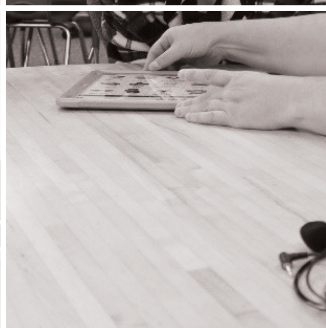
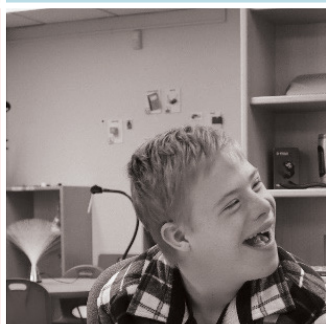


MonTECH

IMPROVING LIVES WITH TECHNOLOGY



2022 | ANNUAL REPORT

MONTECH PROVIDES TECHNOLOGY, SUPPORT, AND SERVICES THAT **IMPROVE** THE **QUALITY OF LIFE** FOR MONTANANS OF ANY AGE WITH ANY DISABILITY.

How MonTECH Serves Montanans

DEMONSTRATIONS

Three years into her pursuit of a degree at UM, Melina Peck hit a tough class. The 20-year-old has cerebral palsy, and when faced with challenges, she turns to assistive technology. When she saw the class syllabus, she headed to MonTECH.

"I had to use a regular camera, and since I only have good use of one hand, I had to find a mount for that class," she explained.

Melina worked with Michelle and a student volunteer, Amelia, to find a mount sturdy enough to attach a heavy camera to Melina's power chair. On assignment days, Melina would meet up with Amelia to get the camera set up.

"I got an 84%," Melina said. "I would say that's pretty good because I knew that would probably be one of the hardest classes I have to take. Now I know to go straight to MonTECH to get what I need."



REUSE

With ALS, it's best to find a communication device that can meet current and future needs. Allyson and Sue were realistic about upcoming challenges from the start. "We talked about preparing long before she'd need a device," Allyson remembered. "That's why we love MonTECH. We can try different things and figure out what will work down the road."

Allyson borrowed two devices; for Sue, VisuALS was a clear winner. Unfortunately, it's no longer being produced. The solution was to give Sue an open-ended loan of VisuALS. "VisuALS gives us a long-term option that she can use and adjust as abilities decline," Allyson explained.

As a speech-language pathologist practicing in a remote northwestern community, Allyson appreciates teaming with MonTECH. "We're so remote up here and traveling is not always an option," Allyson said. "(Michelle) can help steer us the right direction so we don't waste a lot of time with the wrong devices."



1,711

Pieces of
equipment
loaned to
Montanans



1,254

Montanans
participated
in MonTECH
trainings



519

Montanans
participated in
demonstrations
with MonTECH



\$280,716

The amount
our Reuse
program saved
Montanans

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE /MONTANA ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY LOAN PROGRAM (MATL)



In July 2022, a client who used MATL to purchase an accessible van in 2021 unexpectedly passed away. His mother contacted MonTECH to see if anyone in the state was looking for a modified vehicle. Her son's life improved dramatically when

he got his own accessible vehicle; she wanted his van to go to another Montanan with limited mobility who would also appreciate the great freedom that comes with having your own ride.

Within a week, a new client expressed interest and was promptly approved for a MATL loan so the vehicle could easily be transferred to him. The proud new owner uses the van to maintain employment, get to medical appointments, and enjoy all his community has to offer.

In 2022, MATL loaned \$200,999 to Montanans at a 3.5% interest rate. MATL loans can be used to purchase disability-related equipment and renovations.



DEVICE LOANS



Michaela Turner recently moved to Montana. The 32-year-old has Down syndrome and was well supported in Massachusetts. Here? "It was a shocker," Mom Becky said.

Michaela did qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation, which led them to MonTECH. Through MonTECH, Michaela borrowed an older iPad for a long-term loan. She can use the iPad and the Work Autonomy app to remember routines in her work at a bakery, particularly as in-person supports are cut back.

The family also borrowed Google Nest. Michaela uses Nest to check her schedule and entertain the family with a little Karaoke. Becky uses it to get eyes on Michaela when she's home alone, ensuring her daughter's safety. Google Nest has huge impact on Michaela's independence – and her parents' ability to work and leave the house. "She can be at home, doing what she likes to do without her parents hovering over her," Becky said. "It helps us all."

"Does anyone else get a 'Q' (James Bond) or 'Lucius Fox' (Batman) vibe from MonTECH? You know, a tinkering genius that outfits our heroes with a never-ending assortment of the coolest and most efficient tools for the job?" Child Development Center

"We wholeheartedly give MonTECH 5 stars plus a Big Thumbs Up." MonTECH Consumer

"MonTECH is my absolute favorite referral to make." Montana Disability Advocate

Trainings

Our Fourth Annual MontCOMM was a celebration! We marked our first in-person event in **two** years by bringing in **two** of the most charismatic AAC experts in the country. Rachel Madel and Chris Bugaj, co-hosts of the podcast *Talking with Tech*, kept things light and fun through an entire day of learning. The communication conference was a hybrid event to accommodate attendees living in remote areas of Montana. It attracted 146 attendees, higher attendance than any prior MontCOMM and a number we fully expect to grow for MontCOMM 2023.



Technical Assistance

One of MonTECH's many roles is to provide technical assistance to programs and agencies. This can mean assessing accessibility of a website or space, consulting to make meetings and events more inclusive, and helping transform an in-person conference into a hybrid – thus increasing accessibility for those with disabilities or living in remote communities.

In 2022, we offered technical assistance to a range of programs from community theaters and an international airport to government programs and disability advocacy groups.

Introducing Young Montanans to the World of AT



MonTECH is frequently called upon to give presentations to the professionals and advocates of tomorrow. This year we hosted students pursuing degrees in occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, education, and special education. The day we spent with future advocates at the Montana Youth Leadership Forum was, as usual, a highlight of the year.

"I plan to use MonTECH as much as I can when I am practicing as a PT so I can help my patients get the help they need and potentially save a lot of money along the way."

"I think being able to use MonTECH as a resource to help a patient (regain) their activities of daily living or beyond ... would make the physical and emotional journal slightly easier on a patient."



Tribal College Fair Fun

Once again, MonTECH participated in the Montana Tribal College & Career Fair Circuit. Hosted by six tribal communities, these vibrant events feature fabulous food, games, and prayers. Many community members attend, allowing opportunity to share assistive devices for learning and daily living with all ages.

MonTECH Consumer Makes People Magazine

The team was delighted to see our consumer, Tenley, featured in People Magazine as a satisfied user of the Obi Feeding Robot. MonTECH introduced Tenley to Obi, then loaned her an Obi in Winter 2022 while her own device was being repaired.



A Brush with Celebrity

NBA fan-girl! MonTECH's Director, Molly, and AT Ambassador, Madi, presented at Missoula's "Living Dynamically with Parkinson's" conference, where they ran into retired Portland Trail Blazer Brian Grant. Thanks for the photo-op, #44!



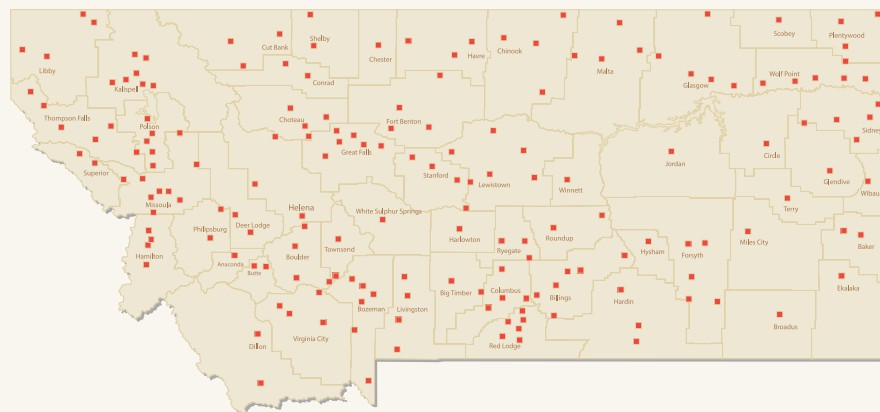
FAM: Coming to a Lake Near You!

In Summer 2022, MonTECH was awarded a generous grant from the **Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation**. In partnership with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, this grant will establish Floating Across Montana (FAM).

FAM will fund installation of accessible kayak/canoe launches at five lakes around Montana in Spring 2023! The program will vastly improve accessibility for Montana paddlers with mobility challenges.

That acronym may have a familiar ring. MonTECH's adaptive trike program, Wheels Across Montana (WAM), has been loaning trikes for years. WAM was initially funded by the Foundation, and its success made it possible for MonTECH to apply for funding for FAM.

OH, THE PLACES MONTECH GOES!



MonTECH serves all Montanans, regardless of how rural their home may be. This map shows communities that received information about MonTECH this year.

We were delighted to loan equipment to a resident of Willard – about as far east as you can go without ending up in North Dakota!

We'll Show You the Money!

MonTECH was awarded a **Bass Pro Shop & Cabela's Community Grant** so we could add to our (already impressive) adaptive recreation loan inventory. We purchased equipment ranging from a foldable kayak to the Freeloader Child Carrier and switch-activated fishing reel.



This year, MonTECH used a community grant from the **Montana Geriatric Education Center** to build up our inventory for those living with memory challenges and their caregivers. We purchased memory supports as well as social supports like our Joy4All Companion kitty, and GrandCare, a touch-screen platform to socialize and manage health conditions. For caregivers, we now have alert systems and more equipment to safely manage transfers.

Children's Special Health Services has a financial assistance program to help families purchase services and equipment. In 2022, the application committee began to wonder if some requested equipment might be better housed at MonTECH. 'Wondering' led to a gift of \$25,000 to purchase pediatric equipment. Housing this equipment at MonTECH means more families can access it, including families who aren't eligible for other programs.



MonTECH serves Montanans virtually or in-person at our physical locations in Missoula and Billings (by appointment). Borrow equipment through our website, or contact us to discuss your needs or make an appointment.

MT-AT.org | montech@mso.umt.edu | 1-406-243-5511