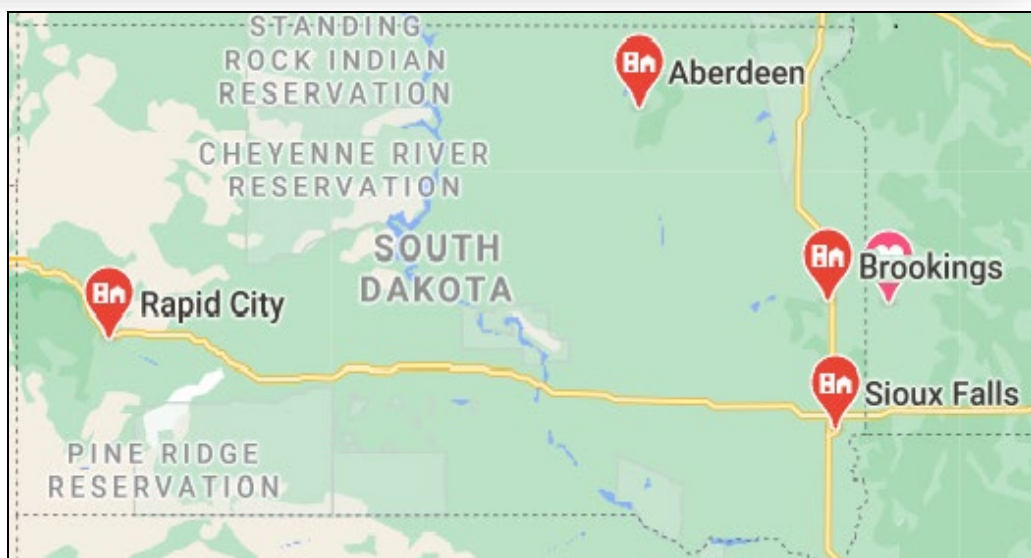


[illegible]

The United States Congress created the Assistive Technology Act (AT Act) in 1998 and reauthorized it in 2004. This legislation provides funding to 60 AT Act Programs, one in each state and U.S. Territory, that provide greater access to assistive technology. DakotaLink, established in 1992, is South Dakota's A.T. Program. DakotaLink activities include supporting alternative financing programs (AFP) for A.T., A.T. device reutilization, Short-term A.T. device loans, A.T. device demonstrations, training, technical assistance, and public awareness.

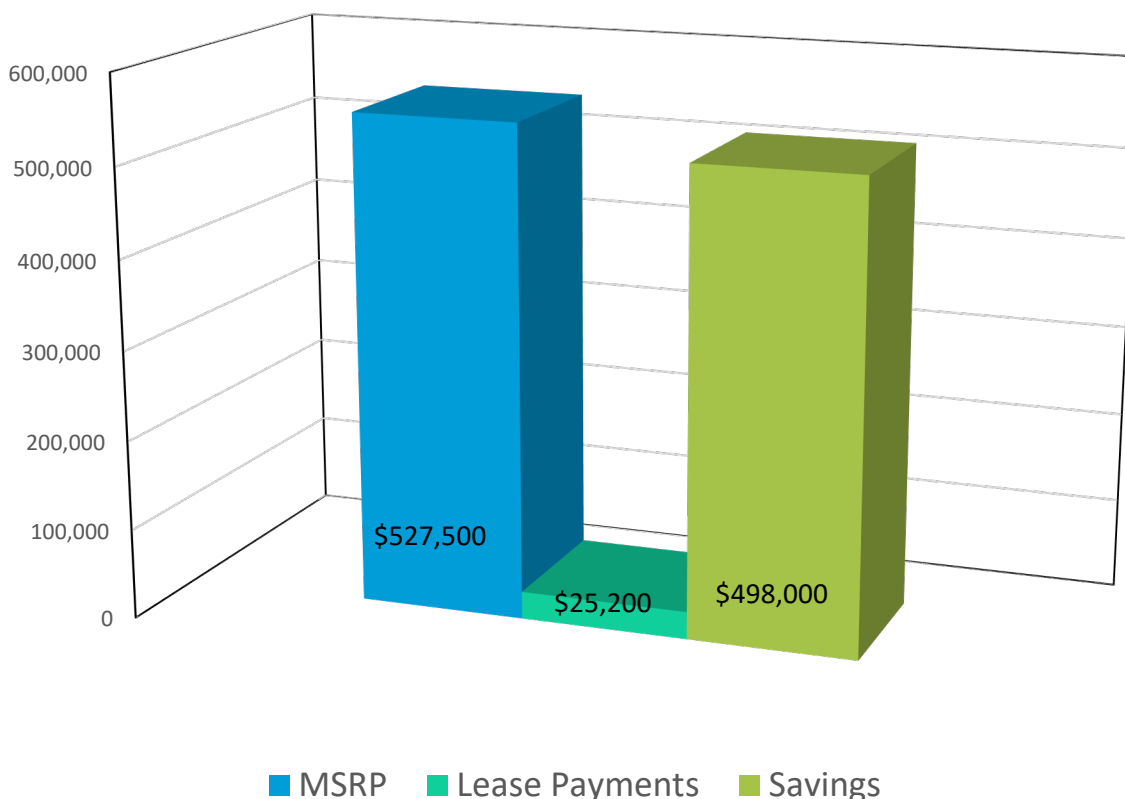
2021 Activities

Alternative Financing

**State Financing Activities that allow consumers
to obtain Assistive Technology at
reduced costs.**

DakotaLink administers a long-term lease/loan program for the South Dakota Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired that provided 211 South Dakotans closed-circuit televisions (CCTV's) in 2021. The Income-based program provided equipment to 70 participants leased at \$30.00 per month. There were 141 people who met the financial need and only paid a \$50 deposit. We have a Database that also tracks all this information. In addition to this information, the database is where we track all the monthly payments that people send us. This allowed individuals with deteriorating vision access to the equipment they might only use for a short while, saving these mostly senior citizens **\$498,000**.

2021 CCTV Lease/Loan Program



Alt fund Success Spotlight

DakotaLink provided a Merlin to a Veteran's home and trained him and his wife about the power connections followed by the controls. They had not been able to read, pay bills independently, or do paperwork for some time and were very excited to receive the unit. We then trained them on the various functions of the Merlin. We followed up and the Veteran's wife reported that he is happily using the Merlin to read a paperback novel and the instruction manual for a battery charger. They greatly appreciate having the Merlin.

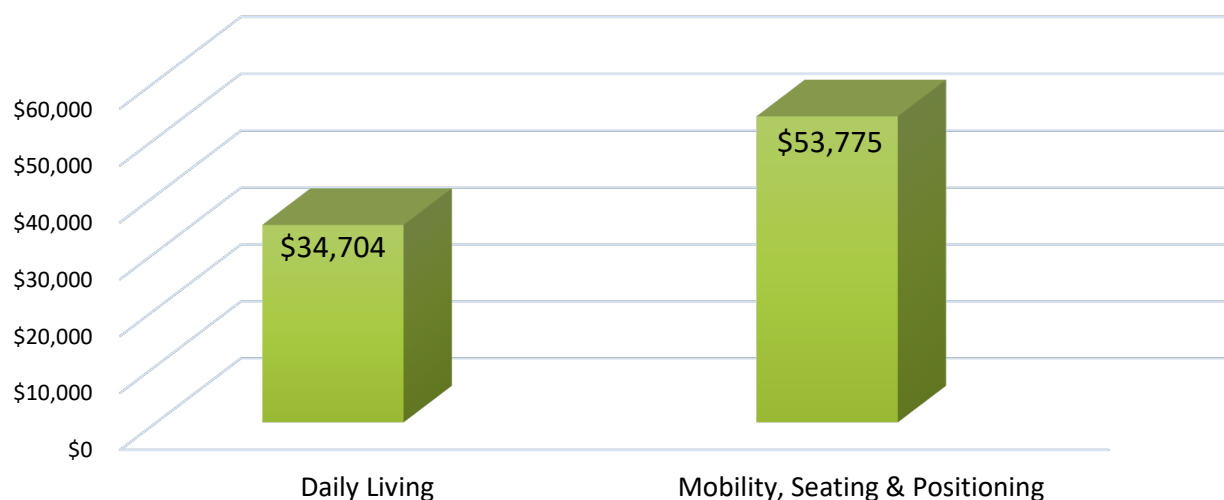
DakotaLink provided a Merlin to a client's home and set it up. We trained a woman and her daughter and niece where the power connections were and where all the controls are located. We then trained them on the various functions of the Merlin. We ensured they had our contact information and let them know they can contact us if they have any questions or need any further assistance. We followed up with the client's daughter and she was very happy to report that she had taken a picture of her mom happily using the Merlin all by herself. The client is happily using the Merlin daily.

Reutilization - SDAT4ALL



<https://www.sd.at4all.com/> is a web-based resource to borrow, recycle, donate, and exchange Assistive Technology Devices and Durable Medical Equipment.

Dollar Value of Exchanged and Refurbished AT Devices Distributed at No or Minimal Cost



In 2021, individuals across South Dakota exchanged or recycled 59 devices, from modified vehicles to aids for daily living; most offered at no charge, saving consumers \$80,773 based upon current retail prices.

Any piece of equipment that is brought in and recycled at the MERR program is available to Medicaid recipients only for 90 days at no cost to the consumer. After 90 days that equipment is available to anyone at ¼ of the value as if it were new to a maximum of \$5,000.00. This means the most any consumer would pay out of pocket is \$1,250.00 plus delivery fees.

The activity at this facility was less than the previous years due to the COVID Pandemic.

Reuse Success Spotlight

There are currently 257 devices available through the sd.at4all.com website which allows people to see all of the devices that are available for loan or sale. The number of requests directly from the website is increasing, but most people contact the program directly to determine the best-suited device they need to purchase or borrow. This also helps in determining if the person requesting is capable of using it effectively.



The Medical Equipment Reuse & Recycle Building and Truck and Trailer

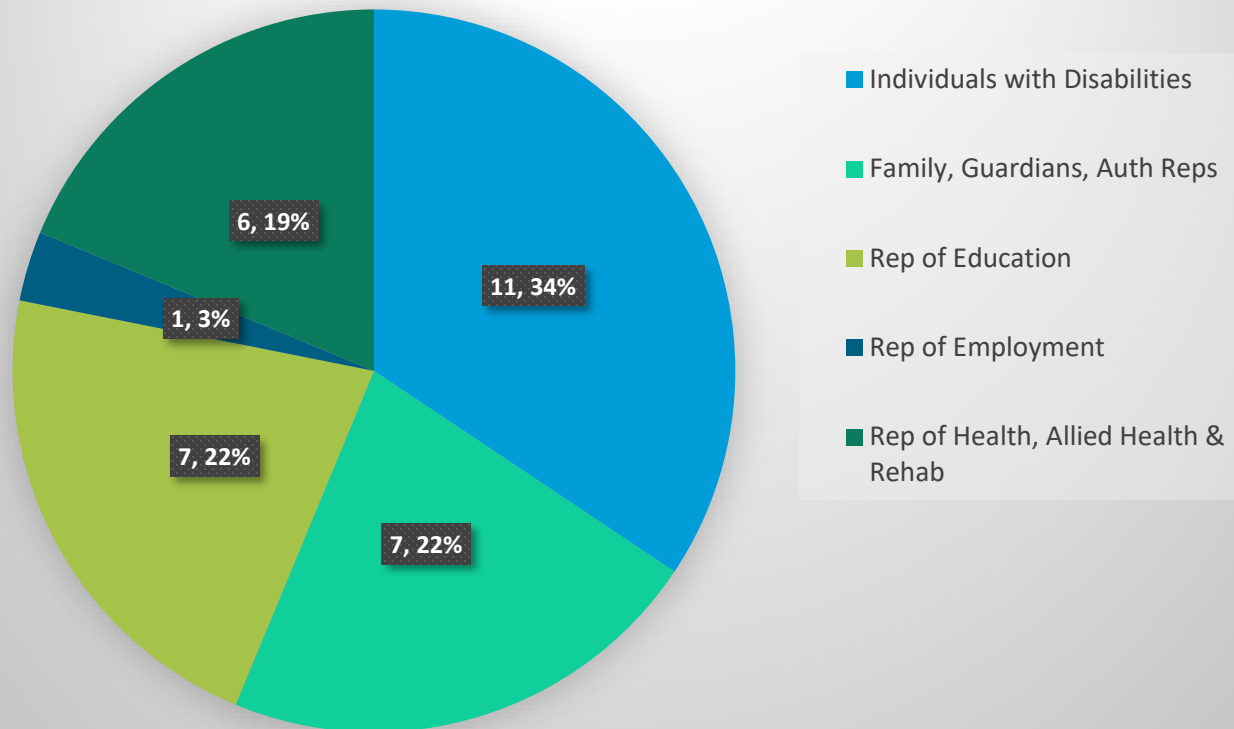


Equipment from The Recycling Center as Well as our HubScrub

AT Device Loans

DakotaLink provides short-term loans of AT devices to assist individuals in decision making, to serve as a loaner during repairs, to provide short-term accommodations, and to conduct training, self-education, or other professional activities. The average loan is for a period of fourteen days. The loan period can be extended depending upon the individual circumstances.

Loans by Borrower Type



Total 32 Loans

Loan Success Spotlight

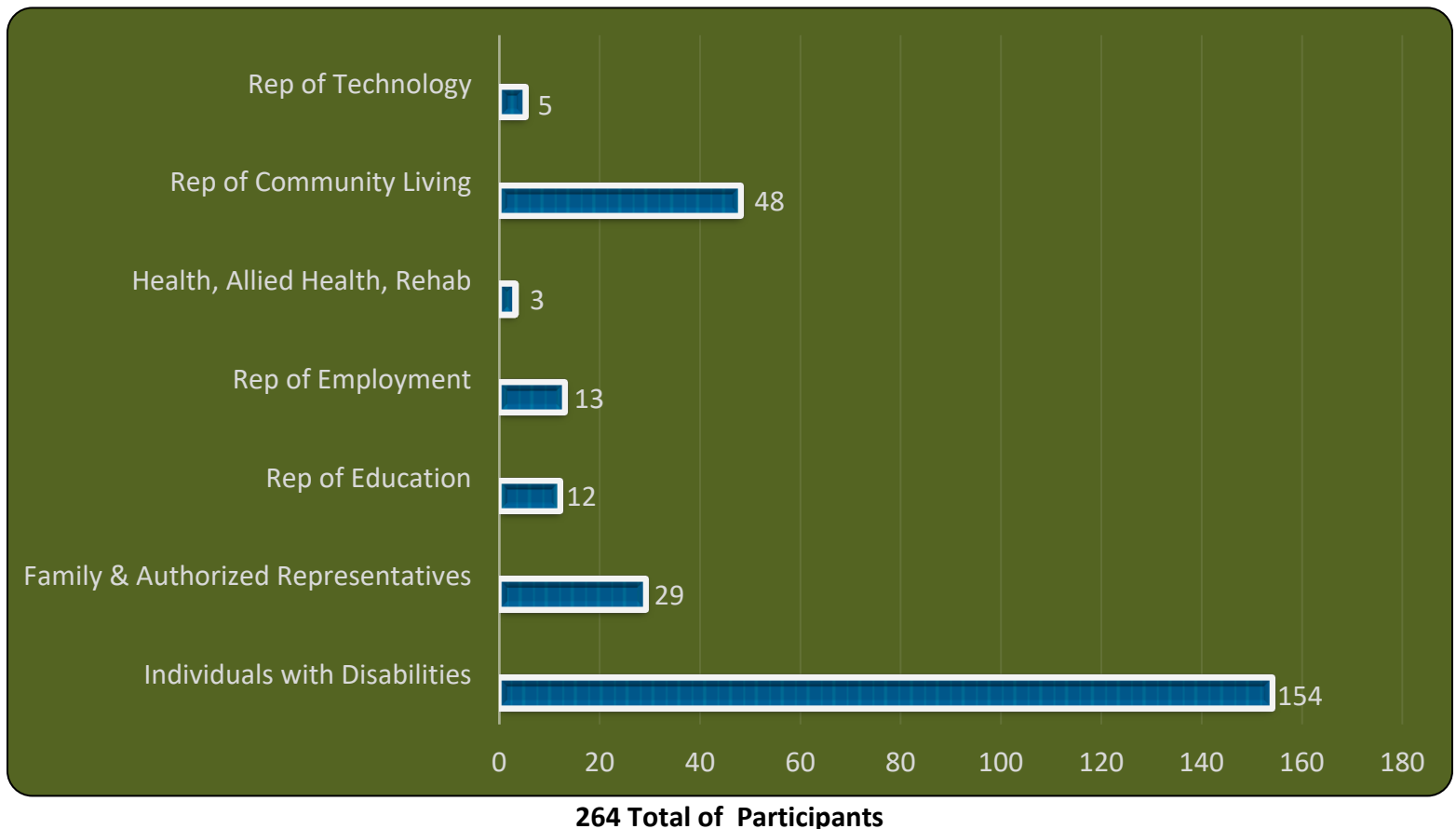
A woman's husband was at Mayo Clinic and was scheduled to come home on April 30th. He had been there for 3 months. He was very weak and was able to get a wheelchair from DakotaLink early to be able to get home in time. He would have had to wait 2 more weeks from the hospital.



AT Device Demonstrations

Dakotalink provided 264 demonstrations of AT Devices to 269 participants in 2021. Demos were provided by appointment at four Demonstration Centers located in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Brookings, and Aberdeen. DakotaLink Technicians also travel to private residences, schools, businesses, and other locations depending upon specific circumstances and individual needs. The number of people involved in these demonstrations was low this year due to the ongoing COVID Pandemic.

Demonstrations by Participant Type



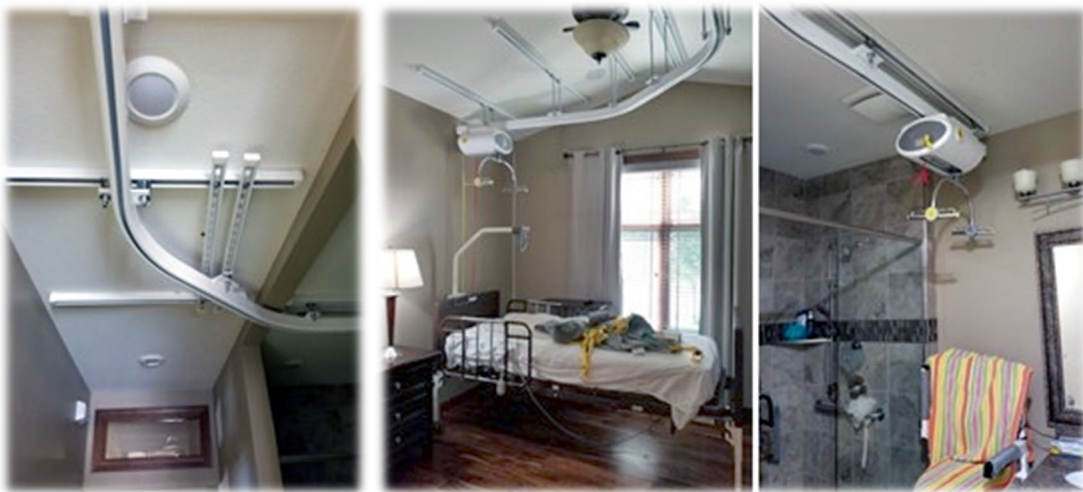
Device demonstrations are done almost every day at all locations and on-site at the consumer's residence, school, or place of business. We do group presentations for many groups throughout the year. These presentations always include demonstrations. If you consider those presentations, then we do demonstrations to thousands every year. Demonstrations include iPad Apps, Computer Software, and Low Vision Devices including Magnifiers and CCTV's and Personal Body Lift Systems.

Demo
Success
Spotlight

AHE is a paralyzed veteran who uses a SureHands lift in his home that we installed several years ago and continues to service periodically. He has been in and out of nursing homes and rehab facilities, and his lift system has significantly reduced the amount of time he has to spend there and increased his independence while at home.



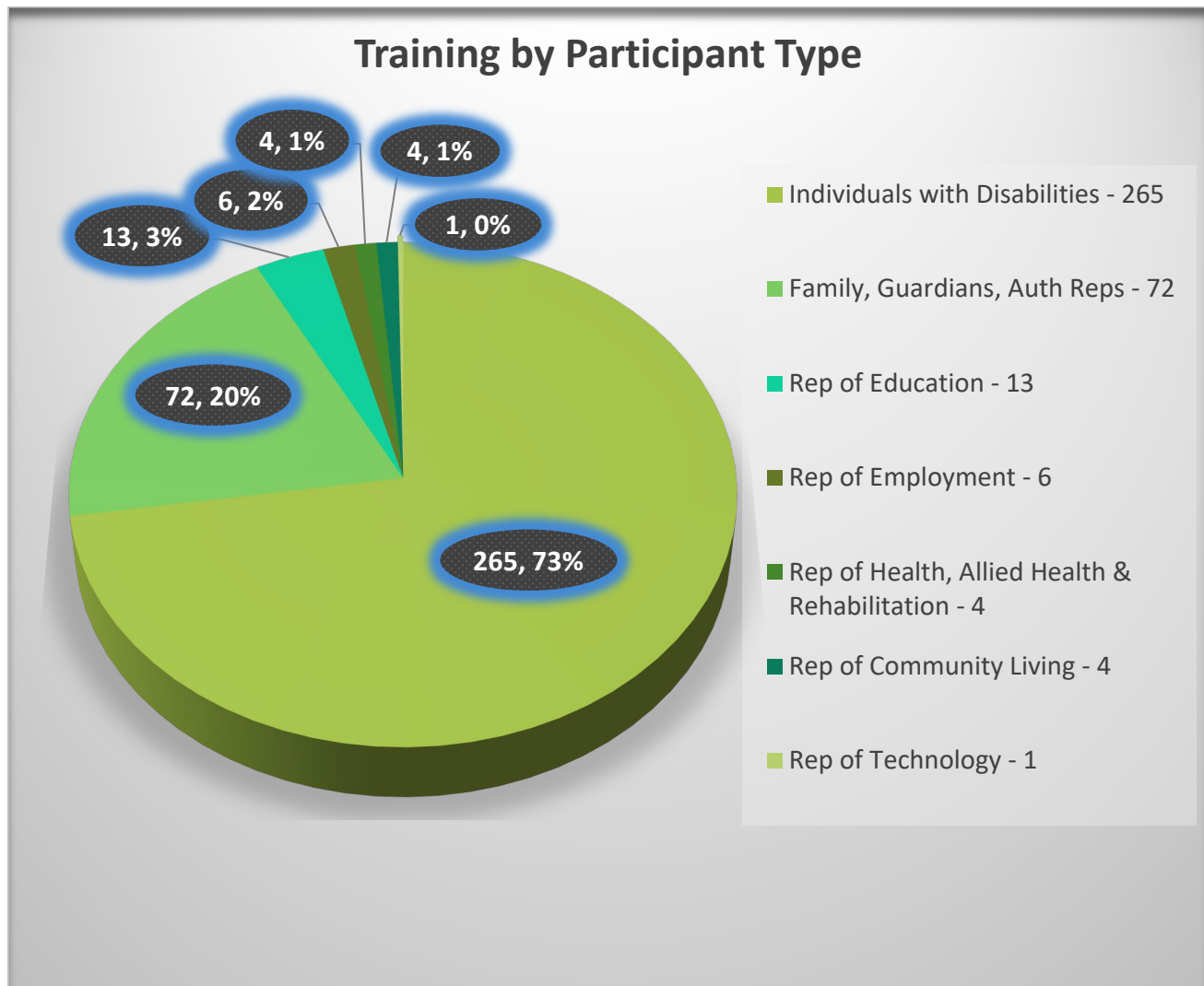
SureHands Body Support



SureHands Ceiling Track and Lift System

Training Activities

In 2021 DakotaLink Technicians provided training on the use of assistive technology devices to 491 individuals across South Dakota.



Total of 491 Participants

Training Success Spotlight

Over the summer of 2021, we trained all of the staff from the Department of Rehabilitation Services on the interactive process we have updated to ensure the appropriate flow of documentation on clients. We also updated all staff on DakotaLink's status, new employees, and transition.

We were able to conduct one Youth Leadership Forum this summer, but all of the other transition activities were canceled this year due to the COVID pandemic.

The State of South Dakota recognizes the need to ensure equal access to electronic and information technologies for all individuals. The South Dakota Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT) has specific standards for web development design in order to provide an accessible web presence that enables the public full access to South Dakota government information and services.

Technical Assistance

The State of South Dakota Bureau of Information and Technology has a List of Standard Assistive Technology and DakotaLink updates this list annually. The software allows for state employees to have access to Informational Communication Technology specifically through the computer with access to email, the Web, and other forms of communication technology. DakotaLink also has an agreement with the Bureau to provide training to State Employees on this technology. DakotaLink evaluated a new web-based file management system that the Department of Human Services was implementing. This includes having meetings with Department personnel and the company providing the software. DakotaLink identifies issues they observe during the evaluation of products and makes recommendations that they implemented.

DakotaLink participates in all of the Catch the Wave events, which help students determine what they might need for going on to college from the high school level. Since the COVID pandemic, the events were canceled in 2021. We did participate in 1 Youth Leadership Forum that 80 students participated in which is a symposium for students with disabilities where Assistive Technology was introduced to them to increase their awareness of options for them when they attend post-secondary educations.

With COVID, we were not able to participate in several canceled events due to the pandemic. DakotaLink has had a long history of working with the State Bureau of Information and Technology and the Department of Human Services to ensure Website Accessibility in regards to Section 508 and W3C Standards. The State Bureau of Information and Technology has adopted and posted an Accessibility Policy along with a Web Page dedicated to assisting other Departments in meeting Section 508 and W3C Standards.

Public Awareness

DakotaLink sends out newsletters every quarter to the folks on our mailing list. We update the list as people are interested. This comes out to be approximately 500 newsletters over a year's time. We also post on list/serves/blogs and social media. The list serves are at3center-ml@list.ataporg.org and The Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP) ataporg@ataporg.org. We also have a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/DakotaLinkAT> where we share what we are doing and keep people informed on our COVID status. We also have brochures for the DakotaLink program, the Medical Equipment Recycle and Reuse program and AT4All, which I have attached. I have also a spreadsheet of our presentation and conferences that we have attended. Due to COVID, we were not able to attend all the conferences this year as many have been cancelled.

DakotaLink's mission is to assist individuals with functional limitations due to disability, illness, injury, or aging to maximize their potential at home, in the community, at school, at work, or at play with Assistive Technology.

For more information please contact us by calling 605-394-6742 (V/TD), or Toll-free at 1-800-645-0673 Email: atinfo@dakotalink.net, <https://www.facebook.com/DakotaLinkAT/>, or visit us on our website <http://DakotaLink.net>.

It is our pleasure to serve the people of South Dakota.