2021 ANNUAL REPORT



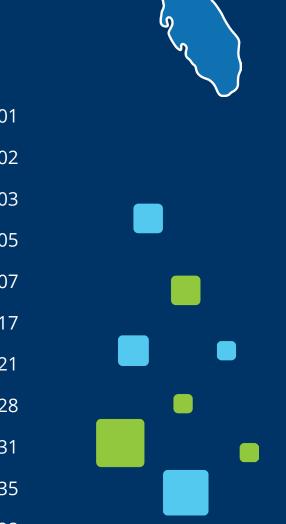
WELCOME TO FAAST-2021

In 2020, FAAST reached the milestone of funding over \$1 MILLION in financial loans since the program began in June 2015.



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WHAT IS FAAST?

Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology

FAAST is the state of Florida's assistive technology program. Assistive technology activities provided by FAAST include device loans, device demonstrations, device reutilization, device training, information and assistance, and a state-wide financing program. FAAST serves Floridians with disabilities and their family members, service providers, educators, therapists, employers, health and rehabilitation professionals, assistive technology vendors, and all other interested parties throughout Florida.

The Florida Alliance for Assistive Ser vices & Technology, Inc. is a non-pr ofit organization focused on enhancing inclusion for Floridians with disabilities of all ages through collaboration and empowerment. By creating a collaborative environment for individuals with disabilities, their families, educators, government officials, and other community stakeholders, we enhance the community for us all.

2021 Assistive Technology Advisory Council

Enrique Escallon, Co-Chair FY2021

Paul Tobin, Co-Chair FY2021

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TJ Moon

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Brandon Palermo

Renee Proctor

Monica Russell, Career Source Florida Representative





The 2020-2021 fiscal year was a historic year for FAAST. It was the first year implementing the Strategic Plan 2020, a three-year plan created by the Assistive Technology Advisory Council (ATAC) in the summer of 2020. FAAST began working to raise public awareness of the organization and expand FAAST services to reach more Floridians through an equitable and quality service, all while addressing structural and operational opportunities.

Increasing Awareness of FAAST

01

FAAST has a new look! This fiscal year brought new branding standards to the organization that gave the FAAST logo a refreshing and active appearance. With the new brand standards, FAAST updated all of its marketing materials and even created some new ones, like the State Agency Toolkit, a reference guide for agencies to understand and utilize assistive technology with clients. FAAST also began a renewed focus on collecting client testimonials, strengthening relationships with partner organizations and businesses, and expanding online training webinars.

Previous Logo



NEW Logo





Evaluating and Updating the FAAST Service Delivery through the Regional Demonstration Center Program

Serving all Floridians through an equitable and quality service delivery model is no small task! FAAST took this on by first evaluating the Regional Demonstration Center program model. FAAST has historically served clients with disabilities through six regional locations in Pensacola, Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Tampa, Orlando, and Miami. F AAST services were being provided in the immediate areas for these locations but not as frequently in the bordering counties. The Ass istive Technology Advisory Council researched other states' Assistive Technology Act programs for best pr actices and analyzed FAAST data from the last five years to create a new service delivery model based on 12 regional locations. The new model expands FAAST services to help reach all 67 counties in a more equitable manner. FAAST brought on many new partners, and the new Regional Demonstration Center locations opened on October 1, 2021.





The last piece of the Strategic Plan 2020 focused on internal operations and structure. Under the new Executive Director's lead, FAAST updated its organization chart and refreshed employee job descriptions and titles. Every manual was reviewed and updated to ensure appropriate processes were implemented throughout the organization. The final piece was a review and update to the FAAST By-laws, which broke the Interagency and Public Policy and Advocacy Committee into two committees.



2021 KEY INITIATIVES







What is Assistive Technology (A.T.)?

Assistive technology helps people with disabilities live, work, learn and play as independently as possible. A.T. is any device, item, gadget, tool, hardware, or software used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals of all ages with disabilities and older adults who may find a need for assistance. Assistive technology provides people with disabilities the option to access education and the workplace, live within their communities, and enjoy recreational activities.







#FAAST Fact:

Did you know that the term "assistive technology" applies to everything from post-it notes to motorized mobility devices, as long as it assists the individual in need of assistance?

Assistive technology device demonstrations, short-term loans, training, and information and assistance activities are conducted across the state of Florida by the FAAST Regional Demonstration Centers. These centers are located in Pensacola, Orlando, Tampa, and Miami, with new locations in Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Gainesville, Winter Park, Ft. Myers, and Ft. Lauderdale. Visitors can see examples of assistive technology, such as speech-generating devices, adaptive computer equipment, and aids for daily living.

The following data is from the FAAST Annual Progress
Report required from the Administration for Community
Living. For a copy of the report, please contact
Whitney Doyle at WDoyle@FAAST.org.





Device Demonstrations

Assistive technology device demonstrations compare the features and benefits of a particular AT device or category of devices for an individual or small group of individuals. The purpose of a device demonstration is to enable an individual to make an informed choice about whether a device would meet their needs.

In 2021, 2,082 individuals participated in 1,058 device demonstrations conducted by FAAST Regional Demonstration Centers. Projecting a modest \$100 savings for the individual realized by just half of the total demonstrations conducted results in statewide savings of \$52,900.

Number and Type of Demonstrations of AT Devices/Services



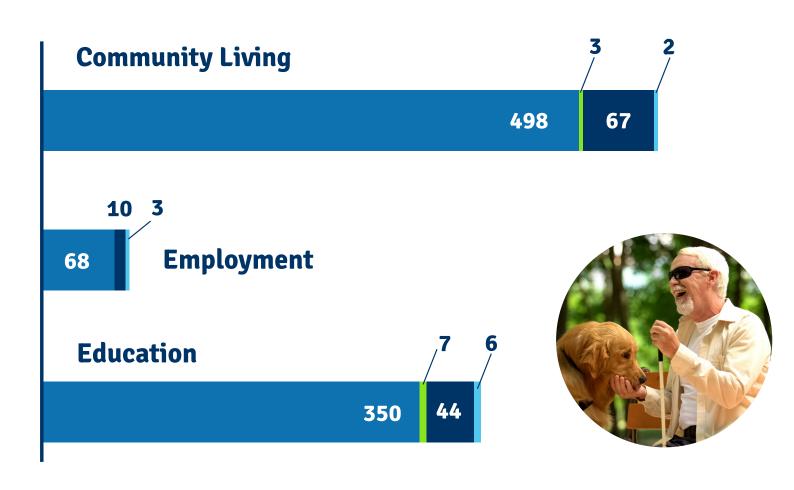
^{*}See page 14 for icon references



Number and Type of Participants in Device Demonstrations



Primary Purpose for Which Demonstrated AT is Needed and Decision-Making Outcome

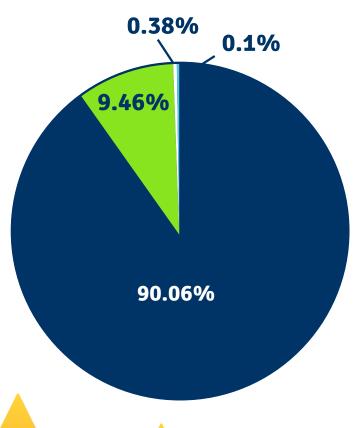


- Decided that AT device/service WILL meet needs
- Decided that AT device/service **WILL NOT** meet needs
- Have not made a decision
- Nonrespondent



Participant Rating Services

- Highly Satisfied 1,875
- Satisfied 197
- Satisfied Somewhat 8
- Nonrespondent 2





















Device Short-Term Loans



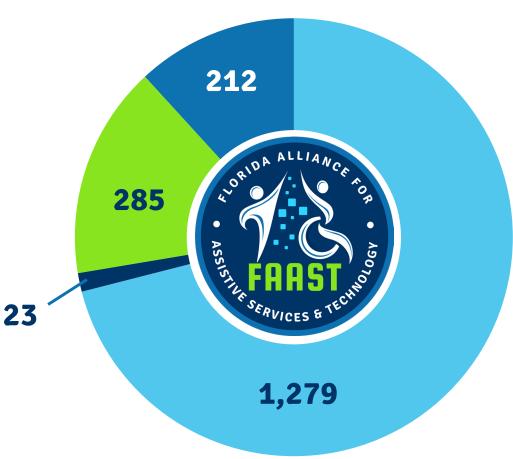
The device loan program provides short-term loans of assistive technology devices to individuals with disabilities, family members, professionals, and others. The devices are used at home, in schools, at work, and in the community. The program allows potential technology users the opportunity to try out devices to ensure that it is a good fit prior to purchase, to use as a backup, or to use while waiting on funding.

In 2021, 1,799 individuals borrowed 2,905 devices for short-term device loans operated through FAAST Regional Demonstration Centers. Assuming an average savings of \$1,000 per device loan (as determined by the National Assistive Technology Act Technical Assistance and T raining Center) and k eeping in mind multiple items are often borrowed to find a solution, we calculate a statewide savings of \$1.1 million. In addition, assuming a minimal \$10-per-day rental fee for the average device loan period, we project a statewide savings of \$156,000 for devices borrowed to meet a short-term need (since these devices did not have to be rented).



Primary Purpose of Short-Term Device Loan





- Assist in decision-making (device trial or evaluation)
- Serve as a loaner during service repair or while waiting for funding
- Provide an accommodation on a short-term basis for a time-limited event/situation
- Conduct training, self-education or other professional development activity

Type of Device and Number of Loans

Short-Term Device Loans

VISION



339

HEARING



53

SPEECH COMMUNICATION



493

LEARNING, COGNITION, AND DEVELOPMENT



281

MOBILITY, SEATING, AND POSITIONING



134

INITIATIVES

DAILY LIVING



311

ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATIONS



183

VEHICLE MODIFICATION AND TRANSPORTATION



01

COMPUTERS AND RELATED



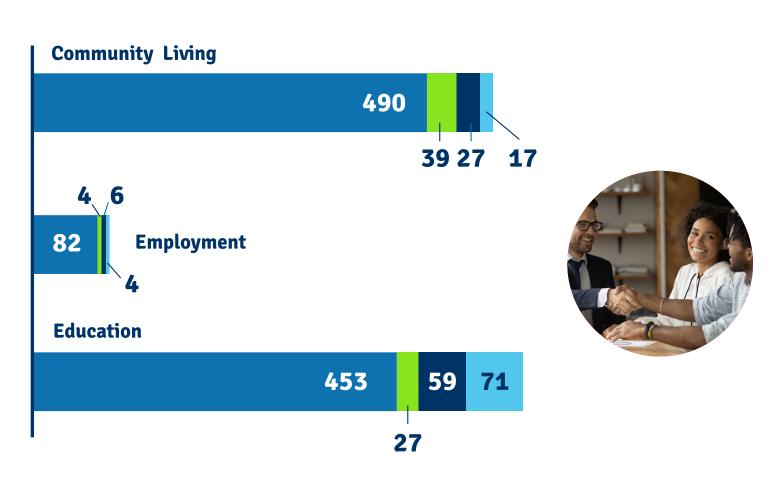
1,040

RECREATION, SPORTS, AND LEISURE



70





- Decided that AT device/service WILL meet needs
- Decided that AT device/service WILL NOT meet needs
- Have not made a decision
- Nonrespondent

Loans



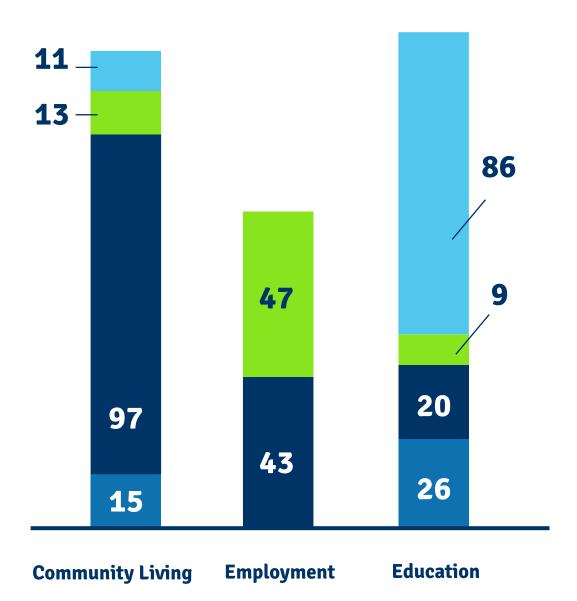
Participants Rating Services



Response Rate = 89.38%



Reason for Accessing Loaned AT



- Could only afford the AT through the AT program
- AT was only available through the AT program
- AT was available through other programs, but the system was too complex or the wait time too long
- Nonrespondent

Assistive Technology Training



Training activities are instructional events, usually planned in advance for a specific purpose or audience, that are designed to increase participants' knowledge, skills, and c ompetencies regarding AT. Such e vents can be delivered to large or small groups, in-person, or via telecommunications or other distance education mechanisms. Examples of training include classes, workshops, conference sessions, and presentations that have the goal of increasing skills, knowledge, and competency.

In FY 2021, FAAST trained a total of 10,024 participants.

Participants in Assistive Technology Training



Primary Topic of Training and Number of Participants



9,909

AT Products/ Services 11

AT Funding/ Policy/ Practice

93

Combination of any/all of the above

11

Transition





Information and Assistance



Information and assistance activities are conducted to provide individuals with accurate, timely, and complete responses to their requests for information about assistive technology devices and ser vices and about the A T ser vices offered by FAAST.

In FY 2021, FAAST provided information and assistance services to 3,671 individuals.



Type of Recipients	AT Device/ Service	AT Funding	Total Participant Responses
Individuals with Disabilities	1,054	401	1,455
Family Members, Guardians, and Authorized Representatives	829	134	963
Representatives of Education	148	4	152
Representatives of Employment	33	3	36
Representatives of Health, Allied Health, and Rehabilitation	727	30	757
Representatives of Community Living	245	18	263
Representatives of Technology	31	12	43
Unable to Categorize	2	0	2
TOTAL 20	3,069	602	3,671

State Financing



As a direct lender, FAAST makes loans to qualified individuals with disabilities and their families for assistive technology devices and services. FAAST also offers a telework and self-employment loan, which can assist with the funding of assistive technology and equipment for individuals who have disabilities for work or seeking self-employment opportunities. FAAST works with individuals who have low credit scores and fixed incomes.

In 2021, 69 borrowers obtained financial loans totaling \$468,119 to buy 119 devices. The vast majority (92.7%) of recipients indicated that if the state financing activity they used was not available, they would not have been able to purchase/obtain the AT device due to cost or availability, potentially resulting in individuals who are unable to successfully work, learn, or live in the community.





Loan Made to Applicants by Income Range

	Income Ranges						
Income Range	\$15,000 or Less	\$15,001 - \$30,000	\$30,001 - \$45,000	\$45,001 - \$60,000	\$60,001 - \$70,000	\$70,001 or More	TOTAL
# of Loans	10	10	16	16	7	10	69
% of Loans	14.9%	14.9%	23.19%	10.14%	10.14%	14.49%	100%

8%

HIGHEST INTEREST RATE

5%

LOWEST INTEREST RATE

5.56%

AVERAGE INTEREST RATE

Number and Dollar Value of Loans Made

Type of AT	# of Devices Financed	\$ Value of Loans
Vision	11	\$32,541
Hearing	67	\$172,515
Speech Communication	0	\$0
Learning, Cognition, and Development	0	\$0
Mobility, Seating, and Positioning	12	\$58,486
Daily Living	16	\$73,860
Environmental Adaptations	0	\$0
Vehicle Modification and Transportation	9	\$125,907
Computers and Related	3	\$1,662
Recreation, Sports, and Leisure	1	\$3,148



Primary Purpose for Which AT is Needed and Reason for Using the Program

	Education	Employment	Community Living	Total Participant Responses
Could only afford the AT through the AT program	0	4	60	64
AT was only available through the AT program	0	0	1	1
AT was available through other programs, but the system was too complex or the wait time too long	0	0	0	0
None of the Above	1	10	3	4
Nonrespondent	0	0	0	0

Loan Partners

FAAST continued to provide modified vehicle loans and disability-related home modification loans through the help of two key partners. First Federal Bank of Florida continues to provide support for vehicle loans through the Bank Guarantee program, and SELF, a Florida-based non-profit, continues to provide support for home modifications through the interest-rate buy-down program. Both organizations are important partners for FAAST to be able to extend loans and the opportunity for credit to more individuals throughout Florida.

Type of Loan	# of Devices Financed	\$ Value of Loans
Direct Loan Program	62	\$337,274
Bank Guarantee Program	4	\$172,515
Interest Buy-Down Program	3	\$48,945
TOTAL	69	\$468,119



Device Reutilization

Assistive technology reutilization program provides for the exchange, repair, recycling, or other reutilization of assistive technology devices and durable medical equipment, which may include redistribution through device sales, loans, rentals, or donations, carried out either directly or in collaboration with another entity. FAAST partnered with Centers for Independent Living in Pensacola, Largo, Ft. Myers, Ft. Lauderdale, and Miami to provide reutilization services.

In 2021, 433 recipients acquired 636 reutilized devices through FAAST. A total of \$144,869 was saved by device recipients by purchasing/obtaining reutilized AT instead of new. In addition, 85% of the reutilized device recipients indicated that they would not have been able to afford the AT or obtain it from other sources if it were not for the reuse services of FAAST. The cost of those individuals being unable to work, learn or live in the community without the AT they need would be immeasurable.



Reutilization Activities by Device Category and Cost

	Reassigned/ Refurbished and Repaired	Current Purchase Price	Which Device(s) Were Sold	
Vision	1	\$500	\$0	\$500
Hearing	4	\$1,550	\$0	\$1,550
Speech Communication	1	\$200	\$0	\$200
Learning, Cognition, and Development	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Mobility, Seating, and Positioning	292	\$103,276	\$0	\$103,276
Daily Living	266	\$17,858	\$1	\$17,857
Environmental Adaptations	34	\$8,410	\$0	\$8,410
Vehicle Modification and Transportation	7	\$7,041	\$240	\$6,801
Computers and Related	28	\$4,600	\$0	\$4,600
Recreation, Sports, and Leisure	3	\$1,675	\$0	\$1,675 27

65

355

Primary Purpose for Which AT is Needed and Reason for Using the Program

- Could only afford the AT through the AT program
- AT was only available through the AT program
- AT was available through other programs, but the system was too complex or the wait time too long
- Nonrespondent

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Community Living

Employment

Education

Participants Rating Services

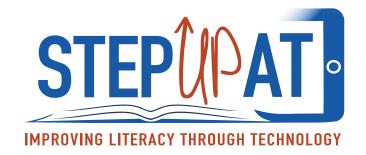
Highly Satisfied	396	91.45%
Satisfied	37	8.55%
Satisfied Somewhat	0	0%
Not at all Satisfied	0	0%
Nonrespondent	0	0%

Response Rate

100%

GRANT PROGRAMS

Step Up AT Grant





Update provided by the Step Up AT Project Director.

The Step Up AT to Promote Early Literacy project is an innovative and integrated toolkit with online and in-person professional development resources to support parents and train early childhood teachers to adopt evidenced-based AT practices. The project emphasizes the use of AT tools and strategies to

support early literacy experiences for young children with disabilities. The program is delivered with individualized coaching in early childhood classrooms so that teachers not only receive training but also AT is applied and integrated into their everyday practices. Currently, the region of focus is South Florida; however, the intention is to serve all of Florida and beyond. The Step Up AT Project at the University of Miami Mailman Center for Child Development began fall of 2016 in partnership with the Florida's state AT program - FAAST.



Where We've Been



In preparation for year four of Step Up AT (2019-20), we worked with a consultant to strengthen our coaching model based on the current evidence-based Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) model. With a consultant, we developed a new coaching framework based on 12 essential AT teaching practices and the key components of PBC-collaborative partnerships, goal setting and action plans, practice-based observation, and debriefing with the teacher. Year four was the second year of the randomized control trial phase, which began in September 2018.



This fourth year included two childcare centers that served as intervention schools and two new centers that served as control schools. The two schools receiving the intervention included 9 specialized classrooms, 22 teachers and aides, and 32 children with diverse abilities and their pr imary caregivers. Two Step Up AT coaches delivered the pr ogram during year four using the PBC model. Post-intervention data still needs to be analyzed for final results. In previous years, the pre to post-intervention data shows that teachers who have participated in Step Up AT have significantly increased their AT use in the classroom. In total, 74 teachers have participated, and 135 children and their parents across 7 schools.



Where We're Going

We have just received another round of funding from the US Department of Education. These next 5 years will again be focused on the South Florida region; however, the project is expanding to a virtual train-the-trainer model. Our coaches will now be Master Coaches who train in-service specialists who work at school centers and programs such as Head Start. With this model, we will modify our resources to fit the training and development needs of the participating sites so that their professional development resources can be used ongoing within these programs that serve children with and at risk for delays or disabilities. FAAST will continue to serve as our collaborative partner to maintain and strengthen the Step Up AT Lending Library, and to build and host more robust online resources for Step Up AT and their collaborating school partners.

Our partnership with Head Start of Miami-Dade continues to grow; there are 7 sites under consideration for the next school year. The team found that when peer coaches can put forth maximum effort and attention on a smaller set of teachers, there is a greater chance of implementation and fidelity. Step Up AT is very excited to continue strengthening the corps of professionals equipped with the knowledge to plan for and use assistive technology in the preschool setting.

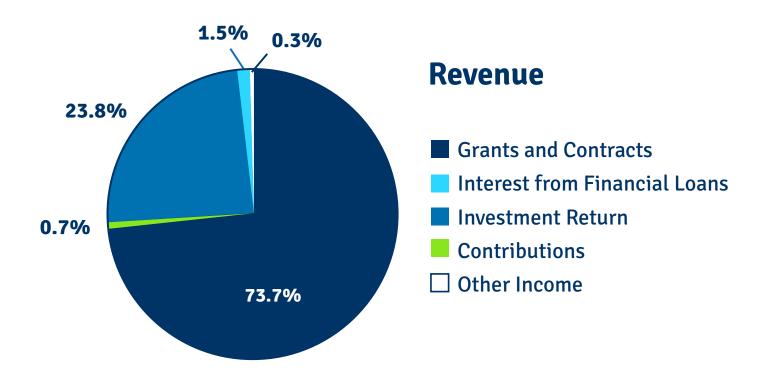




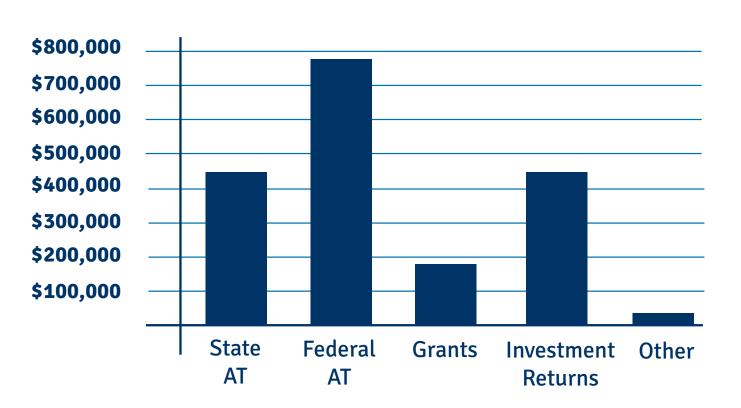
Craig H. Neilsen Foundation Pandemic Support Fund

FAAST received a grant from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation to support individuals who have spinal cord injuries during the COVID-19 pandemic. With this grant, FAAST was able to purchase technology devices to allow 39 Floridians to access online content. FAAST provided a choice of a tablet or lightweight laptop for each participant. Through a pre and post-survey, FAAST learned that 75% of participants stated that a lack of technology was the barrier to them participating in online activities. This number dropped to 26% after receiving a device.

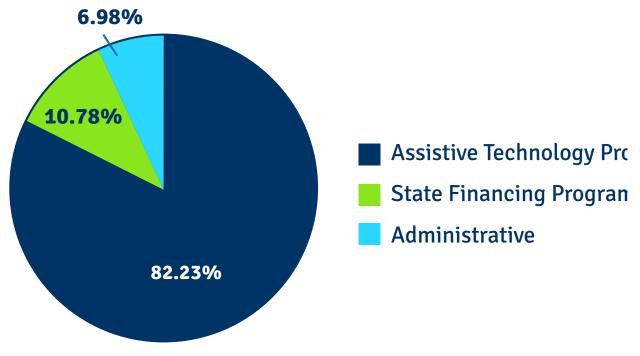
2021 Financials



How We Are Funded



Expenses



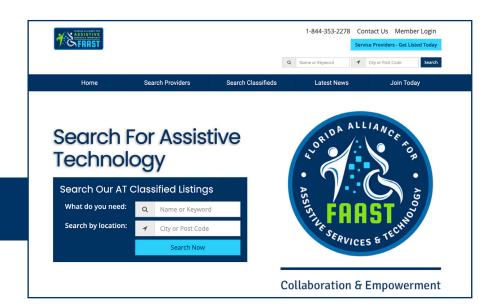


FAAST Resource Directory

A one-stop resource for all things r elated to Assistive Technology; a searchable database that allows users to use multiple keywords, including specific types of AT, location, and cl assifications. Additionally, it enables partner/center autonomy within the FAAST brand guidelines.

The Resource Directory allows users to find the following on the searchable database:

- Regional Centers (RDC)
- Regional Reuse Centers (RRC)
- Centers for Independent Living (CIL)
- AT Vendor / Business Directory
- AT Providers
- Employers (Partners who want to post job opportunities)
- Financial Assistance/Loan Programs
- Classifieds (User Posted)
- Events
- Blogs
- Video Tutorials



www.FloridaFAAST.org

This tool makes AT more accessible by allowing users to connect with service providers in a practical way and find/purchase available equipment in their area.



Regional Locations 2022

FAAST has regional locations across the state to provide assistive technology services.



Regional Demonstration Centers

Regional Demonstration Centers (RDCs) provide device demonstrations, short-term loans, AT training, and information and assistance activities.

Atlantic RDC

Regions Served - Brevard, Orange, Seminole, and Volusia
University of Central Florida School of
Communication Sciences and Disorders
3280 Progress Drive, Suite 250
Orlando, FL 32826
Tel: 407-823-4876
AtlanticRDC@FAAST.org

Broward RDC

Regions Served - Broward
University of Miami Mailman Center for Child
Development
1601 NW 12th Avenue, # 2018
Miami, FL 33136
Tel: 305-243-5706 | T TY: 305-243-7885
ANevares@Med.Miami.Edu

Central RDC

Regions Served - Hillsborough, Manatee, and Pinellas Tampa General Hospital 6 Tampa General Circle, Room 214 Tampa, FL 33606 Tel: 813-844-7591 | T TY: 813-844-7767 FAASTcen@TGH.org

Gulf Coast RDC

Regions Served - Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton Center for Independent Living of Northwest Florida 21 South Tarragona Street, Suite 101 Pensacola, FL 32502 Tel/TTY: 850-595-5566 Sorenson VRS: 850-208-3106 Video Relay: 711

Video Relay: 711
Info@CILNWF.org

Midland RDC

Regions Served - Hardee, Highlands, Osceola, Polk Center for Independent Living in Central Florida Inc. (CIL-CF) 720 N Denning Drive Winter Park, Fl 32789 Tel: 407-623-1070 | Video R elay: 711 MidlandRDC@FAAST.org

North Central RDC

MBrisbane@CILNCF.org

Regions Served - Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Marion, Suwannee, Union Center for Independent Living of North Central Florida 222 SW 36th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32607 Tel: 352-378-7474



Northeast RDC

Regions Served - Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and Saint Johns Center for Independent Living of Jacksonville 2709 Art Museum Drive Jacksonville, FL 32207 Tel: 904-399-8484

JWood@CILJacksonville.org

Northwest RDC

Regions Served - Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla, and Washington

FAAST State Headquarters 2145 Delta Blvd, Suite 200 Tallahassee, FL 32303

Tel: 850-487-3278 | T TY: 1-877-506-2723

Info@FAAST.org

South RDC

Regions Served - Miami-Dade and Monroe University of Miami Mailman Center for Child Development 1601 NW 12th Avenue, # 2018 Miami, FL 33136

Tel: 305-243-5706 | T TY: 305-243-7885

ANevares@Med.Miami.Edu

Southeast RDC

Regions Served - Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, and Saint Lucie Center for Independent Living of Broward 4800 N State Rd 7, Suite 102 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33319

Tel: 954-722-6400

SoutheastRDC@FAAST.org

Southwest RDC

Regions Served - Collier, Hendry, Lee, Sarasota, Charlotte, DeSoto, and Glades Center for Independent Living of Gulf Coast

7011 Cypress Terrace Suite 103 Fort Myers, Florida 33907

Tel: 239-260-4575

Video Phone: 954-320-6860 SouthWestRDC@FAAST.org

West Central RDC

Regions Served - Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Pasco, and Sumter Hope Services, Inc. 5426 Land O Lakes Blvd. Land O Lakes, FL 34639 Tel: 813-907-3731

Office@HopeGetsJobs.com



Center for Independent Living of Northwest Florida

3600 N Pace Blvd, Pensacola, FL 32505 Voice: (850) 595-5566

TDD: (877) 245-2457 Email: info@cilnwf.org

Center for Independent Living of Gulf Coast

7011 Cypress Terrace, Suite 103

Ft. Myers, FL 33907 Voice: (239) 260-4575

Toll-Free: 1 (855) 260-4575

Center for Independent Living Broward

4800 N. State Road 7, Suite 102

Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33919 Voice: (954) 722-6400 TTY: (954) 735-0963

Disability Achievement Center

12552 Belcher Rd South

Largo, FL 33773

Voice: (727) 539-7550 Email: info@mydacil.org

CIL of South Florida

6666 Biscayne Blvd, Miami, FL 33138

Voice: (305) 751-8025

Videophone: (786) 347-7318

Email: info@cilsf.org

Thank You to Our 2021 Partners!

The Family Café

FLORIDA ALLIANCE FOR

A S SISTIVE
SERVICES & TECHNOLOGY

FARST

Center for Independent Broward
Center for Independent of Gulf Coast
Center for Independent of Northwest Florida
Center for Independent of South Florida
Disability Achievement Center
Hope Haven
Tampa General Rehabilitation Center



University of Central Florida Communication Disorders Clinic University of Miami Mailman Center for Child Development

FAAST Staff

Whitney Doyle	Executive Director
Eric Reed	Financial Loan Program Director
Hannah Brock	State AT Program Manager
Tim McCann	Information and Assistance Specialist
Marquesas Blimes	Regional AT Specialist
Megan Atkinson	Administrative and Financial Coordinator
Eric Zimmerman	Financial Loan Program Assistant

This publication was made possible by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living. FAAST also receives funding from the Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocation Rehabilitation. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the above entities.

CONTACT US

2145 Delta Blvd, Suite 200 Tallahassee, FL 32303

Phone: 850-487-3278

Toll-Free: 844-353-2278

TTY: 877-506-2723

Email: info@FAAST.org

Website: www.FAAST.org





