

## ODHH Monthly Bulletin

January 2012

### A message from Director Lisa Kornberg

Happy New Year! 2011 was exciting and productive for ODHH and it is my privilege to share with you some of our accomplishments over the last year. (See article below.) And while it is important to take time to pause and look back, the ODHH staff and I are looking ahead and making plans for 2012 and beyond. You are an important part of the planning process, so please do not hesitate to contact us with feedback and suggestions.

This month, the 431st Session of the Maryland General Assembly will convene. Over the course of 90 days, legislators will meet and act on more than 2000 bills that effect our state. As always, ODHH will monitor these bills for potential impact on Marylanders with hearing loss. We will also be hosting our Third Annual Legislative Awareness Day on Monday, February 20th. I hope to see you at this important event. Register today, space is limited.

Together, we have accomplished so much. Lets continue our work to ensure communication access as we move into the new year. I look forward to working with you in 2012!

-Lisa

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2011 ODHH Year in Review



[Register NOW for  
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Monday, February 20th  
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2011 was a year of tremendous accomplishments at the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH). Staff continued to work tirelessly to improve communication access for Marylanders with hearing loss by responding to requests for information, presenting sensitivity and awareness training, maintaining an active presence online, and participating in program and policy development with both governmental and

nongovernmental entities.

ODHH staff hosted three Town Hall Meetings, responded to nearly 700 requests for information and referral while continuing to post updates to our website, Facebook, and Twitter. ODHH staff also delivered sensitivity and awareness training around the state. One of the highlights was our partnership with the Maryland Department of Transportation to deliver 7 trainings to over 300 MDOT employees as part of Disability Employment Awareness Month in October. We also hosted our Second Annual Legislative Awareness Day, which drew over 60 participants and packed the Baltimore City Delegation Room in the House of Delegates.



Program and Policy Development highlights include hosting a month-long "Lunch and Learn" program to teach American Sign Language to State employees and assisting the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) in applying for a grant from the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention to create, produce, and distribute a "point to picture" communications aid for first responders. Through the collaborative efforts of MCPA, ODHH, the Frederick Police Department, and the Maryland Police and

Correctional Training Commission, the communications aid was developed, tested in focus groups, and sent to press. It is being distributed to all local police departments along with training materials.



Recognizing that veterans with hearing loss may not attend "live" events because of communication difficulties, ODHH utilized interns from area colleges to collect information about veteran services in Maryland to be used for the MDVA website. The information is now available on the [MDVA website](#).

ODHH also participated in an "accessibility tour" of BWI Airport to evaluate features in place to provide communication access for passengers with hearing loss. BWI staff is reviewing options and requirements necessary to provide access to videophones at the airport. And ODHH began collaborating with the Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission to include Sensitivity and Awareness Trainings to candidates in the Police Academy while developing a "Train the Trainer" Model to be provided to the State Police Training Academy and to Corrections staff.

These are just a handful of the many projects ODHH worked on in 2011. As always, if you have questions or comments about anything we are

