

**Assistive Technology Advisory Council Meeting**  
**May 18, 2023**  
**Approved Minutes**

**Members Present:**

Joann Willis Lindholm, Chair; Christy Crowther; Samantha Gregory; Eric Raff; Kevin Kozoil; Elizabeth Flaherty; Sara Pruett; Scott Pruett, Paige Moore, Korey Singleton, Melissa Oliver and Clay Huie

**Members Present by Conference Call:** None

**Guests:**

Robin Ramsey, Director, F.R.E.E.  
Tracy Meador, Operations Manager, F.R.E.E.  
John Naples, Manager, C.A.T.S  
Francie Mitchell, Clinical Director, Richmond, C.A.T.S  
Brittany Howard, TAP Specialist Coordinator, VDDHH  
Dale Batten, Deputy Commissioner, DARS

**Staff Present:**

Barclay Shepard, Manager, VATS-RTS  
Sonja Schaible, VATS  
Emily McKeough, VATS  
Paula Martin, VATS  
Elin Glass, VATS

**Interpreters:** Ivy Brothers and Heather Kubitski

**Call to Order:**

Joann Lindholm, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.  
Ms. Lindholm stated that this meeting was focused on “Access, Access, Access”.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The ATAC Nov.17, 2022 Mtg, Draft Minutes were approved as written.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Ms. Lindholm reviewed the agenda and asked if there were any additions from the floor. No additions were made.

**Public Comment:**

There were no comments from the public.

**Old Business:** No Report

**New Business:**

### **VATS Program Updates:**

Mr. Shepard, Mgr., provided the following general program updates to include:

- Reviewed VATS Priorities/Changes with the Reauthorization of the AT Act named “The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Assistive Technology Act”. Congress passed Bipartisan Bill to Reauthorize the Assistive Technology Act. The Bill modernizes and updates the current law which authorizes VATS and other State and U.S. territory AT Act programs.
  - VATS team participated in a listening session with its national technical assistance provider AT3 regarding guidance/questions submitted to ACL for clarification.
  - Changes to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Assistive Technology Act include but not limited to:
    - Collaboration with State agencies that fund AT (SEA, VR, Medicaid, & other)
    - “Education” replaces references to “training” in the Act
    - Emphasis on assistive telehealth/rehab
    - Advisory Council requires two new mandated partners. Mandated partners will change from five currently to seven. One representative from the State’s alternative financing program must be on the Council. One additional representative from one of the following State’s organizations must be on the Council: Medicaid, Developmental Disability (DD) Council, DD State agency, Agency on Aging, Disabled Veterans, and Protection and Advocacy
    - There will be some new performance measures and State Plan requirements. The new Law will take effect in July
- Reviewed VATS’ partnership with Virginia No Wrong Door (NWD) to include a brief history of the partnership and new programs/assistive technology (AT) kits places with NWD and VATS partner agencies to include: VATS/NWD Public Health AT Specialist position, portable Adaptive Gaming and Social Health Kit at Sheltering Arms Institute (SAI), Emergency Preparedness, Social Health, and Falls-Prevention Kits at several Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), Sensory Kit was placed at Northstar Academy (pilot program), aqua bike at Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center (WWRC), one youth recreation wheelchair is in the process of being purchased and placed at Sportable, Inc. Through these partnerships, VATS is able to collect and report data to support its mission.
- Discussed VATS history and continued focus on emergency preparedness with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and its adult durable medical equipment reuse partners.

### **Universal Design Project Presentation:**

Scott and Sarah Pruett provided a presentation from their company, the Universal Design (UD) Project on accessible housing in the United States to include the following:

- Current state of accessible housing
- Impact of inaccessible design
- Differences between adaptation, home modification and universal design and educational opportunities are available on the Universal Design Project’s website

- Analyze how design can enable people to be independent
- Development of a Universal Design building code to guide builders
- More resources and information available at the website: [universaldesign.org](http://universaldesign.org)
- Podcast available: [goodfitpoorfit.com](http://goodfitpoorfit.com)
- Online courses available at: [go.universaldesign.org](http://go.universaldesign.org)

### **Working Lunch: No Wrong Door Falls Prevention Kit Demos**

Scott and Sarah Pruett from the UD Project played a video and answered questions regarding one of the Project's online courses.

### **VATS Contractor Updates:**

John Naples from Children's Assistive Technology Service (C.A.T.S.) provided an update on C.A.T.S. to include the following:

- Reported that C.A.T.S. received 505 requests for 640 pieces of equipment worth a reuse value of approximately \$943,000
- Discussed C.A.T.S. new logo on materials to include website
- Reviewed website to include an "Inventory Tab" to identify equipment that is currently available
- Discussed Clinical Coordinator position in reviewing medical information, therapist recommendation and equipment to ensure fit and proper use
- C.A.T.S. continues to grow with two full-time employees and five part-time employees
- Strategic Plan in development
- Reported on conference and in-person events
- Searching for new C.A.T.S. Board members
- Hallow Wheels fundraiser will take place October 28, 2023

Robin Ramsey from the Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment & Endowment (F.R.E.E.) provided a program update to include updates from full-service reuse sites. Highlights included:

- Discussed new partnerships to include American Red Cross-Virginia chapter
- Development of a new Memorandum of Agreement with the Roanoke Office on Aging to include basic durable medical equipment (DME) needed for home use
- Opening of new F.R.E.E.-Harrisonburg location (7<sup>th</sup> full-service DME reuse program) which is a partnership with James Madison University (JMU), Sentara Health System, Goodwill, VATS, and the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation
- Update on data/clients served in 2022 to include 3,227 low -income adults with 5,023 pieces of equipment valued at over \$1.1 million
- Reported on F.R.E.E. survey outcomes data
- Discussed trends affecting adult DME reuse

### **Election of Officers:**

Joann Lindholm opened the floor for discussion and nominations for a new slate of ATAC officers. Nominations were provided for Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Nominations for each office were provided during the meeting and voted on individually. The following officers were voted on and elected to office by majority vote.

- Kelvin Harris - Chair
- Christy Crowther - Vice-Chair
- Matthew Shapiro - Secretary

**ATAC Member Updates:**

Several ATAC members reported updates from their organizations or constituent groups.

**Next ATAC Meeting:**

The next ATAC Meeting (Tentative):

- Thursday, November 9, 2023 - Location: Sheltering Arms Institute  
2000 Wilks Drive  
Richmond, VA 23233

\*Unless otherwise noted, meetings be held at:

DARS Central office  
9004 Franklin Farms Dr.  
Richmond, Va 23229

**Adjournment:**

*A motion was made to adjourn and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00pm*