

I Linå' lå-ta (Our Life)

A Newsletter For Individuals With Disabilities



Consumer Highlight: Growing A Business

Returning to work after an injury resulting in a significant disability is a daunting task. Where does one go when you can no longer move cargo for the airline industry? For Bill Fuppul, it was a long and slow process of rehabilitation and seeking alternatives.

In the rehab process, too many counselors looked at Bill's disability; an accident had resulted in paraplegia and limited his upper body mobility. "Hmmm," mused one counselor, "how about training to be a phone operator?"

Others cautioned Bill about aiming at dead end jobs and encouraged him to seek higher ability options. Customer service representative positions were explored, then a long social work degree program... in the meantime, Bill needed to support his wife, two teenaged daughters, and himself, and no one was knocking on the door with a job offer. "I just want to work," he said.

It was then that Bill explored Assistive Technology and decided to access the Guam Options for Alternative Loans for Assistive Technology (GOAL-AT) Project to obtain a laptop computer and initiate internet service. Encouraged by the potential of telework, that is, working from home with the use of assistive technology and looking at his strengths and special skills, Bill took on a few small translation jobs through the university network of the Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (Guam CEDDERS) and the University of Guam Small Business Development Center (SBDC), translating materials from English to his native Chuukese language. Bill had finally moved beyond the mobility limitations of his disability.

When a Request for Proposal for translation services was announced by the Guam Public School System, Bill sought technical assistance from Guam CEDDERS to facilitate his proposal. Bill applied for a business license, worked closely with Guam CEDDERS professional staff, and developed and subsequently submitted a proposal for translation services into two languages, Chuukese and Pohnpeian.

Next, Bill needed software to prepare translated documents. A call to his Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselor resulted in the acquisition of software for his new business, just in time to prepare his Cost Proposal after being selected as the most qualified offeror. Other Assistive Technology supports planned in Bill's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) will follow, which includes a powered wheelchair to enable him to have independent mobility to further maximize his abilities.

Bill is off to a good start towards his business's first big job, a 30-page translation for GPSS. Grateful for this opportunity, he shares that, "I'm very happy about my new line of work."

Through supports from GUAM CEDDERS, the GOAL-AT loan program, VR, and the SBDC, but most of all, personal initiative, persistence, and hard work, Bill has entered the ranks of the self-employed. Congratulations, Bill!



Bill Fuppul, professional translator, "teleworks" from home.

Coming on March 30: GSAT's New Website!

<http://www.gsatcedders.org>

Transit Talk: New Perks & Policies



A new perk ready for March: Ticket and fare pass sales will be expanded to include the Treasurer's window at the Department of Administration in Hagåtña beginning the month of March

2009. This is a short walk from the Chamorro Village hub or a quick one way trip on Blue Line 2. Ticket and pass sales will continue at Kloppenburg Enterprises, Inc. (KEI) headquarters. The past practice of drivers selling passes and tickets to passengers will cease since operators are not expected to handle cash; however, the new location will provide new convenience and hopefully will expand to other Treasurer of Guam service locations in the near future.

Policy: Bill 37 (now on the Governor's desk), an act to re-establish the Guam Regional Transit Authority (GRTA), received a lot of good input during a Public Hearing on February 6. For the most part, the Committee on Utilities, Transportation, Public Works and Veteran's Affairs responded positively to public input; however, the marked up bill as it left the Legislature proposes a governing Board that **DOES NOT GUARANTEE AN ADA (Americans with Disabilities) RIDER** as a Board member. The proposed seven member board would include three members appointed by the Governor, two members of the Mayor's Council, and two riders, one being a senior citizen.

A growing number of riders are knowledgeable of ADA transit issues and have become good advocates for the

needs of riders. Some of you have experienced that your voice is stronger than representative voices. Do you think ADA riders should be included in the broader representation on the GRTA Board to provide direct input on rider needs? If so, **IMMEDIATELY** contact Shannon Taitano Lujan at Governor's Office at **472-8931 through 6** about your concerns.

In regards to daily operations, there is a **change in the transit policy** of dispatch canceling all of your scheduled rides when you miss the first pick-up of the day. The question arose...."What happens if you still need those rides?" You can keep them by calling the dispatcher and tell them you need all remaining scheduled trips. Do this within an hour of the missed ride and you keep your scheduled trips for the rest of the day. But remember to make the call, dispatchers can't read your mind!

Rules and Regulations: Several issues ago, we talked about paratransit "**no shows**"....a situation where you schedule a ride and miss the pick up time and you have not cancelled the ride one (1) hour before. Too many **no shows** impact other riders, delay their rides, and make the schedule inefficient. At approximately \$53.00 an hour, it costs a lot of money to drive to a pick-up point and leave with no passenger. To help manage this problem and

See **Transit Talk**. Page 5



Transit riders relax in the shade while waiting for their connections at the Chamorro Village in Hagåtña.

NEW No Show Notice

PARATRANSIT NOTICE

Driver Name: _____

Your Para Transit Bus arrived
at _____ on _____
TIME DATE
for your scheduled pickup but found that:

- ☐ No one was home.
- ☐ You were not ready to leave within a ten (10) minute window as required.
- ☐ You elected not to go and failed to give one (1) hour prior notice.
- ☐ Other: _____

**Repeated "No Shows" may
result in temporary
suspension of service.**

**For information call:
475-4686/20/16**

BACK SIDE OF NOTICE

PARA TRANSIT:

Cancellation Policy:

If you must cancel a trip, call the Dispatcher at least one (1) hour prior to your scheduled pick up time. If the trip is not canceled at least one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time, the Para Transit cardholder will be considered a "No Show."

Be responsible and remember to cancel unneeded scheduled trips with the dispatcher. Other riders depend on YOU to make the service work. Riders who have repeated "No Shows" may be subject to suspension of future ParaTransit service.

Suggestion: Make sure your address (house number) is clearly visible from the street. Call the dispatcher 30 minutes prior to pick up time. This gives the dispatcher time to coordinate with the Transit Driver to have adequate time to locate your address.

Joseph C. Manibusan
Department of Administration
Deputy Director

Cut Below Line for No Show Report

educate riders, the Public Transportation Division has created a new "sign" which helps document the missed ride and reminds you of the steps needed to avoid being counted as a *no show*. The new "door sign reminders" should be out for the month of March. Don't let too many of these accumulate on your door! Too many no shows on your part can lead to a temporary suspension of service, and no one wants to lose that privilege!

Drivers have indicated that **too many packages** are becoming a problem. Riders are reminded that bundles and personal articles that can be stored under your seat or on your lap without interfering with the comfort of other passengers are allowed. You are not permitted to pay for another seat or place excess packages in the wheelchair securement area; those areas are reserved for the seating of passengers, not parcels. In addition, unsecured/unattended bundles can become a safety hazard during an emergency. Operators shall deny entry if you have too many bundles.

So, how do you **handle your shopping needs?** If you have more packages than you can manage in your seating space, you may bring a Personal Care Attendant (PCA), providing you qualify, or a fare paying companion to assist you, giving you two (2) seating spaces. Otherwise, you will need to use another means of transportation to get yourself and your packages home. The point is, your ride is shared and others may need the space. Don't expect to carry 100 lbs of rice and all of your laundry on the bus in one trip! Smaller is better.

14th Annual GSAT Assistive Technology Fair

**"In the World, a Person;
In a Person, a World:"**

A.T. UNLOCKS it ALL!



**Guam Premier Outlets
Saturday, March 28, 2009
10am - 3pm**

Featuring:

- **Assistive Technology Vendors
& Service Providers**
- **Prizes & Giveaways**



For reasonable accommodations, please call
GSAT at least 72 hours prior to the event at
735-2490 (V), 735-2491 (TTD, TTY), 734-8378 (Fax)



This event is supported by Grant No.: H221A080053 from the Rehabilitation Services Administration, U.S. Department of Education.
The University of Guam is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

OPENING DOORS: “Assistive Technology Unlocks It All!”

By C. P. Cruz



C. P. Cruz

It took me a long time to understand and appreciate the work of visual artist, Monet. The meaning of this 19th century impressionist's work was not to portray the objects of nature in his paintings, but rather the space between the objects. What he expressed through his art is the space through which light travels.

I feel akin to him in the way in which I travel through these same spaces. To borrow the words of UOG President Robert A. Underwood, assistive technology (AT) allows me to “move and groove through time and space.”

In the days of our ancestors, thoughts and meaning were exchanged through space by looks, words, movement, placement and gesture. Objects of meaning, including words, allowed us to transcend time in that people did not have to be present in the same place and moment to exchange ideas.

Stay with me. I am going somewhere with all this.

In today's world of wireless communication and changing media of exchange, e.g., texting, instant messaging, blogging and the like, people have managed to travel through and across great spaces. Until very recently, I only looked on with great wonderment and yes, longing. Longing to participate in this great change. Longing to be just like everyone else. Longing to belong.

My inability in the past to access instantaneous text message exchanges has left me feeling a bit of the outsider, a dinosaur, out of sync with the electronic world. I had so painstakingly learned enough computer skills to access email and “surf the internet” and just when I had gotten caught up, there was something new to learn.

I guess it is because of my limited optical vision and my inability to drive that I find myself physically stranded in a singular place for periods of time. Thus, I can sit in one place for hours at a time, not by choice, but by circumstance. I am a great friend and lover of time and space. Since I cannot see past various shades of grey, I create and recreate my surrounding spaces in my mind constantly. I am a writer by nature and prone to capturing thoughts in words. Since I was fully sighted before, I miss the ease of scribbling notes on the pages of a steno notebook.

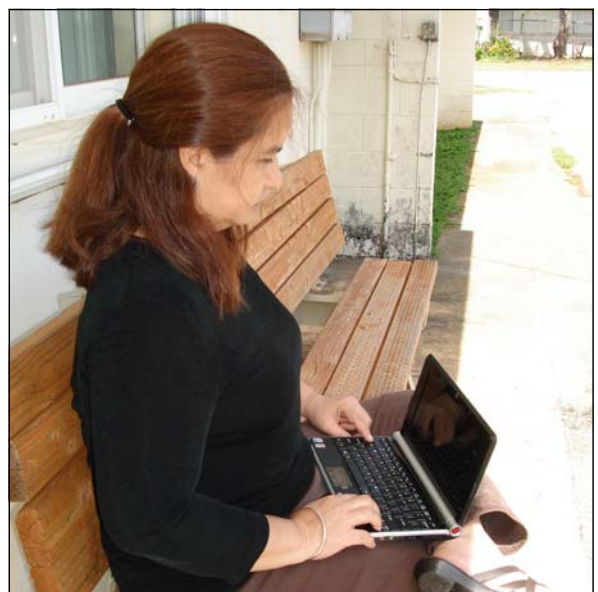
AT! AT? When is she getting to the AT? Now. Just four months ago I acquired a clunker of a laptop. It was nice, but cumbersome. It was equipped with screen reading software and a 17-inch screen which added to its bulk. It was useful but did not capture those “steno” moments for me.

It was around Christmastime that my favorite TV shopping channel kept featuring these netbooks, or mini-computers. Its 8.9 inch screen could fit in a purse they said. It was light, less than three pounds. It was designed for wireless and portable access to the internet. It had more memory than my clunker laptop. I could afford it, just four easy no-interest payments of \$124, \$10 shipping and handling, and they mailed to Guam.

Since it was a new product, I was unsure my screen reader software would work on the system. I did not want to wait months for the product to be tested by service providers. My need was great. Through the convenience of television shopping, a toll-free number, and the willingness of computer tech Andrew Tydingco of Pokilabot Computer Sales and Service (*see related story on page 5*) to work with me, I had a netbook up and running with screen reader **all within two weeks!** That is lightning speed in the world of AT for people with disabilities. I had my steno notebook again!

Now, once again, I write and I write and I write. No words, not even mine can tell you what this technology means in my life. My dreams can come true again. I can write in a moment's notice. I can press a button and in seconds, I am ready to paint the spaces around me in the way I know; with words to transcend time, to capture and express what travels in the space around and through me.

If you've tried AT before and it didn't work for you at that time, try AT again. The world keeps turning; technology changes as do we. I've got a new AT-tude on life and it has made a world of difference. Try AT again, you just might like it!



Lee Cruz checks her email using her new *netbook*. The netbook features wireless internet access in a compact laptop that conveniently fits into a medium-sized purse.

Visual Challenges Do Not Hamper Entrepreneurial Spirit

To Pokilabot and Beyond! Humor, talent, skill, compassion, honesty, and adventure are some of the words that come to mind when describing businessman, Andrew Tydingco, owner of Pokilabot Computer Sales & Services. Pokilabot can meet the needs of computer users who have low vision or are blind, as well as the general computer market.

Andrew, 37, is home grown. He is a 1991 graduate of Guam Community College's Vocational High School and is married to the former Rowena Cables. They have three children, Aaron, 13, Andee, 12, and Andrew, 10.

I Lina'la-ta: How would you describe the service and product Pokilabot provides?

Andrew Tydingco: Pokilabot Computer Sales & Service (see ad bottom right) is a locally owned company that specializes in custom computer builds, computer and laptop repairs, virus removal, data backup, data recovery, and PC maintenance. Pokilabot is also the authorized dealer for products and software for the low vision and the blind.

IL: Where do you suppose this passion you have for computer technology began and developed (in your life experience)?

AT: I was a Disc Jockey at a local nightclub; my partner was also involved with a computer company. My partner and I decided to try and branch out and open a record store in the same building as the computer store.

The owners of the computer store were showing me how music and the computer technology combined would be convenient, creative, and innovative. I began tinkering with computers and after six months of training, I was hired as a Computer Technician and still spinning my music at night.

Andrew has a keen sensitivity to the needs of individuals with disabilities since he has lived his life as a person with low vision since birth. Perhaps this is a motivator for his passion and sincerity about everything he does in life, a trait that is contagious once you meet him. The French call it a "Joie de vivre." I call it amazing.

Andrew doesn't just sell and fix computers, he makes them work in your life. Check him out for your computer needs and he will give you personalized service.

Recently interviewed by I Lina'la-ta Editor, C.P. Cruz, here's what Andrew has to say.

After twelve years with the company, I decided to go into business by myself. It was rewarding to know that I had established a good rapport with my customers. My customers were satisfied with my work and never knew that I had a disability.

IL: What is the nature of your disability?

AT: I am legally blind. I have congenital nastagmas.

IL: What are your hopes in the work of Pokilabot?

AT: To provide reliable products and services to the island. Pokilabot is determined to assist in the independence for individuals with low vision and blindness.

IL: Why the name, "Pokilabot?"

AT: I love to cook, especially barbecue with my family and friends. I love to make people laugh. My friends would laugh so hard and I would say "Welcome to POKILABOT!!! I perform on Thursdays!" And they would laugh even harder!!!



Andrew Tydingco and his wife Rowena prepare for their participation in the Annual Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT) Fair.

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Tel. No. (671) 788-3534 / (671) 929-9990



- PC Custom Builds And Upgrades
- PC & Laptop Repair
- Data Backup/Recovery
- Virus Removal
- PC Maintenance
- Authorized Dealer For Freedom Scientific Specializing In Low Vision & Blind Products

Books Without Borders

People with visual and “print disabilities” now have a roadway to electronically access the literature of the world. Bookshare.org, a project of Benetech, a company based in Palo Alto, California, provides assistance to individuals who have difficulty in reading printed materials.

The folks at Bookshare.org believe that people with print disabilities should have the same ease of access to

books and periodicals that people without disabilities enjoy. Jim Fruchterman, President of the company, recently was on Guam to share information on this service (*see box below*).






Please visit their website at www.bookshare.org or call the Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT) Center at 735-2490/91 for more information

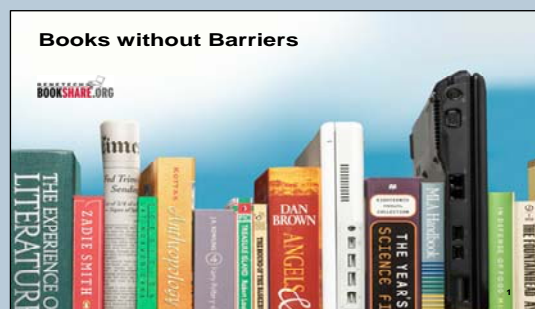
Bookshare.org

GOAL: To make the world of print accessible to people with disabilities.

MISSION: Ensure that all individuals with print disabilities have equal and timely access to print materials. People with visual impairments, physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities can look to Bookshare.org to dramatically increase the quantity and timely availability of books and newspapers in accessible formats. Further, Bookshare.org's vision encompasses new technological developments as well as new applications of widely available technologies to stretch the power of technology for increased access to content.

What Bookshare.org Has to Offer

-  Increased access to materials for students with print disabilities
-  Free for qualified students through an award from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (USDOE, OSEP)
-  Library is available online 24/7
-  Flexible membership options
-  Free assistive technology software downloads



HOW BOOKSHARE WORKS:

Bookshare™ is an online library of digital books for people with print disabilities. It operates under an [exception to U.S. copyright law](#) which allows copyrighted digital books to be made available to people with qualifying disabilities. In addition, many publishers and authors have volunteered to provide Bookshare with access to their works. By requiring individuals to register as Members and provide a Proof of Disability, Bookshare ensures that only qualified individuals use the service.

Bookshare Members download books, textbooks and newspapers in a compressed, encrypted file. They then read the material using adaptive technology, typically software that reads the book aloud (text-to-speech) and/or displays the text of the book on a computer screen, or Braille access devices, such as refreshable Braille displays.

Through an award from the USDOE, OSEP, Bookshare offers free memberships to U.S. schools and qualifying U.S. students.

Who Bookshare Serves

Bookshare provides multiple reading options for each of the communities it serves:

People with Visual Impairments

Members with visual impairments can listen to books with using a text-to-speech synthesized voice, read books in Braille, or access the material in large print. [Hard copy Braille books](#) can also be ordered. These are then created by a partner organization that specializes in producing embossed Braille books. Members with low vision can read books in an enlarged font using either a screen magnifier or by opening the book in a software program that supports increased font size, color, contrast, etc.

People with Physical Disabilities

Members can read books on a computer or a variety of portable devices, either visually and with text-to-speech as desired. Bookshare books are as easy as or easier to access than books in audio and may be controlled with an individual's single-switch or other adaptive technology.

People with Learning Disabilities

Members with severe dyslexia typically benefit from access to the full text of books in digital format, for multi-modal reading with both visual and audio (through synthetic text to speech). Many great software programs exist that provide a range of reading support specifically designed for individuals with learning disabilities, including highlighting of text as it is read aloud, changing margin, word, paragraph and line spacing, and setting custom background and print colors.



2009
TRI-AGENCY CONFERENCE

Transitions: Roles, Rules, & Realities

**A Conference for Parents of
Children with Disabilities in
Middle and High School**

8:00 am - 3:30 pm
Friday & Saturday, March 20-21, 2009
Westin Resort Guam

For more information, contact:
Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT)
Tel: 735-2490 TTY: 735-2491
Email: carla.torres@guamcedders.org



Guam Developmental Disabilities Council
Tel: 671-735-9127



University of Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental
Disabilities Education, Research, & Service
Tel: 671-735-2481



Guam Legal Services Corporation
Disability Law Center
Tel: 671-477-9811

This conference is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities, Tri-Agency: Guam Developmental Disabilities Council, Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, & Service, and Guam Legal Services Corporation.



Are You A Person with A
Disability Interested In
Setting Up a
Home-Based Business?

The Get Guam Teleworking (GGT) Program

provides affordable loans to help persons with
disabilities purchase equipment for a
home-based business.

For more information contact
Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT)
at 735-2490 or
gsat@guamcedders.org.



Guam Developmental Disabilities Council

March Events

Guam Developmental Disabilities Council
General Membership Meeting

March 11, 2009

11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Hilton Resort & Spa

**"Transitions: Roles, Rules, & Realities:
A Conference for Parents of Children with
Disabilities in Middle & High School"**

Friday & Saturday, March 20 & 21, 2009

8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Westin Resort Guam

For more information call
Kristina Perez at 735-9127



Need To Purchase an
Assistive Technology
Device?

Guam Options for Alternative Loans for Assistive Technology (GOAL-AT)

provides affordable loans to
persons with disabilities for the purchase of
assistive technology devices and services.

For more information contact
Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT)
at 735-2490 or
gsat@guamcedders.org.



I Linå'lå-ta is a quarterly publication published and funded through a Tri-agency collaborative partnership between the Guam Developmental Disabilities Council, Guam Legal Services Disability Law Center, and the University of Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, & Service (Guam CEDDERS).

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This issue of **I Linå'lå-ta** was made possible by contributions from the following individuals: C.P. Cruz, Terrie Fejarang, Connie Guerrero, Kristina Perez, Ginger Porter, & Andrew Tydingco.

Alternative formats (e.g. Braille, large print, or audio) of **I Linå'lå-ta** will be made available upon request. Please contact Margaret Johnson at 735-2477 (v), 734-6531 (TTY), or 734-5709 (fax) for more information.

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