



**MISSOURI
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY
2010 ANNUAL REPORT**



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Council Chair's Message

In the 20th year since the Americans with Disabilities Act became law, technology sits in the center of everyday life, especially for so many persons with disabilities. The pace in the advance of new assistive technology is mind-boggling. In education, in employment, in community living ... assistive technology is making things possible.

- At home, assistive technology means that more persons are able to keep their independence. Environmental controls, stairway lifts, adaptive telephones, computerized medicine dispensers, no-step entryways ... an endless stream of assistive technology that means our parents and ourselves can stay in our own homes longer.
- In the community, more Missourians with disabilities can use assistive technology (AT) to take advantage of the great expansion of broadband throughout the state. High-speed Internet access is even more important to so many Missourians with disabilities in pursuing education, employment, government, and other essentials of modern life.
- In schools, assistive technology is making it possible to provide accessible instructional materials sooner – in some cases, a short textbook chapter can be put into accessible formats within minutes; for entire books, the time can be cut dramatically.

In FY 2010, Missouri Assistive Technology was able to provide assistive technology devices and services to thousands of Missourians with disabilities. The ETC Device Loan program and AT Demonstration sites have meant huge savings to schools, agencies, and individuals as they were able to try out devices before making purchasing decisions. Programs like the low-interest financial loan program and the DME Recycling program saved thousands of dollars in AT purchases. The Telecommunication Access Program provided adaptive telephone equipment and adaptive computer devices/software to thousands of Missourians with disabilities. Educators, employers, state agency personnel and individuals with disabilities from every part of Missouri received training on an array of assistive technology topics.

Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) is pleased to provide this Annual Report for 2009-2010. The individual stories and information within paint a picture of the full range of MoAT services and projects during the year. On behalf of the Council, we invite you to look through these pages and learn about MoAT consumers and the programs that assisted them.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dolores Sparks". The script is cursive and fluid.

Dolores Sparks
Council Chairperson



MoAT Overview

In the most recent national rankings of U.S. states and territories:

- MoAT ranks 1st in the nation in the number of device demonstrations provided.
- MoAT ranks 3rd in the total number of individuals trained in assistive technology.
- MoAT ranks 7th in the number of financial loans provided, and our interest rates are among the lowest in the nation.
- MoAT ranks 8th in total information & assistance provided.
- MoAT ranks 9th in the nation for savings obtained by recycled devices in reutilization programs.
- MoAT ranks 14th in the nation for number of AT devices loaned.

MoAT Programs & Services

- Equipment Loan Program (ETC)
- Device Demonstration Program
- Re-Utilization Programs
 - Durable Medical Equipment Recycling (DME)
 - Swap 'N Shop Equipment Exchange
- Show-Me Loan Program
- Show-Me Loan for Telework Program
- Kids Assistive Technology (KAT)
- Telecommunications Access Program for Telephone (TAP-T)
- Telecommunications Access Program for Internet (TAP-I)
- Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)
- AT Training
- Power Up AT Conference & Expo
- Policy Improvement & Technical Assistance

Equipment Loan Program (ETC)

When making a decision about an assistive technology purchase, the chance to try out a device before buying helps ensure that the device chosen will closely meet the needs of the recipient.

“ETC” is a short-term equipment loan program for school districts, vocational agencies, and other Missouri agencies and organizations. Equipment may be borrowed for device trials, for use when a personal device is in for repairs, or for other short-term needs.

Borrowers select from an inventory of over 1,000 devices, from low- to high-end assistive technology (AT). The selection includes many of the newest and most-requested adaptive devices and software on the market.

This year, a total of 1,374 devices were borrowed in 881 loans that went to every corner of the state. Of the total, 841 were provided specifically to make a decision about acquiring the AT. Augmentative communication devices (speech generating devices) were the most-requested type of AT, followed by computer adaptations and AT for learning/cognitive disabilities. A total of 90% of program users rated themselves as “highly satisfied” with experience they had with the program.

Rex’s Story

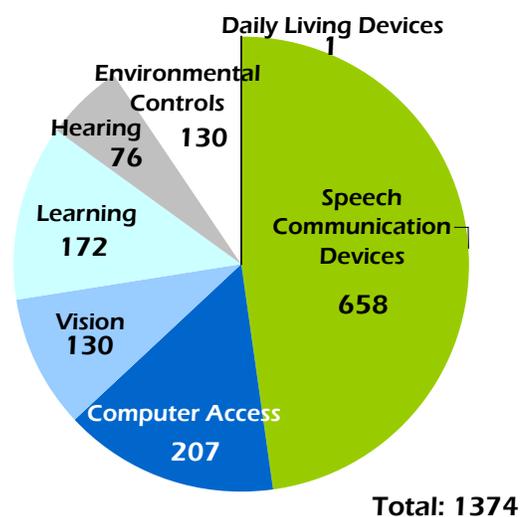
“My son Rex continues to make progress with his AAC devices. He is using his devices every day in different settings –

at home, in school, in the community. He is also more verbal. On Saturday, he verbally told me to put his apple juice in the refrigerator. If I wasn’t so shocked, I would have cried.”



To determine which devices would best fit Rex’s needs, equipment was made available through Missouri Assistive Technology’s “ETC Equipment Loan Program”. The Assistive Technology Evaluation Center in Columbia, in conjunction with the South East Missouri Autism Center in Cape Girardeau borrowed devices for an evaluation. Through device trials, Rex chose the Fusion for text-to-speech and an Ipad Touch with the Proloquo2Go.

ETC Loans by Device Type





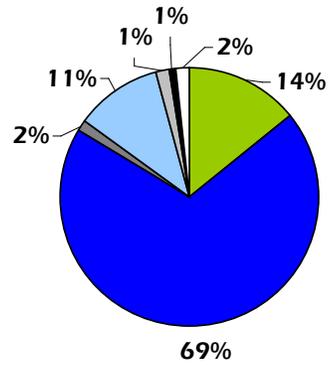
Demo Stories

Joanne, from Kansas City, wanted to try out a selection of portable electronic magnifiers. She had tried using traditional magnifiers for reading to address her macular degeneration, but none worked well for her. MoAT was able to pull together a variety of electronic magnifiers for a guided demonstration with trained staff. Joanne was able to find two hand-held electronic magnifiers with features that allow her to read. "I can now use my devices to shop, read mail, and look at photos without being tied to a large desktop magnifier. The freedom is wonderful!"

Joey, from northwest Missouri, is a fifth-grader with a neuromuscular disability. He was having trouble taking class notes and writing homework legibly because of shaking and fatigue from his disability. He and his parents came to a demonstration center to try out several types of AT. A voice-input computer, word prediction software, reading pens and portable word processors were all demonstrated. The family's final decision was that a combination of the AT turned out to be the solution for Joey to succeed with homework and at school.



Demos by Device Type



■ Vision	- 546
■ Hearing	- 2686
■ Computers/Related	- 60
■ Daily Living	- 419
■ Speech Communication	- 58
■ Mobility/Seating/Positioning	- 36
■ Other	- 63

Device Demonstrations

Missourians with disabilities, spouses, parents, caregivers – all have the chance for hands-on exploration through assistive technology demonstrations. The chance to compare features and ease-of-use of devices help users make informed decisions.

Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) supports regional demonstration programs to make local community resources available for area residents with disabilities. This year, 4,396 Missourians participated in 3,867 device demonstrations. Centers in Springfield, Columbia, St. Louis, Farmington, Cape Girardeau and Kansas City, along with MoAT staff and TAP service coordinators provided the demonstrations.

Following the demonstrations, 99% of individuals were able to make a decision as to whether a device would meet their needs.

Device Re-Utilization

Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) administers two programs to provide low-cost assistive technology. They include a web-based equipment exchange service, called **Swap 'n Shop**, and a statewide **Durable Medical Equipment Recycling Network**. This year, the programs resulted in the re-use of 839 pieces of equipment that may have otherwise ended up in area landfills. Even more importantly, Missourians with disabilities and their families enjoyed a total savings of \$566,613 buying “gently” used versus new devices.

Manual and power wheelchairs, walkers, canes, commodes, shower chairs and pediatric positioning equipment were among equipment most recycled. The network supports regional organizations to collect, refurbish, and re-distribute used equipment, including centers in Cape Girardeau, Columbia, Farmington, Kansas City, St. Louis, and Springfield. Nearly 90% of consumers of the program indicated they were “highly satisfied” with their experience.

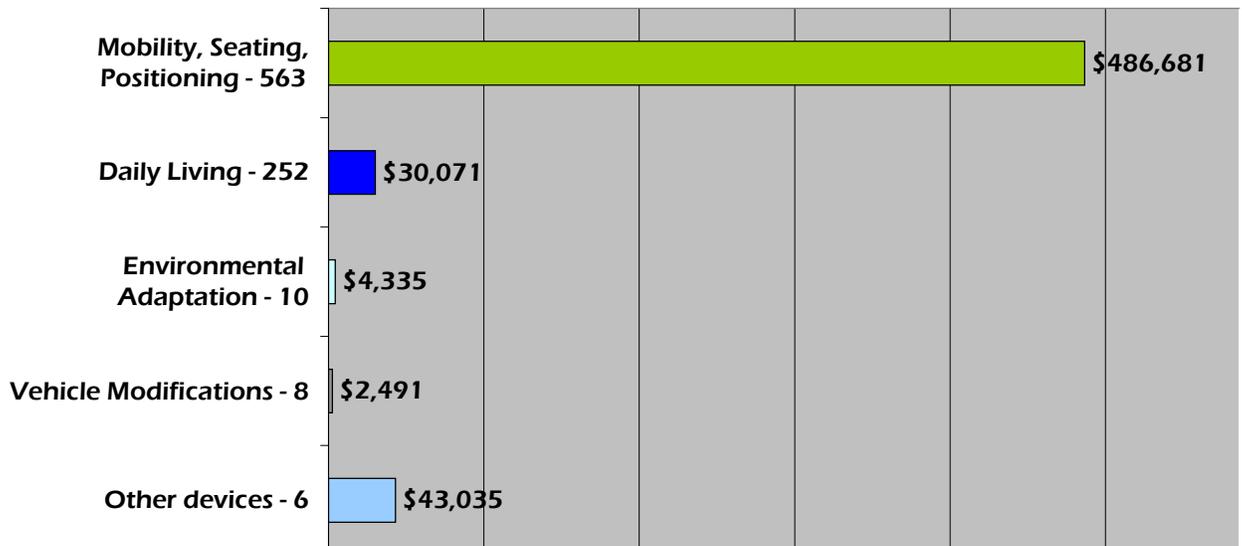
David’s Story

David’s mom, Theresa, was referred to the recycling network by Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City. David (pictured above) needed a small wheelchair that he could use when he wanted to propel himself. The family was able to get a chair with a 10-inch seat width from the Coalition for Independence, one of the center’s in the MoAT recycling network.



Another recycled equipment user - Sasha in his “new” power chair.

Re-Utilization Savings by Device Type



Show-Me Loans

Show-Me Loans is Missouri's alternative financing program for assistive technology. This year, the program provided \$207,144 in low-interest loans to Missourians with disabilities and their families. Over half of the approved borrowers had annual incomes under \$30,000. What types of assistive technology were financed most often through Show-Me Loans? – motor vehicle modifications for wheelchair access; home access modifications such as accessible bathrooms and front entrances; and hearing aids.



Barbara's Story

Barbara is an active 75-year-old from Newton County. A retired school teacher, she wanted to still teach part time

at a local college. After back surgery, she needed a power wheelchair for mobility for any extended distance. To transport her power chair, Barbara was able to get a new lift for the back of her vehicle with the help of favorable financing terms through Show-Me Loans.



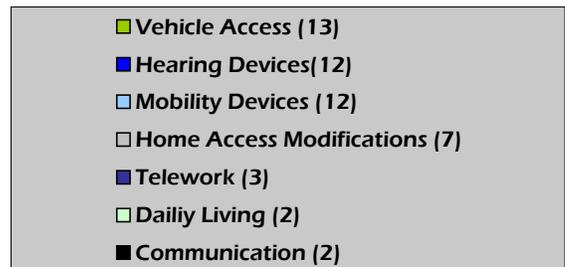
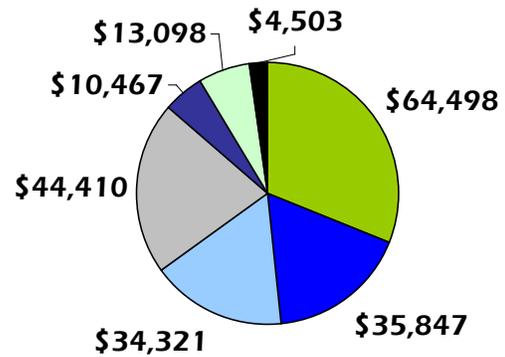
Show-Me Loans for Telework

Missourians with disabilities seeking financing for equipment they need to work from home or a remote site may be able to get help from Show-Me Loans for Telework. "Telework" can be for computer-related equipment, and any type of work-related equipment: home office furniture, wood-working tools, and countless other examples.

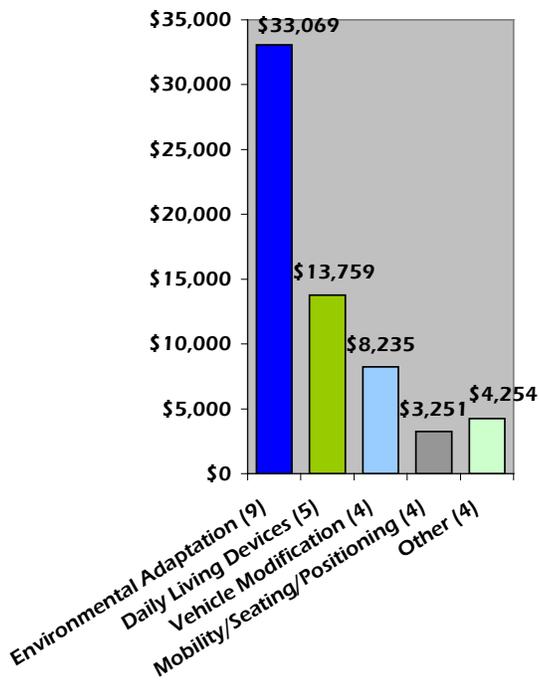
Ann's Story

Ann has a small ranch near King City, Missouri. She was concerned about being able to continue as a rancher due to an inflammatory nerve condition that severely limits her mobility. She turned to the Show-Me Loans for Telework program to purchase an all-terrain vehicle to get around the ranch, a weighing system and a feed bin. The program's favorable loan terms allowed her to maintain her self-employment on her ranch.

AT by Dollars Loaned



KAT Dollars by Type of AT



Kids Assistive Technology (KAT)

For some families, the cost of assistive technology needed for their children with disabilities is far beyond their financial reach. This year, Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) was able to provide low- to moderate- income families with grants to purchase needed AT through the Kids Assistive Technology (KAT) program.

Assistive technology (AT) totaling \$62,568 was provided to 26 Missouri families when no other funding options were available. Home access modifications, wheelchair lifts for vehicles, and AT related to hearing, vision, communication and other functional limitations were eligible through the program. The Department of Health and Senior Services - Special Health Care Needs provides program funding.

The bar graph above shows the breakdown of assistance provided by type of assistive technology.



Tiffani's Story

Tiffani is a 14-year old girl from Ripley county who has a brain injury. Tiffani is unable to walk so her mother requested help for a specialized bathlift. The KAT program provided a bath lift with a control that lets Tiffani lower herself in and out of the tub. When her Mother asked Tiffani if she liked her new bath lift, she spelled out, "NO. I love it!"

Cassidy's Story

Cassidy-Rae is a 4 year old from Cole County with Cerebral Palsy. As with many parents of children with disabilities, Cassidy's family faced ongoing financial challenges. One thing her parents hoped for was a ramp for the front porch to move Cassidy in and out of the house on her chair. The KAT program was able to help get this ramp built. Now Cassidy and her parents can move in and out of their home, effortlessly.





Sherry's Story

"I love using CapTel to call my family and friends and to make business related calls. It's great to have the captions when I can't hear what is being said. It also allows me to go back and reread my conversations when I'm finished in case I've missed important details."



Captioning through her Voice Carry Over phone has allowed Sherry to continue her employment as a paraprofessional. She is able to communicate with teachers and the Principal.

TAP for Telephone

Thousands of Missourians aren't able to use traditional telephones because of a disability. The Telecommunication Access Program for Telephone (TAP-T) provides adaptive telephones and signaling devices for Missourians with a wide range of disabilities.

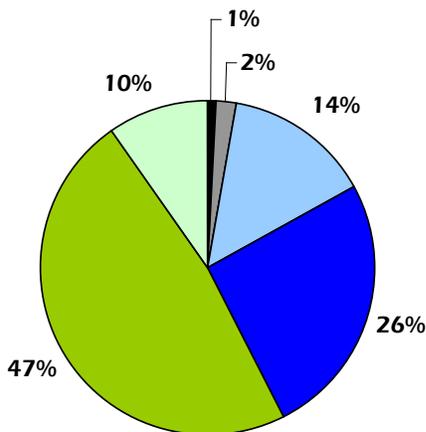
This year, 3,849 adaptive telephone devices were provided to 3,475 individuals with disabilities by TAP for Telephone. Nearly three-fourths of consumers reported that they had been unable to use the phone for three or more years.

TAP for Telephone recipients reported that the assistive technology provided by the program allowed them to: stay in their own home (53%), call for emergencies (61%), call for transportation (57%), and communicate with family and friends (88%).

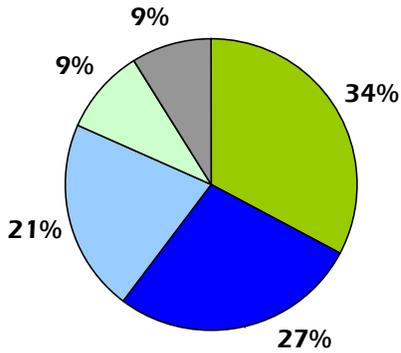
People with hearing loss comprised 77% of program recipients, while 16% had vision loss, 3% had mobility issues, 1% had speech difficulty, and 3% had multiple disabilities which prevent them from using traditional phones.

A network of TAP for Telephone demonstration centers throughout the state provide consumer support and ensure that the appropriate adaptive telephone equipment is matched to the consumer's specific functional needs.

Age of Recipients



TAP-I Type of Equipment



■ Enlargement Software (342)
■ Speech Output & Braille Display (286)
■ Alternative Keyboard & Adaptations (224)
■ Alternative Pointing Devices (99)
■ AT Accessories (93)

TAP for Internet

For most of us, the Internet has become indispensable. Missourians not previously able to use the Internet or e-mail because of a disability are now able to do so because of TAP-I. The program provided 1,044 computer adaptations to Missourians with disabilities this year.

The program remains the only one of its kind in the nation. Equipment and software is available for all types of disabilities. Screen readers, magnification, adaptive keyboards, pointing devices and adaptive software can all be provided through TAP-I. Individuals may also receive training when needed to use the equipment. Since the program began, persons in every corner of Missouri from ages 3 to over 100 have benefitted from the program.

James Story

“So far in our dealings with services for our son with special needs, the Telecommunication Access Program for Internet has been one of the easiest, fastest, most painless procedures for obtaining a service needed. We are extremely grateful that the program exists. The touch screen monitor we received for James has already been a great learning tool and I believe it will continue to be more and more helpful as he gets older. Thank you for providing such useful service!”



James’ Mother

Kathleen’s Story

Kathleen lives in Columbia. Through TAP-I, she uses an alternative keyboard with a keyguard and a word prediction program to help her write. She uses her computer to conduct her ministry, to read information like the newspaper, to produce extensive geometric art pieces, and for research.



Steve’s Story

Steve had his dream job as a train engineer. Then a spinal condition made it impossible to continue. He was only 49 years old and not ready to retire, but his disability limited his employment options. Now able to use only his left hand, typing lengthy emails could take hours. Steve found his solution with voice recognition software and an on-screen keyboard. Both were provided through TAP-I and led to Steve’s current employment as a computer forensic analyst.

Training & Power Up



Educators, individuals with disabilities, service providers, therapists, and Missourians from other disciplines (451 total) reaped the benefits of Power Up 2010. They enjoyed a wide variety of AT products and services with 61 exhibit booths; and learned from 59 presenters with a broad range of expertise in 28 sessions. Keynotes by Don Johnston and Michael Karpovich inspired, motivated, and challenged attendees.



Gina's Story

"I learned loads, relevant to my life as a blind individual, and to my future as an innovative science educator. Knowledge acquisition didn't end with the conference – I collected a whole pile of excellent, accessible resources, that'll allow me to continue building my understanding. I met a lot of inspirational people, who I look forward to communicating and networking with in the future."

Gina, Power Up attendee



Training

MoAT is nationally recognized as a leader in AT training. The most recent figures rank MoAT as 3rd in total training participants among all state AT Programs. MoAT was also ranked 8th in total information & assistance provided to recipients. During the year, MoAT staff handled 10,387 inquiries and requests for information and assistance.

Some 2,851 Missourians received training from MoAT staff in 75 presentations, and 2,715 people were reached through expo booths at local events. MoAT contract staff provided training to another 992 individuals and reached 2,003 through exhibit booths.



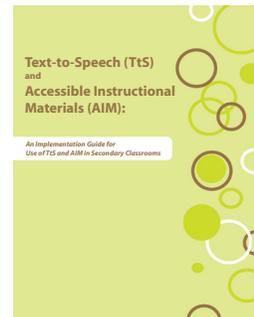
Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)

Reading is fundamental to academic success. Students not able to read standard print materials because of a disability may need accessible instructional materials (AIM). AIM can include specialized formats like audio, Braille, eText, and large print to be used by students with disabilities such as visual impairment, physical impairment, traumatic brain injury, learning disabilities, etc.

MoAT provides support to local school districts in obtaining these specially formatted digital files. To ease the process and decrease the amount of time for the acquisition of needed file sets, MoAT has added Bookshare and Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic to become direct source providers for Missouri schools needing human recording audio textbooks or digital file sets to be used with text to speech, screen reading, screen enlargement or Braille production software. MoAT staff also works closely with Missouri School for the Blind to assure that districts needing hard copy Braille or large print can access the federal quota funds that pay for production of the accessible text materials.

This year, MoAT provided materials and several hands-on training sessions for school districts about how to get accessible textbook files. Once obtained, the file must be converted to the format needed (electronic text, Braille, large print, audio) and then used with the assistive technology selected for the student (e.g. screen readers, Braille embossers, portable reading devices, etc.)

In addition, MoAT has developed an informational DVD and Text-to-Speech (TtS) implementation guide to support additional districts nationwide in the use of TtS technology for struggling readers. The DVD and guide are based on the collective experiences of educators in Missouri school districts who have successfully implemented TtS, and are intended to serve as a resource for others to implement similar programs.





Policy Improvement & Technical Assistance

Missouri Legislative Session



Several measures were introduced in the 2010 legislative session to improve access to assistive technology for Missourians with disabilities. Among them: a bill to improve the ability of students with reading disabilities to obtain accessible instructional materials; a measure to restore coverage of hearing aids for adults in Missouri's HealthNet (Medicaid) program; and legislation to require insurance coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of autism. Of the three, the autism bill made it through the legislature and was signed into law by the Governor.



The autism coverage bill that passed included a requirement that medically necessary equipment needed for treatment also be covered. The goal is to make it easier for children with autism to obtain the assistive technology they need, including augmentative communication devices. Missouri Assistive Technology staff presented testimony and information before and during the legislative session about the critical need for assistive technology coverage.

Disability Legislative Listserv

Hundreds of bills are introduced each year in the Missouri General Assembly. MoAT provides a legislative listserv to help persons with disabilities, parents, disability-related agencies and organizations follow what is happening during the January through May state legislative session. The listserv aims at providing easy-to-understand summaries of measures impacting assistive technology and other disability issues. During the 2010 session, among the bills tracked were those related to personal care attendant services, cost-containment in disability-related services, assistive technology measures and other legislation. More than 400 individuals used the listserv to follow legislation during the 2010 session.

Consumer Representatives

Amy Parker (Chair Elect)
Chip Hailey (Past Chair)
Pam Arbeiter
Michael Goad
Sharon LaRoussa
Rita Lynch
Kerri Morgan
Deana O'Brien
Mary Secora
Marjorie Yates

Agency Representatives

Dolores Sparks (Chair) - DD Planning Council
Gary Harbison - Health & Senior Services
Neil Harms - Vocational Rehabilitation
Leone Herring - Special Education
Aaron Luna - Independent Living Centers
Robin Rust - Mental Health
Naomi Soule - Rehabilitation Services for the Blind
Molly White - Insurance
Cindy Winingers-Watson - HealthNet Division

Legislative Representatives

Senator Scott Rupp
Representative Jeff Grisamore

MoAT Staff

C. Marty Exline, Director
Roselie Backer-Thompson, TAP for Internet Coordinator
Eileen Belton, Program Coordinator
Stacy Brady, TAP for Telephone Coordinator
John Effinger, Program Coordinator
Kristine Roof, Administrative Assistant
Tracy Walker, Program Assistant
Brenda Whitlock, Training Coordinator

IN STATE FY 2010 MOAT DELIVERED
5,803 ASSISTIVE DEVICES AND
PROVIDED SUPPORT SERVICES TO
22,593 MISSOURIANS WITH DISABILITIES.



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