

Department of Rehabilitation Services



# Disability Inclusion in the Workplace

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**Mark Henry, Director, Connect-Ability Staffing, BRS**

**Arlene Lugo, Director, Connecticut Tech Act Project, BRS**

**Jonathan Richmond, VR Counselor Coordinator, BESB**

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# Agenda

- **How can you make your workplace more inclusive?**
- **How can we help?**
  - **Universal Design**
  - **Assistive Technology**
  - **Common Accommodations**
  - **Examples**
- **What do some inclusive employers have to say?**
- **Resources**

# “Disability Inclusion in the Workplace”

By: Louise Orslene, MPIA, MSW, CPDM, JAN CoDirector

- **Does your workplace promote an inclusive culture?**
  - **Are there inclusive policies and practices in place?**
  - **Are your public relations and marketing inclusive?**
  - **Do you have an accessible office and office technology?**
  - **Does your business have partnerships with disability related service organizations?**
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- **From Job Accommodation Network ([askjan.org](http://askjan.org))**

# What is Universal Design?

**“Universal Design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.” – Ron Mace (coined term)**



# What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

**“Assistive Technology (AT) device is *any item*, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that is used to *increase, maintain, or improve* the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.”** – AT Act

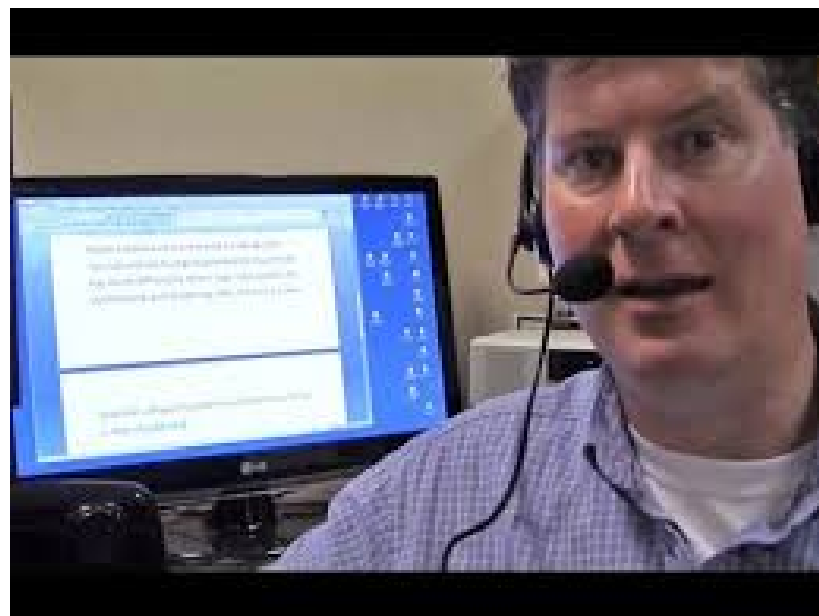
# AT Continuum



**Cost, mechanics & complexity increase as you move up the continuum**

***59% of job accommodations = \$0.00***

***Average costs for job accommodations = \$500***



# What is the Connecticut Tech Act Project?

- **Our Mission is to increase independence and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities through increased access to Assistive Technology for work, school and community living.**
- **AT Demos & Lending**
- **Training & Technical Assistance**





# What is the Bureau of Education Services for the Blind (BESB)?

- **BESB serves adults who are legally blind and children who have visual impairments. People who are visually impaired served as children transition to BESB for Vocational Rehabilitation.**

# Why do you want an Inclusive and Universally Designed Workplace?

- 1.3 million Americans are legally blind
- Almost 3 million people have age-related macular degeneration and/or glaucoma
- 7 million people have diabetic retinopathy
- 30 million Americans have cataracts
- 17% of persons age 45 and older report some form of vision impairment which represents 16.5 million people
- 7.3 million of persons over age 65 report some form of vision impairment

# AT Continuum



## Low Tech Examples:

- Use of lighting, color contrast and the reduction of glare
- Use a heavy black felt-tip pen on white or off white non glossy paper
- Electronic communications
- Turn on built in Accessibility Features for Windows, Mac or smartphones

# Low Tech Examples (Practices):

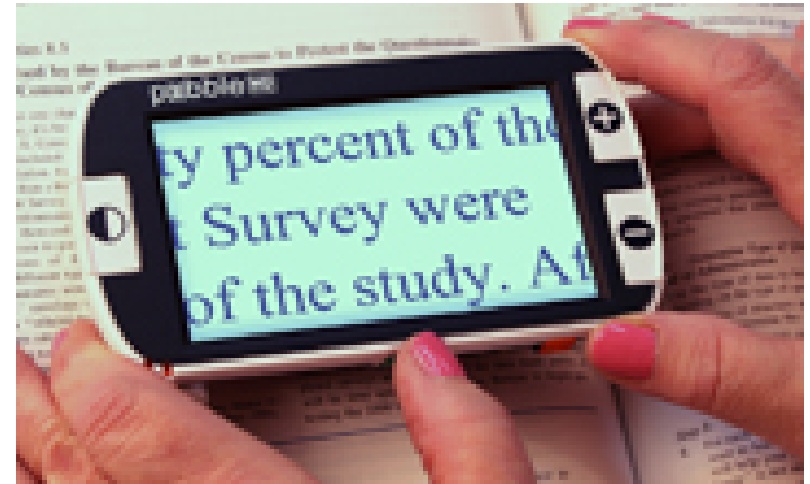
## Meeting Planning:

- Plan ahead to allow adequate time to prepare printed material in alternate formats e.g. braille, large print, electronic
- In conference rooms keep everything set up the same way.  
Telephone location, desks  
Remove hazards of protruding objects (push chairs under table/desks)



# High Tech Devices

- Larger computer monitors
- iPhone
- Portable video magnifier
- Electronic magnifiers
- Adaptations built in to enable access,
  - Zoomtext (reading work stations where a staff person can go to read multiple pages with voice out)





# How can we help?

- A rehabilitation professional can provide further assistance in assessing the work environment and make recommendations
- Connect-Ability Staffing can provide recruitment assistance, employee retention, task analysis, training for the business or employees, tax credit and incentive assistance
- Assistive Technology device demonstration centers and lending available in the community

## What do some inclusive employers have to say?

- **Cyndi Peterson, Unilever**
- **Katie Raucci, Unilever**
- **Joe Wendover, Walgreens**
- **Bill Donehey, Mohegan Sun**
- **Jim McMahon, Travelers**

# Contact Us

- [Mark.Henry@ct.gov](mailto:Mark.Henry@ct.gov) or 860-424-4859
- [Arlene.Lugo@ct.gov](mailto:Arlene.Lugo@ct.gov) or 860-424-4881
- [Jonathan.Richmond@ct.gov](mailto:Jonathan.Richmond@ct.gov) or 860-602-4031



# Resources

- [www.ct.gov/besb](http://www.ct.gov/besb)
- [www.ct.gov/brs](http://www.ct.gov/brs)
- [www.CTtechact.com](http://www.CTtechact.com)
- Job Accommodation Network: [www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org)
- Windows Accessibility:  
<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/Accessibility/windows>