

Technology and Disability Policy Highlights

May 2017



Overview

In May, the Communications and Technology Subcommittee of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing regarding emergency alerting systems in the United States. The questions and answers during the hearing reflected research and development efforts on the modernization and maturation of the national systems. Questions from Congressional members ranged from technical to specific concerns regarding their district such as *Would seniors or socioeconomically challenged individuals have to purchase new televisions or upgrade smartphones to receive and benefit from the enhanced emergency alerts? When will WEA support Silver Alerts? Would the enhancements include alerts communicated in other languages such as Spanish or Sign Language? What impact would a repeal of Net Neutrality rules have on emergency messaging systems?* Regarding the latter, consumer, practitioner, and industry stakeholders will have the opportunity to address that question and many others concerning Net Neutrality. The FCC released a *Notice of Prosed Rulemaking In the Matter of Restoring Internet Freedom* [**WC Docket No. 17-108**]. The NPRM is seeking stakeholder input on amendments to existing Net Neutrality rules put in place to regulate broadband service as a public utility. Initial comments are due on or before July 17, 2017, and reply comments, on or before August 16, 2017.

Several reports were released addressing the rise of wireless-only households, the potentialities of autonomous vehicles and ridesharing services on environmental change, the status of IoT, and persistent barriers to availability and use of assistive technologies. Hyperlinked titles are below:

* [*Wireless Substitution: Early Release of Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), July–December 2016*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201705.pdf)
* [*Three Revolutions in Urban Transportation: How to achieve the full potential of vehicle electrification, automation and shared mobility in urban transportation systems around the world by 2050*](http://bit.ly/ThreeRevolutions)
* [*Technology Assessment: Internet of Things: Status and implications of an increasingly connected worlds*](http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-75?source=ra)
* [*While Assistive Technologies Can Enable Those With Disabilities to Work, Environmental and Personal Factors Still Create Barriers*](https://www.nap.edu/login.php?record_id=24740&page=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nap.edu%2Fdownload%2F24740)

This issue also includes news about a bionic hand that learns and remembers, Global Accessibility Awareness Day, and the new Charles Benton Digital Equity Champion.

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Legislative Activities

**Examining the Future of Emergency Alerting**

May 17, 2017 - The Communications and Technology Subcommittee of the Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing in May regarding emergency alerting systems in the United States.  The systems included Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and the Emergency Alert System (EAS), both on which the Wireless RERC has conducted research regarding the integration and effectiveness of these systems with disability populations. The questions and answers during the hearing reflected research and development efforts on the modernization and maturation of the national systems. There were three witnesses representing industry stakeholders who provided testimony and answered questions before Congressional House Committee members. The Subcommittee is chaired by Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), and the three witnesses were as follows:

* Sam Matheny, Chief Technology Officer at the National Association of Broadcasters, was the first witness to speak and discussed the importance of broadcasters in times of emergency. He also demonstrated Advanced Emergency Alerting on next-generation televisions, showing how advanced alerts can provide more actionable information.
* Christopher Guttman-McCabe, CEO of CGM Advisors, LLC, testifying on behalf of Advanced Computer and Communications, LLC., spoke to integrating the intelligence of the device into WEA services as a move towards device-assisted geotargeting that can display to the end-user the alert area on a map. The goal is to enhance the utility of WEA end encourage localities to use WEA by addressing over-alerting and limiting the impact on the network.
* Dr. Farrokh Khatibi, Director of Engineering at Qualcomm Technology, addressed work conducted by the wireless industry to implement recent FCC rules that enhance WEA messages such as more granular geotargeting and including embedded references (URLs and phone numbers) in WEA messages.

Questions from Congressional members ranged from technical to specific concerns regarding their district.  Issues included community impact: Would seniors or socioeconomically challenged individuals have to purchase new televisions or upgrade smartphones to receive and benefit from the enhanced emergency alerts?  When will WEA support Silver Alerts? Can geofencing reduce over-alerting, so that road congestion is decreased during emergency events? How would the public and municipal authorities be educated about changes and new technologies surrounding emergency alert systems? Communication: Would the enhancements include alerts communicated in other languages such as Spanish or Sign Language? Can social media be used as an alerting tool? Can different alerts with different information be sent to the impacted area (e.g., west of X Boulevard shelter in place, east, evacuate)?  Technical and privacy challenges: What needs to happen to achieve implementation nationwide?  What about piracy and cyber security involving alert messages, traditional, advanced and those on social media?  How can network limitations be overcome? What impact would a repeal of Net Neutrality rules have on emergency messaging systems?

Overall, the Committee’s pointed questions echoed stakeholder concerns regarding ensuring that all people in the impacted areas will have access to emergency messages and that the system technology includes features that encourage local alerting authorities to utilize WEA.

#### Additional Information:

[Watch the video and read the witness statements](https://energycommerce.house.gov/news-center/press-releases/subcommtech-examines-future-emergency-alerting)

[[https://energycommerce.house.gov/news-center/press-releases/subcommtech-examines-future-emergency-alerting](https://energycommerce.house.gov/news-center/press-releases/subcommtech-examines-future-emergency-alerting)]

Regulatory Activities

**Restoring Internet Freedom A/K/A Repealing Net Neutrality**

May 18, 2017 – The FCC released a *Notice of Prosed Rulemaking In the Matter of Restoring Internet Freedom* [**WC Docket No. 17-108**]. The NPRM is seeking stakeholder input on amendments to existing Net Neutrality rules put in place in 2015 to regulate broadband service as a public utility. The NPRM contends that Net Neutrality is a threat to investment and innovation and seeks “substantive” input on defining Internet service, the proposed “light-touch regulatory framework,” and sources and constraints of their legal authority to adopt the proposed rules. Some consumer groups argue that repealing Net Neutrality rules would affect parity of access to content and services, potentially further excluding socioeconomically disadvantaged populations. In 2015, broadband was classified as a telecommunications service rather than an information service. This reclassification, thus, extended Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act to the provision of broadband internet access services, requiring equitable access by people with disabilities. The FCC’s role in negotiating between stakeholder interests will be informed by the comments it receives from the public, not the coverage the issues are getting in the press. As such, people with disabilities and other stakeholders should participate in the process, submitting relevant data to ensure a balanced consideration of the potential consequences of the proposed rules. Initial comments are due on or before July 17, 2017, and reply comments, on or before August 16, 2017. Prepared comments should be upload via the [Electronic Comment Filing System](https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/).

#### Additional Information:

# [Restoring Internet Freedom Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](https://www.fcc.gov/document/restoring-internet-freedom-notice-proposed-rulemaking)

[[https://www.fcc.gov/document/restoring-internet-freedom-notice-proposed-rulemaking](https://www.fcc.gov/document/restoring-internet-freedom-notice-proposed-rulemaking%20)]

[Electronic Comment Filing System](https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/)

[<https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/>]

**Broadband-Enabled Health Care Solutions and Advanced Technologies**

May 10, 2017 – In a recent *Public Notice* [GN Docket No. 16-46] the FCC sought stakeholder input on *Actions to Accelerate Adoption and Accessibility of Broadband-Enabled Health Care Solutions and Advanced Technologies.* They are specifically interested in expanding access and utilization in underserved areas, including rural communities. Broadband connectivity is increasingly instrumental in bringing together healthcare practitioners and consumers, enabling the exchange of information, and use of services. But in some cases, communities that could see the most gains from broadband-enabled health care solutions, gaps in technology (availability, accessibility, and affordability), policy and practice limit its impact. The FCC initiatives such as the Universal Service program and spectrum licensing, are meant to support health care innovation. As such, efforts are ongoing to evaluate and understand broadband health infrastructure and its transformative impact on the delivery of health care services. To this end, the FCC sought stakeholder input on regulatory, technical, and consumer issues related to the fusion of broadband and health care delivery. FCC objectives on this issue include [verbatim]: 1) Promoting effective policy and regulatory solutions that encourage broadband adoption and promote Health IT, 2) Identifying regulatory barriers (and incentives) to the deployment of RF-Enabled advanced healthcare technologies and devices, 3) Strengthening the nation's telehealth infrastructure through the FCC's Rural Health Care Program and other initiatives, 4) Raising consumer awareness about the value proposition of broadband in the health care sector and its potential for addressing health care disparities, and 5) Engaging a diverse array of traditional and non-traditional stakeholders to identify emerging issues and opportunities in the broadband health space. Initial comments were due on May 24, 2017, but there is still time to submit reply comments. That deadline is on, or before June 8, 2017.

#### Additional Information:

Public Notice on the Federal Register [[TEXT]](http://links.govdelivery.com:80/track?type=click&enid=ZWFzPTEmbXNpZD0mYXVpZD0mbWFpbGluZ2lkPTIwMTcwNTEwLjczMTk1MzIxJm1lc3NhZ2VpZD1NREItUFJELUJVTC0yMDE3MDUxMC43MzE5NTMyMSZkYXRhYmFzZWlkPTEwMDEmc2VyaWFsPTE2OTIzMzM4JmVtYWlsaWQ9c2FsaW1haEBjYWNwLmdhdGVjaC5lZHUmdXNlcmlkPXNhbGltYWhAY2FjcC5nYXRlY2guZWR1JnRhcmdldGlkPSZmbD0mZXh0cmE9TXVsdGl2YXJpYXRlSWQ9JiYm&&&169&&&http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-05-10/html/2017-09309.htm)  [[PDF]](http://links.govdelivery.com:80/track?type=click&enid=ZWFzPTEmbXNpZD0mYXVpZD0mbWFpbGluZ2lkPTIwMTcwNTEwLjczMTk1MzIxJm1lc3NhZ2VpZD1NREItUFJELUJVTC0yMDE3MDUxMC43MzE5NTMyMSZkYXRhYmFzZWlkPTEwMDEmc2VyaWFsPTE2OTIzMzM4JmVtYWlsaWQ9c2FsaW1haEBjYWNwLmdhdGVjaC5lZHUmdXNlcmlkPXNhbGltYWhAY2FjcC5nYXRlY2guZWR1JnRhcmdldGlkPSZmbD0mZXh0cmE9TXVsdGl2YXJpYXRlSWQ9JiYm&&&170&&&http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-05-10/pdf/2017-09309.pdf)

[<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-05-10/pdf/2017-09309.pdf>]

Wireless RERC Updates

**In** **Case you Missed It**

Wireless RERC researchers, Salimah LaForce and Ben Lippincott, and Deaf Link CEO and Founder, Kay Chiodo,presented*Clear & Effective Emergency Communications over Wireless Devices* at the Pacific ADA Center and the ADA National Network Learning Session. If you were not able to join us, below are links to the presentation slides, video, and audio recording of the webinar.

* [Video playback of ADA National Network Learning Session: Clear & Effective Emergency Communications over Wireless Devices](http://adapresentations.org/archives/stream.php?id=127)
* [Audio playback](http://adapresentations.org/archives/5_11_17/Clear%20and%20Effective%20Emergency%20Communications%20Over%20Wireless%20Devices.mp3)
* [Clear and Effective Emergency Communications over Wireless Devices 5-11-17(pdf)](http://adapresentations.org/doc/5_11_17/Clear%20and%20Effective%20Emergency%20Communications%20over%20Wireless%20Devices.pdf)
* [Clear and Effective Emergency Communications over Wireless Devices 2 slides per page 5-11-17(pdf)](http://adapresentations.org/doc/5_11_17/Clear%20and%20Effective%20Emergency%20Communications%20over%20Wireless%20Devices_2_slides_per_page.pdf)
* [Clear and Effective Communications over Wireless Devices 5-11-17(rtf)](http://adapresentations.org/doc/5_11_17/Clear%20and%20Effective%20Emergency%20Communications%20over%20Wireless%20Devices.rtf)
* [AHAS Accessible Hazard Alert System Example Links 5-11-17(rtf)](http://adapresentations.org/doc/5_11_17/AHAS%20Accessible%20Hazard%20Alert%20System%20Example%20Links.rtf)
* [Transcript 5-11-17(pdf)](http://adapresentations.org/doc/5_11_17/Transcript_5_11_17.pdf)
* [Transcript 5-11-17(rtf)](http://adapresentations.org/doc/5_11_17/Transcript_5_11_17.rtf)

Publications

**Wireless-Only Household Descriptive Statistics**

May 2017 – The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Division of Health Interview Statistics, National Center for Health Statistics released the [*Wireless Substitution: Early Release of Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), July–December 2016*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201705.pdf)as part of the NHIS Early Release Program. The report provides the most recent statistical information available to the federal government.  However, due to the early release, data files may be slightly different in the final published report.  Preliminary findings from the July–December 2016 report show that for the first time a majority (50.8%) of American homes had only wireless telephones.  These findings are crucial and relevant as the FCC is addressing the need for all Americans to have access to broadband internet in their homes.  In addition, researchers at the Center for Advanced Communications Policy and the Wireless RERC continue to address how changes in access to landline and wireless communications impacts access to the Nation’s 9-1-1 system.

As we [reported earlier this year](http://www.wirelessrerc.gatech.edu/sites/default/files/publications/technology_and_disability_policy_highlight_tdph_march_2017.docx), FCC Chairman Pai stated, “Access to digital opportunity shouldn’t depend on who you are or where you’re from.” According to the statistics, however, many factors, including geography and socioeconomic status, correlated to access. Mobile phones can be used to access the internet, but often data plans are expensive for those who experience economic challenges, which includes people with disabilities and aging adults with limited income. Other interesting statistics from the report include:

* *Geographic Differences* – People residing in the Northeast were least likely to live in wireless-only households (34.%), compared to those in the Midwest and West (53.0%), and the South (56%). There was a six percentage point difference in wireless-only households between adults living in urban areas (53.0%) and those living in non-urban (i.e., rural and suburban) areas (47.0%).
* *Age Differences* – People aged 45 and over have increasingly cut the cord, and become wireless-only household: 34% in the second 6 months of 2013 to 40% in the second 6 months of 2016. At 73%, adults aged 25-29 had the highest percentage of wireless-only households.
* *Economic Differences* - Adults living in or near poverty (10.0% and 11.1% respectively) were less likely than higher-income adults (18.9%) to be living in wireless-*mostly* (have a landline but don’t us it for communications) households.

#### Additional Information:

[Read the Wireless Substitution Report](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201705.pdf)

[<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201705.pdf>]

**Futures of Urban Transportation: Three Revolutions by 2050**

May 2017 – Methods to improve transportation and address environmental factors was the key focus in the recently released paper entitled [*Three Revolutions in Urban Transportation: How to achieve the full potential of vehicle electrification, automation and shared mobility in urban transportation systems around the world by 2050*](http://bit.ly/ThreeRevolutions)**.** Researchers from UC Davis, Sustainable Transportation and Energy Pathways, the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, and several advisors outlined three possible revolutions in transportation. Projections started from the base year of 2015 and researchers developed their “analysis using three main urban travel scenarios: a business-as-usual scenario, a technology-dominated 2 Revolutions scenario, and a technology + high shared-mobility 3 Revolutions scenario” through 2050. The paper outlines the benefits and consequences if each scenario played out full implementation. For example, if more people utilized ride-sharing platforms, this could reduce the number of cars on the road. In addition to the reduction of traffic congestion, this could reduce energy usage and emissions (air pollution). The paper also provides insights into policy changes that would be needed to realize the third revolution. For example, regulatory barriers should be addressed so that ridesharing and autonomous vehicles complement, not compete with public transit.

The 3R scenario may need governments to coordinate both AV infrastructure and management of public and private trips, broadening the definition of publicly funded transportation in favor of seamless regional travel networks. Central to this transition is the government role in (sic) filling gaps, and maintaining equitable access and mobility for all individuals, regardless of income, disability or access to a smartphone or vehicle. (p. 4)

To achieve the preferred future, where these emerging transportation technologies positively impact society, there would need to be a change in public perception and policy concerning public transit and ride-sharing.

#### Additional Information:

[Read the full report](http://bit.ly/ThreeRevolutions)

[<http://bit.ly/ThreeRevolutions>]

**IoT: Status and implications of an increasingly connected world**

May 15, 2017 – The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), a nonpartisan agency that works for Congress and tasked with investigating and reporting on how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars, released a technology assessment on the Internet of Things (IoT). The report,[*Technology Assessment: Internet of Things: Status and implications of an increasingly connected worlds*](http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-75?source=ra)*,* describes how smart devices are increasingly integrated into daily life. Smart devices typically sense, collect, store, and often act upon, or induce user actions based on data received and displayed, bridging physical and digital environments. Individuals and industry are using these smart devices for tracking fitness, monitoring health symptoms, interfacing with car entertainment systems, determining crop planting and harvesting, and integrated into city waterworks, to name a few applications. With the massive data exchanged via internet-connected devices, the report identifies risks associated with IoT. Among the top concerns were economic issues, information security, privacy, safety, and standards. For instance, IoT is providing additional and improved customer services in many industries but reducing employment in manufacturing and assembly line work in other industries. There are security issues related to attacks on municipalities or information stored on smartphones. People do not always understand that personal data from their fitness trackers or child’s toy may be compromised or sold without their knowledge. Because of the integrated and expansive reach of IoT within and across industry sectors, regulation is complex, involving stakeholders in the public and private domains and devices that fall within the purview of discrete regulatory agencies, including, but not limited to the FCC, Food and Drug Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Federal Trade Commission, Department of Agriculture, and so on. As a result, the GAO anticipates that IoT will act as a disruptive force in some economic sectors.

Disruption, however, can produce positive outcomes, forcing marginalized issues to the forefront, as was witnessed with touchscreen interfaces and access by people with vision loss. Though the report does not explicitly address IoT and people with disabilities, smart devices have implications for their inclusion and independence. Some may be designed specifically as assistive technologies, while other mainstream IoT devices may be adopted and used in an assistive manner. Wireless RERC focus group research revealed that some people that are deaf had replaced traditional bed and pillow shakers with smart watches and fitness trackers that can be set to vibrate to awaken them. Hands-free and eyes-free control granted by smart assistants enable people with visual and/or mobility impairment to control aspects of their home environment. Connected exoskeletons can support individuals in the workplace, extending their ability to maintain employment. In the future, autonomous vehicles could open up independent transportation for people with vision, cognitive and mobility disabilities, addressing the perennial problem of transportation access. Setting standards for IoT, ensuring inclusive design, and closing the digital divide will be a critical component of realizing the potential of IoT.

…although the IoT is often discussed as being equally available to all, it is unevenly distributed, similar to the existing digital divide. According to a RAND Corporation report, designing intuitive interfaces and providing education of the IoT may increase equitable use and shared benefits of the IoT (p. 53).

#### Additional Information:

[Read the GAO Report](http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-75?source=ra)

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-75?source=ra>

**Factors that Create Access Barriers to Assistive Technologies and Work**

May 9, 2017 – The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) released, [*While Assistive Technologies Can Enable Those With Disabilities to Work, Environmental and Personal Factors Still Create Barriers*](https://www.nap.edu/login.php?record_id=24740&page=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nap.edu%2Fdownload%2F24740). The Social Security Administration requested that NASEM research and provide analysis regarding people with disabilities and their access to and use of assistive products and technology.  NASEM’s Committee on the Use of Selected Assistive Products and Technologies in Eliminating or Reducing the Effects of Impairments consists of experts in various fields such as medicine, clinical research, rehabilitation, therapy, design, health policy and public policy. This extensive report “examine[d] selected assistive products and technologies – wheelchairs and other seated mobility devices, upper-limb prostheses, and hearing and speech assistive technologies – and assess[ed] the extent to which people have access to and use these devices, as well as the extent to which the devices support occupational success.” The Social Security Administration provides disability benefits to about .06 percent of people in the U.S. with a disability, making access (financial) and utilization (training and technical support) to assistive technologies a critical need for people with disabilities in, and seeking to gain entry into the workforce.  Key findings from the report state that technology and assistive devices that may be of benefit to consumers are being generated at a more rapid pace than medical and service providers as well as approved medical reimbursement entities can keep up with and assess. Access and services for people with disabilities also vary by state and geographical area (urban v. rural). Thus, many factors such as funding, policy, and availability of services create these gaps that may preclude individuals with disabilities from receiving technologies that would improve their daily living, independence, and opportunities for employment. Social and economic factors including health literacy were also determined to influence an individual’s access to or use of devices and technology. The Committee also disclosed difficulties with obtaining data regarding how adaptive devices and assistive technologies mitigate impairments, which limited their ability to draw conclusions regarding workplace accommodations and employability.

#### Additional Information:

[NASEM Press Release](http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=24740&_ga=2.166187902.1758804643.1494507333-1699159028.1494507333)

[<http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=24740&_ga=2.166187902.1758804643.1494507333-1699159028.1494507333>]

[Download a free PDF version of the NASEM Report](https://www.nap.edu/login.php?record_id=24740&page=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nap.edu%2Fdownload%2F24740)

[<https://www.nap.edu/login.php?record_id=24740&page=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nap.edu%2Fdownload%2F24740>]

Other Items of Interest

**Apple Celebrates Global Accessibility Awareness Day**

May 18, 2017 - Apple celebrated Global Accessibility Awareness Day online with a series of promotional videos highlighting accessibility features in Apple products. The videos showcase seven people with disabilities using various accessibility features. The in-person celebration culminated in an outdoor concert with Stevie Wonder! Cook took Global Accessibility Day as an opportunity to reaffirm publicly, Apple's dedication to users with disabilities. "For us, we believe very deeply that accessibility is a human right," Cook said. "And we try very hard to make all of our products accessible for everyone because of that. It's a basic value."

#### Additional Information:

[Apple's Tim Cook talks tech with accessibility advocates for Global Accessibility Awareness Day](http://appleinsider.com/articles/17/05/17/apple-highlights-global-accessibility-awareness-day-on-may-18-with-designed-for-everyone-video-series)

[<http://appleinsider.com/articles/17/05/17/apple-highlights-global-accessibility-awareness-day-on-may-18-with-designed-for-everyone-video-series>]

[Tim Cook Global Accessibility Awareness Day Quote](http://www.toptechnicalsolutions.com/apples-tim-cook-talks-tech-with-accessibility-advocates-for-global-accessibility-awareness-day/)

[<http://www.toptechnicalsolutions.com/apples-tim-cook-talks-tech-with-accessibility-advocates-for-global-accessibility-awareness-day/>]

**AT&T's Efforts to Make Innovation Available to All**

May 17, 2017 - AT&T’s Corporate Accessibility Technology Office designs, develops and reviews technologies to ensure their ease of use for people with disabilities. The goal, according to Lead Accessible Technology Architect Dr. Aaron Bangor is “to not build barriers in the first place.” Since 2015, his team has promoted inclusive design that will improve accessibility and communication for people with disabilities. In an interview with Dallas News, Dr. Bangor and his team spoke of Real-Time Text (RTT), a modern alternative to the legacy teletypewriter devices that allows individuals with hearing or speech impairments to communicate through text on a phone call. The recipient can see a word as soon as the sender types it. As current and emerging technologies such as drone delivery services, apps, and autonomous vehicles change the lived experience, the office's staff endeavors to ensure innovations are inclusive of all consumers. We’re not doing technology for technology’s sake," said Dr. Bangor. "We’re doing it for the benefit it can provide: meeting the needs of as many of our potential customers as possible.” AT&T’s real-time text service is expected to launch at the end of the year. **Source:** Melissa Repko, The Dallas Morning News

#### Additional Information:

# [In AT&T's accessibility lab, the goal is making technology, products for everyone](https://www.dallasnews.com/business/technology/2017/05/17/atts-accessibility-lab-goal-making-technology-products-everyone)

[<https://www.dallasnews.com/business/technology/2017/05/17/atts-accessibility-lab-goal-making-technology-products-everyone>]

**NTIA’s Emy Tseng is the 2017 Charles Benton Digital Equity Champion**

May 17, 2017 – The [National Digital Inclusion Alliance](https://digitalinclusion.org/) (NDIA) awarded [Emy Tseng](https://www.ntia.doc.gov/blog/2013/spotlight-ntia-btop-s-emy-tseng) as the 2017 recipient of the Charles Benton Digital Equity Champion Award. The award was established to recognize commitment and leadership in furthering digital inclusion, and named after the founder of the Benton Foundation. Tseng is a Senior Communications Program Specialist at the [National Telecommunications and Information Administration](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/) (NTIA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Tseng was the second person to receive the Digital Equity Champion Award at the [Net Inclusion 2017: The National Digital Inclusion Summit](https://digitalinclusion.org/netinclusion2017/) held in Minnesota on May 17, 2017.

Emy Tseng has held several positions where it is stated that her commitment to digital inclusion shined.  She served as the Digital Inclusion Director for the City of San Francisco. There she created one of the first local government digital inclusion programs and served on the first California State Broadband Task Force. Tseng served as a fellow at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University. Her work at Harvard focused on “inclusive innovation,” and she researched how vulnerable communities use, adapt, and shape technology to address their needs and goals. Tseng’s career experience also includes work as a Senior Policy Advisor at the Community Technology Foundation of California, a Program Associate for communications policy at the Ford Foundation, and a software engineer in various technology companies. Anne Neville-Bonilla, Director of the California Research Bureau, shared her insights as to why Tseng was an excellent choice for the Digital Equity Champion Award.

“Whether working at the Ford Foundation, the City and County of San Francisco, or NTIA, Emy consistently asks the tough questions about what works and why. She approaches problems methodically, and is guided by passion and a commitment to digital equity. She knows that what works in San Francisco may not look the same in Hartford, but she always thinks about what could be applicable so that we are not reinventing the proverbial wheel. As a colleague and a friend, Emy is always available to brainstorm, talk through a challenging project, or give advice. She is a champion in the truest sense.”

#### Additional Information:

[Read more about the award, celebration of digital inclusion, and Emy Tseng’s accomplishments.](https://www.benton.org/node/259628)

[<https://www.benton.org/node/259628>]

**Bionic Hand Can Learn and Mimic Organic Movement**

May 3, 2017 - Researchers at Newcastle University designed a commercial prosthetic hand with a webcam and a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) to improve the grasping ability of amputees. This system stores the features of similar objects it has encountered thereby improving its ability to grasp novel objects. Due to its inexpensive components, people can have their prosthetics adapted, as opposed to having to purchase and fit new ones.

#### Additional Information:

# [Read the Journal Article: Deep learning-based artificial vision for grasp classification in myoelectric hands](http://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1741-2552/aa6802)

[<http://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1741-2552/aa6802>]

Upcoming Events

***PEAT Talks*: Why Jobseekers Need a Digital Brand**

The Partnership on Employment and Accessible Technology’s (PEAT) next webinar is titled “Why Jobseekers Need a Digital Brand.”  Many companies use eRecruiting to find and hire new talent. Ted Drake, Principal Engineer, Accessibility with Intuit will discuss why students with a disability should invest in having a digital brand/online persona. He will also talk about how using social media has enabled people with a disability to start careers.

*PEAT Talks* are held on the third Thursday of every month at 2 pm ET. The purpose of the talks is to engage participants regarding employment related issues and toshowcase organizations and individuals whose work is advancing accessible technology in the workplace.

#### Additional Information:

[*Peat Talks* Link](http://www.peatworks.org/content/webinars/2017/06/Intuit)

[<http://www.peatworks.org/content/webinars/2017/06/Intuit>]

[Register for *Why Jobseekers Need a Digital Brand*](https://events-na12.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/1285741125/en/events/event/shared/1694163564/event_registration.html?sco-id=1694135811&_charset_=utf-8)

[<https://events-na12.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/1285741125/en/events/event/shared/1694163564/event_registration.html?sco-id=1694135811&_charset_=utf-8>]

[Link to Ted Drake’s 2017 CSUN conference presentation on Accessibility Metrics, and other presentations.](https://www.slideshare.net/7mary4/accessibility-metrics-accessibility-data-metrics-and-reporting-industry-best-practices)

[[https://www.slideshare.net/7mary4/accessibility-metrics-accessibility-data-metrics-and-reporting-industry-best-practices](https://www.slideshare.net/7mary4/accessibility-metrics-accessibility-data-metrics-and-reporting-industry-best-practices)]

**2017 M-Enabling Summit**

The M-Enabling Summit will convene from June 13 to June 14, 2017, in Washington, D.C. Summit presenters will cover topics such as robotics, wearables, virtual and augmented reality, artificial intelligence, and IoT.

#### Additional Information:

[Conference Registration](http://www.m-enabling.com/conreg.html)

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

**RESNA 2017: Annual Conference**

The Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) will convene their annual conference on June 28 to June 30, 2017, in New Orleans, Louisiana. Session topics will include recent assistive technology developments in the field and the lab concerning cognitive and sensory impairments, computer applications and communications, emerging technology, job and environmental accommodations, public policy and advocacy, and more.

#### Additional Information:

[Conference Registration](http://www.resna.org/news-events/annual-meeting/registration)

[<http://www.resna.org/news-events/annual-meeting/registration>]

**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,** May 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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