

Guam Assistive Technology and Alternative Financing Programs

Five-Year Impact Report

October 1, 2008-September 30, 2013



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Introduction

The Guam System for Assistive Technology, better known as GSAT, was established in 1995 by the University of Guam's Affiliated Program (UAP). The UAP, now called the Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service or Guam CEDDERS, received a formula grant from the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration to establish a statewide comprehensive and consumer-responsive program of technology-related assistance. Authorized under Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 and reauthorized in 2004, GSAT has a mission to improve the island's provision of assistive technology (AT) with specific goals to increase access and acquisition of AT.

The AT Act requires that GSAT carry out state level and state leadership activities. State level activities include state financing activities, device reutilization programs, device loan programs, and device demonstration programs. State leadership activities include training and technical assistance, public awareness and information and assistance activities, and coordination and collaboration. Moreover, GSAT is required to serve individuals of all ages with all types of disabilities in all environments. GSAT also provides service to family members, service providers, educators, health and rehabilitation professionals, vendors, and other interested parties. Finally, GSAT is required to provide data on the required activities on an annual basis. This brief will provide an overview of GSAT's program data over the last five years.

What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

AT is any item, piece of equipment, or system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.
~AT Act of 1998 as amended.

GSAT's Device Demonstration Program

At GSAT's demonstration center, individuals and small groups have the opportunity to compare the features and benefits of a particular AT device or category of devices. Through device demonstrations, individuals can make informed decisions about a device before committing to a purchase. Individuals may also opt to borrow the device, through its short term loan program. During the last five years, GSAT conducted a total of 239 device demonstrations for 475 individuals. As noted in Table 1, the majority of devices demonstrated fell under the vision category. Almost half of the participants who received device demonstrations were individuals with disabilities as indicated in Table 2. Following these device demonstrations, GSAT made 85 referrals to a funding source, 66 referrals to service providers, and 107 referrals to vendors.

Table 1: Number of Device Demonstrations by Device Type

Device Type	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	5 year TOTAL
Vision	6	11	53	9	18	97
Hearing	1	5	1	1	2	10
Speech Communication	4	4	8	1	1	18
Learning, Cognition, and Developmental	10	19	13	11	9	62
Mobility, Seating, and Positioning	0	1	0	0	1	2
Daily Living	6	2	2	3	3	16
Computers and Related	1	1	2	8	13	25
Recreation, Sports, and Leisure	1	0	6	0	2	9
Total	29	43	85	33	49	239

Table 2: Number of Individuals Who Participated in Device Demonstrations

Type of Participant	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	5 year TOTAL
Individuals with Disabilities	55	36	66	32	36	225
Family Members, Guardians, and Authorized Representatives	16	31	40	8	8	103
Representatives of Education	59	2	6	6	7	80
Representatives of Employment	9	2	0	1	1	13
Representatives of Health, Allied Health, and Rehabilitation	3	3	1	5	1	13
Representatives of Community Living	15	20	0	0	1	36
Representatives of Technology	3	2	0	0	0	5
Total	160	96	113	52	54	475



AT Success Story

Vedalema "Vel" Valencia is a married mother of three children who attends college and runs her own business. While in elementary school, at the age of 8 or 9, she was diagnosed with a learning disability, which has made running her business and getting a college degree a struggle. Last year she attended a workshop where she first heard of GSAT and the services the program provides. She visited the GSAT office to get more information, which resulted in a device demonstration of three different AT devices and then a 30-day device loan of the Livescribe Smartpen. Vel received her own Livescribe Smartpen through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation which she uses during business meetings, college classes, and workshops. This device has helped her overcome the learning challenges she experiences.

GSAT's Device Loan Program

GSAT's short term device loan program allows island residents to borrow AT devices for a period of 30 days to experience the benefits of the device in natural environments such as home, work, school, and in the community. The purpose of a device loan may be to assist in decision-making; to serve as a loaner while the consumer is waiting for funding or for his or her personal device to be repaired; to provide an accommodation on a short term basis; and/or to conduct training, self-education or other professional development activities. Typically, island residents who take out device loans are individuals with disabilities or professionals who provide services to individuals with disabilities. GSAT also extends loans to students enrolled in education classes for use in presentations. Schools may also borrow devices from GSAT for assessment purposes or for student use while they await procurement. In the last five years, the majority of device loans have helped to assist individuals in the decision making process as seen in Table 3. Additionally, as noted in Table 4, the majority of the borrowers have been from the field of education. GSAT loans the following device types: vision; hearing; speech communication; learning, cognition, and developmental; mobility, seating, and positioning; daily living; environmental adaptations; computers and related; and recreation, sports, and leisure.

Table 3: Short Term Device Loans by Purpose

Purpose	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	5 year Total
Assist in decision-making (device trial or evaluation)	32	39	39	43	24	177
Serve as loaner during device repair or while waiting for funding	1	5	4	3	1	14
Provide an accommodation on a short-term basis	17	17	21	27	25	107
Conduct training, self-education or other professional development activity	54	19	9	7	5	94
Total	104	80	73	80	55	392

Table 4: Device Loans by Borrower

Type of Borrower	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	5 year Total
Individuals with Disabilities	21	20	23	34	16	114
Family Members, Guardians, and Authorized Representatives	16	16	20	17	17	86
Representatives of Education	64	41	27	24	9	165
Representatives of Employment	0	2	0	1	0	3
Representatives of Health, Allied Health, and Rehabilitation	0	1	0	2	6	9
Representatives of Community Living	3	0	3	2	7	15
Representatives of Technology	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	104	80	73	80	55	392



AT Success Story

When Geraldine Unpingco's family built their home, they didn't think twice about the staircase leading to their front door. However, when they took in her elderly mother who uses a wheelchair for mobility, that staircase posed a great barrier. For some time, Geraldine and her family members would carry her mother up and down the stairs. This was taking a toll on them and was a compromising method for her mother, too. The Unpingco family learned about GSAT and contacted the program to look for a solution to their dilemma. Carla Torres, AT Specialist, offered the Stair Trac as a solution. The Garaventa Stair Trac is a portable wheelchair lift that attaches under most standard wheelchairs. It allows an attendant to easily move a person in a wheelchair up and down stairways with the touch of a button. With it being an immediately available access solution, the Unpingcos were very grateful to borrow the device. This device loan gave them the chance to see how effective it would be for them and to serve as a short-term accommodation as they looked for a permanent solution.

GSAT's Device Reutilization Program

Assistive technology reutilization involves transferring a used device from someone who no longer needs it to someone who does. Device reutilization can be divided into two general categories: device exchange and device reassignment which includes refurbishment, repair, and open-ended loans. Device exchange is facilitated through the GSAT website. Guam's Recycling and Equipment Exchange Service, better known as GREES, is an online service wherein Guam residents may post AT devices they wish to sell, donate or trade. GSAT accepts donations of working AT devices in good condition into its loan library. These devices may be provided to individuals in need on an open-ended loan basis. As the term suggests, recipients of open-ended loans may keep the devices for as long as they need them at no cost. In Table 5 below, we see that open ended loans were the most common reutilization activity. Over the last 5 years, GSAT's open-ended loan program resulted in \$21,365 in cost savings to consumers.

Table 5: Recipients of Reutilized Devices by Activity

Activity	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	5 year TOTAL
Device Exchange	0	3	0	0	0	3
Recycling / Refurbishment / Repair	7	13	6	4	4	34
Open-ended Loans	13	16	7	65	4	105
Total	20	32	13	69	8	142

Table 6: Costs Savings to Consumers through Open-ended Loans

	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	5 year TOTAL
Number of Device Recipients	13	16	7	65	4	105
Total Savings to Recipients	\$17,110	\$1,449	\$511	\$2,164	\$131	\$21,365



AT Success Story

In 2011, Francis Dadulfaza contacted GSAT for help. His power wheelchair was inoperable, and he needed to borrow a power chair to maintain his independence. Because Francis isn't able to propel himself, a standard wheelchair would not provide him the ability to continue to go to classes, report to work, or catch public transit without having a full time attendant. He was waiting for vocational rehabilitation to either repair or replace his chair, but there was no telling when this would get done. Frankly, Francis didn't have time. A power wheelchair was recouped from a GOAL-AT loan after the borrower had passed away and provided to Francis as an open-ended loan. Francis used the chair from November 2011 through January 2013. Through reutilization, Francis was able to maintain his independence and continue his life activities at no cost to him.

State Financing through GSAT

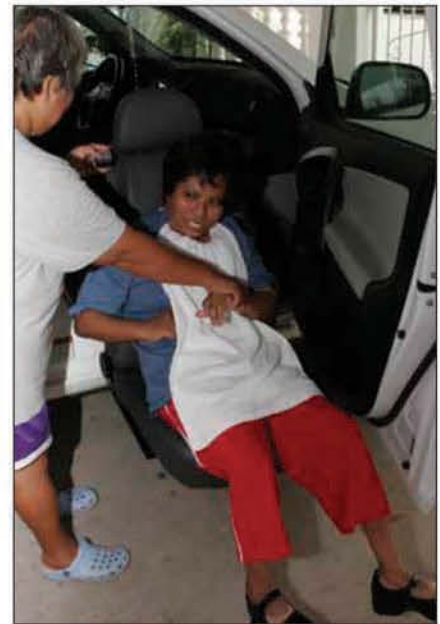


State financing activities assist individuals with disabilities to attain AT devices and services. Because AT Act funds are not authorized for the direct purchase of AT and AT related services for consumers, the Guam Options for Alternative Loans-Assistive Technology Program (GOAL-AT) is a funding source GSAT can offer its clients. GOAL-AT is a low-interest financial loan program that can be used to pay for assistive technology devices and

Table 7: Number of GOAL-AT Applications

2009-2013 Total	
Approved-loan Made	34
Approved-loan not Made	2
Denied	4
Total	40

services. GSAT carries out the day-to-day operation of the GOAL-AT Program which is administered by the Pacific Islands Microcredit Institute. Besides AT devices and services, GOAL-AT loans can be used to pay for home modifications and accessible vehicles. Over the last five years, GOAL-AT has loaned a total of \$136,543.00. (Table 8)



In January 2010, GOAL-AT financed a new Toyota Rav4 equipped with a Bruno chair lift and wheelchair hoist for Catherine Pananganan, seated, and Lilia Ballon, Catherine's aunt and caregiver.

Table 8: Types and Dollar Amounts of Assistive Technology Financed

Type of AT	FY 2009		FY 2010		FY 2011		FY 2012		FY 2013	
	Number of Devices Financed	Dollar Value	Number of Devices Financed	Dollar Value	Number of Devices Financed	Dollar Value	Number of Devices Financed	Dollar Value	Number of Devices Financed	Dollar Value
Vision	5	\$1,669.00	1	\$1,270.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Hearing	4	\$6,252.00	3	\$8,660.00	2	\$4,800.00	4	\$8,935.00	1	\$3,000.00
Speech Communication	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Learning, Cognition, and Developmental	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	1	\$2,835.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Mobility, Seating, and Positioning	1	\$895.00	1	\$1,861.00	1	\$501.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Daily Living	0	\$0.00	1	\$315.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	1	\$995.00
Vehicle Modification and Transportation	1	\$2,899.00	2	\$33,236.00	2	\$13,500.00	1	\$25,000.00	0	\$0.00
Computers and Related	3	\$1,974.00	3	\$8,004.00	3	\$6,415.00	1	\$2,011.00	2	\$1,516.00
Total	14	\$13,689.00	11	\$53,346.00	9	\$28,051.00	6	\$35,946.00	4	\$5,511.00

Note: Multiple devices could be purchased within a single loan.

Training

GSAT holds training activities that are instructional events, usually planned in advance for a specific purpose or audience. Classes, workshops, and presentations that have a goal of increasing skills, knowledge, and competency, as opposed to training intended only to increase general awareness of AT, are examples. GSAT has trained 1,753 participants over the last five years.



Every year, GSAT holds an Assistive Technology Conference for over 200 participants. This photo was taken at the 2013 conference, "The Power of Innovative Technology: Helping Individuals with Disabilities Live Life."

Public Awareness and Information and Assistance

GSAT conducts a variety of public awareness activities designed to reach large numbers of people. This outreach creates a general awareness of AT within the community. Activities include radio talk shows, public service announcements, community outreach events and forums, newspaper and newsletter articles, brochures, and internet outreach. Each year, GSAT conducts an Assistive Technology Fair which is the program's largest outreach event annually. Table 9 provides an estimate of the number of individuals reached through public awareness activities.



Table 9: Estimated Number of Individuals Reached by Activities

Activity Type	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Total
Newsletters	600	5,616	4,000	4,000	17,568	31,784
Other Print Materials	208	499	0	911	463	2,081
Listserves/ Blogs/ Social Media	0	100	150	800	1,000	2,050
Internet Information	6,175	10,911	5,657	15,753	12,000	50,496
Other Electronic Media	0	0	0	178	0	178
PSA/ Radio/ TV/ Other Media	22,000	140,000	656,000	300,000	90,000	1,208,000
Presentations/ Expos/ Conferences	462	262	772	499	302	2,297
Total	29,445	157,388	666,579	322,141	121,333	1,296,886



GSAT receives calls and email messages on a daily basis from island residents in search of information and often connects them to other programs. These activities are categorized as information and assistance activities. The type of information sought is usually around assistive technology devices, services, and funding. In addition, GSAT receives inquiries related to Special Education, the American with Disabilities Act, and other disability related topics. Over the course of the last five years, GSAT has responded to nearly 1,000 inquiries.

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