Humanware™

Spring 2008

HumanWare Announces Braille Literacy Scholarship Winner

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About Us

HumanWare is about empowering people. About innovative solutions. About empowering our customers to compete effectively in today's world.

HumanWare products are designed to last, to grow (and in many cases, to go) with the user. Giving them the independence to compete effectively with peers, to feel connected – to be a vital part of the global information age in which we live.

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HumanWare US sponsored a braille literacy contest in which the winning families with a child who is blind would be provided a complete Mountbatten Learning System or a Jot a Dot note taking device.

Every parent wants the best for their child, and braille literacy is fundamental to a blind child's success. Starting blind children on the road to literacy as early as they are able and choosing the right tools to aid them are the keys to their success.

Entries were submitted by parents on behalf of their children between the ages of 3 and 8 years old in the United States, who are learning braille or are assessed as future braille learners. Parents expressed why braille literacy is key to their child's success and what role the Mountbatten Learning System will play in their future.

In addition, five US students will each receive a Jot a Dot Pocket Brailler. Students described in braille why note taking is an important skill in their lives and submitted entries using poetry, verse or humor. Vital to self organization and as a general aid to memory, blind students need good note taking skills.

Many of the children whose families submitted entries would

benefit greatly from the features that the MountBatten offers. Our winner, Jennifer O'Neill, the mother of Camille, expressed this so well:

"I have learned that literacy is literally at Camille's fingertips. As she learns to read and write

> "The benefits of the Mountbatten will grow with her as she becomes an elementary-age student."

braille, doors will open for her. She will be able to experience the thrill of holding a book and slipping into a different world as stories of wonder unfold. She will have access to newspapers, magazines, and textbooks. She will be able to learn how to think critically, use technology in various forms, and become a well-rounded, independent person. She will be able to seek knowledge about whatever topic interests her, be it faith, math, science, or literature. With braille, she will be able to have a life driven by purpose that only she will limit.

Camille O'Neill, age 3, explores using the Mountbatten Learning System. Her mother, Jennifer, submitted the winning entry in our braille literacy contest.

What a Teacher is Saying About the BrailleNote Nemeth Tutorial

By Anne Spitz
Teacher of the Visually Impaired

The Nemeth code is the leading code for representing mathematical symbols in braille. Learning the Nemeth code is crucial for students and adults who are blind and who want to perform mathematics, opening education and employment opportunities.

Dr. Gaylen Kapperman and Jodi Sticken, the developers of the Nemeth Code Tutorial stated, "We are extremely pleased with the reception that the tutorial has received by the teachers and students who are using it. The feedback we are getting is very gratifying. We think that the students who have an opportunity to use the tutorial will be able to increase their achievement in math because they can actually read braille math. Also, teachers who feel a little insecure about their knowledge of the braille math code can use the tutorial as a 'just in time' vehicle to refresh their own knowledge."

Many students forget, have never learned or choose not to use many of the Nemeth Code rules. Having clear explanations, as well as reading properly formatted Nemeth, helps students immensely. Students grasp the explanations and understand the reasons for using proper formatting.

The proofreading exercises really work well on the BrailleNote in terms of giving feedback. It is great to see students paying more attention to the tutorial's immediate feedback when they make a mistake. Students really enjoy these exercises, wanting to "beat the tutorial."

BrailleNote Software Upgrade Amnesty Program

KeySoft, the software productivity suite for the BrailleNote family of products, has evolved with its many upgrades from its successful product launch in 2000. It is often difficult to secure funding to keep software that was purchased several years in the past updated. Previous upgrades have included new features such as: support for RFB&D material, free foreign multi-language support, and enabling optional programs such as the popular Concise Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus for KeySoft and the Nemeth Braille Tutorial.

The price to upgrade older KeySoft versions can be as expensive as $975. HumanWare is offering a special KeySoft Upgrade program at a reduced price and great savings. Models running KeySoft 5 or KeySoft 6 can upgrade to the current KeySoft version 7.5 for only $495. There is a $10 charge to ship a compact flash card for those running KeySoft 5, which includes a Windows CE 4.2 upgrade as well. In addition, a Software Maintenance Agreement (SMA) can be purchased at the same time for $145 to ensure receiving two future KeySoft upgrades.

> HumanWare is offering a special KeySoft Upgrade program at a reduced price and great savings.

The costs to upgrade from KeySoft 7.2 to 7.5 is $195, and KeySoft 7.1 to 7.5 is $390. SMAs can also be purchased for only $145, instead of the regular $195 price.

KeySoft 7.5 is the last software release offered for BrailleNote Classic models, therefore SMAs are not available for purchase. Classic units running KeySoft Version 3 or 4 are not capable of running KeySoft 7.5 and a trade-in to the mPower BrailleNote family is available.

This special offer is effective March 1 through June 30, 2008.

KeySoft 7.5 includes the following new features:

- Improved SD card and USB Drive support (mPower only)
- SSL Email support
- RFB&D AudioPlus DAISY Books (mPower and PK)
- Bookshare Support for Institutional Accounts
- Built-in Playlist Support for Media Player
- Multilingual Foreign Language Support
- Unified English Braille (UEB)
- Duxbury Braille Translator Upgrade
- New Visual Display Application (KeyView)
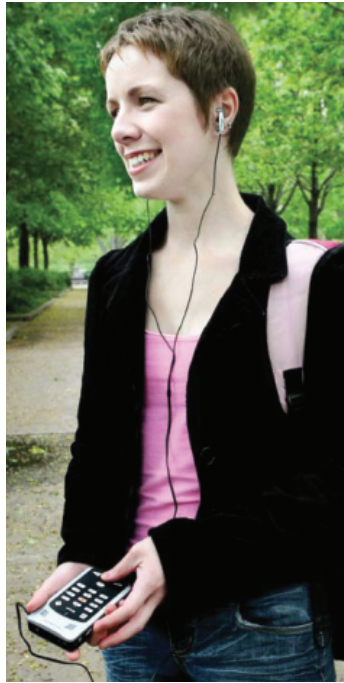- KeySync 3 offering improved Microsoft Outlook synchronization

BrailleNote and Victor Readers Support RFB&D

Since 2001, HumanWare Victor Reader CD-based talking book players have benefited Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic® (RFB&D®) members with an enhanced reading experience with the special navigable AudioPlus books. From the Victor Reader, ClassicX+, Wave and Victor Soft to the User Authorization Key (UAK) support of the BrailleNote, Maestro, Stream and ClassMate Reader, RFB&D now offers its members access to a wide variety of tools from HumanWare to access their AudioPlus books.

When played on the HumanWare products, AudioPlus recorded books can be navigated much like a print book, allowing the reader to move from chapter to chapter, section to section or jump directly to any page.

Serving more than 146,000 students from kindergarten through graduate school, RFB&D's AudioPlus books and HumanWare products have become an essential learning tool for students and professionals.

"With Stream's advanced navigation functions, I can easily follow the books my teacher refers to during my courses. I can bookmark important parts to study for exams. With the microphone, I can also record relevant quotes from my teacher."

myReader Helps Students Improve Typing Speed

Bill Bielawski, manager of the Office Skills Training Program at The Chicago Lighthouse for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired, has discovered a unique way to use the myReader. "One of the courses we teach is keyboarding. Can you imagine taking a typing test using a traditional CCTV video magnifier? You type the few words displayed on the monitor, then move the printed material, then type the next few words, then move the material, and so on. The myReader completely eliminates this problem. We capture the page and then set the scroll rate in column mode to match our student's typing speed.

The typing speed of all students has improved. Similarly, when we know a client is going for a job interview that will involve a typing test, we send them with the portable myReader."

This will change the way you look at low

BrailleNote GPS Version 4.2 Special Offer

Sendero's BrailleNote GPS version 4.2 does all the things you expect from a GPS navigation system. With more than 20 software enhancements, it has excellent pedestrian and vehicular capabilities. Students can create a turn-by-turn route on school campuses or travel routes to and from school with confidence and independence.

For classroom instruction, or those who wish a stepping stone to full GPS, try the new Way to Go talking map software, which offers maps and points of interest along with the virtual exploration capabilities of the full GPS software.

Take part in the KeySoft Amnesty Program and upgrade from GPS 3.3 or lower to the current version 4.2 for only $399, a $600 savings. Shipping is extra if a card is involved. This special must be combined with a KeySoft upgrade. Order a new wireless Bluetooth GPS receiver for $149. This offer is good through June 30, 2008.

Trade Up to a New BrailleNote or VoiceNote mPower!

Trade in your old BrailleNSpeak or BrailleLite and use it towards the purchase of a new BrailleNote or VoiceNote mPower. Get all the advantages of WiFI connectivity, expanded memory, seamless file transfers, RFB&D access, Nemeth tutorial and more. Now's the time to trade up to the newest model in braille connectivity. Call HumanWare at 800-722-3393 for more details.

VoiceOver Support for BrailleConnect and Brailliant Displays

Mac OS X v10.5 Leopard includes a powerful screen reading technology for the blind called VoiceOver that supports the HumanWare Brailliant and BrailleConnect refreshable braille displays. When the display is connected to your computer, VoiceOver automatically detects it and sends information about what is displayed on the screen.

See What I'm Saying

Sighted parents and teachers can take advantage of the built-in Collaborator to magnify or see what is shown on the braille display.
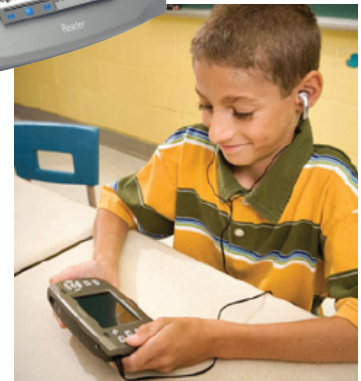
Accessible Out of the Box

With VoiceOver, accessibility begins the moment you power on your computer. No need to purchase or install a dedicated screen reader or for students to work at an assigned computer. Students can simply walk up to any Mac and connect their BrailleConnect for instant access.

ClassMate Reader is the New Mobile Solution to Improve Reading Skills

The ClassMate Reader is a new portable text reader designed to boost reading and learning independence. Students can listen to the audio version of their textbooks and study materials, while following the highlighted text on screen. It can play various electronic book formats including the new NIMAS (National Instructional Material Accessible Standard) format, DAISY, Bookshare.org, and txt files, allowing students to gain instant access to their curricular materials anywhere and anytime.

Using full-color touch screen, students can highlight the text to focus on specific passages, or insert bookmarks to instantly return to important sections or pages. It keeps students focused on reading by reducing distractions and helps reduce load on the computer labs.

Braille Literacy Scholarship Winner *continued from front*

"To teach these skills to preschool and kindergarten children, a sense of independence and fun is essential as motivation; this motivation in turn is essential to instilling the confidence and skills that children need in order to have a lifelong passion for literacy and education. I began to wonder how it could be fun and motivating for Camille to learn braille at a tender age with tiny hands using an outdated and cumbersome manual braille writer. It began to seem that while her peers get to have many exciting tools such as interactive computer programs, dazzling illustrations, and multiple choices in writing tools, Camille would be settling for a single tool that allows for little independent learning and little access to technology, a very important component of literacy in our world today.

"There are so many attributes of the Mountbatten that make it the best technology available for Camille, one being the speech feedback. Camille has very good listening skills and loves to use them, so the Mountbatten would allow her to engage in independent and incidental learning opportunities that she would enjoy immensely. Early practice with speech output will also sharpen those auditory skills that will be necessary to compensate for vision loss, access books and media on tape, and use technology with audible speech feedback later in life. Quite obviously, the Mountbatten will be so much easier for her little fingers to use, making it more fun and less work. The benefits of the Mountbatten will grow with her as she becomes an elementary-age student. Through the Mimic and PC compatibility, her general education classroom teacher will be able to encourage her braille skills even though he or she won't be a braille reader; this is undeniably essential since her Teacher of the Visually Impaired is itinerant. These same features will also allow her to write letters and even emails that can be sent to our PC and on to her friends, family members, and pen pals. Instead of being isolated from her sighted peers because of braille, she will be able to use it to connect to others because of the Mountbatten."

Jot a Dot Notetakers will be awarded to:
• Nicole Lyssy, Austin, TX
• Kendall Lyssy, Austin, TX
• Milagro Sato, Hayward, CA
• Caiden Hooks, Jenison, MI
• Page Strickland, Raleigh, NC

Congratulations to everyone and a sincere thank you to everyone who participated in the contest.

New DeafBlind Communicator (DBC) on the Horizon

HumanWare has been working in partnership with the State of Washington ODHH to develop a new DeafBlind Communicator. Special DB software has been written for BrailleNote mPower and a cell phone with QWERTY keyboard. The cell phone is used, via Bluetooth, for face-to-face communication with sighted people. It can also be activated to do SMS texting. All controls are on the BrailleNote, which also contains the software for TTY usage. Simplicity is the key, so all of the advanced features of the BrailleNote are first hidden from the user, but can be activated when desired. Learn more about the DBC by visiting www.humanware.com/en-usa/products/deafblind.