Assistive Technology Tidbit

The Office of Disability Services has many technologies available to those registered with the office. Here is a look at the Aloud!-Text to Speech app:

Q: What is the Aloud!-Text to Speech App?

A: An easy to use text-to-speech app that reads text for you, whether it's plain text, a PDF or HTML file. Multiple languages and different reading speeds are supported. You can import and save files from iCloud, Google Drive, and Dropbox. It allows you to edit files within the app and choose the start location to optimize speech efficiency. It will even keep reading if you switch to other apps or lock your screen.

Q: Who would this app help the most?

A: Any student on-the-go who wants to make the most of their time and take their reading with them wherever they go. This app would be especially useful for students who are visually impaired or with print/reading disabilities. This app is for iPhone only.

Q: How much does the app cost?

A: This app is free on the iPhone App store. A $2.99 in-app upgrade will give you unlimited article storage in the app.

- Questions answered by Vanessa Vought, Assistive Technology Graduate Assistant

"Being challenged in life is inevitable, being defeated is optional."
-Roger Crawford

December 1st is World AIDS Day

“AIDS Awareness Day is established by the World Health Organization. The acronym AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. This is a late stage of the Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV). As of yet, there is no known cure for this ailment, however, some medications can be used to improve the quality and length of life.”
- Taken from AIDS.Gov

Equality University 2015

ODS staff members attended the Equality University event on November 21, 2015. Equality University is a diversity and inclusion conference that brings individuals from all areas of campus life together to participate in a day of dialogue with national speakers, faculty and staff facilitators, and collegiate colleagues. Conference attendees engaged in authentic peer connections and explored how all identities impact individual relationships, groups and social dynamics.
How long have you worked in ODS?

"I have been working for ODS since September of 2014. Before that I got my Bachelors degrees from UT Arlington, earned an alternative certificate in Bilingual Education and taught first grade for a year, then went to UT Southwestern Medical School for Clinical Rehabilitative Counseling."

What is one thing your coworkers don’t know about you?

"I really enjoy repurposing old items and making them new, kind of similar to thrift store shopping. I also paint pop art pieces!"

What is your favorite thing about working in ODS?

"I really enjoy the opportunity to work with a variety of students. Some people go to graduate school and never use what they learn, but here I get to apply what I learn and can use that to help people."

What does your job entail?

"As the Accessibility Services Coordinator, I review documentation, have appointments with students, approve accommodations and print letters for them. I also meet with some students who use support from a disability specialist. I also oversee audiobook requests, tactalk graphics, brailing, document accessibility as well as overseeing a graduate assistant. Outside of those responsibilities, I am a staff advisor for Hombre Unidos, am involved with Bobcat Pride, a Bobcat Bond Mentor, on the Advocats board, co-lead the Transfer Student Success Team, serve as the treasurer for Hispanic Policy Network and teach a University Seminar course."

What is one tip you have for student success?

Attitude is very important! Everybody is a genius, but if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it is stupid.

―Grace, Mercy and Justice for All: Every Wall is a Door‖

On November 23rd, 2015, the Texas State Division of Student Affairs hosted an event featuring Dr. Cindi Love, the Executive Director of the American College Personnel Association. She spoke with staff from ODS, as well as other departments on campus. This was a great opportunity to hear from a leader in the field of student affairs and engage in dialogue about some of the current events happening in education and ODS is very appreciative of the Vice President for Student Affairs Office for hosting this event.

Mass Communication Week

Student Development Specialist II, Lori Gonzalez, represented ODS on a panel hosted by the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. She spoke alongside other faculty, community partners and staff about Media portrayals and best practices for reporting on people with disabilities.
1. What is ILE?

Independent Living Experience (ILE) is a customized support service for adults desiring a life of independence. Our team of dedicated professionals works directly with each adult to help them become their own self-determined advocate with the necessary skills to be successful within their living, working, and social environments.

2. What services/resources do you provide?

ILE provides services within the 3 domains of employment, independent living, and social skills. The frequency and length of those supports usually vary, but on average our clients get 2-8 hours a week of direct support. We can address any need our clients have under those 3 areas and each client received a different level of support based on their need. We also offer group social events and skills groups to address the social skills and employment challenges presented by some of our clients.

3. How do you support college students with disabilities?

While we don't provide academic support such as tutoring, we can help college students get and stay organized, build their social skills, manage their living/financial situation better, and learn to communicate better with the family, friends, peers, and professors.

4. Can students get involved or volunteer with ILE?

Absolutely, we are open to having individuals volunteer at any of the community events we do including conferences, Social meetups, presentations, etc. If students are interested in this, they should contact the ILE National Director, James Williams, at JWilliams@independentlivingexperience.com or 512-961-3359.

5. What would you say a tip or trick is for success for students with disabilities?

Be willing to ask for help, no matter from whom. Whether it's ILE, DARS, DSS, or even your professors, you have to be willing to ask for and accept help and know that these resources are here for reason and you taking advantage of them is that reason.

Questions and answers by Meredith McCann, Transition Advisor

**Upcoming Events**

**December 10th | 12p-1p | LBJ 3-5.1**

ODS will be hosting a webinar regarding the representation of individuals with disabilities in the work place

**December 18th | 7p-10p | Comm. Center**

The San Marcos Community Center is hosting a Holiday Adults with Disabilities Dance.

**Disability Awareness Week 2016**

ODS will be hosting events for Disability Awareness Week from February 8-12, 2016. Be on the lookout for more information.
Disability Awareness Month Recap

Meet Us In The Quad, It’s Going Down
ODS was in the quad doing outreach events quite a bit over the past two months. We have partnered with Retention, Management and Planning, and the Independent Living Experience as well as collaborating with the Veteran’s liaison for their quad days as well. Students could get facts, stats and candy from ODS and partners.

Pledge Day
Over 100 students took the pledge to stand against stigma and to critically think before assuming things about people. ODS handed out flyers about what stigma is and how they can stop it on campus.

I’m More Than Just A Vet
The challenges veterans or students with disabilities experience are not always obvious or well documented. In the classroom, some veteran students and students with disabilities experience issues in regards to engagement, interaction, and communication with non-veteran student populations. This program encouraged students to participate in active engagement in order to help build networks of support for all students on campus.

Piecing Together The Puzzle: A Look Into Autism Spectrum Disorders
The ODS Popcorn Cinema event featured a discussion about Autism Spectrum Disorders as well as having puzzle pieces available for those in attendance to decorate and wear as a pin to show what Autism means for them. After crafting and discussion, participants watched the movie *The Story of Luke*, a comedy about Luke, a young man with autism who embarks on a quest for a job and a girlfriend.

Dinner In The Dark:
Student Association for Campus Activities (SACA) partners with the ODS for a dinner coupled with a panel discussion to bring awareness about the experiences faced by individuals with visual disabilities. Panelists shared their experiences and all attendees were able to ask questions as well as learning from what was being

Hays Independent School District Dyslexia Fair
The 13th Annual Hays ISD Dyslexia Fair was held on October 20, 2015 at the Hays ISD Activity Center where students with dyslexia from early education through 12th grade came to learn more information about resources available to them. Assistant Director, David Hunt and Accessibility Service Coordinator, Gerardo Altamirano, spoke to students about the accommodations they can expect once admitted to college as well as the types of assistive technology Texas State Offers.

Bobcat Day
ODS Staff Megan Buxton and Jonathan Tyner represented the office at the most recent Bobcat Day event, which allowed for students interested in Texas State to come and explore campus resources and opportunities. Megan and Jonathan spoke with many families about the accommodation process and services offered.