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Success Through Assistive Rehabilitative Technology



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF  
REHABILITATION SERVICES

# 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 2016 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 1,122 individuals under our State Level Activities at cost savings of \$419,145 to the state of Mississippi. Those services included 744 evaluations and demonstration of assistive technology equipment, the repair and refurbishment of equipment for 116 clients and 262 short term loans of assistive technology devices from our loaner library.

Our State Leadership Activities program provided training to 1,008 participants and reached 86,381 people through public awareness campaigns. We also provided assistance and information to 777 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

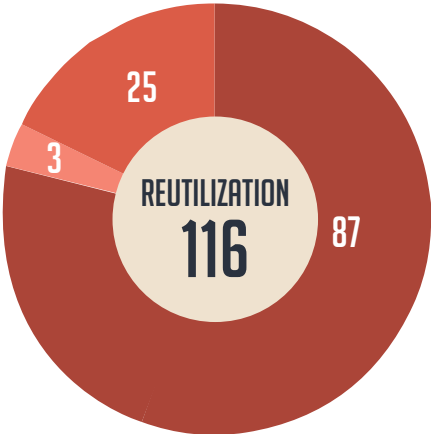


**Patsy Galtelli**  
*Director*

# 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.

## DEVICE REASSIGNMENT/ REFURBISHMENT



- Mobility, Seating, and Positioning
- Daily Living
- Computer and Related

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Highly Satisfied .....	105
Satisfied .....	6
Satisfied Somewhat .....	5

**Total Surveyed ..... 116**

## TESTIMONIAL

*We had a 66 year old male with Multiple Sclerosis who was unable to safely ambulate within his home and community. The client had a work history as an independent dump truck driver and wanted to return to self-employment. Project START was able to accommodate his needs by providing him with a refurbished power wheelchair. The client was able to return to a better quality of life and hopes to soon return to work to assist in supporting his family as well as being able to enjoy a better quality of life.*

# 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  
262**

## DEVICE LOANS BY TYPE OR BORROWER

Individual with Disabilities .....	211
Family members, Guardians & Authorized Representatives .....	2
Representatives of Education .....	43
Representatives of Employment .....	0
Representative of Health, Allied Health & Rehabilitation .....	5
Representative of Community Living .....	1
Representative of Technology .....	0

### PURPOSE OF DEVICES LOANED

Assist in Decision Making (device trial or evaluation) .....	129
Serve as Loaner During Device Repair or While Waiting for Funding .....	74
Provide an Accommodation on a Short-Term Basis .....	59

## TYPES OF DEVICES LOANED

Vision .....	37
Hearing .....	15
Speech Communication .....	86
Learning, Cognition, & Positioning .....	16
Mobility, Seating, & Positioning .....	31
Daily Living .....	58
Environmental Adaptations .....	0
Vehicle Modification & Transportation .....	0
Computers & Related .....	19
Recreation Sports & Leisure .....	0
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>262</b>

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Highly Satisfied .....	217
Satisfied .....	13
Satisfied Somewhat .....	0
Not at all satisfied .....	0
Non respondent .....	32
<b>Total Surveyed .....</b>	<b>262</b>

## TESTIMONIAL

One young man who as apraxia had been in speech therapy for 9 months and could not say any words. We evaluated and loaned a device with Words forLife on it. Within a week he was approximating a few words. His parents were so excited they purchased a device for him. A year later he is using 2-3 word phrases with his natural speech and uses the device for words he cannot say. His parents are beyond thrilled, he is making great progress in school and it is expected he will be in general education.

# 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 .....	76
Hearing .....	43
Speech Communication .....	172
Learning, Cognition, & Developmental .....	77
Mobility, Seating, & Positioning .....	64
Daily Living .....	0
Environmental Adaptations .....	55
Vehicle Modification & Transportation .....	184
Computers & Related .....	57
Recreation Sports & Leisure .....	16
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>744</b>

## TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS

Individuals with Disabilities .....	456
Family Members, Guardians, & Authorized Representatives .....	44
Representative of Education .....	269
Representatives of Employment .....	0
Representative of Health, Allied Health & Rehabilitation .....	7
Representatives of Community Living .....	0
Representatives of Technology .....	0

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

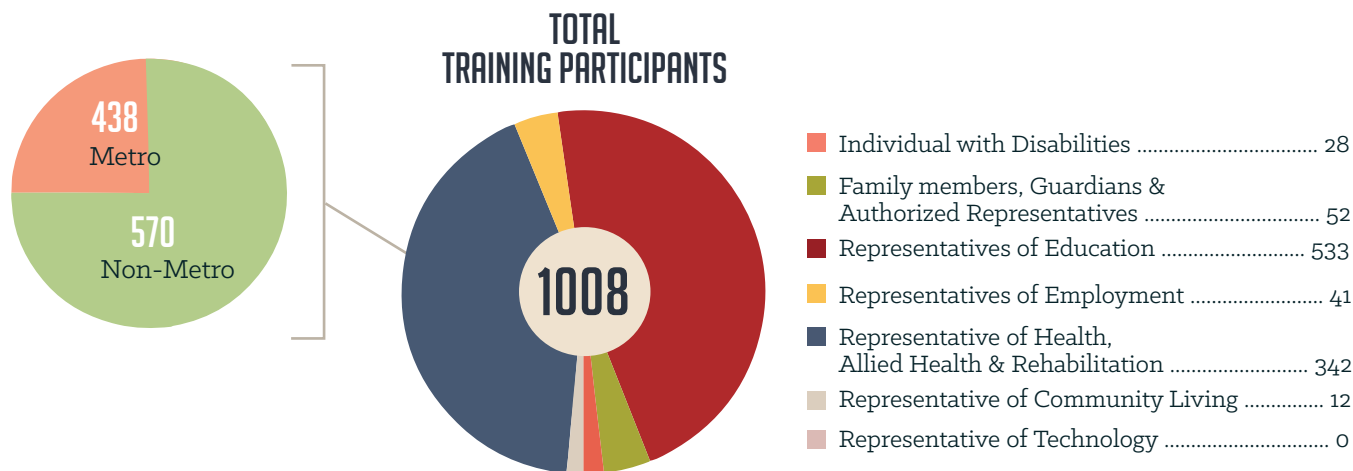
Highly Satisfied .....	742
Satisfied .....	29
Satisfied Somewhat .....	5
Not at all satisfied .....	0
Non respondent .....	0
<b>Total Surveyed .....</b>	<b>776</b>

## TESTIMONIAL

*A parent was searching for options for her 12 year old nonverbal son. We demonstrated several augmentative communication devices but he was unable to comprehend and was totally uninterested. We then demonstrated an iPad with several communication apps installed. His mother was overjoyed as he quickly became engaged and was soon navigating through the various apps.*

# 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.....	756
Other printed materials .....	0
Internet information .....	3,531
PSA/radio/TV/other media .....	81,000
Other Electronic Media .....	489
Presentations/expos/conferences .....	605
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>86,381</b>

## INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE

	AT Device Service	AT Funding	Total
Individuals with Disabilities	167	41	208
Family Members, Guardians, & Authorized Repress	95	58	153
Representative of Education	334	18	352
Representative of Employment	3	0	3
Representative of Health, Allied Health, & Rehab	56	0	56
Representative of Community Living	5	0	5
	660	117	777





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.*