



Fall News 2020

Technology Solutions for Life's Limitations

Greetings!

DakotaLink hopes that you are staying healthy and safe through these extraordinary times with COVID-19. Our numbers in South Dakota are higher than they have ever been.

DakotaLink's Status Regarding COVID-19

All our staff continue to use PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) when visiting our clients. That includes masks, gloves and shoe covers. We are also asking before any visit, if there are any illnesses in the establishment we are going into. We now have a form we use to ask questions about health before we meet.

DakotaLink has “no contact” thermometers for all the offices and they wear protective gear when visiting clients and walking in the offices. DakotaLink is available for curbside drop off and Zoom training for anyone who is concerned about meeting in person.

As you likely know, all conferences and in-person gatherings have been either cancelled or postponed until further notice.

We are continuing our ATAP Membership calls (Zoom Meetings) striving for reauthorization of the 21st Century Assistive Technology Act.

The difficult decision was made to cancel the BHSSC Christmas Party that was scheduled for December 18 at the Spearfish Holiday Inn. There doesn't seem to be any

possibility that within a couple of months it will be safe for a large group of people to spend the evening together. So, this year's BHSSC Christmas Party has been cancelled.

Resources:

<https://covid.sd.gov/>

<https://www.atia.org/covid19-resources/>

<https://www.ataporg.org/>

<https://www.at3center.net/>

Staffing

We have filled our Purchasing Specialist position in Rapid City and welcome Charity Day who started August 27th in our main office. We are still looking to fill the Assistive Technology Specialist position in Sioux Falls. Please feel free to pass along the job description below if you know of anyone that may be a good fit.

**Black Hills Special Services Cooperative/ DakotaLink is seeking an
Assistive Technology Specialist
To be located in Sioux Falls, SD**

This job involves assessing individual needs for assistive technology along with providing installation and training on all types of assistive technology with a major focus on computers with specialized hardware and software. The successful candidate will also install personal environmental control systems and other types of assistive technology. The consumers served will be individuals of all ages with a wide range of disabilities in southeastern South Dakota.

Occasional overnight travel is expected. A degree in a computer related science along with experience is required, however, field experience with AT may be substituted. A desire to work with individuals with disabilities is required. Starting Salary is \$35,000 with full benefits.

Send resume to DakotaLink:

1161 Deadwood Ave #5, Rapid City, SD 57702 or email to pczerny@dakotalink.net.

<https://www.facebook.com/DakotaLinkAT/posts/965786737225140>

Social Networking

We are continuing our efforts in social networking getting a great deal of traffic on Facebook and share posts with ATAP, AT3, ILC, DHS, DSS and MERR. We have also added more resource information on our website: <https://www.dakotalink.net/at-partners/sd-partners>

We also want to remind everyone of our low interest loan program. The application is on our website, but here is the direct link: <https://www.dakotalink.net/at-funding>

Letters to Congress

I am continuing to write letters out to Congressmen for support of the new the AT Act. Sarah said she could write a letter of support. Page is collecting data now and will be processing the annual progress report in October.

The more Representatives we have supporting this legislation, the more serious Congress will take this piece of legislation.

Representatives Eddie Bernice-Johnson and Adam Schiff introduced H.R. 8523, Supporting Children with Disabilities During COVID-19 Act on October 2 which would provide funding for the Assistive Technology Act at \$55 million to address needs associated with COVID-19.

DakotaLink strives to maintain its professionalism by earning a RESNA ATP certification. (ATP – Assistive Technology Professional). We currently have 5 staff with their ATP certification and will continue to help the newer employee's gain that status. To maintain these credentials, we must complete a specific amount of CEU's (Continuing Education Credits) on a biennial basis. We have been doing that mostly through webinars that ATAP provides through an agreement with ATIA.



Remember, we are on Facebook! So, be sure to “like” us to see what we are up to on a daily basis: <https://www.facebook.com/DakotaLinkAT/>

Be safe and healthy!

Best,

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DakotaLink is the South Dakota Assistive Technology Program.

Our mission is to assist individuals with functional limitations; due to a disability, illness, injury, or the effects of aging; maximize their potential whether at home or in the community, at school, at work, or at play through the use of Assistive Technology.

An assistive technology device is any equipment or tool that helps individual overcome limitations in daily activities.

Assistive technology services assist individuals to acquire, use, modify, or maintain an assistive technology device.