



# ODHH Monthly Bulletin

May 2011

## A message from Director Lisa Kornberg

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month and it's a great time to get your hearing tested. The Hearing and Speech Agency in Baltimore is Offering hearing tests for only \$10 during this month. [Check out their website for more information.](#)

May is also a busy month in terms of events - from town hall meetings to veterans events - ODHH will be traveling around the State to meet with constituents and stakeholders. Check out the ODHH on the Move section of this bulletin to find out more information. I hope to see you at some of these fantastic events.

-Lisa

## In This Issue

### 2011 Legislative Wrap Up

### Maryland Workforce Exchange

### Farewell to ODHH Interns

## 2011 Legislative Wrap Up



### **Captioning of Political Ads**

Senate Bill 22, introduced by Senator Stone, and House Bill 1000, introduced by Delegate Hogan, would have required all candidates running for the offices of Governor, Lt. Governor, Comptroller, and Attorney General caption their political ads. ODHH testified in favor of the bill, but neither bill made it out of committee.

### **Internet Access**

SB596/HB580 would have required that the Internet website of a business that provides goods and services to anyone in Maryland be accessible to people with disabilities, including people who are deaf or hard of hearing. This means that if a business is posting videos online, those videos would have to be captioned. The bill applied only to those businesses with revenues over \$1 million per year.

ODHH testified in favor of the bill in both the House and the Senate. SB 596 never made it out of the Judicial Proceedings Committee and HB580 received an unfavorable report from the Health and Government Operations Committee and was withdrawn.

### **Permanent Hearing Aid Loan Bank**

SB754/HB1013 establishes a permanent Hearing Aid Loan Bank in the State. The Hearing Aid Loan Bank was created as a bridge between newborn hearing screening and early intervention. Its purpose is to provide infants and toddlers under the age of three years immediate access to hearing aids following confirmation of hearing loss



## May is Better Hearing and Speech Month

Since 1927, the American Speech- Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) celebrates Better Hearing and Speech Month each May. This annual event provides opportunities to raise awareness about communication disorders and to promote treatment that can improve the quality of life for those who experience problems with speaking, understanding, or hearing.

This month of awareness is also a good time to analyze your own hearing and determine if you are one of the estimated 28 million Americans who have a hearing loss that can be treated.

For more information, visit <http://www.asha.org/bhsm/>.

## **Quick Links**

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by an audiologist. A six-month loan period may be granted to provide the parents, or legal guardians of infants and toddlers, adequate time to secure permanent amplification through personal resources, insurance, or community assistance programs.

This bill was passed by the House and the Senate and is awaiting Governor O'Malley's signature to become law.

For more information about the 2011 Legislative session, see the [90 Day Report](#), which details the status of all of the bills listed above as well as other legislation of interest. Thank you to everyone who participated in Legislative Awareness Day and testified on bills important to Marylanders with hearing loss.

## Maryland Workforce Exchange Becomes Virtual One Stop Employment Center

To compete and win in this changing new economy, we must continue to harness all of the capabilities in Maryland's Innovation Economy. This month, the Maryland Department of Labor's (DLLR) Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning re-launched the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) - [MWEjobs.maryland.gov](#) - as a more dynamic virtual One Stop Employment Center. The expanded portal provides Maryland jobseekers with more resources and better access to job openings.

Working since last fall, the MWE upgraded to web "spidering technology," which aggregates every job search website, every employer website and every job posting in Maryland. This technology takes our greatest resource - the diversity of Maryland's workforce - and connects it with the employers who keep our State moving forward. Because of this important innovation, job postings have increased by nearly tenfold - to 80,000 per month.

## Thank You and Farewell to ODHH Interns

Each year, ODHH welcomes interns from area colleges and universities who want to learn more about State government and services for people with hearing loss in Maryland. This semester, we had three terrific interns. Cassie Costin and Joshua Lamont came to us from Towson University's Deaf Studies Program and Zainab Alkebsi came to us from University of Baltimore School of Law. Zainab Alkebsi, Cassie Costin, and Joshua Lamont, our three interns for this past semester are continuing on with their education and careers.

Cassie will be graduating this month and will begin her search for a career in deaf services. Joshua will be returning to Towson as a senior and will complete his work on his Deaf Studies and Political Science degrees. After completing her final exams, Zainab will be returning to ODHH to continue her internship through the summer.

All three interns worked indefatigably on the numerous projects undertaken by this Office. Through their work on Legislative Awareness Day, revamping our website, researching local and national laws affecting the deaf community, and a plethora of other tasks, our interns were integral in helping the Office work towards our mission. We wish them the best of luck on all their endeavors, and extend to them the utmost gratitude for their work.

If you know of a student who may be interested in interning with ODHH, please have them contact [Julie Anne Schafer](#) for further details.

### Questions? Comments? Contact:

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[Maryland.gov](#)

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### ODHH on the Move

#### employ-ABLE Career Fair for People with Disabilities

Friday, May 6  
9:30 AM - 4 PM  
Maryland State Fairgrounds  
Timonium, MD

#### Brown Bag Lunch

Thursday, May 12  
12 Noon - 2 PM  
Essex Elementary School  
Essex, MD

#### Deafnet Deaf Awareness Day and ODHH Town Hall Meeting

Friday, May 20  
10 AM - 4 PM  
Valley Mall (near JC Penny)  
Hagerstown, MD

#### Prince George's County Circuit Court Veterans Appreciation Ceremony

Monday, May 23  
2 PM - 4 PM  
Prince George's County Circuit Courthouse  
Upper Marlboro, MD

410-767-7793 (voice)  
443-453-5954 (VP)  
[jschafer@gov.state.md.us](mailto:jschafer@gov.state.md.us)  
<http://www.odhh.maryland.gov/>

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