Re:Wireless - The Wireless RERC's Consumer Newsletter
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Connecting consumers of all ages and abilities to the research, development and outreach activities of the Wireless RERC.

Welcome!

A lot has been going on at the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center for Wireless Inclusive Technologies (Wireless RERC) since the last issue of *Re:Wireless.*

- RERC staff presented at CSUN in San Diego, CA.
- We have another SUNspot to share, this time on wireless device operating systems used by people with disabilities.
- RERC staff were able to file reply comments to both the FCC's Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM) In the Matter of Transition from TTY to Real-Time Text Technology, and the Petition for Rulemaking to Update Commission's Rules for Access to Support the transition from TTY to Real-Time Text Technology, and Petition for Waiver of Rules Requiring Support of TTY Technology.
- We've updated our guide to *12 Considerations for Accessible Emergency Communications.*
- RERC staff produced a handy tip sheet on Wireless Emergency Alerting Apps for consumers with disabilities.
- We're recruiting adults with disabilities to participate in research focus groups that will support our research efforts in social and cultural design of the Information of Things (IoT) and wearable technology products.

This newsletter is intended to keep you abreast of some of the latest activities in our research, development and training projects, share upcoming dates to events and conferences we'll be attending, and serve as an invitation to all our consumers to participate in surveys, workshops, focus groups or user testing projects we may have underway.

We have recently redesigned our **website** so be sure to check it out. Subscribing to our **LinkedIn** and **Twitter** feeds, and becoming friends with us on **Facebook** are other great ways to stay informed of our progress!

Our center's newsletters, the *Technology and Disability Policy Highlights (TDPH)* will continue to be issued monthly with content curated for a policy, industry, and research audience, while this one, *Re: Wireless,* will be released bimonthly with a focus on Wireless RERC news for consumers. As we re-sort our mailing lists to represent these new focuses, you may receive both newsletters, or you may be receiving the *TDPH* or *Re: Wireless* for the first time.

We welcome you as a reader and hope you enjoy the newsletter! If you are not currently a *Re: Wireless* reader and were forwarded this newsletter, you can join our mailing list below or text WIRELESSRERC to 22828. In 2017, we look forward to providing you wireless resource materials better matched to your interests.

Thank you for reading and enjoy the articles below!

Sincerely,

Ben Lippincott (Managing Editor)

Wireless RERC staff present at CSUN 2017

Wireless RERC researchers, Salimah LaForce and John Morris attended and presented at the 2017 CSUN Assistive Technologies Conference in San Diego, February 27 - March 4, 2017. The papers/presentations included:

Wireless RERC Policy Retrospective: Strategies to Effect Change

- Thursday, March 2, 2017 - 9:00 AM PST - Wireless RERC researcher, Salimah LaForce, presented *Strategies to Effect Policy Change* at the 32nd CSUN Assistive Technology Conference. Through the lens of Wireless RERC policy activities, her presentation outlined how to identify and develop policy assessments or appropriate policy responses to federal rulemakings.

Smartphone Use and Activities by People: User Survey 2016

- Thursday, March 2, 2017 - 4:20 PM PST - Wireless RERC researcher, John Morris, gave an update on data collected from the Wireless RERC's Survey of User Needs (SUN). His presentation provides an analysis of the impact of demographic variables and disability type on smartphone use by adults with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities based on 2015-2016 national survey.

2016 SUNspot (02) - Wireless Device Operating Systems of People with Disabilities

At some point you may have taken our cornerstone survey, the Survey of User Needs (SUN). This

survey tracks the use and usability of wireless technology used by people with disabilities. We created "SUNspot" to share some of the latest findings from ongoing data collection for our Survey of User Needs (SUN). We launched the first version of the SUN in 2001. The current version (Version 5) was launched in 2015. Data collection was conducted through 2016. The data reported here are preliminary results. Over 1300 people have completed the SUN questionnaire.

2016 SUNspot (02) addresses the following question related to the operating systems of wireless devices used by adults with disabilities:

- Do people with disabilities have a preference for smart devices (smartphones and tablets) running a particular operating system (iOS, Android, etc.)?

Read here for full analysis of the 2016 Sunspot (02) - Wireless Device Operating Systems of People with Disabilities

Wireless RERC on the Record: Transitioning to Real-Time Text Technology

The Wireless RERC submitted reply comments in response to the FCC's Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking **In the Matter of the Transition from TTY to Real-Time Text Technology [CG Docket No. 16-145]; Petition for Rulemaking to Update Commission's Rules for Access to Support the transition from TTY to Real-Time Text Technology, and Petition for Waiver of Rules Requiring Support of TTY Technology [GN Docket No. 15-178].**

While the reply comments supported transitioning from Teletypewriter (TTY) to Real-Time Text (RTT) technology, we concurred with other stakeholder recommendations that the manner and speed in which it is done take into account those most at risk of losing all text communications access if TTY becomes unavailable. While most people with hearing and speech disabilities have a preference for text or video-based communications, there are still some that rely on TTY to place both emergency and non-emergency calls. For no one to be left behind, it is imperative that the transition process includes collecting data on network support, RTT-capable devices on the market, their accessibility levels, and end-user ownership rates. These data would shed light on both industry deployment rates and user adoption rates, users being both consumers and 911 call centers.

Additional Information:
Wireless RERC Reply Comments (3.24.17) - Transitioning to Real-Time Text Technology

UPDATED: 12 Considerations for Accessible Emergency Communications

RERC staff have recently updated our *12 Considerations for Accessible Emergency Communications*. This document features twelve considerations for accessible emergency communications to help guide emergency communications planning for people with disabilities and those with access and functional needs. Also provided is a list of websites and resources with specific information concerning technology, policy, training and education. Some considerations include:

1. Develop or provide accessible formats to disseminate alerts and information.
2. Ensure that EC rulemakings consider access and functional needs.
3. Integrate people with disabilities into emergency planning, exercises and simulations.

The reverse of the document includes links to resources with topic specific information.

Here are the full 12 Considerations.

Tip Sheet: Apps for Enhancing Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) Access

RERC researchers created a handy tip sheet to help consumers find accessible and assistive apps to use after they've received a wireless emergency alert on their mobile device. This document provides a description of some apps that can be used to enhance WEA access. It explains different apps, their features and where you can locate them to better understand WEA messages and aid in responding to WEA the messages appropriately. Provided are links to more information for each app.

Here is the Apps for Enhancing Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) tip sheet.

Upcoming Opportunity: Focus Groups on Wirelessly Connected Devices

The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center for Wireless Inclusive Technologies (WIT RERC) at Georgia Tech in Atlanta will be conducting focus groups in Spring and Summer 2017. These one-hour focus groups will investigate how people with disabilities use wirelessly connected devices and appliances in their everyday lives. Technologies in which we are interested include, but are not limited to, connected home devices (thermostats, light controls, doorbells, outdoor cameras), smart speakers and screens (Amazon Echo, Google Home, Samsung Galaxy View), and wearables (Google Glass, Fitbit, Apple Watch).

Our focus groups seek consumers with disabilities who are users of these and other similar devices. We will discuss the use, usability, and accessibility of wireless devices and services. We are interested in which features make these products important, useful, and useable, and which features make these products difficult to use or not useful.

Focus groups will last for one hour and take place at the Georgia Tech campus in Atlanta. If you are interested in participating in Spring or Summer 2017, please e-mail Nathan Moon at **nathan.moon@gatech.edu** to be added to our recruitment list.

Save the date!

Upcoming conferences, presentations and webinars include:

- May 11, 2017 - ADA National Network Learning Session webinar on Wireless Emergency Alerting (Wireless RERC staff in attendance)
- June 12 - June 13, 2017 - **G3ict's M-Enabling Summit 2017** (Wireless RERC staff in attendance)
- June 26, - June 28 2017 - **RESNA 2017** (Wireless RERC staff in attendance)
- October 33 - October 28, 2017 - **American Congress of Rehabilitative Medicine (ACRM) 94th Annual Conference** (Wireless RERC staff in attendance)

STAY CONNECTED WITH US!

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