



# Assistive Technology @ Work

Tools to Accommodate Employees with Disabilities

*Mystie Rail, Executive Director*

# What is Assistive Technology?

- **“Assist”** or **“Assistive”**
  - to give usually supplementary support or aid
  - providing aid or assistance; *specifically*: designed or intended to assist disabled persons



# What is Assistive Technology?

## ▶ “Technology”

- the practical application of knowledge especially in a particular area
- a manner of accomplishing a task especially using technical processes, methods, or knowledge
- the use of science in industry, engineering, etc., to invent useful things or to solve problems
- a machine, piece of equipment, method, etc., that is created by technology

*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*

# What is Assistive Technology?

- **Assistive + Technology =**
  - generic term for devices and modifications that help overcome or remove a disability
  - devices, software, or services for people with disabilities that promotes greater independence
  - provides enhancements to or changed methods of interacting with the technology needed to accomplish such tasks



# What is Assistive Technology?

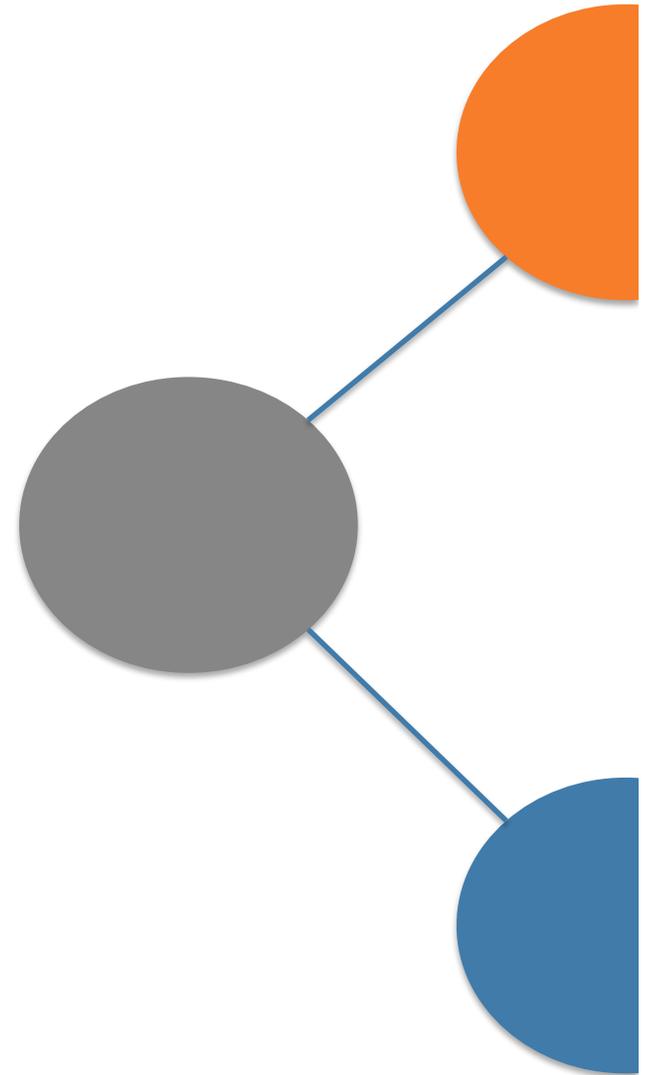
Assistive technology is a type of job accommodation that enables a person with a disability to perform an activity or improve their job performance.



# Who is ATLA?

## Grant Activities

- Information & awareness
- Demonstrations
- General AT presentations
- Short term loans
- Long term rental
- Reutilization of equipment

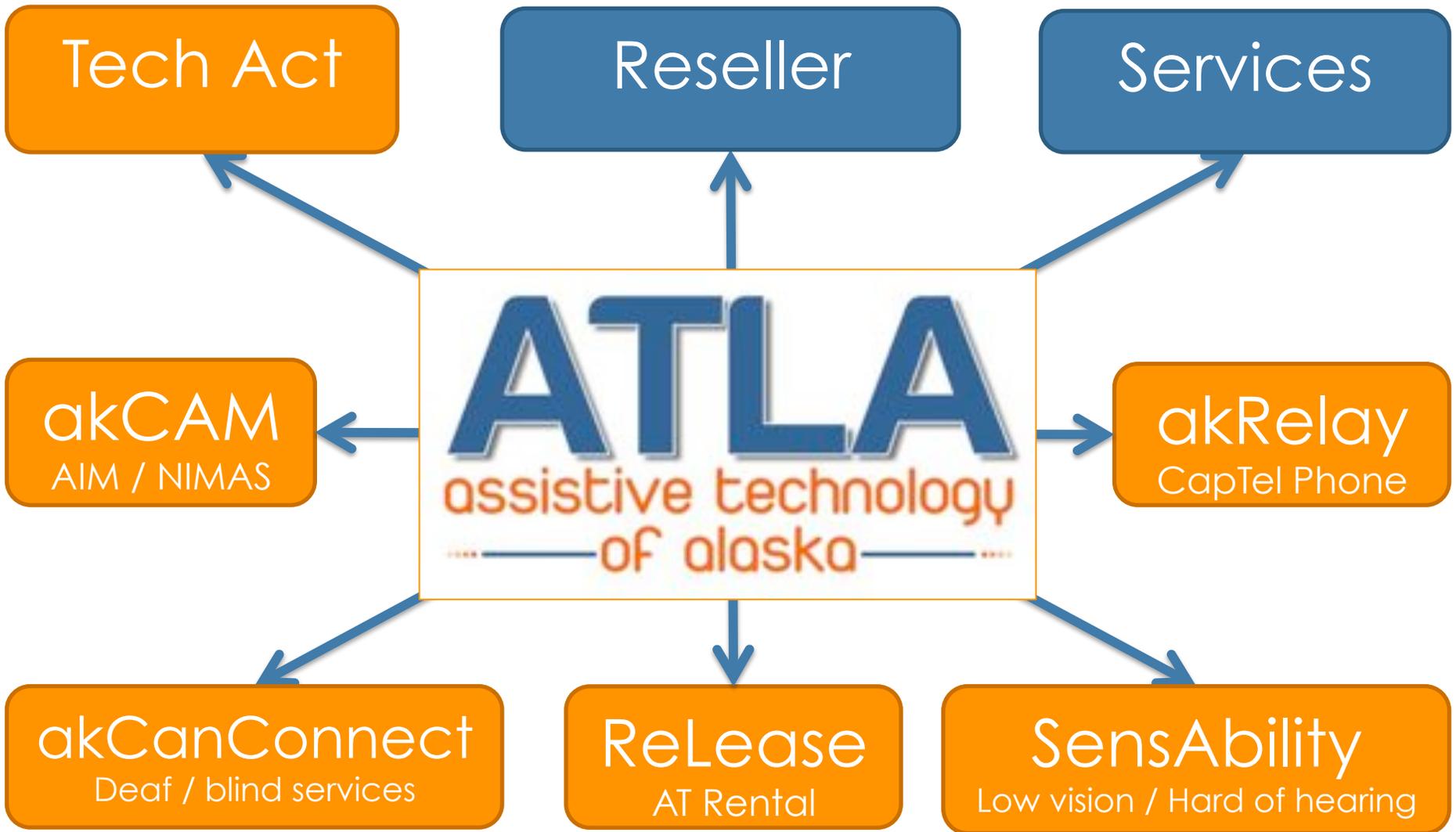


# Who is ATLA?

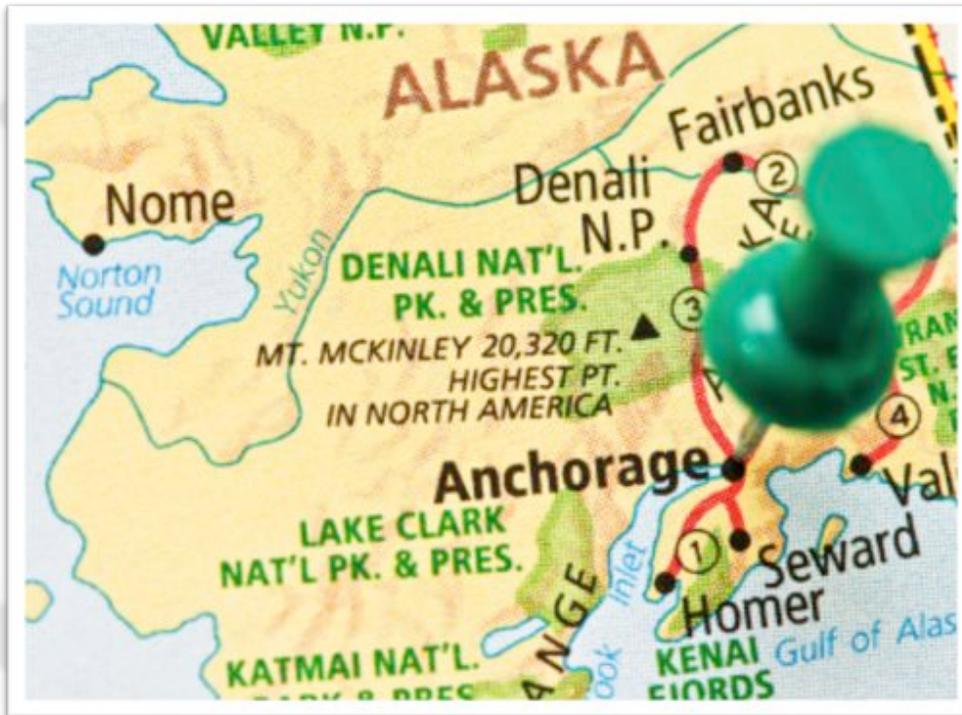
## Fee for Services

- Device and software reseller
- AT training on a variety of custom topics
- AT assessments & training

# ATLA Programs



# Where is ATLA?



Available  
throughout  
Alaska

## Basecamp

3330 Arctic Blvd., Suite 101  
Anchorage, AK 99503

# Who can ATLA help?

## Qualifying Criteria

➔ Be in Alaska

➔ Need  
assistive  
technology

➔ Be alive

Community Living

Education

Employment

IT / Telecom

# ATLA does not...

Fix, maintain, or train  
general computer needs

Provide funding

Bill medicaid / medicare

Therapeutic evaluations  
occupational, physical, speech

Durable medical needs

*(wheelchairs, walkers, vehicle mods, vents, etc..)*

# ATLA AT areas

- Augmentative & Alternative Communication
- Computer Access
- Deaf & Hard of Hearing Aids
- Environmental Controls
- Learning & Cognitive Supports
- Vision Impairment Aids
- Other / Off-the-Shelf / Commercial



# Puzzling process



# AT Assessment Principles

## Assistive technology

is a dynamic process not just a product

is a team process

is a system of devices and services

requires new skills

is a step towards independence

*Technology itself is not the goal...*

*The individual's participation in their chosen activities is the goal.*

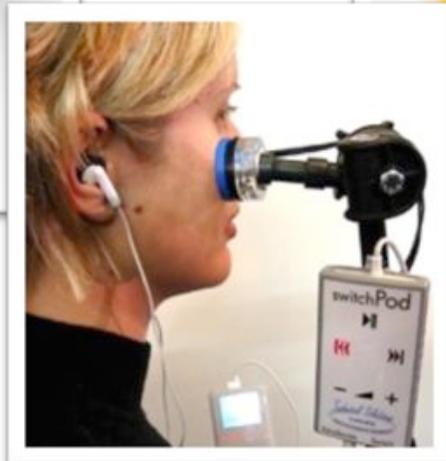
# Low tech solutions

any device or system that allows someone with a disability to perform tasks they would otherwise be unable to do



# Mid Tech solutions

any device or system that allows someone with a disability to perform tasks they would otherwise be unable to do



# High tech solutions

any device or system that allows someone with a disability to perform tasks they would otherwise be unable to do



# Did you know?

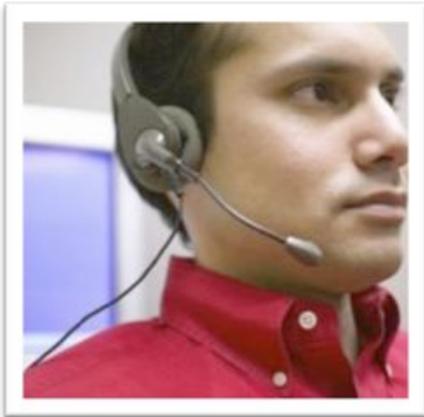
- 57% of working age adults in the U.S. are likely to benefit from the use of accessible technology
- 2010 unemployment rate
  - 14.8 % for people with a disability
  - 9.4 % for people with no disability
- Employer costs for accommodations
  - 56% cost \$0
  - 38% incurred a one-time cost
  - 4% incurred on

# Small Investments – Big Savings



# Case Study: Jim

- ▶ Age: young man
- ▶ Diagnosis: Muscular Dystrophy
- ▶ Observations: fine motor deficits
- ▶ AT Used: Power wheelchair
- ▶ Goal: Teach college level Accounting



# Case Study: Cari

- ▶ Diagnosis: Multiple Sclerosis
- ▶ Observations: Weak upper extremity strength and limitations in movement, difficulty using keyboard and mouse
- ▶ AT Used: onscreen keyboard & head mouse
- ▶ Goal: Review patient charts to gather data independently



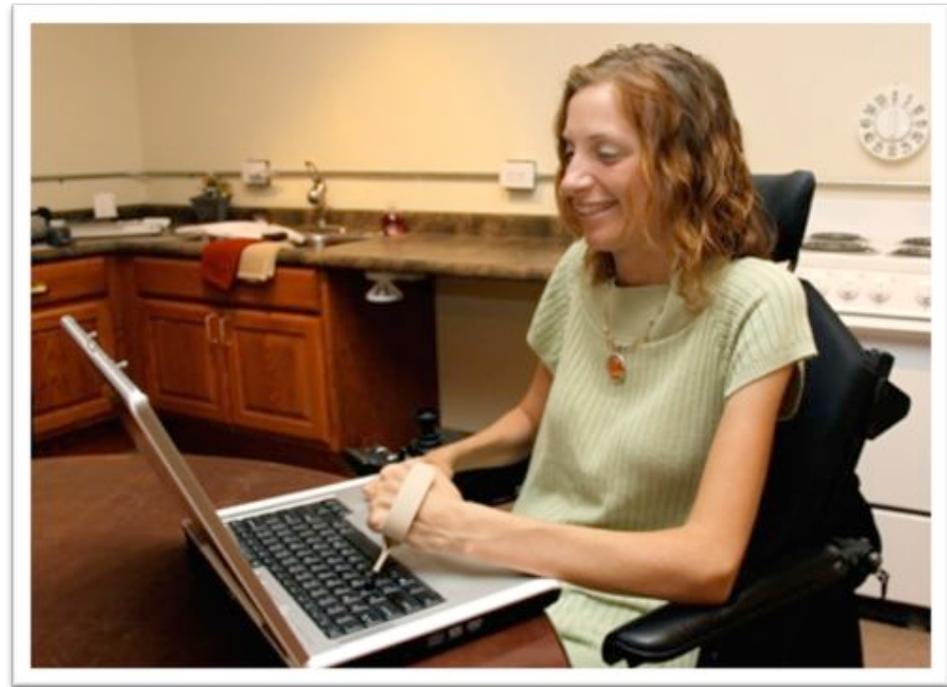
# Case Study: Gary

- ▶ Diagnosis: Low Vision
- ▶ AT Used: Zoomtext magnification software
- ▶ Goal: Needs to access website necessary to do his job



# Case Study: Jessica

- ▶ Diagnosis: Quadriplegia
- ▶ Observations: Partial arm and shoulder movement, hand mobility impairments
- ▶ AT Used: Power wheelchair
- ▶ Goal: Office Assistant



# Case Study: Shawn

- ▶ Age: male in early 50s
- ▶ Diagnosis: severe dyslexia
- ▶ Observations: extremely articulate, great memory, kindergarten reading level
- ▶ Goal: Return to work on slope OSHA



# Case Study: Amy

- ▶ Age: female in early 30s
- ▶ Diagnosis: severe ADHD and ATBI
- ▶ Observations: poor hygiene, disorganized, possible depression
- ▶ Goal: Work in bookstore, return to college



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