Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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.

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.

Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2013

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STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

MARTIN O'MALLEY
GOVERNOR

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A MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR MARTIN O'MALLEY

Dear Friends:

Welcome to the 2013 Annual Report prepared by the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH).

In our State, there is no such thing as a spare Marylander. We must make sure that every person has the tools they need to be successful. That's why ODHH is committed to ensuring that people with hearing loss are able to participate in all aspects of community life. ODHH is helping to expand opportunities by providing training, education, information referral, outreach, and policy development. In the last year, ODHH connected with 516 constituents, stakeholders, and government contacts to provide such resources. Through these avenues, Marylanders with hearing loss can have more access to communication, employment, and public safety tools.

Working together with the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, ODHH co-hosted two successful workshops for jobseekers who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or deafblind, in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Held each October, NDEAM is a national campaign raising awareness about disability employment issues and celebrating the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. Maryland is proud to participate in this campaign. In fact, ODHH and DLLR have already made arrangements to repeat the event again this year.

Together, we can work hard to ensure that the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind community has opportunities to grow and thrive. Thank you for your commitment to promoting equal access for all Marylanders.

Sincerely,

Governor

STATE OF MARYLAND
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

August 2013

Dear Citizens of Maryland:

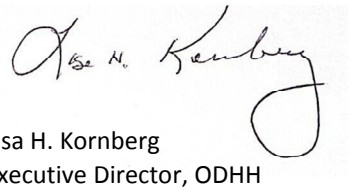
The Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) is pleased to present our Fiscal Year 2013 (FY 2013) Annual Report, which details the accomplishments of both ODHH and the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH). This annual report covers the activities of ODHH and MACDHH from July 1, 2012 until June 30, 2013.

ODHH remains a steadfast contributor to the O'Malley-Brown Administration's vision of *Moving Maryland Forward* by working to improve the quality of life for Marylanders with hearing loss. ODHH shares the Administration's commitment to 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. At the same time, we responded to requests for information and referral services. Furthermore, in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October 2012, we partnered with the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) to launch our first annual workshop for jobseekers with hearing loss. We hosted two separate workshops in Columbia and Frederick, both of which were so successful that ODHH and DLLR are partnering again to offer additional workshops.

FY 2013 was a transitional year for ODHH with its own challenges and triumphs. I was on part-time medical leave and we had staff turnover. I am excited to announce that we welcomed Zainab Alkebsi as our new Deputy Director while bidding farewell to Julie Schafer, who joined the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) as its Director of Public Policy and Advocacy. We thank Julie for her tireless dedication for the past nine years in helping ODHH realize its mission and wish her the best of luck in her new position. We also must thank our state and community partners for their support that kept our Office of three going during these challenging times. The accomplishments of FY 2013 are as much theirs as they are ours.

Finally, we are thankful for the leadership and vision of the O'Malley-Brown Administration and for their continued support to the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the communities we serve.

Respectfully,



Lisa H. Kornberg
Executive Director, ODHH

Sam P. Lenox,
Special Assistant

Julie Anne Schafer
Deputy Director
(left April 2013)

Lisa H. Kornberg
Executive Director

Zainab Alkebsi
Deputy Director
(joined May 2013)

Our 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.

Our 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;
- 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 federal, state, and local governments about the services provided to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind Marylanders.

Our Staff

In addition to the office staff, ODHH welcomes interns from area colleges to enhance available resources and help strengthen students' job skills by integrating education 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 2013: Krystal Johnson, Alycia Olsen, Jenny Roher, Darrin Smith, Neal Tucker, and Jody Williams. We appreciate your help.

Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session

During the 2013 Maryland Legislative Session, ODHH continued to monitor and provide testimony, as appropriate, on bills relevant to our citizens with hearing loss. The Office also hosted its Fourth Annual Legislative Awareness Day.

Fourth Annual Legislative Awareness Day

On February 18, 2013, ODHH hosted its Fourth Annual Legislative Awareness Day. Over 60 people traveled to Annapolis for the day's events, which started with an Advocacy Training to help familiarize participants with the legislative process. The training was followed by guided tours of the Maryland State House. The highlight of the event was the Welcome Ceremony and Awards Presentation with keynote remarks from Lt. Governor Anthony Brown. During the Awards Presentation, ODHH recognized and thanked Delegate Eric Luedtke and Senator Karen Montgomery, both of whom have contributed to and supported Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities. Ms. Ann Black received the Third Annual Kelby Brick Community Leadership Award for her work on behalf of deafblind Marylanders. After the presentation, the constituents in attendance were provided the opportunity to meet individually with their legislators. The day concluded with the House General Session where the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities were formally recognized.

Non-departmental Legislation

On May 16, 2013, Governor Martin O'Malley signed into law two bills that affect people with hearing loss. ODHH provided technical assistance and information on these bills:

House Bill 1176 / Senate Bill 461—Primary and Secondary Education – Online Courses and Services – Accessibility Bill
This bill requires the development, review, and approval of online courses and services to include an assessment regarding the accessibility of the online course or service to individuals with disabilities.

House Bill / Senate Bill 969—Public Safety – Fire Protection and Prevention – Residential Smoke Alarms Bill
This bill clarifies that the installation of specialized smoke alarms is required in specified areas of specific buildings, including visual smoke alarms.

Program and Policy Development Highlights:

- Participated in the Deaf Culture Digital Library (DCDL) Task Force as mandated by FY12 Legislation. The final report was completed by Irene Padilis, Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and has been submitted to the Legislature for review.
- Submitted Comments to the Federal Communications Commission regarding Next-Generation 911.
- Provided testimony at Budget Hearings; ODHH's budget was approved as recommended by the Governor.
- Participated in Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH)'s behavioral integration workgroups and forums to integrate mental health and addiction services.
- Partnered with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) to develop "Train the Trainer" materials for Community Supervision staff.
- Attended meetings for the following Committees, Task Forces, and Councils:
    - Alliance
    - Interagency Aging Council
    - Maryland Department of Transportation – State Coordinating Committee on Human Services Transportation
    - Department of Health and Mental Hygiene – Universal Newborn Hearing Screening
    - Emergency Preparedness and Response Committee, Baltimore City
    - Urban Area Security Initiative, Functional Needs Subcommittee
    - National Council on Disability Quarterly Meeting
    - Maryland Association of the Deaf Board Meeting
- *Maryland Statewide Visual Language Request for Proposals (RFP) Update:*
    - Draft RFP finalized and released; Pre-conference meeting was held; Information posted on DBM and ODHH websites; Response to questions finalized and posted; Amendments to RFP completed; Proposals received November 14th; Proposal review began November 15th and is still underway.

Keeping the Community Informed During Hurricane Sandy

In October 2012, Maryland was hit by Hurricane Sandy, damaging homes and other structures across the State and leaving hundreds of thousands of individuals without power. During Hurricane Sandy, ODHH worked closely with the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Governor's Office to ensure that interpreters were provided for all of the Governor's press conferences. In addition, the press conferences were streamed live on the Governor's website and the interpreter remained in full view for the entirety of the briefings.

ODHH staff also posted information on Facebook and Twitter and sent out e-blasts to our distribution lists to ensure that Marylanders with hearing loss had access to information before, during, and after the storm. Additionally, ODHH captioned all of the Governor's YouTube updates and transcribed the audio for some of the Governor's press conferences. Through social media, we were able to get feedback from community members and respond to questions and requests for assistance.

Constituent Services

There are many ways in which ODHH provides information and referral 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 ranges from locating American Sign Language (ASL) classes to finding financial assistance for hearing aids. We answer questions about how to access government support or how to 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.

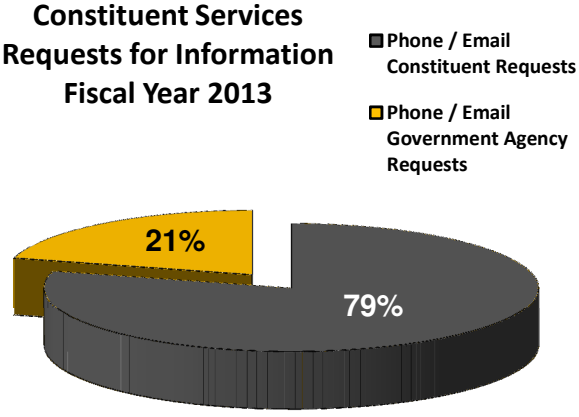
In FY 2013, requests for information from government agencies and requests from constituents and stakeholders both decreased slightly. There are several factors that may have caused a decrease in constituent and stakeholder contacts. First, more information than ever is available on the ODHH website, 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.

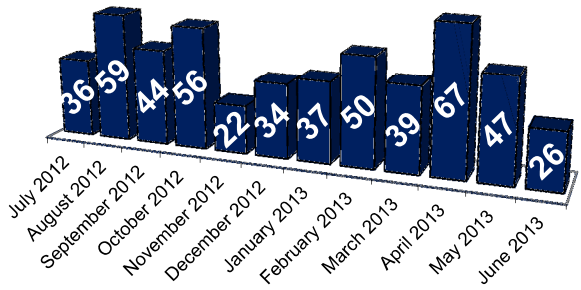
ODHH recognizes that the number of individual requests for information and support services it receives is an integral part of the Office's operation; we are committed to the delivery of timely information and referral. ODHH staff strives to meet or exceed timeliness standards for responding to requests from constituents and stakeholders. It is the goal of the office to respond within two business days to 90% of all requests received. In FY 2013, ODHH received 516 requests for information from constituents, stakeholders, and government entities. Despite our staffing challenges, Office staff responded to 81% 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 FY 2013, ODHH sent out 517 Community Service Announcements reflected in the following table.

Constituent Services Requests for Information Fiscal Year 2013



Constituent Services Announcements Fiscal Year 2013



Training Highlights

ODHH conducts trainings on a number of topics, facilitating an increased awareness about accessibility. These trainings allow ODHH to reach all levels of government, stakeholders, constituents, and nongovernmental entities. In FY 2013, ODHH provided 42 trainings and accomplished the following goals and milestones:

- Began coordination of compilation of hospital kits to fulfill goal of sensitivity training for hospitals;
- Began compilation of contact information for Maryland Hospitals;
- Continued discussions with Department of Aging (DoA) on needs of older Americans;
- Presented training to DoA Ombudsman July 2012, ensuring accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing residents in retirement homes;
- Coordinated DoA contacts with Deaf Seniors of America (DSA) in preparation for the 2013 Conference to be held in Baltimore, MD;
- Assisted Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions (MPCTC) in ensuring that all community supervision personnel had been trained; ODHH developed materials and, at times, provided training;
- Continued to provide training to state and local police on interactions with deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind consumers;
- Provided training to Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) Supervisors on integration of mental health services for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind into statewide services;
- Participated with Maryland Social Media to develop and provide awareness and training about YouTube captioning procedures;
- Coordinated with Department of Aging for integration of programs for deaf seniors;
- Coordinated with Dr. Kathy Heck to schedule State Plan meeting at conclusion of community forums;
- Coordinated with Baltimore Hebrew Congregation (BHC), Johns Hopkins University (JHC), and Hearing and Speech Agency (HASA) to begin initiative to Loop Baltimore;
- Coordinated with Mayor's Office, Visit Baltimore, and DoA in preparation for DSA Conference in Baltimore in August 2013;
- Provided earplugs to Visit Baltimore in anticipation of the Grand Prix for hearing health awareness.

ODHH and DLLR Partner for First Annual NDEAM Workshop

As a result of a unique, exciting partnership with the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, ODHH co-hosted two successful workshops in October for jobseekers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind during National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Over 40 Marylanders were able to participate in the workshops and gain valuable job-seeking knowledge and strategies. Held each October, NDEAM is a national campaign that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. This year's theme was "A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce: What Can YOU Do?"

Both workshops included information on basic job seeking skills and a tour of a DLLR One Stop Career Center. At the workshop in Columbia, Lise Hamlin, Director of Public Policy for the Hearing Loss Association of America, served as the expert presenter on issues facing job seekers with a hearing loss. At the workshop in Frederick, Craig "Hank" Passi, Staff Specialist, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services and Statewide Coordinator for the Deaf for the Division of Rehabilitation Services, was the expert presenter on issues facing job seekers who are deaf. ODHH and DLLR have already made arrangements to host the second annual NDEAM event in FY 2014.

Helping to Raise Awareness on Behalf of the Deafblind Community

The Governor issued a Proclamation in honor of Helen Keller Deafblind Awareness Week during the week of June 23—June 29, 2013. To mark the occasion, ODHH coordinated with the National Deafblind Equipment Distribution Program to raise awareness about a federal grant that helps low-income individuals who have combined hearing and vision loss access telephone, advanced communications, and information services.

The State of Maryland
Proclamation

Website & Monthly Bulletin

In an effort to be in touch with all components of the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities, ODHH made a commitment during FY 2013 to make our monthly bulletins available in ASL. To that end, every monthly bulletin since October 2012 has been accompanied by a video blog in ASL format.

ODHH also continued to update its website. Regular updates included Advisory Council minutes and RFP updates. During FY 2013, there was a total of 20 updates to the ODHH website.

Town Hall Meetings

Three Town Hall Meetings were hosted in FY 2013:

- Hearing and Speech Agency, Baltimore City, September 27, 2012
- DeafNet Deaf Awareness Day, Hagerstown, May 10, 2012
- Eastern Shore Association of the Deaf, Salisbury, June 1, 2012

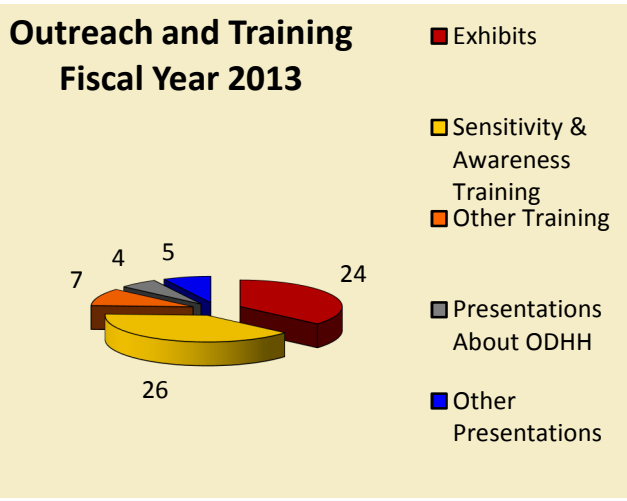
Some of the issues raised by attendees included:

- Medical Interpreting
- Law Enforcement
- Self-advocacy

Outreach Highlights

ODHH's Outreach activities include exhibits, participating in community events, and maintaining an active social media presence. In addition, we collaborate with community partners to expand awareness of issues facing the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind community.

- Facilitated the development of regular "Brown Bag Lunches" (BBLs) so that professionals can share information and resources with each other;
- Provided support to area events, such as Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) Walk4 Hearing; Maryland Association of the Deaf 5K Run/Walk, and Mid-Atlantic Deaf Festival;
- Posted V-logs on voting information on the ODHH website.



ODHH also participated in exhibits, such as:

- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home Open House
- Baltimore County Senior Citizens/Baby Boomer Expo
- Hearing and Speech Agency's Deaf Awareness Week Events

The Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH) was established in October 2001. The Council, which is appointed by the Governor, is headed by a Chair and Vice Chair and consists of 18 members – nine members representing State agencies and nine members representing the general public. There are currently two vacancies on the Council.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER FY 2013

Maryland State Department of Education
Kathleen Heck
Maryland Department of Human Resources
Carl Bailey
Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Marian Bland
Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
Gary Monroe
Maryland Department of Transportation
Robin Underwood
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
John (Jack) Rouse
Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
Sara Muempfer
Maryland Department of Aging
Dakota Burgess

Citizen/Deaf or Hard of Hearing
Shane Feldman
Lisa Jordan
Nwokoma Sampson
Nancy Jenkins

Citizen with Special Knowledge
Laurie Corcoran

Private Agency
Amy Bopp

Parent
Cheri Dowling

The Council meets four times annually to learn about and discuss issues facing individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. During FY 2013, the Council met on the following dates:

1. September 11, 2012
2. December 11, 2012
3. March 5, 2013
4. June 4, 2013

Cheri Dowling was elected as Chair of the Advisory Council at the June 4 meeting. The Council also has three subcommittees that meet separately during the year to focus on special issues. The Council's subcommittees accomplished the following

Behavioral Health Subcommittee:

- Attended Behavioral Health Integration Forums and provided feedback in conjunction with ODHH on the needs of deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind constituents; met and drafted a response to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Behavioral Integration draft report.
- Trained DHMH Supervisors on integration of mental health services for the deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind into statewide services.

Education Subcommittee:

- Hosted a successful regional social event for families on May 1, 2013 at the Frederick Keys game in Frederick, MD. This event offered families who have deaf and hard-of-hearing children the opportunity to gather and meet. The Subcommittee is currently working on providing additional social activities for families around the state.

Communication Access Subcommittee:

- Committee hosted conference calls to discuss communication access issues statewide and developed action items for improvement and advancement.

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