

UAAACT News

Utah Augmentative, Alternative, Assistive Communication And Technology Teams

UAAACT Web Site: www.uaaact.org

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Editor
Suzanne B. Anderson

Assistant Editor
Britta Scullion

**The Computer
Center for
Citizens with
Disabilities**

1595 West 500 South
Salt Lake City, Utah
(84101)

Phone: 801-887-9380
Toll Free:
888-866-5550

Craig Boogaard
Director
UAAACT
cboogaar@utah.gov

Scott Baggaley
Education Program
Specialist
sbaggaley@utah.gov

Lynn Marcoux
Executive Secretary
lmarcoux@utah.gov



Best wishes to everyone for the New Year of 2012.

With the school year now half over, we need to assess what we can do or need to do to better in serving our students. It is amazing to see so many new programs that have been made available for our use. Even more amazing is the technology for iPads, iPhone and the many apps that are available. This new technology is bringing greater hope to many of our students with disabilities. We should still continue to use all equipment and programs -- where it is possible, and to plan wisely as to what is best for our individual students. Over the years, the UAAACT project has grown and been able to offer training, equipment, and programs for the state teams. Many stories could be told of helping individuals and the success they have enjoyed. Each year brings new ways to assist individuals with special needs. The UAAACT members work hard to continue to find ways to assist those that are in need of our training. We say thank you to the foresight of the UAAACT project development and for those that continue to see the vision and the need and continuing to provide us with the tools we need to put smiles on our special need students.

Mark your Calendars for Upcoming Events

January 19
1:00 – 3:00

January 18
10:30 AM

February
1:00 – 3:00

March 2 - 3
Jordan High School

File Maker Pro Training
Scott Baggaley sbaggaley@utah.gov
UAAACT Leadership Council Meeting

Feb - 7th iPad for Literacy
Scott Baggaley sbaggaley@utah.gov
UCET Conference - find details on page 2
Contact Lynn Marcoux
lmarcoux@utah.gov to register

UAAACT Members Encouraged to Attend 2012 UCET Conference

The 2012 UCET Conference will be held at Jordan High School, 95 East Beetdigger Blvd. (approximately 9800 South and State Street) Sandy, UT 84070 on Friday, March 2 and Saturday, March 3, 2012. The conference will run all day on Friday with breakfast and lunch provided. The conference will conclude about 1:00 PM on Saturday. Breakfast will be provided on Saturday. The registration fee is \$45. For UAAACT members, the registration fee, mileage, hotel (if you qualify) and cost of substitute will be paid by the UAAACT Project. The UCET conference will have a significant strand on assistive technology /special education. UAAACT team members who attended Closing the Gap Conference in October will all be presenting what they learned at the upcoming UCET Conference. With this in mind, **we encourage every UAAACT member to attend the UCET Conference if they can get permission to do so.** For an idea of the AT sessions that will be presented at the UCET Conference, see the list at the end of this article.

In order to attend the 2012 UCET Conference, here are some suggested steps:

Step 1- Get approval from your school or district administration to attend the conference ASAP.

Step 2- Before 5 PM on Thursday, February 2nd, email Lynn Marcoux at (lmarcoux@utah.gov) or mail a completed registration form. She needs ALL of this information to complete your registration. The UCET Conference Registration form is the last page of this newsletter.

Step 3- If you live and work over 50 miles from Jordan High School, you may be eligible to have the UAAACT Project cover one or two nights lodging at the Hilton Garden Inn in Sandy. If you are not sure you are eligible, contact Lynn Marcoux at 801-887-9380.

Then make contact with another UAAACT member before making your room reservation and together, **make your reservation at the Hilton Garden Inn, Sandy, UT before February 2, 2012.** Please tell them you are with UAAACT and have been offered a state rate of \$90/night double occupancy. This rate is only good on - March 1st and 2nd.

Hilton Garden Inn
277 West Segoe Lily Drive
Sandy, Utah 84070
Tel: 1-801-352-9400

The cut-off date for reservations will be ***February 02, 2012.*** After this date any rooms remaining will be released back to the hotel. Merri Woods is our contact person at the Hilton Garden Inn. If you have problems with your reservation, you can reach her directly at 801-601-4425.

For more information on the UCET Conference, go to: www.ucet.org

If you have questions about the UCET Conference, contact Craig Boogaard at: 801-887-9533 or cboogaar@utah.gov.

**** Sample of AT Sessions that will be provided at the 2012 UCET Conference:**

iPads and Students with Low Vision

We will cover our experience with accessing the curriculum (textbooks, books, etc.) through scanning and briefly touching on sources like Bookshare.org and Project Gutenberg. This session will discuss accessing worksheets (through email, etc.), Note taking (through audio notes, Livescribe, etc.) and student to student mentoring.

Livescribe / Echo Smart Pens

This session will demonstrate how students with limited note-taking skills are using the Livescribe pens in and out of the classroom.

More Assistive Technology sessions at the 2012 UCET Conference:

Bookshare

This course will cover information on the use of Bookshare.org including the following:

Bookshare is free for all U.S. students with qualifying disabilities. Bookshare dramatically increases the accessibility of books. Bookshare includes a searchable online library. Bookshare offers approximately 127,000 digital books, textbooks, teacher-recommended reading, periodicals and assistive technology tools. Come see how you can use Bookshare in your classroom absolutely free.

Using What you Already Have or Free Tools to Help Students with Reading and Writing Challenges

We will explore using the technology that you may already have in new ways as well as exploring different FREE options that may allow students with reading and writing challenges to be able to access the curriculum, and be able to create and edit their own unique work.

Writing Assistance – Using Desktop and Portable Word Prediction

Do your students have difficulty spelling but have the ability to choose a desired word from a written list? Would they benefit from having a computer speak word choices and constructed sentences to them? Do your students have challenging fine motor skills that inhibit handwriting or need help increasing productivity with keyboarding? Co:Writer, a word prediction program may be the solution. This session will demonstrate the steps to using Co:Writer6, including how to customize vocabulary to meet student's needs and classroom curriculum. We will also discuss the NEO, a portable solution to make Co:Writer accessible anywhere.

Look at This! Video Modeling as an Instructional Tool

This session will explore what video modeling is, some tools for using video modeling, and sources for learning more about video modeling. Research has demonstrated that video modeling is effective in teaching specific

social, play and functional skills to students with autism and other cognitive disabilities. It is tailored for special populations and also has applications in regular education as well.

What's New with Boardmaker

Boardmaker software from Mayer Johnson has been around for years and has been used faithfully by special educators. A year ago Mayer Johnson introduced Boardmaker Studio, a new version of software that allows teachers to quickly print out activities on paper or design interactive activities that can be used on a computer or with an interactive white board. This session will teach you how to create activities using fast and easy templates, design activities from scratch, create pictures for augmentative communication and access thousands of free activities designed by educators from around the country.

Identifying and teaching concrete skills to make the iPad an effective classroom tool

Identifying a student's current levels of performance with an iPad using the AAC profile and observations. Determining concrete skills for the student to master using the iPad (operational, linguistic, social strategic. Setting up a program to teach and monitor the development of these concrete skills.

EEE Pad – Application for Special Education

This session will focus on the EEEPAD and how it can be used in Special Education settings. The session is especially for UAACT team members who would like to receive an Asus EEE Pad for their team assessment kit. All UAACT teams that have at least one team member in attendance at this session will receive an EEE Pad during the session. We will then review some practical applications, describing how this device might help middle school and high school students in special education settings.

Keynote Speakers at the UCET Conference:

Rushton Hurley (Next Vista for Learning)
Rulon Gardner (Olympic Gold Medalist)

Conference Theme: Going for the Gold

We look forward to seeing you there.

Closing the Gap Highlights by Judy Roberts and Julie Aegerter of Jordan School District

In mid-October, nineteen UAAACT team leaders or designees attended the 29th annual Closing the Gap Conference in Minneapolis, MN. This conference is widely regarded as one of the top augmentative/assistive technology gatherings in the United States. The 2011 Closing The Gap Conference offered numerous workshops and presentations, as well as an extensive commercial exhibit hall.

During the three-day conference, over two hundred presentations were held to describe and/or demonstrate successful applications of assistive technology for persons with disabilities. Topics ranged from high-tech, including iPad apps and computer software, to light-tech, such as cause-effect switch use and dollar store bargains. There was also an emphasis on Universal Design and Accessible Instructional Materials.

In addition to workshops, eighty-five vendors filled a large exhibit hall. Attendees were able to walk through the hall, see demonstrations of the latest devices and software and ask questions of the vendors. Many of the vendors also presented workshops during the conference. Following are a few of the highlights:

1) Apps, apps, and more apps! Of course the hot topic was the iPad, and a wide variety of apps were discussed. ArtikPix and PhonoPix have been developed for use with students who have speech impairments. Pictello allows students to import pictures or photos into original stories. See more at www.assistiveware.com. Using the Scene & Heard app, students can create a scene and add hot spots to record their story. Get more details at the www.tboxapps.com website.

2) The LiveScribe Pen may be more versatile than we thought! In addition to note-taking, students can “pencast” their homework or tests to their teachers, and record oral book reports. It can be used to practice articulation, send “penmail” for communication between school and home, and practice reading fluency. There are also applications for art and music! In addition to the notebooks, they have developed sticky notes and stickers. Check out their website: www.livescribe.com as well as www.livescribek12.com to get more information.

3) The Logan Proxtalker is not your typical dedicated augmentative device! It is a mid-tech device which uses RFID technology to retrieve vocabulary stored on sound tags. It was originally developed for a boy with autism who was a picture exchange system user. Pick one of eighty pre-recorded tags, place it on one of five buttons, and press. The Logan Proxtalker will say the appropriate sound, word, or sentence. You can record your own tags, as well as have the device “read” the information on all five buttons from left to right. Go to www.proxtalker.com to see this device in action.

4) Boardmaker Studio is another versatile product! It is the newest Windows-based from Mayer-Johnson. The hundreds of templates that are included within the software allow you to create a variety of interactive and print activities. Templates include interactive books, matching games, sequencing activities, visual schedules and more! It can be used to adapt curriculum and make accessible materials and activities. It also works well with interactive white boards. Version 1.2 also includes templates for creating visual scenes for building vocabulary, building sentences to work on grammar and syntax and the recording and playback of speech for practicing articulation and pronunciation. Mayer-Johnson is currently allowing upgrades from any Boardmaker product to Boardmaker Studio for \$179. Check out www.mayer-johnson.com for further information.

5) Don’t say “Hit the switch”! Scott Marfilus and Kelly Fonner reminded attendees that the switch is not the activity, but rather it is the means to access the activity. They provided a list of purposeful software to motivate switch users. These ranged from cause-effect programs such as Switch Kids by Marblesoft, to a program called Story Builder by Judy Lynn which allows users to write a book or read a book. Click to Read software by Aimee Solutions includes information on animal habitats and life skills, as well as interactive activities and quizzes. See more about these programs and others at www.judylynn.com, www.marblesoft.com, and www.aimeesolutions.com.

Contact your team leader and attend UCET to learn more about Closing the Gap!

My Top 5 “Take-Aways” from Closing the Gap

By: Caroline Bass, OTL, Washington School District

Whew! Closing the Gap 2011 provided an abundance of information from the 96 presentations, plus vendor hands on opportunities. I am still sifting through my notes and the online handouts. Below are my top 5 knowledge acquisitions that I have been able to share and apply with my students, teachers and parents.

1. A solution for those students who cannot successfully tap or drag on the iPad because they rest their hand or multiple fingers on the screen, is to use a glove or mitten with the index and or thumb tip removed. Many stores are now selling adult-size gloves and mittens with the thumb and index finger “tech” tips.
2. Bookshare is an effective and free solution that allows audio and visual enhanced access for students with a print disability. It is under-utilized in many Utah school districts. Important information about Bookshare: Digital books for individuals with print disabilities; FREE memberships for qualified U.S. students through OSEP award; FREE assistive technology software; 24/7 access to books. Books come from a variety of sources such as: NIMAC textbooks which are easily retrieved through Bookshare; Universities are a growing partnership, sending academic to career planning books on a regular basis; Publisher partnerships that allow chopping and scanning of books. A variety of formats are available to individuals with qualifying print disabilities (copyrighted materials) including: DAISY-3 (Digital Accessible Information System); global digital talking book format; BRF (Braille Ready Format); digital Braille; MP3 coming soon.
3. The Livescribe Smart Pen is a relatively low-cost (as low as \$99.00), computer-in-a pen with a multitude of educational, AAC and AT

applications. Specialty paper, sticky notes or dots are required. Some applications include: Use as an AAC device by printing pictures with captions, then creating the audio. The student uses the pen to touch the desired picture which causes the pen to “speak” the caption. See You-Tube at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06cXC23IHt0>

and <http://.screencast.com/tXrnl12TcrD>.

Use to create a Talking Test or worksheet with talking answers, notes and audio can be downloaded to a computer for visual and audio review which enables e-mailing and haring capabilities. Create Auditory Flashcards: Each flashcard can “talk” to the student, giving not only the words, but pronunciation hints. Paper Calculator: Each pen comes with a fully-functional scientific calculator allowing for quick, simple calculations without the paper calculator. More information:

<http://www.livescribek12.com>; <http://bit.ly/dotsba>
<http://livescribe.pbworkks.com/w/page/466767113/FrontPage>

4. A free source for assessing switch readiness can be found at: <http://apps4stages.wikispaces.com>

5. I have to mentioned the new AAC software called, Improv, from Don Johnston; because I won the drawing for the opportunity to use the beta version. As described on their website: <http://www.donjohnston.com/products/improv/iindex.html>

“With Improv, your augmentative communicators won’t be limited to the words programmed in their devices OR the words they can spell. They will have the precise word or phrase available to them by just entering a few letters-whether it’s their favorite movie, restaurant, hobby or current social studies topic. Even phonetic or inventive spellers can communicate with Co:Writer helping out. These supports help your student’s transition into literacy-based communication and as they communicate, Improv learns new vocabulary, phrases, and stories then auto-adapts to improve communication.”

Adaptations for the iPad for students with significant physical disabilities

By: Britta Scullion, OTR/L, Canyons School District

This information comes from Pati King-DeBaun's Early Literacy Tools and Accessibility for Severe and Multiple Disabilities presentation at the 2011 Closing the Gap Conference.

iPad's are becoming available to more and more special education classrooms. There are thousands of apps available to teach basic concepts, literacy, and communication. However, for students with severe physical limitations, adaptations are still required to access an iPad. The following options are available to make iPads and a variety of apps accessible to those with the greatest motor challenges.

Many books for iPads require a simple swipe instead of touching a small arrow icon. Books designed for toddlers generally require light touch to swipe. Check out books from the publisher Ocean House Media.

Mounts: The iPad is easy to access for students in wheelchairs using a mount. There are many available. Modularhose.com and RJ Cooper make wheelchair mounts with iPad attachment. Also, suction cup mounts designed for boating or aviation work well to mount the iPad to a table. AbleNet carries a leg mount for iPods and iPads that securely strap the iPad to a person's leg.



For students who cannot use touch access the iPad with switch access: At this time there are still less than 10 apps that allow for switch access. The two switches currently available for iPad include AbleNet's Blue2 for \$149. and RJ Cooper's Bluetooth switch interface \$99. and super switch interface \$149. These all use Bluetooth technology and only work with apps that have switch access built in.



Switch accessible apps: At this time there are still only about 10 switch accessible apps: some examples are: Sounding board by AbleNet (simple communication multi level), RJ Cooper's Rad Sounds (cause/effect, choice scanning with fun music), Tap Speak Sequence, (sequencer with picture and messages), My Own Books 2 Go by Pati King-DeBaun (scan to create and read stories). See app store for prices.

For those who have some use of their hands, but still struggle with touch access there are a few other options:

Joystick: Think Geek makes a joystick that suctions to an iPad and can be placed over an arrow button, to allow one to activate the arrow by bumping the joystick.



Keyguards: Proloquo2Go makes keyguards for their communication app in a variety of sizes.

Stylus: Crayola and others make a stylus in a universal grip or t-grip for someone with wrist flexion contractures or other upper extremity limitations.



Bub-cap: this fits over the home button, and can only be removed by an adult, preventing a student from leaving the app you are using. (Also called an "angry bird blocker")

These adaptations can help the iPad be accessible to every student, increasing their options for learning, communicating, and socializing. The iPad is new and a motivating way to include students of all levels in school, with peers and during family activities.

UCET Conference Registration Form

Before 5 PM on Thursday, February 2nd, email Lynn Marcoux at (lmarcoux@utah.gov) the registration information requested below. She needs ALL of this information to complete your registration.

Name:

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

Zip

Phone:

Email:

Type of Participant – check all that apply

- K-3 Teacher
- 4-6 Teacher
- Middle School/Junior High Teacher
- High School Teacher
- Library/Media
- School Staff
- Principal
- District Administration
- IT Administration
- IT Staff
- Higher Education
- Other _____

Name of School/Organization: UAAACT

Name of District:

Organization Type:

- In-state K-12 School – public or private / Organization
- In-state College/University
- Other _____

List any special needs that we should be aware of regarding your attendance at this conference. Note: If UCET does not receive a request to meet any special needs at least 30 days prior to the conference, accommodations may not be available.

I would like to volunteer at the conference (check all that apply):

- Introduce presenters and collect evaluation forms
- Help with registration on Friday morning
- Assemble participant packets on Thursday evening, March 1st at Jordan High.
- Whatever needs to be done.