



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

Monthly Bulletin

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Governor O'Malley Promotes Equal Access to Internet Media

The Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) represents the O'Malley-Brown Administration's goal of promoting equal access for all Marylanders by focusing expert attention on enhancing the general welfare of Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind residents. It is our vision that 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.

In this spirit, Governor O'Malley, in consultation with ODHH and Maryland Relay, sent a letter to the entire Maryland delegation to the United States Congress asking them to support H.R. 3101 - the Twenty-first Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2009 and asked the members to work for its swift passage. This bill would ensure that individuals with hearing loss have access to

emerging Internet Protocol-based communication and video programming technologies. You can find more information about the Act at <http://www.coataccess.org/>.

"The Governor's commitment to ensuring access to internet resources for people with hearing loss reinforces a strong principal of the O'Malley-Brown Administration – that there is no such thing as a spare Marylander," said Lisa Kornberg, Director of ODHH.

Governor O'Malley has been proactive in making information on the internet accessible for people with hearing loss. He currently posts transcripts for all video and audio content on his website and is in the process of posting captioned versions of all video so that all Marylanders, regardless of hearing loss, can have full and equal access to information about their government. Check the ODHH website for information and updates about the Governor's captioned videos.

Text Messaging While Driving Ban Takes Effect 10/1

Beginning on October 1, 2009, it will be against the law to write or send a text message while operating a car or other motor vehicle while the vehicle is moving or in the travel part of the road. This means you cannot use your iPhone, Blackberry, or any other device to write or send emails or messages while you are driving.

Under the new law, you can still use your GPS (Global Positioning System) and can send

emergency texts to 9-1-1. But watch out! If you are caught writing or sending a text message, you could get a ticket and have to pay up to \$500.

If you need to send a text message while driving, pull over and out of traffic, type your message, and then get back on the road. Keep yourself and the drivers around you safe.

Want more information? ODHH has a video in ASL on our website. Visit www.odhh.md.gov for more information.

ODHH Updates and Director's Corner



ODHH Director
Lisa H. Kornberg

Summer may be ending for most of us, but the ODHH staff has not taken a vacation from working to improve the lives of Marylanders with hearing loss. In September, Office staff worked on a number of projects, including collaborating with the Governor to draft a letter in support of H.R. 3101 (page 1), working with the Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission to apply for a grant that would provide visual language communicators to officers in the field, and completed a new strategic plan for the Office. The Governor declared Frederick Maryland's Capital for a Day and cut the ribbon to the new

elementary school complex at Maryland School for the Deaf in Frederick.

October is a month for Awareness—it is Disability History Awareness Month in Maryland, as well as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (page 2) and National Domestic Violence Awareness Month (page 3). ODHH continues to seek out resources captioned and in ASL so that you, our constituents, can have the information you need to lead healthy and productive lives.

Finally, the Office welcomed two interns, Michelle Plewes and Sharon Troy Rivas, both of whom will be assisting the ODHH staff with various projects. *fisa*

“An estimated 192,370 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed among women in the United States this year.”

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM) is an annual health campaign organized by major breast cancer charities held every October to increase awareness of the breast cancer and to raise funds for research into its cause, prevention, and cure. The campaign also offers information and support to those affected by breast cancer.

NBCAM is also an opportunity to remind women to have regular mammograms and to generally promote breast health. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women

in the United States, aside from skin cancer. According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), an estimated 192,370 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed among women in the United States this year. An estimated 40,170 women are expected to die from the disease in 2009 alone.

Get the facts about breast cancer. ASL videos (with transcripts and voice overlay) are available at: http://cancer.ucsd.edu/deafinfo/asl_breast.asp

Introducing Real-Time IM Relay

For people with hearing and speech loss, communicating with callers who can speak and hear just went real time. Customers using AT&T IM Relay services now have a new, faster feature at their fingertips: AT&T Real Time IM.

Users log in to a specialized interface that works with an Internet connection on a PC and on many wireless devices. A specially-trained relay operator reads IMs to hearing callers and types IMs which are displayed -- in

real time -- to the end user.

With the new real time IM feature, instead of waiting for the relay operator to type a full phrase or sentence, IM users can see the text messages they are receiving, word-by-word as they are typed -- making conversations feel more like calls experienced by hearing customers.

For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/yczu9ga>

Meet the Advisory Council: Cheri Dowling

Cheri Dowling represents parents of children with hearing loss on the Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She applied to be on the Council because she felt she had a lot to offer from her experiences as a parent of a deaf child and her experiences with the State's Family Support and Resource Center and the American Society for Deaf Children.

As a representative of families who have deaf or hard of hearing children, Cheri has several roles: to take information back to parents around the State and let them know about ODHH; to let the professionals who work with parents know about ODHH so they too can share information; and to bring parents' concerns back to ODHH so their issues can be addressed.

When asked about the issues that were most pressing for families with kids who are deaf or hard of hearing, Cheri named several, including finding unbiased information, learning about all programs available for children, and learning

about all modes of communication and they can be used together. According to Cheri, other issues include parents understanding their rights regarding education, understanding their child's rights, and understanding the technology needed in their homes for their children. Finally, a major issue Cheri identified was finding qualified interpreters for children in educational settings.

Cheri recognizes that one role of the Council is to keep constituents informed. "We can't force people to do things, like becoming involved or participating in activities," she said, "but we can keep them informed so when they are ready to move forward, they will be prepared with the knowledge and information needed."

Cheri welcomes your comments and questions via email at CAD800@aol.com or text at 443-277-8899.



Cheri Dowling

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. There are resources available for victims who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

The Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services (ADWAS) provides comprehensive services to Deaf and Deaf-Blind victims/survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking. ADWAS was founded in 1986 and is located in Seattle, Washington. The ADWAS model has been replicated in 19 Deaf communities across the United States. ADWAS has a hotline with Deaf advocates on duty 9 AM - 5 PM M-F. You can contact them through VP: 69.17.111.201, IM: ADWASHotline, or email: ADWAS@ndvh.org.

One of ADWAS' sister agencies is the Deaf Abused Women's Network (DAWN) in Washington, DC. In the Fall of 2003, DAWN officially opened its doors

and made direct services available to the community. DAWN is the only organization in the Metropolitan Washington, DC area that provides direct services to Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf-Blind survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking. Services include advocacy, client support services, outreach and education, resource referral, and a 24-hour hotline staffed by network advocate volunteers. You can contact DAWN through VP: (202) 223-7959, TTY: (202) 861-0258 (9 AM to 5 PM), or their 24-hour hotline at hotline@Deafdawn.org.

Not a victim, but want to help? Visit <http://deafdawn.org/> and select "Support DAWN" for ways to give to DAWN. Visit <http://www.adwas.org/> and select "Donate Now" for ways to give to the ADWAS.





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ODHH on the Move

October 2009

Howard County Commission on Disability Issues Awards Program
Thursday, October 1, 12 PM—2 PM
Howard County Government Building
Columbia, MD

Grand Opening of New Elementary School Building Complex
Thursday, October 15, 10 AM
MSD-Frederick
Frederick, MD

Brown Bag Lunch for Professionals in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community
Friday, October 16, 12 PM—2 PM
Workforce & Technology Center
Baltimore, MD



** ODHH will be closed on 10/12 in observance of Columbus Day**

November 2009

MRA/DORS Training Conference
Weds-Fri, November 4-6
Wisp Resort Hotel
McHenry, MD

ODHH Town hall Meeting
Friday, November 6, 6 PM—8 PM
Grantsville Senior Center
Grantsville, MD

ODHH Town hall Meeting
Thursday, November 12, 6 PM—8 PM
Hearing and Speech Agency
Baltimore, MD

** ODHH will be closed on 11/11 in observance of Veterans Day, and 11/25-27 for Thanksgiving**



Check the ODHH website for a complete list of the activities of the Office.

Governor Cuts Ribbon to New School for the Deaf Building

Governor Martin O'Malley, Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown and Maryland's Executive Cabinet joined Frederick Mayor William Holtzinger, Frederick County Commission President Jan Gardner, members of the General Assembly, other local officials and area residents to declare Frederick Maryland's "Capital for a Day." The monthly program brings the State Capital to every corner of Maryland through a series of events across a diverse selection of Maryland cities, towns and communities.



The Governor visited the Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) where he helped officially open a new elementary school complex located on campus. The new addition represents a new era for the School and for education of deaf and

hard of hearing students in Maryland. The elementary school complex employs a range of technologies to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students, such as smart boards and acoustic technologies that block outside noise, electronic notice boards at the front of the classrooms that display text versions of the morning announcements, and extra-wide hallways to accommodate for the space needed for conversational signing. It also represents a \$20 million commitment from the State to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children have access to the technologies and educational services they need to be successful and productive citizens. The O'Malley-Brown Administration has provided a total of \$59.8 million to MSD-Frederick.



Users of VRS and/or IP Relay are reminded, if they have not done so already, to register with the VRS or IP Relay provider of their choice as soon as possible, and no later than Nov 12, 2009. After Nov 12, 2009, all VRS and IP Relay users must be registered with a default provider in order to place a non-emergency call through any VRS or IP Relay provider. In addition, after that date, VRS and IP Relay providers will no longer complete calls to a "proxy" or "alias" number that may have been previously obtained from a provider. For more information, go to the FCC Website at <http://tinyurl.com/y8pexgx>.