



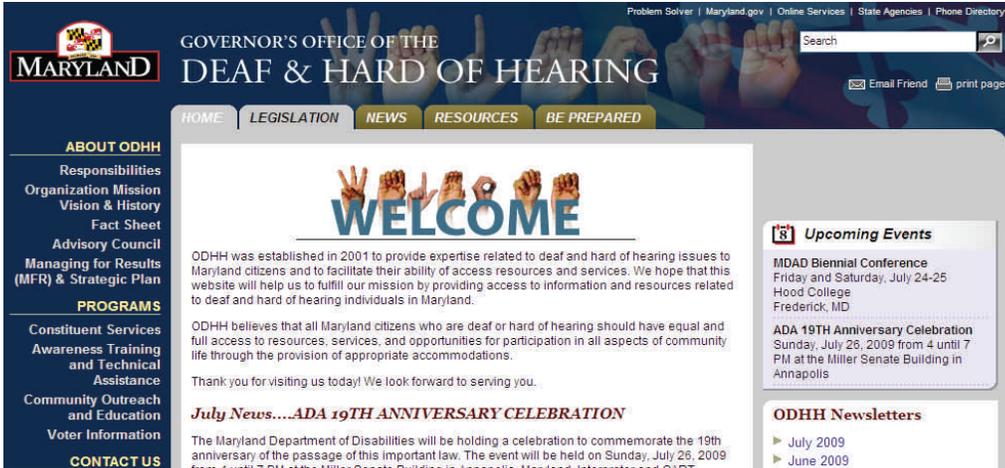
MONTHLY BULLETIN

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AUGUST 2009

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

ODHH LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE



The Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is pleased to announce the launch of the redesigned ODHH website. After months of developing, editing, and reviewing materials, the website is now live. More improvements are coming, but it is ready for your review! You can visit the new website at www.odhh.md.gov.

The new website will continue 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, mental health and substance abuse, sign language classes, senior citizens and aging, and more.

The website provides an opportunity for constituents to submit requests for services and for state and private agencies to submit requests for awareness training and technical assistance. Users can also 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 (coming soon).

In the coming months, ODHH will begin developing and producing video web log (V-log) entries, captioned and in American Sign Language, to be published on the Office's website. Look for videos about ODHH, registering to vote, emergency preparedness, and many other topics of interest to our community stakeholders and constituents.

ODHH believes that all Maryland citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind should have equal and full access to resources, services and opportunities for participation in all aspects of community life. With the launch of the new website, ODHH hopes to promote its mission to represent 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.

As always, ODHH appreciates your feedback. If you have comments, suggestions, or questions about the new website, please email us at odhh.gov.state.md.ud.

ODHH PROGRAMS

- Awareness Training and Technical Assistance
- Constituent Services
- Community Outreach and Education

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ODHH UPDATES AND DIRECTOR'S CORNER

July was an exciting and productive month at the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, as several aspects of the Office received a makeover.

We finally launched the redesigned ODHH website (page 1). Many thanks to Anthony Burrows from the Department of Natural Resources who has been working with us for months to design an appealing and informative website. We hope you enjoy it!

July marked the culmination of another project ODHH has been working on for some time. We now have newly designed brochures to distribute at training and outreach events. We thank Veronica Dorry of the Department of Business and Economic Development for all of her hard work on making a brochure that represents the goals and vision of the Office.

ODHH also hosted 7 interns from a summer camp hosted by Maryland School for the Blind. The interns assisted ODHH staff in a number of administrative tasks, including data entry, preparing materials for workshops and conferences, facilitating document disposal, and assembling promotional items for ODHH outreach events. The staff thanks Forrest, Nick, Mallory, Treasure, Shakita, Alex, and Brittany for all of their help!

Office Staff traveled all over the State to reach out to Marylanders with hearing loss. We participated in the Maryland Association of the Deaf's Biennial Conference at Hood College in Frederick, where we also held an ODHH town hall meeting to solicit feedback from community stakeholders and constituents. I was both humbled and honored to receive the "Distinguished Service Award" from MDAD at an awards luncheon held during the Convention.

Staff also exhibited at the Calvert County Veteran Muster, hosted by the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs and the American Legion Stallings-Williams Post #206. We also attended the TDI Conference, entitled "Where Access Begins," in Washington, DC.

The momentum at the Office is incredible as Laura, Julie, and I work to identify strategies to represent 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.

Best wishes for a safe and enjoyable summer—*Lisa*



PRESIDENT OBAMA CELEBRATES THE 19TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADA BY SIGNING THE UN CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

On Friday, July 24, 2009, President Obama celebrated the 19th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with an announcement of his intention to sign the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Obama also met privately with 12 representatives from the disability community and Administration officials.

The ceremony took place in the East Room of the White House with disability rights champions and advocates. Brenda Battat, Executive Director of Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), and National Association of the Deaf (NAD) members Howard Rosenblum, chair of the NAD public policy committee, and Jeff Rosen were in attendance.

The UN signing ceremony took place at the UN Headquarters in New York on July 30, 2009 with The Honorable Susan E. Rice, Permanent Representative, United States Mission to the



United Nations, and The Honorable Valerie B. Jarrett, Senior Advisor and Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Engagement. Both the NAD and HLAA were invited to attend the signing ceremony.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the United Nations in December 2006, is a binding human rights treaty that, according to HLAA past-president, Marcia Dugan, "surpasses in significance and importance all previous such instruments."

Ms. Dugan, as president of International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH), was instrumental in drafting some of the language of Article 21, Access to Information, which addresses communication access issues for hard of hearing, deaf and deaf-blind people.

The United States Senate must approve the Convention when President Obama submits it for their consideration.

GOVERNOR O'MALLEY PROCLAIMS OCTOBER DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH IN MARYLAND

Governor Martin O'Malley proclaimed October Disability History and Awareness Month in Maryland during the State's annual Americans with Disabilities Act celebration on Sunday, July 26, 2009. Before a gathering of 200 individuals with disabilities, their families, service providers and elected officials, O'Malley signed an Executive Order that instructs State agencies to conduct activities that will lead to increased public awareness and acceptance of people with disabilities.

"Disability History and Awareness Month will serve as an outstanding tool in creating greater awareness, understanding and support for individuals with disabilities," said Governor O'Malley. "By emphasizing disabilities awareness activities in our school systems, we are working toward a future where every person with a disability is respected and valued as a contributing member of our community."



The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD), which works collaboratively with all state agencies to unify and improve services and resources for individuals with disabilities, has been given the lead to increase public awareness of the history of disabilities and the disability rights movement. MDOD will provide information and assistance to other State agencies, local governments, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and institutions of higher education and assist them with the coordination of activities and events throughout the State.

"Through this Executive Order, Governor O'Malley has created a remarkable opportunity for the three departments, MDOD, MSDE and MHEC, to join together in promoting educational programs and activities that will foster an understanding of the long struggle that people with disabilities have had in achieving their civil rights and the chance to pursue their goals," said Maryland Secretary of Disabilities Catherine Raggio.

The Maryland State Department of Education will assist and encourage local boards of education to provide instruction in the history of disabilities, people with disabilities, and the disability rights movement during October of each year.

"College is a time when young people are expanding their worlds, meeting people with diverse backgrounds and experiences," said Maryland Secretary of Higher Education James E. Lyons, Sr. "It is an excellent opportunity for these young people to gain greater insight and knowledge about

people with disabilities and the history of the disability rights movement."

Maryland's institutions of higher education, including the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, Saint Mary's College of Maryland and 16 public community colleges, have also been asked to participate in activities that provide education, awareness and understanding of disability history, people with disabilities, and the disability rights

movement.

During the past three years, the O'Malley/Brown Administration has added \$46 million in state funds and leveraged an additional matching \$46 million in federal funds for the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) budget, most notably so that our youth leaving the school systems can participate in either Supported Employment or a day program. An additional \$20.5 million of the DDA budget was

allocated for the closure of Rosewood as Maryland moves forward in compliance with the Olmstead decision.

Other Administration accomplishments include: increased funding for the Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program by \$4.6 million in FY 2009, bringing the total funding to \$10.4 million and over \$2 million to the Division of Rehabilitation Services, reducing its waiting list by over 54 percent in just 6 months. Last year, Governor O'Malley signed the Fitness and Athletics Equity Act for Students with Disabilities into law, an action that requires all Maryland public schools to allow students with disabilities to try out for sports teams. Believing there is no such thing as a Spare Marylander, the state has also worked to increase employment opportunities for Marylanders with disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was enacted to end disability-based discrimination, and to promote inclusion, full participation, economic self-sufficiency, and equality of opportunity for all people with disabilities. According to the 2000 U.S. Census data, Maryland had approximately 845,000 people with disabilities out of a total population of 5.3 million. In 2006, Maryland served approximately 107,000 students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, a federal law that outlines how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to children with disabilities.

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WWW.ODHH.MD.GOV

ODHH ON THE MOVE

August 2009

Maryland Association of Counties Conference
Wednesday—Saturday, August 12-15
Roland E. Powell Convention Center
Ocean City, MD

Annual Infant Hearing Stakeholders Meeting
Friday, August 14
The Hearing and Speech Agency
Baltimore, MD

HAVE A SAFE SUMMER!



September 2009

Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Quarterly Meeting
Tuesday, September 1
Maryland Department of Transportation
Hanover, MD



Exciting news came for Maryland Deaf Senior Citizens, Inc. (MDSC) at the Deaf Seniors of America (DSA) Conference held at the end of June in Las Vegas, Nevada: the Maryland group won their bid to host the 2013 DSA Conference in Baltimore.

After intensive lobbying and presentations from each of the four competing cities—San Francisco, Houston, Baltimore, and New York City, conference attendees were given a chance to vote of the location of the 2013 Conference. Baltimore came out ahead with a total of 345 votes, defeating New York with 116 votes and Houston (91 votes) and San Francisco (28 votes).

MDSC is wasting no time and has already appointed Lance Fischer as the Conference chairperson.

For more information about Maryland Deaf Senior Citizens, Inc., and for updates about the 2013 Conference, visit <http://www.mddeafseniors.org/>.

ONE MARYLAND: PROTECTING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Governor Martin O'Malley joined Vice President Joe Biden and Attorney General Eric Holder in Philadelphia, where they made a major American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding announcement for law enforcement agencies across the nation. Joined by Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell, New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine, Delaware Governor Jack Markell, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter and Police Commissioner Charles H. Ramsey, the Vice President announced local funding allocations for the COPS Hiring Recovery Program, including more than \$23 million to create 112 law enforcement positions in Maryland.



"We saw the value of COPS program first hand in the City of Baltimore. Once the

nation's most violent and drug addicted City in America, we worked with law enforcement and the people of our City to take our streets and neighborhoods back for our families. And together we achieved a 40 percent reduction in violent crime," said Governor O'Malley, noting that a contributing factor to the success in Baltimore City was a \$24 million COPS grant allowing the hiring of 200 additional police officers.

The O'Malley Brown Administration is putting families first by making public safety a top priority, with 66 fewer lives lost to homicides last year Statewide, the second highest reduction in homicides in nearly a quarter-century. To view the Press Release in its entirety, please visit: <http://www.governor.maryland.gov/index.asp>.