



Annual Report 2011

Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

A VISION

All Maryland citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind will have equal and full access to resources, services, and opportunities for participation in all aspects of community life.

A MISSION

ODHH represents the Governor and his goal of promoting equal access for all Marylanders by providing expertise that enhances the general welfare of Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents.

December 2011

Dear Friends:

In our *One Maryland*, we are united by our belief in the dignity of every individual, and by the belief that there is no such thing as a spare Marylander. Our efforts in promoting equal access for people with hearing loss are connected inherently with our shared priorities – to strengthen and grow the ranks of an increasingly diverse middle class; to improve public safety and public education in every part of our State; and to expand opportunity throughout our State. This means the opportunity to learn, to earn, and to enjoy the health of the people we love and the environment we love.

ODHH is at the forefront of ensuring that Marylanders with hearing loss remain part of the vision of *One Maryland*. Despite tough economic times, ODHH has continued its hard work to improve the quality of life for individuals with hearing loss in Maryland. Together, we have expanded opportunity for people with hearing loss by delivering training on communication access to all levels of government, focusing on employment and public safety.

This year has been a great year for improving access for Marylanders with hearing loss. In the last year, 649 constituents, stakeholders, and government workers reached out to ODHH, looking for information, assistance or training on a variety of topics, including access to interpreters and resources for hearing aids. These issues affect the everyday lives of Marylanders with hearing loss and we are committed to the continued provision of timely responses to such requests so that all of our citizens have equal and full access to resources, services, and opportunity.

Maryland is also a leader in ensuring that its citizens with hearing loss receive appropriate access to government programs and services through partnerships between ODHH and other State agencies. For example, a partnership between ODHH and the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association resulted in the design, production, and distribution of 25,000 “point to picture” communications aids for first responders. ODHH has also been working with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to facilitate access for inmates with hearing loss.

I want to thank all of the people in our State who are working to promote equal access for all Marylanders and to enhance the general welfare of Maryland’s deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents. I stand committed to an ODHH that brings relevance to both government agencies and to the communities we serve.

Together, we continue to move Maryland forward, united in our belief that each of us has a responsibility to advance the common good.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Martin O'Malley". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Martin O'Malley
Governor

RESPONSIBILITIES

ODHH was created to:

- Serve as a coordinating agency that reports directly to the Governor's Office;
- Promote the general welfare of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals in Maryland;
- Work with various State and private agencies to ensure appropriate delivery of services to all of Maryland's diverse citizens;
- Support the development of policies, regulations, and programs that will benefit the communities we serve;
- Improve communication access to existing services and programs;
- Advise State government and the General Assembly on the needs of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals; and
- Coordinate with other units of the State, local, and the federal governments about the services provided to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind Marylanders.

GOALS

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) has three broad goals:

- to serve as a resource for federal, state, and local government agencies;
- to provide information and support to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind; and
- to assist in the development of policies and programs that improve the lives of Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

THE FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Last year, ODHH released a Five-Year Strategic Plan outlining goals and strategies to advance the Office's mission of promoting equal access for all Marylanders by providing expertise that enhances the welfare of Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents. In order to execute programs already in place while maintaining the flexibility necessary to engage in new projects, ODHH established five broad focus areas: training, program and policy development, information and referral, outreach, and information collection. Under these five focus areas, ODHH provides support to federal, State, and local government agencies as well as to community stakeholders and constituents. In July, we released a report detailing the progress made during the first year of the Plan, which encompasses Fiscal Year 2011 – 2016.

Through the implementation of the Strategic Plan, ODHH will increase its relevance to all levels of government and to the constituent populations we serve. ODHH intends to make progress in each focus area in the next two years by completing the mid-term objectives outlined in the Plan. ODHH will also track its implementation progress through the Maryland Managing for Results (MFR) process, a strategic planning, performance measurement, and budgeting process that emphasizes use of resources to achieve measurable results, accountability, efficiency, and continuous improvement in State government programs. To view the Plan and the Year One Progress Report, please visit the ODHH website at <http://www.odhh.maryland.gov/mfr.html>.

PROGRAM & POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing involvement in the coordination of program and policy development promotes equal and full access to resources, programs, and services, which results in greater access to opportunities for Marylanders with hearing loss. These opportunities enable people with hearing loss to participate in all aspects of community life.



The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA), in partnership with the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH), the Frederick Police Department, the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission, and Johns Hopkins University Division of Public Safety Leadership, developed a "point to picture" communications aid for first responders. The development and production of this communications aid was made possible through a grant received by the MCPA through the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP).

Both first responders and members of the deaf and hard of hearing community shared concerns with ODHH about communicating in emergency situations. When ODHH approached MCPA with the idea for this project, they immediately began working on it. MCPA is truly committed to serving the needs of all members of the community and ODHH is honored to have worked with them on such an important and valuable project.

The communications aid is filled with illustrations that are easily understood by individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing as well as persons with limited English proficiency. While this booklet does not replace the use of a qualified interpreter, it does improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the first responder's attempts to obtain critical information.

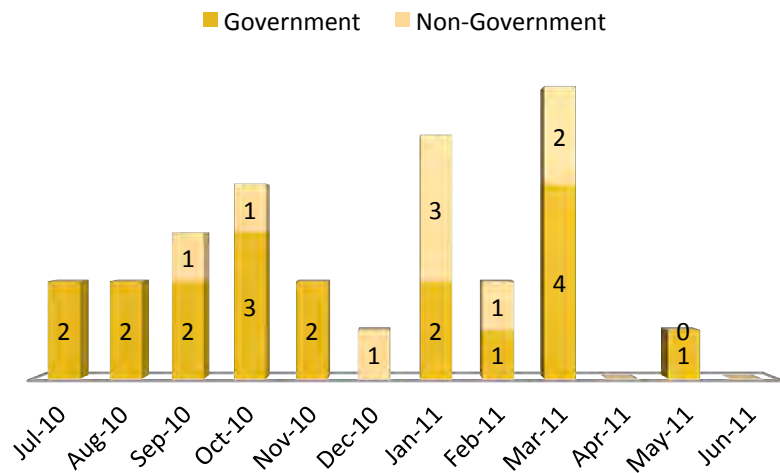
The communications aid was developed by Maryland School for the Deaf graduate Bobby Harris, who first started working on the project as an intern at the Frederick Police Department back in 2008. During the summer of 2011, Bobby worked as a consultant on the grant project, making changes so the booklet is more versatile and can be used across the state. The communications aid and training materials are being distributed to agencies with law enforcement officers and first responders across the state.

Technical Assistance

ODHH provides technical assistance to all levels of government, private entities, community stakeholders, and constituents. Technical assistance is defined as aid given to support the economic, social, and political development of people with hearing loss in Maryland. This includes reviewing, assessing, and evaluating policies, procedures, and practices in relation to effective services for deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals. This also includes ongoing review of and involvement in federal, state, and local legislative initiatives. The provision of communication accessibility assessments is also included. Finally, technical assistance includes individualized responses to inquiries received in person or via email, telephone, or fax.

During Fiscal Year 2011, ODHH continued to focus significant attention on ensuring that Marylanders with hearing loss have access to information posted on the internet by State agencies. To this end, ODHH focused staff time and resources on captioning the Governor's videos on the Governor's Office website, as well as the Governor's videos on the State's YouTube channel. ODHH staff also reached out to other State agencies posting online media and provided information and instructions on captioning online videos.

Technical Assistance Fiscal Year 2011



Highlights

In Fiscal Year 2011, ODHH was involved in the coordination of program and policy development to accomplish the following:

- ODHH coordinated with the Behavioral Health Subcommittee of the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to provide information on restructuring programs to meet standards for the provision of treatment for co-occurring disorders and to outline minimum standards for providing behavioral health services along the entire continuum of care to Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. This included collaboration with the Office of Health Care Quality to address issues of communication access needs of Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents in accessing inpatient and outpatient behavioral health services.
- Recognizing that veterans with hearing loss may not attend "live" events because of communication difficulties, ODHH utilized interns from area colleges to collect information about veteran services in Maryland to be used for the MDVA website. The information was compiled and sent to the MDVA and is now available online under the "Muster" section of the Department's website at <http://www.mdva.state.md.us/news/veteransMuster.html>.
- ODHH assisted the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) in applying for a grant from the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention to create, produce, and distribute a "point to picture"

communications aid for first responders. Through the collaborative efforts of MCPA, ODHH, the Frederick Police Department, and the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission, the communications aid was developed, tested in focus groups, and sent to press at the close of Fiscal Year 2011. It will be distributed along with training materials during Fiscal Year 2012.

- ODHH staff reviewed the disability policy for Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) Police and provided feedback on working with deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind citizens.
- ODHH was invited to join the Urban Area Securities Initiative (USAI) for the Baltimore Region to ensure that the needs of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind Marylanders are addressed as the region moves forward to develop an emergency response plan for individuals with disabilities.
- ODHH worked with the Department of Special Education at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to Fiscal Year strategies for development of a State Plan for the Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children, including the development of goals, strategies, and outcomes. ODHH continues to collaborate with Hank Passi, Statewide Coordinator of the Deaf for the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), to ensure that programs and services offered through DORS are accessible to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind consumers.
- ODHH participated in an “accessibility tour” of BWI Airport to evaluate features in place to provide communication access for passengers with hearing loss. BWI staff is reviewing options and requirements necessary to provide access to videophones at the airport.
- ODHH consulted with the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation and the Maryland Department of Disabilities “Employed Individuals with Disabilities” Program to ensure that all webinars and internet-based information is accessible to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- ODHH participated in the FEMA Emergency Planning for Special Needs Course to increase awareness among State and County stakeholders of the need for policy specifically addressing the communication of emergency information to Marylanders with hearing loss.
- ODHH began collaborating with the Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission to include Sensitivity and Awareness Trainings to candidates in the Police Academy while developing a “Train the Trainer” Model to be provided to the State Police Training Academy.
- ODHH filmed, captioned, and posted two informational videos related to the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (Formerly the Maryland Commission on Human Relations). The first was an overview “About MCHR.” The second was a video explaining “How to File a Complaint with MCHR.” Both videos are posted on the ODHH website and the State of Maryland’s YouTube channel.
- ODHH met with the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) and the Interagency Council on Disabilities to provide input into MDOD’s State Plan.

ODHH coordinated captioning with the Governor’s Press Office to ensure that all videos posted on the Governor and Lt. Governor’s websites were captioned and accessible to Marylanders with hearing loss. Seventy four (74) videos were captioned.

Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session

During the 2011 Legislative Session in Maryland, ODHH continued to monitor and provide testimony, as appropriate, on bills relevant to Marylanders with hearing loss. The Office also hosted its Second Annual Legislative Awareness Day.

On February 21, ODHH hosted its Second Annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Legislative Awareness Day. As part of the event, ODHH also celebrated its Ten Year Anniversary.

Over 80 people were in attendance for the day's events, which started with an advocacy training to familiarize participants with the legislative process. The training was followed by a tour of the State House. The highlight of the event was the Welcome Ceremony and Awards Presentation, with keynote remarks by Lt. Governor Anthony Brown.

During the Awards Presentation, ODHH celebrated its 10-Year history by recognizing those who have contributed to the establishment and success of the Office. Along this vein, Governor O'Malley issued a proclamation creating the Kelby Brick Community Leadership Award, which was created in honor of a passionate community leader who was integral in the establishment of ODHH. The inaugural award was presented to Mr. Brick at the ceremony.



Some of the cosponsors of the ODHH enabling legislation were present to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the Office - Senator John Astle, Senator Donald Elliott, Senator Lisa Gladden, Senator Katherine Klausmeier, and Delegate Shirley Nathan-Pulliam. We are grateful for their continued support.

Finally, we recognized two outstanding legislators who showed leadership in advancing the rights of people with hearing loss in Maryland - Councilmember Craig Rice and Delegate Kevin Kelly.

After the presentation, participants were able to meet with their legislators one-on-one. During the House General Session, Speaker Busch invited the ODHH staff to join him as he read a Resolution in honor of ODHH's Ten Year Anniversary.

The event was a tremendous success because of all of the legislators, volunteers, and participants who made it possible. We look forward to hosting our Third Annual Legislative Awareness Day next year.



Non-Departmental Legislation

PERMANENT HEARING AID LOAN BANK

SB754/HB1013 established a permanent Hearing Aid Loan Bank in the State. The Hearing Aid Loan Bank was created as a bridge between newborn hearing screening and early intervention. Its purpose is to provide infants and toddlers under the age of three years immediate access to hearing aids following confirmation of hearing loss by an audiologist. The bill passed and was signed into law by Governor O'Malley on May 19, 2011.

INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR HEARING AIDS

SB 702/HB 542 requires insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations (carriers) that provide coverage for hearing aids for adults to allow an adult insured or enrollee to choose a hearing aid that is priced above the benefit limit and pay the difference in cost. The intent of the legislation is to protect audiologists who, in some situations, are not allowed to bill for balances when the insurance benefit is less than the amount of the hearing aid. The bill passed and was signed into law by Governor O'Malley on May 19, 2011.

CAPTIONING OF POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENTS

SB22/HB1000 would have required all candidates

running for the offices of Governor, Lt. Governor, Comptroller, and Attorney General to caption their political advertisements. ODHH testified in favor of the bills, but neither made it out of committee. This is the third session in which this legislation was introduced.

INTERNET ACCESS

SB596/HB580 would have required that the Internet website of a business that provides goods and services to anyone in Maryland be accessible to people with disabilities, including people who are deaf or hard of hearing. This means that if a business is posting videos online, those videos would have to be captioned. The bill applied only to those businesses with revenues over \$1 million per year. ODHH testified in favor of the bill in both the House and the Senate. SB 596 never made it out of the Judicial Proceedings Committee and HB 580 received an unfavorable report from the Health and Government Operations Committee and was withdrawn.

ODHH BUDGET

The Governor's budget supported the current programs and staff of the Office. The Department of Legislative Services agreed with the Governor's budget for ODHH, and it was approved by the full General Assembly.

Updates From 2010 Legislative Session

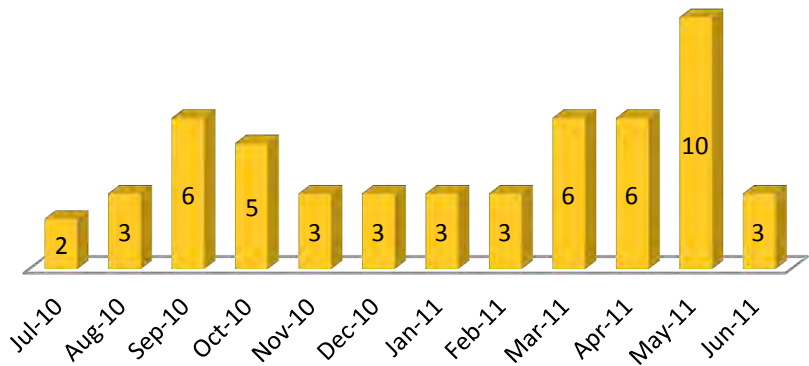
On October 1, 2010, both of the ODHH Departmental bills went into effect. The first is a law (SB 68/HB 1501) that requires public places turn on the captions on their televisions when a person with hearing loss requests it. Examples of public places include - but are not limited to - bars, restaurants, gyms, train/bus stations, hotels, and sports venues. Public places are excluded from this requirement if (1) no television receiver of any kind is available in the public area or (2) the only public television receiver available in the public area is not a closed-captioning receiver. If a public place refuses to turn on the captions, a person can file a complaint with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR).

The second bill (SB 79) expanded the scope of ODHH to include individuals who are deafblind. The bill increased the roster for the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing from 16 to 18 members. The two new members are the Secretary of Aging, or the Secretary's designee, and an individual with knowledge or expertise relating to the deafblind. Both began their term at the March 2011 Advisory Council meeting.

Committees & Task Forces

As a Coordinating Office of the Governor, ODHH provides consultation and follow-up and reviews State programs and services. ODHH staff attends many task force, committee, and council meetings to provide advice and guidance when necessary.

Council and Task Force Meeting Attendance Fiscal Year 2011



On July 6, 2010, the National Association of State Agencies of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NASADHH) held its biennial meeting in Philadelphia, PA. Maryland's ODHH attended this important meeting and contributed to the development of six goals to focus and guide the NASADHH:

1. Set standards throughout US for accessibility in health care situations.
2. Collect consistent, accurate, meaningful data and demographics
3. Sustain agencies, programs and services provided.
4. Develop and promote more local grassroots advocacy.
5. Establish minimum standards to ensure quality, licensed, better trained, teachers of ASL.
6. Collaborate to defragment deaf education and vocational rehabilitation services.

The purpose of NASADHH is to function as the national voice of state agencies serving deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind people and to promote the implementation of best practices in the provision of services.



ODHH serves on or attends meetings for the following Committees and Councils:

- Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Advisory Council
- The Alliance
- Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay
- Interagency Committee on Aging
- MDOT's State Coordinating Committee for Human Services Transportation
- Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services' Workgroup for Vocational Rehabilitation Services to Persons who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Late Deafened
- Interagency Disability Board
- Baltimore County Commission Accessibility of Health Care Task Force
- Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Baltimore Region Vulnerable Populations Workgroup
- National Summit on Deaf Education
- Baltimore County Association of Senior Citizen Organizations, Inc.
- Deaf V.I.S.A Project
- Maryland State Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Communication
Access
Subcommittee

Education
Subcommittee

Behavioral
Health
Subcommittee

Committee to Develop the State Plan for the Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

MSDE State Planning
Sub-Committee on
Early Intervention

MSDE State Planning
Sub-Committee on
Communication
Access

Data Collection¹



ODHH collects data so that consolidated information about statewide services to the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind can be reported. Currently, information is collected from several primary State agencies that provide critical services to our constituent population including:

- **Maryland Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program:** Data on the number of infants identified with a hearing loss as part of the Maryland Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program is counted based on the calendar year. These numbers do not include infants who have had an audiological evaluation, but do not yet have a definitive diagnosis. A number of these infants will eventually be diagnosed with some degree of hearing loss. The numbers may also fluctuate when infants with risk factors return for their monitoring evaluations due to incidents of late-onset hearing loss or transient conductive loss at the time of testing.
- **Telecommunication Access of Maryland (TAM):** TAM provides free telephone assessments to Marylanders with disabilities to determine which telephone is best for each individual's communication needs. Assessments usually take place at one of six Evaluation Centers located across the state. This number reflects all assessments conducted (speech, physical, and hearing disabilities) by TAM.
- **Springfield Hospital Center (SFHC):** This data reflects admissions to the designated Deaf Unit at SFHC. The total reflects the number of annual admissions and not an unduplicated count of individuals served.
- **Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS):** DORS provides employment evaluations, training, and support to Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind. This count, which is based on the federal fiscal year, reflects the number of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind consumers who received an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

The collection of this information assists the Office in identifying trends and gaps to facilitate appropriate and efficient delivery of State services in Maryland. In Fiscal Year 2011, the Office continued to use this data to determine attendance at and involvement in various task forces and councils, to guide outreach, and to focus staff resources.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF STATEWIDE SERVICES

Telecommunications Access of Maryland, DoIT, Telephone Assessments Provided	430
Division of Rehabilitation Services, MSDE, Number of deaf and hard of hearing individuals receiving Individualized Plans for Employment (Federal Fiscal Year)	1609
Maryland Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program, DHMH, Number of infants with a confirmed identification of a hearing loss (Calendar Year)	92
Springfield Hospital Center Deaf Unit, DHMH, Annual admissions to deaf unit	9

¹ As a Coordinating Office of the Governor, ODHH does not provide direct services.

TRAINING & EDUCATION

In the winter of 2011, ODHH staff met with Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Secretary Gary D. Maynard to discuss communication access for inmates with hearing loss. During that meeting, we discussed challenges and solutions. As a result, we began working with the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions (PCTC) to develop a Sensitivity and Awareness Training about hearing loss for all Corrections staff.

As part of this project, ODHH staff invited PCTC staff to attend one of ODHH's trainings at the Frederick County Police Academy and then consulted with the PCTC staff on the development of training materials. In the summer on 2011, ODHH and PCTC staff conducted site visits to Pre-Trial, Central Booking and Intake Center; Maryland Reception, Diagnostic, and Classification Center, and Maryland Correctional Institution – Jessup. As part of these site visits, ODHH and PCTC staff were able to interview Corrections leadership, staff, and inmates with hearing loss to learn about the real-life communication challenges they face. The information learned from these site visits were incorporated into the training developed by PCTC.



Governmental Education and Training Programs

Governmental Education and Training Programs allow ODHH to reach all levels of government, facilitating an increased awareness about the communication access needs of the Marylanders we serve. The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing conducts trainings on a number of topics, including:

- ADA Compliance
- Assistive and Adaptive Technologies
- Sensitivity and Awareness

In Fiscal Year 2011, ODHH provided 15 trainings to federal, state, and local government agencies. ODHH offered training to several new government agencies; however, the total number of trainings decreased from Fiscal Year 2010. The decrease can be attributed to two main factors. First, the Office was invited to present a series of trainings at the Department of General Services, the University of Maryland Police, and the Maryland State Police Academy during Fiscal Year 2010. Similar trainings were not requested in Fiscal Year 2011. Second, as a result of these trainings, the Office gained better insight into the communication needs of law enforcement and first responders in emergency situations. ODHH then began working with the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association to apply for a grant to develop a tool to facilitate communication. Further information about this project is detailed under “Program and Policy Development.”

Federal Government

Federal
Executive
Board Disability
Employment
Conference

State Government

DHMH/MHA
Special Needs
Population
Conference

Local Government

Baltimore County Police
Department

Carroll County Health
Department

Howard County Department
of Fire and Rescue Services

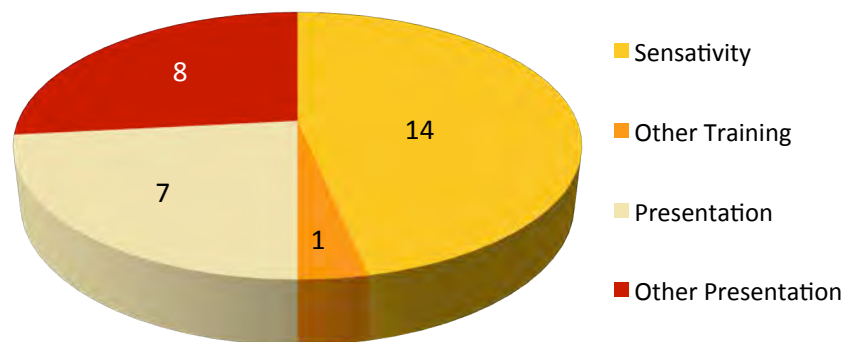
Frederick County Sheriff's
Department

Frederic Police Academy

Nongovernmental Education and Training Programs

In addition to individual requests for information and support services, ODHH provides a number of trainings and presentations to stakeholders, constituents, and nongovernmental entities. In training these groups, we support our mission by educating the communities we serve about their rights and teach them how to access services and programs. We are also able to educate nongovernmental entities about the communication access needs of our constituent population. Through these presentations and workshops, we are able to expand participants' knowledge of and familiarity with people with hearing loss, accessibility issues, ADA requirements, emergency preparedness, adaptive equipment, and more. In Fiscal Year 2011, ODHH provided 15 trainings to nongovernmental organizations, two fewer trainings than in Fiscal Year 2010.

Training and Presentations Fiscal Year 2011



Nongovernmental Training Highlights

Value Options

Foxwell Memorial Apartments

Anne Arundel Medical Center
Accessibility Task Force

Bnos Yisroel of Baltimore

Deaf Shalom Zone

About ODHH Presentations

The Office also provides "About ODHH" presentations to familiarize constituents, community stakeholders, professionals, and all levels of government with ODHH as a resource. In Fiscal Year 2011, we provided seven (7) "About ODHH" presentations at various events and meetings around Maryland.

OUTREACH



Marketing the Office as a State resource on issues affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals is an ongoing process. Outreach through various activities, events, and meetings is necessary to promote awareness of ODHH among stakeholder communities, constituents, and state and local government agencies in Maryland. Our Outreach activities include:

- Exhibiting at expos, fairs, and conferences;
- Publishing the *ODHH Monthly Bulletin*;
- Participating in community events; and
- Maintaining active social media sites.

ODHH focuses a lot of its resources on program and policy development; however, grassroots outreach and education are also integral to fulfilling our mission. As part of our responsibility to be a resource to all of Maryland's residents who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind, ODHH established a monthly gathering at The Louis W. Foxwell Apartments in Baltimore City. Originally intended to be housing for Baltimore's deaf community, the Foxwell apartments has expanded its mission to provide homes to Marylanders who are disabled, who are senior citizens, as well as to those who are deaf. This monthly outreach activity enables deaf residents to access information and opportunities in the community that they may not otherwise have.

During Fiscal Year 2011, meetings were held at the apartments to provide opportunities to learn about employment, emergency preparedness, voter registration, mental health and addiction education, legislative issues, and deaf churches in Baltimore City.

In addition, ODHH staff coordinated and facilitated transportation and attendance for the Foxwell Apartment's deaf residents to the ODHH Legislative Awareness Day and 10th Year Anniversary Celebration in Annapolis, the ODHH Town Hall meeting in Baltimore City; and the 2010 Gubernatorial Candidates Forum on Disability Issues.

This ongoing outreach to some of the most financially vulnerable members of the community reinforces ODHH's full support of the Governor's belief that there is no spare Marylander. By ensuring inclusiveness for all of Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents, ODHH continues to pursue the goal of promoting access for the communities we serve.

Outreach Highlights

Baltimore County Association of Senior Citizens Organizations, Inc. Bi-Monthly Meetings

National Aquarium Deaf Awareness Days

Silent Golden Age Club Meeting

World of Possibilities Disability Expo

Hearing Loss Association of America DC Walk4Hearing

Hearing Loss Association – Greater Baltimore, Veterans with Hearing Loss

Prince George's County Veteran's Extravaganza

Deafnet Deaf Awareness Day

Atholton Community Health

Bayview Disability Awareness Expo

Federal Executive Board Disability Employment Conference

Exhibits at expos, fairs, and conferences are one way ODHH connects with the public to promote ODHH as a resource on communication access. ODHH exhibited at 17 such events during Fiscal Year 2011

ODHH continued its involvement at community and stakeholder events and added the Baltimore County Association of Senior Citizens Organizations, Inc., the Deaf V.I.S.A. project, and the Prison and Aftercare Programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Inmates to the list of community organization in which we participate. Although outreach numbers were down slightly in Fiscal Year 2011, we continue to reach the community and stakeholders through regular bulletins and social media.

Social Media

During Fiscal Year 2011, ODHH continued utilizing both Facebook and Twitter to increase awareness of ODHH as a State resource on issues affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals. Through updates to our Facebook and Twitter pages, we are able to post important information in a timely and efficient manner. ODHH also utilizes these pages to provide updates related to the Office, advertise ODHH and community events, share information from the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, and post news on a variety of topics.

Because of our increased visibility, ODHH is better able to address needs and identify gaps within a diverse and geographically dispersed community.

Monthly Bulletin

Another prominent feature of our Outreach Program is the *ODHH Monthly Bulletin*, a newsletter that provides stakeholders and other entities with pertinent information that affects the constituents we serve. The newsletter also enables ODHH to give monthly updates and progress reports about the activities and programs undertaken by the Office. During Fiscal Year 2011, the Office began distributing the *Monthly Bulletin* through the online program Constant Contact so that we can deliver a more professional-looking, easy to read publication. The program also allows us to track open rates and other trends.

Introduced in 2007, the *ODHH Monthly Bulletin* has become a vital tool for the Office to achieve its mission in all three areas of programming, as well as to highlight programs and policies of the O'Malley-Brown Administration that positively impact the quality of life of Marylanders with hearing loss. *The ODHH Monthly Bulletin* is published and distributed electronically. An archive of previous bulletins is posted on the ODHH website.

ODHH Monthly Bulletin

March 2011

A message from Director Lisa Kornberg

Wow. What a month it has been! From testifying on bills that impact the quality of life of Marylanders with hearing loss to hosting our Second Annual Legislative Day, February has been a busy month. I continue to be humbled by the level of support ODHH receives from legislators, state agencies, constituents, and stakeholders. This year is the Ten Year Anniversary of the establishment of ODHH, but more importantly, it marks a ten-year partnership between all of us to advance the rights of people with hearing loss in Maryland.

So thank you for working to advance our shared vision of equal and full access for Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents. I look forward to continuing our partnerships for the next ten years and beyond.

-Lisa

In This Issue

Legislative Updates

IRS Tax Tips Series - in ASL with Captions and Voice Over

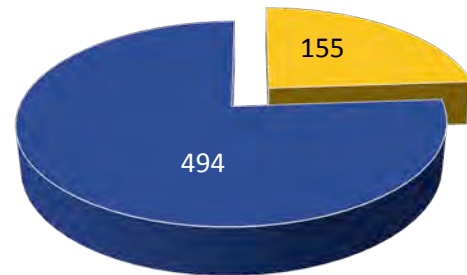
The Internal Revenue Service has produced a video series of Tax Tips that give concise information about a variety of topics. All videos are under three minutes in length and are fully accessible through American Sign Language, Captions, and Voice Over.

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

During Fiscal Year 2010, ODHH staff continued to make significant updates to the ODHH website. As part of these updates, ODHH posted four new video logs (vlogs) on our website. The first is a vlog about the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The second is a vlog on emergency preparedness in Maryland. The third and fourth vlogs both relate to the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR). One gives an overview of MCCR, which is in charge of enforcing the State's antidiscrimination laws. Another explains how to file a complaint with MCCR. Both can be viewed on the ODHH website under the new "Legal and Self Advocacy" section. All V-logs are in American Sign Language and also have captions and voice-over. There are also transcripts posted.

The Office also completely revamped the "Resources" section of the website during Fiscal Year 2011, enhancing the information posted while making it more user-friendly. Prior to the redesign, each topic (i.e. Behavioral Health, Legal and Self Advocacy, etc.) had only a directory of organizations with no further information. With the launch of the new Resource section, most topics include explanations, links to other websites, a directory of resources, fact sheets, and links to vlogs. In Fiscal Year 2012, ODHH plans to finish the redesign by completing new pages for the topics not yet posted. Check out the new Resource section at <http://odhh.md.gov/resources.html>.

Constituent Services Requests for Information Fiscal Year 2011



■ Government Agency Requests ■ Constituent Requests

There are many ways in which ODHH provides information and referral services

Constituent Services

to all levels of government, private entities, community stakeholders, and constituents. One way is through our constituent services program, where ODHH staff responds to individual requests for information and assistance. The information sought through these contacts range from locating American Sign Language (ASL) classes to finding financial assistance for hearing aids. Often, we answer questions about how to access government support and file a complaint if an individual feels that he or she has been discriminated against because of his or her hearing loss. We also answer questions from government agencies, private entities, and advocacy organizations.

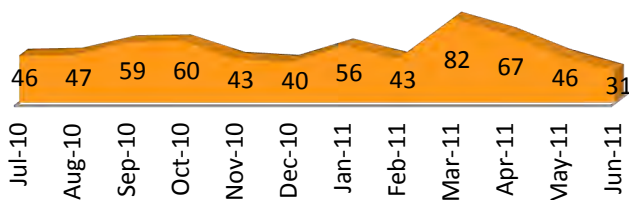
In Fiscal Year 2011, requests for information from government agencies remained the same while requests from constituents and stakeholders decreased. There are several factors that may have caused a decrease in constituent and stakeholder contacts. First, more information than ever is available on the ODHH website, which means that fewer people have to make direct contact to the Office to get the

information they need. Second, the Office is actively using social media to reach out to constituents and the number of followers on the Office's Facebook and Twitter pages has steadily increased.

ODHH recognizes that the number of individual requests for information and support services it receives is an integral part of the Office's operation; we are committed to the delivery of timely information and referral. ODHH staff strives to meet or exceed timeliness standards for responding to requests from constituents and stakeholders. It is the goal of the office to respond within two business days to 90% of all requests received. In Fiscal Year 2011, ODHH received 649 requests for information from constituents, stakeholders, and government entities. Office staff responded to 98% of email/phone requests within two business days and 100% of written inquiries within ten business days.

Another way ODHH ensures community stakeholders and constituents, as well as State and local government entities, get the information they need is through the dissemination of community service announcements. ODHH circulates pertinent community announcements to several electronic distribution lists as a community service. In Fiscal Year 2011, ODHH sent out 620 Community Service Announcements reflected in the following table:

Announcements Fiscal Year 2011

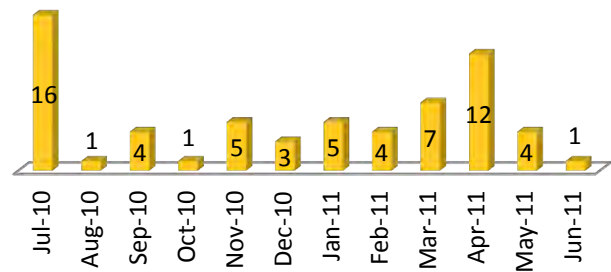


The number of announcements disseminated by the Office increased by 115, which also may have contributed to the decrease in contacts from constituents and stakeholders.

Website

The ODHH website plays a central role in the provision of information related to people with hearing loss in Maryland. In Fiscal Year 2010, ODHH launched a redesigned website. During Fiscal Year 2011, we continued to update and add content so that anyone coming to our website can find the information they need.

Website Updates Fiscal Year 2011



The website continues to serve as a resource for community stakeholders and constituents, as well as to state and local government agencies in Maryland. The resources on the website address emergency preparedness, access to voting, assistive technology and hearing aids, children and youth services, services for people who are deaf-blind, education, behavioral health, sign language classes, senior citizens and aging, and more.

The website provides an opportunity for individuals keep up with ODHH's progress by accessing Advisory Council meeting minutes, press releases, past issues of the *ODHH Monthly Bulletin*, Legislative Updates, and the ODHH Five-Year Strategic Plan. ODHH recently began tracking site usage this year, allowing us to effectively track hits to the ODHH website for future fiscal years.

Town Hall Meetings

ODHH holds at least two town hall meetings each year to solicit public comment and feedback. Information ODHH hopes to gain from these meetings includes:

- Comments on the quality of State services and programs affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind individuals;
- ODHH-related functions and operations; and
- Other issues affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals.



Fiscal Year 2011 Town Hall Meetings

In Fiscal Year 2011, ODHH changed its approach to hosting Town Hall meetings in light of past experience. Instead of hosting “stand-alone” Town Hall meetings, which sometimes drew low attendance, ODHH reached out to other groups and organizations hosting meeting or events and asked if we could join them to solicit feedback from their participants and members. This approach was a success and attendance at ODHH Town Hall meetings in Fiscal Year 2011 numbered in the sixties.

The Office hosted four town hall meetings during Fiscal Year 2011:

- Montgomery County – September 14, 2010
- Baltimore City – September 21, 2010
- Washington County – May 20, 2011
- Wicomico County – June 7, 2011

Some of the issues raised by attendees were:

- Access to interpreters in hospitals and doctor’s offices;
- Quality of Interpreters;
- Employment Resources and Employment Discrimination;

- Access to Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Weather Information;
- Financial Assistance for Hearing Aids; and
- Resources for deaf people immigrating to the US for better social and educational opportunities

In Fiscal Year 2011, partially in response to concerns raised at the Town Hall meetings, the Maryland Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH) behavioral health subcommittee established a working group to provide written information to all hospital emergency rooms and doctors on communication access needs and the rights of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind patients.

ODHH will continue to work on addressing these issues in Fiscal Year 2012. The Office values the input of the community and makes its best effort to address the concerns raised by stakeholders at the Town Hall Meetings we host.

Fiscal Year 2010 Town Hall Meetings Follow - Up

During the Fiscal Year 2010 (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010), some issues raised by the participants were:

- Lack of information for veterans with hearing loss;
- Need for improved relationships with law enforcement; and
- Lack of interpreters in healthcare settings

In response to the lack of information for veterans with hearing loss, ODHH partnered with Maryland Department of Veteran Affairs to create a “Virtual Muster/Information Fair” so that veterans can quickly and easily find the information they need. The Virtual Muster can be viewed at <http://www.mdva.state.md.us/news/veteransMuster.html>. As part of this important project, ODHH, with input from MDVA, developed a new “Fact Sheet” for veterans with hearing loss, which can be found at the Virtual Muster and in the “Veterans” section of the ODHH website. Additionally, ODHH continued its outreach to the veteran community by attending several veterans events and continuing dialogue with the MDVA about the needs of veterans with hearing loss.

In response to the need for improved relationships with law enforcement officers, ODHH continued to provide sensitivity and awareness training to law enforcement officers around the state. As noted above, we worked with the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA), the Frederick Police Department, the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission, and Johns Hopkins University Division of Public Safety Leadership, to develop and distribute a “point to picture” communications aid for first responders.

Other Outreach

In addition to the mandated Town Hall meetings, ODHH Staff and/or members of the Advisory Council attended a number of meetings throughout the State to solicit input and feedback on the needs of the deaf,

hard of hearing, and deafblind communities. This information is used to develop strategies that will further the Office’s mission and vision. Examples of meetings attended include:

- Community Leadership Meetings
- Brown Bag Lunches with Professionals working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Marylanders
- Community Advocacy and Association Meetings (HLAA, MDAD, MDSC)



The Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH) was established in October 2001. The Council, appointed by the Governor, is headed by a Chair and Vice Chair and previously consisted of 16 members – eight members representing State agencies and eight members representing the general public. However, on October 1, 2010, ODHH welcomed two new members to the Council – a representative from the Department of Aging and a member with knowledge about deafblind individuals.

MACDHH's responsibilities include:

- advising ODHH in carrying out its duties;
- reviewing statewide activities for deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals;
- fostering the coordination of and support for programs for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind; and
- studying ways to maximize the use of facilities and services available to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals.

As of October 1, 2011, the State agencies represented are:

- Department of Education
- Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Department of Human Resources
- Department of Transportation
- Commission on Civil Rights
- Department of Housing and Community Development
- Maryland School for the Deaf
- Department of Aging

Of the nine public members:

- one must be a parent of a deaf child;
- one must be a private citizen with special knowledge or expertise relating to services to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals;
- one must be from a private agency providing services to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals; and
- one must have knowledge or expertise about deafblind individuals.

The Council meets four times during the year to learn about and discuss issues facing individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

In Fiscal Year 2011, Laurie Corcoran continued to serve as Chair of the Advisory Council and Gary Monroe continued as Vice Chair.



The Advisory Council participates in various activities and projects. Those activities and projects include:

- Reviewing the results of ODHH Town Hall meetings;
- Ongoing review of ODHH programs and services including technical assistance, constituent services, training, and outreach; and
- Submitting testimony during legislative session on pertinent legislation.

MACDHH Subcommittees

Education Subcommittee, Chairperson – Cheri Dowling

The Education Sub-Committee met four times in Fiscal Year 2011 to develop priorities and to identify projects that would enhance the education of Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind children.

The Subcommittee realizes that many children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf blind are in educational placements where they may be the only child with hearing loss in their schools or classes. The committee discussed the possibility of hosting regional social activities in Fiscal Year 2012 to allow students to meet and interact, with the ultimate goal of providing a safe place for children to meet and form friendships. These social activities will also provide parents the opportunity to meet and talk with other parents in their areas with the goal of forming parent support groups.

In Fiscal Year 2012, the committee will work with a Harford County Public Schools parent and the Outreach Director of the Maryland School for the Deaf to host a social activity for students during the last week of December 2011. Students from Baltimore County, Harford County, Cecil County, and the Maryland School for the Deaf will be invited to attend this event. The committee will also host events in Central Maryland in March 2012, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in June 2012, in Southern Maryland in September 2012, and in Western Maryland in December 2012.

Communication Access Subcommittee, Chairperson – Shane Feldman

The Communication Access Subcommittee continued to meet regularly during Fiscal Year 2011. The members gave careful consideration to transportation issues in Maryland during this fiscal year. As a result of these discussions, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) launched new LED signs in the Baltimore subway, metro, and MARC train stations. Additionally, new visual paging systems were installed in the individual cars to alert passengers for upcoming stops. This was achieved in joint effort on the parts of MDOT and the Maryland Transit Authority (MTA). Also reported were the upgrades being made to state owned crosswalk signs. 532 signs have been updated with an additional 410 signs to be improved by 2016.

The committee continued their work with BWI Airport to ensure access for all travelers. To this end, subcommittee members and ODHH staff took an "accessibility tour" of BWI and gave feedback on how to make the airport more accessible for travelers with hearing loss. A prioritized effort on the part of the subcommittee and the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR) will continue to take up access issues that include continued improvements at BWI.

Behavioral Health Subcommittee, Chairperson - Carl Bailey

The Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's Behavioral Health Subcommittee, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, continued to meet monthly to ensure that comprehensive behavioral health services are made available along the entire continuum of care to Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. Collaboratively, the Mental Hygiene Administration, the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration, and the Developmental Disabilities Administration strive to include information on the needs of the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities as the Department moves towards an integrated system of care.

During Fiscal Year 2011, the subcommittee worked to expand its knowledge and understanding of the existing system. Speakers from the Office of Health Care Quality and Value Options, Inc. were invited to share information on how each of these agencies takes responsibility for monitoring and ensuring comprehensive and culturally appropriate services are provided. As a result of the information gained from these presentations, the Behavioral Health Subcommittee revised its letter to Deputy Secretary Henry outlining recommendations for the minimum standards of care for treating Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind population. These recommendations were divided into three tiers: Tier 1 - Minimum Requirements, Tier 2 – Ongoing Improvements, and Tier 3 – Ideal Services.

Finally, the Behavioral Health Subcommittee has continued with its goal of becoming more inclusive to consumers in the system. Outreach with a number of community providers has facilitated a more diverse and representative membership that better reflects the needs of the service system.

MACDHH Membership Roster

Fiscal Year 2011

The Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing ended Fiscal Year 2011 with one vacancy from a State Agency (Maryland Department of Education) and one public member vacancy.

STATE AGENCIES

Maryland School for the Deaf

Lisa Flynn – *Full Year*

Maryland State Department of Education

Sue Griebler, *Resigned – July 2010*

Maryland Department of Human Resources

Carl Bailey, *Full Year*

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Marian Bland, *Full Year*

Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (Formerly the Maryland Commission on Human Relations)

Gary Monroe, *Full Year*

Maryland Department of Transportation

Robin Underwood, *Full Year*

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

John (Jack) Rouse, *Reappointed September
2010*

Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

Sara Muempfer, *Appointed September 2010*

Maryland Department of Aging

Dakota Burgess, *October 2010*

PUBLIC MEMBERS

Citizen / Deaf or Hard of Hearing

George Kosovich, *Resigned, June 2011*

Amy Bopp, *Reappointed September 2010*

Shane Feldman, *All Year*

Carl Davis, *Appointed June 2011*

Nwokoma Sampson, *Appointed June 2011*

Nancy Jenkins, *Appointed, April 2011*

Citizen With Special Knowledge

Laurie Corcoran, *Full Year*

Private Agency

Jennifer Whitcomb, *Appointed September
2010; Resigned, June 2011*

Parent

Cheri Dowling, *Reappointed September 2010*

Citizen with Special Knowledge of deafblind Individuals

Ann Black, *Appointed December 2010*

December 2011

Dear Citizens of Maryland:

The Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) is proud of the accomplishments of both ODHH and the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH) during Fiscal Year 2011. This annual report covers the activities of ODHH from July 1, 2010 until June 30, 2011.

As in prior years, the ODHH staff has remained dedicated to advancing the O'Malley-Brown Administration's goal of promoting equal access for all Marylanders. Through our Outreach, Training, and Program and Policy efforts we have continued to use our resources to increase opportunities for Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind to participate fully in all aspects of community life.

ODHH remains a steadfast contributor to the O'Malley-Brown Administration's vision of *One Maryland* by working to improve the quality of life for Marylanders with hearing loss. Despite the economic challenges we continue to face, ODHH shares the Administration's commitment to making and creating progress. To this end, ODHH continued to reach out to federal, state, and local agencies to provide training about the communication access needs of people with hearing loss while responding to an unprecedented number of requests for information and referral services.

We are thankful for the leadership and vision of the O'Malley-Brown Administration and for their continued support of the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the communities we serve.

Respectfully,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa H. Kornberg".

Lisa H. Kornberg

Director, ODHH



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie Corcoran".

Laurie Corcoran

Chair, MACDHH

ODHH STAFF Fiscal Year 2011



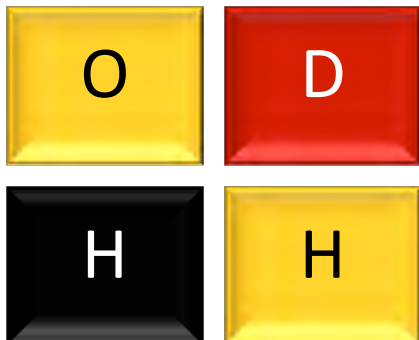
Lisa H. Kornberg, *Director*

Julie Anne Schafer, *Assistant Director*

Laura Quinn, *Special Assistant*

Our Interns

Each year, ODHH welcomes interns from area colleges to help strengthen students' job skills by integrating training with closely related practical work experiences. Though their work often happens "behind the scenes," these interns make significant contributions to ODHH's goal of promoting equal access for all Marylanders. The ODHH staff would like to say a special thank you to the interns who worked at ODHH during FY 2011: Zainab Alkebsi, Cassie Costin, Nicole Dziewanowski, Bobby Harris, Joshua Lamont, and Christopher Sherren. We appreciate your help.



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

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