

Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF) provides education, financing opportunities, and advocates for People With Disabilities (PWD) and older Pennsylvanians, helping them to acquire the assistive technology (AT) devices and services that improve the quality of their lives. PWD's face challenges like high debt-to-income ratios, low or no credit scores, and no collateral. This means that traditional lenders consider them a poor credit risk and will not extend necessary loans. PATF is the only CDFI in Pennsylvania that provides financial products and services which allow PWD to buy the AT that they need. PATF offers no-interest loans from \$100 to \$2,000, or low-interest loans ranging from \$2,000 to \$60,000 with or without a guarantee.

PATF works with state agencies and nonprofits to identify potential funding resources for AT purchases, thereby reducing the amount that the beneficiary must borrow. In 2013, PATF published the first-ever, comprehensive financial education book for PWD entitled, "Cents & Sensibility." In addition to being a CDFI, PATF is also an Alternative Financing Program (AFP).

Due to its strong belief in the CDFI program and its ability to help underserved populations, PATF is working with the Disability CDFI Coalition to expand AFP participation in the CDFI program. Since 1998, PATF has been awarded a total of \$1.3 million in Financial Assistance (FA) awards from the CDFI Fund, has made over \$37 million in loans, and has helped more than 14,000 Pennsylvanians.

Organization Highlights

- Timeframe/years for the organization highlights: July 2017 – June 2018
- Individuals provided with financial counseling and literacy training: 2,613
- Housing units developed and percentage developed for low-mod households: PATF extended \$206,000 in low-interest loans and \$20,000 in no-interest loans for home modifications, making homes accessible, and keeping people with disabilities out of nursing homes and other institutions.
- Total dollar amount loaned: No-interest loans: \$144,622; low-interest (3.75%) loan guarantees: \$228,432

Contact

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Certified Mental Health & Addictions Therapist



Working in the mental health field for close to 30 years, LaTrice has always cared about helping others, and she was excited when she opened her own practice as a Certified Mental Health and Addictions Therapist. In 2015, LaTrice came to PATF to discuss purchasing an adapted vehicle. She uses a wheelchair and had been using a van with a ramp, a swivel driver's seat, and hand controls. She managed to make it to work every day for years, but her van was quickly beginning to feel run-down and LaTrice was feeling the pressure to get a newer, safer mode of transportation.

LaTrice had always taken pride in her work and in being able to manage her own finances. Speaking from experience, she knew how hard it can be when you do not have someone else to lean on for financial support. A disability presents many unforeseen expenses and maintaining good credit can be tricky even in the best of times. Luckily for LaTrice, she chose to partner with PATF. PATF's low-interest rate

made it possible for LaTrice to afford the monthly payments and build good credit. When LaTrice suffered a temporary setback, PATF provided rescue payments which it tacked onto the end of her loan so that her credit would not be impacted. LaTrice worked hard and, as a result, she was approved for a loan for her new van.

LaTrice returned to PATF in 2018 when she needed emergency repairs made to her van ramp and was approved once again. In describing her recent experience with PATF, LaTrice said: "My bank would not extend a loan for the repair. I was out of options and turned to PATF. A loan from PATF made it possible for me get back on the road so that I could continue to work."

Project Highlights

- Median Income Compared to Area Median Income (AMI): 89.56%
- Unemployment Rate: 4.2%
- Poverty Rate: 3.13%
- Jobs created or retained: 1