

UAAACT News

Utah Augmentative, Alternative, Assistive Communication And Technology Teams

UAAACT Web Site: www.uaaact.org

April, 2012

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Seems impossible we have spent another year working with students and enjoying the trainings that has been provided for us. Some were able to go to Closing the Gap during October, while the rest of us enjoyed the UCET Conference. The Leadership Council has been busy looking for latest equipment and also planning our State UAAACT Conference for 2013. Most have us have had fun learning to help students with an abundance of free apps for our iPads and iPhones. Wow, it wasn't so long ago that we were learning to make our own switches and switch interrupters to help student activate toys and to turn on and off tape recorders. The new technology is wonderful, as we continue to search for ways to assist the students that we serve.

Enjoy the rest of the school year and have a great summer. Thanks to Craig and Scott for all they do to help us to provide the best service possible for our students.

Mark your Calendars for Upcoming Events

April 2, 2012

Deadline for Team Orders
(Sent to Lynn Marcoux - lmarcoux@utah.gov)

April 5, 2012

1:00 - 3:00

EEE Pad Workshop
Computer Center - Register with Lynn
lmarcoux@utah.gov

April 18, 2012

10:30 AM

Leadership Council Meeting
New Council Members introduced

May 2, 2012

1:00 - 3:00

QR Codes for Education
Computer Center - Register with Lynn

June 1, 2012

UAAACT Team Member Report of Hours Due
UAAACT Team Member Report of Students

Served Due (Reports given to Team Leaders)

June 8, 2012

Documentation of UAAACT Competencies Due
(send to Craig Boogaard - cboogaar@utah.gov)

June 8, 2012

UAAACT Team Summary Report Due

(send to: Denise Warren)

See additional information on page 2

Check out the UAAACT Website for dates for other trainings.

Watch your e-mails for additional information.

UAAACT Leadership Council



Our Leadership Council members have worked hard during the year, meeting with Craig, Scott, Lynn and Jocelyn Taylor to make plans for trainings, make conference plans for our State Conference in 2013, and looked at equipment to better serve our students. We, of the UAAACT Teams send our appreciation to you for all your hard work with the direction of Craig, Scott and Lynn.

Welcome

We would like to welcome the following team members and to thank those that are leaving their respective teams.

Nathan Pope and Melanie Adams to replace Clyde Farnes and Susan Wilkinson.

Team D – Alpine District

Clarissa Barnhill to replace Lorie Coates and Ann Wilkinson to replace Erik Engar who is now filling Jim West's position as AT specialist. Both Clarissa and Ann represent Team A – Davis District

Karen Petersen to replace Pauline Jonsson

Team T – Box Elder District

State Conference Planning

The Leadership Council has been planning our up-coming UAAACT conference. The 2013 conference will be held in Provo on February 27-28, 2013 with the Pre Conference for UAAACT members on February 26th. Planning for Keynote speakers and vendors is in the process.



The last day for ordering team equipment will be on **April 2, 2012**. If you have not used the balance of your UAAACT team equipment budget, please email Lynn Marcoux – lmarcoux@utah.gov with your equipment request. Please include: suggested vendor, item, item number and the price of the item.

There are a number of teams that have not yet placed a team order and the balance of their team budget must be used by **April 2nd** or you will lose it.

Important

Information for Deadline dates listed on page 1

Please report the number of students served and the number of **UAAACT hours** for the period of **June 1, 2011 to May 31, 2012**.

This report should be completed by the UAAACT Team Leader and sent to Denise Warren by **Friday, Jun 8, 2012**.

If your report is not received by June 15, your team hours and number of students will be recorded as zero and your equipment budget for the 2012-13 school year will be calculated accordingly.

E-mail report to: denisew@usdb.org or to: gratefulweaver@yahoo.com or mail your report to:

Denise Warren
Utah School for the Deaf and Blind
1655 East 3300 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

From Our Leader

Craig Boogaard

Judith Kuster is an American Speech-Language and Hearing Association certified speech-language pathologist and an emeritus professor in the Department of Speech, Hearing and Rehabilitation Services, Minnesota State University, Mankato. She has put together an excellent web site with a collection of resources for SLPs. Her web site includes example of Apps for iPads, resources for augmentative and alternative communication, ideas to work with students on the Autism Spectrum, and many other helpful resources. You might want to check it out.

<http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/juster2/spttherapy.htm1#pictures>.

Trish Johnson of the Don Johnston Company writes: I was hoping you might be able to share this information with the UAAACT team members.

<http://www.donjohnston.com/products/par/index.html>

Many districts are using PAR and found it critical in IEP team meetings! Shifts, changes in thinking and results are occurring with the use of this systematic approach. Better and more consistent decisions are being made.

I hope you find this just as helpful within your districts! We are also looking to collect student samples so we can collect data at a National level. Once you start using this program and you have any samples that you might be willing to share with us, just BLOCK out the students name and send them to us. We would love to include your data!

If you have any questions, contact:

Trish Johnson
Vice President of Sales
Don Johnston Incorporated
847.740.749 Ext. 553
tjohnson@donjohnston.com

Reminder about E-Mail

We have been told by many UAAACT members that they are not receiving our email messages. I am trying a new email address procedure to see if we can successfully communicate. Be sure to update your e-mail with me so that we can be sure to get e-mails out to you.

Craig

RECAP of UCET Conference

By: Melanie Bowen

South Summitt School District

The UCET (Utah Coalition for Educational Technology) conference was held March 2-3 at Jordan High School. It was a wonderful two day conference offering classes on almost every aspect of technology, as well as a couple of great keynote speaker, Ruston Hurley and Rulon Gardner. The conference was well organized with over 30 classes to choose from for each breakout session. Interested in iPads, apps, common core, smart boards, grant writing, Google docs, wikis, Apple TV, edublogs, augmentative solutions, or tech for social media applications? It was all there and more! Almost any topic related to applying technology to your instruction, classroom or individual students was addressed. It was amazing to see the technology available and to consider the possibilities for individual students!

In addition, many UAAACT team members presented sessions specifically focused on augmentative solutions and needs. Some of these included Bookshare, LiveScribe or Echo Smart Pens, writing solutions with word prediction, video modeling, Boardmaker Studio, Asus EEE pad, iPad apps and adaptations, app selection, simplifying Proloquo2Go, ibrain and ibody, low vision, effective switch use, and using and finding free tools for students. If you were not able to attend UCET put it on your schedule as a must for next year, and if you need help in any of these areas, contact the UAAACT staff or your leadership council member to connect you to these presenters. Our UAAACT members hold a wealth of knowledge and would be more than willing to share!

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Continued from pg. 3 -- UCET Conference

A side note, with the exploding of iPad use and the hundreds of apps released daily, how do you keep up or identify the right apps for your students?

Finding appropriate apps can be expensive, challenging and confusing. Check out the following resources to help you focus your precious time and energy:

UCET website: www.ucet.org

UCET blog: <http://UCETnews.blogspot.com>
List of daily free apps or subscribe to the UCET list server to receive daily email of free apps.

<http://apps4stages.wikispaces.com> – apps listed by developmental levels.

www.spectronicsinoz.com/article/iphoneipad-apps-for-aac *Review of apps by feature.*

<http://momswithapps.com/apps-for-special-needs/>
Website with a list of recommended apps for special needs

<http://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/autism-apps>
Recommended apps for autism and developmental disabilities

<http://bridgingapps.org/> *Recommendations of apps already tried with students with special needs.*

<http://www.aactechconnect.com/index.php/app-assistant> *Website highlighting App Assistant which compares AAC Apps*

<http://www.kindertwon.com/> *Free app that reviews early childhood apps.*

<http://www.appsforaac.net/> *List of apps used specifically for AAC*

<http://natri.uky.edu/assoc/projects/qiat/documents/resourcebank/SortingAACappsOct302011.pdf> *Document to help you evaluate and sort through apps by appropriate features.*

UCET Conference Review UAAACT Team Members

Garage Band in Language Arts Curriculum

This session was about how you can use music creation software to reinforce difficult concepts. Music uses both sides of the brain which assists in learning and retention. This session had a quick overview of Garage Band on the Mac, as well as fun examples of student work.

BookShare .org

This session covered the basics of getting started with Bookshare.org. The focus was on demonstrations of how to get started with bookshare and demonstrations of compatible screen readers.

SmartBoards

Real world examples for using the SmartBoard with direct instruction shared during this session. There were lots of examples given to make the use of the SmartBoard more effective.

Erek Engar, Davis

Lisa Wright, Davis wrote:

At the UCET Conference I attended the presentation by Lakeshore. The purpose was to help teachers adapt their teaching to the new Common Core. The presentation was mainly about the products that the presenter had on display from the Lakeshore Company. The idea was that in order to teach the Common Core, one had to purchase the available curriculum from Lakeshore.

Many of their products were demonstrated by the presenter. I came away with information about what products I could purchase. I wanted a peek into the Common Core math for the lower grades and how we could use the curriculum that we have with adaptations.

EEEPad

Good presentation by Scott and Craig! The EEEPad is an Android based device purchased with AURA funds – thanks to Glenna Gallo and Jocelyn Taylor. It is more affordable than the iPad and has power point, word processing and Excel built into the system. The device also has a USB port. Accounts have been set up for each device so that apps can be downloaded.

Susan Hamblin, Davis

Paper Worksheets to Digital Access

By: Denise Warren

Utah School for the Deaf and Blind

One of the questions I receive most often is, “How can my student (who is blind, low vision, or has another print disability- get access to the worksheets that the teacher hands out?” Ideally the teacher provides any written material in digital form, which makes the question much easier. But often class handouts are presented in paper form, and some of our students really struggle. Here are some options:

Scanner/Computer/OCR Programs

The worksheets can be scanned in as text, then read out loud with any number of software programs. The kind of scanner to use is not as important as the OCR software you use. OCR means Optical Character Recognition. By default, a scanner wants to make the image you are scanning a picture, usually a jpg. If the worksheet is scanned as a jpg, then reading/editing software sees it as a picture, not text, and cannot read it out loud. So the scanned image needs to be seen and recognized as text. There are many OCR programs available, at varying costs (search for “OCR Scanning”). One program we have used is ABBYY Finereader. A free version comes with Epson scanners. The free one can be set up to scan, recognize, and open directly in Word with a few keystrokes. Users who are completely blind can use ABBYY in conjunction with a screenreader. One drawback to ABBYY Finereader’s free version is that you can only scan one page at a time, and you must copy/paste to have a document that is multiple pages long. It also is not a reader, just an OCR Program.

Another program we use is Kurzweil 1000. This program will both scan in multiple pages of documents, and read it out loud, and can be run by users who are completely blind. The display is customizable, and can be adjusted for the need of low vision users. The voices are pleasant to listen to. This is a “Cadillac” of scanning/reading programs, and the price reflects that -- it is about \$995.

Other OCR Programs to check out include: Omnipage, OpenBook, Readiris, full version ABBYY Finereader, Presto OCR, Scanitto. Once the worksheet is digital text, there are many programs that will read it out loud for you. Some to check out include: Read/Write Gold, Read: Outloud, Kurzweil 3000, Readplease, and even the built-in text-to-speech on your computer.

Portable Scanner/Readers

There are easier, faster ways to scan in documents than to cart around your flatbed scanner. There is a whole generation of cameras which will snap a picture of a page, then send it to your computer and begin reading it out loud. One example is Freedom Scientific’s PEARL. The camera connects to a laptop via USB. When a book is placed under the cameras, the camera snaps a picture and sends it to the computer. Every time you turn a page, the camera senses the movement and snaps a new picture. The program reads the text out loud to you.

Even more portable solutions include the Intel Reader. This is a handheld stand alone device, which will snap a picture, convert the image to text, and the display will show the text while reading it out loud. Bundled with an optional capture station (for scanning large amounts of text), it costs about \$600.

And finally, iPhones and iPads are offering this type of app as well. iPhones work rather well, but the iPad2’s meager 2 mp camera was not robust enough to allow high accuracy in any of the apps I tried. Hopefully the iPad3’s new, 5 mp camera will allow iPad users to enjoy the same accuracy as the iPhone! Some apps to try include: CamScanner, Prizmo, TextGrabber, Perfect OCR and image to Text-OCR.



The following article was sent to me and although the author is unknown, I felt that it was food for thought and the reason that we have the “passion” to do what we do! (sba)

Having four visiting family members, my wife was very busy, so I offered to go to the store for her to get some needed items, which included light bulbs, paper towels, trash bags, detergent and Clorox. So off I went.

I scurried around the store, gathered up my goodies and headed for the checkout counter, only to be blocked in the narrow aisle by a young man who appeared to be about sixteen-years-old. I wasn't in a hurry, so I patiently waited for the boy to realize that I was there. This was when he waved his hands excitedly in the air and declared in a loud voice, “Mommy, I'm over here.”

It was obvious now, he was mentally challenged and also startled as he turned and saw me standing so close to him, waiting to squeeze by. His eyes widened and surprise exploded on his face as I said, “Hey Buddy, what's your name?”

“My name is Denny and I'm shopping with my mother”, he responded proudly. “Wow, that's a cool name: I wish my name was Denny, but my name is Steve”.

“Steve, like Stevarino?” he asked. “Yes” I answered. “How old are you, Denny?” “How old am I now, Mommy?” he asked as his mother came up the aisle. “You're fifteen years old Denny, now be a good boy and let the man pass by.”

I acknowledged her and continued to talk to Denny for several more minutes about summer, bicycles and school. I watched his brown eyes danced with excitement, because he was the center of someone's attention. He then abruptly turned and headed toward the toy section.

Denny's mom had a puzzled look on her face and thanked me for taking the time to talk with her son. She told me that most people wouldn't even look at him, much less talk to him.

I told her that it was my pleasure . I told her that there are plenty of red, yellow, and pink roses in the garden of life; however, “Blue Roses” are very rare and should be appreciated for their beauty and distinctiveness. You see, Denny is a Blue Rose and if someone doesn't stop and smell that rose with their heart and touch that rose with their kindness, then they've missed a special experience.

She was silent for a second, then with tears in her eyes she asked? “Who are you?” “Oh, I'm probably just a dandelion, but I sure love living in the garden of life.” She reached out, with tears in her eyes, squeezed my hand and said, “Thank you”

May I suggest next time you see a Blue Rose, don't turn your head and walk off. Take the time to smile and say Hello. Why? *Because people will probably forget what you said, people will probably forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.*

Never underestimate the part you play in someone's life.

Expression of Appreciation

Do we make a difference to the students we serve? So often we are told “thanks” by educators and sometimes parents for the services, we provide, but it really makes a difference when a student is grateful!

I received an email that requested a replacement for a 32 Message Communicator that was no longer working. As I walked into the Jr. High classroom I announced that I had brought a 32 Message Communicator. Immediately a young man was by my side, accepting it as if it were a precious gift, and saying “thank you, thank you”. That is when I knew we really do make a difference to the students that we serve, and that they really do appreciate what we bring into their lives.

Submitted by:

Janalyn Biesinger – Granite School District

Standards

As you accept the responsibilities of a UAAACT team member, you are essentially making a commitment to become a **Special Education Technology Specialist**.

The Council for Exceptional Children (www.cec.sped.org) has professional standards for Special Education Technology Specialists. You can find them by clicking on the link for Professional Standards from the home page. The standards are published in the book, "What Every Special Educator Must Know." The book is available as a free downloadable PDF.

Below are the **skills listed by CEC for Special Education Technology Specialists**. These are skills that would be helpful for every UAAACT member to obtain.

ACC4S1 Design and use methods for assessing and evaluating programs

ACC4S2 Design and implement research activities to examine the effectiveness of instructional practices

ACC4S3 Advocate for evidence-based practices in assessment

ACC4S4 Report the assessment of individuals with exceptional learning needs' performance and evaluation of instructional programs

TE4S1 Evaluate features of technology systems

TE4S2 Identify the demands of technology on the individual with exceptional learning needs

TE4S3 Design, fabricate, and install assistive technology materials and devices to meet the needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs

TE4S4 Verify proper implementation of mechanical and electrical safety practices in the assembly and integration of the technology to meet the needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs

TE4S5 Develop specifications and/or drawings necessary for technology acquisitions

TE4S6 Match characteristics of individuals with exceptional learning needs with technology product or software features

TE4S7 Identify functional needs, screen for functional limitations and identify if the need for a comprehensive assistive or instructional technology evaluation exists

TE4S8 Monitor outcomes of technology-based interventions and reevaluate and adjust the system as needed

TE4S9 Identify placement of devices and positioning of the individual to optimize the use of assistive or instructional technology

TE4S10 Examine alternative solutions prior to making assistive or instructional technology decisions

TE4S11 Make technology decisions based on a continuum of options ranging from no technology to high technology

The standards for Special Education Technology Specialists are advanced standards, i.e. not expected of beginning teachers. The standards use the designation ACC or TE in front of each knowledge and skill standard. ACC designates an Advanced Common Core standard, which means that EVERY advanced special education teacher should meet that standard. TE designates the standard is specifically for Special Education Technology Specialists. I hope this information is helpful. If you'd like information on the development of the standards or the literature base behind the standards (which does include the QIAT indicators) please contact me off list.

Deborah Newton, Ed.D.

Chairperson, Associate Professor

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