Tech advances bring disabled students up to speed

By TOMI LAMAP

tapbl@sentinel.com

APTS - Craig Johnson used to get anxious at the mere mention of the word "test." He liked his classes at Cabrillo Community College, but was often nervous during exams. He would hyperventilate, feeling like he was going to faint. During finals, he often sat up in bed at night, unable to rest.

But this year, things are different. Johnson, who is a student at Cabrillo College, has been using a new technology called AccessText. It's a program that helps disabled students access their course materials in a way that's easier for them.

"I used to hate tests, but now I don't," Johnson said. "AccessText has really helped me. I can now read my assignments and tests in a way that's easier for me."

AccessText is a program that allows students to read their course materials in a way that's easier for them. It uses a combination of speech recognition and text-to-speech technology to read the materials aloud.

"I used to have to read my assignments and tests out loud," Johnson said. "Now I can just listen to them. It's so much better."

AccessText is available to disabled students at Cabrillo College, and Johnson is one of the first to use it.

"I was really skeptical at first," Johnson said. "But once I tried it, I knew it was the right choice."

AccessText is just one of many technologies that are helping disabled students at Cabrillo College.

"We have a lot of technology here," said Cabrillo College's Dean of Accessibility Services, Dr. Elizabeth Gonzalez. "We want to make sure that all students have access to the materials they need to succeed."

"AccessText is just one example of the technology we use," Gonzalez said. "We also have a lot of other programs and services that help disabled students."

Johnson is grateful for the support he's received from Cabrillo College and the AccessText program.

"I don't know what I would do without them," Johnson said. "They have really helped me get back on track."

"I'm really looking forward to the future," Johnson said. "I know I can do anything if I set my mind to it."

"We are really proud of Craig," Gonzalez said. "He has really shown what he can do."