State Assistive Technology Act Programs and AgrAbility Partnerships

Wednesday, April 24, 2019

- Marty Exline, Director – AT3 Center.
- Tammy Koger, Director – North Carolina Assistive Technology Program
- Beatriz Rodriguez, Manager – North Carolina AgrAbility Partnership Project
Basic Webinar Instructions

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Basic Webinar Instructions

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• In addition, during the Q & A period, if you have a web microphone, click the “Raise Hand” icon to indicate that you have a question. We will enable your microphone or phone connection.
Basic Webinar Instructions

- Please let me know if more than one person is viewing at your computer
- 4 quick survey questions + opportunity to share comments
- Session recorded and archived with PowerPoint files at www.agrability.org/Online-Training
- Problems: use chat window or email jonesp@purdue.edu
AgrAbility: USDA-sponsored program that assists farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural workers with disabilities.

- Partners land-grant universities with disability services organizations. Currently 20 state projects
- National AgrAbility Project: Led by Purdue’s Breaking New Ground Resource Center. Partners include:
  - Goodwill of the Finger Lakes
  - APRIL (Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living)
  - Colorado State University
  - Washington State University
- More information available at www.agrability.org
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Who Is Served by State AT Programs?

Each state is charged with serving their entire state’s population - throughout the lifespan and there are no referrals needed to receive services.

There are four “State Level Activities” that almost every state assistive technology program provides: Device Demonstration, Device Loan, Device Reuse, and State Financing.
Assistive Technology Demonstration Programs

Provides opportunities for people to learn about and become familiar with specific types of AT by comparing and contrasting the functions and features of devices through hands-on explorations.
Assistive Technology Device Loan Programs

Allows individuals to borrow devices for a limited time period to use at home, school, work, etc. Device loans allow borrowers to try out devices in their own environments.
Assistive Technology Reutilization Programs

Supports the reuse of assistive technology that is no longer needed or used by its original owner. Recipients usually obtain equipment at significantly lower cost or no cost.
State Financing Activities help individuals purchase/obtain AT through a variety of initiatives. Financial loan programs provide consumers with affordable, flexible borrowing options. Other programs provide AT directly to consumers at no cost using dollars from non-AT Act sources or save consumers money when purchasing AT.
For More Information:

For a complete copy of the current ATAct statute and additional information about the law, please visit the National Assistive Technology Act Technical Assistance and Training Center website: https://www.at3center.net/

For a list of State ATProgram Directors, visit: https://www.at3center.net/stateprogram

Or for additional questions, contact: Marty Exline Marty.exline@atap.org
NC AgrAbility Partnership And NC Assistive Technology

Beatriz Rodriguez, Manager
North Carolina AgrAbility Partnership Project

Tammy Koger, Director
North Carolina Assistive Technology Program

AgrAbility and Assistive Technology Webinar, April 24, 2019
North Carolina is gaining about 100,000 people per year.

Loss of 2,700 farms annually.

Demand for food continues to grow.

Support conservation farmland.

North Carolina Agricultural Industry contributes $87 billion annually to the state’s economy.

#1 Industry of the state.

North Carolina is home to more than 80 commodities.

More than 50,200 farms in NC.

Source: NCDA
Mission

To educate and assist farmers, ranchers, farmworkers and their family members farming with disabilities to enable them to stay actively engaged in production agriculture.

Our job is keep farmers, ranchers and farmworkers safe and healthy!
The partnership is endorsed by the National AgrAbility Project, NAP, which supports state and regional programs.

Involves Collaborative partnership between land grant universities and nonprofit disability service organizations.

Funded in October 2011

Currently 4th year of 2nd Grant

Serving 100 counties
Improve Quality of Life

Direct Services

Awareness and Advocacy

Education

Networking
Direct Services
Higher cost solutions

- Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Grants
  - Cost share programs
  - Low cost AT loans
  - USDA loans
- Community programs
  - Farmer or Rancher

Less cost items

- Student projects
- Volunteer days
- Business plan development
Summary of Benefit of the Partnership

- Assistive technology expertise
- On-site farm and assistive technology assessments
- Demonstration and short-term loan of devices
- Link to community resources and funding options for assistive technology equipment and medical/disability resources
- Create awareness and advocates for the needs of farmers with disabilities
NC Assistive Technology Program:

- Funded under the Assistive Technology Act at the federal level
- North Carolina: receives state appropriations and provided fee for service activities
  - State agency under the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Website: [https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/vocational-rehabilitation-services/north-carolina-assistive-technology-program](https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/vocational-rehabilitation-services/north-carolina-assistive-technology-program)
- Serves all 100 counties in North Carolina
- Serves individuals of all ages and abilities
  - Includes individuals with medical and/or disability related concerns
  - Family members and care givers
  - Employers and professionals
NCATP and NC AgrAbility Partnership:

• Provide assessments, **farm assessments**, training, and technical assistance
• Provide **hands-on demonstrations** of assistive technology (AT)
• Provide **short-term AT equipment loans**
• Provide AT resource **information and referral** to other programs
• Provide **awareness activities** on AT and overview of services.
• Provide advocacy and **funding resource information**
• Access to reused assistive technology devices
NCATP and NC AgrAbility Partnership:

• Provide on-site farm and home assessments
  » Report goes to NC AgrAbility Project Manager
  » Copy of the report may go the DVRS Counselor (release must be provided)
    • Recommendations center around farming and/or activities on the farm
• Provide demonstrations and short term equipment loans
• Make referrals and link to resources
  • A referral is typically made to the local DVRS office
• Follow up after assessments providing on-going information, as needed
• Work with DVRS counselor and engineer regarding AT related needs
• Set up and training of AT devices, as needed
• Provide group trainings/workshops on farming and assistive technology
NCATP and NC AgrAbility Partnership:

- **Farm and AgrAbility Related Demos and Loans:**
  - 2 week short term loan program (can be longer, if needed)
  - Device demonstrations to anyone in NC
  - Low tech equipment:
    - Ergonomic grips and handles
    - Kneelers
    - Small wagons and other small tools
  - High tech equipment:
    - Communication boards
    - Tablets/apps
    - Lift system (Access Unlimited)
NCATP and NC AgrAbility Partnership:

- **Awareness Activities:**
  - Veteran farming and assistive technology workshops
  - Farming with a disability
  - Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor training:
    - AgrAbility and Farming in NC
    - Unite office and counselor sessions
  - Peer Support Workshops/Training:
    - AT Demo Days
    - Disability rights and resources
NCATP and NC AgrAbility Partnership:

- **Resource Connection:**
  - Centers for Independent Living: Peer and advocacy
  - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)
    - Disability resources
    - Possible funding for AT related devices
  - Division of Services for the Blind (DSB)
    - Disability resources
    - Possible funding for AT related devices
  - Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH)
    - Disability resource
    - Funding for hearing aides, if needed

- Self-Help Credit Union
  - Alternative Finance Program (financial loans for AT/DME)
Connect With NC AgrAbility

• Like us on Facebook: NC AgrAbility

• Visit our website www.ncagrability.org

• Contact us to refer a farmer

• Join Our NC AgrAbility List Serve