



2015  
two thousand fifteen



# Project START Annual Report

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## 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.



**Chris M. Howard**  
*Executive Director*

## LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Dear friends,

I am pleased to present the 2015 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

# LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

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 853 individuals under our State Level Activities at cost savings of \$395,510.08 to the state of Mississippi. Those services included 496 evaluations and demonstration of assistive technology equipment, the repair and refurbishment of equipment for 260 clients and 79 short term loans of assistive technology devices from our loaner library.

Our State Leadership Activities program provided training to 1,098 participants and reached 79,720 people through public awareness campaigns. We also provided assistance and information to 262 individuals.

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](http://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](mailto:pgaltelli@mdrs.ms.gov).

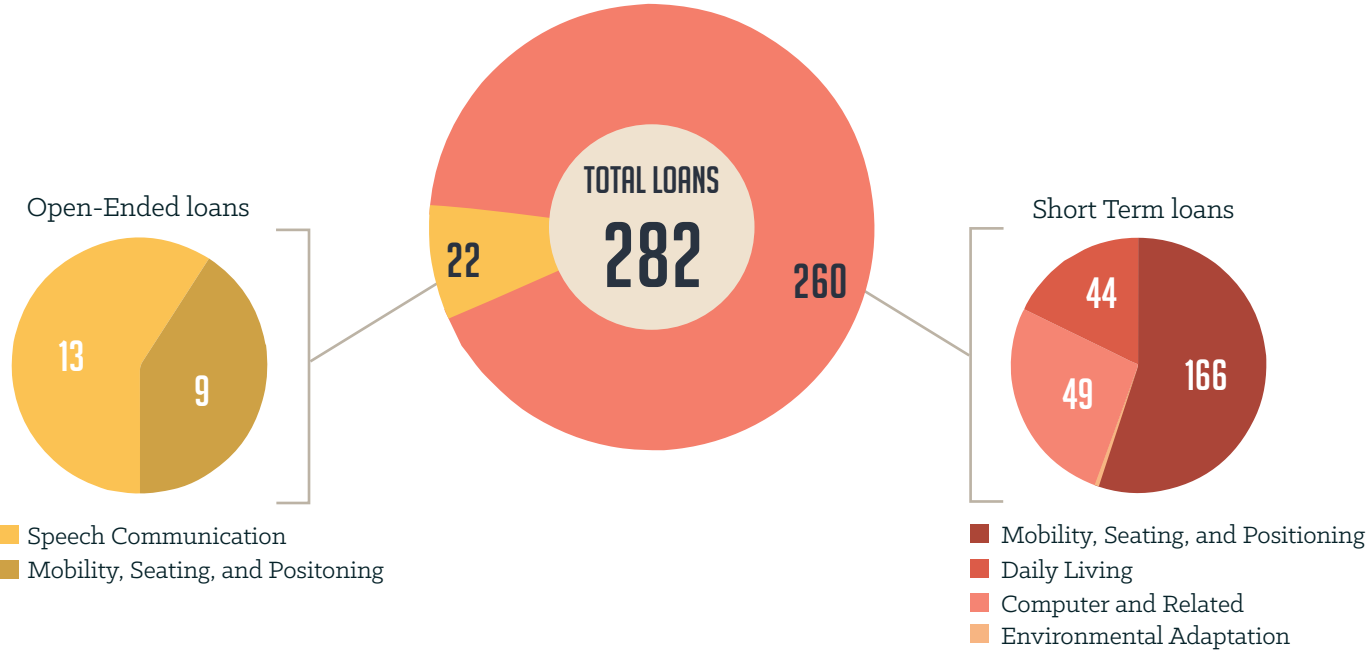
Patsy Galtelli, Director  
Project START



**Patsy Galtelli**  
*Director*

# 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.



## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

AT Primarily Needed for Employment .....	11
AT Primarily Needed for Community Living .....	271
	<u>282</u>

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Highly Satisfied .....	261
Satisfied .....	13
Satisfied Somewhat .....	3
Not at all satisfied .....	1
Non respondent .....	4
<b>Total Surveyed .....</b>	<b>282</b>

## TESTIMONIAL

*We received a frantic call from the caregiver of a client. The client's patient lift malfunctioned and he was confined to the bed. She was told by the dealer it would be several days before they could replace the lift. Our repair specialist was able to see him within a couple of hours of the phone call and was able to repair his lift.*

# DEVICE LOAN PROGRAM

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.

**TOTAL DEVICE  
BORROWERS  
282**

## DEVICE LOANS BY TYPE OR BORROWER

Individual with Disabilities .....	146
Family members, Guardians & Authorized Representatives .....	8
Representatives of Education .....	17
Representatives of Employment .....	0
Representative of Health, Allied Health & Rehabilitation .....	10
Representative of Community Living .....	3
Representative of Technology .....	0

### TYPES OF DEVICES LOANED

Assist in Decision Making (device trial or evaluation) .....	121
Serve as Loaner During Device Repair or While Waiting for Funding .....	13
Provide an Accommodation on a Short-Term Basis .....	54

## TYPES OF DEVICES LOANED

Vision .....	21
Hearing .....	3
Speech Communication .....	64
Learning, Cognition, & Positioning .....	26
Mobility, Seating, & Positioning .....	32
Daily Living .....	14
Environmental Adaptations .....	9
Vehicle Modification & Transportation .....	2
Computers & Related .....	19
Recreation Sports & Leisure .....	16
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>206</b>

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Highly Satisfied .....	167
Satisfied .....	6
Satisfied Somewhat .....	0
Not at all satisfied .....	0
Non respondent .....	11
<b>Total Surveyed .....</b>	<b>184</b>

## TESTIMONIAL

Note from client: "I have to say, being able to check out this hand cycle has given me quite a bit of extra ability to have some out of the box, figuratively speaking, fun. Before this opportunity and since becoming paralyzed, I have not had the chance to go cycling. Being able to borrow this bike has blessed me with the ability to be able to do so. In addition, it's helped by allowing me to try "hand cycling" before deciding to buy one myself. I am very thankful for this opportunity."

# DEVICE DEMONSTRATION

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 .....	7
Hearing .....	5
Speech Communication .....	159
Learning, Cognition, & Developmental .....	36
Mobility, Seating, & Positioning .....	62
Daily Living .....	0
Environmental Adaptations .....	9
Vehicle Modification & Transportation .....	127
Computers & Related .....	21
Recreation Sports & Leisure .....	16
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>442</b>

## TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS

Individuals with Disabilities .....	77
Family Members, Guardians, & Authorized Representatives .....	68
Representative of Education .....	151
Representatives of Employment .....	176
Representative of Health, Allied Health & Rehabilitation .....	22
Representatives of Community Living .....	1
Representatives of Technology .....	1

## NUMBER OF REFERRALS

Funding Source (non-AT Program) .....	356
Service Provider .....	65
Vendor .....	21
Repair Service .....	0

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

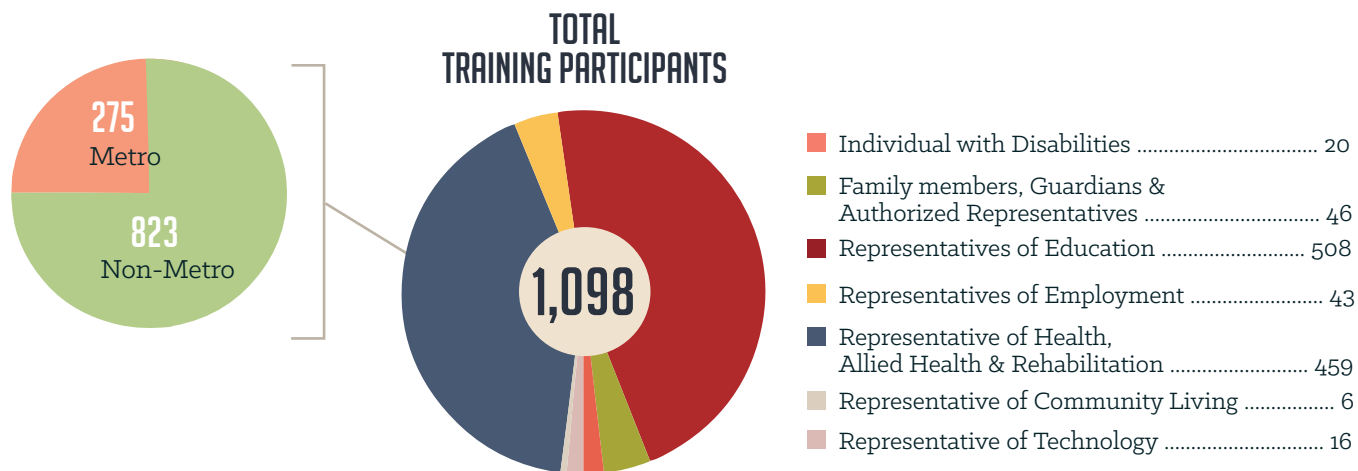
Highly Satisfied .....	484
Satisfied .....	12
Satisfied Somewhat .....	0
Not at all satisfied .....	0
Non respondent .....	0
<b>Total Surveyed .....</b>	<b>496</b>

## TESTIMONIAL

*We had a student who was unsuccessful in expressing his needs. He was using a low tech communication device that had been recommended for him; however, the device did not have the features he needed to communicate successfully. We demonstrated a more sophisticated device and he immediately took interest in it. With some instructions and training he caught on quickly and began communicating with the device.*

# TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

Project START provides training, technical assistance and public awareness activities, providing information on availability, benefits and cost of AT devices and services.



## PUBLIC AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

Newsletter.....	705
Other printed materials .....	375
Internet information .....	4,095
PSA/radio/TV/ other media .....	72,000
Presentations/expos/conferences .....	2,545
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>79,720</b>

## INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE

	AT Device Service	AT Funding	Total
Individuals with Disabilities	46	22	68
Family Members, Guardians, & Authorized Repress	102	39	141
Representative of Education	12	3	15
Representative of Employment	2	2	4
Representative of Health, Allied Health, & Rehab	18	0	18
Representative of Community Living	16	0	16
	196	66	262





Your perspective is extremely valuable,  
and we greatly appreciate any and all feedback!

*Please send any comments or questions to:*

Patsy Galtelli

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1.800.852.8328 (in MS only) | [www.msprojectstart.org](http://www.msprojectstart.org)

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*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.*