MISSION STATEMENT

It is the express mission of Project START to empower Mississippians with disabilities through education, awareness and access to Assistive Technology.

VISION STATEMENT

Mississippi Project START (Success Through Assistive Rehabilitative Technology) was established to provide information about assistive technology to consumers and other interested parties so they may make informed decisions about available assistive technology services.
Dear friends,

I am pleased to present the 2017 Annual Report for the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services’ (MDRS) Project START, also known as the Mississippi Technology Act Program. START stands for Success Through Assistive Rehabilitative Technology.

Project START is a program administered by the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services which provides Mississippians with disabilities access to assistive technology. Assistive Technology includes mobility devices, such as wheelchairs, accessibility software, technology for low vision and blindness, and augmentative and alternative communications devices.

For many children and adults with disabilities, access to and acquisition of assistive technology can make a tremendous difference in their ability to fully participate in employment, school, and recreational activities. The right tools—very specialized devices—allow individuals with disabilities to live, learn, work, and play independently.

Please see what great things we have done together this past year, and know that your continued support of Project START is vital to our mission and to what we can accomplish in the next year.

Sincerely,

Chris M. Howard, Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services
It’s my pleasure to share with you our annual report highlighting the accomplishments of Mississippi’s Assistive Technology Act Program, Project START. Working with and providing services for Mississippians with disabilities is a true blessing. Each day Project START strives to ensure every individual has the opportunity to live their life to the fullest through the assistance of assistive technology.

Last year our program assisted 856 individuals under our State Level Activities at cost savings of $527,421 to the state of Mississippi. Those services included 582 evaluations and demonstration of assistive technology equipment, the repair and refurbishment of equipment for 61 clients and 213 short term loans of assistive technology devices from our loaner library.

I would like to personally thank Mr. Chris Howard, Executive Director of Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services, and his dedicated employees for their hard work and support of our program. Also thank you to our Advisory Council for their guidance and support, and last but not least, our dedicated staff who work tirelessly every day to assist Mississippians with a disability.

We are excited about some additions to our program for the coming year and invite you to visit our website at msprojectstart.org for more information about our services and upcoming events. You can contact us anytime, through our website or by calling our office at 601-853-5249 or 1-800-852-8328 or emailing me directly at pgaltelli@mdrs.ms.gov.

Patsy Galtelli, Director
Project START
Device Reutilization

The Device Reutilization program focuses on the under-served populations in Mississippi with the mission to provide education, awareness and access of assistive technology to individuals with limited resources in their community. The program redistributes used equipment that has been sanitized, checked for safety and repaired for appropriate use.

Device Reassignment/Refurbishment

- Mobility, Seating, and Positioning: 13
- Daily Living: 11
- Computer and Related: 37
- Vision: 2

Customer Satisfaction

Highly Satisfied: 61
Satisfied: 2

Total Surveyed: 63

Testimonial

To guarantee a speedy recovery from her hip surgery, a 60-year-old female contacted Project START to borrow a bedside commode and a long-handled shoe horn. Indeed, to help her during her time of misfortune, Project START loaned her a bedside commode and a long-handled shoe horn, to empower her speedy recovery.
Project START provides a short term equipment loan program allowing an individual to try a device before they purchase it. This program also allows an individual to borrow a device to use while theirs is being repaired or while funding is being secured for the purchase of their device.

### Device Loans by Type or Borrower

- Individual with Disabilities: 135
- Family members, Guardians & Authorized Representatives: 17
- Representatives of Education: 38
- Representatives of Employment: 0
- Representative of Health, Allied Health & Rehabilitation: 22
- Representative of Community Living: 1
- Representative of Technology: 0

### Purpose of Devices Loaned

- Assist in Decision Making (device trial or evaluation): 82
- Serve as Loaner During Device Repair or While Waiting for Funding: 40
- Provide an Accommodation on a Short-Term Basis: 91

### Types of Devices Loaned

- Vision: 45
- Hearing: 3
- Speech Communication: 52
- Learning, Cognition, & Positioning: 67
- Mobility, Seating, & Positioning: 70
- Daily Living: 26
- Environmental Adaptations: 34
- Vehicle Modification & Transportation: 0
- Computers & Related: 44
- Recreation Sports & Leisure: 3

**Total Devices Loaned:** 344

### Customer Satisfaction

- Highly Satisfied: 172
- Satisfied: 13
- Satisfied Somewhat: 0
- Not at all satisfied: 0
- Non respondent: 41

**Total Surveyed:** 213

### Testimonial

A 55 year old male with declining vision was not able to view old pictures of his family nor read his daily word. To help with such a trying time, Project START quickly accommodated the gentleman with a CCTV through the reutilization program, to ensure his ability to review past memories of his family, and read his daily inspirations.
In addition to our offices at the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services in Madison, our partnerships provide Demonstration Centers throughout the state to educate individuals and their families or caregivers on assistive technology to aid in hearing, mobility, communication, vision and performing activities of daily living.

**DEMONSTRATIONS BY DEVICE TYPE**

- Vision ................................................................. 12
- Hearing ................................................................. 0
- Speech Communication ...................................... 203
- Learning, Cognition, & Developmental ................. 2
- Mobility, Seating, & Positioning ......................... 252
- Daily Living .......................................................... 3
- Environmental Adaptations ................................... 0
- Vehicle Modification & Transportation ................. 98
- Computers & Related .......................................... 12
- Recreation Sports & Leisure ................................ 0

Total ................................................................. 582

**TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS**

- Individuals with Disabilities ......................... 444
- Family Members, Guardians, & Authorized Representatives ......................... 67
- Representative of Education ...................... 37
- Representatives of Employment ............... 1
- Representative of Health, Allied Health & Rehabilitation ............................. 21
- Representatives of Community Living .......... 12
- Representatives of Technology .................. 0

**CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

- Highly Satisfied ............................................... 471
- Satisfied ............................................................. 86
- Satisfied Somewhat ........................................... 0
- Not at all satisfied ............................................. 0
- Non respondent ................................................ 25

Total Surveyed ........................................ 582

**TESTIMONIAL**

An 11 year old nonverbal male could not communicate with his mother or teachers at his school. With the help of Project START’s device demonstration, the young man was able to learn how to communicate through an augmented device, to empower his social and educational success.
Project START provides training, technical assistance and public awareness activities, providing information on availability, benefits and cost of AT devices and services.

### TOTAL TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

- Individual with Disabilities ......................... 334
- Family members, Guardians & Authorized Representatives .................... 0
- Representatives of Education .......................... 53
- Representatives of Employment ....................... 0
- Representative of Health, Allied Health & Rehabilitation .................... 309
- Representative of Community Living .................. 8
- Representative of Technology .......................... 0

**Total .......... 704**
Your perspective is extremely valuable, and we greatly appreciate any and all feedback!

Please send any comments or questions to:
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Post Office Box 1698  |  Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1698
1.800.852.8328 (in MS only)  |  www.msprojectstart.org

Mississippi Project START is funded under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended by the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration.

MDRS Project START, the statewide assistive technology program for Mississippians, is coordinated by the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services agency.