

2007 ANNUAL REPORT



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE
DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

MARTIN O'MALLEY
Governor

ANTHONY G. BROWN
Lt. Governor

DENISE GAGNON PERDUE
Interim Director



Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor



**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE
DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

Denise Gagnon Perdue
Interim Director

Dear Governor O'Malley, President Miller, and Speaker Busch:

On behalf of the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, I am pleased to present our fifth annual report, which highlights our activities and progress for the period of January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007. This year, ODHH continued to grow in staff and responsibility, adding two part-time contractual positions to the office staff. As our staff continues to grow, we are able to better address the needs of all of Maryland's citizens and efficiently implement the three programs of ODHH.

The past year has been marked by numerous accomplishments. The ODHH staff worked diligently to advance the Office's mission and vision and to advocate for the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing community. Of particular note, the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, with approval from the Governor, introduced its first departmental bill during the 2007 Legislative Session. Though the bill did not make it out of committee, the introduction of the bill marked an important shift in the involvement ODHH has in policy level changes in the state.

The Office also launched a monthly e-newsletter, the ODHH Monthly Bulletin, to better inform the communities we serve of ODHH programs and projects. The newsletter has also become a forum to educate the community about accessing services provided by the State. The response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive and ODHH looks forward to continuing the newsletter as long as staff and resources permit.

This year, ODHH achieved a new level of advocacy and community involvement. The progress we made would not have been possible without the support of Governor O'Malley and his capable and dedicated staff. The Office takes our mission and vision very seriously and will continue to work to improve the quality of life for Maryland's deaf and hard of hearing citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Denise G. Perdue". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being more prominent.

Denise Gagnon Perdue
Interim Director

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING



According to statistics prepared by Telecommunications Access of Maryland (TAM) from information obtained through the U.S. Bureau of the Census, almost 490,000 Marylanders have at least some hearing loss. The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) serves as an information clearinghouse on issues affecting those individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and advocates for communication access to programs and services. Established in October 2001 to promote the general welfare of deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the State, ODHH serves as a coordinating agency that reports directly to the Governor's Office and works with various state and private agencies to ensure appropriate delivery of services to all of Maryland's diverse citizens.

ODHH advocates for the adoption of public policies, regulations and programs that will benefit deaf and hard of hearing individuals while working to improve access to communication and to existing services and programs. The Office works hard to increase public awareness of the needs and issues affecting deaf and hard of hearing individuals and partners with State and local agencies to ensure appropriate delivery of State, local and other public services to deaf and hard of hearing individuals. ODHH advises other units of State government and the General Assembly on the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals and, to the greatest extent possible in order to avoid any duplication of effort, coordinates with other units of the State and the federal governments about the services provided to deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Through the management of three programs, Awareness Training and Technical Assistance, Constituent Services, and Community Outreach and Education, ODHH strives to fulfill its mission and promote its vision.

The Office holds two public town hall meetings each year to receive public comments on the quality of state services and programs affecting deaf and hard of hearing individuals, ODHH-related functions and operations, and any other issues that affect deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

ODHH ended the year without a Director but with two additional part-time, contractual staff members. In 2008, after the appointment of a new director, ODHH will have the most staff it has ever had, with two full-time and two part-time employees working to better the lives for deaf and hard of hearing Marylanders in the State.

MISSION:

ODHH exists to provide expertise-related to deaf and hard of hearing issues to Maryland citizens and to facilitate their ability to access resources and services.

VISION:

ODHH believes that all MD citizens who are deaf or hard of hearing should have equal and full access to resources, services and opportunities for participation in all aspects of community life through the provision of appropriate accommodations.

2007 Staff of ODHH

Yvonne M. Dunkle, *Director* (January 1, 2007 – October 26, 2007)

Denise Gagnon Perdue, *Assistant Director; Interim Director* (October 26, 2007 – December 31, 2007)

Julie Anne Schafer, *Communications and Special Projects Coordinator*

Laura Quinn, *Administrative Assistant*

AWARENESS TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing provides awareness training, technical assistance, and consulting services to all levels of Maryland government. Through awareness training, ODHH educates Maryland government about the diverse communication needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals by providing information about their specific needs. ODHH identifies actions needed to improve accessibility and to ensure effectiveness and compliance of existing services and programs for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Technical Assistance can include communication accessibility assessments and the review of policies, procedures, and practices in comparison with effective services for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

Awareness training and technical assistance can be either preemptive or responsive. Much of ODHH's awareness training is responsive, that is, an agency or department contacts us because an accessibility issue has been raised by a deaf or hard of hearing person or an advocate. For example, an issue may arise where a state agency needs to be educated about the needs of individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. That agency can contact ODHH to provide sensitivity and awareness training to its staff.

Conversely, most of the technical assistance ODHH provides is preemptive. If ODHH becomes aware of a situation that may lead to a communication access issue for a deaf or hard of hearing person, the Office will provide preemptive technical assistance before a deaf or hard of hearing person has a problem accessing the services. For example, the Office has reviewed websites for their accessibility and informed the appropriate entities if there are communication access barriers.

Under this program, ODHH received 102 contacts from government agencies and departments for education, technical assistance, training, and information sharing on issues and concerns of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

Highlights for 2007:

- ODHH reviewed MTA training orientation materials and made suggestions to incorporate information on individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing as part of sensitivity awareness training for MTA employees.
- The Office sent public comments supporting the Maryland State Board of Education's proposal to amend Regulation .04 under COMAR 13A.03.02 – Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland to include American Sign Language (ASL) as a foreign language credit.
- ODHH sent a letter of support to Public Safety and Corrections Services for updating the requirements of emergency telephone services to include access to speech disabled and deaf and hard of hearing Marylanders (Title 12 - 12.11.03).
- ODHH staff testified at the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Advisory Council on Workforce Shortage public hearing on both the shortage of sign language interpreters and on the shortage of mental health professionals trained to work with deaf and hard of hearing people.

ODHH serves and participates in the following Committees:

- Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and its Subcommittees
- MDOD's Emergency Preparedness and Response for Individuals with Disabilities or Unique Needs Advisory Council
- MDOT's State Highway Administration ADA Advisory Committee
- MSDE's Special Education Statewide Advisory Committee (SESAC)
- Maryland's Interagency Disability Board
- Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Advisory Council
- Maryland State Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students
- Baltimore County Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Special Needs
- The Alliance, Inc.
- MTA's Interagency Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities

- The Office developed workshop topics and prepared curricula related to deaf and hard of hearing rookie drivers for the Department of Disabilities' Transportation Director, who gave the materials to the Motor Vehicle Administration for them to develop Spring training seminars for Driver Education Instructors.
- ODHH staff testified at the Statewide Independent Living Centers' (SILC) public hearing on the State Plan for Independent Living to address the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals in independent living centers, as well as to address accessibility issues faced by deaf and hard of hearing people living in the centers.
- ODHH staff submitted testimony and attended the hearing for House Bill 1334: Income Tax Credit – Visual Fire Alarm Systems.

Training Sessions

- In collaboration with the Deaf Independent Living Association and the Maryland Association of the Deaf, ODHH presented an informal workshop for healthcare providers that focused on Title III of the ADA as it pertains to communicating with deaf and hard of hearing patients.
- The Maryland Department of Transportation hosted a Driver Education Town Hall Meeting at which ODHH provided sensitivity and awareness training to driving school owners about accessibility issues of the deaf and hard of hearing community.

Technical Assistance

ODHH provided Technical Assistance to the following entities:

The Governor's Office
 Maryland State Department of Education/Division of Rehabilitation Services
 Maryland Department of Disabilities
 Deaf Addiction Services at Maryland
 Maryland Department of Transportation/Motor Vehicle Administration
 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene/Mental Hygiene Administration
 Wicomico County Emergency Services/9-1-1
 Maryland State Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students
 Governor's Grants Office

Related Policy Work

Transformation Work Group – Mental Health

In 2005, Maryland was one of seven states to be awarded a Governor's Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant (MHT SIG). The MHT SIG is a Cooperative Agreement grant program of the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMSHA). The program is designed to promote the ambitious agenda laid out in the Final Report of President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health.

Since August 2006, the Maryland Governor's Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has worked with the Mental Health Transformation Project and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to ensure that the needs of deaf and hard of hearing people in Maryland are included in every step of the process. In 2007, in addition to providing ongoing logistic coordination for MHA's Transformation Grant meetings, ODHH staff provided support to MHA and the

Maryland Advisory Council for the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Mental Health subcommittee for a presentation to MHA's management team and Core Services Agency (CSA) coordinators. This presentation focused on the current public mental health system and related issues facing deaf and hard of hearing Marylanders. As a result of the presentation, the MHA Executive Director proposed the formation of a work group consisting of representatives from DHMH/MHA, CSA, ODHH and the Advisory Council's Mental Health subcommittee to come up with a proposal to remedy barriers in the current system for deaf and hard of hearing people. ODHH staff continues to gather data and compile responses from other states for a comparison of various models used to provide mental health services to deaf and hard of hearing people. Furthermore, the University of Maryland received funds from the Transformation Grant for a tele-health demonstration project to reach people in rural counties who need mental health services. After ODHH contacted the University of Maryland about the possibility of deaf and hard of hearing people benefiting from tele-psychiatry, the University of Maryland agreed to include deaf and hard of hearing citizens in their project.

House Bill 1282 – Driver Education Program Deaf and Hard of Hearing Access Fund

This year marked the introduction of ODHH's first departmental bill, House Bill 1282: Driver Education Program Deaf and Hard of Hearing Access Fund. Over the course of the session, ODHH staff met with 23 delegates on House Environmental Matters Committee to garner support for HB 1282 and gave an explanation on the history and intent of the bill. Staff developed and distributed fact sheets and drafted a sample of policy and procedures on the implementation of Driver Education Program Deaf and Hard of Hearing Access Fund to educate delegates about HB 1282. Unfortunately, despite ODHH and MVA staff efforts, HB 1282 did not make it out of the Environmental Matters Committee during the 2007 Legislative Session. ODHH will continue to work on making driver education classes accessible to all of Maryland's citizens.

Task Force to Study Visual Smoke and Evacuation Alarms for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

In 2006, the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing chaired and staffed the Task Force to Study Visual Smoke and Evacuation Alarms for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The Task Force's final report, including findings and recommendations, was submitted on September 30, 2006. Delegate Maggie McIntosh, chairperson of the House Environmental Matters Committee, invited the ODHH Director to give a brief presentation during the 2007 Legislative Session on the Task Force to Study Visual Smoke and Evacuation Alarms for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing final report. As a result of the presentation and his work on the Task Force, Delegate Sossi invited ODHH staff to meet with him to discuss the next steps to adopt the Task Force's recommendations. Delegate Sossi agreed to pursue one of the recommendations as a proposed bill. The legislation, House Bill 1334: Income Tax Credit – Visual Fire Alarm Systems, involved providing a tax credit for condominium associations and apartment owners who make their building alarm systems accessible to deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing people. The bill did not make it out of committee; however, ODHH continues to work to ensure that life safety issues of the deaf and hard of hearing community are addressed by the appropriate entities.



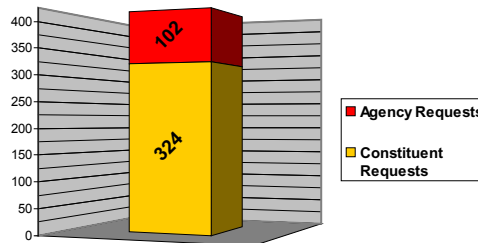
CONSTITUENT SERVICES

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing serves as an information clearinghouse and referral service for the deaf and hard of hearing community to governmental departments and agencies, as well as public and private entities that provide services in Maryland.

ODHH provides advocacy work and acts as a liaison between the deaf and hard of hearing community and the General Assembly, Governor, and governmental departments and agencies in Maryland. ODHH also establishes a network through which services provided by State and federal programs can be channeled. The Constituent Services Program is consistent with the mission and the goals of the Office. Of the three programs ODHH manages, the Constituent Services Program most directly achieves our goal of facilitating the community's access to information and services.

The Constituent Services Program is based on consumer driven information and referral. When an individual or agency contacts ODHH for information related to the deaf and hard of hearing community, ODHH calls that a "constituent contact." Individuals contact the Office for information on a variety of subjects, including information on interpreter referral agencies, locations for American Sign Language (ASL) classes, and resources about assistance for purchasing hearing aids. Constituents contact ODHH via our TTY and voice lines, e-mail, letters, and in person. ODHH also receives requests through the Governor's Office. The chart below reflects the number of constituent contacts received in 2007.

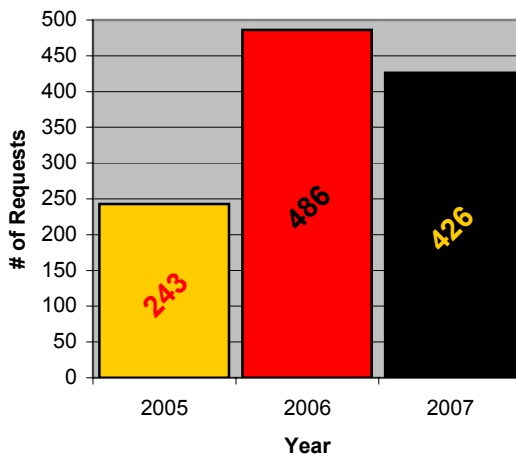
Constituent Contacts 2007



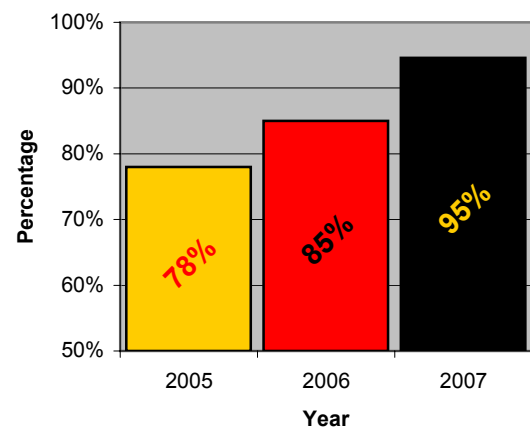
ODHH's goal is to respond to constituent contacts within 24 business hours of receiving them. However, depending on the nature of the information requested, it may take longer to respond.

While the number of constituent contacts ODHH receives has been inconsistent over the last three years, the percentage of requests responded to within 24 hours continues to rise. The tables below reflect the number of constituent contacts received in each of the last three years and the percentage responded to in fewer than 24 hours.

Total Requests for Information



Percentage of Requests Responded to in Less than 24 Hours



Website

In 2006, ODHH officially launched its website, which serves as a resource for the deaf and hard of hearing community and for individuals and organizations working with people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Since launching the website, ODHH staff and interns have worked to maintain and update the existing information and also to add new information and resources. For example, ODHH distributes its new “Monthly Bulletin” through its email distribution list and also publishes it online. The Office also began work on developing video logs (V-logs) to be put on the website in order to deliver more information to the community in American Sign Language. ODHH looks forward to launching the V-Logs in 2008.

Community Service Announcements

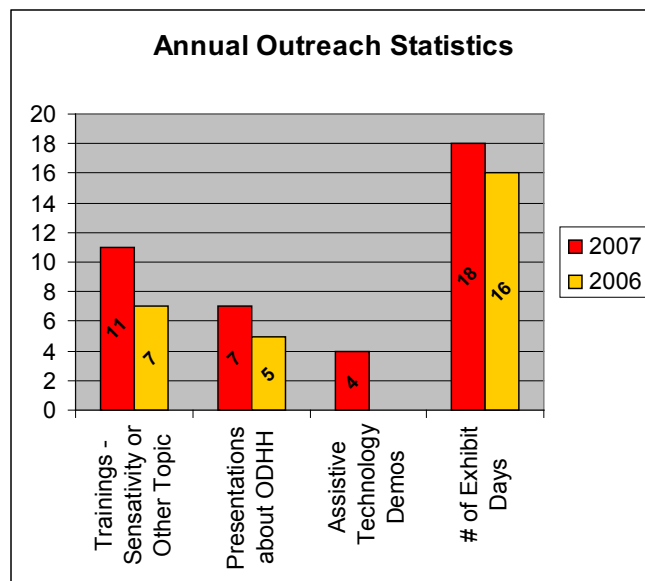
In July 2006, as a community service, the Office began sending out pertinent community announcements related to conferences, workshops, trainings, events, and job opportunities to an extensive email distribution list that ODHH continues to develop and maintain. This year, ODHH sent out a total of 335 Community Service Announcements. Pursuant to statutory authorization, ODHH serves as an information clearinghouse on the needs and issues affecting deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Sending out Community Service Announcements has helped the Office fulfill this goal.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing facilitates community outreach and education through various activities, events, and meetings to promote awareness of ODHH as a state resource on issues affecting deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Efforts under this program also include educating the communities we serve about their rights, about resources available to them from the State, and about accessing information and services. Outreach and education include presentations, provision of training workshops, and booth displays across the State of Maryland.

ODHH provides outreach and education by responding to calls for exhibitors or requests for presentations. The Office also initiates outreach and education by contacting various organizations and offering to provide workshops for their members and the community. For example, in 2007 ODHH developed a presentation about the legislative process and will continue to present it to interested groups throughout the 2008 legislative session. The Community Outreach and Education program strengthens communication between ODHH and stakeholder communities and enables the Office to reach out to the grassroots members of the community.

This year, ODHH exceeded the number of trainings, presentations, and exhibitions made in 2006. Additionally, ODHH added demonstrations of assistive technology to the types of community and outreach provided by the Office. The chart below reflects the outreach statistics for 2006 and 2007.



Highlights

- ODHH forged a partnership with MDOD, MDTAP, and the AT: Coop in order to streamline outreach capabilities of all four agencies by exhibiting together at conferences and seminars.
- The Office partnered with the National Aquarium in Baltimore for their Deaf Awareness weekends and set up an informational table to educate people about ODHH and its programs.
- ODHH staff gave a presentation on ODHH at the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)'s RCDs quarterly meeting.
- ODHH exhibited at numerous events, including: Freedom Day sponsored by the Freedom Center for Independent Living in Frederick, Anne Arundel County Commission on Disability Awareness Day in Glen Burnie, Governor's Volunteer Day at the Maryland State Fair, World of Possibilities Expo (3-day weekend) in Timonium, DeafNet's Awareness Day in Hagerstown, Maryland State Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students (MSSCDHHS) Statewide Annual Conference in Westminster, DILA's 25th Anniversary DEAF Festival in Salisbury, and the first-ever MDAD/PCRID joint Conference in Montgomery County.
- In collaboration with the Deaf Independent Living Association and the Maryland Association of the Deaf, ODHH presented an informal workshop for the deaf and hard of hearing communities that focused on Title III of the ADA as it pertains to communicating with deaf and hard of hearing patients.



Maryland Association of the Deaf (MDAD) Biennial Conference

Denise Gagnon Perdue, as Interim Director, presents a Governor's Citation to the MDAD Executive Board for their dedicated service to the deaf community.

From Left: Bob Seremeth, Eileen Seremeth, Alicia Epstein, Lee Smith, Denise Perdue and Barbara Blakeman

ODHH Initiatives

ODHH Monthly Bulletin

In November 2007, ODHH launched its first issue of the “ODHH Monthly Bulletin,” a monthly newsletter designed to provide stakeholders, service providers, policy makers, and other interested parties with updates and information related to ODHH programs and projects. Through the Bulletin, ODHH strives to bring to light articles of interest related to deaf and hard of hearing issues in Maryland. The Office has also used the Bulletin as a tool to educate the community about accessing services provided by the State. For example, in the December 2007 issue, the ODHH printed an article explaining the legislative process, which described the steps necessary for constituents to be informed about and involved in the legislative session. Finally, the newsletter provides important announcements about upcoming events and meetings related to ODHH programs and projects. The feedback regarding the newsletter has been overwhelmingly positive and the Office looks forward to continuing the Bulletin as long as staffing allows.



ODHH Extravaganza II

The Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing hosted the ODHH Extravaganza II event on Saturday, April 14, 2007. The ODHH Extravaganza II was an opportunity for deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, and hearing Marylanders to come together to network, learn about available services in Maryland, and obtain information from both workshops and exhibits. This year, over 300 Marylanders participated in the Extravaganza II.

Throughout the day there were a total of nine workshops. In the morning, the Department of Justice hosted a workshop about how to identify discrimination and how to file an ADA complaint. The American Association of the Deaf-Blind hosted a “Deaf-Blind 101” workshop about how to communicate with individuals who are deaf-blind. In the afternoon, two of the most popular workshops were a demonstration about how to make a Video-Log and a showing of the film “Audism Unveiled.” Both workshops drew over 50 participants. Additionally, the Maryland Association of the Deaf hosted a “How to Make Laws that Benefit You” workshop. A deaf woman and a woman with a hearing loss teamed up to provide “Deaf and Hard of Hearing 101” where they taught participants about deaf culture, misconceptions about hearing loss, and gave communication tips.



ODHH Extravaganza II

Maryland Department of Disabilities Secretary Cathy Raggio gives opening remarks at the ODHH Extravaganza II.



ODHH Extravaganza II

Amy Bobb talks to Anjela Kenin about the programs and services offered at the Hearing and Speech Agency in Baltimore.

ODHH held a Town Hall meeting during the Extravaganza II to solicit community feedback about ODHH programs and priorities. Some concerns raised by the participants were the quality of interpreters in public schools, interpreting services in hospitals, captioning of informational videos in places of public accommodation, and the lack of interpreters for emergency situations (i.e. car accidents.) Participants also expressed wanting to know demographics and statistics for the number of deaf and hard of hearing people in Maryland and the need for frequent updates on ODHH's activities at the State level.

Overall, the Extravaganza II was a great success, bringing professionals, stakeholders, and government agencies together to network, share ideas, and most importantly, to coalition build.

ADA Training with DILA

Earlier this year, the Deaf Independent Living Association (DILA) of the Eastern Shore wrote a proposal to increase the awareness of the ADA within the medical community within the nine county areas of the Shore. DILA was successful getting their local grant funded. DILA asked for ODHH to be involved and, as a result, ODHH coordinated and developed a two-part training workshop with a representative of the Maryland Association of the Deaf. The first part of the training was a two-hour workshop for medical professionals. Its primary focus was providing sensitivity and awareness training to medical professionals about deaf and hard of hearing patients. The presentation also outlined Title III of the ADA and explained the medical professionals' responsibility to provide "effective communication". The second two-hour workshop was geared toward deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing consumers and focused on self-advocacy and how to file an ADA complaint.

ODHH, along with a consultant contractor, conducted ten DILA sponsored ADA trainings from June to August.

Presentation of Citations on Behalf of the Governor

In order to recognize those organizations and individuals improving the quality of life for deaf and hard of hearing Marylanders, the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing sought and obtained Governor's Citations to present to various individuals, organizations and agencies. In 2007, on behalf of the Governor, ODHH presented citations to members of the Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Deaf Independent Living Association, the Maryland Association of the Deaf, and the Potomac Chapter of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Legislative Action Alerts

This year, ODHH established "Legislative Action Alerts" in order to increase involvement in the legislative process and to increase awareness about legislation affecting people who are deaf and hard of hearing. In 2007, ODHH began laying the groundwork for the program by collecting names for a distribution list and creating a plan to execute the delivery of timely information during legislative session. Starting in January 2008, ODHH will be sending out Legislative Action Alerts to inform the community about legislation of interest and will continue to look for ways to improve the community's access to the legislative process.



**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE
DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

THE MARYLAND ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

The Advisory Council for the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing was established in October 2001. The Council has 16 members. Eight of the members represent state agencies and 8 of the members are from the general public. The Advisory Council has the responsibility to:

1. advise ODHH in carrying out its duties;
2. review statewide activities for the deaf and hard of hearing individuals;
3. foster the coordination of and support for programs for the deaf and hard of hearing;
4. study the ways to maximize the use of facilities and services available to deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

The Council has held meetings in different parts of the State to learn about the issues facing individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. The Council has also advised the Office on numerous issues, including web site development, accessibility issues, and constituent services.

2007 Advisory Council Members

Benjamin J. Dubin
Chair

Alexis Allenbach
Vice-Chair

Public

Marion Bland
Bobette Watts-Hitchcock
Paul Farrell
Will Johnson
Julie Moyer
Robert Padden
Linda Webb

Private

Tom Brett
Lindsay Dunn
Ethelette Ennis
Joshua Friedman
George Kosovich
Howard Leonard*
Michelle Schaefer

*deceased



The Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Top, from left: Tom Brett, George Kosovich, Ben Dubin, Alexis Allenbach, Ethelette Ennis, Linda Webb, and Will Johnson

Bottom, from left: Julie Anne Schafer, Denise Perdue, Holly Ireland, Yolanda Winkler, and Elizabeth Weiblen

Advisory Council Subcommittees Highlights

In 2006, the Council formed four subcommittees to better address specific areas of paramount concern to the council members. The subcommittees were: Mental Health, Communication Access, Education and Legislative. Throughout 2007, the committees achieved different levels of activity.

The Mental Health Subcommittee was the most active committee in 2007, meeting eight times and giving two important presentations, one to MHA Executive Director Brian Hepburn, M.D., and another to DHMH Secretary John Colmers, about access to mental health services for deaf and hard of hearing people living in Maryland. Topics for the subcommittee's meetings ranged

from using tele-psychiatry to reach deaf and hard of hearing people to the re-establishment of a Deaf Services Coordinator position for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

The Advisory Council's Mental Health subcommittee gave a presentation to MHA's management team and Core Services Agency (CSA) coordinators on February 1, 2007 at Spring Grove Hospital. The presentation focused on the state of the current public mental health system, which is not inclusive of deaf and hard of hearing Marylanders. The subcommittee proposed setting up a working group to study the current public mental health system to improve the quality of and access to services.

On July 2, 2007, a small subgroup from the Mental Health Subcommittee gave a PowerPoint presentation to DHMH Secretary Colmers on the history of public mental health services to deaf and hard of hearing in Maryland. The presentation emphasized the change in funding structure that has occurred since 2002.

Mental Health Subcommittee members also participated in the Governor's Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant Work Group to ensure that the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing communities receiving mental health services are being addressed. The goal of the Mental Health Subcommittee is to make sure deaf and hard of hearing residents of Maryland have access to comprehensive, culturally competent, and clinically sound mental health treatment services.

In 2007, the Education Subcommittee began work on a mission and purpose statement. The subcommittee focused some of their efforts on the Governor's Transition Team Report that was released in mid-February. The Education Subcommittee of the Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing reviewed the Transition Report and, after comprehensive discussion, concluded that the complexity of issues and recommendations affecting deaf and hard of hearing children were not fully addressed in the transition report and perhaps distorted the education landscape for deaf and hard of hearing students. As a result of the Education Subcommittee's analysis, the Advisory Council voted to draft a letter to Governor O'Malley to address their concerns. The Council also sent a letter to State Superintendent Grasmick encouraging MSDE to accept the three recommendations related to deaf and hard of hearing issues that fall within her jurisdiction in the Governor's Transition Report.

2007 Subcommittee Members

Mental Health Members:

Howard Leonard* (chair)
Marion Bland
Tom Merrick
Lisa Kornberg
Ava Barron-Shasho
Peggy Johnson
Kyla Liggett-Creel
Laurie Yaffe
Liz Katz
Kendra Smith
Sharon MacDougall
Rudy Gawlik
JoAnn Mackinson
Nancy Billingslea
Holly Ireland

Education Members:

Lindsay Dunn (chair)
James Tucker/
Robert Padden
Paul Farrell
Howard Leonard*
Ben Dubin
Eddy Laird
Diane Perkins
Lee Smith
David Martin
Nancy Jenkins
W. Williams
Angel Gasior

Communication Access Members:

Ethelette Ennis (Chair)
Linda Webb
Howard Leonard*
Michelle Schaefer
Brenda Kelly-Frey
Lise Hamlin
Lee Smith
Sandy Brown
David Martin
Kim Pudans-Smith
Peggy Johnson
Amy Bopp
Grace Steingisser
Angel Gasior
Lisette Belanger
Wendy Hill-House
Carolyn Woosley

Legislative Members:

Ben Dubin (Chair)
Joshua Friedman
Ethelette Ennis
Jennifer Whitcomb
Nancy Jenkins
Carol Stevens
Judy Stout
Yerker Andersson
Carla Mathers
Michael Moore
Jim Bishop
Jerome Vadakin

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