

ATLAS-Advancing Assistive Technology for Learning and Accessibility in Higher Education for Students with I/DD)

The Institute for Human Development and Northern Arizona University (NAU/IHD) is requesting \$50,000 for the ATLAS project. This project is designed to facilitate the success of individuals with I/DD in higher education as well as K-12 environments through the utilization of Assistive Technology (AT). It will focus primarily on students in the Supporting Inclusive Practices in Colleges (SIP-C), a project previously funded by the Council. However, they will provide demonstrations to a minimum of four high schools in the Red Mesa, Kingman, and Yuma school districts. They will also recruit a minimum of 10 SIP-C students from NAU, Coconino and Mohave Community Colleges, as well as Northland Pioneer College in Show Low to participate in the project, which will feature:

- Conducting guided interviews with participants to obtain a greater knowledge of needs in and barriers to postsecondary education. They will develop and administer a guided interview questionnaire and identify needs and limitations that could be improved using Assistive Technology (AT), as well as explore the participants' current and past AT use.
- Providing resources and training to disability resource offices (DROs) and other campus supports. They will create comprehensive training opportunities to encourage DROs and other student-supporting entities to work with students to facilitate access to AT and other accommodations and ensure participants are equipped to obtain permanent AT to incorporate in all aspects of their lives.
- Providing support to facilitate the use of AT. First, staff will undergo training on the principles and functions of AT, the project objectives, and expectations for evaluation and assessment. Second, participants will work with staff to develop individualized plans of action (IPOA), to test and try out AT. Finally, the project will work with the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP), a statewide program that provides assistive technology to individuals and their families.

The proposed project seeks to increase awareness about the benefits of AT use as a way to improve academic performance and self-determination. Participants will access and test several types of AT, learn AT fundamentals related to maintaining and troubleshooting, and be supported to incorporate the use of their need-specific AT in a postsecondary setting.

Qualitative and quantitative data will be collected through a variety of tools and analyzed to identify, design, and incorporate informed revisions to trainings and materials for future use. They also plan on sustaining project outcomes by increasing awareness and building capacity for individuals with I/DD to access and use Assistive Technology in Post-Secondary Education.