



Winter News 2020

Technology Solutions for Life's Limitations

Greetings!

DakotaLink hopes that you had a happy and safe Holiday Season!

We do have some **BREAKING NEWS** in this addition!

Ted Carrell has announced his retirement from DakotaLink. He has been with DakotaLink for 21 years as our Low Vision Specialist in Sioux Falls. His last day will be Friday March 6th, 2020. Please congratulate him if you see him in the next few weeks.

We have posted his position and I have the details listed below. Please share if you know anyone that would fit the need. We also have this posted with Kelo and Indeed.

Black Hills Special Services Cooperative / DakotaLink is seeking an Assistive Technology Low Vision Specialist 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. There will be a major focus on computers with specialized software and other types of low vision equipment. The consumers served will be individuals of all ages who are primarily Blind or have Low Vision in southeastern South Dakota. Occasional overnight travel is expected. A degree in computer related sciences along with experience is required, however, field experience with Low Vision AT may be substituted. A desire to work with individuals with disabilities is required. Starting Salary: \$35,000 with full benefits. Send resume to DakotaLink: 1161 Deadwood Ave #5, Rapid City, SD 57702 or email to pczerny@dakotalink.net.

In other news, Dave Scherer is back out of retirement! He has accepted the position of Director of Programs and Technical Assistance for ATAP (Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs). Dave is working directly with the AT3 Center (The connection to information about the Assistive Technology Act, State Assistive Technology Programs and general assistive technology). Dave will work in a variety of ways that include serving as the liaison between AT3 and CATADA, as well as working on program evaluation.

His new email address is: dave.scherer@ataporg.org

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

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

October

2019 Fall Conference in Sioux Falls

Mark Fleming out of Sioux Falls and I attended and managed a booth at this conference. Attendance was 275 so we had some good traffic at our booth demonstrating the latest in AT. We provided an Amazon Echo Plus as a door prize.

November

November was business as usual apart from the Thanksgiving holiday.

December

Congress approved a bipartisan final spending package for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, just a day ahead of a temporary deadline and nearly three months after the fiscal year began. The \$1.4 trillion package includes a previously approved \$49 billion boost to discretionary spending. The big news here for State Assistive Technology Act Programs is a \$1 million increase dedicated only to State Assistive Technology Act Grantees! Therefore, it is guaranteed our program is to receive an increase in FY 2020! The gift giving began early in Washington, and there are no complaints from ATAP!

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

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/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/AT-Resource-Directory-2017.pdf>

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>

Appreciation

Brett Burden attended and presented at the Veteran Stand Down event in November and received the following appreciation letter:

THANK YOU all for another successful Veteran Stand Down event. We really appreciate all the community organizations that came out to provide information and services. We received a ton of positive feedback from stakeholders and veterans. This event continues to grow each year and it really speaks the respect the community has for its veteran population. We are excited to continue working with you all in the future. Please see some of the event numbers below.

- Total sign in = 254 participants
- 212 veterans attended
- 42 family members of veterans attended
- 22 female veterans attended
- Over 30 flu shots given
- Approx. 75 haircuts provided by the Man Salon

Huge thank you to our volunteers. Also wanting to thank Goodwill for providing the meal and the winter weather gear. Additionally, so much appreciation for the great donations from the VFW/DAV/Am. Legion.

Thank you for the support,

Jamison Hild, LCPC, NCC

Homeless Program Manager

Black Hills Health Care System

Staff Meeting

We had our staff meeting in Rapid City in December and covered all our efforts and the results of those in bringing assistive technology to those in need in South Dakota. We continue to strive to educate ourselves on the latest technology and getting together helps a great deal with that. We also attended the BHSSC Christmas Party the evening after our meeting.

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/>

DakotaLink hopes you have an excellent and safe Winter!

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.