

WASHINGTON ACCESS FUND



Promoting Access to Technology & Economic Opportunity for
People with Disabilities in Washington State

Who We Are!



- Small ***statewide*** Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) established by and for individuals with disabilities
- Mission is to help people with disabilities pay for the technologies needed to live independently & to succeed at school, at work, at play & in the community
- Consider all of our programs to be “asset building”

Needs Within Washington's Disability Community....



Community represents 12-19% of population & among the poorest in the state!

- Poverty rate about three times that of people without disabilities (24.8% vs 8.1%)
- College graduation rate (14.3%) much lower than than adults without disabilities (32.8%)
- Workforce participation rate half that of people without disabilities (40.1% vs 80.5%)

Needs Within Washington's Disability Community....



Disability Impacts individuals & households...

In 2008, median household income for Washington families with at least one working age adult with a disability was \$44,000 as compared to \$67,800 for families without working age adults with disabilities.

Additional Asset Building Challenges



- Discrimination & lack of awareness re possibilities
- Disincentives to earn & save (asset limits)
- AFI Program
 - Assets do not include assistive technology or other specialized needs (e.g., job development)
 - Inability to save from unearned income
- Many IDA Programs do not have needed training or knowledge (e.g, benefits issues)

What We Do!

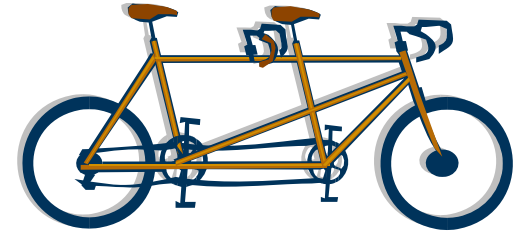


- Low interest loans for assistive technology (because many people cannot afford to buy the Assistive Devices they need!)
- Low interest loans for business equipment
- Long term, low cost leases of CCTV magnifiers
- Individual Development Accounts
- Related Technical Assistance & Services

Assistive Technology Loans



- Designed to fill the funding gaps for Assistive Technology (“AT”)!
- Up to \$10,000 for 5 years at 5%
- For any any type of AT (including home and vehicle modifications) for any purpose
- *Eligibility: any person with a disability (includes seniors!) and family members for benefit of a person with a disability*



Assistive Technology.....

Broadly defined to include any device that maintains or enhances functional capabilities plus related services

Examples: hearing aids; modified vehicles; vision aids (Braille Notetakers, magnifiers), computers ,iPads, e-readers, adaptive recreational equipment, GPS Systems, cell phones, wheelchairs, co-pays, etc!!!

Business Equipment Loans



- 5% loans up to \$10,000 (\$25,000 for well established businesses) for any assistive technology or business equipment needed for employment or self employment
- Also can be used for related services & limited inventory & supplies
- Examples: computers, vehicles, sewing machines, tractors, back hoes, specialized software; workplace modifications

Other Services



- Tips on selecting & funding Assistive Technology
- Referrals to Assistive Technology Vendors & Service Providers
- Informal Assistance with budgeting & credit
- Building Credit with Credit Reporting & \$500 Credit Builder Loans
- Small Business Planning Assistance

Business Development Services

- 6-9 Week Small Business Planning Webinar (Free) offered 3 times a year
- Monthly Peer Group Meetings via Webinar
- One on One Counseling/Coaching with Kathy Gilman, Program Director
- Information & Referral on Business Resources

Loans – Outcomes

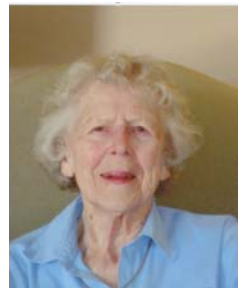


- 329 Loans To Date -- \$1,134,908
- About \$302,000 currently outstanding
- Average Loan Size: \$3,450.
- Approximately 68% to individuals at or below 80% of statewide median.
- Default Rate – 2.4% (Dollars Written Off as a % of Loans Disbursed)
- Annual Borrower Survey: Loans & Technologies Purchased Impact Lives!



CCTV Rental Program

- Long term, low cost rentals primarily to very low income seniors not interested in loans
- Provides affordable access to CCTVs which cost \$2500 - \$3500/unit
- Most use every day for cooking, reading, managing money, managing meds, etc.
- Serve 40-50 people per year
- Surveys show significant impact on ability to live independently...



Access Fund IDAS.....



Three Individual Development Account Pilot Projects

- United Way of King County Collaboration – Assistive Technology for Work IDAs (2008-2011)
- Business Equipment IDAs (launched October 2010)
- Assistive Technology IDAs funded via Paul G. Allen Foundation Grant (launched January 2011)

United Way IDAs for Work



- Funded with \$40,000 in state dollars under Washington's IDA Legislation (RCW 43.31.460) which permits participants to save from *unearned income* for *assistive technologies* that “allow a person with a disability to participate in work-related activities”
- Eligibility: Person with a disability; must be saving for assistive technology for work related activities and be 18 at time of purchase

United Way -- Assistive Technology IDAs for Work...

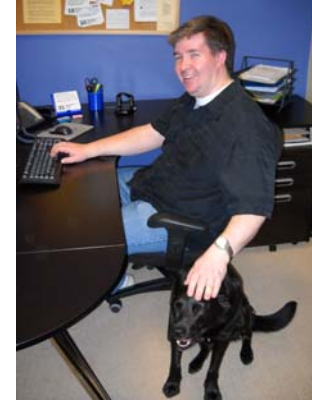
- Participants started saving in October 08; Program ends in June 2011
- Clients required to chose savings goals of \$2000 or \$4000; 1:1 Match
- Saving generally by EFT on day of client's choosing (1 exception)
- Savings put in *custodial* accounts so would not count as assets for SSI & other benefits
- Required to save for at least 6 months & take ***financial education & "AT" training***

United Way Savers



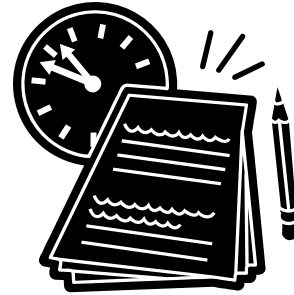
- 17 Participants – 14 men; 3 women
- Age: 20-60; Mdn = 44
- 13/17 = single person households
- 6 = negative net assets; 7 = net assets of less than \$1000; 4 = net assets of \$1000+
- 10 on SSI or SSDI
- 5 Employed Full/Part-time; 3 Self Employed
- 9 Unemployed (3=students) (so ability to save from unearned income was important!)

United Way Savers



- Monthly contributions: \$10-\$200/month; median about \$40/month
- All saved & made purchases – most multiple
- **Items Purchased:** Vehicles; Computers & iPads; Special Software (Zoomtext; Dragon; ProQuo2); Closed Circuit TV; GPS System; Dentures; Hearing Aids; Digitizing Table; AT Training; Color Identifier; Talking Alarm Clock; iBill

United Way – Other Outcomes



Exit Surveys – Not complete but so far clients report benefitting from:

- Financial Education & AT Training
- Saving Consistently by EFT
- Match even though just 1:1
- Working with staff – resources & referrals

Self-employed seemed to have benefitted the most; those who were unemployed -- still unemployed

Barriers To A Better Life: Disability; Not Enough Money; Lack of Steady Work & Health

Business Equipment IDA Pilot

- Launched in October 2010
- Funded via U.S. Department of Education Telework Grant
- Can save any amount up to \$4,000 for assistive technology or business equipment needed for employment or self employment
- Match is 1:1
- Savings can come from earned or unearned income

Business Equipment IDA – Eligibility



- 80% of county median income excluding disability related medical expenses
- Net Assets of \$20,000 excluding retirement funds, special disability-related equipment
- Adult children living with parents eligible if considered a household for SSI purposes
- Parents can save for children with disabilities
- Children can start saving at 15
- Feasibility Analysis if for Self-Employment

Business Equipment IDA – Requirements

- Save for at least six months; total of three years to save
- Asset Specific Training (AT, Technology and/or Small Business)
- Financial Education
 - Goal is to develop a specialized curriculum which can be offered on line or in person!
 - New: Benefits Consultation & Assistance with goal of offering full range of tools (loans, IDAs, Work Incentives, etc.) to clients

Business Equipment IDA – To Date



- 10 Enrolled; another six in process of enrolling
- Savings goals range from \$750-4000 (slightly higher than last group?)
- Similar profiles – age, employment status, etc.
- Most want to start/expand small business
- Several from United Way Pilot
- Equipment: Computers; ipads; software; sewing machines; digitizing board; vehicles, etc!

New Assistive Technology IDA Pilot!

- Funded by Paul G. Allen Foundation as part of “comprehensive” asset building program
- Participants can save up to \$4,000 for any type of assistive technology and/or home and vehicle accessibility modifications.
- AT can be for any purpose – not just work related activities!
- Savings can come from earned or unearned income!
- Match: 1:1

New Assistive Technology IDA Pilot!

Eligibility Requirements: Same as Business Equipment IDA (except that equipment need not be for employment or self-employment!)

Program Requirements – Same as Business Equipment IDA (except not required to take self-employment training of course!)

Program Launched in February – so still actively seeking participants!

- As of May: One active participant & two enrolling. Saving for Computers & Augmentative Communication Devices

New Assistive Technology IDA Pilot!

Wondering...

- If we will get any seniors who need vision or hearing aids – a big reason we wanted an AT IDA that was not just for work related activities
- If we will get any high school students...

Hoping...

- To provide more comprehensive financial education and “futures planning” for these clients
- We can use data/outcomes to promote new funding for Assistive Technology IDAs when state’s financial outlook improves!

Examples of Asset Building!!

Shawna Hutton – Adapted Vehicle Loan

Deanna Vega – Hearing Aids

Linda Lovelett – Home Modifications

Tyler Eckel – Assistive Technology IDA

Robert Plummer – Assistive Technology IDA

***Chuck B. – CCTV Renter & Business Loan
Client (Clean & Clear!)***

Small Business Clients.....

Many are start ups (or start up planning); most are part-time. Goal is often (not always) to supplement & not supplant disability income

Examples...

- <http://www.compupane.com>
- <http://www.chocolatemyracles.com>
- <http://simoneandsylvia.com/>



Opportunities for Collaboration...

- Sharing links/mailing lists, event information
- Help with outreach to Disability Community
- We can help you Identify resources & problem solve on disability-related issues
- Financial Education Curriculum Development
- The Disability Initiative: Promoting asset building, Tax Preparation, Best Practices & Training

Access Fund Staff

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