities. The atlas is an accessory application for the Talking Tactile Tablet created by Touch Graphics, a computer peripheral device on which raised-line and textured (tactile) plastic overlay sheets can be mounted. Users press shapes, regions, and icons on the tactile surface to instigate interactions with a human-voice narrator. A menu system allows the user to select from a number of operational modes that provide access to a database of sociopolitical and geographical map information. National Geographic maps provide cartographic content and associated information at no cost to the project, and act as advisors to the project to ensure that the product meets current standards for print atlases.
Development of an Audio/Tactile Accommodation for Delivery of Standardized Math Tests to Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

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www.touchgraphics.com

Principal Investigator: Steven Landau
Public Contact: 646/515-3492; Fax: 212/375-6341

Project Number: ED-01-PO-3667 (3-4)
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $148,190; FY 03 $148,190

Abstract: This project includes the design, implementation, and evaluation of a system for delivering standardized math tests, and other assessments that include references to graphic material, to individuals who are blind, have a visual impairment, or who have other print disabilities. This system allows a user to scroll through test items, listen to a trained human-voice narrator read questions and answer choices, and refer to interactive raised-line and textured (tactile) diagrams. When the user presses various regions and shapes on these diagrams, the narrator describes the feature of the drawing or illustration that is touched. The test delivery accommodation also incorporates a talking calculator, a timer, and a database for automatically capturing statistics on student performance. The system is based on standards already established and proven effective for audio-tactile computer applications; it is designed to be used in conjunction with the Talking Tactile Tablet, a simple, durable, and inexpensive computer peripheral.
Online Instruction Tools for Teaching Mathematical Problem Solving to Learning Disabled Students

Learnimation
53 West 90th Street #4
New York, NY 10024

Principal Investigator: Sarah Manning
Public Contact:

Project Number: ED-02-R-0012 (3-5)
Start Date: September 30, 2002
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Judith Fein
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $159,068; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project builds a bundled set of web-based validated intervention tools to improve mathematical problem-solving outcomes of middle school students with learning disabilities. Utilizing instructional strategies proven by educational researchers to be effective in addressing the needs of students with learning disabilities, this software application focuses on the full set of cognitive processes, metacognitive activities, and affective factors required to attain proficiency in mathematical problem solving. In order to develop students’ mathematical problem solving skills, interventions designed to address this scope and sequence of skills and abilities is presented within the context of motivating, life-based animated word problems. The application teaches general problem-solving strategy and explicit cognitive mathematical sub-skills.
Development of an Authoring Tool to Allow Teachers to Create Audio-Tactile Materials for Blind and Visually Impaired Students

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Principal Investigator: Steven Landau
Public Contact: 646/515-3492; Fax: 212/375-6341

Project Number: H133S030036
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $232,243

Abstract: This project focuses on the design, implementation, and evaluation of an authoring tool that allows teachers to create customized audio-tactile educational materials for students who are blind, or have other visual or print disabilities. Teachers create raised-line and textured graphic imagery on pre-made templates sheets, place these sheets on a touch-sensitive device connected to a computer, and program the graphic with descriptive audio “tags”. Later, a student interacts with the system by pressing regions and shapes on the tactile surface to instigate appropriate audio responses. The goals of this project are: (1) creation of a market-ready suite of software applications for creating, reading, and transferring teacher-produced audio-tactile courseware; (2) a software sharing website to encourage wide-scale adoption of the authoring tool product and to proliferate the teacher-generated materials; (3) findings on the potential for adapting a variety of methods for producing tactile graphic images to the authoring tool system; (4) a complete braille tutorial application as a demonstration of the system’s full capabilities, ready for distribution via Internet; (5) results of a large scale evaluation of teacher-produced audio-tactile materials in the United States and in selected foreign countries; and (6) investigation of the potential for the authoring tool system to be adapted for use in the transcription of entire illustrated textbooks and full-scale curricula.
The Next Generation of Audio-Based Assistive Technology: An Instantaneous Customizable Audio Pegging System

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Principal Investigator: Leonard Chang
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Project Number: H133S030030
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $251,900

Abstract: This project develops an Audio Pegging System which allows for the instant lacing of an audio source to its corresponding transcript or vice versa, utilizing a human voice rather than a computer synthesizer, and enables the user to click on any part of the text and hear its matching audio immediately. It is akin to a word processor with audio processing capabilities, allowing the user to instantly create a customized text-and-audio-laced file, which users can cut and paste, and e-mail just like a word processor document. More importantly, this product enables users to search efficiently through audio. In Phase I, the project successfully created a proof-of-concept prototype, which has proven the technical merit and feasibility of the Audio Pegging System (APS). Based on this foundation, Phase II expands on the proof-of-concept prototype to construct a full application version of this system to be made available to the general public.
GOODFEEL® Braille Music Translator

Dancing Dots Braille Music Technologies, LP
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Principal Investigator: William R. McCann
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Project Number: H133S030040
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $250,000

Abstract: This project integrates SharpEye’s scanning functions and Lime’s editor with GOODFEEL to create a single application that allows one to scan, edit, and transcribe a printed page into the equivalent music braille through a single user interface equally accessible to both sighted or blind users. In 1997, Dancing Dots released GOODFEEL®, the world’s first Braille music translator. To create braille scores, sighted non-specialists, who need not know braille but who must read printed music, employ mainstream and assistive technology in a three-step process: scanning (SharpEye), editing (Lime), and transcribing (GOODFEEL). Although GOODFEEL produces high-quality music braille, users have too often found it overly labor-intensive and its relationship to mainstream music software difficult to understand, discouraging many overworked or unsophisticated potential users.
Practical Force-Feedback System for Upper-Limb Prosthesis Users

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www.utaharm.com

Principal Investigator: Harold H. Sears, PhD
Public Contact: 801/978-2622; 888/696-2767; Fax: 801/978-0848

Project Number: H133S030177
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Thomas Corfman
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $249,062

Abstract: This project develops a practical Grip-Force Feedback (GFF) system for upper-limb prosthesis users, which enables wearers to sense the grip force of their terminal device (TD). During Phase I, successful prototypes of a grip force sensor and a method of direct force feedback to the wearer were developed. Furthermore, several methods for gravity compensation of a body-powered version of the Utah Arm were designed, built, and tested. In Phase 2, Motion Control further develops these systems toward field trial versions, which are tested with prosthesis wearers. Preliminary experiments have demonstrated that force feedback can improve the prosthesis wearer’s control of an electric TD. By developing a practical system to implement force feedback into a myoelectric hand, the next generation of myoelectric hand wearers will have potentially greatly improved control, more natural sensation of their prehension, and reduced dependence on visual feedback to moderate grip force.
Remote Access Screen Reader Architecture Math System (RA SRAMS)

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Principal Investigator: Ronald A. Morford
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Project Number: H133S030012
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $250,000

Abstract: The objective of the Remote Access Screen Reader Architecture Math System (RA SRAMS) is to design, develop, and test a computer based system, which enables remote access to math by students and teachers with visual impairments. The access is via the Internet so the student and teacher may be at different locations when using RA SRAMS. The software uses successful screen reading architecture to enable visually impaired students to independently manipulate math expressions to solve math problems. RA SRAMS provides tools that make it easier for a student with a visual impairment to succeed in higher math (i.e., Algebra I, Algebra II, Trigonometry, and Calculus). This system provides the means for thousands of visually impaired students to succeed in higher math and therefore be qualified to fill the ever-increasing technical job and educational positions.
Independent Living and Community Integration

Independent living recognizes that each person has the right to independence through maximum control over his or her life, based on an ability and opportunity to make choices in performing everyday activities. These activities include: managing one’s personal life; participating in community life; fulfilling social roles, such as marriage, parenthood, employment, and citizenship; sustaining self-determination; and minimizing physical or psychological dependence on others. Community integration incorporates ideas of both place and participation, so that a person is physically located in a community setting, and participates in community activities. Issues of consumer direction and control also are integral to concepts of community integration. NIDRR’s research program encourages independent living and community integration to achieve more successful outcomes for people with disabilities, and it fosters the development of innovative methods to achieve these outcomes and to measure achievement.

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Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)  
California  

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Personal Assistance Services  

University of California, San Francisco  
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Public Contact: 866/727-9577; 415/502-7190 (V); 415-502-5216 (TTY); Fax: 415/476-6552  

Project Number: H133B031102  
Start Date: July 1, 2003  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer  
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $900,000  

Abstract: This project provides research, training, dissemination, and technical assistance on issues of personal assistance services (PAS) in the United States. Center projects focus on: (1) the relationship between formal and informal PAS and caregiving support, and the role of AT in complementing PAS; (2) policies and programs, barriers, and new models for PAS in the home and community; (3) workforce development, recruitment, retention, and benefits; and (4) workplace PAS models that eliminate barriers to formal and informal PAS and AT at work. The Center is based at the University of California, San Francisco, and includes the Topeka Independent Living Resource Center, InfoUse, the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute, the Institute for the Future of Aging Services, as well as faculty members at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County Policy Sciences Graduate Program, the West Virginia University Job Accommodation Network, and the University of Michigan’s Institute of Gerontology and the Department Health Management and Policy. A Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee of PAS users, disability advocates, business leaders, independent living center leaders, and academics provide guidance to the project.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)  
Florida

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Positive Behavior Support

University of South Florida  
Division of Applied Research and Educational Support (DARES)  
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Principal Investigator: Glen Dunlap, PhD  
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Project Number: H133B980005  
Start Date: October 1, 1998  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer  
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $600,000; FY 99 $600,000; FY 00 $600,000; FY 01 $600,000; FY 02 $600,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2004)

Abstract: This project acquires and disseminates new knowledge to advance the field of behavior support in school, home, and community settings. Through research and training projects, the Center increases and enhances the effectiveness of behavior support strategies, expands the applicability of effective practices to broader and more diverse populations, and addresses the need for effective training, technical assistance, and widespread dissemination. The three primary research projects: (1) expand the applicability of effective interventions, (2) increase and enhance the effectiveness of interventions, and (3) understand and describe the long-term impacts and processes of effective behavior support. Embedded within these research projects are systematic studies of nonaversive interventions, etiology and prevention, maintenance, self-management, and functional assessment. The three primary training projects focus on: (1) in-service and pre-service training, (2) dissemination, and (3) technical assistance. The Center is conducted as a consortium that includes the University of South Florida, the University of Oregon, State University of New York (SUNY) at Stony Brook, the University of Kansas, the University of California at Santa Barbara, and the University of California at Hayward.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Florida

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center for Children’s Mental Health

University of South Florida
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Project Number: H133B990022
Start Date: September 30, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $750,000; FY 00 $750,000; FY 01 $875,000; FY 02 $750,000; FY 03 $870,000
Other funding: FY 01 $520,000 (Center for Mental Health Services), $198,911 (Children’s Board of Hillsborough County Florida), $188,932 (Florida Dept. of Children and Families), $131,250 (USDE-OSERS), $37968 (Texas A & M University), $22,500 (Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative), $64,210 (Other); FY 02 $216,326 (Florida Department of Children and Families), $169,659 (Florida Department of Education), $150,000 (US Department of Education), $132,124 (Children’s Board of Hillsborough County), $63,750 (NIH/NIDA)

Abstract: This program conducts an integrated set of field research projects, employing multiple methods to examine policies affecting children with emotional disturbances and their families in order to enhance the understanding of policy development, its implementation and effects. The research program builds on an analytic framework for understanding variables related to translation of policy into community-level actions. The consistency of state-level policy with system-of-care principles is examined through a series of related studies that address: family perspectives, interagency collaboration, school reform in urban communities, local theories of change and their relationship to services and outcomes, Medicaid managed care and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program, the impact of managed care and system-of-care policies on access to care for children of color and their families, and development of a new instrument to assess interagency collaboration. The Center’s dissemination approach includes conferences and meetings, peer-reviewed journal articles, research briefs, presentations, the web based and other electronic media, and technical assistance.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Illinois

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Aging with Developmental Disabilities

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**Project Number:** H133B031134
**Start Date:** October 1, 2003
**Length:** 60 months
**NIDRR Officer:** Margaret Campbell, PhD
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $750,000

**Abstract:** The mission of the RRTC is to have a sustained beneficial impact on the health and community inclusion of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) as they age through a coordinated set of research, training, and dissemination activities. Major goals are: (1) improving health and function of adults with I/DD, (2) enhancing caregiving supports and transition planning among older caregivers and other family members, and (3) promoting aging and disability friendly environments that enable adults with I/DD to participate in community life. Each goal is addressed through coordinated and complementary sets of activities within the core areas. Projects promoting health and functioning include: examination of age-related changes, epidemiological surveys, research on health care utilization, and development of community-based health promotion interventions. To enhance caregiving supports and transition planning, RRTC research includes epidemiological surveys on family demographic and health characteristics, including families of minority backgrounds and families of persons with dual diagnoses of I/DD and psychiatric impairments; sibling roles and interventions in transition planning; and consumer direction in family support. Projects examining aging and disability-friendly environments include research to identify features of communities and residences that hinder and assist community integration as people with I/DD age, state policies regarding nursing home use, and dementia care in family homes and other community residences. Training and dissemination activities involve collaborations with national provider, professional, and consumer organizations to enhance skills and to promote progressive interventions and policies.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Kansas

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Full Participation in Independent Living

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Project Number: H133B000500
Start Date: January 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $499,876; FY 02 $661,864; FY 03 $626,364
Other funding: FY 02 $299,999 (NIDRR Dissemination & Utilization)

Abstract: Through research, training, and dissemination, this project makes available person-environment strategies that enable full participation in society by persons with disabilities from diverse cultures, varying socioeconomic strata, and emerging disability populations. This mission is implemented through multiple research and training activities that are influenced by independent living (IL) philosophy and values; for example, participatory action research is emphasized, in which consumers take an active role throughout the research process. The RRTC develops, tests, and uses measurement tools to investigate the interactional relationship between personal and environmental factors and their effects on full participation in IL by the designated populations. Based on the project’s Analytical Research Framework, the four core areas of intervention development and testing include: (1) increasing the knowledge base about the emerging universe of disability, (2) community participation and wellness, (3) cultural IL accommodations, and (4) personal and systems advocacy.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Massachusetts

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center in Rehabilitation of Persons with Long-Term Mental Illness

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Project Number: H133B990023
Start Date: October 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $749,990; FY 00 $749,990; FY 01 $350,000; FY 02 $749,990; FY 03 $749,990
Other funding: FY 00 $300,000 (Center for Mental Health Services); FY 01 $300,000 (CMHS); FY 03 $300,000 (CMHS)
Abstract: This Center studies the recovery and rehabilitation of people with long-term mental illness and the individual and environmental factors that promote recovery. It is linked by its programmatic focus on three specific core areas of, recovery dimensions, rehabilitation interventions, and alternative interventions; is strengthened by the use of the appropriate research strategies; and is assisted by a vigorous program of training, technical assistance, and dissemination activities designed to maximize the impact of the center at all levels in the field of psychiatric rehabilitation. The research projects are designed to have an impact on the field at the personnel, program, and system levels. Research projects use a participatory research process with significant input from consumers and other stakeholders, and culminate in dissemination, training, or technical assistance activities to maximize the impact of the research program. The Training, Dissemination, and Technical Assistance (TDTA) projects are designed to provide exposure, experience, and expertise to knowledge transfer. The TDTA component produces new technologies in recovery and rehabilitation, and increases the likelihood that researchers, service providers, and others use the cumulative knowledge developed by this Center.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Minnesota

Research and Training Center on Community Living (RTC/CL)

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Project Number: H133B031116
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Dawn Carlson, PhD, MPH
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $750,000
Other funding: FY 04 $300,000 (Administration on Developmental Disabilities), $70,000 (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services), $295,000 (NIDRR Field Initiated Projects), $300,000 (Kansas Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities), $120,000 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities), $145,000 (College of Direct Support web-based training program), $30,000 (Partners in Community Supports) $20,000 (NIDRR via subcontract with National Resource Center on Supported Living), $60,000 (University of Minnesota)

Abstract: The Center conducts research, training, technical assistance, and dissemination to enhance inclusion and self-determination of citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD). The research program has six outcome areas: policy studies and data bases supports for full participation self-determination and consumer-control workforce development and quality assessment and improvement systems. The research program within the priority areas includes: (1) research syntheses of the state of knowledge and practice; (2) secondary analyses of high quality, topically relevant national and state data sets; (3) case studies of best practices; (4) evaluation of demonstration efforts to improve policy and practice; (5) survey and interview studies of critical issues; and (6) group process studies with key constituencies. An integrated intramural training program addresses the development of skilled disability researchers and community service professionals. Outreach training programs provide training and technical assistance to agencies and individuals providing support to people with ID/DD, including members of their families. The College of Direct Support provides on-line interactive multi media training to thousands of direct support professionals across the US. Outreach programs include conferences and workshops for a wide variety of national, regional, and state audiences, a state-of-the-art conference, annual “Reinventing Quality” conference, and intensive technical assistance with community organizations, including advocacy and self-advocacy organizations. The Center disseminates practical information to targeted audiences through its internal publication program that includes: IMPACT, Policy Research Brief, DD Data Brief, and Frontline Initiative. It maintains high standards for scholarly productivity and publication through books, journal articles and technical reports. About 15,000 people visit Center websites each month for access to view publications or other information on best practices in person-centered services (“QualityMall.org”), national statistics on services and expenditures, the direct support workforce, and other contemporary topics.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
New York

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Independent Living Management (RRTC-ILM)

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Principal Investigator: Douglas J. Usiak
Public Contact: John Moffat, 716/836-0822; Fax: 716/835-3967

Project Number: H133B000002
Start Date: November 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $600,000; FY 01 $600,000; FY 02 $600,000; FY 03 $600,000
Abstract: To help Centers for Independent Living (CIL) become integrated more fully with their communities, this project identifies and applies best practices, finding examples from both inside and outside the CIL network. The work is conducted embracing, supporting, and emulating the principles of the independent living philosophy, which encompass consumer control, self-help, advocacy, peer relationships, peer role models, and empowerment. The seven projects of the RRTC-ILM are: (1) developing a database of CIL profiles, aggregating the information required to develop and implement a set of related research, training, and dissemination projects whose best practices help to build a secure economic foundation for CILs; (2) designing and testing options for generating funding from alternative sources, through collaborations with others that include building business development strategies and analyzing the policy-related and programmatic consequences of various funding options (such as those independent of public financing); (3) identifying best practices and developing test programs that allow CILs to expand their services to youth with disabilities and their families, including those from diverse cultural backgrounds, and to interface with existing educational and transitional programs to prepare children and youth for independent living; (4) modifying and testing management models of other successful community-based organizations so those strategies benefit CILs; (5) investigating CIL and VR agency policies related to collaborations, and designing strategies for innovative partnerships that promote employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities; (6) coordinating activities with the Rehabilitation Services Administration and providing instruments, curricula, methodologies, resource guides, and research findings; and (7) providing training and information for CIL policy-makers, administrators, and advocates on the RRTC’s research findings and identified strategies.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)  
New York

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on the Community Integration of Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury

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Research and Training Center  
One Gustave L. Levy Place, Box 1240  
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www.mssm.edu/tbinet

Principal Investigator: Wayne A. Gordon, PhD  
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Project Number: H133B980013  
Start Date: October 1, 1998  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD  
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $800,000; FY 99 $800,000; FY 00 $800,000; FY 01 $800,000; FY 02 $800,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2004)

Abstract: The RTC is a product of participatory action research, emphasizing the empowerment of individuals with TBI both in setting and carrying out its research agenda, and in implementing a program aimed at strengthening the voices of individuals with TBI. The program includes four evaluation projects and three basic research projects: (1) evaluating a measure of community integration that assesses both the individual’s level of participation and his or her experience of daily activity; (2) evaluating an innovative approach to person-centered, community-based VR; (3) evaluating a peer mentoring program; (4) screening for TBI in individuals identified with substance abuse disorders; (5) researching longitudinal studies of the emergence and resolution of behavioral/emotional challenges post-TBI; (6) researching factors associated with healthy aging after injury; and (7) validating a brain injury screening approach used in school children. The RRTC is also active in providing technical assistance and in training and dissemination activities.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Center to Improve Services for Children with Serious Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities and Their Families

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Project Number: H133B990025
Start Date: October 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $725,000; FY 00 $725,000; FY 01 $300,000; FY 02 $725,000; FY 03 $725,000
Other funding: FY 99 $150,000 (Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS)); FY 00 $155,000 (CMHS); FY 01 $570,000 (CMHS); FY 03 $500,000 (CMHS)

Abstract: This project conducts an integrated set of research, training, and technical activities to: (1) develop and evaluate service delivery models for children with an emotional disturbance and their families, including family-centered and culturally sensitive services; (2) define and evaluate the formal and informal components of family support and identify successful family support interventions; (3) identify and evaluate early intervention strategies; and (4) identify, develop, and evaluate communication skills to enable families and service providers to communicate effectively with each other. Research issues include caregivers and employment, inclusive care, early intervention, education, service delivery, training, and mentoring.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Pennsylvania

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Community Integration of People with Psychiatric Disabilities

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Project Number: H133B031109
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $749,212

Abstract: The goal of this Center is to insure that people with psychiatric disabilities not only move from institutional care to more integrated settings but also are free to choose to participate in a wide range of roles in their communities. The Center’s five year mission focuses on three core areas: (1) Factors Associated with Community Integration develops a coherent conceptual framework for community integration and identifies key factors, intervention models, and appropriate instrumentation and research methodologies; (2) Policies Associated with Community Integration identifies, develops, and assesses the effectiveness of a range of public policies and system strategies promoting community integration and engage key stakeholders in learning about and utilizing the Center’s findings; and (3) Intervention Supports that Assist Community Integration identifies, develops, and assesses the effectiveness of support service interventions promoting community integration, and provides training, technical assistance, and dissemination based on those initiatives to change behaviors and practices of key stakeholders. This Center capitalizes upon the longstanding history of collaboration among three Philadelphia-based central partners: The University of Pennsylvania, the peer-operated Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, and The Matrix Center at Horizon House, Inc.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Texas

Rehabilitation and Training Center on Community Integration in Persons With TBI

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Principal Investigator: Angelle M. Sander, MD; Margaret Struchen, PhD
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Project Number: H133B031117
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $799,960

Abstract: The research program of this project includes: development and evaluation of a social network mentoring program; an investigation of racial/ethnic differences in acceptance of disability, community integration needs, barriers, and supports; a distance learning program to train family members in rural areas as paraprofessionals; assessment of employers’ attitudes toward persons with TBI and a pilot educational intervention to reduce attitudinal barriers in the workplace; a randomized clinical trial to assess the effectiveness of a brief substance abuse intervention; a qualitative exploration of intimacy following TBI; and a study investigating the role of social communication abilities and environmental factors on social integration. Training projects include: a National Information, Educational Resources, Dissemination, and Technical Assistance Center for the Community Integration of Individuals With TBI; development of educational materials for increasing community awareness of TBI and reducing attitudinal barriers; adoption of a social action network program from disability studies for improving positive identity; partnering with artists in the community to implement a Center for Creative Expressions for persons with TBI; training of community healthcare professionals in the community integration needs of persons with TBI; a rehabilitation fellowship in community integration of persons with TBI; and a state-of-the-science conference and book on community integration.
Leadership Development: A New Generation of Effective Leadership

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Project Number: H133A990020
Start Date: October 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $175,000; FY 00 $175,000; FY 01 $175,000; FY 02 $65,000; FY 03 $175,000
Other funding: FY 02 $110,000 (Rehabilitation Services Administration); FY 03 $110,000 (RSA), $65,000 (NIDRR)

Abstract: This project improves services provided under the Rehabilitation Act as amended, especially services provided to individuals from minority populations. The goal of the project is to increase the leadership competencies of individuals with disabilities from underserved and underrepresented communities, thereby maximizing the full inclusion and integration of people with disabilities from underserved and underrepresented groups into society, employment, independent living, family support, and economic and social self-sufficiency. All activities are focused on promoting and ensuring full participation of members of groups who have traditionally been underserved by the VR system. Community-based rehabilitation, disability, and educational organizations and entities work as collaborators to the project in nominating people from underserved and underrepresented groups to participate in the training and to provide assistance to the participants in the implementation of a follow-up plan of action. Individuals participate in a leadership development training program that provides a broad range of technical assistance, consultation, and support services to them during implementation of their individual action plans.
Asset Accumulation And Tax Policy Project

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Project Number: H133A031732
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Roslyn Edson
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $299,991

Abstract: This project develops and disseminates a new and comprehensive body of knowledge to multiple target audiences nationwide to improve the economic independence, social empowerment, and community integration of persons with disabilities. Researchers examine systematically the relationship between tax policy and asset accumulation for persons with disabilities, and resultant improvements in economic and community integration. The project investigates the impact of multiple intervention strategies—including financial education, matched savings accounts, expanded financial services, and increased use of state and Federal tax incentives for asset and community economic development—in six states and ten pilot demonstration sites nationwide on youth in transition and adults with disabilities. This project is a collaborative effort of The Law, Health Policy, and Disability Center at the University of Iowa College of Law, Southern New Hampshire University School of Community Economic Development, the National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions, the World Institute on Disability, and the National Cooperative Bank Development Corporation.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Kansas

The Impact of Interventions on Self-Determination and Adult Outcomes

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Principal Investigator: Michael Wehmeyer, PhD (University of Kansas); Laurie Powers, PhD (Oregon Health Sciences University), 785/864-7605
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Project Number: H133A031727
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $299,313

Abstract: This project conducts three semi-longitudinal, national studies examining the impact of interventions to promote the self-determination of students with high incidence and low incidence disabilities, and students who are at-risk for poor adult outcomes on student self-determination, adult outcomes, and quality of life. In all three studies, participants receive instruction for several years (with annual measurements) and adult outcomes are measured during the next two years, post-high school. The first study focuses on students with learning disabilities, mild intellectual disabilities, and emotional/behavioral disorders. The second study focuses on students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, and severe autism. The third study focuses on students with disabilities from foster systems or juvenile justice system.
Identification and Reporting of Violence By People with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133A031724
Start Date: December 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Joyce Y. Caldwell
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $300,000

Abstract: The purpose of this project is to reduce the prevalence of violence against people with disabilities. People with disabilities are at substantially higher risk for violence, abuse, and criminal victimization than the general population. The identification and reporting of violence typically involves individuals’ self-identifying as victims and accessing safety and reporting information and resources, as well as the availability of sensitive and accessible reporting methods. The goal of this project is to improve the identification, reporting, and response to violence against persons with disabilities living in the community by: (1) validating the efficacy of a culturally sensitive approach to promote violence screening, safety behaviors, disclosure and reporting by women with disabilities; (2) increasing knowledge of the extent to which current crime reporting methods incorporate disability status and accommodation information, and the barriers faced by police jurisdictions across the nation in documenting and facilitating crime reporting by persons with disabilities; and (3) identifying practices and policies that promotes and support violence disclosure and reporting by individuals with disabilities.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
California

Occupational Therapy Evaluation and Training Module to Guide Practice with Parents with Physical Disabilities

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Project Number: H133G010054
Start Date: November 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000
Abstract: This project develops an evaluation tool and an evaluation training module that helps occupational therapy students and clinicians in their work with parents with physical disabilities, a currently underserved population. The training module, which consists of a clinical evaluation tool, a manual, and a videotape, guides clinical reasoning and the ability to provide appropriate recommendations and options that take into consideration the baby care roles and adapted baby care equipment needs of parents with physical disabilities who care for (or want to care for) their children. The training module provides a guide to evaluation of baby care needs and intervention in a variety of settings. Parents who have physical disabilities who also have children birth to age 3 inform production, piloting, and field-testing. Further, occupational therapy expertise is needed nationally regarding AT related to parenting. This is especially true as regards evaluation of parents with disabilities whose capability is being questioned, for example in custody, child protection, or adoption situations. This module paves the way for more inclusion of occupational therapist expertise in these evaluation circumstances.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
California

Total Community Immersion Model for Postsecondary-Age Students with Significant Disabilities: An Outcome-Based Approach to Transition

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Project Number: H133G020184
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months

NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project develops, implements, and evaluates a Total Community Immersion Model for transitioning students who are 19 and 20 years old from several metropolitan school districts in San Francisco Bay Area. The Oakland Unified School District, and other Bay Area School Districts in collaboration with San Francisco State University, have spent the last three years establishing the Transition Service Integration Model, which has produced a seamless transition to adulthood by integrating services with adult service providers functioning as receiving agencies and the rehabilitation and developmental disability systems at the point of transition. However, that model focuses exclusively on the needs of pending graduates, that is, 21-year-old students during their last year of school, and could benefit from receiving students with well-developed preferences for community living and employment. A new model, developed through this research, eliminates the use of a fixed school site and develops initial work and non-work activities that facilitate inclusion into each individual’s neighborhood, as well as other communities in Oakland and the metropolitan Bay Area.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Florida

RAICES/Promotoras

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Project Number: H133G030014
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Joyce Y. Caldwell
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,992

Abstract: RAICES (Resources, Advocacy, Integration, Collaboration, Empowerment, and Services) develops and tests a method of service provision that integrates a model known as Promotoras with a locally funded school-linked case management approach known as the Family and School Support Team (FASST). FASST provides school and in-home services for children and their families funded through the Children’s Board of Hillsborough County. The RAICES project targets at-risk limited English speaking and Spanish monolingual Latino children or those with serious emotional disturbance enrolled in grades K-5 and their families in rural east and south Hillsborough County Florida. The project also targets service providers and school personnel that serve Latino families. “Raices,” or “roots,” symbolizes building healthy school and family ties upon the foundations present within the family and community. Promotoras, or community educators, are community members who use their knowledge of local resources and their neighborhood’s health and social issues to promote healthy living and help community residents access needed health and social services. Case management programs such as FASST face challenges in identifying, mobilizing, and sustaining informal resources to support families. The Promotoras model offers a vehicle to make needed modification of local services through development of more culturally competent methods for linking and engaging Latino families with FASST and schools.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)

Illinois

University of Illinois at Chicago Mental Health Services Research
Program Medication Adherence Program Study (UIC-MAPS)

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Project Number: H133G010093
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000
Abstract: This project examines the effects of a multifaceted curriculum designed to improve adherence to medication and treatment regimens, explore attitudes regarding physical health and treatment planning, and improve the ability of participants to return to work. The UIC-MAPS intervention comprises several components, including: (1) developing an educational workshop consisting of three one-hour modules regarding health information, use of anti-retroviral medications, treatment planning, maintaining health, detecting early symptoms of illness progression, and other topics; (2) developing individualized medication plans; (3) meeting with clients and their identified sources of social support to address medication and services issues; and (4) hosting monthly peer-led support groups on medication adherence, attitudes toward health and medication regimens, and issues related to health, well-being, and quality of life. The project includes a comprehensive evaluation designed to make significant contributions to the state-of-the-science literature regarding employment and adherence among people living with HIV/AIDS. In addition, information from peer support group leaders regarding their role(s) in working with other individuals living with HIV/AIDS is examined. The Mental Health Services Research Program at the University of Illinois at Chicago is collaborating with Chicago House, a community-based HIV/AIDS services organization on this project.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)

Illinois

Moving Out of the Nursing Home and to the Community: Examining and Effecting Social Change

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Project Number: H133G010033
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months

NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer

NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,989; FY 02 $149,993; FY 03 $149,981

Abstract: This project develops, evaluates, and disseminates a social action and networking program with people with disabilities who are transitioning from nursing homes to communities of their choice. The majority of community reintegration program research has focused on individual functional skill development as delivered by professionals. This new social action program, based on disability studies research and disability narratives, targets four major unmet needs for: (1) sustained networking with peers, mentors, and activists who have disabilities who can share experiences and strategies; (2) joining meaningful social reference groups, especially those in which disability identity, pride, community membership, and collective activism are valued and modeled; (3) using information technologies, such as computers and the Internet, to gain knowledge, socialize, and network with identified communities of choice; and (4) gaining access to consultative services and resources to access these technologies and the community environment over time. The project uses a participatory action research collaboration approach to create and research the impact of this social action program on long-term community living, participation, quality of life, social networking, and individual and collective identity development processes and outcomes. The project involves a collaborative partnership to effect social change among two Centers for Independent Living, two departments within the Joint Doctoral Program in Disability Studies at the University of Illinois/Chicago (UIC), the Center on Disability Research at UIC, and state agencies and disability organizations involved in community reintegration and resource allocation to support community living.
Integration at Home: Strengthening Family Relationships of Adults with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133G020146
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,957; FY 03 $149,976

Abstract: This study investigates the family relationship issues of adults with physical or mobility disabilities and adults with chronic fatigue syndrome. Phase I involves focus group interviews with adults with disabilities for an open exploration of family relationship issues. Phase II involves in-depth case studies of families experiencing disability who exemplify positive family integration. Phase III involves a randomized control group study to test the impact of a family “intervention” based on the social model of disability.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Illinois

Enabling Self-Determination for People Living with AIDS

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Project Number: H133G020217
Start Date: January 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,032; FY 03 $149,337

Abstract: This project implements and studies a model program of peer-facilitated, empowerment-oriented services for people with AIDS within five supportive living facilities. The facility-based program provides individualized and group services that are tailored to each client’s needs and provides clients with necessary environmental supports. The program also empowers clients to access additional resources and services that support their self-determination. This model program, Enabling Self-Determination, is initially offered to clients in three supportive living facilities. Researchers study: (1) the independent living, employment, and community participation outcomes of the model program, and (2) the three facilities’ efforts to sustain the program. This condition is compared to a control group comprised of individuals from two other facilities who receive basic educational services. Participatory research methods are used to identify potential obstacles and solutions to program implementation and efficacy, and to evaluate how the services impact upon and are viewed by the clients. Researchers work closely with the two control group facilities to build their capacity to implement the model program. In this way, the five transitional living facilities in Chicago that serve persons with AIDS are empowered to sustain the Enabling Self-Determination program. Finally, the project creates extensive resources for program replication and vigorously disseminates the model program so that community-based supportive living facilities can replicate the program nationwide.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Indiana

Integrating Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and Illness Management and Recovery (IMR) for Clients with Severe Mental Illness (SMI)

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Project Number: H133G030106
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,458

Abstract: This project targets the subgroup of 20 percent of consumers with severe mental illness identified with the most severe disabilities, that is, the subgroup most often excluded from rehabilitation services and mental health treatment. The project involves: (1) the systematic integration and high-fidelity implementation of two evidence-based practices for consumers with severe mental illness: assertive community treatment and illness management and recovery; (2) enhancing integration by employing a consumer specialist on treatment teams in a well-defined role; and (3) providing the first empirical test of a comprehensive package of techniques designed to help consumers learn to manage their own illness and foster recovery. Outcome measures include achievement of recovery goals, such as competitive employment and independent living, as well as indicators of illness management, such as prevention of hospitalization.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Kansas

Independent Living for People with Psychiatric Disabilities: Using Contextual Cues to Remove Environmental Barriers

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Project Number: H133G000152
Start Date: August 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $148,765; FY 01 $136,107; FY 02 $148,672; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 4/30/2004)

Abstract: This project examines an intervention that reduces environmental barriers by teaching contextual cues. The grocery store, an exemplar of a complex community-based environment, is the focus, and grocery shopping is the designated skill. The hypotheses tests the effectiveness of the intervention in improving knowledge, performance, and application of grocery shopping skills, and the relationship of cognition to skill acquisition. Individuals with psychiatric disabilities from five community-based sites are randomly assigned to either the grocery shopping intervention or a wait-list control group. Outcome measures address all levels of skill acquisition: knowledge, performance (including generalizability and maintenance), and application of grocery shopping skills. In addition, measures of basic cognitive processes and executive functioning determine whether cognition predicts skill acquisition. Consumer collaborators are included in all aspects of the program. The findings provide direction for enhancing this and other skills training interventions.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Louisiana

Louisiana Community Housing Advocacy Network (LA-CHAN)

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Project Number: H133G020211
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Roslyn Edson
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: The goal of this project is to establish community Housing Advocacy Networks in several areas in Louisiana. The purpose of the advocacy networks is to provide a foundation for collaboration among persons with disabilities, disability service providers, and housing professionals that will: (1) develop local housing policies that are responsive to the housing needs of persons with disabilities, (2) ensure communities access all available national housing resources for persons with disabilities, and (3) establish local programs and service that meet the unique housing needs of persons with disabilities. Anticipated project outcomes include: (1) increased availability of mainstream housing vouchers, (2) increased participation of persons with disabilities in the local Consolidated Planning Process, and (3) the successful transition of individuals from restrictive residential settings to community-based housing options. This project also recruits, hires, and trains individuals with significant disabilities to serve as housing advocates and play an integral role in ensuring individuals with disabilities are active participants in the networks.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Michigan

Identifying Social Integration Needs During Transition to Adulthood Following Traumatic Brain Injury

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Project Number: H133G000038
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $148,363; FY 01 $136,590; FY 02 $143,034; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 2/29/2004)
Abstract: This study identifies specific social rehabilitation and integration needs of persons with TBI. Social functioning is a core domain of quality-of-life, a key predictor of well-being, and is critical to the development of independence. Earlier work has demonstrated that persons with TBI are at risk for social isolation and impaired social problem-solving (SPS) skills including the ability to be assertive in achieving desired social outcomes in school, work, and other settings. SPS skills have been shown to be powerful predictors of social success and integration in noninjured individuals. The specific aims of this study are to: (1) examine SPS skills as key predictors of social integration and quality of life in a sample of young adults with TBI; (2) examine the mediating role of SPS in the relationships between age of onset of TBI and outcome variables; (3) examine predictors of SPS following TBI; and (4) examine SPS following childhood TBI as predictors of social integration and subjective well-being in adulthood.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Michigan

Stress and Coping over the Life Course: A Perspective on Women with Spinal Cord Injury

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Principal Investigator: Denise G. Tate, PhD
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Project Number: H133G020060
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,995; FY 03 $149,999
Abstract: This investigation describes the challenges to independent living faced by women with SCI and the strategies they use to manage the stresses of everyday life. The ratio of men to women who sustain SCI is approximately four to one, with current national prevalence of women estimated to be 36,900. Much of the research on SCI has focused on men and may not reflect the experiences of women with SCI. Even more than their male counterparts, women with SCI endure multiple minority status, poverty, lack of education, job discrimination, and restricted choices, and are often burdened by extra care-taking responsibilities, all of which may elevate their risk for stress-related disorders. This study: (1) documents, from a contextual life perspective, the ways women with SCI perceive and respond to stressful life events; (2) explores, in depth, effective and ineffective ways of coping; and (3) assesses the impact these strategies have on quality of life.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Michigan

Community Participation After Spinal Cord Injury: Idioms of Beliefs and Behaviors

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Project Number: H133G020151
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Phillip Beatty
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,959; FY 03 $149,974

Abstract: This study identifies and describes the self-defined forms of community and the modes of community participation found meaningful to persons living with SCI. The five specific aims are to: (1) discover and describe the self-defined forms of community that people with SCI envision and pursue in daily life; (2) identify and describe the cultural and individual idioms of beliefs and behaviors by which people with SCI create a sense of identification and participate in personally valued communities; (3) identify the barriers to participation in desired communities, and strategies and techniques (if any) that persons with SCI use to overcome these barriers; (4) compare and contrast persons in two groups (new onset SCI and more longstanding duration) in terms of the forms of community, idioms of identification, and strategies used to overcome barriers and achieve meaningful community participation; and (5) evaluate preliminary qualitative hypotheses about the nature and modes of community participation actually envisioned by persons with SCI themselves.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Minnesota

National Training Institute for Frontline Supervisors (NTIFF)

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Project Number: H133G030058
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Joyce Y. Caldwell
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project refines, tests, and delivers a national train-the-trainer and technical assistance model to assist community organizations that provide supports and services to persons with developmental and other severe disabilities to recruit, retain, and train direct support and frontline supervisor staff members. The model includes: (1) assisting organizations to assess their recruitment and retention challenges; (2) providing web-based training on recruitment and retention strategies; (3) conducting 2 intensive train the trainer institutes for 10-15 organization representatives; (4) supporting organizational representatives to provide training to 70-100 frontline supervisors; (5) providing on-site as well as remote technical assistance support and training to organizational representatives; (6) supporting technical assistance efforts by organizational representatives for frontline supervisors; (7) supporting ongoing follow-up measurement to assess the effectiveness of interventions and to guide future intervention work; and (8) developing project products and reports to share the project outcomes with policy makers, provider organizations, and other interested persons.
PeerLink: Empowering Persons with Disabilities to Manage Their Own Information

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Principal Investigator: Laura Schopp, PhD
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Project Number: H133G020065
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William V. Schutz, PhD, MSW, MPH
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $145,379; FY 03 $145,911

Abstract: This project develops an information management system that allows users to share personal and local community resource information instantaneously and selectively, according to their own specifications. The PeerLink team provides expertise in disability issues, informatics, and adaptive computing. PeerLink creates information innovation in three major goal areas: (1) peer-to-peer information transfer model: developing, seeding, and implementing a highly disseminated, agile information system to promote effective service integration by enabling efficient consumer-directed information transfer; (2) knowledge management: converting implicit local resource information held by knowledgeable community members with disabilities in order to make vetted information more broadly available to other community members when and where they need it; and (3) graphic representation: capitalizing on an existing information dissemination user interface to allow access to geographically-based visualization of data for local disability resources.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
New Hampshire

Survey of Home Ownership Nationwide

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Project Number: H133G000034
Start Date: August 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,999; FY 01 $149,999; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2003)

Abstract: This project systematically investigates the quality-of-life outcomes of home ownership for people with severe disabilities, and the personal, service system, financial system, and support network variables associated with achieving and maintaining successful home ownership. Five interrelated studies are conducted: (1) a home ownership outcome study, using in-person structured interviews across six states, conducted by individuals with disabilities, in collaboration with the Temple University Institute on Disabilities, to examine the effect of home ownership on quality-of-life and quality-of-service provision; (2) a study of facilitating and inhibiting factors in home ownership, based on telephone interviews with disability service system personnel, financial personnel, and informal support persons assisting the successful and unsuccessful home seekers identified in the outcome study above, in collaboration with the UNH Center for Survey Research; (3) an investigation of the predictors of mortgage company underwriting decisions to test the effect of differences in disability, assistance, and income sources on mortgage lending; (4) an intensive case study of selected home owners to examine the personal meaning of home ownership and the process of overcoming barriers; and (5) a follow-along study of the variables associated with long-term success by successful home owners.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
New York

Evaluating Independent Living Outcomes for Blind and Visually Impaired Older People: Development of a Nationally Standardized Minimum Dataset (NSMD)

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Project Number: H133G010183
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000
Abstract: This project develops and pilot tests a Nationally Standardized Minimum Dataset (NSMD), through which research can be conducted on the outcomes of services for older persons with visual impairments. This population has traditionally been underserved by public programs including the VR system and the aging network. The NSMD is piloted in several agencies throughout the country and includes: (1) pre-service consumer data, (2) a post-service consumer profile, (3) a functional outcomes assessment, and (4) a consumer satisfaction and perceived outcome survey. Public agency administrators and staff are the primary audience. Secondary target audiences are private agencies for the blind, centers for independent living, and consumers.
A Longitudinal Study of Psychosocial Outcomes and Subjective Quality of Life Many Years After Traumatic Brain Injury

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Project Number: H133G030026
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,999

Abstract: This project is a longitudinal study of individuals with TBI who are on average 18 years post-injury. Between 1994 and 1997, the Research and Training Center on the Community Integration of Individuals with TBI at Mount Sinai School of Medicine conducted extensive quality of life and health interviews with over 800 individuals with TBI, spinal cord injury (SCI) and no disability (NO). The researchers for the current project will re-interview these same individuals eight to nine years after their initial interview, using most of the original measures. This project has three main objectives: (1) to document long-term psychosocial functioning post-TBI and its change over time; (2) to examine longitudinally subjective quality of life post-TBI as a primary indicator of adjustment to TBI; (3) to determine the predictors of change in subjective quality of life. The comparison groups provide a means of examining whether the changes observed in individuals with TBI reflect the unique experience of living with a TBI, the broader experience of living with a disability (comparison with the SCI group), or the general challenges we all face in conducting our daily lives (comparison with the NO group). Results of the study are disseminated through public conferences for both professionals and consumers, through publications in journals for consumers and professionals, and through the development of reports specifically targeted to individuals with TBI.
Neuropsychological Functioning and Psychosocial Adjustment in Adolescents with Spina Bifida and NLD

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Project Number: H133G000134
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $147,750; FY 01 $149,958; FY 02 $147,623; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 3/31/2004)

Abstract: This study examines the relationship between type and severity of neuropsychological impairment, in particular the nonverbal learning disability (NLD) profile, and psychosocial functioning in adolescents with spina bifida. Adolescents with spina bifida exhibit a variety of neurocognitive deficits that are thought to undermine psychosocial adjustment. Between 40 and 50 percent have neuropsychological impairments indicative of NLD, which is strongly associated with poor social adjustment and internalizing behavior problems (e.g., depression). In general, adolescents with spina bifida display problems in behavioral, social, and personality adjustment, although there is considerable variability in this population. Primary goals of the study are to: (1) identify differential patterns of psychosocial management at different points in adolescent development; (2) determine the predictive utility of the NLD profile to subsequent psychosocial functioning and determine if psychosocial problems increase with age in those with NLD; and (3) test whether family functioning moderates the association between neuropsychological impairment and psychosocial adjustment. Results from this study elucidate causal relationships between neuropsychological impairment and psychosocial functioning in adolescents with spina bifida, delineate risk factors that contribute to early identification and the design of effective interventions, and reveal patterns of psychosocial functioning across age in adolescents.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Oregon

Getting A Life: Research on Individual and Person-Centered Planning Processes in Oregon

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Project Number: H133G010167
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $149,999; FY 02 $149,999; FY 03 $149,997

Abstract: This project researches the relative merits of forms of Person-Centered Planning (PCP), including the Individualized Support or Service Plan (ISP) system, Essential Lifestyle Planning (ELP), and others. Activities include the following three studies: (1) surveying the features of individual planning systems used in Oregon at the start of the project and in Year 3 after large scale systems change efforts have occurred; (2) creating a causal-comparative 3-by-2 factorial group design, where study participants are assigned to groups based on whether they are experiencing a defined set of significant life challenges and the types of service planning they receive, with groups balanced or blocked based on demographic variables; and (3) creating a multiple-baseline single subject design in which the outcomes of three service planning approaches (ISPs, ELPs, and PCP) are compared related to specific outcomes for six individuals who experience challenging behavior.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Oregon

Resilience in Students with TBI: A Longitudinal Investigation

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Project Number: H133G030179
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,950

Abstract: The project extends the work of Project PSO, a project investigating post-secondary outcomes for young adults with TBI, for three more years, during a time when the subjects are making significant life adjustments in the areas of post-secondary education, employment, independent living, and interpersonal relationships. Now in its fifth and final year, the Project’s quantitative and qualitative data are revealing that some of the 92 subjects appear to be resilient, achieving successful post-injury adjustments, while others are experiencing difficulty, becoming dependent on family members for instrumental and social support. The data are also beginning to suggest that access to specific types of educational interventions and support services account for these differences in adjustment. In addition, this project investigates factors that facilitate and impede delivery of services and support to young adults with TBI from key agencies, including VR, Social Security Administration, and state social service agencies serving individuals disabilities.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Oregon

Men’s Personal Assistance Services Abuse Research Project

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Project Number: H133G010040
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000
Abstract: This project focuses on prevention and management of personal assistance service (PAS) abuse carried out against men with disabilities who are living independently in the community, who are abused by their formal or informal PAS providers. It increases identification, assessment, and response by: (1) developing a knowledge base regarding men’s definitions, perceptions, and experiences of PAS abuse; (2) designing a culturally sensitive screening and assessment approach that can be used by men, Centers for Independent Living (CILs), and health and disability services providers to identify PAS abuse; and (3) identifying culturally appropriate response strategies that can be used by men, CILs, and health and disability services providers to prevent and manage PAS abuse. The project is collaboratively conducted by the Center on Self-Determination at the Oregon Institute on Disability and Development of Oregon Health Sciences University, the World Institute on Disability, and Berkeley Planning Associates.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Oregon

Community Environmental Assessment Project: A Multi-Method Approach to Identify Barriers, Assets, and Engage Communities for Change

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Project Number: H133G020125
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Unknown
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project develops a multi-method approach to measure a community’s level of accessibility. The project measures accessibility of communities through a process of community engagement and use of extant data. Effectively measuring community accessibility through the explication and depiction of extant data at the local level can provide the means for participatory social change at low cost, using available resources. The project’s major objectives and activities include: (1) identifying access issues in different communities through a call-back survey of people with disabilities, summarizing results by type and location of community; (2) engaging community members to identify local needs and resources and measurable indicators of barriers and facilitators; (3) developing community profiles based on measurable indicators (including statistical data and maps with geographic information systems); (4) evaluating community access at the local community level by reviewing all data and maps to address future plans, policies, or interventions to improve access with disability experts, community leaders, service and government agencies, and planners; and (5) developing and disseminating a handbook that summarizes the multi-method approach. The project summarizes procedures and findings and disseminates them nationally.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Oregon

Healthy Lifestyles Evaluation Project

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Project Number: H133G020231
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project evaluates the effectiveness of the Healthy Lifestyles for People with Disabilities training curriculum. To achieve this goal, the project: (1) conducts ten Healthy Lifestyles training events for persons with disabilities through local Centers for Independent Living within the Portland metropolitan area and statewide; (2) assesses the level of wellness and the healthy lifestyles attitudes, knowledge, and skills of participants over the course of the project (before and after participating, and over time, to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in establishing and maintaining long-term lifestyle changes); (3) assesses participants’ completion of lifestyle change goals; and (4) compares participants’ wellness and healthy lifestyles attitudes, knowledge, and skills to that of controls.
Stability of Vocational Interests Two Years after Spinal Cord Injury: Relationship with Employment, Participation, and Subjective Well-Being

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Project Number: H133G030151
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Joyce Y. Caldwell
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $149,944

Abstract: The primary objectives of this study are to identify how much interests change in the first two years after SCI onset, factors related to change, and the extent to which interest type and interest change are associated with employment, participation, and subjective well-being. Return to gainful employment has been widely endorsed as fundamental rehabilitation goal after the onset of a SCI, yet employment rates for people with SCI rarely exceed 30 percent. This high unemployment rate is generally attributed to the dramatic impact of SCI on ability to perform job functions requiring physical strength and dexterity. However, successful employment is related to both the extent to which the individual is able to perform the needed job functions and the degree to which the job environment and job tasks are intrinsically interesting to the individual. Unfortunately, research has shown that SCI often occurs selectively to people whose interests are in physically challenging activities that may no longer possible given the physical limitations imposed by SCI. The impact of no longer being able to perform intrinsically rewarding activities not only poses a threat to successful return to work, but also to overall participation in society and subjective well-being. By helping rehabilitation professionals to better understand the relationships of both interest type and interest stability with employment, participation, and well-being, this study lays a foundation for intervention strategies that maximize opportunities for participation and help people with SCI to lead fulfilling and rewarding lives.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Texas

**Depression and Rural Women with Disabilities: Testing a CIL-Based Self-Management Program**

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**Project Number:** H133G030170
**Start Date:** October 1, 2003
**Length:** 36 months
**NIDRR Officer:** Bonnie Gracer
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $150,000

**Abstract:** This project evaluates a depression self-management intervention for reducing and preventing depression in rural women with disabilities. The intervention is designed to increase participants’ understanding and self-management of depression as it relates to experiences of secondary and chronic health problems, stress, lack of support, chronic pain, and abuse. This study is implemented in eight rural centers for independent living. The goals of this project are to (1) identify, address, and evaluate the mental health of rural women with physical disabilities, including women with newly recognized disabilities such as chronic fatigue immune deficiency syndrome and fibromyalgia; and (2) disseminate the findings to rural women with disabilities, rural independent living counselors, researchers, and mental health service providers.
Multi-Family Group Intervention for Traumatic Brain Injury and Spinal Cord Injury Patients and Families

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Project Number: H133G020006
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard E. Wilson II, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project establishes two SCI and two TBI multi-family group (MFG) interventions to support and teach families and patients about the disability process and management strategies. MFG is a structured management strategy that has been extensively tested in the management of chronic schizophrenia and more recently adapted for other chronic disabling conditions. This strategy brings together groups of six to eight families with two MFG group clinician/facilitators in a psycho-educational problem-solving format, over a period of 18 months. Families are given the opportunity to discover and share problems and solutions about the process of living with other families and patients through the implementation of practical guidelines for effective coping. The intervention has been highly effective in reducing relapse and hospitalizations, and improving symptom control and quality of life, for persons with schizophrenia. This project compares TBI and SCI MFG groups for ease of implementation, efficacy (process and outcome), and cost, adapting measures previously studied in schizophrenia with those used in assessing family stress in SCI and TBI.
Pocket Compass: A Palmtop Computer-Based Intelligent Aid for Individuals with Mental Retardation to Increase Independence and Self-Determination in Decision Making

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Principal Investigator: Daniel K. Davies
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Project Number: ED-01-PO-3664
Start Date: September 17, 2001
Length: 6 months

NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $60,000; FY 03 150,000

Abstract: This project helps individuals with mental retardation navigate the cognitive process of making appropriate decisions by developing and evaluating Pocket Compass, a portable software system that uses an expert-system approach combined with intelligent audio and visual cues. Achieving greater independence and self-determination for individuals with mental retardation depends upon the ability to make appropriate decisions independently. This device should be useful in the acquisition of decision-making skills relating to community involvement in areas such as work, recreation, and independent living where available choices can be rationally predicted. Research activities include: (1) determining the user interface, technical, and functional requirements of the system; (2) designing and building a software prototype on the Pocket PC platform; and (3) conducting a pilot study to evaluate the utility of the system for improving independence and self-determination in decision making for adults with mental retardation.
Pocket Voyager: Making Palmtop Computers Accessible to Individuals with Mental Retardation

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Project Number: ED-01-PO-3665
Start Date: September 17, 2001
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $60,000; FY 03 149,997

Abstract: This project researches and develops Pocket Voyager, a specially designed multimedia application to make the features and programs on palmtop computers more independently accessible to individuals with mental retardation. Palmtop computers are becoming an increasingly common platform for AT developers, in part because of their portability, integrated touch-screens, multimedia capabilities, removable storage options, and PC slot accessories that extend the capacities of the system. Also, mainstream production makes them a more desirable development platform than specially designed hardware units, with lower costs due to high-volume production runs and significantly more research and development attention. Software products are being developed that are designed to be used by individuals with mental retardation in areas such as communication, schedule maintenance, and task completion, but great difficulty is encountered when a user exits the closed environment of a specialized software application and must use the palmtop computer’s interface to, for example, launch another desired application. AbleLink builds upon methodologies used in developing its current Voyager desktop application for Windows desktop computers. The project involves determining the functional, interface, and technical requirements for such a system, building a software prototype, and then evaluating that prototype in a pilot study to assess its utility for making palmtop computers more independently accessible to individuals with mental retardation. The prototype utilizes multimedia and error minimization methodologies to make other software programs and features on the computer more accessible.
SEAMS: Special Education Administrative Management System

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Project Number: H133S030210
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 6 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $68,350

Abstract: The overall objective of the project is to develop a prototype of a web-based Special Education Administrative Management System (SEAMS) to support the administration of local, state and federal special education laws and regulations such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). SEAMS is a comprehensive system designed to be used by everyone involved in the special education process including special educators, parents, general education teachers, allied health professionals, principals, local, state, and federal administrators. The goals of SEAMS are to: (1) minimize the administrative burden of assembling, completing, tracking, and updating the required paperwork; (2) give all stakeholders real-time access to a student’s performance; (3) allow educators to spend more time customizing pedagogical strategies and monitoring the student’s performance; and (4) facilitate better tracking of outcomes and the documentation of best practices.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase I  
Texas

CyberCoach: An Automated System to Help Integrate Individuals with Memory Disabilities Into Employment or Independent Living Settings

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Principal Investigator: James E. Schroeder, PhD  
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Project Number: H133S030189  
Start Date: October 1, 2003  
Length: 6 months  
NIDRR Officer: Roslyn Edson  
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $70,000

Abstract: This project designs and tests the feasibility of the CyberCoach system which helps persons with memory deficits perform tasks related to employment and independent living. The primary user interface is speech, with CyberCoach using synthesized or recorded speech output and speech recognition for input. A standard computer serves as the base unit and a digital phone as the user’s remote unit. The system is also capable of exchanging text, pictures, and auditory information. CyberCoach also serves as a communication hub, originating or relaying information to other appropriate participants (e.g., work supervisor, rehabilitation professional, family member). The project also investigates the use of the global positioning system as a tool for helping the user perform work-related and independent-living tasks. Front-end analysis is conducted to determine: (1) target functional capabilities of the proposed system and (2) corresponding capabilities available in current products. A test is conducted to determine the accuracy of current speech recognition technology when the voice signal is from a limited set and transmitted from a remote digital phone.
Pocket Compass: A Palmtop Computer-Based Intelligent Aid for Individuals with Mental Retardation to Increase Independence and Self-Determination in Decision Making

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Project Number: ED-01-PO-3664 (5-2)
Start Date: September 17, 2002
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,997; FY 03 $149,997

Abstract: This project develops and evaluates Pocket Compass, a decision-making aid for people with mental retardation. Achieving greater independence and self-determination for individuals with mental retardation depends upon the ability to make appropriate decisions independently. The portable software system uses an expert-system approach combined with intelligent audio and visual cues to help individuals navigate the cognitive process of making appropriate decisions. This device is useful in acquiring decision-making skills relating to community involvement in areas such as work, recreation, and independent living, where available choices can be rationally predicted. This project completes Phase I of the Pocket Compass intelligent decision aiding system, builds a companion desktop software utility to help set up and manage decision assistance scenarios for multiple individuals, and performs expanded field testing of the system to evaluate its applicability in supporting a wide range of types of decisions.
Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR), Phase II
Maryland

Development and Testing of LD/LEP Friendly Computer Textbooks in Diverse Subjects, Classrooms, and Formats

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Project Number: H133S030008
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 24 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $326,950

Abstract: This project determines if textbooks based on a Phase I prototype help students with learning disabilities and low-English-proficiency (LEP) learn computer subjects better, faster, and easier. The study also determine if these textbooks are suitable for mainstream students, and if the books are effective when used in electronic format. Twenty Phase I-type textbooks on common computer subjects are produced and distributed to high school, college, and adult education computer classes containing LD, LEP, and mainstream students. One group of classes uses bound copies, another uses electronic copies, and a control group uses textbooks currently on the market. At the beginning of the semester, students in each class take a pre-test to measure existing knowledge. At the end of the semester, they take a post-test to measure what they’ve learned. Test data from two semesters is used to compare the progress of students in the bound, electronic, and current-book test groups.
Associated Disability Research Areas

Related disability research emphasizes knowledge areas that are cross-cutting and essential to the support and refinement of disability research generally. The common theme linking disability statistics, outcome measures, and the emerging fields of disability studies, rehabilitation science, and disability policy research is that they all provide essential frameworks and building blocks for the research and address important issues in a meaningful way.

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Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Arizona

American Indian Rehabilitation Research and Training Center

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Public Contact: Priscilla Lansing Sanderson, Project Director, 928/523-4791 (V); 928/523-1695 (TTY); Fax: 928/523-9127

Project Number: H133B980049
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Constance Pledger, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $595,000; FY 99 $605,000; FY 00 $605,000; FY 01 $739,500; FY 02 $600,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2003)

Abstract: This Center develops, implements, and conducts research and training activities around four core areas. Eight research projects and six training projects focus on: (1) investigating and analyzing existing disability and employment data, and recommending methodology for planning and evaluating employment services for American Indians and Alaska Natives; (2) recommending successful strategies to improve employment outcomes, including existing employment and VR service practices for American Indians and Alaska Natives with disabilities on or off reservations; (3) developing and evaluating innovative and culturally appropriate VR services for the employment of American Indians and Alaska Natives; and (4) disseminating results of the data collection and evaluation of model employment services to a range of relevant audiences, using appropriate accessible formats. Consultation with researchers, CANAR, and the training team helps develop a dissemination method that is accessible and acceptable for each respective target community. Information and resources are developed and disseminated to providers, tribal and state vocational rehabilitative agencies, consumers, and Regional Continuing Education Programs.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
California

Disability Statistics Rehabilitation Research and Training Center

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Principal Investigator: Mitchell P. LaPlante, PhD
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Project Number: H133B980045
Start Date: December 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $700,000; FY 99 $750,000; FY 00 $700,000; FY 01 $700,000; FY 02 $700,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 11/30/2004)
Abstract: The Center conducts research in the demography and epidemiology of disability including costs, employment statistics, health and long-term care statistics, and statistical indicators. Statistical information is disseminated through published statistical reports and abstracts, journals, professional presentations, and a publications mailing list. Training activities and resources (such as a predoctoral program) disseminate scientific methods, procedures, and results to both new and established researchers, policy-makers, and other consumers, and assist them in interpreting statistical information. A National Disability Statistics and Policy Forum is conducted periodically to foster dialogue between people with disabilities and representative organizations, researchers, and policy-makers.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Kansas

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Policies Affecting Families of Children with Disabilities

University of Kansas
Beach Center on Disability
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Principal Investigator: Ann Turnbull, EdD; H. R. Turnbull, LLM
Public Contact: H. R. Turnbull, LLM, 785/864-7600; Fax: 785/864-7605

Project Number: H133B980050
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $650,000; FY 99 $650,000; FY 00 $650,000; FY 01 $650,000; FY 02 $650,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2004)

Abstract: This project assesses policies and services and their impact on families’ quality of life, focusing on four priorities: (1) developing an analytical framework for policy and service analysis; (2) developing measurement tools that apply state-of-the-art legal and policy analysis methodologies to the assessment of policies, service systems, and family outcomes; (3) identifying impacts of partnership (including interagency collaboration and coordination) on family outcomes; and (4) conducting research with families from diverse backgrounds in several communities and states (Kansas, Louisiana, and North Carolina). This research agenda is composed of five comprehensive training projects, six dissemination projects, and five technical assistance projects. Training activities include: (a) pre-service training and the preparation of three textbooks; (b) in-service training that helps service providers and families form community coalitions using the measurement toolkit; and (c) sponsorship of an international state-of-the-science conference. Dissemination activities include: (a) networking with federal agencies; (b) developing and disseminating the measurement toolkit, six users’ manuals, and a management information software package; and (c) publishing articles in peer-reviewed newsletters, research briefs, fact sheets, a web site, and a newsletter. Technical assistance focuses on: (a) enhancing federal and state policies; (b) conducting summer institutes with state-local partners on policy and service analyses; and (c) developing partnerships with federal agency liaisons, grantees, and key family and professional organizations to mentor them in using the results of project research to enhance policies and services.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Kansas

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Policies Affecting Families of Children with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133B031133
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $749,951

Abstract: This center conducts eight research projects on the effects of the policies of governments, systems, networks, and agencies on the family quality of life and community integration (FQOL/FCI) of families who have children with developmental disabilities and emotional-behavioral disabilities or both. Researchers identify four target populations: families, providers, policy-leaders, and networks (all at the federal, state, and local levels). Three policy challenges are prisms through which the effects of policy on families can be understood: early intervention, alternative schools, and consumer control of funding. For each policy challenge, researchers inquire into whether the applicable federal and state policies and practices, and the applicable network policies, advance FQOL/FCI; whether the policies across education, social services, and health care are mutually consistent with each other and advance FQOL/FCI; and whether the practices of agencies in those systems advance FQOL/FCI. The center’s analytical framework holds that the core concepts shape policies; policies shape services; policies and services should be coordinated and delivered through partnerships; enhanced FQOL/FCI occurs when there is coherence among core concepts, coordinated policies delivered through partnerships, and coordinated services delivered through partnerships; and influencing factors must invariably be taken into account.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Massachusetts

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Measuring Rehabilitation Outcomes

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Project Number: H133B990005
Start Date: September 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $699,736; FY 00 $699,868; FY 01 $699,745; FY 02 $698,812; FY 03 $699,946

Abstract: This Center develops new, more effective outcomes measurement tools and applies these tools to determine the effectiveness of medical rehabilitation interventions. Research components include: (1) identifying gaps in existing outcome measures and developing new instruments that address these gaps as part of a rehabilitation outcomes system; (2) critically evaluating the newly developed instruments against tools currently in use; (3) implementing the newly developed outcome instruments across impairment groups and across rehabilitation settings to assess their feasibility, responsiveness, and validity; (4) investigating the extent to which specific rehabilitation interventions affect outcomes following the onset of a stroke; and (5) applying modern psychometric techniques to develop dynamic outcome instruments that can also be used with individual patients in a clinical setting. Several components have been designed to enhance the translation of research findings into rehabilitation practice and to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to provide input into the Center including surveys of the use of medical rehabilitation outcomes data, consensus conferences, institutes, fellowships, a web site, and a consumer guide to choosing postacute care services.
Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Demographics and Statistics

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www.disabilitystatistics.org

Principal Investigator: Andrew J. Houtenville, PhD
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Project Number: H133B031111
Start Date: December 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $750,000

Abstract: The RRTC on Demographics and Statistics (Cornell StatsRRTC) bridges the divide between the sources of disability data and the users of disability statistics. The project conducts research exploring the reliability of existing data sources and collection methods, and studies the potential to improve current and future data collection efforts. In addition, the project utilizes existing data sources to provide a comprehensive and reliable set of statistics, increase access to and understanding of how statistics can be used effectively to support decision making. Cornell StatsRCC works with key organizations to determine their needs and helps them maximize the use of disability statistics in their ongoing efforts to improve the lives of people with disabilities and their families. As members of the Cornell StatsRRTC, the American Association of People with Disabilities the Center for an Accessible Society, and InfoUse provide vital expertise and resources needed to reach the users of disability data and statistics. The StatsRRTC includes researchers from Cornell University, Mathematica Policy Research, the Urban Institute, and the Institute for Matching People and Technology, all of which bring extensive expertise in working with and creating sources of disability data.
Emergent Disability, Systems Change, and Employment of People with Disabilities

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Project Number: H133A021503
Start Date: December 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $300,000; FY 03 $300,000

Abstract: This project examines state service systems to document the impact of federal policies and practices on systems change and how such changes affect people with disabilities. Research activities include: (1) analysis of national, state, and local data collection systems and actual employment outcomes for people with disabilities; (2) documentation of data sets being used by state agencies to measure effectiveness and how these could be used to examine outcomes for people with disabilities; and (3) examination of how people with disabilities fare within the existing system and challenges they may face through direct consumer research. The goals of the project are: (1) to develop a clear description and presentation of how federal policies impact systems change efforts; (2) to identify how these policies and practices affect the lives of people with disabilities; (3) to identify procedures for a more integrated approach to gathering data that better explains the consumer outcomes of these services; and (4) to document how people with disabilities progress within the service system.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
California

Disability Rights and the Independent Living Movement: The Formative Years Nationwide

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Principal Investigator: Charles B. Faulhaber, PhD, 510/642-3781
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Project Number: H133G000083
Start Date: August 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $150,000; FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 7/31/2004)

Abstract: This project creates a national platform for comprehensive research on the origins and leadership of the independent living and disability rights movement in the United States. An experienced team collects and preserves oral histories and archival records of pivotal leaders and key organizations across the country, before they are irretrievably lost. The documentation that is generated about the formative years of the movement is to be made widely available for research use, both on the Internet and in appropriate archival repositories. The project includes three main components: (1) oral history interviews with 50 to 60 national and regional leaders of the movement, (2) collection and preservation of historical records in archival repositories, and (3) the creation of an Internet-based Disability Rights and Independent Living Movement Digital Archive that includes oral histories, selected documents, and finding aids for collected materials at all repositories.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Colorado

National Study Of Disability Finance

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Principal Investigator: David L. Braddock, PhD
Public Contact: 303/492-0639

Project Number: H133G030149
Start Date: December 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: The project is a unique and comprehensive longitudinal study of the financial and programmatic structure of public spending for disability in each state of the US and at the national level. The study develops and maintains a state-by-state and national database on public spending for mental, physical, and sensory disability during 1997-2004, and investigates the determinants of that spending. The project includes a wide-ranging dissemination and technical assistance program on innovative financing of disability programs in the US, based on the results of this research. The project also includes a consortium of dissemination and technical assistance partnerships with five national organizations: the National Conference of State Legislatures, the 100-agency-member Washington DC-based Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, the National Council on Independent Living, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, and the grassroots ADAPT organization (Americans Disabled for Attendant Programs Today).
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Illinois

An Analysis of the Demography of Living Standards, Health, and Poverty of Persons with a Disability Living in Third World Nations Based on Data from the World Bank

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Project Number: H133G010139
Start Date: November 1, 2001
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project analyzes World Bank economic development data in 24 developing nations of the world. The goal of the analysis is to describe basic demographics and their relationship to the living standards of persons with a disability. The overall goals of the project are to elevate awareness of disability issues globally, to assist local advocacy efforts in raising awareness of disability as a basic development issue, and to stimulate a dialogue regarding the international role in the evolving paradigm of disability. Primary areas of emphasis are: (1) characterization of employment, economic status, and social well-being (i.e., access to health services, supports, assets); (2) estimation of the magnitude of disablement within nations; (3) identification of subgroups within each nation that are most vulnerable to disablement; (4) analysis of the status of women with disabilities; (5) identification of unique regional concerns; and (6) broad comparisons of the living standards in the developing world to those of the U.S. The project employs systems initiated by the World Bank in 1980 called the Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) project, which involves sophisticated population-based household surveys on economic behavior and living standards in underdeveloped nations. This project is a collaborative effort by the Department of Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois/Chicago and Disabled Peoples’ International. The project operationalizes the principles of participatory action research by employing the expertise of regional representatives of the DPI, a consumer-driven, cross-disability network with member organizations in more than 158 countries, of which more than half are in the developing world.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Illinois

Differences in Mental Health Service Satisfaction Among Clients Interviewed by Consumer and Non-Consumer Researchers Using Computer-Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) Technology

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Project Number: H133G020027
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This study compares differences in service satisfaction ratings made by clients interviewed by researchers who are and are not mental health consumers to better understand mental health consumers’ evaluations of the services they receive. In a randomized design, 400 clients complete satisfaction surveys administered by mental health consumer researchers and 400 clients complete satisfaction surveys administered by non-consumer researchers. Computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) technology is used to administer the satisfaction surveys. Study results provide important information on clients’ satisfaction with community mental health programs, the effect of researchers’ consumer status on program satisfaction ratings, and the use of CAPI technology in mental health program evaluation.
Rehabilitation Readiness Tool for Latinos with Psychiatric Disabilities

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Latino Initiatives at the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation
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Principal Investigator: Maria Restrepo-Toro, MS; Marianne Farkas, ScD
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Project Number: H133G020181
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,776; FY 03 $149,897

Abstract: This project develops a Rehabilitation Readiness Tool for Latino Consumers with Serious Psychiatric Disabilities. Based on information gathered about the experience of Latino consumers with psychiatric disabilities. This tool can be used by professionals and/or the person’s family or natural support system to assess and develop the individual’s readiness for rehabilitation in an effective and culturally appropriate way. To implement the project the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation at Boston University is collaborating with Maria Sardinas Center (MSC) and South Bay Guidance Center (SBGC), both programs of Community Research Foundation in San Diego, CA, and Center House, Inc., and Casa Primavera, both programs of Bay Cove Human Services in Boston, MA. The present proposal addresses several barriers related to Latino service underutilization, including a lack of understanding of how to begin services in a way that matches the Latino clients’ needs (i.e., readiness to engage) and the absence of accompanying readiness educational materials in Spanish. The tool generated by this project allows rehabilitation professionals, family members, and/or other natural supports to help Latinos engage more successfully in the rehabilitation process. This innovation helps to provide a bridge between existing rehabilitation services and the potential Latino consumer.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
Minnesota

Secondary Analyses of Persons with Disabilities in the 1994-1995 Disability Supplement to the National Health Interview Survey and in 1999 and 2000 NHIS Surveys

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Principal Investigator: Sheryl Larson, PhD; Charlie Lakin, PhD, 612/624-6024 (Larson); 612/624-5005 (Lakin)
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Project Number: H133G020037
Start Date: August 01, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $135,670; FY 03 $140,139

Abstract: This project conducts and disseminates the results of focused secondary analyses of data on persons with developmental and other disabilities within the 1994-1995 Disability Supplement to the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS-D) and within 1999 and 2000 NHIS surveys. The combined 1994 and 1995 NHIS-D is the most comprehensive survey of non-institutionalized persons with disabilities ever conducted in the United States and is the first national survey to include persons with disabilities of all ages. The analyses focus on the 3,076 sample members with mental retardation (MR) and/or developmental disabilities (DD), and on the 12,078 adults and 1,536 children who have one or more substantial functional limitations but who do not have MR or DD. The analyses build on earlier research using the NHIS-D in which operational definitions for mental retardation, and developmental disabilities, and functional limitations were developed and used for estimating prevalence, demographics, and service use of persons with MR and/or DD. Data analysis topics include: (1) demographic, functional, and health characteristics; (2) in-home services and supports; (3) access to health care; (4) services, devices, and technology; (5) households with parents who have disabilities; and (6) social roles and experiences of adults. In each of these areas, four disability groups are examined: those with mental retardation only, those with developmental disabilities only, those with mental retardation and developmental disabilities, and those with substantial functional limitations but not mental retardation or developmental disabilities. Of particular interest is the comparison between working-age adults with developmental disabilities and those with three or more functional limitations whose disabilities first occurred in adulthood.
Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)
New York

Utilization and Analysis of Census 2000 Data to Inform Disability Advocacy and Employment Policy

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Principal Investigator: Andrew J. Houtenville, PhD
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Project Number: H133G020117
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000
Abstract: This project analyzes and disseminates disability employment statistics gleaned from the long-form dataset of the 2000 U.S. Census. A unique feature of the statistical summary is the disaggregation of data at the state and, if possible, county level. The project generates a “user friendly” report and web site designed for advocacy groups and other end users of disability employment statistics. The web site is designed in a “question-and-answer” format, based on a model currently employed by Cornell’s RRTC for Economic Research on Employment Policy. The project also analyses and disseminates Public Use Microdata Sample files, which allow the summary and reporting of data at the state and local level. Research also includes testing of statistical models purporting to describe the “disablement process” and barriers to employment.
A Six-Year Longitudinal Study of Community Integration, Subjective Well-Being, and Health After Spinal Cord Injury: Relationship with Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Environmental Factors

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Project Number: H133G020218
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,734; FY 03 $149,941

Abstract: This longitudinal study identifies changes in quality of life and health outcomes over a six-year period as a function of gender, race/ethnicity, and environmental factors. Follow-up data are collected from 466 participants from three collaborating sites that include the Shepherd Center, Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, and Craig Hospital. The same core outcome measures that were used during the preliminary data collection in 1997-98 are being re-administered by phone. Measures include the Craig Handicap Assessment Reporting Technique, the Older Adult Health and Mood Questionnaire, the Reciprocal Support Scale, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey and the Life Situation Questionnaire. In addition, newly developed measures are being used to identify the relationship between environmental factors and adverse outcomes. These measures include the Craig Hospital Inventory of Environmental Factors; Acculturation, Integration, Marginalization, and Segregation; and the assimilation factor of the Community Integration Measure. A 2x4x2 longitudinal factorial design is being used to analyze the data. A mediational model is being used to identify the extent to which differences in environmental factors explain any associations of gender and race-ethnicity with participation, subjective well-being, health behaviors, and health outcomes.
Knowledge Dissemination and Utilization

Dissemination and utilization are the tools through which to ensure that people with disabilities become fully integrated and participating members of society. NIDRR’s dissemination and utilization efforts ensure the widespread distribution, in usable formats, of practical scientific and technological information generated by research, demonstration, and related activities. NIDRR’s challenge is to reach diverse and changing populations, to present research results in many different and accessible formats, and to use technology appropriately.

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Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Alabama

National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center

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Project Number: H133A011201
Start Date: July 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $349,988; FY 02 $350,000; FY 03 $350,000
Abstract: The Statistical Center has the following objectives: (1) establish the appropriate IT system; (2) train and provide technical assistance to the Model SCI centers; (3) communicate with NIDRR and the centers to ensure quality of the items in the database; (4) demonstrate the capacity to conduct and facilitate research from the database; (5) link to other related databases; (6) incorporate culturally appropriate methods of data collection and dissemination, including culturally sensitive measurement approaches; (7) demonstrate the capacity to provide technical assistance to the Model SCI centers and other related projects regarding database development and maintenance.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
California

National Resource Center for Parents with Disabilities

Through the Looking Glass
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Principal Investigator: Megan Kirshbaum, PhD; Paul Preston, PhD
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Project Number: H133A980001
Start Date: April 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Bonnie Gracer
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $500,000; FY 99 $500,000; FY 00 $500,000; FY 01 $500,000; FY 02
$500,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2003)

Abstract: The National Resource Center for Parents with Disabilities focuses on the 10.9 percent of
U.S. families with children in which one or both parents have a disability—nearly 9 million parents.
The Center provides: (1) accessible and disability-appropriate information regarding parenting with a
disability to parents, potential parents, disability advocates, and legal, medical, and social service
providers; (2) training to parents with disabilities, potential parents, and service providers; (3) technical
assistance that increases informed practice and informed decisions; (4) program consultation that
increases local and regional services that are accessible and disability-appropriate. To accomplish these
goals, project researchers: (1) consolidate and disseminate information and resources, (2) synthesize
and disseminate materials from other agencies and organizations, (3) develop and disseminate new
materials tailored to address the specific needs of parenting with disabilities and service providers, (4)
expand the national availability of training and technical assistance to parents with disabilities and
service providers, and (5) develop curricula to train future service providers. Parenting areas designated
as highest priority are: custody, pregnancy and birthing, adoption, adaptive parenting equipment, and
general parenting information. The project is staffed by nationally recognized experts regarding parents
with disabilities, the majority of whom are parents with disabilities or family members of parents with
disabilities.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
California

Ideas for the New Millennium

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Oakland, CA 94612-1520
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www.disabilityworld.org

Principal Investigator: Kathy Martinez, 510/251-4326
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Project Number: H133A990006
Start Date: October 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Eva M. Gavillán, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $400,000; FY 00 $400,000; FY 01 $400,000; FY 02 $400,000; FY 03 $400,000

Abstract: The ideas for the new millennium project creates a productive international exchange of information and expertise on disability and rehabilitation, connecting disability research and advocacy leadership in ten target countries with their peers in the United States. At the heart of this exchange is an online information system that captures innovation, links government officials, policy-makers, disability leaders, rehabilitation specialists, researchers, and innovators in a lively exchange of ideas, networks, resources, and contacts. This sustainable network of information and resources on substantive disability issues is available across professions, cultures, and communities. The issues critical to the information exchanges are: (1) disability rights and independent living, (2) employment and entrepreneurial activity, (3) access and technology, (4) mass media images, and (5) influence through governance. Using a civil rights perspective, the project addresses disability policy, law, advocacy, research, and related developments in the ten countries. The project systematically promotes international exchange, reports results, and analyzes their significance in consumer-friendly formats and forums, including a comprehensive database, five annual symposia, as well as a bi-monthly webzine, www.disabilityworld.org, in English and Spanish. The project collaborates with four disability-led organizations with substantial international experience.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project to Disseminate
Independent Living Research Information Through the Mass Media to
Persons with Disabilities

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Principal Investigator: Cynthia Jones
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Project Number: H133A980045
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $299,991; FY 99 $299,994; FY 00 $299,988; FY 01 $299,996; FY 02 $299,992; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 3/31/2004)
Abstract: This project disseminates research information on independent living (IL) through the popular mass media. Like many groups who rely on well-planned programs of media dissemination involving media relations firms, this project hires and works proactively with a media relations firm and selected researchers to obtain coverage of IL issues in the popular mass media. The goal is to create the recognition that the target population and its issues require ongoing, in-depth coverage. The project conducts a proactive “media watch” to identify opportunities to insert an IL perspective into public debates on policy issues in the popular mass media. As part of that watch, the project establishes a “rapid response” program to provide members of the popular mass media with resources among IL researchers, and to generate a response from the IL community to stories that omit the IL perspective. The project manages an interactive web site to provide information and resources about IL research to members of the popular mass media, researchers, and consumers.
TECH CONNECTIONS: Improving the Utilization of Existing and Emerging Rehabilitation Technology in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Program

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490 Tenth Street Northwest
Atlanta, GA 30318
techconnections@crt.gatech.edu
www.techconnections.org

Principal Investigator: Anthony J. Langton, MS
Public Contact: 877/835-7335; 404/385-0633; Fax: 404/385-0641

Project Number: H133A980052
Start Date: October 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Richard Johnson, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $499,970; FY 99 $500,000; FY 00 $499,978; FY 01 $499,962; FY 02 $499,960; FY 03 (No cost extension through 9/30/2004)

Abstract: TECH CONNECTIONS facilitates the use of rehabilitation technology in state VR programs. This customer-responsive, customer-driven, training, technical assistance, and dissemination project features: (1) a multifaceted approach to training that builds capacity through new curricula and new supporting materials that augment existing materials, for use by project-trained rehabilitation and university staff; (2) regional training forums, topic-specific audio conferences, and satellite video training; (3) individualized technical assistance and information about the AT, on a case-by-case basis, for rehabilitation professionals and for their customers with disabilities; and (4) broad-based outreach and dissemination to people who provide AT. Training includes an Internet-based discussion group open to rehabilitation professionals, people with disabilities, and other interested parties and a mentoring program pairing experienced technology users with rehabilitation professionals or people with disabilities seeking AT. Additional methods of outreach include project announcements circulated to rehabilitation, education, and disability Internet discussion lists; presentations at conferences and workshops; a toll-free phone number; and an Internet-based newsletter. United Cerebral Palsy Association works in collaboration with the Center for Rehabilitation Technology and the Southeast Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects  
Massachusetts

Web Accessibility Initiative, Phase II

Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
W3C Web Accessibility Initiative  
MIT/LCS Room NE43-355  
200 Technology Square  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
jbrewer@w3.org  
www.w3.org/WAI

Principal Investigator: Tim Berners-Lee, 617/253-5702  
Public Contact: Judy Brewer, 617/258-9741

Project Number: H133A000500  
Start Date: October 1, 2000  
Length: 60 months  
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson  
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $499,999; FY 01 $499,998; FY 02 $500,000; FY 03 $499,999

Abstract: The project addresses newly emerging accessibility issues in the web industry, and expands implementation of existing web accessibility solutions. Activities include: (1) developing advanced versions of WAI guidelines and techniques to cover advanced web technologies such as XML applications; (2) developing a superset of universal design guidelines by integrating device-accessibility issues in 25 or more W3C specifications; (3) documenting techniques for accessibility features of W3C specifications in appendices and example code; (4) expanding techniques for retrofitting and validating conformance with WAI guidelines; (5) developing resource packages for accessibility of E-Commerce and distance learning; (6) providing in-house technical assistance to industry on the design of accessible web sites and software; (7) providing and monitoring a liaison to research and development projects that affect future web accessibility; and (8) providing technical assistance to research projects to promote adoption of universal design approaches in development of new web technologies. Support for the Phase I project enabled WAI to address cross-disability web accessibility issues successfully through a broad range of activities. It has provided a forum where scores of organizations internationally have combined their efforts to improve the accessibility of the web. For tens of millions of Americans with visual, hearing, physical, or cognitive disabilities, web accessibility provides the key to the information society: to the online commercial world, educational opportunity, employment opportunity, workplace communication, government services, recreation, and more.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
New Jersey

Traumatic Brain Injury National Data Center

Kessler Medical Rehabilitation Research and Education Corporation (KMRREC)
1199 Pleasant Valley Way
West Orange, NJ 07052
kwood@kmrrec.org
www.tbindc.org

Principal Investigator: Mitchell Rosenthal, PhD, 973/243-6971
Public Contact: Kenneth Wood, PhD, 973/243-6811; Fax: 973/243-6990

Project Number: H133A011403
Start Date: July 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $348,187; FY 02 $348,133; FY 03 $348,064
Other funding: FY 03 $10,000 (NIDRR Supplement)

Abstract: Goals of this TBI National Data Center include: (1) data collection improvements through development of an interactive web-based syllabus for the use of Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems (TBIMS) staff, researchers and others that improves the quality and cost-effectiveness of data collection efforts; (2) a new web site featuring a searchable TBI Model Systems Research and Publication Registry; (3) enhanced statistical and technical consultation services to streamline the database, employ innovative statistical techniques to compensate for incomplete or missing data, make comparisons with other datasets, improve measurement tools and prediction models, and enhance analysis of longitudinal data; (4) improved data collection methods based on the “focus group” feedback received from the data collectors at the other centers, which include awareness and incorporation of techniques designed to improve cultural sensitivity of data collection instruments and data collection methodologies used in the model systems; (5) consumer dissemination of the latest TBIMS research results through a partnership with the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA); (6) continued leadership in TBIMS dissemination activities through Facts and Figures, TBIMS and BIAA web sites, NCDDR dissemination programs, journal publications, and TBIMS conferences; (7) continued development of policies that allow for public access to data, while protecting the confidentiality of subjects in the database and incorporating the perspectives of both NIDRR and the TBIMS researchers and data management teams; (8) collaboration with the NIDRR SCI and Burn Data Centers to develop advanced methods of database function, data acquisition, data quality assurance, and general Data Center operations; (9) exploring feasibility of new projects with Center for Disease Control and other programs whose database have similar TBI populations; and (10) conducting site visits to each TBIMS to assure the highest levels of data quality and database integrity.
Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange (CIRRIE)

State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo
Center for Assistive Technology
515 Kimball Tower
Buffalo, NY 14214
ub-cirrie@buffalo.edu
cirrie.buffalo.edu

Principal Investigator: John Stone, PhD, 716/829-3141, ext. 125
Public Contact: Marcia E. Daumen, 716/829-3900, ext. 146; Fax: 716/829-2211

Project Number: H133A990010
Start Date: September 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Eva M. Gavillán, EdD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $400,000; FY 00 $400,000; FY 01 $400,000; FY 02 $400,000; FY 03 $400,000

Abstract: The mission of this Center is to improve rehabilitation services by obtaining and disseminating information on international rehabilitation research and practices. CIRRIE has four primary objectives: (1) develop and maintain an international research database, searchable from an accessible web site and organized according to the major types of rehabilitation research, as delineated in the NIDRR Long-Range Plan; (2) assist grantees of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) to establish an international component within their domestic conferences by facilitating and subsidizing participation by international experts and involve U.S. experts in international conferences; (3) conduct an international exchange of research and technical assistance experts based on requests from rehabilitation research centers in the U.S. and other countries; and (4) disseminate information to rehabilitation service providers on the cultural issues relevant to meeting the needs of recent immigrants. Publications include monographs addressing the relevant cultural issues for the top ten countries of origin of foreign-born people in the U.S. The monographs are based on a model of the service provider as a “culture broker,” with the first monograph in the series addressing the theory of culture brokering and its relevance to rehabilitation practice. A workshop on this topic is also available.
National Resource Center on Supported Living and Choice for People with Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

Syracuse University
Center on Human Policy
805 South Crouse Avenue, Room 101
Syracuse, NY 13244-2280
techp@sued.syr.edu
soeweb.syr.edu/thechp

Principal Investigator: Steven J. Taylor, PhD, 315/443-3851
Public Contact: Bonnie Shoultz, Associate Director; Rachael A. Zubal-Ruggieri, Information Coordinator, 800/894-0826 (V); 315/443-3851 (V); 315/443-4355 (TTY); Fax: 315/443-4338

Project Number: H133A990001
Start Date: January 30, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $400,000; FY 00 $400,000; FY 01 $400,000; FY 02 $400,000; FY 03 $400,000

Abstract: This project conducts information dissemination, training, and technical assistance on community inclusion, with a specific focus on supported living and choice. The Center identifies and documents innovative policies and practices for home ownership, self-directed support services, self-determination, self-advocacy, and community participation. Activities include the preparation of information materials for direct support staff, a national survey of state funding for supported living, and increased efforts to address the needs of historically underrepresented groups. The project maintains an information clearinghouse on supported living and choice and disseminates resource material targeted to people with developmental disabilities, family members, professionals, direct services staff, policy-makers, and providers. It offers assistance and support to Self Advocates Becoming Empowered, state and local providers, developmental disability councils, and protection and advocacy agencies.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Texas

National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDDR)

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
211 East Seventh Street, Suite 400
Austin, TX 78701-3281
lharris@sedl.org
www.ncddr.org

Principal Investigator: John Westbrook, PhD
Public Contact: Lin Harris, Information Assistant, 800/266-1832 (V/TTY); Fax: 512/476-2286

Project Number: H133A990008
Start Date: September 30, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $750,000; FY 00 $750,000; FY 01 $750,000; FY 02 $750,000; FY 03 $750,000

Abstract: The goal of the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDDR) is to promote the utilization of research results developed through NIDRR grants/contracts. Major areas of work of the NCDDDR include: (1) Research–designed to collect information that assists in identifying the needs and most likely strategies that assist in matching dissemination practices with intended user audiences. Activities include conducting annual surveys, focus groups, surveys, and annual reporting of state-of-the-art information about NIDRR grantees’ dissemination successes. (2) Demonstration–conducted to determine the effectiveness of new strategies and approaches in achieving intended dissemination and utilization outcomes. Activities include developing and using innovative web-based mechanisms, increasing common portal access to substantive English and Spanish language resources of grantees, and developing outreach strategies for under-represented audiences. (3) Dissemination and Utilization–implemented not to support the simple distribution of materials and other resources but rather the use of research outcomes in meaningful ways by those that can most benefit from their use. Activities include production of print and web-based informational products, networking of grantees to maximize outreach impact, and developing networks with a variety of research stakeholder groups for information and strategy exchanges. (4) Technical Assistance–provided to NIDRR grantees to build understanding, skills, and resources related to the dissemination and utilization of their disability research outcomes. Activities include providing onsite and offsite assistance in planning effective dissemination efforts, providing direct assistance to grantees with targeted dissemination efforts, and assisting in designing evaluation strategies to measure dissemination and utilization outcomes.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Texas

Research Utilization Support and Help (RUSH) Project

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
211 East Seventh Street, Suite 448
Austin, TX 78701-3253
mlinder@sedl.org
www.researchutilization.org

Principal Investigator: John Westbrook, PhD
Public Contact: Mark Linder, Communications Assistant, 800/761-7874 (V/TTY); Fax: 512/476-2286

Project Number: H133A031402
Start Date: June 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $350,000

Abstract: The RUSH project develops and tests models for increasing the effective use of NIDRR research results. The RUSH Project intends to assess utilization successes in terms of benefits produced for intended user audiences including: people with disabilities and their families, disability researchers, and disability service providers, among others. The goal is to expand awareness, strategies, and evaluation of knowledge utilization outcomes among NIDRR-supported researchers in order to increase access and use of research results by those who can benefit the most from them. The objectives for the RUSH Project are: (1) to assess the use of and obstacles to the dissemination/utilization of NIDRR-supported disability research by a wide range of potential target audiences; (2) to develop a variety of strategies and approaches designed to accommodate differing topics of disability research information and diverse target audiences; (3) to demonstrate a variety of new strategies and approaches to improve/achieve utilization outcomes of disability research findings; (4) to disseminate information about knowledge utilization models and their associated effectiveness by topic, target audience, and level of knowledge transfer needed in order to increase the use of NIDRR grantees’ research outcomes; (5) to provide new and current NIDRR researchers with information they can use to strengthen their dissemination and utilization approaches; and (6) to provide technical assistance to NIDRR researchers to build understanding, skills, and resources in developing, implementing, and evaluating knowledge utilization models within NIDRR project designs.
Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems Dissemination Center

The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (TIRR)
1333 Moursund Street
Houston, TX 77030-3405
khart@bcm.tmc.edu
www.mscisdisseminationcenter.org

Principal Investigator: Karen A. Hart, PhD
Public Contact: 713/797-5946; Fax: 713/797-5982

Project Number: H133A011501
Start Date: September 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: The Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems (MSCIS) Dissemination Center is a collaborative effort that includes the NIDRR-funded Model Spinal Cord Injury Centers and SCI collaborative research projects. The Center provides information about MSCIS research and publications to inquirers and model system staff members via the Internet, the telephone, and surface mail. Overall objectives of the project are: (1) documenting the scientific productivity of the Model SCI Centers and Collaborative Research Projects and providing a history of the Model Centers’ publications; (2) verifying that the publications are peer-reviewed by downloading citations from Medline, Current Contents, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), and Psychology Literature (PsychLit); (3) ensuring the accuracy of the citations through verification by Center and author semi-annually; (4) maintaining, on a semi-annual basis, the listing of web-accessible citations hosted on web site of the Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center of the Delaware Valley at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia; (5) documenting and verifying the accuracy and currency of published book chapters and textbooks; (6) storing information electronically in Reference Manager in a format that can be uploaded to Reference Web Poster on the Center’s web site; (7) gathering structured data from each of the Model SCI Centers and Collaborative Research Projects that describes the educational products produced and the presentations given; (8) classifying the educational products and presentations produced by the Model SCI Centers and Collaborative Research Projects to provide a variety of accurate retrieval options for interested constituents; (9) developing a data storage system that facilitates uploads into the program’s web site in accessible format for interested constituents such as individuals with SCI, organizations, NIDRR, NCDRR, NARIC, the Model SCI Centers, libraries, rehabilitation facilities, professionals, and students; (10) disseminating efficiently and effectively to the greatest number of constituents the publications, educational products, and presentations produced by the Model SCI Centers and Collaborative Research Projects as an aggregate representation of this NIDRR program’s contribution to the field of SCI; (11) providing a mechanism for NCDRR and NARIC to verify that they have complete and accurate information about all the Model SCI Centers and their accomplishments so that NCDRR and NARIC can achieve their dissemination objectives; and (12) reaching the greatest number of individuals possible with information and education about SCI by efficient use of NIDRR-funded resources and personnel.
Disability Law Knowledge Management System: A One-Stop Clearinghouse for Disability Information

Meeting the Challenge, Inc.
3630 Sinton Road, Suite 103
Colorado Springs, CO 80907-5072
info@mtc-inc.com

Principal Investigator: Robert H. Gattis, Jr., 719/578-8448
Public Contact: 719/444-0252; Fax: 719/444-0269

Project Number: H133G000221
Start Date: June 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Kristi E. Wilson, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,998; FY 01 $149,977; FY 02 $149,926; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 12/31/2003)

Abstract: The Disability Law Knowledge Management System (KMS) project develops a comprehensive knowledge dissemination and utilization repository of disability civil rights information in a web-based helpdesk format. The system builds on research conducted for the Rocky Mountain Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) project, in which a prototype knowledge management system was developed and tested with information specialists from NIDRR-funded DBTACs. The prototype included a portion of the material available on the American with Disabilities Act. The Disability KMS project expands on the earlier work in two important areas. It vastly increases the quantity of information in the knowledge base, and it makes the work of information specialists more available to the general public. The project includes a comprehensive evaluation of the resulting system.
Exploring Universal Design: Developing and Disseminating Universal Design Education Material Online

North Carolina State University
Center for Universal Design
104 Brooks Hall, 50 Pullen Road
Campus Box 8613
Raleigh, NC 27695-8613
molly_story@ncsu.edu
www.udeducation.org

Principal Investigator: Molly Story
Public Contact: 707/578-6839 (V/TTY); Fax: 707/578-9435

Project Number: H133G000025
Start Date: October 1, 2000
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: William Peterson
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $149,967; FY 01 $149,721; FY 02 $149,789; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 9/30/2004)

Abstract: This project develops an interactive web site of universal design instructional materials, project ideas, visuals, teaching strategies, and resources for use by design faculty, students, practicing designers, and user-experts. These growing audiences require sophisticated instructional materials, available through an efficient and timely vehicle for communication and dissemination. Objectives include: (1) allowing flexibility and discussion in how projects, visuals, and instructional materials are used in design education; (2) building an infusion model of teaching rather than a prescriptive, singular curriculum approach; and (3) promoting the site internationally to design faculty, practitioners, and others interested in universal design education. Partners in the project are the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University, the IDEA Center/Center for Virtual Architecture at the State University of New York at Buffalo, and Elaine Ostroff of the Global Universal Design Educators Network.
ADA Technical Assistance Projects
Washington

National Center on Accessible Information Technology in Education

University of Washington
Center on Human Development and Disability
Box 357920
Seattle, WA 98195-7920
accessit@u.washington.edu
www.washington.edu/accessit

Principal Investigator: Kurt Johnson, PhD, 206/543-3677
Public Contact: Alan J. Knue, 866/968-2223 (V/TTY); 206/616-2223 (V); 866/866-0162 (TTY);
Fax: 206/543-4779

Project Number: H133D010306
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $700,000; FY 02 $700,000; FY 03 $700,000

Abstract: This program, working nationwide with NIDRR-funded Disability Business and Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs), serves to increase the access of individuals with disabilities to information technology in educational institutions at all academic levels nationwide. The Center facilitates the implementation of policies, procedures, and practices that promote the procurement and use by educational entities of accessible information technology that applies universal design principles and meets recognized standards. By providing training, support, dissemination materials, and technical assistance to the DBTACs, AccessIT utilizes and builds on this existing infrastructure for information dissemination and technical support. Additionally, information and training to educational institutions is provided through the Center’s website and presentations at educational events. The website includes accessibility checklists, best practices, knowledge base articles, links to resources, and case studies, tailored to applications of information technology in education. The Center also conducts training sessions and presentations at major educational, disability, and technology conferences to inform target audiences about how to make information technology in education accessible to individuals with disabilities and of the availability of resources from AccessIT and of technical assistance from the DBTACs. Leading the efforts of the Center are the University of Washington’s Center for Technology and Disability Studies and Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology. NIDRR-funded Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers and the IT Technical Assistance and Training Center, DBTACs, project EASI (Equal Access to Software and Information), and Microsoft Corporation are among its many partners.
Assistant Technology Technical Assistance Projects
Georgia

assitivetech.net - Internet Site on Assistive Technology

Georgia Institute of Technology
Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access (CATEA)
490 Tenth Street
Atlanta, GA 30318
beth.bryant@arch.gatech.edu
www.assistivetech.net

Principal Investigator: Elizabeth A. Bryant, 404/894-0254
Public Contact: Robert Todd, Project Director, 404/894-6895; 800/726-9119 (V/TTY); Fax: 404/894-9320

Project Number: H224B020002
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $250,000; FY 03 $250,000

Abstract: The National Assistive Technology Internet Site (www.assistivetech.net) increases the availability of, and ease of access to, information about assistive technology (AT), services, and resources available for people with disabilities. The web site provides 24-hour access to AT information for those with Internet connectivity, and a toll-free telephone number for those without it. The site serves all people but focuses particularly on people with disabilities, their families, service providers, educators, and employers. The assistivetech.net web site features: access to information about more than 15,500 AT devices, innovative automated intelligent agents to assist with AT definition and selection, vendor data entry interface to enable vendor involvement in maintaining AT information, and over 1,000 electronic links to appropriate and accessible public and private resources and information related to all types of disabilities, including low-level reading skills. Enhancements to the site include: natural language search interface to enhance site usability, a forum for user-submitted accommodations and strategies, and improved, easier-to-use access to AT product information.
National Assistive Technology Advocacy Project

Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc.
Disability Law Unit
Ellicott Square Building
295 Main Street, Room 495
Buffalo, NY 14203
atproject@nls.org
www.nls.org

Principal Investigator: James R. Sheldon Jr., Esq.
Public Contact: 716/847-0650; Fax: 716/847-0227

Project Number: H224B020004
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $160,000; FY 03 $160,000

Abstract: This project provides management- and advocacy-related technical assistance to attorneys and advocates who work for the 56 Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (P&AAT) projects, as well other public entities with an interest in the funding of AT. Advocacy-related training is provided through an annual project conference; sessions at the annual National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems (NAPAS) conference; sessions at statewide or regional conferences sponsored by protection and advocacy programs or State AT Act projects; and distance training events on special education, funding of work-related AT, and other topics to be determined. Management-related training is provided at four annual training events sponsored by NAPAS. The project prepares publications on the funding of AT through a variety of funding sources and acts as a clearinghouse for funding-related documents through in-house resource libraries containing administrative hearing decisions; a wide range of court-related documents, including briefs and complaints; and model policies, procedures, and practices for delivery of AT in special education systems. A national AT email list provides a low-cost, efficient way to communicate with a nationwide network of AT advocates. The project also maintains a web site containing information relative to the funding of AT, including many of the project’s publications and links to other web-based resources to support AT advocacy efforts.
National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC)

HeiTech Services, Inc.
4200 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 202
Lanham, MD 20706
naricinfo@heitechservices.com
www.naric.com

Principal Investigator: Mark X. Odum
Public Contact: Information Specialists, 800/346-2742 (V); 301/459-5984 (TTY); 301/459-5900 (V);
Fax: 301/459-4263

Project Number: ED-02-CO-002
Start Date: January 1, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $740,000; FY 03 $695,972

Abstract: The National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC) maintains a research library of
more than 60,000 documents and responds to a wide range of information requests, providing facts
and referral, database searches, and document delivery. Through telephone information referral and the
Internet, NARIC disseminates information gathered from NIDRR-funded projects, other federal
programs, and from journals, periodicals, newsletters, films, and videotapes. NARIC maintains
REHABDATA, a bibliographic database on rehabilitation and disability issues, both in-house and on
the Internet. Users are served by telephone, mail, electronic communications, or in person. NARIC
also prepares and publishes the annual NIDRR Program Directory, available in database format from
NARIC’s web site.
ABLEDATA Database Program

ORC Macro
8630 Fenton Street, Suite 930
Silver Spring, MD 20910
abledata@orcmacro.com
www.abledata.com

Principal Investigator: Katherine Belknap, 301/608-8998, ext. 100
Public Contact: Katherine Belknap, 800/227-0216 (V); 301/608-8998 (V); 301/608-8912 (TTY);
Fax: 301/608-8958

Project Number: ED-02-000128
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $516,829; FY 03 $589,408
Abstract: This project maintains and expands the ABLEDATA database, develops information and referral services that are responsive to the special technology product needs of consumers and professionals, and provides the data to major dissemination points to ensure wide distribution and availability of the information to all who need it. The ABLEDATA database contains information on more than 26,000 commercially produced and custom-made assistive devices. Requests for information are answered via telephone, mail, electronic communications, or in person.
Technical Support for Data Collection Development: Implementation of NIDRR’s Web-Based Performance Reporting System Data Collection

RTI International
Center for Research in Education
3040 Cornwallis Road
P.O. Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194
cat@rti.org

Principal Investigator: Christene A. Tashjian
Public Contact: 919/541-6128; Fax: 919/541-5849

Project Number: ED-01-CO-0052
Start Date: April 18, 2002
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Mary Darnell
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $175,000; FY 03 $175,000

Abstract: This project ensures the continuation of technical assistance activities for NIDRR staff and grantees of 8 programs (ARRT, D&U, DBTAC, DRRP, FIP, Model Systems, RERC, RRTC) using a web-based reporting system for collection of annual performance information. RTI staff, in consultation with NIDRR, developed the system and is responsible for ongoing system maintenance and implementation. The system meets Section 508 accessibility requirements; access is restricted to current grantees who are assigned unique passwords they must enter (along with their federal award number) to use the reporting system. RTI staff assist grantees with technical and programmatic questions they may have while inputting their annual data into the system. RTI is responsible for updating program-specific instruction manuals, reviewing the technical assistance logs to suggest possible changes to the system to make it more ‘user-friendly’, and providing NIDRR with quarterly updates of the data base. Project staff conduct periodic briefings for NIDRR staff on the individual grant programs. Based on NIDRR’s specifications, RTI staff will analyze grantee data and submit a program performance report.
ADA Technical Assistance Programs

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) opens more opportunities for persons with disabilities. It also places certain responsibilities on employers, transit and communication systems, state and local governments, and public accommodations. To assist covered parties to understand and comply with the ADA, NIDRR has funded a network of grantees to provide information, training, and technical assistance to businesses and agencies with duties and responsibilities under the ADA.

Contents

ADA Technical Assistance Projects .................................................................................................................. 3
New England ADA Center and Universal Design in Educational IT
(Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center - Region I)

Adaptive Environments Center, Inc.
374 Congress Street, Suite 301
Boston, MA 02210-1807
oharrison@adaptiveenvironments.org; vfletcher@adaptiveenvironments.org
www.adaptiveenvironments.org

Principal Investigator: Valerie Fletcher, 617/695-1225, ext. 26
Public Contact: Oce Harrison, EdD, Project Director, 800/949-4232 (V/TTY in CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, and VT); 617/695-1225, ext. 27 (V/TTY); Fax: 617/482-8099

Project Number: H133D010211
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $850,000; FY 02 $850,000; FY 03 $850,000

Abstract: The New England DBTAC provides technical assistance, training, and information dissemination for Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The new grantee retains relationships with previously contracted state affiliates, the statewide coalitions, the annual incentive grants, and the newsletter. Groups with rights or responsibilities under the ADA that are targeted for expanded outreach include self-advocacy organizations and the ARC; libraries; human resources trade groups; the hospitality industry, including visitor and convention bureaus; schools; and health care professionals. Annual regional training initiatives include day-long workshops for state, municipal, and county ADA coordinators; half-day trainings for centers for independent living; training for architects on ADA updates; outreach and training in minority and immigrant communities both to people with disabilities and business owners; and voter accessibility training. Implementation of the education-based IT component of the project includes: (1) establishing regional linkages to educational entities for cooperation/collaboration; (2) establishing the capacity in each state to coordinate and build skill, using resources of state organizations and the state infrastructure to reach large audiences through familiar, local methods; (3) training using a variety of distance learning techniques tailored to target audiences; (4) convening a collaborative conference on universal design on the web with the Rhode Island School of Design; (5) running a public awareness campaign that puts the issue of universal design on the educational IT agenda; and (6) identifying best practices in the region to be written up as case studies each year.
ADA Technical Assistance Projects
Region II - NJ, NY, PR, and VI

Northeast Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center - Region II

Cornell University
Program on Employment and Disability
School of Industrial and Labor Relations
107 ILR Extension Building
Ithaca, NY 14853-3901
northeastada@cornell.edu
www.northeastada.org

Principal Investigator: Susanne Bruyère, PhD, 607/255-7727
Public Contact: Andrea Haenlin-Mott, Project Director, 800/949-4232 (V/TTY, in NJ, NY, PR, and VI); 607/255-8348 (V); 607/255-6686 (TTY); Fax: 607/255-2763

Project Number: H133D010205
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $1,100,000; FY 02 $1,100,000; FY 03 $1,100,000
Abstract: The Northeast ADA & Accessible Information Technology Center provides technical assistance, training, and information dissemination for New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands on the ADA and accessible information technology. A new focus for the project is information, training, and technical assistance to educational entities in Region II, on the procurement and use of accessible information technology for students and employees with disabilities. Services are comprehensive, involving effective use of existing networks and collaborations with regional partners and organizations that currently deliver services to educational organizations, parent organizations, disability advocacy organizations, employers, labor unions, and state and local government. The Program on Employment and Disability at Cornell University’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations takes the lead in a regional collaborative effort that includes the following partners: Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities for New York state; AccessPoint Solutions in New Jersey; the Department of Architecture and Center for Assistive Technology at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo; the Assistive Technology Project at the University of Puerto Rico; the University Affiliated Program at the University of the Virgin Islands; and various local agencies and organizations.
Mid-Atlantic Disability Business Technical Assistance Center - Region III

TransCen, Inc.
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Rockville, MD 20850-4151
adainfo@transcen.org
www.adainfo.org

Principal Investigator: Marian S. Vessels, Project Director
Public Contact: 800/949-4232 (V/TTY, in DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, and WV); 301/217-0124 (V/TTY); Fax: 301/217-0754

Project Number: H133D010212
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $1,099,998; FY 02 $1,099,998; FY 03 $1,099,998
Abstract: The Mid-Atlantic DBTAC provides technical assistance, training, and information dissemination for Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. Activities are organized under two major goals: (1) provide technical assistance, training, and information dissemination about the ADA; and (2) provide technical assistance, training, and information dissemination about accessible education-based IT. Individual activities to meet these goals and project objectives are designed to build capacity among State and local agencies, including centers for independent living, so that the Center’s impact and effectiveness is maximized. Approximately 20,000 individuals and organizations are directly impacted through project activities each year.
Southeast Disability Business Technical Assistance Center - Region IV

Georgia Tech Research Corporation
Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access (CATEA)
490 Tenth Street
Atlanta, GA 30318
sedbtacproject@catea.org
www.sedbtac.org

Principal Investigator: Shelley Kaplan, Project Director, 404/385-0636
Public Contact: 800/949-4232 (V/TTY, in AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, and TN); 404/385-0636 (V/TTY); Fax: 404/385-0641

Project Number: H133D010207
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $1,450,000; FY 02 $1,450,000; FY 03 $1,450,000

Abstract: The Southeast DBTAC provides technical assistance, training, and information dissemination for Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The project: (1) provides expert technical assistance to promote voluntary and effective implementation of the ADA among entities with rights and responsibilities; (2) facilitates widespread use, particularly in educational entities, of accessible and usable electronic and IT; (3) fosters and facilitates regional capacity-building by cultivating collaborations between the regional Educational Leadership Team and the existing ADA Leadership Network; (4) expands training programs by incorporating enhanced distance learning methods, including teleconferences, web-based training, and electronic discussions, that are designed in a fully accessible and useful manner; and (5) identifies and disseminates “Best Practices” in employment and IT in order to encourage and support replication. To build on its ten-year history of regional capacity building, the DBTAC: (1) strengthens its ADA Leadership Network of eight state and 80 local affiliates; (2) shares expertise about IT through the Georgia Tech Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access (CATEA)’s Information Technology Technical Assistance and Training Center (ITTATC) project; and (3) facilitates accessible education-based IT across the educational spectrum via the newly-established Educational Leadership Team.
Great Lakes Disability Business Technical Assistance Center - Region V

University of Illinois at Chicago
Department of Disability and Human Development
1640 West Roosevelt Road, Room 405
Chicago, IL 60608-6904
gldbtac@uic.edu
www.adagreatlakes.org

Principal Investigator: Robin A. Jones, Project Director, 312/996-1059
Public Contact: 800/949-4232 (V/TTY, in IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, and WI); 312/413-1407 (V/TTY);
Fax: 312/413-1856

Project Number: H133D010203
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $1,450,000; FY 02 $1,478,750; FY 03 $1,450,000
Abstract: The Great Lakes DBTAC provides technical assistance, training, and information dissemination for Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The project’s audiences include business, government, and education organizations and individuals with disabilities and their families. The Center assists these audiences in understanding their rights and responsibilities under the ADA. For example, technical assistance and training are provided to educational entities regarding their responsibility to ensure that the IT they purchase and use is accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The aim is that within the education system administrators, educators, staff, students, and parents have full and equal access to programs, services, and information used or disseminated through a variety of information technologies. The Center programs and services are coordinated through a network of collaborators at the local, state, and regional level representing business, government, education entities and people with disabilities. Services and programs include direct technical assistance, training, and materials dissemination utilizing a variety of methods and strategies.
Disability Law Resource Project (Southwest Disability Business Technical Assistance Center - Region VI)

The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (TIRR)
Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU)
2323 South Shepherd Boulevard, Suite 1000
Houston, TX 77019-7024
dlrp@ilru.org
www.dlrp.org

Principal Investigator: Lex Frieden, 713/797-5283
Public Contact: Wendy Wilkinson, Project Director, 800/949-4232 (V/TTY, in AR, LA, NM, OK, and TX); 713/520-0232 (V); 713/520-5136 (TTY); Fax: 713/520-5785

Project Number: H133D010210
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $1,099,997; FY 02 $1,099,997; FY 03 $1,099,997
Abstract: The Disability Law Resource Project (DLRP), based at ILRU, is one of ten regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers that offers expert technical assistance, training, and material dissemination to Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Information and training is provided on the ADA, information technology, and other disability related laws. DLRP proactively informs and educates a diverse audience that includes educational, business, and governmental entities. The DLRP collaborates with an affiliate in each of the five states, as well as disability organizations, to expand its outreach throughout the region.
ADA Technical Assistance Projects
Region VII - IA, KS, MO, and NE

Great Plains ADA and Information Technology Center - Region VII

University of Missouri/Columbia
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Columbia, MO 65203
ada@missouri.edu
www.adaproject.org

Principal Investigator: Jim de Jong, Project Director, 573/882-3600 (V)
Public Contact: 800/949-4232 (V/TTY, in IA, KS, MO, and NE); 573/882-3600 (V/TTY); Fax: 573/884-4925

Project Number: H133D010201
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $850,000; FY 02 $850,000; FY 03 $850,000
Abstract: The Great Plains DBTAC provides technical assistance, training, and information dissemination for Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. In order to facilitate successful implementation of the ADA and accessible education-based IT in Region VII, the project and its collaborating partners:
(1) provide training and technical assistance, and disseminate materials to individuals and entities with responsibilities and rights under the ADA regarding the ADA’s requirements as well as developments in case law, policy, and implementation; (2) increase the capacity of organizations at the state and local level, including centers for independent living (CILs), to provide training on the ADA; (3) provide training and technical assistance, and disseminate material on the legal obligations of educational entities to provide accessible IT to students and employees; (4) provide information to CILs, parent training information centers, and regional resource centers on accessible education-based IT; (5) increase the capacity of organizations at the state and local level, including CILs, to provide technical assistance; (6) provide technical assistance to educational entities to enable them to conduct self-evaluations on the accessibility of their IT; and (7) provide technical assistance, either directly or through referral, regarding how to make existing IT accessible and ensure that new IT acquisitions are accessible.
ADA Technical Assistance Projects
Region VIII - CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, and WY

Rocky Mountain Disability Business Technical Assistance Center - Region VIII

Meeting the Challenge, Inc.
3630 Sinton Road, Suite 103
Colorado Springs, CO 80907-5072
RegionVIII@mtc-inc.com
www.adainformation.org

Principal Investigator: Robert H. Gattis, Jr., Project Director, 719/444-0252
Public Contact: 800/949-4232 (V/TTY, in CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, and WY); 719/444-0268 (V/TTY); Fax: 719/444-0269

Project Number: H133D010004
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $849,716; FY 02 $849,157; FY 03 $849,576

Abstract: The Rocky Mountain DBTAC provides technical assistance, training, and information dissemination for Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The project builds the capacity for reaching every individual, business, public entity, and educational institution with training, materials dissemination, and technical assistance on the ADA and educational-based IT accessibility. A comprehensive program expands a collaborative network consisting of key agencies and organizations throughout the region. This project also operates and maintains the ADA Impact Measurement System (AIMS), a web-based system that collects customer survey data. This system allows the ten regional DBTACs to evaluate the outcomes of the DBTAC program quantitatively.
ADA Technical Assistance Projects
Region IX - AZ, CA, HI, NV, and the Pacific Basin

Pacific ADA & IT Center (Pacific DBTAC)-Region IX

Public Health Institute
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Oakland, CA 94607-4046
adatech@pdbtac.com
www.pacdbtac.org

Principal Investigator: Erica C. Jones, Project Director, 510/285-5600 (V/TTY)
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Project Number: H133D010209
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $1,450,000; FY 02 $1,450,000; FY 03 $1,450,000

Abstract: The Pacific DBTAC provides technical assistance, training, and information dissemination for Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and the Pacific Basin. The latest funding cycle includes a series of innovative initiatives and approaches to enhance compliance with ADA rules and regulations. There is also an integrated action plan to enhance the availability of accessible IT equipment in Federal Region IX, primarily through a focus on educational institutions as key sites for adopting the principles of Section 508, and for ensuring full access to IT for young people with disabilities. The Pacific DBTAC’s interdisciplinary, multilevel management strategy ensures that all project objectives are tracked and attained and that Center services are fully integrated and delivered in an effective, cost-efficient, and accessible manner. The DBTAC provides quality training, federally approved materials, and technical assistance services to requesters who seek support, advice, and information and it conducts proactive strategic outreach and education services that promote adherence to ADA regulations and principles at all levels of society. Education-Based Information Technology, being a key focus, uses best practices to promote utilization throughout school systems.
Northwest ADA/IT Center (Disability Business Technical Assistance Center - Region X)

Oregon Health and Science University
Oregon Institute on Disability and Development
P.O. Box 574
Portland, OR 97207-0574
nwada@ohsu.edu
www.nwada.org

Principal Investigator: Charles Drum, JD, PhD, 503/494-8047
Public Contact: Lynnae Rutledge, Project Director, 800/949-4232 (AK, ID, OR, and WA only); 503/494-6747; Fax: 503/494-6868

Project Number: H133D010002
Start Date: October 1, 2001
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 01 $850,000; FY 02 $850,000; FY 03 $850,000
Abstract: The Northwest DBTAC/Information Technology Center provides technical assistance, training, and information dissemination for Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Audiences include people with disabilities, state and local governments, and businesses in Region X. In addition to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other state and federal disability laws and regulations, the Center also provides technical assistance, training, and dissemination to educational entities regarding “best practices” information on accessible IT. The sources of such information include the new National Center on Accessible Education-Based Information Technology.
ADA Technical Assistance Projects
Virginia

National ADA Program Assistance Coordinator

CESSI
6858 Old Dominion Drive, Suite 250
McLean, VA 22101
adata@adata.org
www.adata.org

Principal Investigator: Shelia Newman
Public Contact: Jennifer Eckel, Project Director, 703/448-6155 (V); 703/448-3079 (TTY); Fax: 703/442-9015

Project Number: ED-02-CO-0008
Start Date: May 3, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $557,883; FY 03 $577,566

Abstract: The role of the ADA Program Assistance Coordinator (PAC) is to enhance the performance of the organizations that are members of NIDRR’s nationwide ADA Technical Assistance grant program. These include ten regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs), and newly funded National Center for Accessible Information Technology at University of Washington (AccessIT). The Program Assistance Coordinator conducts: (1) coordination services, (2) collaborative assistance, (3) public relations, and (4) reporting activities. In addition, the PAC organizes and manages the semi-annual Project Directors’ meetings. It facilitates legal review of grantee generated materials and conducts periodic searches for legal proceedings on the ADA and disability related laws in federal and circuit courts. The PAC identifies and distributes appropriate materials from federal agencies, related NIDRR research projects, and private and public sector organizations. As a gateway to the national ADA technical assistance grant program, the PAC maintains a national Web site, develops and disseminates promotional materials, and provides the DBTACs with daily news updates to assure they have timely information on disability related legislation.
Capacity-Building for Rehabilitation Research and Training

NIDRR funding for capacity building supports advanced instruction for researchers and service providers, and training for consumers in applications of new research and technology. This involves training researchers across disciplines, training rehabilitation practitioners and service providers to use research-generated knowledge and new techniques, and training consumers to participate in research efforts. Distinguished and Merit Fellowships are provided for a one-year period of intense research.

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Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)
Illinois

UIC National Research and Training Center on Psychiatric Disability

University of Illinois at Chicago
Department of Psychiatry
104 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 900
Chicago, IL 60603-5902
www.psych.uic.edu/uicnrtc

Principal Investigator: Judith A. Cook, PhD, 312/422-8180, ext. 19
Public Contact: Jessica A. Jonikas, 312/422-8180, ext. 18 (V); 312/422-0706 (TTY); Fax: 312/422-0740

Project Number: H133B000700
Start Date: September 30, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: David W. Keer
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $450,000; FY 01 $450,000; FY 02 $450,000; FY 03 $450,000
Other funding: FY 00 $300,000 (CMHS); FY 01 $300,000 (CMHS); FY 02 $300,000 (CMHS)

Abstract: This Center conducts a comprehensive series of research and training projects that focus on increasing self-determination for persons with psychiatric disabilities. The Center’s current projects are composed of five core areas: (1) choices in treatment decision-making; (2) economic self-sufficiency; (3) consumer advocacy under managed care; (4) career development through real jobs for real wages; and (5) strengthening self-determination skills and self-advocacy. These core areas reaffirm that people with psychiatric disabilities have the right to maximal independence, which grows out of making choices in the decisions that affect their lives. Project activities are implemented by multidisciplinary workgroups composed of consumers, families, service providers, state agency administrators, researchers, and Center staff. Outcome and measurement tools developed for each core area assess key outcomes and program policies related to self-determination. The project includes a collaboratively planned state-of-the-science conference and workshop series on self-determination and psychiatric disabilities and a comprehensive report on self-determination in this area. Advanced technology is incorporated into each project’s objectives and Center training and dissemination activities. Multimedia formats ensure widespread accessibility of the Center’s products and materials to multiple constituents. Additionally, the Center conducts evaluation and basic research; trains consumers, families, and rehabilitation, education, and mental health service providers. The staff also develops and provides information for public policy initiatives.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Connecticut

Capacity Building through Collaboration among American Indian Tribes in Connecticut and Rhode Island

Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation
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Mashantucket, CT 06339
vellien@mptn-nsn.gov

Principal Investigator: Valerie Ellien, PhD CRC
Public Contact: 860/396-2105; Fax: 860/396-2282

Project Number: H133A031706
Start Date: November 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Delores Watkins
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $294,057

Abstract: This project builds capacity to improve the quality and utility of health and disability information available for American Indian tribes in Connecticut and Rhode Island. It achieves this goal through three objectives: (1) to ensure the optimal participation of Connecticut and Rhode Island Indian tribes in disability and rehabilitation research; (2) to encourage and support the development of tribal members as researchers, administrators, and educators; and (3) to investigate and evaluate the degree of access of American Indians to health and vocational rehabilitation services. Tribal members of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, the historic Eastern Pequots, the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation, and the Narragansett Indian Tribe serve as key collaborators, or community experts. All staff are trained in the participatory action research model, and culturally appropriate research methodology utilizing the expertise of the American Indian Rehabilitation Research and Training Center at Northern Arizona University. The project utilizes an experienced senior rehabilitation researcher as mentor to the Research Coordinator, through development of the consumer interview, data collection, and analysis. Graduate assistants are paired with tribal members in the collection of data in their respective communities. Health and disability data is analyzed, summarized, and shared with each of the tribes, and the Connecticut Bureau of Rehabilitation Services through the Advisory Council of the Mashantucket Pequot Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Louisiana

Rehabilitation Research Institute for Underrepresented Populations
(RRIUP)

Southern University A&M College
Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies
229 Blanks Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70813
kundusubr@aol.com

Principal Investigator: Alo Dutta, PhD
Public Contact: Madan Kundu, PhD, 225/771-2819; Fax: 225/771-2293

Project Number: H133A031705
Start Date: December 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $350,000

Abstract: The goal of this project is that of improving the quality and utility of research related to individuals with disabilities from traditionally underserved racial/ethnic population to enhance knowledge and awareness of issues related to these populations, to help maximize the full inclusion and integration of individuals with disabilities into society, and to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act. The objectives of this project are: (1) to expand the existing and proven work alliance of three minority and two non-minority entities, e.g., Southern University, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Crownpoint Institute of Technology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Independent Living Research Utilization respectively, for strengthening the disability-related multicultural research framework and improving long-term rehabilitation outcomes of culturally diverse groups; (2) to investigate, evaluate, and modify five measures to assess the capacity and competence of the disability and vocational rehabilitation workforce to provide quality services to individuals with disabilities from traditionally underserved racial and ethnic populations; (3) to investigate and develop culturally appropriate research capacity and infrastructure building techniques to ensure the optimal participation of minority entities and Indian tribes in disability and rehabilitation research; and (4) to develop and evaluate outreach, recruitment, training, reinforcement, retention, and dissemination strategies to enhance participation of students and investigators from traditionally underserved populations as rehabilitation researchers, administrators, and educators.
**Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects**

**New York**

**Toward Equity: Innovative, Collaborative Research on Interpreter Training, DBT, and Psychological Testing**

University of Rochester  
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Deaf Wellness Center  
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**Principal Investigator:** Robert Pollard, PhD  
**Public Contact:** 585/275-3544; Fax: 585/273-1117

**Project Number:** H133A031105  
**Start Date:** July 1, 2003  
**Length:** 60 months  
**NIDRR Officer:** Bonnie Gracer  
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $299,900

**Abstract:** The research activities of this project focus on three thematic categories: mental health interpreting, dialectical behavior therapy, and psychological testing. The interpreter training project builds upon the Deaf Wellness Center’s (DWC) prior innovations in interpreter training and applies them to four geographically dispersed urban settings. A team of experts in the mental health interpreting field employs the DWC’s demand-control schema approach and implements a five-month program of training and supervision with a local interpreter pool. Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) is a highly structured treatment approach focusing on emotional regulation and behavioral self-control. The three-part DBT project adapts DBT materials and methods to maximize treatment access and efficacy with three deaf consumer populations: those with language skills, those with limited language, and those with comorbid psychiatric and substance abuse problems. The Signed Paired Associates Test and the ASL Stories Test are tests of verbal learning and memory for sign language users. The extensive data that exists at the DWC regarding the tests’ psychometric properties and clinical utility implications are analyzed. This research has implications for the assessment of dementias, retardation, learning disabilities, etc. A second testing project is the development of a psychosis symptom rating scale. The goal is to produce a tool that clinicians can employ to reliably and validly identify the nature and severity of psychotic symptomatology in deaf individuals. Finally, the project includes a psychological testing casebook, written based on reviews of hundreds of DWC psychological testing case files. Most of the studies are multi-site, collaborative ventures.
Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects
Texas

### Minority Scholar/Champion Research Training Project

Texas Southern University
3100 Cleburne Avenue
Houston, TX 77004
www.tsu.edu/academics/continue/research/index.asp

**Principal Investigator:** Irvine E. Epps, EdD, 713/313-7224  
**Public Contact:** Darrell K. Simmons, Project Coordinator, 713/313-7753; Fax: 713/313-7579

**Project Number:** H133A031704  
**Start Date:** December 1, 2003  
**Length:** 60 months  
**NIDRR Officer:** Shelley Reeves  
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $350,000

**Abstract:** The Minority Scholars/Champions Research Training Project develops, implements, and evaluates the effectiveness of a train-the-trainer “Scholar/Champion” model to facilitate increased and improved vocational rehabilitation (VR)/disability research among the targeted Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). More specifically, the project develops an innovative research infrastructure of institutional “cores” that partner an HBCU, Texas Southern University (TSU), with a majority research institution, Baylor College of Medicine (BCM). Together, these partner institutions create a collaborative research infrastructure that increases research capacity and helps build an institutional research infrastructure at five additional HBCUs in Texas. These “cores” are: (1) the Administrative, Planning, and Evaluation Core directs the Center, selects Center participants, and supervises evaluation of all project activities, budgets, and reports; (2) the Training Core uses innovative methods of onsite and off-site training to recruit, support, and mentor minority investigators in the areas of research design, development, and implementation, including analysis of racial and cultural factors related to VR/disability research; (3) the Community Collaboration and Dissemination Core partners with communities and VR/disability agencies to engage individuals with disabilities in research and training, using a model of participatory action-oriented research, and disseminates culturally-sensitive information related to VR/disability research to community groups, agencies, and VR/disability researchers; and (4) the Research Core works with the HBCU Scholar/Champions to conduct innovative and rigorous pilot research projects as well as write fully developed research proposals that address racial disparities in VR/disability research.
Fellowships (Distinguished)
Connecticut

Employment Outcomes and Experiences of College Graduates with Learning Disabilities

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Project Number: H133F030022
Start Date: August 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $55,000

Abstract: Building upon significant findings from a follow-up study of 79 graduates with learning disabilities from a single institution, this project uses a technically-proven survey instrument to explore the employment experiences of graduates with LD from at least 6 postsecondary institutions across the country that vary in size, competitiveness, and mission. Over the last decade, public policy has increasingly emphasized the need to improve outcomes for students with the largest cohort of students with disabilities. Growing numbers of professionals, parents, and students with LD perceive postsecondary education as a critical means to the goal of gainful employment. Much attention has thus been focused on the transition and adjustment to college and on assisting students to access individual accommodations and auxiliary aids. However, there is a paucity of research related to how postsecondary education impacts the subsequent transition to employment for these individuals. Specifically, it is largely unknown how postsecondary education prepares individuals with LD to handle the interaction of the disability and the complex demands of the employment environment. Obtaining such information from a large, heterogeneous database is vital in assisting secondary and postsecondary programs to develop and refine services that focus on the transition to employment. Through this project, information is solicited related to respondents’ demographic information (e.g. rates of employment, salary, type of employment, level of education obtained), the interaction of disability and the employment environment (e.g., disability self-disclosure, knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act accommodation, and self-regulatory strategy use), levels of job satisfaction, and levels of employment self-efficacy. Finally, suggestions related to how postsecondary disability support services could improve the preparation of graduates to make the transition to employment are obtained from the respondents.
Examination of Youth With Concomitant Emotional, Behavioral, and Learning Disabilities (C-EBLD): Analyses of Characteristics, Subtypes, Risk Factors, and Outcomes

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Project Number: H133F030041
Start Date: September 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $55,000

Abstract: The purpose of the study is to increase the existing knowledge base about students with serious emotional disturbances and concomitant disorders by: identifying and describing diagnostic characteristics, symptomatology, and associated variables of this population; identifying characteristic patterns or subtypes within this population; identifying mediating variables and risk factors related to poor outcomes or comorbidities; providing longitudinal data on course and prognosis of disability subtypes; and examining interventions and service delivery methods for predictive effects on outcomes. This project conducts a thorough examination of a sample of children and adolescents who are currently at greatest risk for failure in school and in adult adjustment: youth with concomitant emotional/behavioral and learning disabilities. Results of each segment of this multi-phasic study enhance the existing research base related to these students. health, and medical organizations.
Fellowships (Distinguished)
Missouri

Shifting Perceptions: Mental Retardation in Ancient Greece

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Project Number: H133F030042
Start Date: August 15, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $55,000

Abstract: The goal of this project is to complete a book-length history of people with mental retardation in the ancient Greek world from the perspective of disability studies. The main purpose of this project is to contribute to the effort to restore people with mental retardation to the pages of history and specifically to the history of ancient Greece, which is the cultural, philosophical, and political ancestor of Western civilization. Innovative strategies utilized in this project include applying the methodologies of disability studies to ancient history; using mental retardation as a category of analysis in ancient social history alongside childhood, gender, and slavery; and emphasizing mental retardation itself as a category of historical analysis that aids in understanding both ancient and modern society. The phenomenon of mental retardation sheds light not only on the historical role of people with cognitive disabilities, but also reflects and represents views of childhood, civic participation, class, education, gender, and religion, to name only a few categories. In focusing on the much-ignored category of cognitive disability, the project will help to adjust an imbalance of emphasis in disability studies.
Exploiting Residual Functions After Paralysis

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Principal Investigator: William Craelius, PhD
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Project Number: H133F030011
Start Date: July 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $55,000

Abstract: This project develops new ways for people with paralysis due to SCI or stroke to use and improve their residual function through improved communication with assistive devices. The primary emphasis is on improving the human-machine interface, that is the coupling between the human user and his assistive devices. The interface is a myo-kinetic interface (MKI) wherein a sensory array is applied to limb muscles and joints in order to register residual kinetic activity, that is then used to control an assistive device. MKI offers advantages over current interface methods in terms of convenience, cost, and reliability. When coupled with assistive devices, MKI will help users retrain their affected arm and hand through biofeedback of their progress during rehabilitation. Such an interface could help users regain lost functions such as hand dexterity.
Clinical Supervision Within the State-Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Program: A Combined Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

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Principal Investigator: James T. Herbert, PhD
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Project Number: H133F020007
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $55,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 8/31/2004)

Abstract: This project develops a model of effective supervision that is field-based, from counselor and supervisor perspectives within the state-Federal vocational rehabilitation program. The research combines qualitative and quantitative (nested design) methods to address five research objectives that examine the nature of clinical supervision as practiced by the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Approximately 100 participants (80 counselors and 20 supervisors) from all of the 15 district offices complete an individual, structured interview. After finishing the interview, research participants complete two research scales. The first, the Rehabilitation Counselor Supervision Inventory, examines the knowledge and preparedness to conduct supervision. The second scale, the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory, examines two dimensions of the supervisory relationship, rapport, and client focus. Results from this study provide a better understanding of effective and ineffective supervision and what variables contribute to each type.
Fellowships (Merit)
Arizona

Assistive Technology and Adult Literacy: Bridging the Gap for Adults with Learning Disabilities

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Project Number: H133F020025
Start Date: August 1, 2002
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Ellen Blasiotti
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $45,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 10/31/2003)
Abstract: This project investigates whether assistive technology access and instruction improves the literacy skills and goal attainment of adult students with learning disabilities, when combined with regular adult basic education classes. A participatory action research (PAR) design seeks reflective participant involvement at every level, incorporating personal reflection, group dialogue, negotiation of the emerging analysis, and social action in an ongoing, long-term commitment. The overall goals of this project are to: (1) investigate the effects of assistive technology on adult literacy learners’ skill development and goal attainment, (2) investigate the personal and social impacts that participation has on the learners, and (3) make recommendations to the field of adult education on promising practices for the infusion of assistive technology into literacy instruction.
Motor Imagery Protocol to Improve Functional Recovery from Hemiparesis in Stroke Survivors

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Project Number: H133F030015
Start Date: July 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $45,000

Abstract: This project examines the behavioral and clinical efficacy of a recently developed Motor Imagery Protocol (MIP) as a treatment for upper extremity hemiparesis in stroke survivors. To date, there are no stroke rehabilitation approaches that specifically target the cognitive level of motor planning as a means to facilitate functional recovery from hemiparesis. MIP aims to practice the circuitry mediating motor planning, representation, and execution of action through the use of appropriate cognitive motor tasks. The primary objective of the project is to complete a large-group clinical trial evaluating the effectiveness of MIP as a treatment for upper extremity hemiparesis in stroke survivors. Participants complete a four-week intervention of either MIP or occupational therapy. Clinical and behavioral assessments are administered immediately before and after treatment and at two long-term follow-up intervals (one and three months post-intervention month).
Body Mass Index and Disability In Older Adults: The Health and Retirement Study

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Project Number: H133F030023
Start Date: August 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $45,000

Abstract: This project conducts focused secondary analyses of public data from the Health and Retirement Survey (HRS). The HRS data collection is sponsored by the National Institute on Aging and conducted by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Designed to investigate health outcomes, retirement decisions, and economic security during retirement, the HRS targeted community-dwelling U.S. adults who were born between 1931 to 1941. In-home interviews were conducted in English or Spanish in 7,702 households (82.0% response rate), yielding 12,652 participants at baseline 1,992. Follow-up telephone interviews were conducted every two years through 2000. Vital status was determined through the National Death Index and household contacts. The analyses address major public health concerns with obesity, obesity-related disability, and physical inactivity. The specific study objectives are: (1) to determine the relationship between body-mass index, physical activity, overall health, and physical functioning; (2) to examine changes in body-weight from 1992 to 2000 among adults in late middle age and associated factors; and (3) to explore racial/ethnic differences on patterns of physical activity and how much of the differences can be explained by socioeconomic status.
Understanding Ethical Decision-Making and Behaviors: An Important Prelude to Improved Service Delivery and Employment Outcomes

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Project Number: H133F030016
Start Date: July 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $45,000

Abstract: The purpose of the study is to examine the ethical decision-making of rehabilitation counseling students and professionals. The study has both quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative aspect is designed to examine cognitive complexity, five personality dimensions, and moral reasoning of students and professionals in rehabilitation counseling with various levels of experience (novice, experienced, and expert). Descriptive analyses, regression analyses, and analysis of variance are conducted in this qualitative aspect of the study. Structural equation modeling is used to examine the hypothesized relationship among the variables identified in this study in an attempt to transform a theory into a model that can be statistically tested. The second aspect of the study is a quantitative approach to understanding ethical decision-making. Individuals with various levels of experience (novice, experienced, and expert) are asked to process ethical dilemmas “out loud” and the actual cognitive process of ethical decision-making behavior is analyzed. As a result, the outcome of this study provides both quantitative and qualitative data regarding ethical decision-making and provides valuable information in regard to the development of effective curricula, interventions, and strategies for improving the skills of service providers and the services and outcomes they provide to people with disabilities.
Fellowships (Merit)
Iowa

Is Passive Spine Instability a Determinant of Trunk Motor Control Differences between Asymptomatic Individuals and Patients with Chronic Low Back Pain?

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Project Number: H133F030024
Start Date: September 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $45,000

Abstract: The primary aims of this research project are to: (1) determine the differences in trunk motor control strategies between asymptomatic individuals and patients with chronic low back pain (CLBP) during a standardized functional task; (2) establish whether passive spine instability is a determinant of these motor control differences; and (3) determine which factor(s) (muscle recruitment patterns, index of spinal stability, pain parameters, self-reported disability, and degree of spinal degeneration or pathology) can be used to improve classification of patients with CLBP. Low back pain continues to represent a major health concern in industrialized countries and continues to place an increasing burden on the health care budget. Of main concern are the individuals who become disabled with CLBP, which results in considerable disruption to the patient’s functional, economic, and social status, not to mention a greater use of health care dollars than any other musculoskeletal diagnosis. The etiology of most CLBP is unknown and as such, it is not surprising that treatment effectiveness has fallen short.
Journal Writing Intervention in Alleviating Psychological Distress of Korean Mothers of Children with Developmental Disabilities

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Principal Investigator: Su-Je Cho, PhD
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Project Number: H133F030018
Start Date: July 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $45,000

Abstract: This project investigates the effects of a journal writing intervention on Korean-American mothers of children with developmental disabilities. Fifty Korean-American mothers who have children with developmental disabilities diagnosed within the year participate. Based on pretest results, the participants are randomly assigned to either the experimental or the control group. The experimental group receives a journal notebook and written instructions designed to help them write about stressful events associated with their child’s disability while the control group is given written instructions for writing about trivial events. All returned journal notebooks are transcribed verbatim, translated, and analyzed to explore if any specific items in the journal writing instructions are more effective or any modification is necessary in the instructions.
Fellowships (Merit)
New York

The Practice of a Functional Bimanual Task By Children With Hemiplegic Cerebral Palsy

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Project Number: H133F030020
Start Date: September 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $45,000

Abstract: This project addresses the disorder of hemiplegic cerebral palsy (HCP) in young children. HCP is a category of CP that primarily involves the arm and leg on one side of the body. The project explores effects of part-task practice on the learning of bimanual motor skills by children with HCP. The bimanual task requires the child to cut a line on a paper with an adapted scissors apparatus. In this project, part-task practice involves the practice of the movement component performed by the extremity affected with HCP prior to practice of the whole bimanual task. The overall goal of the project is to conduct two experiments: Experiment 1 investigates the effects of part-task practice on the learning of a bimanual task by children with a HCP; experiment 2 investigates the effects of part-task practice on the learning of the same bimanual task by children with typical development in order to contrast the utility of part-task in the two groups of children.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
California

Advanced Rehabilitation Research Program: Ed Roberts Fellowship in Disability Studies

University of California
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www~iurd.ced.berkeley.edu/Press/2003~02~12disability~studies~fellowship.h tm

Principal Investigator: Susan Schweik
Public Contact: 510/642-4874 (V); 510/549-1865; 510/913-5791; Fax: 510/643-9576

Project Number: H133P020009
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000
Other funding: FY 04 $150,000

Abstract: This program trains scholars who have PhD, MD, or other advanced professional degrees, conferred in the last five years, to be leaders in disability studies and rehabilitation research, teaching and mentorship. Based at the University of California, Berkeley, a San Francisco Bay area-wide consortium of universities, research institutes, and disability agencies recruits people who want to broaden their theoretical outlook and their disability research methodological skills. In particular, the project recruits scholars with significant disabilities from minority groups who have not had the opportunity for collaborative cross-disciplinary research study of disability that includes social science and the humanities. The project supports three nine-month-long (September to May) Ed Robert Postdoctoral Fellowships a year for each of the five program years. Fellows devote their full-time effort to Fellowship activities on site. Funding includes a stipend and travel funds.
Interdisciplinary Rehabilitation Research Post-Doctoral Program

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www.hp.ufl.edu/rehabsci/

Principal Investigator: William C. Mann, PhD
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Project Number: H133P020005
Start Date: August 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Margaret Campbell, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project addresses the shortage of rehabilitation researchers through an interdisciplinary postdoctoral training program in rehabilitation research. The focus is on recruiting and training postdoctoral fellows with backgrounds in professions of high need, specifically rehabilitation engineering, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. There is also a strong focus on recruiting members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in rehabilitation research positions. The participating faculty for this program have large funded programs of rehabilitation research and also have considerable experience in serving as mentors for advanced research training. The program offers postdoctoral fellowships from two to three years to qualified individuals interested in rehabilitation research. Postdoctoral fellows focus in an area related to one of the levels of these models: neurological rehabilitation, rehabilitation engineering, and rehabilitation outcomes research.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
Illinois

Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Project in Rehabilitation Services Research

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www.northwestern.edu/ihsrps

Principal Investigator: Allen W. Heinemann, PhD
Public Contact: 312/238-2802; Fax: 312/238-4572

Project Number: H133P980014
Start Date: May 1, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $150,000; FY 99 $150,000; FY 00 $150,000; FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 (No-cost extension through 4/30/2004)
Abstract: This project develops a five-year fellowship program in rehabilitation services research at Northwestern University’s Institute for Health Services Research and Policy Studies and the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. It uses available expertise and collaborators to train postdoctoral fellows in rehabilitation health services research. Over two years the program includes course work, a practicum, original research, and grant writing. Fellows new to health services research have six core courses, as well as the two additional courses for all fellows. The first year concentrates on beginning Masters in Public Health (MPH) courses. The second year includes intermediate MPH course work plus electives. Each fellow is expected to develop an individual research project by the end of the first training year and a publishable article by the end of the second year in addition to submitting at least one grant application related to the research activity.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
Illinois

Rehabilitation Science for Engineers and Basic Scientists: An Advanced Training Program

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Principal Investigator: W. Zev Rymer, MD, PhD
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Project Number: H133P990006
Start Date: February 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Robert J. Jaeger, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $148,323; FY 00 $148,752; FY 01 $148,724; FY 02 $148,720; FY 03 $146,384

Abstract: The goal of this program is to increase the number of PhD engineers and basic scientists trained to perform research aimed at solving problems of people with disabilities. To meet this objective, the project trains postdoctoral scientists in three areas of special expertise: musculoskeletal biomechanics; neurorehabilitation; and prosthetics, orthotics, and biomaterials. Targeted technical training is coordinated with intensive clinical instruction and experience. Postdoctoral trainees, including scientists and engineers from minority or disability groups, are recruited by regional and national advertising and via the Internet. Many training faculty are based within the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, providing access to active clinical rehabilitation programs, and interaction both with clinical faculty and people with disabilities.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
Illinois

Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training

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Principal Investigator: Tamar Heller, PhD
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Project Number: H133P000005
Start Date: April 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Margaret Campbell, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $150,000; FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project provides an intensive interdisciplinary postdoctoral training program for disability and rehabilitation research scholars. The program combines immediate immersion in an ongoing research program with a focused didactic training experience, providing trainees with knowledge of the critical values, current issues, and innovative approaches in contemporary disability research. The training is offered through a cooperative effort of three units within the College of Health and Human Development Sciences: the Department of Disability and Human Development, Department of Occupational Therapy, and the Department of Physical Therapy. These departments have an established record of successful collaboration in advanced training, including creating the Interdisciplinary in Disability Studies at UIC, a unique interdisciplinary doctoral program that addresses the multidimensional nature of disability. A central theme of this program is that the current fragmentation of knowledge regarding disability can be rectified only by preparing future scholars and researchers who have a coherent, integrated, and in-depth knowledge of the multidimensional nature of disabilities. All three academic units offering this advanced research training have senior faculty with established, ongoing research programs capable of guiding postdoctoral training in three specialized content areas of disability research: disability measurement, disability experience, and disability service and policy.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Project in Rehabilitation Services Research

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Principal Investigator: Allen W. Heinemann, PhD
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Project Number: H133P030002
Start Date: May 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This project develops a five-year fellowship program in rehabilitation services research at Northwestern University’s Institute for Health Services Research and Policy Studies and the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. It uses available expertise and collaborators to train postdoctoral fellows in rehabilitation health services research. Over two years the program includes course work, a practicum, original research, and grant writing. Fellows new to health services research have six core courses, as well as the two additional courses for all fellows. The first year concentrates on beginning Masters in Public Health (MPH) courses. The second year includes intermediate MPH course work plus electives. Each fellow is expected to develop an individual research project by the end of the first training year, a publishable article by the end of the first year, and two articles by the end of the second year, in addition to submitting at least one grant application related to the research activity.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
Massachusetts

An Integrated Rehabilitation Engineering Research Training Program

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Principal Investigator: James J. Collins, PhD
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Project Number: H133P990003
Start Date: February 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Robert J. Jaeger, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $149,915; FY 00 $149,915; FY 01 $149,915; FY 02 $149,915; FY 03 $149,915

Abstract: The goal of this project is to establish a clinically oriented, scientifically grounded educational program for training biomedical engineering (BME) postdoctoral fellows in rehabilitation engineering. The overall objective of the program is to produce biomedical engineers who are capable of communicating and interacting with physician investigators in a significant and meaningful manner, and who are capable of defining and solving clinically relevant problems in rehabilitation engineering. The specific objectives of this project are: (1) to establish a core faculty and administrative structure for the training program; (2) to provide BME postdoctoral fellows with the opportunity to participate in clinical educational rotations in physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) and geriatrics; (3) to provide BME postdoctoral fellows and medical trainees in geriatrics or PM&R with the opportunity to collaborate on clinically relevant research projects; and (4) to establish a rehabilitation engineering curriculum that includes didactic sessions on clinical research methodology, as well as a seminar series to expose trainees to leaders in the field and develop their own expertise in giving scientific presentations. Accordingly, this program trains a new cadre of biomedical engineers with the knowledge and skills to develop innovative rehabilitation technologies that directly benefit individuals with disabilities.
Rehabilitation Health Services Research Fellowship Program

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Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
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Principal Investigator: Alan M. Jette, PhD, 617/353-2704
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Project Number: H133P990004
Start Date: June 1, 1999
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Ruth Brannon
NIDRR Funding: FY 99 $149,999; FY 00 $149,429; FY 01 $149,999; FY 02 $149,999; FY 03 $149,996

Abstract: This program provides health services research training experience for doctoral-level professionals from the rehabilitation disciplines. The primary goal is to qualify these fellows to conduct independent, high quality, funded health services research on problems related to disability and rehabilitation. Specific goals of the program include: (1) providing intensive, broad-based health services research training consisting of didactic coursework offered by faculty of Boston University to a total of six postdoctoral fellows over the course of the five-year project; (2) providing each fellow with the opportunity to conduct rehabilitation health services research under the guidance of a faculty mentor from Boston University; and (3) critically evaluating this rehabilitation health services research training program, including the recruitment, academic preparation, mentoring, and the career development of participating fellows. Through state-of-the-art training and mentoring, the project contributes to the creation of a cadre of highly skilled health services researchers equipped to conduct research that improves the measurement of rehabilitation outcomes, evaluate new and existing rehabilitation inventions, and broadly apply health services research methods to the improved organization and management of rehabilitation services in this changing health care environment.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
Massachusetts

Advanced Research Training Program in Psychiatric Rehabilitation

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Principal Investigator: Zlatka Russinova, PhD; Marsha Ellison, PhD
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Project Number: H133P020011
Start Date: September 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Cate Miller, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $149,984; FY 03 $149,991
Abstract: This project prepares a cadre of six advanced-level researchers in the area of psychiatric rehabilitation. The recruitment efforts target consumers, with the expectation that one or more consumers will be selected for the training program. Six fellows are recruited over the course of the project. The training program consists of two consecutive cycles of 2.25-year postdoctoral fellowships in psychiatric rehabilitation research. In order to optimize the training experience, three fellows are in residence during each cycle. While the fellowship is designed to provide broad-based intensive training in psychiatric rehabilitation research, the six fellows develop a particular expertise in conducting recovery-oriented research, given the current research profile of the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation at Boston University. Through a variety of training modalities fellows acquire competencies in the following areas: psychiatric rehabilitation and recovery oriented systems, recovery framework and consumer issues, research design/methodology, statistics, computer literacy, conduct of applied rehabilitation research, and grant and professional writing.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
Michigan

The UMHS/MSU/AACIL Rehabilitation Research Training Program

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Rehabilitation Psychology
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1500 East Medical Center Drive
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Principal Investigator: Denise G. Tate, PhD
Public Contact: 734/936-7052; Fax: 734/936-7048

Project Number: H133P030004
Start Date: September 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer:
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: The University of Michigan Health System (UMHS), Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living (AACIL) with consulting faculty from Michigan State University (MSU) and Wayne State University (WSU) have developed a training program to train six PhD and ten MD fellows. Training opportunities include the existing research programs funded at UMHS, the academic doctoral level rehabilitation counseling program at MSU, the multidisciplinary rehabilitation program at WSU, and opportunities for research training at a community-based agency, the AACIL. Emphasizing the consumer-scientist-practitioner model, this multidisciplinary research training program utilizes faculty and resources from 3 universities and from the AACIL to train 16 new fellows. Fellows and resident trainees may select from a curriculum that focuses on three content areas: (1) health rehabilitation outcomes; (2) independent living and community re-integration; and (3) social/environmental aspects of rehabilitation, including assistive technology.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
New York

Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training

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Principal Investigator: Mary R. Hibbard, PhD
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Project Number: H133P000001
Start Date: September 1, 2000
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Margaret Campbell, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 00 $138,006; FY 01 $140,382; FY 02 $140,341; FY 03 $144,215

Abstract: This project provides advanced rehabilitation research training to nine postdoctoral psychology fellows. Each fellow participates in the ongoing research of the NIDRR-funded Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Community Integration of Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury. The goals of the training are to: (1) increase the number of researchers in the field of rehabilitation, (2) enhance knowledge of rehabilitation research, (3) disseminate research findings within the professional consumer communities, and (4) train fellows to become part of an interdisciplinary research team. The RRTC is a model program of participatory action research that focuses on four core research areas: quality of life/outcome measurement, disability over the life span, models of community integration, and psychosocial challenges of persons with disabilities.
Research Training in Rehabilitation Science with Special Emphasis on Disability Studies

University of Pittsburgh
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
Dean’s Office, 4029 Forbes Tower
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www.shrs.upmc.edu/research/fellowships.html

Principal Investigator: Clifford Brubaker, PhD
Public Contact: 412/647-1261; Fax: 412/647-1255

Project Number: H133P970013
Start Date: September 1, 1997
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Robert J. Jaeger, PhD
NIDRR Funding: FY 97 $141,327; FY 98 $147,327; FY 99 $147,327; FY 00 $141,327; FY 01 $150,000; FY 02 (No-cost extension through 8/31/2003) FY 03 (No-cost extension through 8/31/2004)

Abstract: This program provides a plan for research training in the emerging academic discipline of rehabilitation science. The program is based on a multidisciplinary approach to the study of topics and issues of relevance to people with disabilities. A primary goal is to develop an increased capacity for research in the general domain of rehabilitation science, and particularly in the area of disability studies. The program of study is based on a challenging curriculum of didactic instruction, clinical exposures, community interaction, and research experiences, and encompasses study and research over a spectrum of scientific, technical, psychosocial, physical, physiological, cultural, ethical, political, economic, and clinical issues.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
Texas

Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training

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public.bcm.tmc.edu/pm&r/education/Fellowships/RehabResearch.html

Principal Investigator: Diana H. Rintala, PhD, 713/791-1414, ext. 5807
Public Contact: Daisy McKenzie, 713/799-5033; Fax: 713/794-7623

Project Number: H133P020003
Start Date: October 1, 2002
Length: 60 months

NIDRR Officer: Theresa San Agustin, MD
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $150,000; FY 03 $150,000

Abstract: This program trains postdoctoral fellows in the skills necessary to become independent investigators in rehabilitation. Research training in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation is multidisciplinary in nature, and encompasses the spectrum from basic mechanism to societal integration. Through this program, fellows develop research expertise in spinal cord injury, stroke, Parkinson’s disease, amputee rehabilitation, neuropsychological rehabilitation/cognitive neuropsychology, rehabilitation outcomes, and social policy. The coursework includes topics such as research methodology, statistical methods, ethical issues, special populations, and scientific writing. The Applied Rehabilitation Research Course complements the Clinical Scientist Training Program by emphasizing the unique characteristics of research in rehabilitation. Fellows also participate in other education activities such as the department’s Research, Education, and Development Seminar and are expected to present and produce documentation for publication on their independent research and prepare applications for federal funding building on their project for career development. They also attend, and submit abstracts for presentation at, national professional meetings to begin to integrate into the greater rehabilitation research community.
Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Projects
Wisconsin

Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training for Physicians and Biomedical Engineers

Marquette University
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735 North 17th Street
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Principal Investigator: Gerald Harris, PhD, 414/288-0698
Public Contact: Deborah Epps, Project Administrator, 414/288-0696; Fax: 414/288-0713

Project Number: H133P020004
Start Date: July 1, 2002
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: William V. Schutz, PhD, MSW, MPH
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $84,566; FY 03 $144,506
Abstract: This project develops expertise, enthusiasm, and productivity in rehabilitation research that results in an increase in the number of rehabilitation-trained physicians and biomedical engineers able to conduct independent transdisciplinary research on problems related to disability and rehabilitation. The program is specifically designed to give the postdoctoral trainees the skills needed to become productive career researchers. The training program utilizes a rehabilitation research team consisting of a focused cadre of mentors and two postdoctoral fellows (one physical-medicine-and-rehabilitation-trained MD and one postdoctoral biomedical engineer). The trainees are enrolled in the research training program for 18 months. A total of three physicians and three biomedical engineers participate in this training program over the five year period.
Technical Support for Computer and Other Related Activities

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Principal Investigator: Shelia Newman
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Project Number: ED-98-CO-0004
Start Date: January 9, 1998
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Joseph A. DePhillips
NIDRR Funding: FY 98 $569,870; FY 99 $962,046; FY 00 $312,562; FY 01 $714,569; FY 02 (No-cost extension through 1/7/2003) FY 03 (No-cost extension through 8/22/2003)
Abstract: This project provides technical support to NIDRR for computer-based and other related activities. Activities include data collection and tabulation, database and management information system development, statistical analyses, literature reviews, small surveys, and focus group meetings. Active projects involve analysis and design of a management information system for NIDRR, focus groups for planning the research agenda, and electronic dissemination.
State Technology Assistance

This program, funded under Title I of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, supports consumer-driven Grants to States. Currently there are 56 projects that provide statewide, comprehensive, technology-related assistance for individuals with disabilities of all ages. The purpose of the program is to increase and improve access to assistive technology devices and services through public awareness and information, advocacy, outreach, technical assistance and training, and interagency coordination.

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Assistive Technology Technical Assistance Projects  
Virginia

Technical Assistance Project

Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA)  
1700 North Moore Street, Suite 1540  
Arlington, VA 22209  
resnata@resna.org  
www.resna.org/taproject

Principal Investigator: M. Nell Bailey  
Public Contact: 703/524-6686, ext. 305 (V); 703/524-6639 (TTY); Fax: 703/524-6630

Project Number: H224B020001  
Start Date: October 1, 2002  
Length: 36 months  
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen  
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $525,000; FY 03 $525,000

Abstract: This project assists the 56 state Assistive Technology Act (AT Act) grantees in reducing barriers and increasing access to AT devices and services for consumers with disabilities of all ages through capacity building initiatives. The needs of the state AT Act grantees are continually assessed and plans are tailored to provide timely, responsive, and proactive technical assistance to meet those needs. Delivery strategies include onsite visits, training by peers (States Helping States) and expert consultants, national meetings focused on project implementation issues, publication development on grantees’ impact, models of best practice and policy issues, online services, and other communication tools. The project maintains a content-rich, accessible web site that serves as the grantees’ prime resource for information dissemination. Areas of the web site include a Policy Information Pipeline, links to other related resources, and a private area designated specifically for grantees to share and exchange information. A reference library on the web contains publications and documents that can be easily accessed and downloaded.
Alternative Financing Programs
Delaware

Delaware Assistive Technology Loan Fund

State of Delaware
Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
4425 North Market Street
Wilmington, DE 19802
edwin.tos@state.de.us

Principal Investigator: Edwin Tos
Public Contact: Griff Campbell, Program Specialist, 302/761-8275; Fax: 302/761-6611

Project Number: H224C030027
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $889,687

Abstract: The Delaware Assistive Technology Loan Fund reflects the influence of successful loan programs in other states as well as the consensus of the many Delaware stakeholders involved in its conceptualization. The project model, in which the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation serves as the fiscal agent and the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative functions as the partnering community-based organization, provides for a combination of guaranteed and non-guaranteed loans, as well as interest buy-downs and flexible terms, for the purchase of all forms of AT, home modifications, and vehicle modifications.
Alternative Financing Programs
Florida

FAAST Loan Fund Alternative Financing Program

Florida Department of Education: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc
325 John Knox Road, Building B
Tallahassee, FL 32303
faast@faast.org
faast.org

Principal Investigator: Terry Ward, PhD, 850/487-3278
Public Contact: Lennie Larson, Loan Fund Director, 888/788-9216 (V/TTY, in state, information and referral only); 850/487-3278 (V/TTY); 850/922-5951 (TTY); Fax: 850/487-2805

Project Number: H224C030018
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 60 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $1,270,981

Abstract: This project expands a consumer directed AFP for the state of Florida that increases access to and funding for AT. The Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology (FAAST) assures that Floridians with disabilities, and their family members, continue to obtain low-interest, longer-term loans that enable them to select and purchase AT and services. FAAST has partnered with the Florida Department of Education, the Florida Association for Centers for Independent Living (FACIL), and the Florida Independent Living Centers (FILC). The Centers are the focal point of consumer counseling regarding application, selection of devices and services, and assistance with completion of paperwork. With full funding, FAAST is able to expand the statewide AFP with the involvement from the entire network of FACIL, FAAST regional centers, and the consumer driven FAAST Loan Fund stakeholders.
Credit-Able, Georgia’s Alternative Financing Program

Georgia Department of Labor
Vocational Rehabilitation Program
AT Unit Tools for Life
1700 Century Circle, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30345
info@gatfl.org
www.gatfl.org

Principal Investigator: Joy Kniskern, 404/638-0387
Public Contact: Rebecca Roper, 800/497-8665 (V, in state only); 404/638-0384 (V); 404/638-0385 (TTY); Fax: 404/486-0218

Project Number: H224C030009
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $1,563,307

Abstract: The Credit-Able Alternative Financing Program represents the efforts of state agencies and local organizations to make low-cost financing on assistive technology available to the citizens of Georgia. Since Georgia does not have a state credit union for residents, Tools for Life partnered with a number of groups committed to improving the economic literacy, self-sufficiency, its affordable financial services for citizens. Georgians with disabilities can benefit to a significant degree from financial counseling as an option to increase the likelihood of their success in fulfilling responsibilities as borrowers. These groups formed The Getting Ahead Association (TGA) two years ago to address statewide needs for financial education and support among many different populations. Regardless of age, economic status, education, or geographic location Georgians with disabilities can join TGA for a $5.00 membership fee, covered by this grant or by a sponsor, which then offers them opportunities to join one of several participating credit unions. MACO and Gwinnett Federal Credit Union both serve the entire state regardless of members’ county of residence, and have online financial services. Tools for Life and its partners are committed to consumer choice and control of programs like Credit-Able. As the program matures, expanded opportunities occur in every area of program operations: from selection of assistive technology, decisions about whether to pursue a loan, to leadership opportunities on the Credit-Able Advisory Group and Loan Guarantee Review Panel, and TGA board or program staff.
Alternative Financing Programs
Guam

Guam Options for Alternative Loans Assistive Technology (GOAL-AT)

University of Guam
AVP/CEEDARS/GSAT
UOG Station
Mangilao, GU 96923
gsat@ite.net
uog2.uog.edu/uap/gsat.html

Principal Investigator: Heidi E. Farra-San Nicolas, PhD, 671/735-2482 (V)
Public Contact: Michael Terlaje, 671/735-2490, ext. 3 (V); 671/735-2491 (TTY); Fax: 671/734-8378

Project Number: H224C030023
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $508,392

Abstract: This program aims to maximize independence and participation in society by individuals with disabilities through the establishment of alternative financing mechanisms. Given that Guam is not entitled to Supplemental Security Income, and Medicaid caps preclude the provisions of waivers, Guam residents have not had sufficient support through public assistance programs to finance AT equipment and services. This project funds alternatives to the traditional payment options of public assistance and self-financing so that individuals with disabilities can acquire AT devices and services. Goals and objectives of the GOAL-AT Project include: (1) to establish a permanent and separate account with a financial institution on Guam utilizing a proposal process; (2) to generate policies and procedures for GOAL-AT; (3) to formulate and disseminate a Request For Proposal for a community-based organization that has individuals with disabilities involved in decision making at all organizational levels to administer the project; (4) to advertise the availability of the GOAL-AT program and the applications for loans; (5) to work with interested applicants to determine specific AT needed to facilitate independence and participation in the community; (6) to provide training on AT for recipients of a loan on the particular device they acquire to ensure appropriate usage; (7) to provide follow-up monitoring and technical assistance to recipients of the loan program; and (8) to maintain data and reporting information on the status and success of program and status of funding.
**Alternative Financing Programs**

**Illinois**

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**TechConnect Low Interest Loan Program**

Illinois Department of Human Services  
IATP  
1 West Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 100  
Springfield, IL 62701  
iatp@iltech.org  
techconnect.iltech.org

**Principal Investigator:** Wilhemina Gunther, 217/522-7985  
**Public Contact:** Sue Castles, Loan Program Coordinator, 800/852-5110 (V/TTY, in state only); 217/522-7985 (V); 217/522-9966 (TTY); Fax: 217/522-8067

**Project Number:** H224C030026  
**Start Date:** October 1, 2003  
**Length:** 12 months  
**NIDRR Officer:** Carol Cohen  
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 03 $3,228,292  
**Other funding:** FY 03 $1,076,098 (State of Illinois AFP Matching Fund)  

**Abstract:** The Illinois Dept of Human Services’ (DHS) alternative financing program, the TechConnect Low Interest Loan Program assists individuals with disabilities and their families in borrowing money to obtain the assistive technology devices and services, including home modifications, they need to learn, work, and live independently in the community. In many cases the TechConnect Low Interest Loan Program has also assisted individuals with disabilities and their families to establish a positive credit history. The TechConnect Low Interest Loan Program is targeted statewide to individuals with disabilities and their families who historically have had difficulty obtaining or repaying traditional bank loans. By lowering interest, offering extended repayment plans, and/or relaxing standards for determining credit worthiness, individuals with disabilities and their families for whom a loan would otherwise be completely out of reach now have a chance to finance needed assistive technology.
Alternative Financing Programs
Iowa

Iowa AFP and Telework Loan Program

Iowa Finance Authority
100 East Grand Avenue, Suite 250
Des Moines, IA 50309
sharon.murphy@ifa.state.ia.us
www.ifahome.com

Principal Investigator: Michael Tramontina, 515/242-4977
Public Contact: Sharon Murphy, Program Administrator, 515/242-4990; Fax: 515/242-4957

Project Number: H224C030005
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $482,972

Abstract: In an effort to assist individuals with disabilities in Iowa, the State, represented by Iowa Finance Authority, along with the The Iowa Able Foundation and The Abilities Fund, administer two separate loan programs that provide loan guarantees and interest rate buy downs on commercial loans as well as offering non-guaranteed direct-to-consumer loans. The first loan program allows individuals with disabilities, their guardians, advocates, and representatives, to obtain home modifications and AT equipment and services to become more independent and productive. The second loan program gives individuals with disabilities access to the financial resources necessary to purchase computers, software, peripherals, and other equipment deemed necessary to become employed or self-employed through a home-based or telework setting. The AFP and Telework programs are administered in a manner that allows consumers to receive technical assistance throughout the application process, a timely and fair decision making process, and financial products that best meet the situation and need of the consumer.
Alternative Financing Programs
Kansas

Kansas Alternative Financing Program and Telework Program

University of Kansas Center for Research, Inc.
Schiefelbusch Institute for Life Span Studies
2601 Gabriel Avenue
P.O. Box 738
Lawrence, KS 66045
ssack@ukans.edu
www.atk.lsi.ukans.edu

Principal Investigator: Sara H. Sack, PhD, 620/421-8367
Public Contact: Assistive Technology for Kansans, 800/526-3648 (800/KAN DO IT, in state only)
316/421-8367 (V/TTY); Fax: 316/421-0954 (Fax/TTY)

Project Number: H224C030028
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $7,343,450

Abstract: The Assistive Technology for Kansans project (ATK), coordinated by the University of Kansas at Parsons, and its non-profit partner, Kansas Assistive Technology Cooperative (KATCO) operate a financial loan program for the purchase of AT devices and services necessary for independence, inclusion, learning, and employment. The program is directed by persons with disabilities and provides the financial guarantee necessary for personal financing of devices such as adapted vehicles, communication devices, hearing and vision aids, powered wheelchairs, scooters, and other mobility aids. Program development activities include reviewing and implementing additional financing options that would result in increased consumer choice and control. The KATCO Advisory Board reviews financing options for the Alternative Finance Program (AFP). The AFP loan program offers consumers access to a low-interest loan fund, a revolving loan fund, and a loan guarantee or insurance program. Dissemination and outreach efforts for the AFP include public service announcements, media campaigns, informational booths at state and regional meetings, direct mailings, articles in newsletters, and presentations made to disability and non-disability groups. AT providers and durable medical equipment vendors are involved in media outreach efforts and are included in public awareness efforts. Data regarding applicant characteristics, device selection, impact of access to technology, and employment outcomes is collected and shared with a national database. Information and outcomes are shared with policymakers.
Alternative Financing Programs
Kentucky

Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation Alternative Financing Program

Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
Cabinet for Workforce Development
209 St. Clair Street
Frankfort, KY 40601
nancye.hansen@mail.state.ky.us
www.kyatloan.org

Principal Investigator: Dave Matheis, 502/564-4440
Public Contact: Nancy Hansen, 859/246-2117; 877/675-0195 (in state only); Fax: 859/246-2124

Project Number: H224C030029
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $142,349

Abstract: Since the summer of 2000, Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) and Fifth Third Bank have been providing low interest loans for AT. To date, a total of $672,668 has been loaned to 97 individuals for vehicle and vehicle modifications, hearing aids, computers and computer adaptations, wheelchairs and other mobility devices, and prosthetics. KATLC currently has $1.62 million on deposit at Fifth Third Bank. The consumer-controlled KATLC Board of Directors has striven to develop an efficient and consumer-friendly loan application process. Through the use of an e-group and with direct access to Fifth Third loan officers, KATLC processes applications in a timely manner, providing an answer in three days or less to the great majority of applicants. In three short years, KATLC has developed an important place in the continuum of services available to Kentuckians with disabilities. It has enabled many individuals to obtain the benefits of AT. It has had a major impact on many lives. With this grant, KATLC is able to further expand its lending capacity and provide this funding option to more people.
The Assistive Technology Guaranteed Loan Program: A Model of Success

Principal Investigator: Michael Dalto
Public Contact: Tony Rice, Assistant Director, 410/554-9233; 800/832-4827; Fax: 410/554-9237

Project Number: H224C030015
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $1,270,981

Abstract: The Assistive Technology Guaranteed Loan Program (ATGLP) provides loan guarantees and interest buy-downs for AT loans when the end user is a Maryland resident with a disability. The project introduces partial principal buy-downs as a more cost-effective alternative to interest buy-downs. The project’s partnerships institute innovations that make it a national model including: (1) multiple lenders providing a choice of options to borrowers and the program, and offering the program the leverage to negotiate better terms among all lenders; (2) exclusive purchase discounts to borrowers; and (3) increased income and resources for borrowers to help them afford AT. Benefits InfoSource and the Benefits Resource Center assist borrowers to use SSI and Social Security work incentives to retain higher cash benefits, while the Maryland Center for Community Development links borrowers with service providers to establish Individual Development Accounts to provide matching funds for their savings set aside for AT purchase. Alternative resources for AT evaluation and training are also offered through No Boundaries, the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, and Learning Independence through Computers.
Massachusetts Assistive Technology Loan Program

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
Independent Living
27 Wormwood Street, Suite 600
Boston, MA 02210
Karen.Langley@mrc.state.ma.us

Principal Investigator: Karen Langley
Public Contact: 617/204-3623; Fax: 617/727-1354

Project Number: H224C030016
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $1,694,641

Abstract: Massachusetts Assistive Technology Loan Program is a low interest loan program for AT equipment and services for individuals with disabilities in Massachusetts. This project enhances and increases the availability of funding for the purchase of these devices and services, and gives control to the user in the choice of AT equipment and providers. Assistive Technology Access Points (ATAPs) serve as local sites where people with disabilities can make applications for AT and AT services. People with disabilities have choice in their ATAP, which includes a range of disability and elder organizations. The ATAP staff conduct intake, determine program eligibility, and provide resource information to help the consumer in identifying the AT most suitable to their needs, where to purchase AT equipment, and how to get the best price. The ATAP submits the request for loan to the community-based organization/lending institution for approval. People with disabilities and family members of people with disabilities are included in all aspects of the program planning, design, implementation, oversight, and evaluation. Project funds have been set aside to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to participate in these activities. Project funds are also used to contract with Individual Consumer Consultants to be meaningfully involved in a paid capacity to guarantee substantial consumer involvement from the earliest stages of the program.
Alternative Financing Programs
Michigan

Michigan Assistive Technology Loan Fund

Department of Career Development/Rehabilitation Services
Community Development Division
780 West Lake Lansing Road, Suite 200
Lansing, MI 48823
miatloanfund@aol.com
www.mi-atlf.org

Principal Investigator: Norm DeLisle, 517/333-2477
Public Contact: Kathryn Wyeth, Operations Director, 517/333-2477, ext. 35; Fax: 517/333-2677

Project Number: H224C030022
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months

NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $635,490

Abstract: Individuals with disabilities in Michigan are the target group of the fund, the goal of which is that people with disabilities in Michigan are able to obtain, either through loans or through other means, AT equipment and services. Key objectives for this project are: (1) expand the number of local disability organizations serving as counseling and intake sites; (2) expand the outreach of the fund to underserved populations including minorities, people living in economically disadvantaged areas, and individuals living in rural communities; and (3) approve loans for 75 people with disabilities to enable them to purchase AT devices and services that will enable them to achieve increased independence.

The Michigan Assistive Technology Loan Fund is a project of the Michigan Department of Career Development-Rehabilitation Services, the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC), United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan, which administers the fund, several local disability organizations, and the Financial Health Credit Union of Lansing (FHCU). The loan fund is governed by MDRC’s Board of Directors, most of whose members have disabilities and is administered by UCP Michigan. A loan committee composed of people with disabilities who use AT and two bankers approves loan guarantees.
Alternative Financing Programs
Minnesota

Alternative Funding Mechanism Project

State of Minnesota, Department of Administration
1800 Pioneer Creek Center
Box 310
Maple Plain, MN 55359
info@atmn.org
www.atmn.org

Principal Investigator: Carol Fury
Public Contact: 763/479-8239

Project Number: H224C030030
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $1,270,981

Abstract: This project is managed by Assistive Technology of Minnesota, ATMN, a statewide non-profit organization. ATMN provides low interest loans to consumers, their families, and employers for the purchase of AT devices and services. This project expands the financial options available to people with disabilities for the purchase of AT devices and services. The addition of a revolving loan program and a loan guarantee provides options to meet the varying financial needs of individuals with disabilities. Who in the past may have been ineligible for a traditional loan. The revolving loan fund provides ATMN with continued funding, as the revenues generated through the program are reinvested sustaining the program for many years in the future. It is important to expand awareness about the benefits of AT so that people with disabilities can take advantage of AT devices and services for employment, mobility, in their homes and their independence. ATMN collaborates with state and local groups to increase awareness about the benefits of AT. Collaborating with other nonprofit groups and building new relationships enables ATMN to reach out to all areas and all disability groups in the state.
Low Interest Loan Program for the Purchase of Assistive Technology for Persons with Disabilities

Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership  
Nebraska Department of Education  
Vocational Rehabilitation  
5143 South 48th Street, Suite C  
Lincoln, NE 68516-2204  
atp@atp.state.ne.us  
www.nde.state.ne.us/ATP/

Principal Investigator: Mark Schultz, Project Director, 402/471-0734  
Public Contact: Nancy Noha, 888/806-6287 (V/TTY, in state only); 402/471-0734 (V/TTY); 402/471-0735 (V/TTY); Fax: 402/471-6052

Project Number: H224C030025  
Start Date: October 1, 2003  
Length: 12 months  
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen  
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $635,490  
Abstract: The development of an alternative loan financing program in Nebraska provides low interest loans to qualified individuals with disabilities to increase access to and utilization of AT devices and AT services. Interest and principal is returned to the original permanent separate account to establish a revolving loan fund in order to make additional loans. The Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership contracts with a community based non-profit organization to develop and implement a low interest revolving loan program. A financial institution provides low interest loans, ranging from 0-3% interest, to individuals with disabilities and their families. The state and federal match results in an $847,000 alternative financing loan program that provides for an estimated 100 loans to individuals.
Alternative Financing Programs
New Mexico

New Mexico Alternative Financing Program (NMAFP)

New Mexico Department of Education
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP)
435 Saint Michaels Drive, Building D
Santa Fe, NM 87505
awinnegar@state.nm.us
www.nmtap.com

Principal Investigator: Andy Winnegar, Project Director, 505/954-8521
Public Contact: Caroll Cadena, 800/866-2253 (V/TTY); 800/659-4915 (TTY); 505/954-8533 (V/TTY); Fax: 505/954-8562

Project Number: H224C030012
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $1,270,981

Abstract: The NMAFP program provides statewide outreach to increase awareness of the loan program including accessible electronic and printed information to assist users to seek, find, and obtain loans for assistive technology needs. The NMAFP provides a low interest and interest buy-down program that involves a loan guarantee to lower rates and allows higher risk loans. The state of the art accessibility methods regarding outreach, loan processing, and consumer support services are employed including the use of toll-free telephone consulting, and information navigation and accommodation assistance. NMAFP serves persons with disabilities throughout the state regardless of disability or age. Employees with disabilities may choose to have an employer seek loans through the NMAFP for job accommodation needs.
Alternative Financing Programs
North Dakota

North Dakota Alternative Financial Loan Program

North Dakota Protection and Advocacy Project
North Dakota Department of Human Services
Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT)
P.O. Box 743
Cavalier, ND 58220
jlee@polarcomm.com
www.ndipat.org

Principal Investigator: Judith A. Lee, Project Director, 701/265-4807
Public Contact: 800/265-4728 (V/TTY); Fax: 701/239-7229

Project Number: H224C030014
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $1,270,981

Abstract: This project expands personal financing options for North Dakotans with disabilities and their families for the purchase of AT devices and services by: (1) establishing a guaranteed loan program with lower interest rates and buy-down mechanism for the purpose of purchasing AT; (2) contracting with a community based organization to administer the AFLP to ensure consumer control; (3) developing and implementing a statewide public awareness and information dissemination plan to market the AFLP; (4) developing and implementing of a plan to address the sustainability and permanence of the AFLP; and (5) developing outcome measurement tools and reporting systems to provide a mechanism to measure effectiveness of the program and to monitor and improve the quality of service. Protection and Advocacy and IPAT’s critical partners in the establishment of the North Dakota AFLP include: (1) a community-based organization, North Dakota Association for the Disabled; (2) the IPAT Consumer Advisory Committee, made up entirely of persons or family members with disabilities; (3) the Bank of North Dakota; (4) Centers for Independent Living; and (5) a financial institution. IPAT and partners are structured to provide statewide services, reaching consumers in all regions of the rural state.
Alternative Financing Programs
Northern Mariana Islands

Trankilu: A Northern Mariana Islands Alternative Financing Program

CNMI Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities
Building #1312, Capitol Hill
P.O. Box 502565 C.K.
Saipan, MP 96950-2565
straid@cnmiddcouncil.org
www.cnmiddcouncil.org/atstraid/atflash.htm

Principal Investigator: Thomas J. Camacho, Project Director
Public Contact: Project Coordinator, 670/664-7000; Fax: 670/664-7010

Project Number: H224C030031
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $508,392

Abstract: Trankilu (tranquil), a CNMI Alternative Financing Mechanism Program, offers qualified individuals with disabilities affordable loans to purchase assistive technology, adapted vehicles, and/or home modifications. Within five years, the goal is to be operating a sustainable $1,000,000 revolving loan fund and implementing additional programs such as interest buy-down and a loan guarantee. Trankilu provides assistance to CNMI citizens who wish to build their asset base, financial well being, and have access to low cost financial service.
Oklahoma Alternative Financing Program

Oklahoma State University
Seretine Wellness Center
1514 West Hall of Fame
Stillwater, OK 74078-2026
mljwell@okstate.edu
okabletech.okstate.edu

Principal Investigator: Linda Jaco
Public Contact: 800/257-1705 (V/TTY); 405/744-9864; Fax: 405/744-2487

Project Number: H224C030003
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $597,361

Abstract: The purpose of this project is to enhance and maintain the existing alternative financing program, a partnership between ABLE Tech, Oklahoma Assistive Technology Foundation (OkAT), and BancFirst of Stillwater. OkAT is a community-based organization established and directed by a majority of persons with disabilities. The overall program goal of the project is to increase access to and funding of assistive technology devices and services for the targeted population which includes all Oklahomans with disabilities or their authorized representative. ABLE Tech implements both a low-interest loan fund and a loan guarantee program. ABLE Tech assures Oklahomans with disabilities, and their authorized representative, low-interest, longer-term loans with customized underwriting standards for the purchase of AT. In addition, for Oklahomans that do not meet BancFirst of Stillwater’s loan criteria, OkAT, under established policies and procedures, can guarantee a low interest loan for the purchase of AT. All AFP loans, guaranteed or non-guaranteed, have the same low interest rate of 2% above the Wall Street Journal Daily Prime Interest Rate for a term up to 60 months. The federal, state, and private funds are deposited into a separate permanent account that is used to leverage substantial private sector dollars from BancFirst of Stillwater to loan funds to the targeted population for the purchase of AT. ABLE Tech has already secured state funds, and is working diligently to secure private foundation funds to be utilized as a match for federal funding.
Alternative Financing Programs
Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Alternative Financing Program

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Community and Economic Development
Keystone Building
400 N Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120
stachau@amexcenters.com
www.assistive-technology4pa.org/program/index.html

Principal Investigator: Richard Overmoyer, 717/720-1373
Public Contact: Susan Tachau, 484/875-3066; Fax: 484/875-0982

Project Number: H224C030013
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $1,270,981

Abstract: Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF) administers a low-interest loan program with a guarantee component for borrowers who require additional support. The guarantee monies operate as a revolving fund. As guaranteed loans are repaid, equivalent amounts from the fund are freed up to guarantee new loans. Goals for this project include increasing the total number of new borrowers by 25 percent to 100; increasing the proportion of minority, limited English-speaking, and senior citizen participants to 15 percent of this total, making a special outreach effort to older Pennsylvanians (with special emphasis on hearing and vision aids); and maintaining the interest rate charged to participating borrowers at 3.5 percent for the entire year regardless of market-rate fluctuations. As a community-based organization, PATF is responsible for conducting and/or overseeing all aspects of the program in Pennsylvania, including planning and implementing new outreach to older Pennsylvanians, minority, and limited English-speaking communities. PATF also oversees activities in support of the program to be carried out under an agreement with the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University. The Institute provides coordination and training to strengthen the capacity of PATF’s network of funding assistance centers, provides counseling to individuals regarding other funding sources, and collects data needed to complete the annual project evaluation. PATF also strengthens its own capacity to serve the public by adopting new plans for organizational development, diversification of funding, and better use of information technology.
South Carolina Assistive Technology Loan Program (SCAT)

South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department
1410 Boston Avenue
P.O. Box 15
West Columbia, SC 29171

Principal Investigator: Denise Koon, 803/896-6570
Public Contact: Mark Wade, Public Information Director, 803/896-6834 (V/TTY); Fax: 803/896-6510

Project Number: H224C030024
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $406,714

Abstract: Independence can provide a person with a disability a sense of self-sufficiency and enhanced self-esteem, can define perceived self-worth, and increase their overall sense of well being. However, independence for citizens with disabilities has not yet been fully realized in South Carolina. One of the major contributions to this discrepancy is the lack of financial resources. Currently, the major service programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, and vocational rehabilitation programs cannot meet the growing demand for AT devices for all citizens with disabilities. These factors only intensify the financial strain the 800,000 plus South Carolinians with disabilities face when purchasing AT devices and services. The Alternative Financing Mechanism program addresses these issues by providing the financial support needed to increase access to AT, expand educational opportunities, increase integration into the workforce, and promote access to daily community living. Through the implementation of the South Carolina Assistive Technology Loan Program, South Carolinians with disabilities, regardless of age, race, or gender, can apply for loans designed to aid in the purchase of AT devices and services. The program includes an interest buy-down program and a guaranteed loan program.
Alternative Financing Programs
Utah

Utah Alternative Financing Program

Utah State University
Center for Persons with Disabilities
6835 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322
uatf@cpd2.usu.edu
www.uatf.org

Principal Investigator: Marilyn Hammond, PhD, 435/797-3811
Public Contact: 800/524-5152; 435/797-2025; Fax: 435/797-2355

Project Number: H224C030008
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $254,196

Abstract: This program: (1) expands consumer choice and control of Utah Assistive Technology Foundation (UATF) services; (2) maintains a zero/low interest buy down program for AT devices and services; (3) increases the number of approved loans for AT devices and services; (4) develops, implements, and evaluates a targeted outreach initiative to underrepresented populations, thus increasing the number of individuals in Utah who receive zero/low interest loans to purchase the AT devices and services they need; (5) increases the endowment fund, enabling the UATF to earn interest that can be used for future interest buy down and future administrative support; and (6) designs a comprehensive process and outcome evaluation plan that assists in evaluating the effectiveness of the UATF in meeting its mandate and continuing the consumer-responsive UATF on a permanent basis. Expanding the current services offered by UATF enables greater numbers of individuals with disabilities to increase their independence in home, school, work, and community settings.
Alternative Financing Programs
Vermont

Vermont Development Ventures Assistive Technology Loan Fund

Vermont Department of Aging and Disabilities
Agency of Human Services
VTAP
103 South Main Street, Weeks Building
Waterbury, VT 05671-2305
jtucker@dad.state.vt.us
www.dad.state.vt.us/atp

Principal Investigator: Julie Tucker, Project Director
Public Contact: 800/750-6355 (V/TTY, in state only); 802/241-2672 (V/TTY); Fax: 802/241-2174

Project Number: H224C030011
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $635,490

Abstract: The mission of the Vermont Development Ventures Assistive Technology (VDVAT) Loan Fund is to enhance the physical and economic self-sufficiency of Vermonters with disabilities to the maximum extent possible through affordable counseling-based lending. To maximize the alternative financing impact, the VDV AT Loan Fund: (1) creates extensive marketing to reach and provide information to more Vermonters with disabilities and generate more applications; (2) offers an array of counseling-based services to help more low-income Vermonters with disabilities qualify for loans; (3) dedicates additional resources to continually improve products, operations, and efficiencies; (4) increases the number of loans made and dollars distributed; (5) integrates with existing funds to achieve economies of scale, maximize cost-efficiency, and provide seamless service; (6) utilizes the proven resources of an established community development financial institution with experience in serving disabled Vermonters for the administration, marketing, origination, underwriting, and loan servicing; (7) capitalizes on an existing investment in sophisticated to track the impact of the fund; (8) makes available the full benefits of VDCU’s mission as a community development financial institution to the disability market.
Alternative Financing Programs
Virgin Islands

Virgin Islands Alternative Financing Program

University of the Virgin Islands
Virgin Islands Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
2 John Brewer’s Bay
St. Thomas, VI 00802
wfrancis@uvi.edu; wevans@uvi.edu
www.uvi.edu/pub-relations/resource.htm

Principal Investigator: Yegin Habtes, 340/693-1323
Public Contact: Wilbert Francis; Wanda Evans, 340/693-1189 (Francis); 340/692-1919 (Evans); Fax: 340/693-1325

Project Number: H224C030004
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $635,490

Abstract: The main mission of this program is to help the approximately 8,000 US Virgin Islands (USVI) residents with disabilities purchase AT devices and services that may be required for independence in the home, workplace, and community. The USVI has unique cultural, geographics and economic barriers that make the acquisition of AT more difficult than in other parts of the United States. Over 85% of the total population is comprised of a traditionally underrepresented group that is spread over 4 islands. While nearly half are “native” islanders, many come from surrounding islands/countries and represent many diverse cultures. Residents of USVI are not beneficiaries of public programs that often provide AT (i.e., Medicaid). Financial resources for AT in programs such as independent living are also very limited. This program is implemented in partnership with community service organizations, local financial institutions, individuals with disabilities, their family members, guardians, advocates, and the Virgin Islands University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.
Alternative Financing Programs
Virginia

Alternative Financing Technical Assistance Project

Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA)
1700 North Moore Street, Suite 1540
Arlington, VA 22209-1903
www.resna.org/AFTAP

Principal Investigator: Nancy Meidenbauer
Public Contact: 703/524-6686, ext. 304 (V); 703/524-6639 (TTY); Fax: 703/524-6630

Project Number: H224C030002
Start Date: May 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $726,000

Abstract: This project supports states in establishing and maintaining Alternative Financing Programs (AFP). The purpose of the project is to provide technical assistance (TA) to states in developing AFPs that reduce barriers to the availability of AT and create new sources of funding for AT services and devices for people with disabilities of all ages. Technical assistance and information dissemination and utilization activities have been designed in order to achieve the project’s goals. These goals are: (1) to provide timely, responsive, and proactive TA using a comprehensive model for delivery of TA, and (2) to address the TA needs of the states currently receiving Title III funds and those states that are in the process of preparing applications for AFP. The delivery strategies include on-site visits by expert consultants; a national meeting focused on issues related to developing, implementing, and maintaining financial loan programs; targeted research publications; and electronic services. A particular focus of the project is to revise the web-based data collection instruments in use today to increase their usability and validity in collecting uniform data across state programs. The project works to streamline the data collection process and analyzes the data collected to highlight trends and determine the outcomes and impact of the loan programs.
Alternative Financing Programs
Virginia

Virginia Alternative Financing Program

Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services
Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS)
8004 Franklin Farms Drive
P.O. Box K091
Richmond, VA 23288
loanfund@erols.com
www.vats.org
www.atlfa.org

Principal Investigator: Kenneth Knorr, 804/662-9995
Public Contact: Mike Scione, 804/662-9993; Fax: 804/662-9478

Project Number: H224C030007
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $4,941,575

Abstract: This project assists individuals with disabilities and their families, and eligible businesses, to acquire adaptive technology devices and equipment, to purchase vehicles with modifications, and to obtain home modifications for accessibility. Funds are also utilized to demonstrate assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering, assessment services, and short-term equipment loans. Services are also available at three regional loan application centers. This project is a collaboration of the Virginia Assistive Technology System and the Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority.
Washington Assistive Technology Alternative Financing Project

Washington State Department of Community Trade & Economic Development
3670 Stone Way North
Seattle, WA 98103
fpennell@watf.org
www.watf.org

Principal Investigator: Nancy Hanna, 360/725-2856
Public Contact: Frances Pennell, 206/826-1038; Fax: 206/826-1138

Project Number: H224C030032
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $635,490

Abstract: This project provides low interest loans for Washington residents with disabilities for AT and home and vehicle accessibility modifications. These loans are provided through a direct lending program operated by The Washington Assistive Technology Foundation (WATF) and through contracts with other commercial lenders potentially including commercial banks, credit unions, and/or community development financial institutions. Potential borrowers are offered financial counseling and financial literacy education, information on AT selection, assistance with PASS plan preparation, and information about, and referral to, appropriate AT professionals and providers. These services are provided directly by WATF and/or through referral to other state and private entities.
WisLoan: Wisconsin’s Alternative Financing Program

Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services
Division of Disability and Elder Services
One West Wilson Street, Room 450
P.O. Box 7851
Madison, WI 53707-7851
PelkeRJ@dhfs.state.wi.us
www.wistech.state.wi.us/WisLoan.htm

Principal Investigator: Ralph Pelkey, 608/267-9091
Public Contact: Susan Abbey, 608/266-1794; Fax: 608/267-3203

Project Number: H224C030006
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $2,287,766

Abstract: WisLoan facilitates provision of low-interest loans, made by Marshall & Illsey Bank (M&I), its banking partner, for the purchase of AT by Wisconsin citizens with disabilities. IndependenceFirst, a community-based and consumer-controlled organization, manages WisLoan and maintains its partnership with M&I and Wisconsin’s independent living centers to provide statewide consumer access to WisLoan. AT purchased through the program ranges from hearing aids to mobility equipment. Funding decisions are made by the WisLoan Board. The Board is comprised of a majority of people who are geographically representative of the entire state. The program’s goal is to enhance current services by making available benefits counseling to each applicant and implementing comprehensive follow-up services to all applicants, regardless of an approved or denied application. These enhancements emphasize the program’s consumer-direction by providing consumers with the tools needed to make informed decisions to direct their care and by strengthening the program’s overall relationship with existing AT funding sources.
 Wyoming Technology Access Program

University of Wyoming
Wyoming Institute for Disabilities/WYNOT
P.O. Box 4298
Laramie, WY 82071-4298
wynot.uw@uwyo.edu
wind.uwyo.edu/wynot

Principal Investigator: Keith Miller, PhD, 307/766-2761
Public Contact: 800/861-4312 (V/TTY, in state only); 307/766-2051 (V/TTY); Fax: 307/721-2084

Project Number: H224C030010
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 12 months
NIDRR Officer: Shelley Reeves
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $167,769

Abstract: In 2001, WYNOT began a collaborative effort with Wyoming Independent Living Rehabilitation, Inc. (WILR), a private non-profit center for independent living, and the First Interstate Bank of Laramie to initiate an AT alternative financing program. The Wyoming Technology Access Program (WYTAP) was created, became effective on November 11, 2002 and is currently providing low or no interest loans to consumers in Wyoming for AT. WIBR serves as the community based organization for the WYTAP program. Federal funds ensure that WYTAP is a self-sustaining program far into the future. To obtain those federal funds, the WYTAP program is committed to generating $66,000 in local non-federal matching funds.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Alabama

Alabama Statewide Technology Access and Response Project (STAR)
System for Alabamians with Disabilities

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services
2125 East South Boulevard
P.O. Box 20752
Montgomery, AL 36120-0752
tbridges@rehab.state.al.us
www.rehab.state.al.us/star

Principal Investigator: Steve Shivers
Public Contact: Ted Bridges, 800/782-7656 (V, in state only); 334/613-3480 (V); 334/613-3519 (TTY); Fax: 334/613-3485

Project Number: H224A30009
Start Date: October 1, 1993
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 93 $520,670; FY 94 $540,000; FY 95 $580,000; FY 96 $536,900; FY 97 $574,900; FY 98 $710,052; FY 99 $730,000; FY 00 $688,624; FY 01 $516,468; FY 02 $344,312
Abstract: This project addresses nine goals: (1) to establish an organizational structure that maximizes consumer participation; (2) to facilitate interagency collaboration in the development of policies and procedures concerning technology services; (3) to maximize consumer participation at all levels of project activities; (4) to establish a statewide consumer and family network; (5) to develop a statewide consumer-responsive information and referral system; (6) to develop a public awareness campaign to elevate the understanding of the benefits and use of technology for people with disabilities; (7) to develop and provide technology training activities for consumers, their families, professionals, employers, and the general public regarding technology-related issues; (8) to advance positive policy and funding changes that improve the procurement of and access to technology devices and services; and (9) to develop and implement a project evaluation system and conduct ongoing needs assessment.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Alaska

Assistive Technologies of Alaska

Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
1016 West Sixth, Suite 205
Anchorage, AK 99501
james_beck@labor.state.ak.us
www.labor.state.ak.us/at/index.htm

Principal Investigator: Jim Beck
Public Contact: 800/478-4378 (V/TTY, in state only); 907/269-3569 (V/TTY); Fax: 907/269-3632

Project Number: H224A990001
Start Date: July 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $563,052; FY 91 $565,205; FY 92 $595,000; FY 93 $748,000; FY 94 $749,298; FY 95 $749,298; FY 96 $693,618; FY 97 $731,618; FY 98 $548,714; FY 99 $368,000; FY 00 $365,809; FY 01 $365,809; FY 02 $365,809
Abstract: Assistive Technologies of Alaska (ATA) is a systems change project funded under the authority of the Tech Act. ATA has worked to establish a statewide, consumer-responsive system to improve access to AT. The project has responded to the needs of Alaskans with disabilities by creating training tools and resource documents; establishing a guaranteed loan program; achieving passage of an AT consumer protection law; and setting up a statewide library system for access to technology. In the last two years, the project is transitioning services to other permanent programs.
American Samoa Assistive Technology Service (ASATS) Project

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Department of Human Resources
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799
edperei@blueskynet.as

Principal Investigator: Pete P. Galea’i
Public Contact: Edmund Pereira, Project Director, 011/684/699-1529 (V); 011/684/233-7874 (TTY); Fax: 011/684/699-1376

Project Number: H224A30014
Start Date: October 1, 1993
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 93 $139,200; FY 94 $150,000; FY 95 $150,000; FY 96 $150,000; FY 97 $150,000; FY 98 $210,000; FY 99 $105,000; FY 00 $150,000; FY 01 $105,000; FY 02 $105,000

Abstract: This project addresses four goals: (1) identification, training, and support of people with disabilities to provide direction and guidance to the American Samoa Assistive Technology Project; (2) development and implementation of a system for individual and program needs assessment for AT; (3) development and promotion, in collaboration and in partnership with existing agencies, of a consumer responsive, culturally appropriate assistive technology service-delivery system; and (4) development and implementation of a model multiagency information, education, and public awareness system.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Arizona

**Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP)**

Northern Arizona University
Institute for Human Development
4105 North 20th Street, Suite 260
Phoenix, AZ 85016
jill.oberstein@nau.edu
www.nau.edu/ihd/aztap

**Principal Investigator:** Jill S. Oberstein, Project Director
**Public Contact:** 800/477-9921 (V); 602/728-9534 (V); 602/728-9536 (TTY); Fax: 602/728-9535

**Project Number:** H224A40002
**Start Date:** October 1, 1994
**NIDRR Officer:** Carol Cohen

**NIDRR Funding:** FY 94 $507,916; FY 95 $550,000; FY 96 $509,130; FY 97 $547,130; FY 98 $675,531; FY 99 $654,103; FY 00 $654,103; FY 01 $654,103; FY 02 $490,000; FY 03 $490,577

**Abstract:** This program increases access to AT services and devices for people with disabilities and their families and facilitates the development of a coordinated, consumer-responsive AT service-delivery system. The program includes seven goals: (1) to establish a program infrastructure that is consumer responsive and promotes system change; (2) to increase consumer involvement; (3) to increase interagency collaboration and coordination; (4) to increase awareness of the needs for, and efficacy of, AT services and devices; (5) to increase the competencies and skills of providers and consumers of AT services and devices; (6) to improve program and fiscal resources; and (7) to develop and implement protection and advocacy services in support of the program. Priority activities include: information and referral, training and technical assistance, outreach to underrepresented populations, funding and policy analysis, advocacy, and research.
Arkansas Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN)

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
Department of Workforce Education
2201 Brookwood Drive, Suite 117
Little Rock, AR 72202
bmgullett@ars.state.ar.us
www.arkansas-ican.org

Principal Investigator: Barbara Gullett
Public Contact: 800/828-2799 (V/TTY, in state only); 501/666-8868 (V/TTY); Fax: 501/666-5319

Project Number: H224A90020
Start Date: October 1, 1989
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 89 $503,811; FY 90 $506,078; FY 91 $551,078; FY 92 $725,000; FY 93 $773,929; FY 94 $835,000; FY 95 $835,000; FY 96 $772,951; FY 97 $579,713; FY 98 $386,476; FY 99 $386,476; FY 00 $386,476; FY 01 $386,476; FY 02 $386,476; FY 03 $386,476

Abstract: This project’s activities and objectives include maintaining a clearinghouse for technology, expanding funding alternatives for technology, creating a consumer-responsive technology system through legal remedies, expanding outreach programs, increasing system capacity through education across professional and technical disciplines, and providing information and referral services.
State Technology Assistance Projects
California

California Assistive Technology System (CATS)

California Department of Rehabilitation
External Affairs/Independent Living Division
2000 Evergreen
P.O. Box 944222
Sacramento, CA 94244-2220
bscwesi@dor.ca.gov; rharring@dor.ca.gov
www.atnet.org

Principal Investigator: Benjamin Harville, 916/263-8950
Public Contact: Olivia Wetherbee; Edwina Brock, 916/263-9842(V); 916/263-8685 (TTY); Fax: 916/263-7467

Project Number: H224A30008
Start Date: October 1, 1993
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 93 $550,000; FY 94 $680,000; FY 95 $900,000; FY 96 $833,000; FY 97 $871,121; FY 98 $1,337,103; FY 99 $1,315,675; FY 00 $1,315,675; FY 01 $986,765; FY 02 $657,838

Abstract: This project is administered by a unit within the lead agency, Department of Rehabilitation. It is advised by an Assistive Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC), a majority of whose members are consumers. The unit administers a transportation and AT loan guarantee program. The unit contracts with other entities to provide advocacy services, outreach, and training for underserved and rural populations; establish AT centers in rural counties; and establish a nonprofit organization to conduct other project activities and continue the project when grant funding ends. The nonprofit unit (AT Network) operated by the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) includes a toll-free AT information and referral service (800/390-2699 [V] and 800/900-0706 [TTY], in state only), a project web site, an AT news service, public awareness and marketing activities, interagency coordination, and coordination of system change activities.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Colorado

Colorado Assistive Technology Project (CATP)

University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
Assistive Technology Partners
1245 East Colfax Avenue, Suite 200
Denver, CO 80218
cathy.bodine@uchsc.edu
www.uchsc.edu/atp

Principal Investigator: Cathy Bodine, Project Director, 303/315-1281
Public Contact: 800/255-3477 (in state only); 303/315-1280 (V); 303/837-8964 (TTY); Fax: 303/837-1208

Project Number: H224A40014
Start Date: October 1, 1989
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 89 $540,140; FY 90 $542,571; FY 91 $577,571; FY 92 $609,538; FY 93 $690,407; FY 94 $780,000; FY 95 $780,000; FY 96 $722,000; FY 97 $541,529; FY 98 $361,019; FY 99 $361,019; FY 00 $361,018; FY 01 $361,019; FY 02 $361,019; FY 03 $361,019

Abstract: This project’s activities and objectives include a network of Technology Outreach Centers throughout the state and a central AT resource center. Project activities include information, referral, public awareness, training, technical assistance, and electronic networking linkages between local agencies and the state. Systems-change activities include a task force on policy review and analysis, ongoing advocacy education, and direct advocacy services through a contract with the state protection and advocacy system.
State Technology Assistance Projects  
Connecticut

Connecticut Assistive Technology Project

Connecticut Department of Social Services  
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services  
25 Sigourney Street, 11th Floor  
Hartford, CT 06106  
DrJohnF@aol.com  
www.techact.uconn.edu

Principal Investigator: John M. Ficarro  
Public Contact: 800/537-2549 (in state only); 860/424-4881 (V); 860/424-4839 (TTY); Fax: 860/424-4850

Project Number: H224A20013  
Start Date: October 1, 1992  
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen  
NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $525,000; FY 93 $554,000; FY 94 $580,000; FY 95 $520,000; FY 96 $500,000; FY 97 $538,000; FY 98 $651,365; FY 99 $629,937; FY 00 $472,453; FY 01 $314,969; FY 02 $314,969

Abstract: This program provides Connecticut residents with disabilities a single point of entry for advocacy, information and referral, peer counseling, and access to objective expert advice and consultation. This system is founded on the principles of ready access to available technology, informed choice, coordination, and maximum use of available resources and knowledge. The project’s low-interest AT revolving loan fund serves as an alternative funding mechanism for individuals ineligible for existing funding streams. The project has developed an equipment recycling program and is the primary sponsor of an annual AT trade fair. Finally, the program is supported by an extensive training, education, and public awareness component.
Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI)

Center for Applied Science and Engineering
University of Delaware
Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children
1600 Rockland Road
P.O. Box 269
Wilmington, DE 19899-0269
dati@asel.udel.edu
www.asel.udel.edu/dati

Principal Investigator: Beth A. Mineo Mollica, PhD, 302/651-6836
Public Contact: Carmen Taylor-Acevedo, Staff Assistant, 800/870-DATI (V/TTY, in state only); 302/651-6790 (V); 302/651-6794 (TTY); Fax: 302/651-6793

Project Number: H224A10005
Start Date: September 1, 1991
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 91 $501,562; FY 92 $505,146; FY 93 $550,616; FY 94 $620,000; FY 95 $620,000; FY 96 $573,934; FY 97 $611,928; FY 98 $695,827; FY 99 $521,870; FY 00 $347,921; FY 01 $347,914; FY 02 $347,914; FY 03 $347,914

Abstract: The DATI project has established county resource centers in each of Delaware’s three counties. These centers serve as information and equipment resource sites, offering short-term equipment loans, training and demonstration workshops, and regular informational mailings. DATI also offers a quarterly newsletter featuring articles on funding, equipment recycling, and general AT information. DATI assists consumers in locating funding for AT devices and services. Collaboration among existing state agencies and consumer groups has enhanced assistive technology promotion further throughout the state.
State Technology Assistance Projects
District of Columbia

University Legal Services AT Program for the District of Columbia

University Legal Services
220 I Street Northeast, Suite 130
Washington, DC 20002
atpdc@uls-dc.com
www.atpdc.org

Principal Investigator: Alicia C. Johns, 202/547-0198, ext. 134
Public Contact: Information Specialist, 202/547-0198 (V); 202/547-2657 (TTY); Fax: 202/547-2662

Project Number: H224A30001
Start Date: October 1, 1993
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 93 $500,000; FY 94 $550,180; FY 95 $565,000; FY 96 $523,015; FY 97 $557,503; FY 98 $632,503; FY 99 $616,143; FY 00 $616,143; FY 01 $462,107; FY 02 $308,072; FY 03 $308,072

Abstract: This project’s activities are designed to empower individuals with disabilities; to promote consumer involvement and advocacy; to provide information, referral, and training as they relate to accessing assistive technology services and devices; and to identify and improve access to funding resources. Activities focus on increasing access to AT devices and services for school age children, public awareness, and demonstrations targeting people who are underserved. The program collaborates with public and private entities, conducts advocacy training specifically for consumers with disabilities, and implements systems change activities that increase access to, provision of, and funding for AT devices and services on a permanent basis. This project operates a Resource Center, a reduced-interest AT financial loan program, and a short-term AT equipment lending program.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Florida

Florida Alliance for Assistive Service and Technology (FAAST), Inc.

FAAST, Inc.
325 John Knox Road, Bldg. B
Tallahassee, FL 32303-4151
faast@faast.org
faast.org

Principal Investigator: Terry Ward, PhD
Public Contact: Ben Greve, Program Manager, 800/322-7881 (V/TTY, in state, information and referral only); 850/487-3278 (V/TTY); 850/487-2850 (TTY/Fax); Fax: 850/487-2805

Project Number: H224A000001
Start Date: July 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $550,000; FY 93 $995,000 (includes carryover funding); FY 94 $730,000; FY 95 $700,000; FY 96 $647,983; FY 97 $685,983; FY 98 $922,107; FY 99 $902,700; FY 00 $675,509; FY 01 $450,340; FY 02 $450,340; FY 03 $450,340

Abstract: FAAST, designed by and for consumers in Florida, provides comprehensive consumer outreach, awareness, and services. Its consumer-directed board is composed of 51-percent people with disabilities or family members of individuals with disabilities. Services are provided through four strategically located regional centers in Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Tampa, and Miami. FAAST’s mission is to enhance the quality of life for all Floridians with disabilities by promoting access to, awareness of, and advocacy for AT. Through a seamless supportive network between Florida business and government, FAAST provides AT products and services that enable people with disabilities to participate fully in independent living, education, work, and recreation.
Georgia Tools for Life

Georgia Department of Labor
Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Assistive Technology Unit
1700 Century Circle, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30345
info@gatfl.org
www.gatfl.org

Principal Investigator: Joy Kniskern
Public Contact: Rebecca Roper, 800/497-8665 (V, in state only); 404/638-0384 (V); 404/638-0385 (TTY); Fax: 404/486-0218

Project Number: H224A10001
Start Date: September 1, 1991
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 91 $519,474; FY 92 $520,000; FY 93 $585,000; FY 94 $729,924; FY 95 $729,924; FY 96 $675,683; FY 97 $713,683; FY 98 $888,822; FY 99 $666,617; FY 00 $444,411; FY 01 $444,411; FY 02 $444,411; FY 03 $444,411

Abstract: The Georgia Tools for Life program includes training at all levels, public awareness, funding policy analysis, direct services, device lending libraries, and program evaluation. The hub of Tools for Life is operated out of the Georgia Division of Rehabilitation Services. Tools for Life is responsible for seven areas of coordination: (1) policy analysis and improved service delivery, (2) coordination with consumers, (3) coordination among public and private organizations, (4) training and technical assistance, (5) public awareness and an information and referral network, (6) advocacy, and (7) consumer-responsive program evaluation. Tools for Life also coordinates four Assistive Technology Resource Centers, the ReBoot Recycling Service, and is helping to create the GettingAhead Association for individuals who are improving their economic self-sufficiency. The association includes financial services such as economic literacy assistance.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Guam

Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT)

AVP/CEDDARS/GSAT
University of Guam, UOG Station
Mangilao, GU 96923
gsat@ite.net
uog2.uog.edu/uap/gsat.html

Principal Investigator: Heidi E. Farra-San Nicolas, PhD, 671/735-2482 (V)
Public Contact: Michael Terlaje, 671/735-2490, ext. 3 (V); 671/735-2491 (TTY); Fax: 671/734-8378

Project Number: H224A40003
Start Date: October 1, 1994
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 94 $150,000; FY 95 $150,000; FY 96 $150,000; FY 97 $150,000; FY 98 $150,000; FY 99 $150,000; FY 00 $105,000; FY 02 $105,000; FY 03 $105,000

Abstract: This project has established a consumer-responsive, comprehensive, territory-wide program of technology-related assistance for people with disabilities to assist in overcoming Guam’s unique challenges, including limited local funding, lack of trained personnel, few markets and market incentives, limited information, and limited eligibility for specific federal funding. Additionally, the provision of AT devices and services in the Pacific Basin presents many unique challenges. Small island systems, such as Guam, have limited budgets, and a harsh tropical-island environment (salt water, high humidity, and rough terrain) that creates difficulties for equipment repair and maintenance. The remote geographic location makes procurement, adjustments, and custom modifications to assistive technology equipment extremely difficult and costly. The project emphasizes and supports systems change and advocacy activities that serve to build capacity within existing programs and with people with disabilities of all ages. GSAT is administered locally by Guam University’s Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (CEDDERS).
State Technology Assistance Projects
Hawaii

Assistive Technology Resource Centers of Hawaii (ATRC)

414 Kuwili Street, Suite 104
Honolulu, HI 96817
atrc@atrc.org
www.atrc.org

Principal Investigator: Barbara Fischlowitz-Leong, Executive Director, 808/532-7110
Public Contact: 800/645-3007 (V/TTY, in state only); 808/532-7110 (V/TTY); Fax: 808/532-7120

Project Number: H224A10023
Start Date: October 1, 1991
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 91 $530,926; FY 92 $530,926; FY 93 $530,926; FY 94 $660,895; FY 95 $678,000; FY 96 $627,618; FY 97 $665,618; FY 98 $754,956; FY 99 $566,217; FY 00 $377,478; FY 01 $377,478; FY 02 $377,478; FY 03 $377,478

Abstract: Assistive Technology Resource Centers of Hawaii (ATRC) provides information and training on AT devices, services, and funding resources for the residents of Hawaii and also works nationally as part of the Association of Tech Act Projects. The organization conducts presentations and demonstrations in the community to increase AT awareness and promote self-advocacy among people with disabilities. ATRC offers classes on basic software and AT software in the state-of-the-art Technology Center. Open lab time is available for personal computer use. ATRC operates six equipment loan banks throughout Hawaii for individuals to try out AT devices. For eligible individuals wanting to purchase AT devices, ATRC offers financial loans. The agency collaborates with educators, independent living specialists, employment counselors, medical professionals, and others to ensure individuals have access to the technology they want and need. An advisory council to the organization provides input from the prospective of consumers and service providers, and the organization collaborates with state agency officials through its Policy Coordinating Committee, members of which are appointed by the Governor.
Idaho Assistive Technology Project

University of Idaho
129 West Third Street
Moscow, ID 83843-4401
rseiler@uidaho.edu
www.educ.uidaho.edu/idatech

Principal Investigator: Ron Seiler, Project Director
Public Contact: Susan House, Information Specialist, 800/432-8324 (V/TTY); 208/885-3559 (V/TTY); Fax: 208/885-3628

Project Number: H224A20017
Start Date: September 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $529,436; FY 93 $676,680 (includes carryover funding); FY 94 $620,000; FY 95 $634,246; FY 96 $587,115; FY 97 $625,115; FY 98 $719,907; FY 99 $698,479; FY 00 $539,000; FY 01 $349,240; FY 02 $349,240; FY 03 $349,240

Abstract: The Idaho Assistive Technology Project is managed by the Center on Disabilities and Human Development at the University of Idaho. The project engages in systems change activities, training, materials development, information dissemination, and advocacy activities directed at increasing the availability of assistive devices and services to Idahoans who have disabilities. A customer board directs the overall activities of the project and engages in a process of barrier identification and elimination. Major project components include training for consumers and service providers about AT, funding and loan programs for AT, advocacy, direct service provision through five regional resource centers, and systems change that addresses policy, practice, and legislation.
Illinois Assistive Technology Project (IATP)

IATP
1 West Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 100
Springfield, IL 62701
iatp@iltech.org
www.iltech.org

Principal Investigator: Wilhelmina Gunther
Public Contact: Sherry Edwards, 800/852-5110 (V/TTY, in state only); 217/522-7985 (V/TTY); 217/522-9966 (TTY); Fax: 217/522-8067

Project Number: H224A90038
Start Date: October 1, 1989
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 89 $515,300; FY 90 $517,619; FY 91 $617,619; FY 92 $620,000; FY 93 $750,000; FY 94 $923,271; FY 95 $923,271; FY 96 $833,121; FY 97 $640,997; FY 98 $427,332; FY 99 $647,332; FY 00 $427,332; FY 01 $427,332; FY 02 $427,332; FY 03 $427,332

Abstract: This project’s activities and objectives include information and referral services highlighting available technology and services, comprehensive advocacy training for people with disabilities and their families, and opportunities to explore AT options in the demonstration center. The project has statewide consumer involvement. Consumers have input into all facets of the project’s operation, from establishing goals and objectives to implementing the activities.
ATTAIN, Inc. (Assistive Technology Through Action in Indiana, Incorporated)

ATTAIN, Inc.
32 E. Washington Street, Suite 1400
Indianapolis, IN 46204
attain@attaininc.org
www.attaininc.org

Principal Investigator: Gary Hand, Executive Director
Public Contact: Lilia Teninty, 317/486-8808 (V); 317/486-8809 (TTY); 800/528-8246 (in-state only); Fax: 317/486-8809

Project Number: H224A00027
Start Date: July 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $521,480; FY 91 $541,277; FY 92 $565,277; FY 93 $660,288; FY 94 $726,892; FY 95 $726,892; FY 96 $672,877; FY 97 $710,877; FY 98 $533,158; FY 99 $355,439; FY 00 $355,439; FY 01 $355,439; FY 02 $355,439; FY 03 $355,439

Abstract: The mission of ATTAIN, Inc. is to ensure that all people with disabilities in Indiana have access to assistive technology. ATTAIN, Inc. provides direct service programs and promotes systems change in the public and private sectors to promote the availability and use of assistive technologies. Direct service programs include Empowerment and Advocacy trainings, group technology trainings, information and referral services, assistive technology assessments, individual case advocacy and an Equipment Exchange Network. ATTAIN, Inc. serves individuals of all ages and all disabilities.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Iowa

Iowa Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT)

Iowa University Center for Excellence in Disabilities
Center for Disabilities and Development
100 Hawkins Drive, Room S295
Iowa City, IA 52242-1011
infotech@uiowa.edu
www.uiowa.edu/infotech

Principal Investigator: Jane Gay, RN, 319/356-4463
Public Contact: Ann Dudler, 800/331-3027 (V/TTY); 319/356-4463 (V); 877/686-0032 (TTY); Fax: 319/356-8284

Project Number: H224A00028
Start Date: April 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $557,322; FY 91 $594,287; FY 92 $595,289; FY 93 $700,314; FY 94 $735,000; FY 95 $735,000; FY 96 $680,382; FY 97 $718,382; FY 98 $538,787; FY 99 $359,191; FY 00 $359,191; FY 01 $359,191; FY 02 $359,191; FY 03 $359,191

Abstract: This project conducts awareness and training programs and collaborates with other systems-change efforts. The information and referral portion of the Iowa program, InfoTech, provides information on new and used adaptive equipment, funding information, and a newsletter. The goals and objectives of the Iowa Program are developed and implemented through an extensive process that involves consumers, advocacy organizations, private and public service providers, regional and state agencies, third-party payers, and entities not traditionally associated with AT services.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Kansas

Assistive Technology for Kansans Project

University of Kansas
Life Span Institute
2601 Gabriel Avenue
P.O. Box 738
Parsons, KS 67357
ssack@ku.edu
atk.ku.edu

Principal Investigator: Charles R. Spellman, EdD; Sara H. Sack, PhD
Public Contact: 800/526-3648 (800/KAN DO IT, in state only); 620/421-8367 (V/TTY); Fax: 316/421-0954 (Fax/TTY)

Project Number: H224A30013
Start Date: October 1, 1993
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 93 $515,000; FY 94 $529,999; FY 95 $550,000; FY 96 $513,758; FY 97 $551,758; FY 98 $665,404; FY 99 $643,976; FY 00 $643,876; FY 01 $483,077; FY 02 $362,216; FY 03 $362,216

Other funding: FY 93 $89,029 (Kansas Rehabilitation Services); FY 95 $395,000 (KRS); FY 96 $780,000 (KRS); FY 01 $61,906 (KRS); FY 02 $375,000 (KRS); FY 03 $35,000 (Kansas Department of Health & Environment)

Abstract: Through consumer involvement and leadership by the Kansas University Program at Parsons, this project engages in activities that are designed to result in laws, regulations, policies, practices, or organizational structures that promote consumer-responsive programs that increase access to assistive technology devices and services. Through subcontracts with organizations across the state, the project operates five Regional Assistive Technology Access Sites, provides a toll-free number that connects callers directly to the appropriate Regional Access Site, manages an Interagency Equipment Loan System, and leads a policy analysis and legislative alert effort.
Kentucky Assistive Technology Service (KATS) Network

KATS Network Coordinating Center
8412 Westport Road
Louisville, KY 40242
katsnet@iglou.com
www.katsnet.org

Principal Investigator: J. Chase Forrester, JD, Project Director
Public Contact: Ronji Dearborn, 800/327-5287 (V/TTY, in state only); 502/327-0022 (V/TTY); 502/327-9855 (TTY); Fax: 502/327-9974

Project Number: H224A90002
Start Date: October 1, 1989
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 89 $535,102; FY 90 $537,510; FY 91 $577,102; FY 92 $680,000; FY 93 $710,108; FY 94 $800,000; FY 95 $800,000; FY 96 $740,552; FY 97 $555,414; FY 98 $370,276; FY 99 $370,276; FY 00 $370,276; FY 01 $370,276; FY 02 $370,276; FY 03 $370,276
Other funding: FY 03 $37,167 (SE-DBTAC)

Abstract: This project is a statewide network of organizations and individuals connecting to create a consumer-driven, collaborative system to make assistive technology information, devices, and services easily obtainable for people of any age or disability. In addition to its primary role in the development and coordination of activities among state agencies and organizations that facilitate access to, provision of, and funding for AT devices and services, the Coordinating Center staff conducts information and referral services and disseminates information. Associated organizations provide training activities, assessments and evaluations, consultations on appropriate technologies, technical assistance, operate an equipment recycling and lending program and implement a low interest loan program. Consumers represent a majority of the advisory board membership.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Louisiana

Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network (LATAN)

LATAN
P.O. Box 14115
Baton Rouge, LA 70898-4115
cpourciau@latan.org
www.latan.org

Principal Investigator: Julie M. Nesbit
Public Contact: Clara Pourciau, 800/270-6185 (V/TTY); 225/925-9500 (V/TTY); Fax: 225/925-9560

Project Number: H224A10028
Start Date: September 1, 1991
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 91 $502,566; FY 92 $505,398; FY 93 $555,398; FY 94 $631,095; FY 95 $660,000; FY 96 $610,955; FY 97 $648,955; FY 98 $791,475; FY 99 $593,606; FY 00 $395,738; FY 01 $395,738; FY 02 $395,738; FY 03 $395,738
Other funding: FY 03 $1,500,000 (Title III, AT Act)

Abstract: Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network (LATAN) is an advocacy and systems change project whose mission is to ensure that Louisiana citizens of all ages with functional limitations who want AT have what they need and are able to use it. Major program initiatives include: (1) consumer involvement, empowerment, and training; (2) advocacy and systems change; (3) outreach; (4) interagency coordination; and (5) provider training. Area programs provide the opportunity for LATAN to reach rural and inner-city areas, where a majority of ethnic minorities and elderly reside. The project provides information about aids that enable an individual to live at home, work, learn, and recreate. It also provides information about the services needed to acquire and use these assistive devices. Members of the project staff provide training that empowers individuals to self-advocate successfully for the aids they need. LATAN also advocates for increased access to assistive technology through public and private agencies and entities. Training is provided to increase the skills of case managers, personal service assistants, rehabilitation counselors, educators, therapists, and other providers and support personnel to recognize the benefits and uses of, and the need for, various types of AT devices and services. A consumer-majority board directs LATAN.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Maine

Maine Consumer Information and Technology Training Exchange
(Maine CITE)

Maine CITE Coordinating Center
46 University Drive
Augusta, ME 04330
kpowers@maine.edu
www.mainecite.org

Principal Investigator: David Noble Stockford, 207/624-6650 (V); 207/624-6800 (TTY)
Public Contact: Kathleen Powers, Project Director, 207/621-3195 (V); 207/621-3482 (TTY); Fax: 207/621-3193

Project Number: H224A90047
Start Date: October 1, 1989
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 89 $541,876; FY 90 $544,315; FY 91 $594,315; FY 92 $650,000; FY 93 $750,000; FY 94 $845,000; FY 95 $845,000; FY 96 $782,000; FY 97 $586,656; FY 98 $391,104; FY 99 $391,104; FY 00 $391,104; FY 01 $391,104; FY 02 $391,104; FY 03 $391,104
Abstract: This project collaborates with various Maine organizations, including centers for independent living, parent training agencies, and nonprofit community programs, to build a statewide network of information and resources on AT. Project goals are: to promote broader understanding of the benefits and wider availability of AT; to educate people with disabilities, their families, professionals, and general public in purchasing and using AT; to promote self-advocacy among people with disabilities to shape public policy that promotes assistive technology and universal design; and to assist public and private institutions, organizations, and associations in providing the knowledge, skills, and competencies related to AT and universal design to their constituents.
Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MD TAP)

Maryland Governor’s Office for Individuals with Disabilities
2301 Argonne Drive, Room T17
Baltimore, MD 21218
rasinski@charm.net
www.mdtap.org

Principal Investigator: Paul Rasinski, Project Director
Public Contact: Patrick McCurdy, 800/832-4827 (800/TECH TAP, V/TTY); 410/554-9230 (V/TTY); Fax: 410/554-9237

Project Number: H224A90019
Start Date: October 1, 1989
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 89 $500,000; FY 90 $502,250; FY 91 $502,250; FY 92 $671,029; FY 93 $770,000; FY 94 $825,000; FY 95 $825,000; FY 96 $763,694; FY 97 $572,771; FY 98 $381,000; FY 99 $381,847; FY 00 $381,847; FY 01 $381,847; FY 02 $381,847

Abstract: The Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MD TAP) is a part of the Governor’s Office for Individuals with Disabilities serving individuals of all ages and disabilities. Activities of this program include conducting a public awareness campaign with a toll-free phone number, maintaining lending libraries of information and AT devices, and equipment demonstration centers. The program administers a loan guarantee project, that makes possible low-interest loans for AT to individuals with disabilities. The program grants funds to private organizations to provide regional coverage of the state in relation to AT issues.
Massachusetts Assistive Technology Partnership

Children’s Hospital
1295 Boylston Street, Suite 310
Boston, MA 02215
matp@matp.org
www.matp.org

**Principal Investigator:** Marylyn Howe, Project Director, 617/355-7167 (TTY)

**Public Contact:** Patricia Hill, 800/848-8867 (V/TTY, in state only); 617/355-7153 (V); 617/355-7301 (TTY); Fax: 617/355-6345

**Project Number:** H224A00036

**Start Date:** July 1, 1990

**NIDRR Officer:** Carol Cohen

**NIDRR Funding:** FY 90 $563,998; FY 91 $593,993; FY 92 $624,062; FY 93 $725,764; FY 94 $811,962; FY 95 $811,962; FY 96 $751,592; FY 97 $789,592; FY 98 $592,194; FY 99 $592,194; FY 00 $394,796; FY 01 $394,796; FY 02 $394,796; FY 03 $394,796

**Abstract:** The Massachusetts Assistive Technology Partnership (MATP) is a consumer-responsive, cross-disability, multicultural, statewide project that conducts activities to increase access to AT for people with disabilities. Activities include public awareness, information services, training and technical assistance, funding and policy analysis, advocacy, and related work to improve services and promote involvement of people with disabilities in AT. Through regional Peer Assistive Technology Programs, The MATP provides information and referral, peer networking, training, and individual and systems advocacy. The MATP works closely with people with disabilities, family members, providers, and state agencies to identify needs and pursue change in the AT service-delivery system. The project publishes an AT newsletter, pursues remedies of funding and policy barriers, provides training on a range of AT available and resources for obtaining assistive technology, pursues improvement of equipment standards, promotes increased availability of services, promotes increased involvement of people with disabilities in AT services and policy making, and coordinates with related projects in Massachusetts, regionally, and nationally.
Michigan’s Assistive Technology Project

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
740 West Lake Lansing Road, Suite 400
East Lansing, MI 48823
www.copower.org

Principal Investigator: Harold Wasner, 517/373-3390
Public Contact: Kathryn Wyeth, 800/760-4600 (V/TTY, in state only); 517/333-2477 (V/TTY); Fax: 517/333-2677

Project Number: H224A50009
Start Date: September 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $550,000; FY 93 $885,881 (includes carryover funding); FY 94 $610,000; FY 95 $850,000; FY 96 $786,837; FY 97 $824,837; FY 98 $1,033,953; FY 99 $1,012,525; FY 00 $759,394; FY 01 $506,263; FY 02 $506,263; FY 03 $506,263

Abstract: Michigan’s AT Project focuses on building the capacity of community-based, local organizations to advocate for the use of AT as a tool for inclusion in all aspects of life. Currently, Michigan’s AT Project has projects around the state that are creating genuine systems change on a local basis. The AT Project also supports a web-based system of AT resources and communication networks.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Minnesota

Minnesota System of Technology to Achieve Results (STAR) Program

State of Minnesota Department of Administration
309 Administration Building
50 Sherburne Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55155
star.program@state.mn.us
www.admin.state.mn.us/assistivetechnology

Principal Investigator: Chuck Rassbach, 651/297-1554
Public Contact: 800/657-3862 (V, in state only); 800/657-3895 (TTY, in state only); 651/296-7516 (V); 651/296-9478 (TTY); Fax: 651/282-6671

Project Number: H224A90041
Start Date: October 1, 1989
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 89 $500,000; FY 90 $502,250; FY 91 $567,250; FY 92 $700,000; FY 93 $750,000; FY 94 $820,000; FY 95 $820,000; FY 96 $759,066; FY 97 $694,268; FY 98 $569,300; FY 99 $379,500; FY 00 $379,500; FY 01 $379,533; FY 02 $379,533

Abstract: This project: (1) provides a toll-free information service for residents of Minnesota; (2) distributes brochures and other literature; (3) hosts workshops and forums; (4) provides opportunities for consumer involvement; and (5) assists individuals seeking funding. STAR advocates for policy, practice, and legislative change regarding access to AT; contracts for mobile outreach projects and legal advocacy services; and provides grants on a regional basis.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Mississippi

Mississippi Project START (Success Through Assistive/Rehabilitative Technology)

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services
P.O. Box 1698
Jackson, MS 39215-1000
contactus@msprojectstart.org
www.msprojectstart.org

Principal Investigator: Stephen Power, Project Director
Public Contact: Eugenie Bradshaw, 800/852-8328 (V/TTY, in state only); 601/987-4872 (V/TTY);
Fax: 601/364-2349

Project Number: H224A00032
Start Date: May 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $521,285; FY 91 $530,000; FY 92 $554,000; FY 93 $594,714; FY 94 $619,430; FY 95 $619,430; FY 96 $573,400; FY 97 $611,400; FY 98 $458,550; FY 99 $305,700; FY 00 $305,700; FY 01 $305,700; FY 02 $305,700
Abstract: Project START is a multifaceted, collaborative effort. The primary components include: (1) an advisory council that allows for consumer input and the involvement of other relevant agencies, organizations, and groups; (2) an information clearinghouse that provides people with disabilities, their families, service providers, and other interested parties with information regarding available AT devices and services; (3) a training program that ensures that service provider personnel, people with disabilities, and other relevant parties are familiar with the utility and potential of AT devices; (4) a model service-delivery system that acts as a referral source and concurrent technical resource to existing AT providers, and provides AT services to people with disabilities ineligible for existing programs; and (5) an equipment loan program that makes assistive devices available to people with disabilities for trial periods, for use while their personal equipment is being repaired or replaced, and to service providers for training and demonstration purposes.
Missouri Assistive Technology Project

Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Governor’s Council on Disability
4731 South Cochise, Suite 114
Independence, MO 64055-6975
matpmo@swbell.net
www.dolir.state.mo.us/matp

Principal Investigator: Diane Golden, PhD, Project Director
Public Contact: 800/647-8557 (V, in state only); 800/647-8558 (TTY, in state only); 816/373-5193 (V); 816/373-9315 (TTY); Fax: 816/373-9314

Project Number: H224A30015
Start Date: September 1, 1991
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 91 $524,488; FY 92 $526,988; FY 93 $550,801; FY 94 $667,121; FY 95 $675,000; FY 96 $689,639; FY 97 $727,639; FY 98 $878,221; FY 99 $658,666; FY 00 $439,111; FY 01 $439,111; FY 02 $439,111; FY 03 $439,111

Abstract: The primary components of this project include: (1) a statewide advisory council established to provide input from consumers and relevant state agencies; (2) legislative and policy initiatives including an equipment loan program, an equipment distribution program that provides both adaptive telephone equipment and adaptive computer equipment, a no-interest or low-interest loan program to purchase AT, a funding program to provide AT to children to age 21, health care coverage for mandatory infant hearing screenings and initial amplification devices, Medicaid coverage of augmentative communication devices for adults, an AT lemon law, sales tax exemptions on AT, managed care reform, and accessible state IT; (3) an information and referral service; (4) individual advocacy services; and (5) a statewide AT conference.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Montana

MonTECH

University of Montana
The Rural Institute
634 Eddy Avenue
Missoula, MT 59812
montech@selway.umt.edu
montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/

Principal Investigator: Gail McGregor, Project Director
Public Contact: 800/732-0323 (V/TTY); 406/243-5676 (V/TTY); Fax: 406/243-4730

Project Number: H224A10002
Start Date: September 30, 1991
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 91 $550,553; FY 92 $550,553; FY 93 $590,553; FY 94 $675,258; FY 95
$673,058; FY 96 $624,080; FY 97 $663,080; FY 98 $752,408; FY 99 $564,306; FY 00 $376,204; FY
01 $376,204; FY 02 $376,204

Abstract: This project develops a comprehensive statewide system of technology-related assistance to
ensure that all Montanans with disabilities have equitable access to the AT devices and services they
need. Emphasis is on eliminating barriers to obtaining AT, enacting policy change, improving aware-
ness, strengthening consumer and provider networks, and increasing access to funding. The Montana
Consortium for Assistive Technology (MCAT) serves as the program advisory board and offers
opportunities for consumer participation. Activities currently underway include: (1) a comprehensive
equipment demonstration and evaluation center offering hands-on experience with devices to both
consumers and service providers; (2) an AT loan/lease clearinghouse; (3) an information and assistance
service that includes maintenance of a comprehensive database of Montana service programs; (4)
focused outreach activities with the state’s largest minority group, Native Americans; and (5) a web
site. Other activities include a low-interest financial loan program for consumers who do not qualify for
other funding sources, and specialized training programs to increase the skills of professionals provid-
ing AT services.
Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership

Nebraska Department of Education
Vocational Rehabilitation
5143 South 48th Street, Suite C
Lincoln, NE 68516-2204
atp@atp.state.ne.us
www.nde.state.ne.us/ATP/

Principal Investigator: Mark Schultz, Project Director, 402/471-0734
Public Contact: Nancy Noha, 888/806-6287 (V/TTY, in state only); 402/471-0734 (V/TTY); 402/471-0735 (V/TTY); Fax: 402/471-6052

Project Number: H224A90040
Start Date: October 1, 1989
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 89 $523,000; FY 90 $525,352; FY 91 $570,352; FY 92 $730,000; FY 93 $766,984; FY 94 $820,000; FY 95 $820,000; FY 96 $759,066; FY 97 $569,300; FY 98 $379,533; FY 99 $379,533; FY 00 $379,533
Abstract: The Partnership provides statewide AT and home modification services for Nebraskans of all ages and disabilities. The Partnership is a collaboration of private, nonprofit, and governmental organizations and agencies working together to create a seamless, comprehensive, statewide AT program. Collaborators include Nebraska’s Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Developmental Disabilities, Economic Development, and Vocational Rehabilitation. The collaboration has resulted in funding for services to help meet the diverse needs of consumers regarding education, employment, housing, and independent living. These services include assessment, evaluation, fabrication, repair, maintenance, and training. Cost savings have also resulted due to equipment recycling, identification of appropriate equipment, and cost sharing between partnering agencies. In addition, the Partnership helps to support demonstration centers, utilizes a peer support network, and sponsors special events, including technology expos. Training materials have been developed for educators (three hour instructional unit and special education technical manual), health care professionals, and insurance reviewers.
State Technology Assistance Projects  
Nevada  

Nevada Assistive Technology Collaborative  
Dept. of Human Resources  
Office of Disability Services  
3656 Research Way suite 32  
Carson City, NV 89706  
Kpreston@DHR.State.NV.US  
hr.state.nv.us/directors/disabilitysvcs/dhr_ads.htm  

Principal Investigator: Todd Butterworth  
Public Contact: Kelleen Preston, 888/337-3839 (V, in state only); 775/687-4452 (V); 775/687-3388 (TTY); Fax: 775/687-3292  

Project Number: H224A00037  
Start Date: July 1, 1990  
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen  

NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $560,884; FY 91 $580,047; FY 92 $594,368; FY 93 $624,588; FY 94 $675,046; FY 95 $675,046; FY 96 $624,883; FY 97 $662,883; FY 98 $497,162; FY 99 $331,442; FY 00 $331,442; FY 01 $331,442; FY 02 $331,442  

Abstract: The Nevada Project is accomplishing 15 major goals in systems change that have been established in response to identified needs in consultation with the state’s consumer-directed executive board. Additionally, the project trains 400 consumers in the use of technology; a minimum of 1,800 consumers in self-advocacy skills; 550 families in applying technology to the needs of a family member with a disability; and a minimum of 5,730 cross-disciplinary university undergraduates in the fields of medicine, health, education, rehabilitation, gerontology, engineering, speech pathology and audiology, and counseling in AT and cultural awareness. The project provides information and referral and other awareness services to a minimum of 10,000 consumers over the life of the project and evaluates the impact of those services through follow-up and satisfaction surveys.
New Hampshire Technology Partnership Project

University of New Hampshire Technology Partnership
Institute on Disability/UCE
The Concord Center
Ten Ferry Street #14
Concord, NH 03301-5019
sonke.dornblut@unh.edu
iod.unh.edu/projects/technology_policy.html

Principal Investigator: Jan Nisbet, PhD; Terese Wilkomm, PhD, 603/862-4320 (V/TTY)
Public Contact: Sönke Dornblut, 800-238-2048 (V/TTY, in state only); 603/224-0630 (V/TTY);
Fax: 603/228-3270

Project Number: H224A10015
Start Date: September 1, 1991
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 91 $506,307; FY 92 $505,008; FY 93 $550,008; FY 94 $635,000; FY 95
$635,000; FY 96 $587,813; FY 97 $625,813; FY 98 $717,815; FY 99 $538,361; FY 00 $358,908; FY
01 $358,908; FY 02 $358,908; FY 03 $358,908
Abstract: The goal of this project is to increase access to assistive technology through the creation and
support of consumer-driven systems for the provision of state-of-the-art assistive technology products
and services for citizens with disabilities in the state of New Hampshire. The project’s lead agency is
the Institute on Disability, a University Center of Excellence at the University of New Hampshire.
Additional subcontracts have been awarded to ATECH Services and Granite State Independent
Living.
State Technology Assistance Projects
New Jersey

New Jersey Assistive Technology Advocacy Center (ATAC)

New Jersey Protection and Advocacy, Inc.
210 South Broad Street, Third Floor
Trenton, NJ 08608
advocate@njpanda.org
www.njpanda.org/atac

Principal Investigator: Ellen Catanese, Project Director
Public Contact: 800/342-5832 (V, in state only); 609/633-7106 (TTY); 609/292-9742 (NJ P&A Intake Unit); Fax: 609/777-0187

Project Number: H224A20007
Start Date: September 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $548,050; FY 93 $670,528 (includes carryover funding); FY 94 $548,050; FY 95 $550,000; FY 96 $509,130; FY 97 $547,130; FY 98 $710,380; FY 99 $688,800; FY 00 $516,714; FY 01 $344,476; FY 02 $344,476

Abstract: ATAC is a consumer-driven program whose mission is to increase awareness of and improve access to AT for all people with disabilities in the state. The project provides information and referral through its 800 telephone number and web site regarding all aspects of AT. ATAC also provides advocacy services, both legal and nonlegal, addressing both individual and systems issues. In addition, project staff members provide training and technical assistance, as well as outreach regarding the benefits of and funding for AT devices and services. ATAC disseminates brochures, funding guides, and informational bulletins.
New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP)

New Mexico State Department of Education
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
435 Saint Michaels Drive, Building D
Santa Fe, NM 87505
awinnegar@state.nm.us
www.nmtap.com

Principal Investigator: Andy Winnegar, Project Director, 505/954-8521
Public Contact: Caroll Cadena, 800/866-2253 (V/TTY); 800/659-4915 (TTY); 505/954-8533 (V/TTY); Fax: 505/954-8562

Project Number: H224A00017
Start Date: April 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $500,500; FY 91 $515,500; FY 92 $525,000; FY 93 $660,710; FY 94 $750,000; FY 95 $750,000; FY 96 $694,000; FY 97 $732,268; FY 98 $549,201; FY 99 $366,134; FY 00 $366,134; FY 01 $366,134; FY 02 $366,134; FY 03 $366,134

Abstract: NMTAP examines and works to eliminate barriers to obtaining assistive technology in New Mexico. The project has established a statewide program for coordinating AT services; the program is designed to assist people with disabilities to locate, secure, and maintain AT that can increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of people with disabilities. This program is a resource both for people requiring assistive technology and those that manufacture and provide AT devices or services. The program focuses on permanently eliminating barriers in three major areas: access to, availability of, and funding for AT with programs that include low cost financial loans and AT short-term loans to individuals with disabilities.
New York State Office of Advocate for Persons with Disabilities
One Empire State Plaza, Suite 1001
Albany, NY 12223-1150
traid@oapwd.org
www.advoc4disabled.state.ny.us/TRAID_Project/technlog.htm

Principal Investigator: Lisa Rosano-Kazckowski, Project Manager
Public Contact: 800/522-4369 (V/TTY/Spanish, in state only); 518/474-2825 (V); 518/473-4231 (TTY); Fax: 518/473-6005

Project Number: H224A00041
Start Date: October 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $500,000; FY 91 $600,000; FY 92 $615,000; FY 93 $820,961; FY 94 $950,000; FY 95 $950,000; FY 96 $879,406; FY 97 $917,406; FY 98 $688,054; FY 99 $458,703; FY 00 $458,703; FY 01 $458,703; FY 02 $458,703; FY 03 $458,703

Abstract: The Technology-Related Assistance of Individuals with Disabilities (TRAID) Project has been established to improve access to AT through consumer-responsive interventions to effect systemic change on a policy, regulatory, and legislative level. Project staff members chair and facilitate the workings of the NYS Interagency Partnership on Assistive Technology, a group designed to collaborate with a consumer-majority advisory board to identify systemic barriers to AT devices and services and collaborate on strategies to address the barriers. In collaboration with the NYS Department of Health, Early Intervention Program, the TRAID Project administers 12 Regional TRAID Centers (RTCs) that operate device demonstration and loan services, coordinate local information and referral, and support individualized self-advocacy. Through a subcontract with Cornell University’s Disability Business Technical Assistance Center, the RTC’s also disseminate materials on accessible information technology. The TRAID Project also provides information and referral regarding assistive technology, provides training and public awareness, and administers the TRAID-IN Equipment Exchange service.
State Technology Assistance Projects
North Carolina

North Carolina Assistive Technology Project

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
1110 Navaho Drive, Suite 101
Raleigh, NC 27609-7322
rhiatt@ncatp.org
www.ncatp.org

Principal Investigator: Ricki Hiatt, Project Director
Public Contact: 919/850-2787 (V/TTY); Fax: 919/850-2792

Project Number: H224A00010
Start Date: July 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $566,425; FY 91 $595,441; FY 92 $625,843; FY 93 $730,152; FY 94
$820,000; FY 95 $820,000; FY 96 $759,066; FY 97 $797,066; FY 98 $597,800; FY 99 $398,533; FY
00 $398,533; FY 01 $398,533; FY 02 $398,533; FY 03 $398,533

Abstract: This project provides information and referral services, technical assistance, and training
seminars and materials. It supports five regional demonstration centers that provide demonstration and
trial of devices. The project’s central office in Raleigh coordinates systems change and advocacy,
policy, and funding issues statewide. The North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Ser-
vices provides the project with internal management systems, agency resources, and fiscal manage-
ment.
State Technology Assistance Projects
North Carolina

Assistive Technology Act (AT Act) Technical Assistance Program (TA)-Data Collection Program

RTI International
Center for Research in Education
3040 Cornwallis Road
P.O. Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194
cat@rti.org

Principal Investigator: Christene A. Tashjian
Public Contact: 919/541-6128; Fax: 919/541-5849

Project Number: H224B030001
Start Date: October 1, 2003
Length: 36 months
NIDRR Officer: Roslyn Edson
NIDRR Funding: FY 03 $427,891

Abstract: The primary purposes of this grant are to continue implementation and maintenance of the web-based data collection system for AT Act state grantees and to develop and implement a similar system for Protection and Advocacy (P&A) grantees. Specific project activities include: (1) maintaining and supporting the existing web-based data collection system for the AT Act state grantees; (2) developing an annual program performance reporting form for P&A grantees in collaboration with NIDRR and a work group of stakeholders; (3) developing, implementing, and maintaining a web-based data collection system for the P&As based on the new form; (4) training grantees in the use of the data collection instruments and systems; (5) writing analytical reports based on the data collected from the grantees and writing an annual report on grantees’ performance and outcomes, including interpretations of findings; (6) identifying and evaluating successful strategies that can be linked to increased access to and provision of AT based on the data collected from the grantees, including analyses of use of AT by individuals with disabilities and national trends related to AT use by individuals with disabilities; (7) examining the extent to which the grantee data address the intended purposes of the data collection activities; and (8) disseminating the reports generated from grant activities to the primary stakeholders of the AT Act grant program and other relevant groups. This project is a collaboration of RTI, Neighborhood Legal Services, and InfoUse.
State Technology Assistance Projects
North Dakota

North Dakota Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT)

North Dakota Department of Human Services
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
P.O. Box 743
Cavalier, ND 58220
jlee@polarcomm.com
www.ndipat.org

Principal Investigator: Judith A. Lee, Project Director
Public Contact: 800/265-4728 (V/TTY); 701/239-7247 (V/TTY); Fax: 701/239-7229

Project Number: H224A30003
Start Date: October 1, 1993
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 93 $500,000; FY 94 $540,000; FY 95 $540,000; FY 96 $509,130; FY 97 $547,130; FY 98 $633,103; FY 99 $611,000; FY 00 $611,000; FY 01 $458,756; FY 02 $305,500; FY 03 $305,500

Abstract: The Interagency Program for Assistive Technology is dedicated to supporting the AT needs of all people with disabilities in North Dakota, including those individuals experiencing the effects of aging. The vision of this project is increased access to AT devices and services for the citizens of North Dakota. This goal is realized through: (1) interagency coordination that develops and promotes policies that improve access to AT devices and services for individuals with disabilities of all ages; (2) a public awareness program designed to provide information to targeted individuals relating to the availability and benefits of AT devices and services; (3) technical assistance and training that provides support to public and private entities to increase consumer access to appropriate assessments, training, equipment, and funding for AT; and (4) outreach activities to all regions of this rural and sparsely populated state, including a focus on Native Americans and older individuals living below the poverty level, the two population groups identified as underrepresented in North Dakota.
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Assistive Technology Project: System of Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities (STRAID)

CNMI Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities
Capitol Hill
P.O. Box 502565
Saipan, MP 96950-2565
clamkin@cnmidcouncil.org; straid@cnmidcouncil.org
www.cnmidcouncil.org/atstraid/atflash.htm

Principal Investigator: Thomas J. Camacho, Project Director
Public Contact: Project Coordinator, 670/664-7000 (V); Fax: 670/664-7010

Project Number: H224A40007
Start Date: October 1, 1994
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 94 $150,000; FY 95 $150,000; FY 96 $150,000; FY 97 $150,000; FY 98 $150,000; FY 99 $105,000; FY 00 $105,000; FY 01 $105,000; FY 02 $105,000; FY 03 $105,000

Abstract: This project provides technology-related assistance for people with disabilities in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project focuses on the development of a locally based system for the technology-related needs of children, youth, and adults with disabilities. The primary objective of this project is to enhance opportunities for people with disabilities in the Commonwealth to become independent, productive, integrated, and fully included in the community. Through increased emphasis on coordination with agencies or organizations that provide or pay for the provision of AT devices or services, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities is building and activating a system that responds to the needs of people with disabilities to: (1) have greater control over their lives; (2) participate in, and contribute more fully to, activities in their home, school, work environment, and community; (3) interact to a greater extent with individuals who do not have disabilities; and (4) benefit from opportunities that are taken for granted by individuals who do not have disabilities.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Ohio

Assistive Technology of Ohio (AT OHIO)

Ohio State University Research Foundation
J.L. Camera Center
2050 Kenny Road, 9th Floor
Columbus, OH 43221
atohio@osu.edu
www.atohio.org

Principal Investigator: Sheldon R. Simon, MD
Public Contact: Douglas Huntt, Executive Director, 800/784-3425 (V/TTY, in state only); 614/292-2426 (V/TTY); 614/292-3162 (TTY); Fax: 614/292-5866

Project Number: H224A40001
Start Date: August 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $522,100; FY 93 $522,000; FY 94 $770,113; FY 95 $600,000; FY 96 $555,414; FY 97 $593,414; FY 98 $815,688; FY 99 $794,260; FY 00 $595,695; FY 01 $397,130; FY 02 $397,130; FY 03 $397,130
Abstract: This project administers, and advocates for, programs that promote increased availability and affordability of assistive technology for Ohioans with disabilities. Staff members work to accomplish an increased level of education among people with disabilities and the professionals that provide services to them regarding the role that technology can play in the lives of people with disabilities. The project educates the public at large about how technology can be the bridge to independence for people with disabilities in the areas of employment, education, and everyday living. A project goal is to improve the services provided to people with disabilities by state, locals and county governments, service agencies, and public libraries. This project is a resource for people with disabilities to learn about assistive technology and how it can help them overcome barriers in their lives. Project initiatives include adaptive toy lending libraries for families of children with disabilities, low interest loans for technology to people with disabilities, and a computer refurbishing and recycling program.
Oklahoma ABLE Tech

Oklahoma State University
Seretean Wellness Center
1514 West Hall of Fame
Stillwater, OK 74078-2026
mljwell@okstate.edu
okabletech.okstate.edu

Principal Investigator: Mac McCrory, Project Director
Public Contact: Linda Jaco, Project Manager, 800/257-1705 (V/TTY); 405/744-9864 (V); Fax: 405/744-2487

Project Number: H224A50007
Start Date: July 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $530,000; FY 93 $668,524 (includes carryover funding); FY 94 $530,000; FY 95 $575,000; FY 96 $532,272; FY 97 $570,272; FY 98 $695,237; FY 99 $673,809; FY 00 $505,357; FY 01 $336,905; FY 02 $336,905; FY 03 $336,905
Other funding: FY 92 $85,000 (Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services); $64,944 (US Department of Agriculture); FY 00 $33,000 (Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education-NIOSH); FY 01 $100,000 (Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services)

Abstract: The purpose of Oklahoma ABLE Tech is to increase access to assistive technology for people of all ages and all disabilities through a variety of consumer-responsive systems change activities. ABLE Tech provides information, referral, training, technical assistance, and advocacy, and works to improve laws and policies providing access to assistive technology.
Oregon Technology Access for Life Needs (TALN)

Oregon Disabilities Commission
c/o Access Technologies, Inc.
3070 Lancaster Drive Northeast
Salem, OR 97305-1396
ati@oregonuos.net
www.taln.org

Principal Investigator: Laurie Brooks, Project Director
Public Contact: 800/677-7512 (V/TTY, in state only); 503/361-1201 (V/TTY); Fax: 503/370-4530

Project Number: H224A50002
Start Date: April 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $540,000; FY 91 $555,000; FY 92 $575,000; FY 93 $620,000; FY 94 $670,000; FY 95 $670,000; FY 96 $620,212; FY 97 $658,212; FY 98 $493,659; FY 99 $329,106; FY 00 $329,106; FY 01 $329,106; FY 02 $329,106

Abstract: This project uses existing resources including community colleges, medical, rehabilitation, educational, and recreational and adaptive sports programs, the state library system, federally funded technology projects currently in existence in Oregon, and state agencies to expand the availability of AT in Oregon. Projects include an exhibit to increase public awareness, a toll-free number for information and referral, training programs, equipment loan banks and demonstration labs, and a database on used equipment.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania’s Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT)

Temple University
Institute on Disabilities/UCDD
1301 Cecil B. Moore Avenue, 423 Ritter Annex
Philadelphia, PA 19122
piat@temple.edu
disabilities.temple.edu

Principal Investigator: Diane Nelson Bryen, PhD; Amy S. Goldman, 215/204-1356
Public Contact: Amy S. Goldman, 800/204-7428 (V) in state only; 215/204-5966 (V); 215/204-1356 (V/TTY); Fax: 215/204-9371

Project Number: H224A20006
Start Date: September 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $550,000; FY 93 $602,623; FY 94 $730,000; FY 95 $850,000; FY 96 $786,837; FY 97 $824,837; FY 98 $1,049,575; FY 99 $1,028,147; FY 00 $771,110; FY 01 $514,074; FY 02 $514,074; FY 03 $514,074

Abstract: This project focuses on the creation of a consumer responsive system, supported by combined public and private resources, through which Pennsylvanians with disabilities (including older Pennsylvanians) have access to the AT services and supports they need to contribute to and participate fully in their communities. Major functional areas include public awareness, information and referral, individual advocacy and systems change, and training. PIAT has established a network of regional Assistive Technology Resource Centers (ATRCs). ATRCs are also a key to Pennsylvania’s Assistive Technology Lending Library, a state funded program based on the pilot short-term equipment loan program developed by PIAT.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico Assistive Technology Project

FILIUS Institute
University of Puerto Rico
Jardin Botanico Sur 1187 Calle Flambyan
San Juan, PR 00926-117
pratp@pratp.urp.edu
www.pratp.urp.edu

Principal Investigator: Maria I. Miranda
Public Contact: 800/496-6035 (V/TTY, from the U.S.); 800/981-6033 (V/TTY, from Puerto Rico);
787/767-6035 (V); 787/764-6062 (V); 787/767-8642 (TTY); Fax: 787/754-8034

Project Number: H224A70001
Start Date: October 1, 1993
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 93 $500,000; FY 94 $545,000; FY 95 $555,000; FY 96 $513,758; FY 97 $551,758; FY 98 $692,202; FY 99 $670,774; FY 00 $670,774; FY 01 $503,081; FY 02 $335,387

Abstract: This project establishes a comprehensive, island-wide system of AT services to maximize and enhance existing resources in Puerto Rico. This system is timely and consumer-responsive to the needs of people with disabilities. The project’s main focus is to influence the system through collaborative efforts with public and private agencies to guarantee equal opportunity and access to AT by people with disabilities in Puerto Rico. The Assistive Technology Program is administered by the University of Puerto Rico, Office of the President, FILIUS Institute, Assistive Technology Institute.
Rhode Island Department of Human Services
Office of Rehabilitation Services
40 Fountain Street
Providence, RI 02903-1898
reginac@ors.state.ri.us
www.atap.state.ri.us

**Principal Investigator:** Raymond A. Carroll, Administrator

**Public Contact:** Regina Connor, Project Director, 800/752-8088 (in state only); 401/421-7005, ext. 390 (V); 401/421-7016 (TTY); Fax: 401/222-3574

**Project Number:** H224A30012

**Start Date:** October 1, 1993

**NIDRR Officer:** Carol Cohen

**NIDRR Funding:** FY 93 $500,000; FY 94 $500,000; FY 95 $500,000; FY 96 $500,000; FY 97 $538,000; FY 98 $624,467; FY 99 $603,039; FY 00 $603,039; FY 01 $452,279; FY 02 $301,520; FY 03 $301,520

**Abstract:** The Rhode Island Assistive Technology Access Partnership (ATAP) is a statewide partnership of organizations, each with a targeted focus, working together with a consumer council (Rhode Island Council on Assistive Technology) to remove barriers and increase access to AT for individuals with disabilities of all ages.
State Technology Assistance Projects
South Carolina

South Carolina Assistive Technology Program (SCATP)

University of South Carolina School of Medicine
Center for Disability Resources
Columbia, SC 29208
jjendron@usit.net; evelyne@cdd.sc.edu
www.sc.edu/scatp

Principal Investigator: Richard Ferrante, 803/935-5231 (V)
Public Contact: Evelyn Evans, Project Director, 803/935-5340 (V/TTY); Fax: 803/935-5342

Project Number: H224A60001
Start Date: October 1, 1991
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen/Judy Fein
NIDRR Funding: FY 91 $541,767; FY 92 $541,767; FY 93 $595,767; FY 94 $720,000; FY 95 $720,000; FY 96 $667,000; FY 97 $704,497; FY 98 $829,535; FY 99 $622,151; FY 00 $414,768; FY 01 $414,768; FY 02 $414,768; FY 03 $414,768

Abstract: This project is the catalyst for uniting AT services statewide into an easily accessible system that is responsive to the needs of all South Carolinians with disabilities. SCATP collaborates with state agencies, policy-makers, and private entities to overcome barriers that prevent people from getting the devices and services they need for full and productive lives. Systems change activities are connected to training and technical assistance activities that are supportive of system change. All activities are guided by input from and responsiveness to consumers and their families.
State Technology Assistance Projects
South Dakota

South Dakota Assistive Technology Project (DakotaLink)

DakotaLink
1925 Plaza Boulevard
Rapid City, SD 57702
dvogel@tie.net
dakotalink.tie.net

Principal Investigator: Grady Kickul, 605/773-3195 (V)
Public Contact: Dave Vogel, 800/224-5336 (V/TTY, in state only); 605/224-5336 (V/TTY); Fax: 605/224-8320

Project Number: H224A20019
Start Date: July 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $520,000; FY 93 $520,000; FY 94 $620,000; FY 95 $650,000; FY 96 $601,699; FY 97 $601,699; FY 98 $728,100; FY 99 $700,000; FY 00 $525,000; FY 01 $353,336; FY 02 $353,336; FY 03 $353,336

Abstract: To achieve systems change, DakotaLink works with consumers, state and private agencies, and organizations providing services to, or advocating for, people with disabilities to identify and eliminate barriers to individuals receiving AT devices or services in a timely manner. The project uses demonstration centers, outreach coordinators, rehabilitation technicians, and training programs as a catalyst to: (1) reach the most underserved areas; (2) provide advocacy training for people with disabilities and their representatives; and (3) provide information support to all individuals regarding access to, provision of, and funding for assistive technology devices and services. DakotaLink continues to use a Native American Outreach Coordinator to reach specifically that underserved population.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Tennessee

Tennessee Technology Access Project (TTAP)

TTAP
Tennessee Department of Human Services
Department of Rehabilitation Services
Citizen’s Plaza, 11th Floor
400 Deadrick Street
Nashville, TN 37248
tn.ttap@state.tn.us
www.state.tn.us/humanserv/ttap_index.htm

Principal Investigator: Kevin R. Wright, Project Director
Public Contact: 800/732-5059; 615/532-3122 (V/TTY); Fax: 615/532-4685

Project Number: H224A010002
Start Date: July 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $550,000; FY 91 $553,675; FY 92 $553,675; FY 93 $640,800; FY 94 $665,000; FY 95 $665,000; FY 96 $615,584; FY 97 $653,584; FY 01 $326,792; FY 02 $326,792; FY 03 $326,792

Abstract: This project’s mission is to maintain a statewide program of technology-related assistance that is timely, comprehensive, and consumer-driven to ensure that all Tennesseans with disabilities have the information, services, and devices they need to make choices about where and how they spend their time as independently as possible. TTAP and its five regional assistive technology centers, located in Jackson, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Memphis, and Nashville, work daily toward that mission by providing public awareness, evaluation, minority outreach, and advocacy services to individuals, families, businesses, and government.
Texas Technology Access Project

University of Texas at Austin
Texas Center for Disability Studies
4030 West Braker Lane
Building 1, Suite 180
Austin, TX 78759
johnz@utxvms.cc.utexas.edu
techaccess.edb.utexas.edu

Principal Investigator: Susanne Elrod, Project Director
Public Contact: John Moore, 800/828-7839 (V/TTY, in state only); 512/471-7621 (V); 512/471-1844 (TTY); Fax: 512/471-7549

Project Number: H224A20012
Start Date: August 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $550,000; FY 93 $550,000; FY 94 $550,000; FY 95 $850,000; FY 96 $786,837; FY 97 $824,837; FY 98 $1,167,518; FY 99 $1,146,080; FY 00 $859,566; FY 01 $573,044; FY 02 $573,044; FY 03 $573,044

Abstract: This project promotes increased access to assistive and telecommunication technology through technical assistance and training, information and public awareness activities, and coordination with public agencies and policy makers.
U.S. Virgin Islands Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities (TRAID)

University of the Virgin Islands  
Virgin Islands Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities  
2 John Brewers Bay  
St. Thomas, USVI 00801-0990  
sgrant@uvi.edu; wevans@uvi.edu  
www.uvi.edu/pub-relations/resource.htm

Principal Investigator: Yegin Habtes, 340/693-1323  
Public Contact: Charlene Grant; Wanda Evans, 340/693-1188 (Grant); 340/692-1919 (Evans); Fax: 340/693-1325

Project Number: H224A50005  
Start Date: October 1, 1995  
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 95 $150,000; FY 96 $150,000; FY 97 $150,000; FY 98 $150,000; FY 99 $105,000; FY 00 $105,000; FY 01 $105,000; FY 02 $105,000; FY 03 $105,000  
Other funding: FY 95 $6,400

Abstract: The Virgin Islands project disseminates necessary information on assistive technologies for people with disabilities and provides a venue for device demonstration through the establishment of two resource centers, on the islands of St. Thomas and St. Croix. The project is also initiating an AT loan library.
State Technology Assistance Projects
Utah

Utah Assistive Technology Program (UATP)

Utah State University
Center for Persons with Disabilities
6855 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322-6855
uatp@cc.usu.edu
www.uatpat.org

Principal Investigator: Martin E. Blair, Program Director, 435/797-3886
Public Contact: 435/797-3824 (V); Fax: 435/797-2355

Project Number: H224A90051
Start Date: November 1, 1989
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen

NIDRR Funding: FY 89 $505,445; FY 90 $507,720; FY 91 $559,720; FY 92 $696,224; FY 93 $788,526; FY 94 $800,000; FY 95 $800,000; FY 96 $740,560; FY 97 $555,414; FY 98 $370,276; FY 99 $370,276; FY 00 $370,276; FY 01 $370,276; FY 02 $370,276; FY 03 $370,276

Abstract: The Utah Assistive Technology Program (UATP) provides expertise, resources, and a structure to enhance and expand AT services provided by private and public agencies in Utah. This occurs through professional training, device demonstration, policy monitoring and development, interagency coordination, information dissemination, the identification and removal of barriers with consumer groups, and expanding state resources. Primary components of UATP include: (1) the Utah Center for Assistive Technology, a statewide service hub; (2) Assistive Technology Access Centers located in rural centers for independent living; (3) outreach to underrepresented populations with specific emphasis on those of Hispanic and Native American descent; (4) the Utah Assistive Technology Foundation providing zero-interest loans to consumers; (5) the Assistive Technology Council, made up of state service agency representatives (usually the directors) and consumers that take appropriate action to remove barriers; and (6) consumer technical services and training provided by the Assistive Technology Development and Fabrication Laboratory at Utah State University. UATP is currently directing initiatives to: (a) expand the Utah Relay System and telephone equipment distribution system; (b) ensure accessible elections (both physical and procedural access); (c) improve access of One Stop Centers (both facility and program access); and, (d) develop and provide ongoing, competency-based training to service providers and families in the early intervention and adult services systems.
Vermont Assistive Technology Project

Vermont Department of Aging and Disabilities
103 South Main Street, Weeks Building
Waterbury, VT 05671-2305
betsy@dad.state.vt.us
www.dad.state.vt.us/atp

Principal Investigator: Julie Tucker, Project Director
Public Contact: 800/750-6355 (V/TTY, in state only); 802/241-2620 (V/TTY); Fax: 802/241-2174

Project Number: H224A00023
Start Date: July 1, 1990
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 90 $553,048; FY 91 $560,577; FY 92 $581,417; FY 93 $705,000; FY 94 $700,000; FY 95 $700,000; FY 96 $647,983; FY 97 $685,983; FY 98 $514,487; FY 99 $342,991; FY 00 $342,992; FY 01 $342,992; FY 02 $342,992; FY 03 $342,992
Other funding: FY 03 $92,000 (Medicaid Infrastructure Grant)

Abstract: The Vermont Assistive Technology Project has regional centers for demonstration, trial, and technical support for all types of assistive technology, including computer and augmentative communication equipment, as well as information and referral. The project affects change in policies and procedures of public and private agencies by providing AT expertise on boards and committees such as the Developmental Services Communication Task Force, ADA Coalition, Telephone Equipment Distribution Program, etc. The Project advocates for visitable homes by educating consumers about Vermont’s housing accessibility laws, which the Project was instrumental in passing. The Project supports an annual AT institute for educators and presents many workshops in settings such as the Traumatic Brain Injury Conference to raise awareness and institute AT knowledge and expertise into existing public and private agencies. The Project also supports an AT Equipment Revolving Loan Fund Program through a community credit union.
Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)
8004 Franklin Farms Drive
P.O. Box K-300
Richmond, VA 23288-0300
knorrkh@drs.state.va.us
www.vats.org

**Principal Investigator:** Kenneth Knorr, Project Director  
**Public Contact:** 800/552-5019 (V/TTY); 804/662-9990 (V/TTY); Fax: 804/662-9478

**Project Number:** H224A00009  
**Start Date:** June 1, 1990  
**NIDRR Officer:** Carol Cohen

**NIDRR Funding:** FY 90 $550,000; FY 91 $562,500; FY 92 $578,883; FY 93 $685,331; FY 94 $663,467; FY 95 $745,000; FY 96 $689,639; FY 97 $727,639; FY 98 $545,729; FY 99 $363,820; FY 00 $363,820; FY 01 $363,820; FY 02 $363,820; FY 03 $363,820

**Abstract:** The Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) provides coordination at two levels: state policy, through the mechanism of interagency agreements and project management; and at the local and regional level, through three AT regional sites. Activities include information and referral services, technical assistance, training materials and seminars, and policy development. The project has produced a textbook, *Assistive Technology: A Resource for School, Work, and Community* (Brookes Publishing) and a *National Study of Loan Financing Programs*. This project participates in the Mid Atlantic DBTACs Accessible Information Technology in Education program.
Washington Assistive Technology Alliance (WATA)

University of Washington
Center for Technology and Disability Studies (CTDS)
Box 357920
Seattle, WA 98195-7920
uwat@u.washington.edu
wata.org

Principal Investigator: Kurt Johnson, PhD, 206/685-4181
Public Contact: Debbie Cook, Project Director, 800/841-8345 (V/TTY, in state only); 206/685-4181 (V); 206/616-1396 (TTY); Fax: 206/543-4779

Project Number: H224A020001
Start Date: October 1, 2002
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 02 $308,072; FY 03 $359,105
Abstract: WATA promotes the use of assistive technology devices and services for people with disabilities, their families, caregivers, employers, teachers, and health care and social service providers in Washington State. Activities for this project include information, consultation, and training related to selection of technology devices, services, and funding; legal advice and advocacy; policy development; legislative action; technical consultation and training; publications; and online resources. WATA is a consumer advocacy network that includes the University of Washington Center for Technology and Disability Studies, and the AT Resource Center at Easter Seal Society in Spokane. The project is administered by the University to Washington with guidance from the Consumer Majority Advisory Board.
State Technology Assistance Projects
West Virginia

West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS)

West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities
Airport Research and Office Park
955 Hartman Run Road
Morgantown, WV 26505
jcstewart@hsc.wvu.edu
TBA

Principal Investigator: Janice A. Holland, 304/766-4694 (V)
Public Contact: Jack Stewart, Project Manager, 800/841-8436 (V/TTY, in state only); 304/293-4692 (V/TTY); Fax: 304/293-7294

Project Number: H224A20011
Start Date: July 1, 1992
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 92 $530,000; FY 93 $530,000; FY 94 $620,000; FY 95 $620,000; FY 96 $573,928; FY 97 $611,928; FY 98 $716,068; FY 99 $716,068; FY 00 $520,980; FY 01 $347,320; FY 02 $347,320; FY 03 $347,320

Abstract: The WVATS project seeks to improve the availability of AT by improving existing AT services, facilitating coordination of AT service-delivery programs, identifying and remediating gaps in services, and promoting, developing, and/or delivering new services. These systemic changes are carried out in response to and consonant with consumer advice, direction, and consent. The West Virginia project has a board composed primarily of consumers and their families. State organizations and agencies provide guidance, structure, and input. WVATS uses a “core” system directed by a board, overseen by the Division of Rehabilitation Services, and managed on a day-to-day basis by the Center for Excellence in Disability at West Virginia University. WVATS supports program staff, an information and referral system with a toll-free number, two resource centers, a statewide awareness campaign, training programs, and seven regional technology-related assistance teams.
**State Technology Assistance Projects**

**Wisconsin**

**WisTech**

Wisconsin Assistive Technology Program  
Division of Supportive Living  
1 West Wilson Street, Room 450  
P.O. Box 7851  
Madison, WI 53707-7851  
abbeysu@dhfs.state.wi.us  
www.wistech.state.wi.us

**Principal Investigator:** Susan Abbey, Project Director, 608/266-1794  
**Public Contact:** 608/266-0421 (V/TTY) (until 2/27/2004); 608/266-8905 (V/TTY) (after 2/27/2004); 608/267-9880 (TTY); Fax: 608/267-3203

**Project Number:** H224A00013  
**Start Date:** May 1, 1990  
**NIDRR Officer:** Carol Cohen  
**NIDRR Funding:** FY 90 $572,871; FY 91 $575,000; FY 92 $590,313; FY 93 $685,488; FY 94 $730,000; FY 95 $730,000; FY 96 $675,754; FY 97 $713,754; FY 98 $535,315; FY 99 $356,877; FY 00 $356,877; FY 01 $356,877; FY 02 $356,877; FY 03 $356,877

**Abstract:** WisTech provides direct consumer services by contracting with eight Wisconsin Centers for Independent Living, the Wisconsin Coalition for Advocacy (a Protection and Advocacy agency), and AgrAbility. Consumer-direct services include AT assessments, maintenance of equipment loan closets, assistance with locating funding for AT, among other services. WisTech incorporates consumer control and involvement by working with the WisTech Advisory Board, comprised of at least 51 percent consumers or parents, and service providers.
Wyoming’s New Options in Technology (WYNOT)

University of Wyoming
Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND)
University of Wyoming
Laramie, WY 82071-4298
wynot.uw@uwyo.edu
wind.uwyo.edu/wynot

Principal Investigator: Keith Miller, PhD, 307/766-2761 (V)
Public Contact: 800/861-4312 (V/TTY, in state only); 307/766-2051 (V/TTY); Fax: 307/721-2084

Project Number: H224A60002
Start Date: October 1, 1993
NIDRR Officer: Carol Cohen
NIDRR Funding: FY 94 $500,000; FY 95 $500,000; FY 96 $500,000; FY 97 $500,000; FY 98 $620,502; FY 99 $599,074; FY 00 $599,074; FY 01 $449,306; FY 02 $336,979; FY 03 $299,537
Abstract: The mission of WYNOT is to build statewide capacity for universal access to assistive technology for all of Wyoming and to establish a self-sustaining system that will continue to meet the state’s need for assistive technology after Federal funding for WYNOT has ended. In pursuing this mission, WYNOT provides training and technical assistance to statewide and community-based organizations to enhance their capacity to meet the assistive technology needs of individuals with disabilities. WYNOT also provides technical assistance and training for consumers. The project operates a demonstration center, loan bank, information and referral service, and outreach services.
Subject Index
No subject index was created for this version of the NIDRR Program Directory. The Directory remains in database format at www.naric.com/search/pd. This format is considerably more effective for subject-oriented organization of the material in the Directory.

For assistance in searching the Program Directory database, contact the staff at NARIC at 800/346-2742 or email jchaiken@heitechservices.com
Grantees
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DePaul University       H133G030165  Chicago, IL  1-16
Dept. of Human Resources H224A00037  Carson City, NV  9-59
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  H224A30014  Pago Pago, American Samoa  9-31
Duke University         H133A010401  Durham, NC  3-37
Duke University         H133E030018  Durham, NC  3-22
Duke University         H133E980026  Durham, NC  3-21
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Elana E. Rock, EdD      H133F030041  Baltimore, MD  8-7
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Eugene Research Institute H133G010162  Eugene, OR  3-64
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Florida Department of Education:
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  H224C030018  Tallahassee, FL  9-3
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Georgia Department of Labor H224A10001  Atlanta, GA  9-40
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Heidi Silver-Pacuilla    H133F020025  Tucson, AZ  8-11
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Henter Math, LLC         H133S030198  St. Petersburg, FL  3-75
Howard University       H133A990020  Washington, DC  4-13
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Indiana University      H133G030106  Indianapolis, IN  4-24
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Institute for Community Inclusion H133B980037  Boston, MA  1-4
Institute for Disabilities Research and Training H133S030009  Silver Spring, MD  3-85
The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (TIRR) H133A011501  Houston, TX  6-12
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