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envisioningaccess.org

Fall 2024 Newsletter



Matt and George testing the Cognimate glove



ENVISIONING ACCESS

Innovative Solutions
for People Living With
Physical Disabilities

From the Executive Director

Envisioning Access is dedicated to finding innovative solutions through technology to assist those with physical disabilities to find meaningful employment, attain higher education and alleviate isolation.



It is with great excitement that we explore opportunities to work with tech start-ups and universities, and encourage and spur the development of those new technologies, now coming on the market at a rapid pace, to empower individuals with physical disabilities to live more independent and engaged lives.

Where Technology Meets Disability

The purpose of our work is to determine the intersection of technology and disability, and then put the technology into the homes of those living with disabilities to ascertain the efficiency of the technology. We want to:

- assist in and support the development of new technologies.
- provide support and find clients to test and provide feedback on the new technology to ascertain how well robotics or mixed reality provides independence for the person living with the disability.
- determine how comfortable the primary caregiver felt when they were not in the home and their loved one was dependent on the new technology.
- determine if the new technology could take care of specific daily living needs.

Our goal is not just to provide the technology but to train each individual on the technology. Additionally, we will provide support until both the person living with the disability and the caregiver are comfortable with the device/piece of technology, and understand how to use all aspects of the new technology on their computer, phone or wherever it is useful.

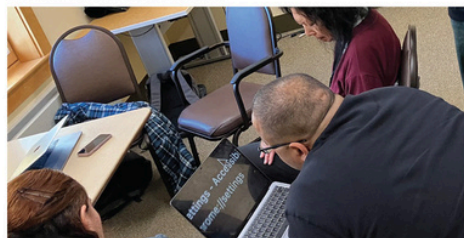
We have a variety of projects and partners we are working with. I hope that you enjoy reading a brief summary of two projects.

Please visit our website for more information on all the interesting and exciting work that we are doing: envisioningaccess.org

Our Projects and Partners

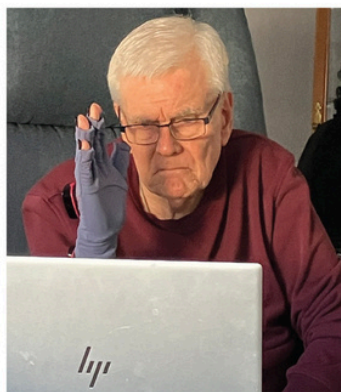
Northeastern University—Partner

ACCESS AI—Envisioning Access is collaborating with Northeastern University's Khoury College of Computer Science on ACCESS AI, a Chrome add-on designed for visually impaired individuals to navigate online job applications more effectively. This tool will address the gaps in existing solutions by assisting users in completing mandatory fields accurately. Testing will take place at a vocational high school in Roxbury, MA, ensuring its practical application. This strategic partnership will enable us to gather invaluable feedback from visually impaired students and educators, ensuring the add-on's effectiveness and usability in diverse contexts.



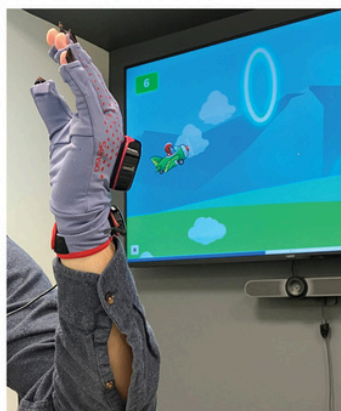
Cognimate—Partner

We are partnering with Cognimate to test their innovative smart glove, designed to aid recovery of fine motor skills impacted by various conditions such as stroke, multiple sclerosis, and cerebral palsy. The glove leverages neuroplasticity, gamification, and biofeedback, allowing users to engage in therapeutic games controlled by wrist and palm movements. This easy-to-use device can be operated remotely, offering convenient rehabilitation at home. The goal of this Smart glove is to boost motor skills recovery and improve fine motor skills, cognitive function, and emotional state.



COMING SOON—Mixed Reality Storytelling Project

We are currently working on an exciting project with an arts group that will look at how augmented and virtual reality can be used to relay compelling stories that have not been seen or heard.



Join Us—Don't Be Left Out

Do you have a story or a project involving robotics, AI, or mixed reality?

We want to hear from you!

Partnership Opportunities

We continue, always, to look for qualified partners: both technology companies and universities that would be interested in exploring opportunities with us. Our goal is to work with companies/universities who are developing technologies that are assisting those living with physical disabilities in their daily living needs.

Of course, we believe that no technology should hit the market until the community that will use the technology tests the technology. Thus, if you are an individual living with a physical disability and would be interested in testing any of the new technologies in development, we welcome your participation.

For more information, please contact Diane Nahabedian, Executive Director, at dianen@envisioningaccess.org.



Testing the ReviMo Niko device

The 2025 Monkey Calendar



We are so excited—another 12 months of adorable monkey photos from the Monkey Living Center is on its way! With a full 11 x 8 1/2 page for each month, you will have plenty of space to write birthdays, appointments, and reminders!

The calendar will be available for purchase in October on our website and on social media.

Visit us at envisioningaccess.org for more info. We love our calendar and we hope you will, too!

Flood Recovery Update



As you may know, on Sunday, May 5, 2024, the Envisioning Access team came into the office to discover a devastating sight—a pipe to the boiler had ruptured, covering the entire downstairs with 3-5 inches of water.

The flood caused extensive damage to our infrastructure, equipment, and supplies, not to mention displacing our administrative team. Thanks to your generosity and the support of others like you, we raised over \$50,000 to help with costs that insurance would not cover.



It has been quite the summer, with the administrative team working from home while supporting our Innovative Technology Initiative, our monkey care team, and our post-service monkeys. After working tirelessly with insurance companies, contractors, and city government, cabinets and carpets were ripped out, parts of walls were removed, and everything we were able to salvage was moved into storage in July.

August was spent getting permits issued and choosing replacements for things that were destroyed. As of this writing, construction has finally begun, and we are hopeful that the administrative team will be able to rejoin their colleagues in the building by the end of September.



It has been a difficult time, but the Envisioning Access team has been working together to be flexible, patient, and resilient in the face of adversity.

Be sure to follow us on social media to see updates on the reconstruction! If you are interested in helping rebuild, make a gift at envisioningaccess.org/flood.