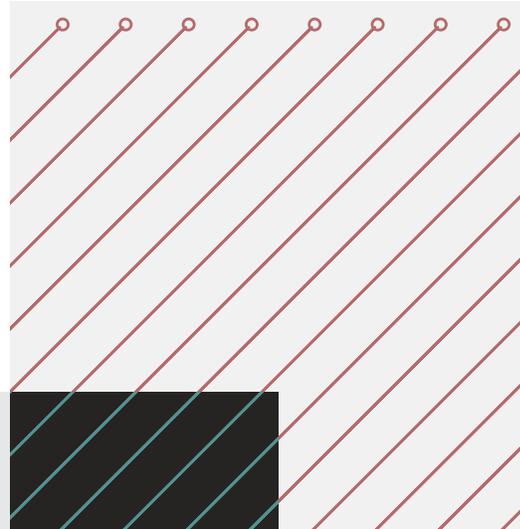


2018

ANNUAL

REPORT

EDUCATION  
EMPLOYMENT  
COMMUNITY



**i atp**

**Illinois Assistive  
Technology Program**

*Independent Living Through Technology*

## My Friend Ann Ford



As we have mourned the passing of our wonderful friend, advocate, and fiercest of all fighters, Ann Ford, we have heard many glowing tributes to the societal changes she was instrumental in bringing about. She was a friend, staunch supporter of IATP and served on our Advisory Committee.

I want to add a tribute to Ann Ford, friend extraordinaire. Ann was the best of friends. She supported people she loved in whatever endeavor they were involved in but wasn't afraid to tell them if she thought they were way off base.

Ann was a connoisseur of good food and she loved a good dinner (or breakfast or lunch) out, and her favorites were red wine (because she said you got a good feeling quicker), Mexican food, and anything Augie's was serving.

Ann was a lover of music of all kinds. Her tastes ranged from the jazz played at Blues and Barbeque Fest to seeing Elton John and Billy Joel at Wrigley Field with her beloved daughter Erin, to concerts at the state fair.

Ann had a wicked sense of humor. Sometimes that humor was addressed at others (and believe me no one was so high they couldn't be her target) but often her humor was addressed at herself like, the time I was helping her transfer and I told her we had been told in church to visit the sick or help those in need that week and she looked at me and said, "you tell them you did your part by helping the feeble and crippled tonight."

Ann loved to shop especially for Erin and her sisters. We spent hours at the Art Fair and around Christmas finding them the perfect gift and when she found something she knew they would love but that was a bit pricey she would announce "I want to give them a gift, not adopt them."

Ann was never afraid to laugh at herself and with that laughter she normalized disability and made it part of the human condition. One great example was the time Amtrak didn't tell her they were in Springfield and she continued to merrily ride down the road and ended up in Carlinville, an hour away.

Her legislative battles were important to society as a whole and have made a huge difference for many generations of people and we all are better because of those changes. However, for those of us lucky enough to have called Ann friend we will always remember her love, her laughter, those stories she told as only an Irishman can tell them and most importantly the way she touched our lives in ways we will never forget.

Rest in peace, my wonderful friend, and thank you for the gift of yourself you shared with us for too short a time. ~Susy Woods

# Board of Directors

Barbara Doyle, PRESIDENT

Rita Howells, VICE PRESIDENT

Brian Dowd, TREASURER

Cecile Perez, SECRETARY

Joanne Blakley

Horacio Esparza

LuAnn Hickman

David Perez



# DEVICE LOAN

The Device Loan Program provides short term (5 week) loans of assistive technology devices to individuals with disabilities, family members, professionals and others. The devices are used at home, in schools 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 back up, or to use while awaiting funding. In FY18, a total of **1,807** devices were loaned to **1,558** customers.

Of those **1,807** devices, **942** were provided to **192** school districts in **63** counties. A grant through the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) made it possible to purchase additional devices that are dedicated to Illinois school districts.

---



In January 2018, Ben enrolled in the Freeport 160 Driving Academy. He was hearing impaired and wore a hearing aid in his right ear. The instructor is skyped so he was able to wear ear phones during class. Ben received his permit his 1st attempt at testing.

The next step was the driving portion. After a couple of days in the truck, the instructor brought Ben into the office to discuss options because Ben was unable to hear him when the truck was running. Ben was so upset. His hearing impairment has always caused a barrier into anything he has wanted to do.

I requested an FM System from IATP and had the device in a few days.

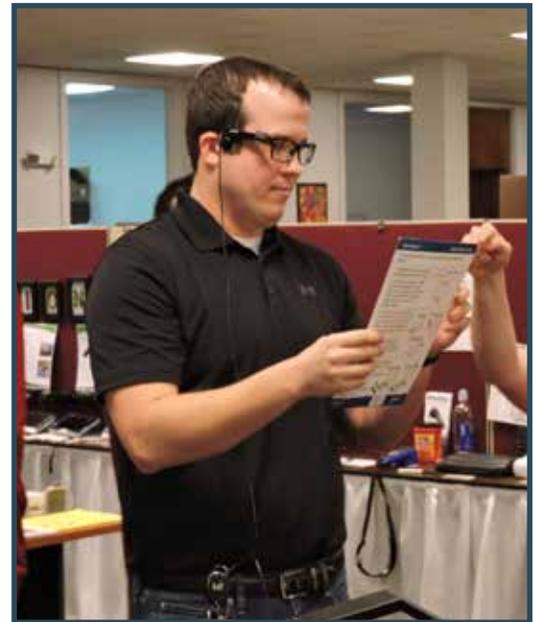
Ben's dreams started to come true!! He was able to hear his instructor with the device and passed his driving test the 1st time!! Ben is so thankful for everything we have done for him!

Thank you for assisting us in making Ben's dreams come true and getting him on the road with his Class A CDL!! Ben has started his new career with one of our contracting companies. ~ Kathy

# DEMONSTRATION

IATP's Demonstration Center features 8 rooms that are filled with the latest technology in all categories including smart home solutions. Guided tours are provided that allow visitors the opportunity to have hands on exploration of various devices in rooms that include a bathroom, bedroom, kitchen and more. In FY18, just under **500** individuals toured the Demo Center.

Demonstrations of equipment can be given on or off site enabling participants to compare the features and benefits of devices so they can make an informed decision as to whether a device would or would not meet their needs. In FY18, **1,465** participated in **632** Device Demonstrations.



A visitor discovers a perfect hands-free magnifier that he can use for his wood working hobby.



Many senior groups visit IATP to learn how AT can increase their independence.

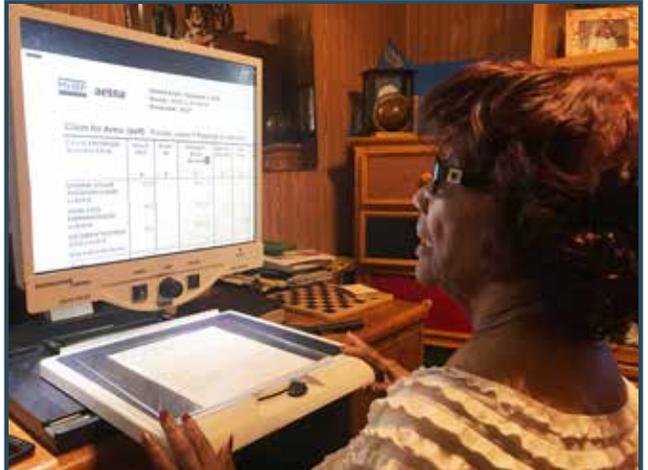


Students learning about devices for the deaf and hard of hearing.

# REUSE

The Reuse Program collects lightly used assistive technology and redistributes it to individuals who can't afford to purchase new equipment. The equipment can be used for short term (while a patient is recovering from an injury and/or illness, or is awaiting a device to be repaired or funded). It may also be used as an open-ended loan where the recipient can keep it as long as needed.

In FY18, consumers received **861** pieces of assistive technology from the Reuse Program resulting in a savings of **\$330,760**.



## A Right End to a Wrong Number

Five years ago, my cell phone rang and when I answered, the lady on the other end apologized, saying she'd dialed the wrong number. I assured her that it was no problem. Soon after, it started happening more frequently. We always seemed to talk more and more with each accidental call. Her name is Armo and she lives in Chicago. She explained that my cell number was just one number off from her nephew's number. Soon, she started calling just to visit. She called on happy days when her family was there so I could speak to them. She called when her husband was sick and she called me when he died. She called on holidays and on her birthday. We soon felt like old friends.

Recently she called to tell me that she was having great difficulty with her vision and that she felt like she was losing her independence. Someone had to read her mail to her. Her faith was a very big part of her life and she missed reading her bible. She needed a CCTV but couldn't afford one.

I explained the Reuse Program to her and soon after, met with her nephew who delivered a CCTV to my friend Armo. ~Jane



I want to thank IATP for helping me solve a very difficult problem. By giving me the special device I was looking for, I am able to continue my daily independence. In the near future, I will be facing ear

drum repair. After this surgery, I won't be able to hear out of that ear for several months. Since my other ear is almost useless and I am blind, I will have dual sensory deprivation. This will make it nearly impossible to communicate with my husband and family. The Braille Note Apex is allowing me to communicate via email and Braille display. This amazing accessible device has taken away much of my anxiety relating to the surgery. I am excited to be able to continue to communicate with those that I love.

I hope that funding and new technology will always allow IATP to continue its programs to help people with disabilities to remain independent in their daily lives. Your services are truly priceless. ~Marla

# IATP ATLOAN\$

As a direct lender, IATP makes loans to qualified individuals with disabilities and their families for assistive technology and limited home modifications. Credit builder loans for AT are available to help individuals with disabilities with no or poor credit and to establish good credit. A total of **45** applications were reviewed in FY18 resulting in **8** approved loans for a total of **\$116,997**.

My granddaughter, Razjada has Cerebral Palsy and uses a walker. We are having an increasingly difficult time getting her in both my car, and her mother's Tahoe using a step stool. We have determined that a valet seat in a van would work best for her family which includes two brothers ages 7 and 9. We need a larger vehicle such as this van in order for us all to go any place together which we do frequently. We cannot get the walker with seat, wheelchair and Raizer lift that we use when she falls, plus other items we need as a family to travel. At this time we cannot all go together to visit family that is out of town or do any type of fun activities or doctor's appointments together. She has fallen and her mother has to lift each leg onto the step stool and then into the Tahoe in order for her to get in and it's extremely difficult. Her mother has issues with heart arrhythmia and this can sometimes trigger a problem. I am too old to assist her getting in the truck. She is beginning to have difficulty getting in and out of my car also. The Valet seat will eliminate the problem and the van will give us the ability to travel and go about our daily lives together as needed.

I Just Want to thank you for my new van and my special seat. It helps me to get in and out of the van, and I'm so thankful to have it in the van, and I am really happy and when I sit down on the seat it feels so comfortable and I can't believe how you guys made it. Thank you so much for making my seat so I can ride in the van everyday for school.  
Sincerely, Razjada

Thank you so much for your help & guidance through this process. We were at the end of trying to figure out how to accommodate Razjada's needs for transportation. This van & valet seat has been such a blessing and allows her to be a part of the family & included in so much more. Thank you again.  
Stephanie (Mom)

Thank you so much for the lift seat and the van! We are extremely grateful for this blessing & it is so awesome for her to have and it helps her so much!



Sincerely,  
Stephanie  
(Mom)

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION EVALUATION / FAST TRACK

Assistive Technology Specialists (ATS) provide assistive technology evaluation, training and technical support to customers in the home, school or in the workplace. After a customer referral is made by a vocational counselor, ATS staff identify assistive technology needs and provides either recommendations for home modifications and/or training on adaptive technology and software.

In FY18, ATS staff provided **165** evaluations and **174** technical assist sessions to customers.

Fast track is the open-ended loan program for DHS/DRS Vocational Rehabilitation customers. During an evaluation with a customer, the Assistive Technology Specialist will trial adaptive technology, software and other devices with the customer. If the technology is appropriate, the customer may keep it the day of the evaluation, eliminating delays that can occur while waiting for equipment to be ordered and delivered. In FY18 the Fast Track Program provided **1,356** devices to **429** customers saving the state **\$335,847**.

---



Brian is a perfect example of how evaluations and Fast Track work hand in hand. He is pictured working with his new Livescribe 3 smart pen which he received through the Fast Track Program as soon as his evaluation was completed. Brian is a veteran of the United States Army who was injured during his service. He is currently enrolled in college courses with the goal of becoming a social worker and he is finding ways to use assistive technology to help him overcome some of his physical barriers as well as a learning disability.

Barbara had to quit her job as a flight attendant after experiencing spasmodic dysphonia, spasms of her vocal cord muscles that can severely limit her ability to speak. She is currently enrolled as a college student seeking training to become a medical transcriptionist. She is pictured with her new computer system provided through the Fast Track Program and is working with an IATP Assistive Technology Specialist to explore possibilities for voice amplification.



# EDUCATION

In FY18, IATP's Education Liaison attended **793** IEPs or 504 plans either in person or by phone. She was in **192** school districts and in **74** counties. She worked with students from early intervention age through college age.

Liam is 10 and is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Glenwood Intermediate School. He and his family have received IATP's services since he was three. He has cerebral palsy, a hearing impairment, and is, for the most part non-verbal. He has used assistive technology since pre-school. He uses a Dynavox and it is used across all settings since it is his principle means of communication. While the AT is important for academics it is crucial for communication. Through the efforts of both in school and private speech therapists who understand assistive technology and are trained in how to best use this, Liam continues to make great strides. Three quick stories come to mind: 1. Liam was able to tell his mother "I love you" last year on Valentine's day using his device. 2. Liam was able to take part in the spring musical using his device (and having a wonderful music teacher who understood the importance of including him with that device). 3. Many of Liam's friends have learned his device so they can better communicate with him.

Because of Liam's device and a school that understands how this device should be used not only is Liam making both academic strides and communication strides but this device is helping him be included in school and in his community. Liam loves roosters and last year when he had to do a presentation with a group of other students in science, they managed to work a rooster into the presentation so Liam could use his device to spotlight this. He has been invited to parties. His friends want him to be on their team and their group in the general education class.



His friends show new students who don't know him how to use the device to communicate with him. He is an integral part of his fifth grade class thanks to assistive technology and parents who knew from an early age how important this would be for him and a school district willing to be open-minded about what this student needed to be successful.

# K-12 ASSESSMENT

Through a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), IATP provides Assistive Technology (AT) and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Evaluations for K-12 students throughout Illinois. In FY18, there were **47** AT Evaluations and **109** AAC Evaluations conducted in **114** schools, in **39** counties bringing the total to **156** for the year.

---

## AT ASSESSMENT



“Yani” is a ten year old student in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade who presents with Arthrogryposis. Her gross and fine motor skills are impacted significantly due to severe contractures in upper and lower limbs. Even with the challenges she faces, Yani functions independently in nearly all aspects of her life. Despite her hard work and diligence, the school workload has become increasingly difficult for Yani. Writing is an especially challenging task for her. She is an articulate student with strong verbal skills. This strength provides an alternative method for writing. We introduced her to speech recognition and word prediction which allows her to complete her work much more efficiently. Yani was thrilled when she trialed speech recognition. She said, “I have so many ideas I want to write!” Yani was excited to begin using her new tools. The team members who support Yani also expressed optimism over the recommendations. All expressed a similar sentiment that Yani can accomplish a great deal as long she is given access to programs which can be useful now and in the future.

# AAC ASSESSMENT



My friend Allen, so wants to communicate that one night he picked up a picture of a McDonald's card and placed it in his dump truck, which looks just like his family's truck. His mother was so thrilled that she dropped everything and drove her son to McDonalds for a late night snack of french fries. Allen is a very smart and clever boy who has such a strong desire to communicate with others.

He loves Paw Patrol, music, tractors, and his family. Allen is five years old and he carries the diagnosis of Autism which significantly impairs his ability to verbally communicate. An additional diagnosis is Ataxia, which impacts Allen's motor planning skills for using his hands. Allen was seen for an AAC evaluation at the end of the school year and he is currently trialing the NOVA Chat 10 device during

the summer. His mom was so anxious to get things started that she requested the device through IATP's device loan program and will receive training through the Saltillo/NOVA Chat consultant for southern Illinois. In the new school year, Allen will continue to trial the device with his school team.

During the AAC evaluation, Allen communicated in a variety of ways. He asked for a "fruit snack" and specified his color, said "please" and "thank you," and even stated his name, age, school name, and his favorite things. Allen could even create a medical needs statement, by saying "something hurts, it's my toe." He quickly caught onto how to use the device, by navigating across page sets of vocabulary and locating his "target" words/symbols. The larger size device and key guard helped accommodate his ataxic hand movement, as he could easily zero in on his desired symbols and activate them. He never took his eyes off of the device and wanted to explore the "voice output" of the speech buttons. The NOVA Chat 10 will open up a whole new world of communication for Allen and will allow him to "talk" to his family and most importantly develop language. Allen can even say "I love you" to mom and dad with the device symbols. Thinking about Allen and his family warms my heart as an AAC evaluator. He is definitely one of those kids I'll never forget.

# INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

IATP provides trainings on Information Communication Technology (ICT) Accessibility. ICT is the concept that everyone should have access and ability to use all devices, documents, web pages and web applications. When the ADA was enacted the primary issues at hand were physical problems like curb cuts, ramps and widening doorways. Since then the internet and digital documents like PDF, Word, and PowerPoint have become commonplace in our life. IATP, through the ICT trainings are helping public and private agencies put curb cuts, ramps and widened doorways in the digital world. IATP provides accessibility audits on websites and web-based applications and digital documents like PDF, Word, and PowerPoint. IATP follows the Web Consortium Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 with Success Criteria AA, and the Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act, Web Accessibility Standards when conducting trainings. In FY18, IATP trained **573** individuals in the development of accessibility of Information Communication Technology.



ICT Accessibility is a tough road with a lot of twists and turns. Our recent ICT Accessibility adventures brought us to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). ICCB contacted us about implementing new branding and communication strategies, and wanted to make sure that they meet state and federal accessibility requirements for their digital documents and websites. ICCB Springfield staff attended an IATP training on "How to make accessible documents." As a result of this training the ICCB staff recommended IATP to attend the Forum of Excellence sponsored by Illinois Centers for Specialized Professional Support. This conference provides professional development for career technical and adult education. IATP is dedicated to expanding the conversation about accessibility in all avenues of education, following each lead down the path of our accessibility adventure.

# WORK INCENTIVES PLANNING AND ASSISTANCE (WIPA)



IATP administers the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA) grant in Illinois. This program helps individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) make informed choices about how employment can affect benefits.

The WIPA Program received **762** referrals last fiscal year.

WIPA provided services to **581** of **762** SSA Disability Beneficiaries. They, as a team wrote **381** Benefits Analysis and provided **200** Packets of Information.

## Breakdown of the data is as follows:

- Referrals: 762
- Services Provided: 581
- Services were not provided to 129 referrals due to:
  - Declined Services: 26
  - Unable to Contact: 78
  - Ineligible for SSA Disability Benefits: 11
  - Non-Compliant: 12
  - Out of Territory: 1
  - Incarcerated: 1
- Benefits Analysis: 381
  - Approximately 70% SSDI; 20% SSI; & 10% Concurrent.
- Packets of Information: 200
- In transition at fiscal year-end: 52 (waiting on intake; waiting for Benefits Analysis to be written; or waiting for intake to be scheduled).



# PUBLIC POLICY



IATP was successful in seeing two pieces of legislation signed into law in FY18.

The first bill is Public Act 100-0993 that requires that all parents and guardians of students with IEPs at the first meeting and at each meeting following will be informed about Assistive Technology and if the student needs AT to receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education. If the student does not qualify according to the IEP team, parents will be given notification in writing of why the student does not qualify. They will also be given information about the state assistive technology program (which is Illinois Assistive Technology Program) including contact information for the program. This legislation was spearheaded by Senator Dave Koehler and Representative Laura Fine.

The second bill is Public Act 100-1018 that requires Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) and managed care programs who contract with HFS to work with IATP and our Reuse program so that clients may choose to use our equipment if it is less expensive (including shipping), it can be used for a minimum of three years, it is the type of durable medical equipment they require, it is available when they need it and it is clean, sterilized and safe and has passed the FDA standards for safety. This legislation was spearheaded by Senator Andy Manar and Representative Kelly Cassidy.

---

## NOTEWORTHY NUMBERS FROM FY18

- **4,024** devices were received by consumers through Device Loan, Fast Track and Reuse Programs.
- **115,520** individuals were made aware of IATP services through exhibits, media, presentations, and other means.
- **981** individuals participated in **100** trainings on topics that include IATP services, AT devices, accessibility and more.
- IATP partnered with the Mary Bryant Home to host a Low Vision Fair that featured **26** exhibitors and welcomed over **200** visitors.

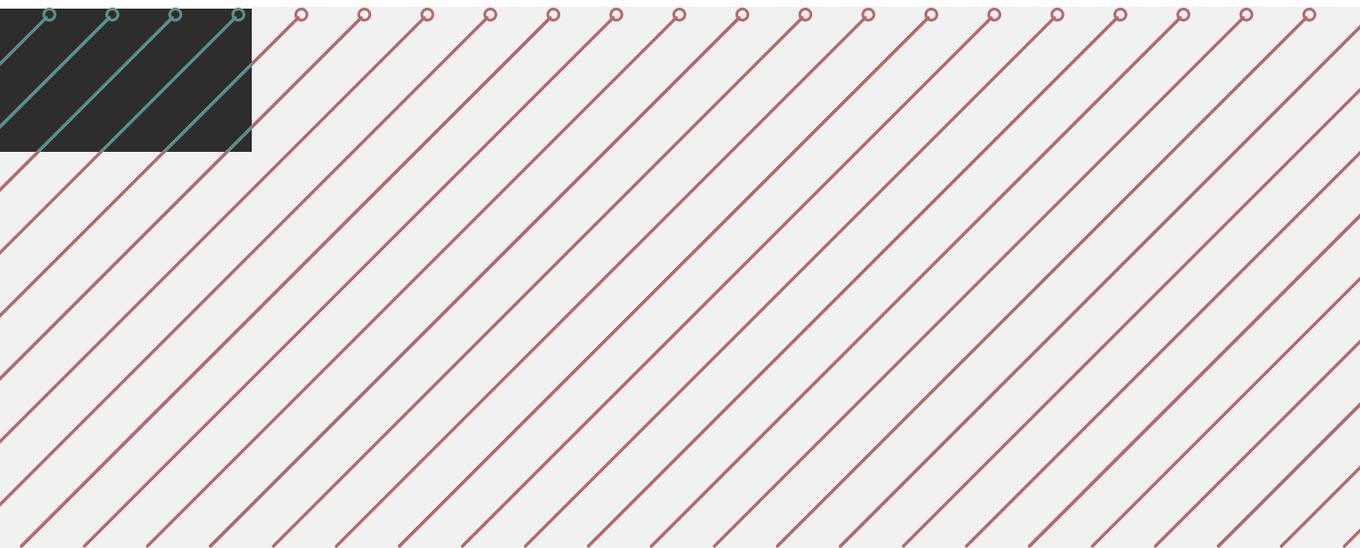
# EXPO HIGHLIGHTS



Last year, IATP held the Assistive Technology Expo at the Convention Center in conjunction with the Illinois Transition Conference. The event was attended by over **600** participants that included individuals with disabilities, family members, educators, therapists and service coordinators. The **120** exhibitors showcased AT devices and equipment, along with many service providers to explain disability related programs. Zot Artz provided great fun with adaptive art equipment that allowed individuals of all ages and abilities to create and take unique pieces of art home with them.



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**SEPTEMBER 13 & 14, 2019**  
**IATP STATEWIDE CONFERENCE**  
**“DISCOVER THE POSSIBILITIES”**  
**CROWNE PLAZA**  
**SPRINGFIELD, IL**



---

### Address

---

### Telephone

---

### Website

—  
1020 S. Spring St.  
Springfield, IL 62704

—  
217-522-7985  
800-852-5110 (IL only)

—  
[www.iltech.org](http://www.iltech.org)



This publication was made possible by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (HHS/ACL). IATP also receives grants from U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA), Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DHS/DRS), and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the above entities. The information in this report reflects data that was run on the state fiscal year.