Digital Accessibility Lab

The number of students with disabilities entering college is increasing. Many Iowa State students experience daily barriers to their educational goals. The Digital Accessibility Lab is a physical space on campus for students with disabilities to work together using assistive technology, and a place for them to try out new technologies that could increase their course engagement. Today Digital Accessibility Coordinator, Cyndi Wiley, will discuss some of the services that the Digital Accessibility Lab offers Iowa State Students. If you would like to learn more information about the lab, please visit their website here.

1. What does the digital accessibility lab do?
The lab addresses the university's immediate need for digitally accessible hardware and software on campus. We partner with other departments to assess digital products for meeting compliance with digital accessibility standards.

2. Why is it important to make digital websites and material accessible?
Inclusive design and Universal Design for Learning are crucial steps in ensuring all students are offered an equitable education and access to learn. "To be truly inclusive, we have to embrace all and that’s part of what this lab is about. Doing the right thing is our moral imperative and doing things right gives us a competitive advantage. Fortunately, being inclusive does both," Kristen Constant, VP and Chief Information Officer ITS.

3. Can you give examples of large projects that you have done for the University?
The Digital Accessibility Lab is included on the 2020 Presidential Interdisciplinary Research Initiative (PIRI) grant for "Game2Work" with Dr. Larysa Nadolny (https://www.research.iastate.edu/news/ovpr-announces-2020-piri-grant-recipients/)

4. Do you work with individuals? Can you give some examples?
Examples include working through our campus partners, like the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, Student Accessibility Services, and the library. We work best in support of students and faculty in that capacity.

5. What equipment can be found in the lab?
Equipment: https://www.digitalaccess.iastate.edu/digital-accessibility-lab

6. Hours it can be accessed? Virtually until Fall 2021 due to COVID-19
https://www.digitalaccess.iastate.edu/digital-accessibility-lab