Technology and Disability Policy Highlights

WINTER ISSUE: December 2015 – January 2016



# Overview

During December and January, legislative and regulatory activity at the intersection of disability and technology access addressed several topics, including broadband access, hearing aid compatibility, employment, emergency communications, IT standards, and community integration. Regarding the latter, Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) introduced the [*Disability Integration Act of 2015*](https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2427/text) [**S.2427**] to make unlawful, discrimination against people with disabilities that keeps them isolated from their communities. Among other things, **S.2427** addresses de-institutionalization, housing, employment, community-based long-term service or support and state planning. In a concerted effort to advance progress on the Department of Justice’s Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Accessible ICT standards, [nine senators signed a letter](http://www.markey.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Ltr%20to%20OMB%20on%20ICT%20Access%20%283%29.pdf) urging the U.S. Office of Management and Budget to complete their review so that the ICT standards can be revised to reflect advances in technology.

In the regulatory arena, the FCC was also concerned with updating standards with their [proposed amendments to the hearing aid compatibility (HAC) rules](https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/12/28/2015-31368/hearing-aid-compatibility-standards). The goal is to increase the clarity and usability of telecommunications equipment for people who use hearing aids or cochlear implants. The FCC also released a [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)concerning the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs)](https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-16-5A1.docx). The proposed changes are intended to increase their effectiveness at prompting the public to take the appropriate protective actions.

Protecting people with disabilities’ rights to work in the community, the U.S. Department of Justice signed a [settlement agreement](http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-reaches-landmark-settlement-agreement-state-oregon-regarding-americans) which addressed transitioning people with intellectual and development disabilities out of sheltered work environments into integrated employment. Employers that embrace the use of accessible and assistive technologies in the workplace and have corresponding policies regarding the same will be in a good position to receive these candidates that were formerly in sheltered work environments.

In Wireless RERC news, in collaboration with Georgia Tech’s Center for Advanced Communications Policy (CACP), the [Wireless RERC added their expertise to support several of the proposed enhancements to the Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) system](http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001404241). Wireless RERC and CACP research on the accessibility of WEA messages for people with disabilities provided empirical data in support of recommendations to increase the character limitation, lift the prohibition on the inclusion of URLs and dialable numbers in WEA messages, and to require more precise geotargeting of WEA messages.

**Click the headings below to link directly to a particular section.**

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# Legislative Activities

**Senate Proposed Bill on Disability Integration**

December 18, 2015 - Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) sponsored and introduced the *Disability Integration Act of 2015* [**S.2427**] to make unlawful discrimination against people with disabilities that keeps them isolated from their communities. The legislations intend to ensure people with disabilities receive the necessary services to live independently and participate in community activities. Among other things, S.2427 addresses de-institutionalization, housing, employment, community-based long-term service or support and state planning. This type of inclusion is not specifically described in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), so the proposed legislation would build on the base set forth by the ADA. The legislation has been referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Disability Integration Act of 2015 [S.2427]](https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2427/text)

[<https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2427/text>]

**Senators Write Letter Regarding Accessible IT**

December 17, 2015 - Nine Senators signed a letter to Shaun Donovan, the director of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, to request specific requirements for compliance standards for accessible information communications technology. They urged the U.S. Office of Management and Budget to complete their review of the Department of Justice’s Advanced Notice of Postposed Rulemaking that was issued five years ago. The senators suggest that the current standards are out dated and need to be revised to reflect advances in technology. The letter contends that by updating the standards, individuals with disabilities would have improved access to 21st Century advances in information communications technology.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Read the Letter](http://www.markey.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Ltr%20to%20OMB%20on%20ICT%20Access%20%283%29.pdf)

[<http://www.markey.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Ltr%20to%20OMB%20on%20ICT%20Access%20%283%29.pdf>]

# Regulatory Activities

**FCC Releases Proposed Rulemaking on Accessible Emergency Alerts**

January 29, 2016 - The FCC released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) *In the Matter of Amendment of Part 11 of the Commission’s Rules Regarding the Emergency Alert System* [**PS Docket No. 15-94**] and *Wireless Emergency Alerts* [**PS Docket No. 15-91**] proposing changes intended to strengthen the emergency alerting systems and to increase their effectiveness at prompting the public to take the appropriate protective actions. The major areas of change include improving alerting organization at the state level, bringing alerting tools up to date with advancements in technology, and developing community based, accessible public safety exercises.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[NPRM Concerning EAS and WEA](https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-16-5A1.docx)

[<https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-16-5A1.docx>]

**Nominations Open for FCC Accessibility Awards**

January 6, 2016 - The FCC is accepting nominations for their Awards for Advancement in Accessibility from January 11, 2016 through March 31, 2016. Nominees may include anyone responsible for accessibility products, services, or technologies released in 2015. The awards are meant to highlight advancements in accessibility for people with disabilities in the public and private sectors. More information is available in the link below.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Public Notice](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2016/db0106/DOC-337158A1.pdf)

[<http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2016/db0106/DOC-337158A1.pdf>]

**Oregon and Justice Department Agree on Settlement Involving Alleged ADA Act Employment Violations**

December 30, 2015 - The U.S. Justice Department’s [settlement agreement](http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-reaches-landmark-settlement-agreement-state-oregon-regarding-americans) with the State of Oregon addressed transitioning people with intellectual and development disabilities out of sheltered work environments into integrated employment. The lawsuit alleged that Oregon’s employment services were placing individuals capable of working in the community in sheltered workshops. The Agreement between the two parties requires 1,115 people currently working in sheltered workshops to receive jobs at competitive wages in the community. Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta stated, “People with disabilities deserve opportunities to work alongside their friends, peers and neighbors without disabilities and to earn fair wages, access equal opportunities for advancement and to achieve social and economic independence.” Employers that embrace the use of accessible and assistive technologies in the workplace and have corresponding policies regarding the same will be in a good position to receive candidates that were inappropriately placed in sheltered work environments.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Press Release](http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-reaches-landmark-settlement-agreement-state-oregon-regarding-americans)

[<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-reaches-landmark-settlement-agreement-state-oregon-regarding-americans>]

**FCC Proposes New Hearing Aid Compatibility Standards**

December 28, 2015 - The FCC proposed amendments to its hearing aid compatibility (HAC) rules to create a more universal standard for wireline and wireless handsets. The goal of the new national standards is to increase the clarity and usability of telecommunications equipment for people who use hearing aids or cochlear implants. Among other things, the proposed changes would add volume control requirements for wireline and wireless handsets and work on settling on a technical standard for the industry to follow.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Proposed Rule](https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/12/28/2015-31368/hearing-aid-compatibility-standards)

[<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/12/28/2015-31368/hearing-aid-compatibility-standards>]

**Inclusion of Broadband in the Federal Lifeline Program**

December 10, 2015 - 44 mayors and city officials, including mayors from major metropolitan areas such as Boston, MA, Charlotte, NC, and Seattle, WA and smaller communities including Mount Vernon, WA, Davidson, NC, and Yellow Springs, OH, sent a letter to the FCC in support of a proposal to improve internet access for low income families with the Federal Lifeline Program. They contend that inclusion of broadband subsidies in the Lifeline would allow low income families to gain access to internet services. The major reasons behind their support are the education benefits, economic opportunity, and community engagement enhanced by broadband access.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[44 Mayors and City Leaders Support Modernizing Federal Lifeline Program to Include Broadband](http://nextcenturycities.org/2015/12/10/44-mayors-and-city-leaders-support-modernizing-federal-lifeline-program-to-include-broadband/)

[<http://nextcenturycities.org/2015/12/10/44-mayors-and-city-leaders-support-modernizing-federal-lifeline-program-to-include-broadband/>

**FCC Unveils a New Website**

December 10, 2015 - The FCC recently launched an upgraded version of their website. It incorporates new features such as an enhanced search feature and clear separation of consumer and practitioner content. The structure has been updated to convey a more responsive feel with cross linking, menus, and overall site map. The display also adjusts to different viewing platforms, allowing for a better experience on tablets and other mobile devices.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Introducing the New FCC.gov](https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/blog/2015/12/10/introducing-new-fccgov)

[<https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/blog/2015/12/10/introducing-new-fccgov>]

**DoT’s Intentions Concerning Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability** December 7, 2015 - The Department of Transportation (DOT) released a Notice of Intent: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Air Travel [Docket No. DOT–OST–2015–0246], to begin exploring possible policy solutions for accommodating people with disabilities. Several factors like inflight entertainment, medical oxygen, service animals and seating accommodations need to be addressed to ensure people with disabilities receive the same level of comfort and safety as all other travelers. The DOT has hired a convener to bring together different stakeholder perspectives including disability advocacy organizations, airlines, airports, aircraft manufacturers, movie studios, content providers, service animal training organizations and others.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Notice of Intent: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Air Travel; Consideration of Negotiated Rulemaking Process](https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-12-07/pdf/2015-30764.pdf)

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-12-07/pdf/2015-30764.pdf>

# Publications

**GAO Recommends FCC Increase Its Data Collection Efforts on IP Transition**

December 16, 2016 - The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released their report concerning the FCC’s Internet Protocol Transition. The GAO investigated the FCC’s initiative to transition legacy phone networks to Internet Protocol networks. According to the GAO report, the FCC should bolster their information gathering efforts to uncover more information about the transition and decrease the time needed to get the entire system up and running. Specifically, the GAO states, “**Recommendation**: To strengthen FCC's data collection efforts, the Chairman of FCC should develop a strategy to gather additional information on the IP transition to assess the transition's potential effects on public safety and consumers.” While the GAO encourages increased attention to collecting, managing and analyzing data concerning the IP transition, they did recognize the FCC’s efforts in engaging stakeholders on issues such as maintaining access for consumer with disabilities.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[INTERNET PROTOCOL TRANSITION: FCC Should Strengthen Its Data Collection Efforts to Assess the Transition's Effects](http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/674231.pdf)

[<http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/674231.pdf>]

**G3ict Advises Accessibility Requirement for Government Tech Procurement**

December 3, 2015- The Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (G3ict) is an organization with the mission of improving rights for individuals with disabilities in the digital space. G3ict released a [Global Charter: Promoting Global Digital Inclusion through ICT Procurement Policies & Accessibility Standards](http://g3ict.org/resource_center/g3ict_global_charter), which recommended all governments purchase *only* accessible technology to quicken the inclusion of people with disabilities in societies around the world. According to the press release, G3ict received a lot of support in this endeavor from organizations like the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network, the Mexican National Council for the Development and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, and the Royal National Institute of Blind People. James Thurston, Vice President for Strategy and Development at G3ict stated, “Governments at all levels, local, regional, national, and international, can use their substantial purchasing power to influence how the technology industry designs its products and services… With this charter, we recognize that governments worldwide are among the largest customers for technology and we urge them to use that power to require increasingly accessible ICT products that support greater digital inclusion of persons with disabilities. We are proud to be launching this global charter with partners from government, civil society, academia, and industry.”

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Press Release](http://g3ict.org/press/press_releases/press_release/p/id_92)

[<http://g3ict.org/press/press_releases/press_release/p/id_92>]

[Global Charter: Promoting Global Digital Inclusion through ICT Procurement Policies & Accessibility Standards](http://g3ict.org/resource_center/g3ict_global_charter)

[<http://g3ict.org/resource_center/g3ict_global_charter>]

**Report Analyses Online Education for student with Disabilities**

The report, Equity Matters: Digital and Online Learning for Student with Disabilities, was released in November 2015 by the Center on Online Learning and Students with Disabilities. The state policies on online learning were investigated to determine guidance for the inclusion of K-12 students with disabilities in online learning environments. According to the report, very few states addressed accommodations for students with disabilities. This prompted the authors to study policies at the school level to determine successful strategies for inclusion. The report is comprised of the following chapters:

* Understanding Transformative Change
* State and Territory Policy Scan for Online Learning and Students with Disabilities
* Special Education in Online Learning Environments
* The Changing Structure and Roles within Online Education
* Special Topics: Access to Online Education, Data and Privacy, and Graduation

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Equity Matters: Digital and Online Learning for Student with Disabilities](Equity%20Matters%3A%20Digital%20and%20Online%20Learning%20for%20Student%20with%20Disabilities)

[<http://centerononlinelearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2015_COLSD_Annual-Publication_FULL.pdf>]

# Other Items of Interest

**Georgia Tech and edX Partner to Offer Online Courses in Accessibility**

January 26, 2016 – The Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) and edX have signed an agreement for edX to host Georgia Tech online courses. The GTx’s first course offering is [Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Accessibility](http://www.edx.org/course/information-communication-technology-ict-ict100x) and will be delivered by the Alternative Media Access Center (AMAC). The ICT Accessibility course will focus on accessible and assistive technologies in the workplace. Several more online courses are planned for future release. edX CEO, Anant Agarwal, stated, “As a pioneer in online learning, Georgia Tech will bring its expertise and innovative online coursework and programs to the global edX learning community.”

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[GT News](http://www.news.gatech.edu/2016/01/26/georgia-tech-partners-edx-offer-online-courses)

[<http://www.news.gatech.edu/2016/01/26/georgia-tech-partners-edx-offer-online-courses>]

**World Wide Web Consortium Receive Emmys for Work on Accessible Video**

January 5, 2016 - The World Wide Web Consortium’s (W3C) recent advances in video captioning and subtitles have earned them an Emmy Award in Technology and Engineering. W3C developed the Timed Text Markup Language (TTML) standard for people with hearing disabilities. Jeff Jaffe, W3C CEO had to say this about the award, “W3C is thrilled to receive a 2016 Emmy ® Award in recognition of technologies that support an important part of our mission to bring the full potential of the World Wide Web to everyone, whatever their disability, culture, language, device or network infrastructure.”

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Press Release](https://www.w3.org/2016/01/emmyawardttml.html.en)

[<https://www.w3.org/2016/01/emmyawardttml.html.en>]

**Microsoft Partners with the American Council of the Blind**

December 17, 2016 – Microsoft and the American Council for the Blind announced their partnership to advance the accessibility of information technology. The partnership will focus on ensuring updates to several Microsoft products that will maintain and/or implement accessibility for people with visual disabilities. Rob Sinclair, Chief Accessibility Officer at Microsoft, had this to say, “By working with the ACB, we will gain valuable user insights about our experiences. This will help us deliver more powerful assistive technology as well as more inclusive and empowering experiences to help every person on the planet achieve more.”

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Press Release](http://www.acb.org/microsoft-accessibility)

[<http://www.acb.org/microsoft-accessibility>]

**EEOC Service to Inform People with Hearing Disabilities about Employment Discrimination**

December 11, 2015 - The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) announced the launch of their new service to connect people that use American Sign Language as their preferred method of communication directly with an EEOC intake representative. The service will enable people with hearing disabilities whose primary language is ASL to ask questions and/or discuss filing claims in real time through video phones. EEOC Chair Jenny R. Yang said, "EEOC is proud to strengthen our service to the deaf and hard of hearing community and provide a more effective way for individuals to connect with our agency. This enhanced means of communication helps to ensure that all individuals have access to EEOC resources on employment rights and responsibilities." The EEOC is the third federal agency to add an ASL video phone feature to their customer service. The Federal Communications Commission and the Small Business Administration also provide this option.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Press Release](http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/12-11-15.cfm)

[<http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/12-11-15.cfm>]

**New Grant Will Study Affordable Care Act’s Effects on People with Disabilities**

December 8, 2015 - The Collaborative on Health Reform and Independent Living (CHRIL) at the University of Kansas will conduct a five year study on the Affordable Care Act’s impact on individuals with disabilities. They will look into the working age group (18-64) and investigate questions like if insurance was provided to more individuals, how access to services has changed, and if more people with disabilities are employed. Noelle Kurth said, “I don’t think anyone has taken a look at the impact of the ACA on this scale, and it is important to study it from the beginning and see how it affects people with disabilities.” Funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, this $2.5M grant aims to transforms its research findings into health and wellness guidance for people with disabilities and advocates.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Researchers will study Affordable Care Act's effects on people with disabilities](http://news.ku.edu/2015/11/16/ku-researchers-part-25m-grant-study-affordable-care-acts-effects-people-disabilities)

[<http://news.ku.edu/2015/11/16/ku-researchers-part-25m-grant-study-affordable-care-acts-effects-people-disabilities>]

**USBLN Innovation Lab Hosted Shark Tank Style Design Panel**

December 7, 2015 – The United States Business Leadership Network (USBLN ) hosted a panel of information technology professionals, presenting them with workplace accessibility solutions developed by two diverse teams. The two ideas presented were smart ID cards for individuals with disabilities for emergency preparedness and a smartphone application for people with hearing disabilities that could create live subtitles for everyday interactions.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Watch the Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQijCBDCxng)

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

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# Wireless RERC Updates

**Meet Wireless RERC Researchers at CSUN 2016**

Wireless RERC researchers will be featured at the 2016 International Technology & Persons with Disabilities Conference (CSUN) in San Diego, March 21-26, 2016.  The papers/presentations include:

* [Wireless Independence Now (WIN) Workshop](http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference/2016/sessions/index.php/public/presentations/view/588) (Wednesday, March 23, 2016 - 10:00 AM PST)
* [Mixed Sentience Learning Communities: Design Considerations & Opportunities](http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference/2016/sessions/index.php/public/presentations/view/317) (Thursday, March 24, 2016 - 10:00 AM PST)
* [Wireless technology use by people with disabilities-2015: A national survey](http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference/2016/sessions/index.php/public/presentations/view/13) (Friday, March 25, 2016 - 10:00 AM PST)
* [FutureS of Disabilities: The migration to a digital world](http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference/2016/sessions/index.php/public/presentations/view/8) (Friday, March 25, 2016 - 10:00 AM PST)
* [Optimizing Accessibility of Wireless Emergency Alerts: 2015 Survey Findings](http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference/2016/sessions/index.php/public/presentations/view/7) (Friday, March 25, 2016 - 1:20 PM PST)

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Come meet us in San Diego!](http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference/2016/sessions/index.php/public/website_pages/view/1)

[<http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference/2016/sessions/index.php/public/website_pages/view/1>]

**Wireless RERC Researchers at Res/Con 2016**

Christina Touzet will travel to New Orleans, LA to present a poster, E*AS & WEA: Does the new alerting technology improve accessibility?* at RES/Con 2016 (formerly the International Disaster Conference and Expo (IDCE). Christina will present the results of research activities which were conducted to examine the effectiveness of EAS and WEA to provide alerts to people with disabilities.  Specifically, the Wireless RERC conducted comparative analyses of the awareness of EAS and WEA messages, the accessibility of the two systems, as well as the types of protective actions taken as a result of the emergency messages.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Registration](http://www.peatworks.org/content/webinars/2016/02/AudioEye)

[<http://www.peatworks.org/content/webinars/2016/02/AudioEye>]

**Wireless RERC on the Record: Wireless Emergency Alerts & Accessibility**

January 13, 2016 - The Wireless RERC, in collaboration with Georgia Tech’s Center for Advanced Communications Policy (CACP), added their expertise to support several of the proposed enhancements to the Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) system. In a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking released by the FCC *In the Matter of Improving Wireless Emergency Alerts and Community Initiated Alerting* [**PS Docket 15-91**], the FCC requested stakeholder input on several ways to enhance the effectiveness and content of WEA messages. Wireless RERC and CACP research on the accessibility of WEA messages for people with disabilities provided empirical data in support of their recommendations. From a regulatory review and literature review conducted under contract with the Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) Project Management Office (PMO), a framework was developed that identified influencing factors that, if not optimal, could negatively impact the effectiveness of WEA messages. For example, current WEA regulations limit the potential of the system. Most notably the 90 character maximum length and the geotargeting boundaries being too large (i.e., county wide). Additionally, the rules currently prohibit the use of URLs and dialable numbers. The accessibility provisions only addressed alert notification signals (i.e., vibration cadence and alert tone) but not access to the content of the message. For people with disabilities, these features would be especially useful as it would enable them to receive more information about the event in a format that is accessible to them, or made accessible via the assistive technology they have installed on their WEA capable device. Following are a few examples of the recommendations found in the comments:

* Rules governing WEA should be updated to increase the character limitation. Doing so should decrease the need to rely on abbreviations and acronyms in order to stay within the character limitation.
* Rules governing WEA should be updated to allow for the inclusion of URLs. This would be a step towards enabling the next-generation of WEA, as URLs can contain the additional information the public seeks, including American Sign Language (ASL) videos, emergency management websites or social media feeds, and more.
* Improve the geotargeting capabilities of the WEA system. This should increase the relevance of WEA messages to the recipients and likewise, increase their trust of the message, encouraging them to take the desired protective actions.
* Testing of the WEA system should extend beyond the providers’ infrastructure to the mobile devices in use by the public. This should increase public awareness of WEA, as many users learned of WEA only after receiving a WEA message for the first time. The test message could include a link to the IPAWS PMO’s frequently asked questions regarding WEA.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Read the Comments of the Wireless RERC and CACP](http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001404241)

[<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001404241>]

**Share the Survey of User Needs (SUN)**

The Wireless RERC's 2015 Survey of User Needs (SUN) for Wireless Technologies is still open and we invite you to share the survey with your networks. It‘s available in both English and Spanish. The SUN is our cornerstone survey of wireless technology use and usability by people with all types of disabilities. First launched in 2002, the SUN is the only national source of comprehensive information and insight into the wireless technology needs of people with disabilities.

Please consider sharing the Survey of User Needs to ensure we capture any new data to reflect the changing nature of accessibility and wireless technology adoption by people with disabilities.

* **To** [**share**](http://www.wirelessrerc.gatech.edu/content/newsroom/wireless-rerc-launches-new-survey-user-needs) **the SUN,** use the share buttons at this link: <http://www.wirelessrerc.gatech.edu/content/newsroom/wireless-rerc-launches-new-survey-user-needs>.
* **To** [**take**](https://WWW.SURVEYMONKEY.COM/R/SUN-2015) **the SUN online**, please go to this address: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SUN-2015](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001Almm6pKWRoe4bLrBoBiBLLSsAEX4U6Z9qvArYmzspO1grSzgoAhX7BEjNmBVOCewzKFzJfj1-RttDJram8b2fvw1bnqvLDtZvj7KALFFf4fAwhXIJCn_oW_Jw0p73Ft9YEr2Jd1PqNQF8K07NtRx3_H0hovw0lr_P63TCpx7xiYkc5gy-AzsPsoDKpxWrCacdRRQWo8-0SxOq7CtW1YpqjGwBXQI-HAbvXsMdZ3S5rK1yzbp3YnXlxdYt71QLk7jU91Yv0rc_lpzTnxsUsS8Ao0P3mkebAasjrQaEbwDOZTtaHqAxMBG8pSGuE_P9vP64y_YJgFrWnnCKPszovWXV1YrGpPme12l693v5YNN8GQ=&c=J5gXrtB50_k7qMoPCVvEVj0_vOXpZ-bkPplhgXDkvn808R9deFl8hQ==&ch=i1yuPCr7Hno8MtABcPJo1pX6VGDxbTWC4_jeO7pHoNgbv7ZBhkC6TA==)

Individuals with disabilities may also participate on the phone, or we can send a paper copy with a postage paid return envelope.

To complete the survey over the phone or to request a paper copy, contact John Morris at:**john\_morris@shepherd.org**or 404-367-1348

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[2015 Survey of User Needs (SUN) for Wireless Technologies](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001Almm6pKWRoe4bLrBoBiBLLSsAEX4U6Z9qvArYmzspO1grSzgoAhX7BEjNmBVOCewzKFzJfj1-RttDJram8b2fvw1bnqvLDtZvj7KALFFf4fAwhXIJCn_oW_Jw0p73Ft9YEr2Jd1PqNQF8K07NtRx3_H0hovw0lr_P63TCpx7xiYkc5gy-AzsPsoDKpxWrCacdRRQWo8-0SxOq7CtW1YpqjGwBXQI-HAbvXsMdZ3S5rK1yzbp3YnXlxdYt71QLk7jU91Yv0rc_lpzTnxsUsS8Ao0P3mkebAasjrQaEbwDOZTtaHqAxMBG8pSGuE_P9vP64y_YJgFrWnnCKPszovWXV1YrGpPme12l693v5YNN8GQ=&c=J5gXrtB50_k7qMoPCVvEVj0_vOXpZ-bkPplhgXDkvn808R9deFl8hQ==&ch=i1yuPCr7Hno8MtABcPJo1pX6VGDxbTWC4_jeO7pHoNgbv7ZBhkC6TA==)

[[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SUN-2015](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001Almm6pKWRoe4bLrBoBiBLLSsAEX4U6Z9qvArYmzspO1grSzgoAhX7BEjNmBVOCewzKFzJfj1-RttDJram8b2fvw1bnqvLDtZvj7KALFFf4fAwhXIJCn_oW_Jw0p73Ft9YEr2Jd1PqNQF8K07NtRx3_H0hovw0lr_P63TCpx7xiYkc5gy-AzsPsoDKpxWrCacdRRQWo8-0SxOq7CtW1YpqjGwBXQI-HAbvXsMdZ3S5rK1yzbp3YnXlxdYt71QLk7jU91Yv0rc_lpzTnxsUsS8Ao0P3mkebAasjrQaEbwDOZTtaHqAxMBG8pSGuE_P9vP64y_YJgFrWnnCKPszovWXV1YrGpPme12l693v5YNN8GQ=&c=J5gXrtB50_k7qMoPCVvEVj0_vOXpZ-bkPplhgXDkvn808R9deFl8hQ==&ch=i1yuPCr7Hno8MtABcPJo1pX6VGDxbTWC4_jeO7pHoNgbv7ZBhkC6TA==) ]

[Encuesta sobre las Necesidades del Usuario respecto a las Tecnologías Inalámbricas](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SUN-Esp_2015)

[<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SUN-Esp_2015>]

# Upcoming Events

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**PEAT Talks: Raising the Bar on Accessibility (webinar)**

On February 18, 2016 at 2:00pm, Dan Sullivan, Vice President at Audioeye, will speak on the return on investment for companies that procure accessible technologies.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Registration](http://www.peatworks.org/content/webinars/2016/02/AudioEye)

[<http://www.peatworks.org/content/webinars/2016/02/AudioEye>]

**Res/Con 2016**

Res/Con 2016, formerly the International Disaster Conference and Expo (IDCE), will convene March 1-3, 2016 in New Orleans, Louisiana. The conference will feature presentations on resilience and disaster management, collaboration, global leadership, networking, and information Sharing.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Conference Website](http://resconnola.com/)

[<http://resconnola.com/>]

**2016 American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conference**

The American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conference will be held March 3-5,2016 in Arlington, Virginia. The purpose of the conference is to bring experts and people affected by visual impairments together to discuss the most recent and developing topics within the field of blindness. A diverse range of participants from corporate representatives to students with visual impairments will all be in attendance. For more information follow the link below.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Conference Website](http://www.afb.org/info/about-us/events-and-awards/american-foundation-for-the-blind-leadership-conference-2016-2017/123)

[<http://www.afb.org/info/about-us/events-and-awards/american-foundation-for-the-blind-leadership-conference-2016-2017/123>]

**31st Annual Technology & Persons with Disabilities Conference**

The 31st Annual Technology & Persons with Disabilities Conference, also known as CSUN 2015 will convene in San Diego, CA from March 21 to March 26, 2016. CSUN conferences are well attended by professionals, advocates and academics that work at the intersection of technology and access by people with disabilities.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Conference Website](http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference/2016/sessions/index.php/public/website_pages/view/1)

[<http://www.csun.edu/cod/conference/2016/sessions/index.php/public/website_pages/view/1>]

**Technology and Disability Policy Highlights,** Winter Issue: December 2015 – January 2016



The Technology and Disability Policy Highlights (TDPH) reports on national public policy events and tracks emerging issues of interest to individuals with disabilities, researchers, policymakers, industry, and advocacy professionals. The TDPH is published monthly by the Wireless RERC. 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 web site 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 Dalton Nechanicky [Dalton@cacp.gatech.edu] or Salimah LaForce [salimah@cacp.gatech.edu].

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