

**Assistive Technology Advisory Council Meeting**  
**Approved Minutes**  
**June 9, 2011**

**Members Present:** Elizabeth Flaherty, Chair; Matthew Deans, Vice Chair; Margaret Fields, Ph.D., Secretary; Michael Behrmann, Ed.D.; Clayton Bowen; Tom Dowling; Tony Gentry, Ph.D., OTR/L; George Scott Higdon; Kelly Lum, OTR/L; William Massey; Joseph Wallace, Ph.D.; Joann Willis

**Member Present by Conference Call:**

Melanie Brunson, Esq.

**Members Absent:** John Eisenberg; Shawn Utt; Brenda Wickard

**Presenters:**

James Rothrock, Commissioner, Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)  
Linda Meyer Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Director, Communication Services  
Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center

**Guests:**

Mary Wilds, Council Representative for Department of Education  
Barbara Seymour, Department of Medical Assistance Services  
Mary Nunnally, DRS

**Staff Present:**

Kathy Hayfield, Director, Field Rehabilitation Services, DRS  
Robert Krollman, Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) Central Office  
Barclay Shepard, VATS Central Office  
Elin Glass, VATS Central Office  
Emily McKeough Fallings, VATS-North Regional Site - George Mason University  
Alisa Louther, VATS-North Regional Site - George Mason University  
Joann Ervin, VATS Southeast Regional Site - Old Dominion University  
Susan Asselin, Ph.D., VATS Southwest Regional Site – Virginia Tech  
Brynne Halsey, Virginia Tech

**Call to Order:**

Elizabeth Flaherty, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Ms. Flaherty recognized William Massey, CEO, Peninsula Area Agency Area on Aging, Inc., and welcomed him as a new member of the Council. All members of the Advisory Council, VATS staff and guests introduced themselves.

**Approval of 3/10/11 Minutes:**

*Margaret Fields, Ph.D., Council Secretary, asked if there were any corrections to the draft minutes for the last quarterly meeting. The 3/10/11 ATAC Meeting Minutes, as submitted, stand approved.*

**Public Comment:** No public comments were offered.

**Old Business:** No old business was brought forward.

**New Business:** No new business was presented at this time.

**Commissioner's Update:**

James A. Rothrock, Commissioner, DRS, welcomed William Massey, CEO, Peninsula Area Agency Area on Aging, Inc., as a new member of the Council.

One of the things Commissioner Rothrock has been working on is a new website for community living with accessibility, affordable housing, with an accessible location (sidewalks, etc), transportation, using available assistive technology (AT) and support systems for greater independence. The website is in the final phase of development and will list resources available for people to use in developing their 'livable community' in Virginia; listing promising and best practices and several programmatic models. The website for Virginia's Blueprint for Livable Communities is [www.vadrs.org/vblc](http://www.vadrs.org/vblc).

**Assistive Technology (AT) Director's Update**

Kathy Hayfield stated that Bob Krollman sent a VATS Update to the Council on activities that took place during the last quarter and stated the need for VATS Regional Sites to include information in these future Updates.

Ms. Hayfield discussed the current DRS fiscal environment and implications for client service delivery. DRS is serving the current clients determined eligible in all categories; new service applicants are placed on lists that will allow them to receive services as funding becomes available at a future time.

The VATS initiative entitled the Virginia Reuse Network was affected by an 11% cut from the primary funding source, the Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative (CNI). It was noted that CNI funding for the reuse program grant ends next year (7/1/2012). VATS needs to secure funding for the continued operation of the reuse program. The FREE Foundation will also be seeking funding through the General Assembly for this program. Ms. Hayfield requested the Council to please keep VATS informed if they know of any grant opportunities to keep these programs going.

Ms. Hayfield requested members use the next quarterly ATAC Meeting, scheduled for September 15, 2011, as a planning meeting. She proposed looking at information VATS has on data collected, available data on the aging population, and how VATS is using the funds received from the AT ACT to come up with a plan for future years. Mr. Krollman stated that he could send out a packet of information in August to Council members with data, and some thoughts and questions. Ms. Hayfield stated that Mr. Krollman will look at service delivery models in other states and VATS could request a member of RESNA

attend the ATAC meeting so Council could be clearly informed of the requirements of the AT Act.

Robert Krollman stated that the VATS contract with the ADA Resource Center, Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC), will end this year for the program focused on “AT @ Work”, and the future contract will focus on “Emergency Preparedness and AT” with a connection to AT Reuse. Mr. Krollman requested from the Council a plan for sustainability of the new DBTAC contract in order to provide a potential avenue for funding for the AT Reuse Program.

Barclay Shepard stated the Pass It on Center is working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to focus on being prepared for an emergency disaster so that FEMA would know who they could contact. There is a need to look at the whole state and how we can partner with other agencies and coordinate services. Mr. Shepard is scheduled to attend a Summit in September with FEMA Region III.

Ms Hayfield discussed “AT follows the Student” progress and asked the Council to consider how we should proceed as a resolution did not make it through the General Assembly last year.

#### **Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC):**

Kelly Lum gave an update on WWRC activities. The therapy department is re-prioritizing their program due to budget and staff reductions. They are still providing AT services for both DRS clients and non-client services, particularly in the area of seating and mobility. In the area of AT, the WWRC Blueprint has largely remained the same. They are focusing on transition-age students and continue to look at AT resources across the state. The Driver’s Training Program will serve clients already in the program and in the future will only serve DRS clients.

#### **NewWell Fund:**

Joseph Wallace, Ph.D., Director, NewWell Fund, reported the NewWell Fund has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Richmond Eye & Ear Foundation Fund, a component fund of The Community Foundation. The purpose of this grant is to provide vision and hearing equipment to individuals with disabilities who otherwise could not afford these devices in the Cities of Richmond, Colonial Heights, Hopewell and Petersburg and the Counties of Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, Goochland, Powhatan, New Kent, Charles City, Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond and Westmoreland. Grant applications will be available on the NewWell Fund website at [www.newwellfund.org](http://www.newwellfund.org) or by calling 804-662-7021.

The NWF has submitted a grant proposal for \$25,000 to the Sheltering Arms Fund and is still pursuing legislation to restore funding to the Consumer Service Fund.

### **Project Catalyst:**

Michael Behrmann, Ed.D., GMU, gave a report on Project Catalyst. Project Catalyst is the new Federal Tech Act Technical Assistance Project and Dr. Behrmann is highly involved in this project. A proposal was submitted to RESNA to work in an advisory capacity with the Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA) to develop training webinars. The webinars are for professional development. The first webinar was held March 23, 2011 and all webinars are archived. GMU will make these links available. On-line registration is free and open to everyone. They are planning now to identify topics for the next three years.

### **Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment and Endowment (FREE Foundation)**

Barclay Shepard provided a report from the FREE Foundation. FREE received \$65,000 worth of durable medical equipment from Physicians for Peace which is largest single equipment donation ever given to FREE. The FREE Foundation served 153 individuals during January-March, 2011. The FREE Foundation has students serve as volunteers and is working with the American Red Cross to set up loan closets for the Richmond Chapter and the upcoming Hampton Roads Chapter scheduled to open in the fall. A new sanitation unit (Hubscrub) was received at the FREE-Winchester location and FREE is in the process of hiring a part-time technician at the Richmond Chapter.

The FREE Foundation has submitted a grant proposal to the Sheltering Arms fund. The FREE Foundation and VATS will continue to look for funding options due to the CNI grant ending in FY 2012.

### **VATS Regional Sites:**

All three of VATS Regional Sites reported on regional site activities that took place in the preceding quarter.

### **Presentation**

Linda Meyer Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Director, Communication Services, WWRC, provided a presentation on a variety of communication equipment used at WWRC.

### **Advisory Council Member Reports:**

Tony Gentry, Ph.D., OTR/L, reported a success story regarding a 14 year-old student in Fairfax. The student worked on a project with the iPod Touch. The student accumulated data on the people who most needed this type of equipment and could not afford to purchase it. The student conducted fund raising to purchase this equipment and gave the equipment to those identified as having the greatest need.

Peggy Fields, Ph.D., Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired, reported that the six regional labs in the state were provided new computers and equipment was updated with current and popular AT devices.

**Next ATAC Meeting:**

The next ATAC Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 15, 2011, at the DRS Central Office in Richmond.

**Adjournment:**

*A motion was made by Ms. Flaherty to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Dr. Wallace and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 1:45pm*