

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE DEAF & HARD OF HEARING

ODHH Monthly Bulletin

December 2011

A message from Director Lisa Kornberg

It's hard to believe that 2011 is coming to an end - it seems like we were just gearing up for our 10 year anniversary a few weeks ago - and now the year is winding down. It has been an exciting year for ODHH, and we look forward to planning events for next year.

Our Advisory Council will be meeting on Tuesday December 7th in Catonsville, MD and their input, as well as input from the community, will assist us in developing our 2012 agenda.

We have expanded our partnerships with the University community and hosted three interns this past fall. In addition we worked closely with Towson University in the expansion of their service learning class (see article below).

We also have been actively engaged in expanding our training program to State and local agencies. We continue to provide State and county employees the opportunity to increase their knowledge and awareness of diverse communication styles and the importance of planning for access. We are excited about these opportunities to further enhance opportunities for Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities.

We wish each of you a healthy and happy holiday season.
-Lisa



December 1 is World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day is held on 1 December each year and is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died. World AIDS Day was the first ever global health day and the first one was held in 1988.

Studies still show that there is a lack of understanding and comprehension about HIV in the Deaf community, leading to a higher prevalence of HIV among its members of the community. Data shows that Deaf people are on average twice as likely to contract HIV as their hearing counterparts, which is why education about safer sex practices is a valuable tool for decreasing the spread of HIV within the community.

Want more information about HIV/AIDS in ASL? Check out these resources:

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November ODHH Updates



November was a busy and exciting month for the team at ODHH. In addition to answering requests for information and referral, we delivered training to the Baltimore County Police Department and continued our work with the Towson University Deaf Studies Department (see article below). We also participated in the Maryland Association of the Deaf's Biennial conference by staffing a booth, hosting a Town Hall meeting, and providing a workshop about the legislative process. ODHH staff teamed up with friends and family members for the Hearing Loss Association of America's "Walk4Hearing." And ODHH also exhibited at Charlotte Hall Veterans Home's annual

Open House. We also continued working with the Zainab, in addition to her normal research and writing projects, helped answer requests for information and referral, helped with sending out announcements, and worked on several other projects for us. Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions as they develop a "Train the Trainer" module for training corrections staff on how to interact with deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind

inmates.

These are just a few of the many projects and events ODHH staff worked on in November. And we couldn't have done it without the help of three terrific interns. Zainab Alkebsi, Katherine Anderson, and Sam Lenox have really helped the office run smoothly since the Office Secretary position became vacant. All three stepped up by taking on additional responsibilities and working extra days and hours to help make sure ODHH continued to operate efficiently without a third staff person. Zainab, in addition to her normal research and writing projects, helped answer requests for information and referral, helped with sending out announcements, and worked on several other projects for us. Katherine took over captioning the Governor's videos and sending out announcements while answering requests for information, preparing training materials, and working on a number of other projects. Sam took over making sure the office was organized while working on projects like an article for the monthly bulletin and managing the details of our project with Towson University.

A third-year law student at the University of Baltimore, this semester will be Zainab's last as an intern at ODHH. We thank her for her 2 years of service at ODHH and wish her the best of luck. She will be missed. Fortunately, Katherine will be returning next semester as part of her Master of Social Work Program at Gallaudet University. And finally, it is our great pleasure to announcement that Sam, a senior in Towson University's Deaf Studies Department, will be joining the ODHH team in a more "official" capacity as our Office Assistant.

As always, if you have questions or comments about the projects we are working on, please let us know.

Towson University Deaf Studies Department Launches New Service Learning Project this Fall



In an exciting new Service Learning Project launched this fall, Towson University, the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH), and Deaf Shalom Zone (DSZ) collaborated on a two-tier service learning experience for students enrolled in the Deaf Studies Program. Through this innovative project, students spent the first several weeks of the semester working with DSZ to attain real-life experience and personal contact with various deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind consumers. This interaction was the first tier of the learning experience and facilitated an in-depth understanding of the varied needs and diversity of communication methods within the community.

During the second half of the semester, Towson students were trained by staff from ODHH to offer a professionally developed Deaf and Hard of Hearing Sensitivity and Awareness Training module at various sites around the state. The locations range from universities to local government agencies, not-for-profit and faith-based organizations, and health care providers. The trainings are currently being conducted and have a common objective: increase awareness and understanding of communication access issues to facilitate equal access to services, programs, and information throughout the state. The sites, such as Kennedy Krieger Institute, Goucher College, Sheppard Pratt, Port Discovery, and Disability Support Services, are all at various stages of their participation and are appreciating the opportunity to interact with and learn from the students.

Students currently enrolled in the class Social Services in the Deaf Community, under Dr. Sheryl Cooper, are the first to undertake this project. The feedback has been quite positive! There is a mutual sense of accomplishment on the part of the Towson students and the various sites. Dr. Cooper hopes to use this service learning project model as a bulk of the curriculum for her Social Services class each fall semester. The project provides professionals in Maryland with vital information about the communication access needs of

- [What is HIV/AIDS?](#)
- [How can I get HIV/AIDS?](#)
- [What are the Symptoms of HIV/AIDS?](#)

Quick Links

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ODHH on the Move

Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Meeting

Tuesday, December 6
11 AM - 2 PM
Christ United Methodist
Church of the Deaf
Baltimore, MD

**** State Offices will be closed December 23-26 in Observance of Christmas and December 30 -January 2 in Observance of the New Year****

people with hearing loss. As a result, Towson students are able to erase social stigmas and replace them with an understanding that promotes equal access for all.

Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council Seeks New Members



The Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council is recruiting applicants for membership on the Council to fill vacancies.

The Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council (the Council) currently has fourteen (14) members with twelve (12) voting members appointed by the Governor and two (2) ex-officio, non-voting members representing state agencies. A majority of the voting members must be individuals with disabilities who do not work for a center for independent living or any state agency. The Council functions as a partner with the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) and

the Maryland Centers for Independent Living (CILs) to ensure the existence of appropriate planning, financial support and coordination, and other assistance to appropriately address, on a statewide basis, the independent living needs of Marylanders with disabilities.

The Council meets six times per year, usually in Baltimore, MD. Reimbursement is provided for travel, lodging and other approved reasonable and necessary expenses for attending meetings. A term of appointment is three years and council members may serve two full consecutive terms. The Council supports the participation of its members by ensuring that council meetings and activities are fully accessible and providing accommodations to Council members with disabilities upon request.

Applications will be reviewed by and nominees selected by the Council. Nominees selected will be submitted to the Governor for appointment to the Council. This process can be lengthy and new members are not always appointed before the term begins. If you have questions or need further information or assistance, please visit the [Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council's website](#) or [contact Tonya Gilchrist](#). You may also reach her by phone at 410-554-5412 410-554-5412 (Voice).

Questions? Comments? Contact:

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