

*Agency Report    October 1<sup>st</sup> through  
December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014*



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*Submitted by:  
Virginia L. Moore*

## **KCDHH Quarterly Activities**

**October 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014**

### ***Legislation***

2015's upcoming Legislative session is only 30 days of meetings. We will keep close tabs on all bills filled and will comment on bills which might affect the agency or the deaf and hard of hearing community. Senate Bill 2 (SB 2), which has been prefilled, could have a major impact on agency regulatory functions. If passed, the General Assembly (GA) would have authority to resend (void), once they reconvened. Any new or amended regulation already approved through the Legislative Research Commission process. This would significantly delay amendments to our agency's current regulations and possibly cause us to implement procedures or distribute revised forms that could be void the next time the GA meets. Regulations governing the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) are being updated and revised, along with the program's application form. If SB2 passes both the House and Senate and is signed by the Governor the regulation process could take up to a year rather than the current 4-6 months.

We will not be introducing any agency specific legislation for 2015, but continue to work with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to improve the hearing screening process for school aged children. We have met and agreed that modifying the form itself to include a more in depth definition of screening would be beneficial. This might take legislative or regulatory changes by KDE. The Commission Chair, the Executive Staff Advisor and the Executive Director are working closely together to keep this initiative alive. The study group is contacting the Pediatric Associates, Health Departments and other stakeholders to give feedback on the requirements for hearing screening and how the screenings are done in different offices. We hope that this form can be presented back to KDE soon, in a better format for obtaining a true hearing screening. Legislative liaison meetings begin December 15, so agencies within the Cabinet can keep abreast of each other's initiatives and ensure we work together to support each other's projects.

We have also been asked by the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) to work with them to obtain additional funds in their outreach budget. Since this legislative session is not a budgetary session another means must be pursued, and may be difficult until the next budget cycle in 2016 when additional funding could be requested. KCDHH also continues to follow the coverage of hearing aids by insurance companies at the National level to support whatever can be done to insure such devices are covered. Assistance with the purchase of hearing aids is our number one request to the Information, Referral and Advocacy department within KCDHH.

*(3.3 Continually monitor and initiate legislative issues that affect deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.)*

## **Budget**

KCDHH has been put on alert that a budget cut could be required in 2015 as the economy has not rebounded as much as anticipated. The Executive Director, Financial Officer and the Internal Policy Analyst III met with staff from the Public Service Commission (PSC) in December and were advised that due to an automated accounting error made by the PSC accounting system, we will be required to pay back restricted funds that were incorrectly credited to our account since 2011. Hopefully the amount required won't be as much as first anticipated, but this budgetary constraint has caused the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) to start a waiting list for equipment. The Executive Director and the Financial Officer are keeping in close touch with both the Cabinet's budget staff and the Governor's budget staff to determine if additional restricted funds can be requested to reduce the TAP waiting list.

## **Regulations**

Cabinet staff were provided with an updated listing of our Regs Watch listing to fulfill the Small Business Ombudsman Report requirements in December.

During this quarter regulation changes from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) Department of Community Based Services (DCBS) were reviewed:

- 922 KAR 2:160&E. Child Care Assistance Program – Enables CHFS to qualify for federal funds and increases the income eligibility criteria for applicants and ensures that licensed and certified child care providers are used.
- 921 KAR 3:030. Application process – Revises materials incorporated by reference such as the food stamp application, adding language to better understand how to complete the application and which questions are optional. Stronger fraud/abuse penalties were imposed with possible jail sentences of 18 months for violation of the rules, to conform to requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.
- 921 KAR 3:060. Administrative disqualification hearings and penalties – Revise materials incorporated by reference such as notice of fraud/abuse, intentional violation and advise consumers of their rights during a disqualification hearing.
- Protection and Permanency Division - 922 KAR 5:050 – Establish requirements for domestic violence shelters to receive funding and remove the cost sharing requirement to refine the process per recommendations of the Kentucky Coalition against Domestic Violence (KCADV), formerly known as the Kentucky Domestic Violence Association.
- 921 KAR 2:015&E - Supplemental programs for persons who are aged, blind, or have a disability – Increases the standard of need to reflect a cost of living increase and updates training requirements.

## **Educational Professional Standards Board**

- 16 KAR 6:010. Teacher proficiency and acceptance of emergency certification for areas of greater need and requiring full certification within three years  
*(3.3 Continually monitor and initiate legislative issues that affect deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.)*

## **Personnel**

KCDH's Information Office Supervisor transferred to the Kentucky Arts Council effective December 16. Our agencies work together, especially during DeaFestival, and the move should allow for a stronger partnership between us. The vacancy will be advertised. The Executive Secretary II was promoted to the vacant Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing position and the Secretary position is non-merit so the Executive Director will work to find a qualified applicant.

## **Clerc Banquet**



The Executive Director and Internal Policy Analyst III attended the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) Gallaudet & Clerc Banquet on December 4. The banquet is the oldest continuous annual celebration to honor the founding fathers of Deaf education. The Keynote speaker was Beth S. Benedict, Ph.D, who is co-director of the deaf/hard of hearing infants, toddlers and families Interdisciplinary Certificate Program at Gallaudet University. Her specialization tends toward early hearing detection and intervention (EHDI) and she encouraged Kentucky to work closely with First Steps and other stakeholders involved in education for children 0-5. She indicated she would be willing to be a resource for us as we work toward improving these

services statewide. Students at KSD then performed a short play depicting the interactions of Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet as they founded American Sign Language and began teaching deaf students over 200 years ago. The Executive Director also met the new staff within the Kentucky Department of Education that will be working with us, and the Principal of KSD.

*(4.5 Promote staff involvement in the community through participation in deaf and hard of hearing-related organizations and events.)*

## **Kentucky Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Advisory Board**

The Executive Staff Advisor was invited to sit on the Kentucky Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Advisory (EHDI) Board. This will be an excellent opportunity to work closely with various EHDI providers in Kentucky and across the nation. This partnership and resulting information sharing will also assist with the KCDHH Educational Study group as the current focus is on education and early intervention for deaf and hard of hearing children aged 0-3. The National EHDI conference will take place in Louisville March 8-10.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

## KCDHH GOALS



### **KCDHH Goal I: Improve, strengthen and develop services, including communication services and access to human services.**

The Access Center has added a new feature to the KCDHH Interpreter Request form. Many state agencies such as the Cabinet for Health and Family Services need an interpreter for several appointments for the same consumer. In the past they had to fill out a new request form for each separate appointment for the same client. We now have a new feature where agencies can request up to ten different assignments for an individual or a family in a single request. This new feature will save state employees time when entering requests and allow for a more efficient flow of coordination for the Access Center.

### ***National Interpreter Certification Opportunities***

This quarter KCDHH offered eight National Interpreter Certification (NIC) Performance Exams. KCDHH continues to offer stipend slots for the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) national certification exams and the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI). This quarter KCDHH provided one NIC performance exam stipend slot.



*(1.3 Provide national certification opportunities (NIC) within the Commonwealth of Kentucky.)*

### ***University of Louisville Interpreter Training Program Mentoring***

On November 19 the Interpreter Referral Specialist gave a presentation at the University of Louisville Interpreter Training Program (ITP) Mentoring session. The Interpreter Referral Specialist shared personal experiences from participation in an ITP and explained how important interaction with the community is if they want to be a successful interpreter. Some explanation of experiences working at KCDHH was also presented. Then the group watched videos to practice interpreting and feedback was provided on their practices.

*(1.4 Educate and promote current interpreting standards, including Kentucky licensure law, RID Professional Code of Conduct and Access Center policies.)*

### ***Access Center Assignments***

<b>Requests</b>	<b>Filled /pending assignments</b>	<b>Cancelled assignments</b>	<b>Interpreting Hours</b>	<b>Average # of contacts per assignment request</b>
Request for Interpreting	129	12	790	12
Request for Captioning	4	0	12	5
Request for Videoconference	1	0	0	0

## **Telecommunication Access Program Activities**



The iPad pilot project ended June 30 and after review of the program's current budgetary constraints, reapplicants (those individuals that have received equipment in the past four years) are being added to a waiting list, so that first time applicants can be served per TAP mandates to implement priority of selection. Vlogs have been filmed and placed on the website to explain denial letters for those who have received equipment in the last four years. The letters have a QR code on them allowing the person to see the vlogs for an explanation in American Sign Language. All letters, even those to first time applicants that are on the waiting list, now have QR codes on them so the vlogs can be viewed for clarification. The vlogs are also captioned. Contacts are being made with consumers on a daily basis to explain delays and answer questions. The influx of applications has slowed down a bit and we will be catching up with our processing soon, but there will still be an extensive waiting list unless additional funding can be acquired.

In November Great Call announced that they would no longer provide state programs with the Jitterbug, a wireless phone designed to be easy for seniors primarily. Applicants who have selected this device are contacted on an individual basis to pick another piece of equipment. TAP's brochures were revised to remove equipment that is no longer available and explain that iPad's are currently only being offered with wifi. TAP equipment offerings are being reevaluated to ensure we serve the needs of our consumers and still meet our budgetary limitations. New vendor contracts will be bid on this spring and a request for proposals (RFP) is being drafted for posting.

*(1.6 Provide specialized telecommunications equipment to deaf and hard of hearing consumers through the Telecommunications Access Program and promote the use of assistive devices for the deaf and hard of hearing.)*

### **TAP Advisory Board meeting**

The TAP Program Coordinator, Administrative Specialist II, Document Processing Specialist, and Internal Policy Analyst III conducted the TAP Advisory Board meeting on October 23. The board mourned the passing of Ms. Betty Timon on October 2, as she was a long time member of this Board and also held many other positions within the Commission during her 25 years of service with KCDHH. She will be greatly missed, and her vacancy on this Board will be filled with a hard of hearing individual. The meeting continued, by discussing the need for members to show up at meetings so that a quorum is present for voting purposes. A motion was made and passed to allow electronic communications, including teleconference or videoconferences for members to participate if necessary. Statistics were shared, explaining the influx of applications since addition of the iPads to the program and various outreach events that had been presented, resulting in double the number of applications since last year, most of which are first time applicants. Reports were provided on the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program

Administrators (TEDPA) conference and the National Association of State Relay Administrators (NASRA) conference held previously and the networking connections made at both events. Members were asked for input on any equipment they wished to be included ongoing as our vendor contracts expire in May 2015 and a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be posted in the spring to solicit equipment. Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and provide input. The next meeting will be held in April and the individual selected to fill the vacancy will be announced at that time, after approval of the full Commission board. Members were encouraged to pass the word to others that might want to serve and send any recommendations to TAP staff.

*(1.6 Provide specialized telecommunications equipment to deaf and hard of hearing consumers through the Telecommunications Access Program and promote the use of assistive devices for the deaf and hard of hearing.)*

### **Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) Advisory Board**

The Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) Advisory Board met on October 23. Updates were provided by Sprint staff, and consumers in attendance posed questions and were given answers or told they would be contacted with the answer. The Public Service Commission also provided updates regarding collections and a possible increase to the TRS funding source. The TRS Board also needs hard of hearing members, especially CapTel users. A joint announcement is planned and will be placed on the website to solicit new applicants for both the TAP and TRS Advisory Boards.

*(1.9 Continue to develop new partnerships and research ways of streamlining costs of broadband to access telecommunications for deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.)*

### **Telecommunication Access Program statistics**

<b>Request</b>	<b>Applicants Receiving Equipment</b>	<b>Pieces of Equipment Distributed</b>	<b>Pending Order / Waiting List</b>
Applying for STE	62	91	416

<b>Method of Referral</b>	<b># Received</b>
Applied before	51
TV Advertisement	4
Outreach	31
Friend referred	92
Website	25
Newsletter	2
Facebook	1
Referral from another agency	163
Other	37
Billboards	0



**KCDHH Goal II: Serve as a hub of current information from local, state and national resources to provide appropriate information and referral services.**

***Information and Referral Requests***

The Office of Information Services received **5,931** new contacts and **1,494** new requests during this quarter, broken down as follows by category:

Nature	Contacts	Closed Requests	Pending Requests
AC: Evaluations	6	2	
AC: Request for Captioner	65	3	
AC: Request for Interpreter	1702	100	6
AC: Request for Videoconferencing	16	1	
Administration	42	295	2
DeaFestival	15	6	
IRA: ASL & Linguistics	32	13	1
IRA: Deaf Culture	6	2	
IRA: Deafness & Hearing Loss	162	71	3
IRA: Demographics & Statistics	4	2	
IRA: Education	19	5	
IRA: Employment	4	1	
IRA: Families & Children	32	8	
IRA: General Database	2	1	
IRA: Human Services	154	58	
IRA: Interpreting	78	19	5
IRA: Legal Rights of Deaf and HOH	86	14	1
IRA: Outreach	20	6	
IRA: Technology	86	36	1
Information Technology	3	1	
JUST BETTY SURVEY	6	2	
LOANER	2	1	
Library	30	8	
PUB: Communicator	9	4	
PUB: Directory of Services	5	2	
PUB: Visor Cards	16	7	
Special Projects	9	1	1
TAP : STATUS CHECK	1730	16	
TAP: Received Application for STE	2148	36	216
TAP: Repair	28	13	
TAP: Requested a TAP Application	983	469	1
TAP: TAP ISSUES	131	61	3
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>5931</b>	<b>1254</b>	<b>240</b>

*(2.1 Provide up-to-date and accurate information and make appropriate referrals to the public upon request.)*

### **Public Relations Output**

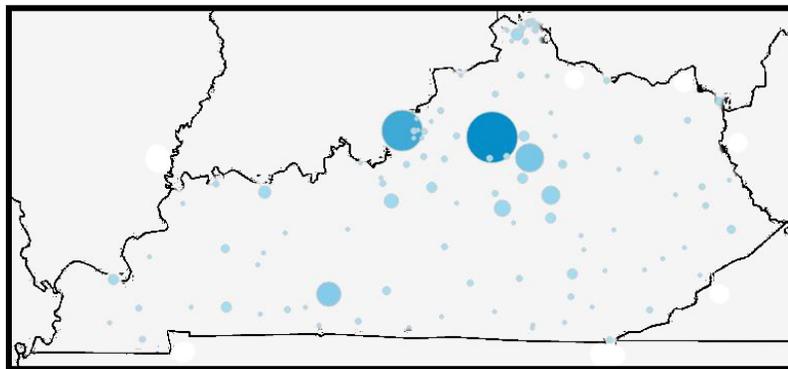
The Office of Information Services focuses on Public Relations (PR) efforts and outreach activities to increase awareness of services offered by the agency. **31,591** information and PR items were distributed during the quarter as follows. There is a significant decrease in the numbers this quarter due to the end of advertising for DeaFestival 2014 and the creation of the new KCDHH Facebook page. The new Facebook page was created after the original page was shut down by Facebook administration. Multiple unsuccessful attempts were made to get this resolved with Facebook administration and it was determined it would be best to create a new page which means all friends have to be regenerated.

<b>PR Dissemination</b>	
<i>Method of Dissemination</i>	<i>Number Disseminated</i>
Hard Copy	5082
Blitz	19,651
Social Media	6858
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31,591</b>

*(2.8 Launch an aggressive PR plan to share information about KCDHH and its programs, and additional programs and services related to the deaf and hard of hearing community.)*

### **KCDHH Web Counter Hits: October 1 – December 31, 2014**

The following image depicts the cities and towns throughout Kentucky from which visitors go to see our Web site. The bigger the circle, the more visits from the area that the circle represents.



The following image lists the top 10 Kentucky cities from which visitors visited our Web site from, the top 10 countries in the world from which visitors visited from and the top 10 pages of our Web site that they viewed. We have had a total of 4,459 visitors from Kentuckians this quarter which represents an expected drop of visitors from the previous quarter (6,849) due to waning interest in the recent DeaFestival.

However, interest in general information, interpreter requests and TAP appear to be steady.

*Note for Top Ten Pages section: /forms/index-cond.html was a development page used for changes in the Interpreter Request form.*

Top Ten Visitor Cities in Kentucky		Top Ten Visitor Countries in World		Top Ten Pages Visitors Viewed	
City ?	Sessions ? ↓	Country ?	Sessions ? ↓	Page ?	Pageviews ? ↓
	<b>4,459</b> % of Total: 61.10% (7,298)		<b>7,298</b> % of Total: 100.00% (7,298)		<b>15,711</b> % of Total: 100.00% (15,711)
1. Frankfort	1,350 (30.28%)	1.  United States	6,501 (89.08%)	1. /index.html	4,469 (28.45%)
2. Louisville	867 (19.44%)	2.  Brazil	332 (4.55%)	2. /forms/index.html	1,238 (7.88%)
3. Lexington	401 (8.99%)	3.  Italy	56 (0.77%)	3. /deafestival/index.html	890 (5.66%)
4. Bowling Green	310 (6.95%)	4.  Canada	37 (0.51%)	4. /oea/whatequip.html	758 (4.82%)
5. Richmond	182 (4.08%)	5.  United Kingdom	31 (0.42%)	5. /ois/signlang.html	733 (4.67%)
6. Danville	121 (2.71%)	6.  Australia	27 (0.37%)	6. /bulletin/events.html	611 (3.89%)
7. Elizabethtown	88 (1.97%)	7.  India	27 (0.37%)	7. /oea/howapply.html	424 (2.70%)
8. Florence	80 (1.79%)	8.  Portugal	18 (0.25%)	8. /forms/index-cond.html	407 (2.59%)
9. Owensboro	71 (1.59%)	9.  Spain	17 (0.23%)	9. /oea/tddprog.html	398 (2.53%)
10. Nicholasville	55 (1.23%)	10.  Mexico	17 (0.23%)	10. /bulletin/index.html	332 (2.11%)

*(2.5 Broaden the Web site to be inclusive of issues and needs of Kentucky’s deaf and hard of hearing community.)*

### **Health Fair**

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Administrative Specialist II attended a Health Fair in Louisville on October 4. KCDHH set up a booth to provide resources about hearing loss and information on TAP for individuals who live in the community. The booth disseminated various printed resources related to KCDHH and its programs and services. There were approximately 500 attendees.

*(2.8 Launch an aggressive PR plan to share information about KCDHH and its programs, and additional programs and services related to the deaf and hard of hearing community.)*

### **Kentucky Career Center Resource Fair**

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was invited to the Resource Fair hosted at the Kentucky Career Center in Covington, Kentucky on October 29. KCDHH set up a booth with general flyers, TAP flyers, and TAP equipment. The Fair was an opportunity for the community and employees at the Career Center to learn about services that are available. Approximately 75 people were in attendance.

*(2.8 Launch an aggressive PR plan to share information about KCDHH and its programs, and additional programs and services related to the deaf and hard of hearing community.)*

## ***The Kentucky Sheriff's Association Conference***



Both Information Coordinators for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended the Kentucky Sheriff's Association Conference in Bowling Green on December 10 and 11. KCDHH set up a booth to promote the Visor Communication Program and communication accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing individuals with law enforcement employees. The conference planner for the Kentucky Sheriff's Association was approached and discussion was held to establish an outlet to present at

next year's conference, so we can reach this niche of professionals that interacts with our community. There were approximately 175 attendees.

*(2.2 Facilitate training opportunities regarding issues that affect the deaf and hard of hearing community.)*



**KCDHH Goal III: Initiate and advise the development of public policy and systems change efforts in cooperation with the Governor, General Assembly, governmental agencies, public and private entities.**

## ***Hearing Loss Association of Kentucky – Kentucky Home Chapter/Bardstown***

The Internal Policy Analyst III attended the Hearing Loss Association of Kentucky Home Chapter gathering on November 14 in Bardstown. The group welcomed Mr. Ed Ogiba, National Director of Chapter Development, and socialized with him during a carriage tour of Bardstown and dinner. The Executive Director also attended the dinner and discussed our current projects with HLAKE and the partnership to produce the second HLAA Kentucky Conference in July 2015. About 48 persons attended and Mr. Ogiba was impressed with the partnership and strength of the Kentucky HLAA Chapters. A workshop on chapter building was also given on November 15 for HLAKE members across the state.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

## ***Hearing Loss Association of America Conference planning***

The Executive Director attended a meeting with the Hearing Loss Association of Kentucky (HLAK) Conference Planning Committee on October 28. Plans are coming together for the 2<sup>nd</sup> biennial conference, which will be held at the Marriott Downtown Louisville in September of 2015. KCDHH is assisting in planning and soliciting sponsors for the event and will provide accessibility services as part of our partnership.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### **Lexington Public Library Videophone Launch**

The Chair of the Access to Videophones in Public Libraries study group, the Executive Staff Advisor, the Information Office Supervisor, and the Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing partnered with a Sorenson representative to hold a videophone launch at the Lexington Public Library on October 17. The study group chair gave a presentation to the librarians and various library staff as well as members of the community at large in regards to hearing loss in Kentucky and the need for effective communication access via videophones or other listening devices such as looping the rooms. KCDHH disseminated printed materials related to the agency's programs and services and refreshments were provided by Sorenson.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### **Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau**

On December 3 the Executive Director and Internal Policy Analyst III attended a luncheon to network with other agencies such as Tourism, and private entities such as hotels. KCDHH functions as the conduit between these providers and national and statewide deaf and hard of hearing community events; such as DeaFestival, Hearing Loss Association of Kentucky conference, National Black Deaf Advocates conference and the National Association of the Deaf conference.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### **Kentucky Hands & Voices Board Meeting**



On October 18 the Executive Staff Advisor attended the Kentucky Hands & Voices board meeting in Louisville. This meeting focused on details of the upcoming second annual Trivia Night fundraiser to be held the first Saturday in November as well as recruiting new parents to get regional leaders and individuals interested in becoming potentially Guide By Your Side (GBYS) parent guides.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### **Hearing Aid Bank Project**

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended to the Hearing Aid Bank project meeting in Frankfort on October 28. The meeting was to give an update of the project. The Rehabilitation Services Administration has been granted approval to assist with funding the project and used hearing aids are currently being collected statewide. All applicants will start with an application to the HearNow program to determine eligibility, and the application fee will be subsidized by the project. If the individual is not eligible for that program or chooses not to utilize it for some reason, they can apply for the refurbished

hearing aids through the project, which is entitled the Statewide Hearing Aid Assistance and Reuse Program (SHARP). Applications to SHARP are anticipated to begin in March 2015. Brochures have been printed, which are being distributed to consumers requesting assistance with purchasing hearing aids. Follow up meetings will be scheduled as needed to keep the project moving forward.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### **Kentucky School for the Deaf Advisory Board Meeting**

The Executive Staff Advisor was appointed by the governor to sit on the Kentucky School for the Deaf Advisory Board. This seat will allow KCDHH to keep a pulse and have a voice on issues and changes at the school.

On October 28 the Executive Staff Advisor attended the Kentucky School for the Deaf Advisory Board meeting in Danville. The focus of the meeting was to determine how all of the future meetings would flow. It was determined that the board would invite various representatives to make presentations to the board related to specific topics the board members feel are of current concern at each meeting. The board will remain flexible with meeting agendas to address any new concerns that may arise as needed. Dates for future meetings were agreed upon.

On November 11 the Executive Staff Advisor attended the Kentucky School for the Deaf Advisory Board meeting in Danville. Several presentations were made to the board related to different topics of concern. The Director of KSD's Outreach for Statewide Support Services gave a presentation regarding the Statewide Educational Resource Center on Deafness partnership with First Steps which will work to provide better support and services to families with deaf and hard of hearing children. The new KSD Principal addressed the board regarding current issues with hiring practices and explained that the new Human Resources employee is working to address certain weaknesses in that area. The K-8 Teaching and Learning Specialist gave an overview of recent changes in the K-8 program and detailed many activities that the students have recently been involved in.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### **Just Betty Project**

A Town Hall Meeting was held in Northern Kentucky on October 24<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with the 143<sup>rd</sup> Commission meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup>. The Town Hall meeting purpose was to solicit support for the "Just Betty" Project as we continue to work to establish an agreement with the Cardinal Corporation to build deaf and hard of hearing accessible housing units. We are still waiting on a non-profit entity to step up and sign the agreement to proceed with the purchase of land and construction. The non-profit would be responsible for



moving the project forward and soliciting project support. KCDHH cannot do this as a state agency, and the Knowledge Center on Deafness (KCD) mission statement does not include a business involvement of this kind. The Executive Director could serve on the Board established to locally monitor the coordination, along with others from the community and members of the non-profit that signs the agreement. Additional meetings are scheduled in January to attempt to finalize the partnership so the project can move forward. Ms. Betty Timon passed away on October 2, 2014 but her legacy will continue through this project.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### ***Mental Health Advisory Board meeting***

The Executive Director attended the Mental Health Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Advisory Committee meeting on November 19. The group began with a networking lunch, and then members were introduced to the Commissioner of the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, Ms. Mary Begley. Appointed by the Governor, she was formerly the Inspector General at the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. The advisory group was able to educate and provide concerns to Commissioner Begley. She appeared to be very interested and knowledgeable as to the responsibilities of the committee.

There was also a presentation from staff with the Kentucky Initiative on Collaborative Change (KICC) which focused on at-risk children's System of Care issues. Kentucky's System of Care (SOC) offers services and supports for children and youth at-risk of behavioral health and/or substance abuse problems. The SOC coordinates multi-agency efforts and resources to provide services to the individual and their families, consistent with SOC principles and values.

*(3.5 Work in partnership with public, private and state providers to improve mental health services for the deaf and hard of hearing.)*

### ***Kentucky Assistive Technology Services Network Advisory Board***

The Internal Policy Analyst III attended as Chair, the Kentucky Assistive Technology Services (KATS) Network Advisory Board meeting on November 19 in Louisville. This board works with other agencies, private entities and the public to ensure that assistive technology is available to individuals. Members discussed expiring member terms and reappointments and elected the Co-Chairs for the next term. The Regional Assistive Technology Centers provided activity updates, as did the KATS Network staff, the Statewide Hearing Aid and Reuse Project, Medicaid, the Kentucky Department of Education/Housing Corporation, Protection and Advocacy (P&A), Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation, Office for Vocational Rehabilitation, Rehabilitation Technical Branch, KCDHH and the Coordinating and Assisting the Reuse of Assistive Technology (CARAT) project. Each participating member/agency provides these updates to ensure that we are working together to provide assistive technology (AT) to those in need across the

Commonwealth and do so in an effective and efficient manner, utilizing each other's programs to maximize access to AT. Redwood AT Center has developed videos describing how to use many AT devices and has loaded them to YouTube and will be adding them to the AT4all website as well. The KATS annual report was reviewed in which it was reported that over the past three years 3,934 individuals have been provided AT for a total of \$933,865. Reutilization has been a huge success and the CARAT project may be expanded in 2015. KATS is working with P&A to expand the Medicaid definition of durable medical equipment to include more AT devices, so coverage can be obtained through insurance companies.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### ***Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation***

On December 10, the Internal Policy Analyst III attended as Chair, the Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) Board of Directors meeting in Louisville. This group reviews applications for low interest loans for assistive technology (AT) devices and works between meetings via electronic communications to approve or deny loans. Hearing aids continue to be the number one AT device people apply for, with modified vehicles second. Fifth Third is the bank that KATLC contracts with to review loans and make recommendations to the board, and their representative provided an update at the meeting. Board members reviewed and affirmed applications since the last meeting and discussed the trend toward denying more applications as credit ratings of applicants have been lower. The financial report was reviewed, and KATLC staff provided updates on outreach activities and investment opportunities future funding contingencies. There have been no defaults in the past quarter and reinvestments with the bank are providing a higher return, securing the stability of future loans. Members discussed the passage of the national Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act; HR 647, and how states will become involved in setting up accounts for applicants if it passes. This act would allow a tax free saving account of up to \$100,000 for disabled individuals (disability acquired prior to age 26), allowing them to accumulate assets while maintaining eligibility for SSI and Medicaid. SHARP is a program within KATLC and has been discussed earlier in this report. KATLC still remains fifth in the nation for providing loans to approved individuals, even though the overall number of loans has decreased. 623 loans were approved in the last three years for a total of \$7,444,330.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### ***Statewide Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children***

The Executive Staff Advisor attended the Statewide Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC) meeting November 23-25. The meeting took place in Louisville during the Council for Exceptional Children's annual conference in order to allow members to take advantage of the multitude of presentations related to special education given over the

three day conference. Due to the conference and presentations, the members of the panel met for one afternoon as opposed to two days. The Kentucky Department of Education staff gave an update on the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and meeting dates for 2016 were approved. An open public forum was held but there were no attendees.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### **Foster Parent VLOG**



On November 24 the Executive Director had a coffee chat vlog with the Statewide Mental Health Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing regarding the need for Foster Parents who can help with deaf and hard of hearing children. Three other vlogs were also developed to promote awareness and stress the need for foster parents. All three are linked and captioned through coffee chat on the KCDHH website. The three vlogs were also provided to the Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental, and Intellectual Disabilities so they can also promote the need and awareness.

Vlog Views	
Foster Care Coffee Chat	171
Foster Care – Statewide Mental Health Coordinator for the Deaf and HOH	132

*(3.5 Work in partnership with public, private and state providers to improve mental health services for the deaf and hard of hearing.)*

### **Statewide Educational Resource Center on Deafness and First Steps Collaborative**

The Executive Director and Executive Staff Advisor met with the Kentucky School for the Deaf Statewide Educational Resource Center on Deafness (SERCD) administrators on November 25 to review the Memorandum of Understanding between First Steps and the SERCD and make any recommendations for changes. A few changes were discussed and a follow up meeting will be held to review again and make any additional changes.

*(3.6 Expand on partnerships with state and national organizations to improve early hearing detection and intervention.)*

### **AT&T Consumer Advisory Panel**

On December 2 the Internal Policy Analyst III attended the AT&T Consumer Advisory Panel meeting in Louisville, held at the ElderServe Senior Center. Members were provided with a tour of the facility and a brief explanation of the work they do, including adult day care programs, computer labs and workshops for seniors. They serve 60-80 people daily. Other members of the panel provided updates including WellSpring, KCDHH, Center for Accessible Living, Attorney General’s Office, Salvation Army, AARP, Better Business Bureau, Urban League, Migrants International and the Judge Executive from Henry County. AT&T staff provided an update on a new campaign called “IT Can Wait” to promote safe

driving by not texting. More drivers are distracted by texting than drunk driving, per a national research institute study. Legislatively AT&T is again pursuing their bill to update the telecom laws so that they can invest more in broadband and VoIP services (digital) and not waste funds on wire lines (analog). They ensure us that this legislation will not prevent any consumer from continuing to have landline/analog services, but as people move and new homes are built only digital services will be available. To relieve some of the fears from consumers they did a survey and found that 70% of Lifeline services are through wireless means currently and 40% of all households have only wireless service, no landline (KY is one of top 5 in nation). KCDHH has taken a neutral stance on this bill until we are convinced that our landline consumers will not be “overlooked” or “underserved” by this change. Members were invited to stay after the meeting concluded to participate in an AT&T sponsored learning workshop for technology with seniors. WAVE TV was covering the event.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### ***Kentucky Functional and Access Needs Collaborative (Emergency Preparedness)***

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended the Kentucky Functional and Access Needs Collaborative meeting on December 9 in Frankfort. The meeting focused on Ebola and a presentation by the Center of Disease Control (CDC) Career Epidemiology Field Officer. Follow up meetings are ongoing as KCDHH stays involved in this statewide collaborative to ensure the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals are met during disasters and emergencies. An updated Directory for Kentucky’s Emergency Support Function (ESF) – 8 Primary and Support Agencies was provided.

*(3.4 Enhance emergency preparedness, response (including mobilization of resources), and the emergency notification communication system for Kentucky’s deaf and hard of hearing persons.)*

### ***Postsecondary Education Programs Network (PepNet)***

On December 10 the Executive Director attended a PepNet meeting at KCDHH. The meeting included community leaders from the private sector, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Kentucky Department of Education, and other stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the framework of the curriculum for children who are deaf and hard of hearing as they transition from high school to post-secondary or explore career options. The curriculum includes college and career exploration during the ninth through twelfth grades, and the importance of developing an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for every student. It was acknowledged that working with deaf and hard of hearing students requires creative development and peer-to-peer mentoring. KCDHH has offered to develop the vlogs with peer youths to educate students on the importance of developing a transition plan.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*

### ***Collaborative meeting with Hands & Voices and University of Kentucky Hospital***

On December 11 the Executive Staff Advisor met with the research assistant for the head of the Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery and Pediatric Ear, Nose and Throat departments at the University of Kentucky (UK) hospital. This meeting was scheduled to discuss how Hands & Voices and KCDHH could work with the Department head and his assistants to help provide resources for families with deaf and hard of hearing children. The UK group is currently working to serve families of deaf and hard of hearing children in Eastern Kentucky. Hands & Voices and KCDHH printed materials were shared with the assistant and follow up meetings will be held on an as needed basis.

*(3.2 Work with state agencies and private sector committees, boards, task forces and organizations in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)*



**KCDHH Goal IV: Empower constituents by providing leadership, training, advocacy, education, awareness, as well as programs and services to foster informed cultural and linguistic choices.**

### ***Individuals Gaining New Ideas To Excel (IGNITE) Leadership Retreat***



The Executive Staff Advisor met with the Western Kentucky University American Sign Language Studies staff and the Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental, and Intellectual Disabilities on October 3 to discuss changes to the schedule for the Individuals Gaining New Ideas To Excel (IGNITE) program. The initial meeting for the IGNITE campers was postponed due to the low number of applicants. It was decided that IGNITE would host a meet-and-greet in January or February with a follow up retreat in the Spring and Fall of 2015. Ongoing meetings will be held to work out the specific details of each event.

The Executive Staff Advisor met with the Western Kentucky University American Sign Language Studies staff on December 16 to discuss final changes for the winter Individuals Gaining New Ideas To Excel (IGNITE) meet-and-greet. The event will take place at the Baymont Inn in Elizabethtown on January 31-February 1. The website, application and flyer is being edited to reflect this change and a huge push will be done the first week of January to recruit students.

*(4.6 Facilitate leadership-training opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing youth in partnership with other agencies and educational institutions.)*

### ***Kentucky Storytelling Association Conference***

KCDHH partnered with the Kentucky Storytelling Association (KSA) for their 2015 Conference held in Bowling Green November 7-8. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> year that we have maintained this partnership. A KCDHH representative typically presents and helps open the Saturday morning program with a presentation on how to work with sign language interpreters. This year the KCDHH representative was a KSA member that is also a professional storyteller and a certified sign language interpreter. She presented on her experience being on both sides of the spectrum, one as the storyteller and the other being

the sign language interpreter for the storyteller. The KCDHH Access Center coordinated interpreters for the event and sponsored half of the cost for this accessibility.

*(4.3 Educate and expose the public to the uniqueness of deaf culture.)*

### **“Everybody Counts” Presentation**

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was invited to the “Everybody Counts” week at Seton Catholic School in Lexington on October 27. The goal was to teach students about different disabilities and the value of everyone we encounter. A presentation was given to 2nd graders and each student was engaged in the lesson. Participants were given a packet of ABC’s, Myths, and color pages.

*(4.3 Educate and expose the public to the uniqueness of deaf culture.)*

### **Hands Alive**



The Document Processing Specialist II, Executive Secretary II, and Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing volunteered at the Hands Alive event in Lexington on October 30. The event is held annually for deaf and hard of hearing students in the Bluegrass region and allows them to interact and participate in a variety of activities geared toward empowerment and positive self-identity. There was a large turnout and the experience was good for all as the students had to communicate with the staff and vice versa.

*(4.7 Expand and improve mainstream opportunities to address social isolation among deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)*

### **Hearing Loss Association of Kentucky**

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended the Hearing Loss Association of Kentucky meeting held at the Lexington Speech and Hearing Center on November 13. A presentation was given by a former HLAK president, about financial assistance/resources for hearing aids. This was an opportunity to learn about new programs that are available and guidance in finding the best option for hearing aids.

*(4.5 Promote staff involvement in the community through participation in deaf and hard of hearing-related organizations and events.)*

### **Deaf Culture Presentation at Spalding University**

On December 17 the Executive Staff Advisor and the Interpreter Referral Specialist gave a Deaf Culture presentation to three Communications classes at Spalding University in Louisville. The presentation was designed to give an overview of deaf culture and hearing loss as a whole. Several of the students knew individuals who had a hearing loss and their stories were shared. One veteran who had recently returned from the Middle East shared his story as well as that of a friend who is now profoundly deaf due to close proximity to an exploding bomb. His friend is currently struggling to accept his hearing loss and desperate for resources. Dialogue was had about various resources that would be beneficial for this

individual and others with similar experiences. Materials were given to participants at the event for future reference, or referral to KCDHH.

*(4.3 Educate and expose the public to the uniqueness of deaf culture.)*



**KCDHH Goal V: Cultivate and maintain an environment where productivity, efficiency and innovation thrive.**

### ***Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf conference***

The Interpreter Referral Specialist, Executive Staff Interpreter and Interpreter I attended the Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Fall Conference on October 3-4 in Florence. The variety of workshop topics focused on ethics, fingerspelling and linguistics. Presenters that were brought in were of a high caliber, creating an excellent opportunity to earn continuing education credits required for licensure of sign language interpreters.

*(5.1 Seek professional and personal development opportunities for staff and commissioners.)*

### ***Flu Shots***



On October 24 the Franklin County Health Department sent two nurses to provide Flu shots to any KCDHH staff member that chose to receive one.

### ***Ornament Exchange and Potluck Lunch with the Executive Board***



On December 12 the agency hosted an annual holiday ornament exchange in conjunction with the Executive Board Meeting. After the meeting, KCDHH staff and board members enjoyed a potluck lunch, and then participated in the ornament exchange.

*(5.2 Ensure the continued, effective collaboration between staff members and Commissioners.)*



### ***Holiday Open House with Signing Santa***



On December 19, KCDHH hosted the annual Holiday Open House opening its doors to the community at-large. In addition to desserts and fellowship, a Signing Santa was on site for children to visit. Many children visited with Santa and each received small gifts and had their pictures made. The event was a great opportunity for interaction among various KCDHH constituents and also an opportunity for many to tour the KCDHH office for the first time.

### ***Governor's Open House / Food Drive***



On December 17 the Administrative Specialist II attended the Governor's Holiday Open House and Food Drive. KCDHH collected and donated food goods and Governor Beshear, his wife Jane, and recently appointed Lieutenant Governor Crit Luallen posed for this photo as they acknowledged appreciation for KCDHH's donation.

### ***Birthdays***

KCDHH celebrated the birthdays of the Network Analyst II, Internal Policy Analyst III, Executive Staff Interpreter, Administrative Specialist II and Information Program Coordinator during this quarter.