



**Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Meeting
Deaf Independent Living Association – Salisbury, MD
June 7, 2011**

Attendees: Carl Bailey (DHR), Ann Black, Marian Bland (DHMH), Lisa Brinks (MSD), Laurie Corcoran (DASAM), Cheri Dowling, Nancy Jenkins, Gary Monroe (MCHR), Sara Muempfer (DLLR), Jack Rouse (DHCD), and Robin Underwood (MDOT).

Absent: Amy Bopp, Dakota Burgess (MDOA), Shane Feldman, George Kosovich, and Jennifer Whitcomb (DILA).

Staff: Lisa Kornberg, Laura Quinn, and Julie Schafer.

Guests: George Failla (MDOD)

Interpreters: Jonathan Blackmon, Joy Carney, Carrie Quigley, and Dennise Scott

CART: Steve Clark

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

In addition to the usual introductions, the Council welcomed George Failla, the Deputy Secretary at the Maryland Department of Disabilities as the special guest.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

George Failla, the Deputy Secretary at the Maryland Department of Disabilities, gave a presentation on the development of the 2012 state disability plan. The plan encompassed different policy areas, including housing, employment, education, assistive technology, behavioral health, transportation, children, and family support.

Concern was expressed about a few items in the plan. First, a few members want to make sure that people have culturally appropriate services and are not put into mainstream environment simply because that is what the general disability community sees as the best thing for all children or all adults seeking behavioral health. Mr. Failla agreed, responding that emphasis should be placed on preserving an individual's freedom to choose the best environment to meet their needs but also on making sure that people are not unnecessarily isolated or do not have access to information and services.

A few members also brought up the issue of the “least restrictive environment” and how an “inclusive environment” might mean different things to different people. The Council’s request is to define “least restrictive environment” further. Another idea was to add in something about “communication needs.”

Action: MDOD will take the Council’s suggestions in consideration. MDOD will also put the draft plan up on their website so that people have an opportunity to look at it and provide further comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was not a quorum to approve the minutes so the Council agreed to do it via e-mail.

MEMBERSHIP VACANCIES

There are a number of vacancies on the board so the Chair made a request to everyone to let her know if there were any suggestions regarding other people in the community who would be an asset to the board.

BYLAWS

SB79, which was passed last year, changed the membership of the Advisory Council from 16 to 18 and this has not yet been reflected in the bylaws. Therefore, the board agreed to update the bylaws to reflect the new membership. The bylaws will now have the following changes: 18 members due to the addition of 2 new positions, one from the Department of Aging and a representative from the deaf-blind community. Another change in the bylaws will also reflect the new name of the Advisory Council: “on” instead of “for.” So it is now the “Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.” It was also decided that Robert’s Rules would be eliminated. Furthermore, the current majority of two-thirds will be changed to a simple majority so that it will be easier to have a quorum at meetings.

Action: ODHH’s intern will add said changes to the bylaws and send them out to the board members for voting via e-mail.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Chair requested that the board members review the strategic plan and email her regarding any suggestions they may have. The board agreed to add “deaf-blind” to the wording in the strategic plan. The board also agreed to change the word “Deaf” to “deaf.”

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The subcommittees took about 30 minutes to meet. The following are their reports. Also, each subcommittee worked on the wording of MDOD’s state plan in addition to their usual activities.

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE – Cheri Dowling

Welcome

Nancy Jenkins was welcomed as the new member.

Social Activities

At their last meeting, they talked about doing a social activity for deaf students, along the lines of a fun day at a bowling alley. They were going to do the first one on the shore but that is on hold for now.

State Data

They also discussed tackling the problem of inconsistent data. They have an idea to develop an ad hoc committee to bring people together through the different agencies that have this data—such as DHMH, State Department of Education, Maryland School for the Deaf, DORS, and public schools—and identify what data is out there and what is needed. Then, the ad hoc committee would develop a plan to try to get this data so that we know where these students are

in Maryland and what is needed. The goal is to find out the number of deaf and hard of hearing students in Maryland. That will be the focus of the Education subcommittee.

Action: They will draft a letter to identify who needs to be on the ad hoc committee. Then, they will have a meeting with said people in the fall.

COMMUNICATION ACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE – Julie Schafer

Monthly Conference Calls

They agreed to do a monthly conference call in order to stay regularly connected.

Employment in MDOD’s State Plan

They also talked about employment and how to add to the state plan to make some of their employment recommendations more robust and reflect the needs of our community better.

MCHR

Gary Monroe reported back on some things going on in MCHR, which is soon to be MCCR (Maryland Commission on Civil Rights). He talked about some access issues and also mentioned that he is our enforcer in that he goes to all the restaurants and tells them to turn on the captions while flashing his badge and cards.

CDL

They also talked about the CDL issues of deaf and hard of hearing people being unable to get their commercial driver's license and ways to approach that.

Training

They also discussed with Robin Underwood regarding the potential for ODHH to come do some training in the Department of Transportation. Sara Muempfer also said that she would like ODHH to be at the DLLR One-Stops yet again to train the people there.

Action: They will send out an e-mail to the members who are not here today to try to agree on when the monthly conference call will be.

Action: Regarding employment language in the state plan, an email will be sent out with draft language for the other subcommittee members to review. Sara Muempfer agreed to do this since that is her area of expertise.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE – Carl Bailey

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

They made a set of recommendations to Deputy Secretary Renata Henry at the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) on the provision of services to members of the deaf and hard of hearing community. Marian Bland was supposed to meet with her in March but that has been postponed.

Hospitals

They then turned their attention to the issue of provision of services to members of the deaf and hard of hearing community in hospitals across the state since there were a number of concerns and problems that were brought up. In the midst of that, there were some positive things that came up regarding some good things that have been accomplished in some of the hospitals within the state. So they talked about ways that that could be duplicated across the state. They formed a sub-working group to look at that and create a list of recommendations that can be made on how services can be improved in hospitals to members of the deaf and hard of hearing community.

Trainings

The subcommittee was contacted by Value Options to provide two trainings to their case management clinical staff on access issues and other issues related to the deaf and hard of hearing community.

Action: They will follow up with Deputy Secretary Renata Henry.

“QUALIFIED” INTERPRETER:

A side discussion began about the issue of “qualified” interpreters. Too often, people make the assumption that if one is hearing and knows how to sign, that automatically makes them qualified to be an interpreter when that is not the case. Maryland, unfortunately, does not have a law requiring certification. There was a sub-discussion on the status quo in other states. Some board members also said they had horror stories about bad experiences with non-certified interpreters. Furthermore, federal law states that it must be a “qualified” interpreter but the problem is that it does not define the meaning of “qualified.” The problem is that a lot of well-meaning hearing people who do not know sign language hire an interpreter while having no idea that the interpreter is not qualified. There is no way for them to know whether the interpreter is saying the right words. The deaf person on the receiving end suffers for it.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT and AGENCY REPORTS

Since it was time to wrap up, the Chair requested that the board members review the reports on their own and to email Laura Quinn if they had any changes to make.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday, September 13, 2011 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM at HASA (5900 Metro Drive, Baltimore, MD 21215).

ADDENDUM A

STATE AGENCY AND DIRECTOR'S REPORTS to the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing June 7, 2011

Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) Director's Report

Administrative Key Accomplishments

1. Town Hall Meetings

- Town Hall meeting held May 20th – Hagerstown, MD
- Town Hall meeting scheduled June 7th – Salisbury, MD

2. Exhibits

- Exhibited at State Steering Committee Annual Conference
- Exhibited at BayView, Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Exhibited at DeafNet Expo, Hagerstown, MD
- Baltimore County Association of Senior Citizen Organizations Meeting

3. Legislative Session

- Permanent Hearing Aid Loan Bank legislation approved
- Sent out legislative wrap-up to “Legislative Action Alerts” List Serv

4. Internships

- Joshua Lamont, Towson University, completed his internship at ODHH
- Cassie Costin, Towson University, completed her internship at ODHH
- Zainab Alkebsi, University of Baltimore Law School, continues internship 3 days per week
- **Team Maryland/Education Subcommittee**
 - Participated in Remote National Summit with MSDE, MSD and Local School System representatives
- **Press Office Coordination**
 - Continued to caption videos for Governor's website
 - Reviewed weekly schedule for Governor and Lt. Governor and facilitate interpreters as appropriate
- **Emergency Preparedness**
 - Urban Areas Security Initiative

- **Veteran Outreach**
 - Prince George’s County Circuit Court Veterans Appreciation Ceremony
- **Corrections**
 - Introduced Visual Language Assistant (VLA) project to Executive Director Rapp
 - Assisted Dawn Pearson, Dept. of Corrections, with development of curriculum for corrections staff
- **Visual Language Assistant Grant**
 - Developed draft training power point to accompany VLAs
 - Requested Chief Gerst’s involvement in developing video, letter and training
- **Police and First Responders**
 - Provided S&A Training
 - Howard County Fire and Rescue;
 - Baltimore County Police Academy and
 - Frederick Police Department Academy
- **Behavioral Health**
 - Provided S&A Training to Value Options Staff
 - Finalized revised letter to Deputy Secretary Renata Henry
 - S&A Training, DHMH Special Populations Conference

Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA) Report

Specific Programs, Projects and /or Services Being Developed or Implemented to Address Constituent Concerns

The 3Ps: Planning, Prevention and Preparedness

The Maryland Department of Aging is developing an exciting new public awareness campaign called the 3Ps that encourages baby boomers, older adults, caregivers, adults with disabilities, veterans and the professionals that serve them, to plan ahead for healthy and independent community living. This campaign is a call to action, inviting consumers and communities across the state to take a fresh new look at the Maryland Department of Aging and its statewide aging services network. Over the course of the next twelve months, there will be media alerts and community events that offer updates on health care reform, help with understanding Medicare benefits and fraud prevention, strategies to manage chronic diseases, and ways to enhance overall physical and financial health and fitness.

In response to this campaign the Maryland Department of Aging has launched a weekly radio series: “Living Well with Walter Kirkland.” Using a live radio call in show as the vehicle to

reach a broad consumer audience, listeners can tune in each week and learn what it takes to age successfully. This new radio series will air for thirteen weeks starting April 13 and concluding July 6, 2011 on Radio One WOLB 1010 AM in Baltimore. You'll hear about Medicare, Medicare Fraud, employment, civic engagement, boomer planning, long term support information and services, caregiving, health promotion, chronic disease management, and more. National, state, area agency on aging, and community experts and partners will stop by the radio show each week and tackle complex issues, share their expertise, and discuss relevant programs and services.

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH)

DHMH Legislative Updates:

- HB 97 Behavioral Health - Integration of Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Services. The bill would have required the DHMH Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health and Disabilities to develop a plan by January 1, 2012 to integrate mental health and addiction treatment services. Bill was withdrawn but will likely happen without legislation.
- SB 556/HB1150 – Facilities – Trauma Informed Care. This bill was passed this session. The bill will require psychiatric facilities and general hospital psychiatric units to provide training in trauma informed care and to adopt policies on identifying and responding to sexual abuse and harassment.

Mental Hygiene Administration:

- The Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA) is developing its FY 2012 State Mental Health Plan. On April 29, 2011, MHA's Office of Planning had a meeting with stakeholders to develop goals and strategies for FY 2012. The state's mental health plan is in draft but includes a strategy to work with the Governor's Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing to provide cultural sensitivity and awareness trainings for behavioral health providers in community mental health centers and local health departments. Additional strategies will be added in response to the behavioral health subcommittees' recommendations pending approval of the Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health and Disabilities.
- Mid-shore Mental Health Systems and MHA will working collaboratively to identify a vendor to provide interpreting or culturally competent mental health services for individuals for deaf and hard of hearing on the Eastern Shore. DILA will discontinue providing interpreting services effective July 1, 2011.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration:

- The Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration (ADAA) is continuing to work on the RFP for Deaf and Hard of Hearing patients and anticipates having the official announcement advertised to the public this summer.

Developmental Disabilities Administration:

- The Developmental Disabilities Administration is recruiting for a new Executive Director.

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

Governor Martin O'Malley Announces Emergency Mortgage Assistance for Unemployed Homeowners

ANNAPOLIS, MD (April 1, 2011) Governor Martin O'Malley today announced a \$40 million program to assist homeowners in addressing back mortgage payments. The funding comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development with the goal of helping homeowners who are facing foreclosure due to job loss or a decrease in wages, including those who lost income due to illness.

"Even as we move beyond the fallout of the subprime mortgage and predatory lending crisis, there are still too many families in our State struggling to make ends meet," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "Thanks to our federal partners, this program will strengthen an important safety net for unemployed homeowners and protect the investment they made in the American dream."

"The Emergency Homeowner Loan Program will provide limited and targeted assistance to help working families get back on their feet and keep their home while they look for work," said Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan. "We are pleased to get the program off the ground in Maryland, which is already working to help keep families in their homes during difficult economic times."

The new program provides assistance in the payment of up to 12 months of overdue debt, including delinquent taxes and insurance, and up to 24 months going forward, with a maximum combined total of \$50,000.

"This program is welcome news for the countless people in Maryland who are going through these difficult times," said Congressman Elijah Cummings. "I helped create the bridge loan program to help everyday, hard-working Americans; the same folks who we all see everyday in our neighborhoods. Now, many of them will be able to get the help they have so desperately asked for, straight from the government."

"Too many families are still struggling to find employment and hold onto their homes," said Congressman John Sarbanes. "This program will allow Maryland families to avoid foreclosure until they can get back on their feet."

"This means that homeowners who lost their jobs through no fault of their own will may get the breathing room they need in order to find new employment and get back on track financially," said Raymond A. Skinner, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

Eligible homeowners include those who:

- Are experiencing a loss of employment income because of the economy or a medical condition. Homeowner(s) must have a current income that is at least 15% less than it was prior to the loss of employment.
- Are 3-12 months delinquent on their mortgage payments and pending foreclosure. It must be the first mortgage on the principal residence of the homeowner.
- Have a total household income equal to, or less than, 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI), including wages, unemployment benefits, and other income. (See the Pre-Application Eligibility Checklist on www.mdhope.org for AMI chart.)
- Have a reasonable likelihood (based on industry underwriting standards) of being able to resume mortgage payments within 2 years, when full employment has been regained.

Prospective applicants must meet certain prequalification requirements. Homeowners will be able to access assistance in this process through specially-trained housing counseling agencies approved by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and at various foreclosure prevention events.

Maryland will begin to take applications immediately. Homeowners can get more details on Maryland's Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program by visiting the HOPE website at www.mdhope.org or by calling the HOPE hotline (877) 462-7555 to find a housing counselor in their area for free counseling and assistance.

Since 2007, the O'Malley-Brown Administration has aggressively worked to fight the foreclosure crisis. Maryland has passed what the Washington Post called some of the most "sweeping legislation in the country," giving distressed homeowners more time to work out alternatives to foreclosure. The State has also taken the lead in enacting tough new laws against predatory lending practices. The Administration has reached agreements with multiple mortgage servicing companies to create a streamlined and transparent loss mitigation process; and through Judge Bell, over 1,000 pro bono attorneys have been recruited to assist vulnerable families. In 2010, DLLR secured \$2.5 million in refunds from financial institutions for consumers. In February, Maryland foreclosures reached their lowest levels since April 2007. February foreclosures were down more than 15 percent from January and more than 77 percent compared to the same period last year, according to RealtyTrac. Maryland recorded the second largest rate of decline in the country. The [MD HOPE Housing Counseling network](#) has aided more than 55,000 homeowners at risk of foreclosure since the crisis arose.

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The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development works with partners to finance housing opportunities and revitalize great places for Maryland citizens to live, work and prosper. To learn more about DHCD programs, log on to www.mdhousing.org.

Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) Report

1. Update on Departmental Priorities

- DLLR DWDAL remains fully committed to providing quality workforce services to Marylanders with disabilities. Therefore, DLLR DWDAL continues to investigate funding options to have a Statewide Disability Coordinator for DWDAL.

2. Specific Programs, Projects and/or Services being Developed or Implemented to Address Constituent Concerns

- Prince George's County Workforce Services will participate in technical assistance to implement the Ticket to Work Program within the One-Stop Career Center.
- DLLR DWDAL video series- Overview of the One-Stop Career Centers, Universal Customer Service, Assistive Technology at the One-Stop Career Centers, Serving Customers with Mental Health Disabilities

3. Staff Training/Education on Disability Issues, Cultural Competency, etc.

- Maggie Leedy, one of Maryland's Disability Resource Coordinators for DLLR DWDAL, will focus on providing One-Stop Career Centers with technical assistance and training on disability employment issues of need and significance until June 30, 2011.
 - Late March, 2011- Maggie provided TA to Prince George's County regarding assistive technology for the One-Stop Career Center in Largo, MD- recommended utilization of MD TAP's Equipment Demonstration and Loan Program
- May 26, 2011- Lower Shore One-Stop Career Center staff will show the DLLR DWDAL video titled "Overview of the One-Stop Career Center" and provide training about the new and improved Maryland Workforce Exchange at the Annual Maryland Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies (MAHRA) Conference, during a session titled "Problem Solving for Persons with Special Needs."
- June 10, 2011- Maggie Leedy and Sara Muempfer will provide disability awareness training and resources, to include disclosure training in a career center setting, to 10 REA (Re-Employment Assistance) Program staff (federally grant funded program, serving those hard-to-serve UI recipients)
- June 29, 2011- scheduled training to be given by the MD Relay for Maryland's LEA's (Labor Exchange Administrators)- information and resources will be passed down to the local One-Stop Career Centers; will encourage trainings for staff in the local One-Stop Career Centers

4. Number of Deaf / Hard of Hearing Staff Requesting Accommodations (by WIA)- since January 1, 2011

- Frederick County- 0
- Mid-Maryland- 0
- Prince George's County- 0
- Upper Shore- 0
- Maryland Institute for Workforce Excellence (including the Raising the Bar workforce development conference)- 0
- POAC- 0

5. Number of requests from Deaf / Hard of Hearing Constituents for Services (by WIA)- since January 1, 2011

- Baltimore- 1 (Congressman Cummings Job Fair at the Armory- interpreter services paid for by the Baltimore City Commission on Disabilities)
- Frederick County- 8 (will also have interpreters at their Job Fair on May 25th)
- Mid-Maryland- 5
- Prince George's County- 7
- Upper Shore- 0
- Maryland Institute for Workforce Excellence (including the Raising the Bar workforce development conference)- 0
- POAC- 3

6. Events of Significance

- Maryland kicked off the new and improved Maryland Workforce Exchange on April 18, 2011- the site can be accessed at www.mwejobs.maryland.gov
- 2 other specialized job portals were also introduced in April and May 2011, both can be accessed through www.mwejobs.maryland.gov
 1. Green Jobs- www.marcgreenworks.com
 2. Mil2Fed- www.mil2fedjobs.com

7. Information for Dissemination to Constituents

- Websites of Interest:
 - Maryland Workforce Exchange- Virtual One-Stop, online system: www.mwejobs.maryland.gov
 - Regional Green Jobs information: www.marcgreenworks.com
 - Military to Federal Jobs Crosswalk: www.mil2fedjobs.com
- Videos of Interest (housed on the DLLR website):
 - <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/dpn/>

Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) Report

Update on Departmental Priorities:

- We have collected all the data for our self-study year for the Middle States Association and CEASD Accreditation, and will start putting it together through the summer and

early fall months. Part of the data, a survey which was available to students, staff and parents are on the MSD Website under “Accreditation”. Validation teams will be visiting both campuses in November of 2011.

- We continue working to ensure that each student graduates with a Maryland State Department of Education High School Diploma, and/or has connections to community agencies to seamlessly move into the workforce.

New Programs, Projects and/or Services being Developed or Implemented to Students’ Needs:

- The Work-to-Learn Program, (developed through a grant from DORS), has been awarded a third year of grant support from DORS. WTL has successfully placed more than 30 students in a work environment the past two years and this summer will place 18 students in summer jobs.
- MSD continues to work with MSDE to expand our Program for Deaf Students with Emotional Disabilities. MSDE is working to find a partner who can provide the residential piece of the program so we can serve Deaf students who do not have daily transportation.
- Frederick Campus recently hired Kevin Strachan as their new principal; Kevin was formerly the High School Assistant Principal. Columbia Campus is still advertising for a new principal. There are several administrative vacancies on the Frederick Campus, as well as several teacher vacancies at both campuses as we approach the end of the school year.
- MSD is following the lead from MSDE on the new *Common Core Standards* being developed nation-wide. This includes new standards for teaching English, mathematics, science and social studies and new assessments called PARCC (www.parcconline.org). MSD will be participating in summer training for the new standards this July.

Number of Students Enrolled:

- 492 – This includes Frederick, Columbia and Family Education.

Staff Concerns:

- Class size
- Highly Qualified credentials for a small percentage of faculty
- Student performance

Policy Issues – Transition, or job training, etc.

- None

Significant changes in Budget Impacting Programs/Service (including Grants):

- Enrollment for MSD continues to rise, and we continue to face challenges with a fixed budget.