

Technology and Disability Policy Highlights

June 2017



Overview

In June the Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection Subcommittee held two hearings concerning the advancement of emerging technologies: the [Disrupter Series: Update on IOT Opportunities and Challenges](https://energycommerce.house.gov/hearings-and-votes/hearings/disrupter-series-update-iot-opportunities-and-challenges), and the hearing on [Self-Driving Vehicle Legislation](http://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=106182)*.* Both hearings addressed the multitude of issues that accompany designing, developing, testing and deploying these technologies. The positive impact that IoT and self-driving vehicles could have on the lives of people with disabilities was a topic of discussion at both hearings as well, but more prevalent in the self-driving vehicles testimonials from both House Representatives and witnesses. Regarding air travel, the *Air Carrier Access Amendments Act of 2017* [**S.1318**] was introduced by Senator Tammy Baldwin[D-WI]. The purpose of the legislation is “To protect the rights of passengers with disabilities in air transportation, and for other purposes.” S.1318 includes a provision directing the U.S. Access Board to create accessibility standards for stowage of assistive technologies, in-flight entertainment, video displays, announcements, and other air travel experiences such as boarding and deplaning.

In regulatory news, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) celebrated the winners and honorable mentions of the Sixth Annual Awards for Advancement in Accessibility (Chairman’s AAA) at the 2017 M-Enabling Summit. There were four winning technologies that addressed either the accessibility of video programming, social media, or real-time, in-person group meetings. FCC Chairman, Ajit Pai stated, “Building accessible products and services by design helps everyone. It allows consumers with disabilities to benefit immediately from technological innovation. It can create buzz for your products. It can be far cheaper and more effective than retrofitting after a product is built. In short, “baking in” accessibility features can unlock tremendous value throughout the supply chain.” Chairman Pai also released a statement outlining FCC initiatives during Consumer Protection Month. The FCC has prioritized addressing issues identified by consumers through the FCC’s consumer complaint process. The number one complaint from consumers is Robocalls. Another key initiative is to improve services for people with visual impairments by providing more accessible television programs and an enhanced viewing experience. The FCC’s Disability Advisory Committee meeting convened in Washington, D.C., June 15-16, 2017 where Commissioner Mignon Clyburn reiterated her support for an increase in the number of hours of video-described programming content, improved closed captioning, and the application of Hearing Aid Compatibility standards to advanced communications.

This issue also includes news about virtual worlds, accessibility accommodations, captioning live videos, augmented reality, a smart glove, and more.

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Legislative Activities

**Subcommittee Hearing on Self-Driving Vehicles**

June 27, 2017 - The Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection of the Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing on *Self-Driving Vehicle Legislation*. Two of the fourteen pieces of legislation (discussion drafts) that framed the testimonies and dialogue included:

* [H.R. \_\_, Disability Mobility Advisory Council Act](http://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF17/20170627/106182/BILLS-115pih-DisabilityMobilityAdvisoryCouncilAct.pdf)
* [H.R. \_\_, Improving Mobility Access for Underserved Populations and Senior Citizens Advisory Council Act](http://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF17/20170627/106182/BILLS-115pih-ImprovingMobilityAccessforUnderservedPopulationsandSeniorCitizensAdvisoryCouncilAct.pdf)

Chairman Greg Walden’s written remarks acknowledged the benefit of self-driving vehicles to improve road safety; reduce accident, injury, and losses due to human error; and enable independent transportation for people with disabilities and senior citizens. Several of the witnesses addressed the impact of self-driving technology on enhanced quality of life for people with disabilities. Testimony was heard from Mr. Mitch Bainwol, Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, Mr. John Bozzella, Global Automakers, Mr. Tim Day, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Alan Morrison, The George Washington University Law School, The Honorable David Strickland, Self-Driving Coalition for Safer Streets and Venable LLP, and Mr. Will Wallace, Consumer Union. Some of the witnesses and Representatives noted the absence of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHSTA) at the hearing. Congressman Frank Pallone (NJ) suggested that each Bill be reviewed through the lens of safety since there was no one there to testify on behalf of NHSTA. The safety of the self-driving vehicles themselves and conversely, their potential to improve roadway safety was a key theme of the hearing. Mr. Brainwol noted that less than 1% of accident fatalities are related to the vehicle itself. Though the general tone was for advancing the technology, warnings were also given, as Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (IL) stated that self-driving vehicles could displace 4.1M driving jobs, so the economic impacts, particularly on the workforce should be considered. In sum, most were optimistic about the technology, even referring to it as “the prize at the end of the rainbow.”

To read the witness testimonies, draft legislation, and supporting documents select the link: <http://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=106182>.

#### Additional Information:

[View the Hearing](https://youtu.be/ec3QXabOrLI)

[<https://youtu.be/ec3QXabOrLI>]

[Link to Written Statements - Hearing: Self-Driving Vehicle Legislation](http://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=106182)

[<http://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=106182>]

**Subcommittee Hearing on IOT Opportunities and Challenges**

June 13, 2017 - The Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection Subcommittee of the Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing entitled, *Disrupter Series: Update on IOT Opportunities and Challenges*. The discussion focused on the benefits and challenges of the Internet of Things (IoT).  Members of the Committee learned more about how smart devices are being utilized by consumers and businesses. They also garnered more information about the societal challenges concerning IoT such as security and privacy. Representative Bob Latta from Ohio chairs the Committee, Chairman Latta commented:

“The Internet of Things has been a monumental innovation for the economy – changing how companies conduct business operations and how consumers go about their day to day lives...Integrating connected devices has helped a myriad of industries like healthcare, manufacturing, and retail to share data in real time so they can increase efficiency and improve customer service.”

The testimony of Dr. William S. Marras addressed IoT and healthcare. Stating that Ohio State University Spine Research Institute (SRI) “has been using advanced sensors and modeling enabled by the IoT to better diagnose, treat and prevent spine injuries. Improvements in sensor technology and internet communication have made all of this work possible and are rapidly accelerating the pace of research and development. New developments in mobile computing and wearable technologies will connect our work in the laboratory with clinicians and patients in ways never before possible, while social media and app development make our research applications accessible to the masses where it can help the most people.”

#### Additional Information:

[Disrupter Series: Update on IOT Opportunities and Challenges](https://energycommerce.house.gov/hearings-and-votes/hearings/disrupter-series-update-iot-opportunities-and-challenges)

[<https://energycommerce.house.gov/hearings-and-votes/hearings/disrupter-series-update-iot-opportunities-and-challenges>]

**Legislation to Improve Air Travel for People with Disabilities**

June 8, 2017 – The *Air Carrier Access Amendments Act of 2017* [**S.1318**] was introduced by Senator Tammy Baldwin[D-WI] and co-sponsored by Senators Richard Blumenthal [D-CT], Edward Markey [D-MA], Margaret Wood Hassan [D-NH], Tammy Duckworth [D-IL], Robert P. Casey, Jr. [D-PA]. The purpose of the legislation is “To protect the rights of passengers with disabilities in air transportation, and for other purposes.” S.1318 includes a provision directing the U.S. Access Board to create accessibility standards for stowage of assistive technologies, in-flight entertainment, video displays, announcements, and other air travel experiences such as boarding and deplaning. Section 8 of the Bill calls for the creation of an Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights and Section 10 for an Advisory Committee on the Air Travel Needs of People with Disabilities, to be comprised of at least two:

* Passengers with disabilities,
* Disability organizations,
* Airport operators,
* Air carriers, and
* Air carrier contractors that provide disability services.

The *ACA Amendments Act* was read and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation for further action.

#### Additional Information:

[*Air Carrier Access Amendments Act of 2017* [**S.1318**]](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/1318/text?format=txt)

[<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/1318/text?format=txt>]

Regulatory Activities

**Consumer Protection Month at the FCC**

June 22, 2017 - FCC Chairman, Ajit Pai, released a statement outlining FCC initiatives during Consumer Protection Month in July. The issues on which the FCC are most focused stem from consumer complaints and concerns. The number one complaint from consumers and a top priority for the FCC are Robocalls. The FCC continues to address the problem and is working on an authentication system that will identify the “true” number of the caller, and enhance the ability to block unwanted calls. Slamming and cramming may be unfamiliar terms. However, many have experienced unknowingly being switched from their phone company via unscrupulous carriers, known as “slamming.”  After a consumer has been switched, then the person is “crammed” with unauthorized charges on their phone bills. Stronger regulations are being proposed to stop slamming and cramming.

Another key initiative is to improve services for people with disabilities. During the summer, the FCC intends to vote on expanding the number of hours of video-described programming by 75%. If approved, this will provide more accessible television programs and an enhanced viewing experience for people with visual impairments. Other issues directly affecting consumers include rural call completion and consideration for rules that would increase high-band frequencies (76-81 GHz spectrum). Regarding the latter, the FCC not only wants increased connectivity but to also be safe on the roads. To that end, the FCC will consider regulations that would allocate a large block of high-band frequencies for use by vehicular radars. This consideration to increase frequency is a part of FCC’s innovation initiatives and could improve communication between advanced sensors such as collision avoidance features that are in vehicles.

#### Additional Information:

[FCC Blog: Consumer Protection Month at the FCC](https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/blog/2017/06/22/consumer-protection-month-fcc)

[<https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/blog/2017/06/22/consumer-protection-month-fcc>]

**Chairman’s Awards for Advancement in Accessibility**

June 13, 2017 – FCC Commissioner, Ajit Pai, presented the Sixth Annual Awards for Advancement in Accessibility (Chairman’s AAA) at the 2017 M-Enabling Summit in Arlington, Virginia. These awards are earned by innovators that develop communication technologies for people with disabilities. The Chairman’s AAA falls under the FCC’s Accessibility and Innovation Initiative and encourages both private and public sector nominees. And the winners are…

* Ava App for People Who Are Deaf or Hearing Impaired enhances the accessibility of small group meetings/socials (e.g. dinner party) via live transcription of conversation delivered to smartphones.
* Facebook -Automatic Alt Text (AAT) adds descriptions to images posted on Facebook so that people with visual impairments know what is pictured.
* The Integrated Described Video Best Practices Guide provides broadcasters with techniques to create more inclusive programming.
* Amazon –VoiceView enhances the accessibility of menu and programming delivered using the Fire TV Stick.

Chairman Pai stated, “Building accessible products and services by design helps everyone. It allows consumers with disabilities to benefit immediately from technological innovation. It can create buzz for your products. It can be far cheaper and more effective than retrofitting after a product is built. In short, “baking in” accessibility features can unlock tremendous value throughout the supply chain.”

#### Additional Information:

[Winners and Honorable Mentions of 2017Chairman’s AAA](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2017/db0613/DOC-345332A1.pdf)

[<http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2017/db0613/DOC-345332A1.pdf>]

[Remarks of Chairman Pai at the 2017 M-Enabling Summit](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2017/db0613/DOC-345333A1.pdf)

[<http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2017/db0613/DOC-345333A1.pdf>]

**Disability Advisory Committee Meeting**

June 16, 2017 - The FCC’s Disability Advisory Committee meeting convened in Washington, D.C., June 15-16, 2017. In addition to the presentation of subcommittee reports on emergency communications, relay / equipment distribution, video programming, and technology transitions, the agenda included updates from CSRIC, the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee, the Disability Rights Office, Consumer Affairs and Outreach Division (CAOD), remarks by Commissioner Mignon L. Clyburn, and information about the incentive auctions. The CAOD noted that since the launch of the direct video line for consumers that they have received significantly more ASL callers than they did with Video Relay Service (VRS). The success of the direct video line in reaching ASL users is a testament to how a communication method can affect consumer engagement. Commissioner Clyburn reiterated her support for an increase in the number of hours of video-described programming content, improved closed captioning, and the application of Hearing Aid Compatibility standards to advanced communications. One audience member questioned the DAC on efforts to engage more people with disabilities in crafting of regulations. She stated, “The rulemaking process works for the government, not for the community.” Indeed, the average consumer may not realize they have the opportunity to provide input on how the technology they buy and use is governed. Perhaps a consumer workshop on how to participate in FCC rulemakings is in order [pun intended].

#### Additional Information:

[Disability Advisory Committee](https://www.fcc.gov/general/disability-advisory-committee)

[<https://www.fcc.gov/general/disability-advisory-committee>]

**Communications Reliability, Security and Interoperability Council**

June 12, 2017 - The FCC’s Communications Security, Reliability, and Interoperability Council (CSRI) held its first meeting under the renewed charter. The meeting is available to view at [www.fcc.gov/live](http://www.fcc.gov/live). Brian King, Senior Vice President of the National Technology Service Delivery and Operations at T-Mobile USA, chairs the committee, and three working groups will assist the CSRIC in its mission to “provide recommendations to the FCC to ensure, among other things, optimal security and reliability of communications systems, including telecommunications, media, and public safety.”  The three working groups are:

* Transition Path to NG911
* Comprehensive Re-imagining of Emergency Alerting
* Network Reliability and Security Risk Reduction

Members of the CSRIC represent stakeholders from industry (Verizon, Monroe Electronics Inc., Oracle Communications, etc.), government (California Governor Office of Emergency Services, US Department of Transportation, Federal Emergency Management Agency, etc.), education (Texas A&M University Internet2 Technology Evaluation Center), and other stakeholders such as the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association, and National Association of State 911 Administrators. For a full list of committee members and to learn more about CSRIC, select the following link <http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2017/db0612/DA-17-574A1.pdf>

#### Additional Information:

[Communications Security, Reliability, and Interoperability Council (CSRIC) Membership and Meeting AnnouncementFCC Announces the Membership and First Meeting of The Communications Reliability, Security, And Interoperability Council](https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-17-574A1.pdf%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

[<https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-17-574A1.pdf>]

[U.S. Federal Register Notice Regarding CSRIC](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/06/07/2017-11809/federal-advisory-committee-act-communications-security-reliability-and-interoperability-council)

[<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/06/07/2017-11809/federal-advisory-committee-act-communications-security-reliability-and-interoperability-council>]

Wireless RERC Updates

**Wireless RERC at RESNA**

Wireless RERC principal investigator, Dr. Helena Mitchell and, Project Directors, Dr. Paul Baker, Maureen Linden, and Dr. Nathan Moon attended the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) 2017 Annual Conference in New Orleans, LA, June 26-30, 2017. Helena and Paul presented the Wireless RERC Technology Transfer Plan at the review meeting for newly funded RERCs. The Plan detailed how the Wireless RERC intends to move projects through the design and development phases and into the market. Maureen and Nathan attended the RESNA Board meeting and the conference to view exhibits, attend workshops and scientific research platforms, and poster sessions.

#### Additional Information:

[RESNA 2017](http://www.resna.org/resna-2017-annual-conference)

[<http://www.resna.org/resna-2017-annual-conference>]

**Wireless RERC at M-Enabling**

June 14, 2017 - Wireless RERC researcher, Ben Lippincott, chaired the Mobility and Dexterity panel at the 2017 M-Enabling Summit. The session speakers assessed technological advances in mobile apps and services and reviewed recently released solutions for users with mobility or dexterity impairments. The speakers included

* Chuck Eger, Director for North America, Mobile & Wireless Forum (MWF)
* Gary Birch, Executive Director, Neil Squire Society
* Dianne Goodwin, MEBME, President/Rehabilitation Engineer, BlueSky Designs, Inc.
* Mauricio Meza, Co-Founder, Komodo OpenLab
* David Niemeijer, Founder and CEO, AssistiveWare

#### Additional Information:

[M-Enabling 2017](http://www.m-enabling.com/agenda.html)

[<http://www.m-enabling.com/agenda.html>]

**Using Virtual Worlds to Break Through Access Barriers**

June 5, 2017 - Maureen Linden, Wireless RERC project director and operations manager, presented *BreakThru: Findings and Lessons from Using Virtual Worlds to Broaden Participation of Students with Disabilities in STEM Education*, at the 2017 Virtual Worlds Education Conference. BreakThru is an NSF-funded project, a collaboration between [Georgia Institute of Technology](http://www.gatech.edu) and the [University of Georgia](http://www.uga.edu).

**Presentation Abstract:** BreakThru is a project of the NSF-funded Georgia STEM Accessibility Alliance (GSAA) to broaden the participation of students with disabilities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. BreakThru used Second Life to provide virtual mentoring for secondary and postsecondary students with disabilities at three participating colleges and universities and in three high school districts. Between 2011 and 2015, BreakThru enrolled 98 postsecondary and 75 secondary students, most of whom were retained within the program. Second Life was used as a platform for providing mentoring, transition assistance, academic support, and career guidance. This presentation will focus on our development of BreakThru Island in Second Life and how it was expanded and revised to better reflect the needs and expectations of our participants. We also will discuss some of the accessibility and policy challenges in using virtual worlds to support students with disabilities, including the need to adapt to diverse communication preferences and address concerns of safety and security. We also will present findings from research about the potential of virtual worlds and mentorship programs within those environments to support retention and persistence in STEM education.

#### Additional Information:

[BreakThru](http://georgiabreakthru.org/)

[<http://georgiabreakthru.org/>]

[2017 Virtual Worlds Education Conference](http://411.fit.edu/virtualworlds/)

[<http://411.fit.edu/virtualworlds/>]

Publications

**Fresh Perspective on Making Accessibility Accommodations**

June 2, 2017 – The Coaching Training Institute (CTI) has released their latest findings on incorporating coaching, accommodation, and inclusion in the workplace entitled, “Co-Active Accessibility and Wholeness Project” (CAWP) Report.” A key quote from the report states, “Our efforts are not about making the “able-bodied” world available to those with “disabilities” but something infinitely richer. We seek to expand our understanding of what it means to be and hold others as naturally creative, resourceful and whole.” Technology advancements and change in societal views are making it possible for more people with disabilities to pursue traditional post-secondary education, career training opportunities, and professional certifications.  However, for individuals with severe disabilities, appropriate accommodations to complete these programs still present numerous challenges. Though this report focusses on delivering training content for coaching and leadership development, the principals and objectives could be implemented in other areas of training and education. The Co-Active® Accessibility & Wholeness Project report states three key objectives [verbatim]:

* To advance the effort of creating and implementing industry-wide standards in the field of personal and professional development for approaching accessibility and accommodation needs.
* To reveal unconscious bias about perceived challenges and shift that perception from one of deficit to a unique expression of wholeness.
* To illustrate ways the lens of wholeness enhances accessibility for all by providing tangible examples of how the Co-Active® Accessibility & Wholeness Project serves students.

#### Additional Information:

[Read the Co-Active® Accessibility & Wholeness Project Report](http://www.coactive.com/ee_newsletter/images/resource_pdfs/CAWP_External_Report.pdf)

[<http://www.coactive.com/ee_newsletter/images/resource_pdfs/CAWP_External_Report.pdf>]

Other Items of Interest

**RespectAbility Career and Fellowship Opportunities**

Under the RespectAbility logo are the words “Fighting Stigmas Advancing Opportunities.”  RespectAbility is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to educating, empowering and creating opportunities for people with disabilities.  The organization is currently seeking to fill the positions of Development Director/Grant Writer (full-time) and Grant Writer (part-time).  RespectAbility is also recruiting for the 2017 National Leadership Fellowship program in the Washington, DC area.  Under the About Us section reads, “RespectAbility understands we are a stronger community when we live up to our values – when we are welcoming, diverse, moral and respect one another…we work…to reshape the attitudes of American society so people with disabilities can more fully participate in and contribute to society.”

#### Additional Information:

[Careers at RespectAbility](https://www.respectability.org/about-us/careers/)

[<https://www.respectability.org/about-us/careers/>]

**Judge Rules in Favor of Plaintiff in Website Accessibility Case**

June 13, 2017 – United States District Judge Robert Scola made a ruling in the presumed to be the first trial case regarding website accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). His decision in U.S. District Court Southern District of Florida (Miami), Gil v. Winn Dixie Stores, Inc. [CASE #: 1:16cv23020RNS] confirmed that “Title III of the ADA applies if the website is “heavily integrated” with and serves as a “gateway” for the physical stores.” The plaintiff, Juan Carlos Gil, brought a lawsuit against the Winn-Dixie grocery store chain alleging that Winn Dixie’s website did not meet accessible public accommodation guidelines under Title III of the ADA, specifically that he was caused injury because he could not use a standard screen reader to access Winn Dixie’s store website. Therefore, denying him full and equal enjoyment of what the grocery store had to offer to sighted customers, such as online prescription refills.  Litigating parties appeared for a two-day bench trial in Miami. Plaintiff, Gil, and a website accessibility expert testified at the two-day trial. Winn-Dixie filed for Summary Judgement, which asks the presiding judge to dismiss the case on the grounds that the plaintiff presented insufficient facts or did not show relevance to support their case. Judge Scola denied Winn Dixie’s request for Summary Judgement.  Winn Dixie has to pay plaintiff’s attorney fees, comply with the injunction mandating that the store’s website come into compliance, and Winn Dixie must provide web accessibility training to their employees.

#### Additional Information:

[U.S. District Court Southern District of Florida (Miami), Gil v. Winn Dixie Stores, Inc. [CASE #: 1:16cv23020RNS]](http://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.orrick.com/files/order.pdf)

[<http://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.orrick.com/files/order.pdf> ]

[First Public Accommodations Website Accessibility Case Goes To Trial in Florida](http://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/first-public-accommodations-website-82698/)

[<http://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/first-public-accommodations-website-82698/>]

**Facebook Adding Captioning Capability to Live Videos**

June 7, 2017 - Facebook reports that in 2017 users are currently watching four times more live video content than they did in 2016, and 20 percent of videos uploaded to Facebook are aired live.  As user-generated video content is increasingly available to the public, Facebook is working to increase accessibility with closed captioning on live videos.  This feature will benefit people who need or use closed captions to access the content, such as people who experience hearing impairments or English language learners. Facebook’s captioning on some live broadcasts will be accomplished with a Live Application Programing Interface (Live API).  Publishers with broadcasting equipment, Live API, a third party caption provider or closed captioning software will be able to translate the video’s audio into text.  Captioning video in real time can be difficult.  However, with one in five Facebook videos streamed live, this is an industry step forward for increasing accessibility.  If publishers use closed captions and enable the feature on their videos, Facebook users who already have closed captions turned on will automatically see the text.  **Source**: Hillary Grigonis, Digital Trends

#### Additional Information:

[Read the Article: Facebook users will soon start seeing more live videos with closed captioning](https://www.digitaltrends.com/social-media/facebook-adds-closed-captioning-for-broadcasters/)

[<https://www.digitaltrends.com/social-media/facebook-adds-closed-captioning-for-broadcasters/>]

**Master Degree in Management of Design for All**

June 10, 2017 - “Universal Design (UD) is evolving from designing for the needs of elder and disabled populations towards designing for the respect of human diversity in economic growth context considering all aspects of diversity,” states the press release launching a new master’s degree program in Management of Design for All.  Starting in October 2017, the Central University of Catalonia and the Design for All Foundation (DfA) will collaborate to offer the program. Students will learn aspects of UD in several modules including online discussions and six weeks of training in Barcelona. Some of the learning outcomes include good practice in UD, critical aspects of succeeding in designing and delivering services, tools used to involve and co-design with users, ability to act as a consultant for the implementation of UD in products and services. As more designers, engineers, architects, and anyone creating products and delivering services implements UD principles from conception to deployment, a greater diversity of users will benefit.

#### Additional Information:

[Master in Management of Design for All](http://www.uvic.cat/formacio-continua/en/node/3690)

[[www.uvic.cat/formacio-continua/en/node/3690](http://www.uvic.cat/formacio-continua/en/node/3690)]

**Apple Offers Free Augmented Reality Development Tools**

June 5, 2017 - At the 2017 Worldwide Developers Conference, Apple announced its new augmented reality (AR) platform. Also announced was ARKit, a free programming framework that lets developers and consumers create augmented reality applications. Available this fall with the upcoming release of iOS 11,according to the press release, Apple will become the largest AR platform owner in the world with potentially hundreds of millions of users. ARKit can combine camera and motion-sensing information on the device to track virtual objects in real-time. Apple explains, “ARKit allows developers to tap into the latest computer vision technologies to build detailed and compelling virtual content on top of real-world scenes for interactive gaming, immersive shopping experiences, industrial design and more.” This technology could empower users with disabilities to participate in the development of assistive and accessible technologies, and demonstrate innovative AR solutions for and by people with disabilities.

#### Additional Information:

[Link to Apple Press Release](https://www.apple.com/newsroom/2017/06/ios-11-brings-new-features-to-iphone-and-ipad-this-fall/)

[<https://www.apple.com/newsroom/2017/06/ios-11-brings-new-features-to-iphone-and-ipad-this-fall/>]

[CNET Video Demonstrating Apple Augmented Reality (audio and captioned)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9avmqNEG5ls)

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9avmqNEG5ls>]

**Sign-to-Text Technology, a Prototype Smart Sign Glove**

June 2, 2017 - Yingmi Tech announced this week at Computex Taipai, one of the largest computer and technology expositions, a new prototype smart glove that can translate signed characters into text. The glove is equipped with sensors in the fingers and wrist that allow it to send data to a smartphone that presents it as a text communication/translation. Though currently only capable of detecting Chinese sign language, the team hopes to expand to other signed languages. **Source:** Caitlin Fairchild, Government Executive Magazine

#### Additional Information:

[These Smart Gloves Can Translate Sign Language](http://www.nextgov.com/emerging-tech/2017/06/these-smart-gloves-translate-sign-language/138361/)

[<http://www.nextgov.com/emerging-tech/2017/06/these-smart-gloves-translate-sign-language/138361/>]

[CNET Video Demonstrating the Smart Gloves (audio and captioned)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGbdJzYyB-s)

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGbdJzYyB-s>]

**Dr. Gregory Abowd Honored by the Center for Leadership in Disability**

June 2, 2017 - Dr. Gregory Abowd, Regents’ Professor and J.Z. Liang Chair in the [School of Interactive Computing](http://www.ic.gatech.edu/) at the Georgia Institute of Technology (GA Tech) was recently honored for his commitment, contributions, and research in autism.  He received the 2017 Autism Achievement Award from the Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD) located within the Center for Healthy Development and the School of Public Health at Georgia State University.  Dr. Abowd is a recognized authority for his research in the area of ubiquitous computing (or ubicomp), the [Future Computing Environments](http://www.cc.gatech.edu/fce/), and the [Aware Home Research Initiative](http://www.awarehome.gatech.edu/). These research areas focus on technologies used in everyday environments such as the classroom and home and appear to have seamless, yet complex interaction with humans. This discipline is referred to as human-computer interaction (HCI).

The [Atlanta Autism Consortium](https://www.atlantaautismconsortium.org/) is a nonprofit organization founded by Dr. Abowd in 2008.  He combined his research expertise with first-hand knowledge as a parent with two sons who experience autism. Through the years, Abowd has also received the ACM SIGCHI Social Impact Award and the ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) Eugene Lawler Humanitarian Award.  Daniel Crimmins, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD) commented, “It is my great pleasure to honor Dr. Abowd for his work…This is deserved recognition that gives us the opportunity to acknowledge Gregory’s deep commitment to creating a more inclusive environment for all.” Upon receiving the award, Abowd stated, “I was incredibly flattered and surprised to receive this year’s Autism Achievement Award…It’s wonderful to be a part of a consortium that recognizes the importance of community and produces a forum where people can come, learn and communicate in a safe environment.”

#### Additional Information:

[Center for Leadership in Disability Presents 2017 Autism Plan for Georgia Achievement Award](http://disability.publichealth.gsu.edu/2017/06/02/center-leadership-disability-presents-2017-autism-plan-georgia-achievement-award/)

[<http://disability.publichealth.gsu.edu/2017/06/02/center-leadership-disability-presents-2017-autism-plan-georgia-achievement-award/>]

[Center for Leadership on Disability](http://disability.publichealth.gsu.edu/2017/06/02/center-leadership-disability-presents-2017-autism-plan-georgia-achievement-award/)

[<http://disability.publichealth.gsu.edu/>]

[Georgia Tech Ubicomp Group](http://ubicomp.cc.gatech.edu/) - [Gregory D. Abowd](http://ubicomp.cc.gatech.edu/gregory-d-abowd/)

[<http://ubicomp.cc.gatech.edu/gregory-d-abowd/>]

Upcoming Events

**Minority Mental Health Awareness Month**

July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. Did you know that one in five people in the U. S. report experiencing a mental health condition? Some of these conditions are identified as anxiety disorders, autism, ADHD, depression, eating disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Find tools and resources such as discussion and planning guides to have conversations in your community: <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/content.aspx?ID=9447&lvl=2&lvlid=12>, and check out the Mental Health Myths and Facts link at <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/myths-facts/index.html>

#### Additional Information:

[National Alliance on Mental Illness, NAMI](https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Raise-Awareness/Awareness-Events/National-Minority-Mental-Health-Awareness-Month)

[<https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Raise-Awareness/Awareness-Events/National-Minority-Mental-Health-Awareness-Month>]

**U. S. Access Board Meeting & Upcoming Webinars**

The United States Access Board will hold their next meeting on July 12, 2017 from 1:30 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. (ET). This meeting is open to the public and may be attended in person in Washington, D.C. or via live webcast. The Board will hear public comments during the final 15 minutes of the meeting. If you would like to make a comment during this time, please send an email to Rose Bunales at bunales@access-board.gov.  For more instructions regarding submitting your comments and additional details regarding the meeting, select the following link <https://www.access-board.gov/the-board/board-meeting>.  Upcoming webinars include ADA and ABA Accessibility Standards for courthouses, impacts of rough and uneven surfaces on wheelchair travel, and updates to Section 508 Standards.  To obtain more information and registration details, go to <https://www.access-board.gov/news/access-currents-may-june-2017>.

#### Additional Information:

[Access Board Webinars](https://www.access-board.gov/news/access-currents-may-june-2017)

[<https://www.access-board.gov/news/access-currents-may-june-2017>]

**GSMA Mobile World Congress Americas**

Mobile World Congress will convene from September 12 to September 14, 2017, in San Francisco, California. The conference sessions will address core mobile technologies, consumer and industrial applications in the Internet of Things and the intersection of mobile with entertainment, content, and media.

#### Additional Information:

[Conference Registration](https://www.mwcamericas.com/register-plan/register/)

[<https://www.mwcamericas.com/>]

**Technology and Disability Policy Highlights,** June 2017



The Technology and Disability Policy Highlights (TDPH) is a monthly newsletter that reports on national public policy events and tracks emerging issues of interest to individuals with disabilities, researchers, policymakers, industry, and advocacy professionals. The Wireless RERC is a research center that promotes universal access to wireless technologies and explores their innovative applications in addressing the needs of people with disabilities. For more information on the Wireless RERC, please visit our website at [<http://www.wirelessrerc.org>]. For further information on items summarized in this report, or if you have items of interest that you would like included in future editions, please contact this edition’s editors Synge Tyson [[synge@cacp.gatech.edu](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Csalimah%5COneDrive%20-%20Georgia%20Institute%20of%20Technology%5CwiRERC_2016%20-%202021%5CTDPH%5CApril%202017%5Csynge%40cacp.gatech.edu)], Kenneth Goughnour [kenneth@cacp.gatech.edu], or Salimah LaForce [[salimah@cacp.gatech.edu](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Csalimah%5COneDrive%20-%20Georgia%20Institute%20of%20Technology%5CwiRERC_2016%20-%202021%5CTDPH%5CApril%202017%5Csalimah%40cacp.gatech.edu)].

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