

Expanding Assistive Technology: A Federal Grant Success Story

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Mini-Grant
for Serving Patrons with Disabilities, 10/02-9/04.

New England Library Association
October 21, 2008

Northeastern University Libraries

Supports NU community, BLC members, and Boston public

www.lib.neu.edu

Volumes: 986,231

Electronic journals: 31,031

Government Publications: 150,096

Audio: 5,024

Video: 12,667

Assistive Technology (AT) is...

A wide range of resources that enable patrons with disabilities to do their research, write papers, review documents, and conduct business related to their academic experience.

Any device that allows an individual to work or gain access to information independently.

AT examples

Magnifying glass

TTY/TDD device

Closed captions

Assistive listening systems

Screen reading software

Voice activated software

Trackballs

Closed circuit display systems

1990 American with Disabilities Act PL 101-336

Most comprehensive civil rights legislation protecting persons with disabilities against discrimination

Intent-- to provide persons with disabilities with equal rights and services, including information, programs, and resources

Make “reasonable accommodations” when feasible
(such as ramps, interpreters, height adjustable furniture, ergonomic keyboards)

1990-2000: NU's AT Program Development

Instituted Vision Resource room in new Snell Library Media Center

University acquired Kurzweil/Xerox Reading Edge with ADA Committee funds

Added new services: closed-caption decoders, closed-captioned video collection, ASL technology in Language Lab, assistive listening access

Appointed Library liaison to Disability Resource Center

Formed Libraries' Assistive Technology Committee

Implemented Jaws and Magic Software-five licenses

Trained AT Committee Members

Established new AT Room on 1st floor

AT Committee Charge 2000

Set goals for providing AT

Lead implementation of activities

Plan and execute training

Evaluate and recommend changes and upgrades

Publicize availability of AT, promote its use

LSTA Grant Background

1996- Congress passed Museum and Libraries Services Act, H.R. 3785, and established the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

Library state grants focus on information access via technology and for special services for underserved communities.

Mass. Board of Library Commissioners 5th Long Range Plan (1998-2002):
“to provide persons who face special challenges using libraries with a full range of library services.”

NU Libraries one of 10 MA libraries applying for grants ranging from \$10K-\$20K, on two-year implementation schedule.

Grant Writing Process-Six Months

Collaboration

Formed grant writing team of five

Worked with MBLC Consultant, Library Services to the Unserved

Research

Followed official planning document

Conducted needs assessment/ gathered data

Consulted with patrons, colleagues

Targeting the user population

Only 3.3% registered DRC students responded to survey-limited feedback!

1/02: Official documentation:
600 registered students documented have these disabilities.

Learning	47%
Misc.	12%
Hearing	11.1%
Psych.	8.8%
Other	5%
Vision	4.3%
Phys. Mob.	3.8%
Phys. Dext.	3.4%
Cognitive	2.8%

Grant Goals: “Training and Equipment Enhancement”

Improve access to library information resources

Remove barriers that impede that access

Increase awareness about Library services for people with disabilities

Expand training to staff and to patrons with disabilities

Program & Service Components:

Staff training: Libraries' Staff Development Committee, Adaptive Technology Consulting (vendor), training materials, website

Patron training: Disability Resources Center, AT Training sub-committee

Equipment and Materials

Publicity

Project's Two-Year Budget Request

	LSTA	Library Cost Share
TOTAL	\$19,779	\$29,076.00
Personnel: Salaries and Fringe Benefits		\$19,866.00
Computer Software	\$5,420.00	
Supplies		\$ 500.00
Equipment	\$8,035.00	\$2, 350.00
Travel	\$ 300.00	
Contractual	\$ 5,894.00	
Telephone		\$ 50.00
Advertising/Printing		\$1, 700.00
Equipment Maintenance		\$ 300.00
Other/Open House	\$ 330.00	\$ 155.00

Budget Items

A. Computer Software

For people who are blind/visually impaired

Kurzweill 1000

For people with learning disabilities

Kurzweill 3000

For people with visual, learning, and physical disabilities

DragonNaturally Speaking

B. Equipment

LSTA

2 desktop computers

3 scanners

Color Closed circuit display system

Library

1 desktop computer

2 printers

Smart View, K300, Dragon Naturally Speaking



Talking Book Machine, K1000



Braille Printing Room



C. Contractual Services

Closed captioning videotapes from the Media Center's Collection

Vendor relations

a critical element of success! Knowledge,
reliability, flexibility, competitive pricing, humor

Grant Highlights

Tripled the number of AT workstations

Added 51 CC video titles to collection

Conducted 13 ½ hour training sessions for 15 Public Services staff

Coordinated two workshops for all staff

Revised and expanded AT flyer

Publicized AT through two Open Houses, external publicity

Keys to Success

Excellent collaborations

Library committee

Partnership with vendor

Supportive library staff

Positive feedback from public

Integration with curriculum

Bibliography

Gerding, Stephanie and Pamela H. Mackellar. *Grants for Libraries: a how-to-do-to manual for libraries*. New York: Neal Schuman, 2006.

Lazzaro, Joseph L. (1993). *Adaptive technologies for learning & work environments*. Chicago: American Library Association, p.xiii.

Rubin, Rhea Joyce. (2000, September). *Planning for library services for people with disabilities: a process for libraries in Massachusetts*. (Available from American Library Association, ASCLA Office, 50 E. Huron St. Chicago, IL 60611)

Web Sites

NU Libraries Resources for People with Disabilities

<http://www.lib.neu.edu/reference/special/pwd.htm>

NU Libraries LSTA Grant Application (pdf)

<http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d10000537>

Massachusetts LSTA information:

<http://mblc.state.ma.us/grants/lsta/index.php>

Thank You!

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