

# *Agency Report*

*January 1 through  
March 31, 2012*



TAP



Access  
Center



Deaf Festival  
Kentucky



Information  
Referral &  
Advocacy



Deaf  
Access  
Station

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*Submitted by:  
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## **KCDHH Quarterly Activities**

**January 1, 2012 to March 31, 2012**

### ***Legislation***

The Internal Policy Analyst III attended Legislative liaison meetings weekly to acquire updates on Cabinet issues and legislative changes going through the 2012 General Assembly. Although KCDHH did not file any bills this session, each piece of legislation presented by the House and Senate were reviewed for impact on the deaf and hard of hearing community. Bills of concern were monitored daily and any necessary actions taken by the Executive Director with Legislators.

The Budget Bill (HB265) passed both the House and Senate on March 30 and was sent to the Governor for his signature. Overall, thanks to efforts in the Senate to preserve funds for KCDHH, the agency fared better than most agencies for the upcoming biennium. As of this report, the Governor returned the bill with several line item vetoes, none of which affected KCDHH or the interests of the deaf and hard of hearing community.

On April 6, the Governor signed SB 43, which will provide diplomas to students with disabilities who finish a modified high school curriculum, replacing a certificate currently issued.

KCDHH did not file legislation in the 2012 legislative session, but monitored bills that affected the deaf and hard of hearing community. SB 87, which would potentially have reduced the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) revenue, died in committee. Its aim was to add a telephone surcharge to support access to newspapers for the blind. KCDHH's concern was that the legislature might allocate part of the surcharge already collected for TAP.

The "money follows the child bill" — HB 320 — died in the House Education Committee. The bill addressed flexibility in educating special needs students. If a parent decided that their child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) was not being met by the school district in which they resided, then that parent would have the option to request that the child be transferred to a more appropriate environment and that the SEEK funding for that child would follow them to the new school district.

### ***Regulations***

The Executive Director attended the Kentucky Board of Interpreters (KBI) Board meeting on February 22 to ensure that amendments to the KBI regulations meet the comments provided by KCDHH and do not weaken the licensure law requirements.

After some discussion, the Board members agreed to make some technical amendments to the regulations to avoid delaying implementation past the July 1, 2012 licensure renewal date.

The Executive Director, Internal Policy Analyst III and Executive Staff Advisor attended the Administrative Regulation Review Subcommittee (ARRS) hearing at the Capitol Annex on January 9 and testified to the committee on the amendments filed regarding the Telecommunication Access Program (TAP) regulations. The amendments passed to the next phase of processing and became final effective March 1, 2012. Changes include the requirement that TAP applicants be 13 years of age to apply for wireless devices, allowing Internal Medicine professionals to authorize hearing loss on TAP applications, and other technical amendments.

KCDHH reviewed regulation amendments from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Community Based Services regarding the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and from the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB), regarding certification of teachers, and found no impact on the deaf and hard of hearing community regarding either of these amendments.

### ***Budget***

The Executive Director, Internal Policy Analyst III and Executive Staff Advisor attended the House Appropriations and Revenue Subcommittee meeting at the Capitol in January to be available to testify to KCDHH's budget needs if asked by the Cabinet Secretary. A technical amendment was introduced to reduce the KCDHH budget cut of 8.4% in the bill proposed by the Governor, to a 4.2% cut in the House Committee Substitute (HCS) version proposed.

The Executive Director and the Internal Policy Analyst III attended the Senate Appropriations and Revenue subcommittee meeting at the Capitol in March to provide input to the Cabinet Secretary regarding KCDHH budget needs. Thanks to legislative efforts, the Senate Committee Substitute (SCS) subsequently passed on the Senate floor, restored funds to KCDHH increasing the General Funds appropriations for FY 2012-2014. The final budget bill has been sent to the Governor for line item vetoes and signature.

### ***Personnel***

KCDHH received over 400 applications for the Information Office Supervisor position, but only received four applicants that qualified for the Information Office Coordinator (IOC) position. To facilitate more applicants for the IOC position it was closed and reopened for an additional 20 days, allowing KCDHH to advertise the vacancy again. The Interpreter I position had several qualified applicants and

interviews were conducted. The Executive Secretary II was offered the position. A fourteenth position, Database Processor, was requested in the KCDHH budget proposal, but with the recent cuts, we are unsure if it will be authorized.

### ***Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI)***

The Executive Director and Executive Staff Advisor attended the National Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) meeting March 5-6 in St. Louis, Mo. The EHDI annual meeting brings together a broad cross-section of the deaf and hard of hearing community and advocates. Among those stakeholders were those who work in state early hearing detection and intervention programs, assist in EHDI efforts on the federal level; provide screening, diagnostic and early intervention support at the state/ local level to young children with hearing loss and their families, champion medical home activities within each state, and are parents of children with hearing loss or are deaf or hard-of-hearing adults who are helping to expand opportunities for young children with hearing loss. EHDI meeting participants ranged from advocates in state and local programs to the federal level and from academics to families.

The goal of the annual EHDI Meeting was to enhance the implementation of comprehensive state-based early hearing detection and intervention programs. After participating in the meeting, participants were better able to:

- Identify and promote knowledge and awareness of successful strategies for implementing comprehensive state-based EHDI programs that include screening, audiologic diagnostic evaluation, early intervention, medical home, reporting, tracking, surveillance, loss to follow-up issues, data integration, and other related surveillance components. Interpret and describe current research and research methods related to EHDI.
- Examine cultural competence of providers and assess their ability to work with children who are deaf or hard of hearing, their families, and communities.
- Discuss the importance of enhancing and creating new and ongoing working relationships among federal agencies, non-profit organizations, state health departments and educational agencies, advocacy groups, families, and professionals.

There was some controversy with those in attendance and protesters that indicated that EHDI was promoting “audism”, or discrimination against people who sign as their primary mode of communication. Follow up meetings with the EHDI group have been scheduled.

## KCDHH GOALS



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

### *National Certification Opportunities*

As a supersite for the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), KCDHH hosted 11 performance test dates for 21 individuals and one SC:L written and one SC:L performance examination during this quarter. Dec. 1, 2011, the new NIC performance exam was implemented and proctored by the Local Test Administrator. The new NIC performance exam is now only one hour, down from 2 ½ hours in the previous version of the exam. Upcoming requirements at Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) As of July 1, RID hearing exam candidates must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree (any major) or an approved updated/2012 Alternative Pathway to Eligibility application record in their RID account at the time of testing for any RID performance-based exam. Deaf exam candidates must have a minimum of an associate's degree (any major) or an approved updated/2012 Alternative Pathway to Eligibility application record in their RID account at the time of testing for any RID performance-based exam. This applies to all deaf exam candidates, including those who already hold RID certification.

### **Access Center Assignments**

<b>Requests</b>	<b>Filled /pending Assignments</b>	<b>Cancelled Assignments</b>	<b>Interpreting Hours</b>	<b># of contacts required to fill assignments</b>
AC: Request for Interpreting	117	20	491	12
AC: Request for Captioning	2	1	7	13
AC: Request for Videoconference	0	0	0	0

### *Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) Activities*

<b>Request</b>	<b>Applicants Receiving Equipment</b>	<b>Pieces of Equipment Distributed</b>	<b>Pending Order / Waiting List</b>
<b>TAP: Applying for STE</b>	193	242	69

### *Wireless Update*

There has been a lot of activity associated with Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) wireless device distribution as the one-year pilot program period with AT&T

recently ended. The first group of wireless recipients is now moving over to their own wireless plans.

During the first quarter of 2012, the Executive Director, Executive Staff Interpreter and Internal Policy Analyst III met every Tuesday in person or via teleconference with AT&T staff to resolve problems and work out an ongoing solution for distribution of wireless equipment. Many meetings spent in negotiations of overages, those nearing deadline to transfer services, and the provisions for ongoing eligibility (credit check, deposit, higher rate plans, etc.) Meetings continued throughout the quarter with new policy effective April 1.

Per the wireless agreement signed by applicants on approval, they were notified that they would be responsible for service payments upon exhaustion of their funds. TAP sent out letters to AT&T consumers explaining their service allotment had expired with their wireless devices and they were notified to contact AT&T immediately to transfer their service to their own responsibility or risk disconnection. TAP staff made direct contacts with the 400 consumers in this group to explain the process, via either phone or VP, and gave further instructions. The Executive Director posted two vlogs, in American Sign Language (ASL) with captions, explaining the letters sent out to those consumers and paperwork necessary to complete the transactions.

AT&T was given permission to send out text notifications to those consumers over their TAP service allotment, or nearing the end of their allotment. Consumers were advised to contact an AT&T store to complete the transaction and a listing of authorized stores was placed on the web with the vlog explaining the need to complete these transactions immediately or risk disconnection. Staff began fielding calls from consumers as soon as the text was released. Some confusion ensued, as AT&T stores were not all made aware of the transfer procedures. Staff assisted consumers in completing the transaction as needed.

### ***Other TAP activities:***

Per AT&T request to review the disability section of the telephone directory customer guide, KCDHH and Sprint provided AT&T with comments and updated the information to ensure the guide's accuracy regarding access to interpreters, captioners and video relay services.

TAP contract renewals for vendors were completed and forwarded to the Finance Cabinet as required.

### ***National Deaf Blind Equipment Distribution Project***

The Internal Policy Analyst III provided comments to the Telecommunications

Equipment Distribution Program Administration (TEDPA) regarding Kentucky's application for the National Deaf Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP) grant. As of March 30, the partnership has yet to be notified if Kentucky has been approved. This grant is from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as a result of the passage of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Video and Communications Act (CVCA). The Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) Center on Deafness (COD) submitted the joint grant application in November and will handle the funds if Kentucky is approved. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Office for the Blind, along with KCDHH, will assist in assessment, outreach, evaluation and distribution of equipment by working with the vendors. ECU COD will complete the reporting necessary for the 2-year grant project. Notification should be received in the next quarter with the grant starting in July.

### ***Video Relay Services***

Staff commented on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) further notice of proposed rule-making (FNPRM) on Video Relay Services (VRS) regulations, including input on affordability of broadband services, how VRS meets the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing user, and how VRS companies should be compensated in the future (possibly transferring responsibility to states).

### ***DeaFestival 2012***

Several key elements of DeaFestival-Kentucky came together in this quarter, including the selection of six students whose artwork would be featured on a fiberglass horse statue commemorating DeaFestival-Kentucky 2012.

Last May, KCDHH collaborated with Melody Bock-Freeman, former KCDHH commissioner and artist instructor, to implement a competition for Kentucky deaf and hard of hearing K-12 students. This competition gave students a chance to display their artistic abilities. Brochures and information about the program was sent to all of deaf and hard of hearing instructors, art teachers, district wide coordinators, and superintendents of each school district. The deadline was January 31. Two entries from each category — elementary, middle and high school — were selected on February 17 by three art judges. Then those who have been selected will have an opportunity to duplicate their artwork on the fiberglass horse at the 51<sup>st</sup> Biennial National Association for the Deaf (NAD) Conference July 3-7 in Louisville. Melody Bock-Freeman will mentor each student giving them a one-on-one master class and adding something to their already noteworthy artistic abilities while completing the horse.

<b>Art competition winners</b>	
<b>Name of student</b>	<b>School</b>
Kerwyn Haake	Home school
Jimmy Yeley Jr.	Brooks Elementary School
Hannah Dowd	Anderson County Middle School
Jessica Lopez	Paducah Middle School
Nicole Agro	Greenwood High School
Lindsey Culp	Dixie Heights High School

The Executive Director, Interpreter Referral Specialist and Internal Policy Analyst III met with the National Association for the Deaf (NAD) board on Jan. 19-22 in Louisville to continue planning for the 51st Biennial NAD conference and DeaFestival-Kentucky partnership event.

KCDHH is working closely with the Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau in preparation for both events. The DeaFestival-Kentucky team has drafted a tentative program with performers and visual artists. The DeaFestival poster is complete. DeaFestival meetings were held on January 20, February 7, February 14, February 20, February 27 and March 31. KCDHH also has been working with the downtown Louisville museums and attractions to make sure that they are prepared and accessible to all deaf and hard of hearing visitors not only during the week of the festival but all year round. The Executive Director, Executive Staff Advisor and Interpreter Referral Specialist met with these museums on two different dates to discuss accessibility needs, deaf and hard of hearing rights and culture: the Kentucky Derby Museum at Churchill Downs, Louisville Slugger Museum, Frazier History Museum, Louisville Science Museum, Muhammad Ali Center, and Louisville Glassworks. KCDHH and the Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau have set up training for all hospitality venues such as hotels, museums, and tourist facilities.



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

***Public Relations Output***

The Office of Information Services focuses on PR efforts and outreach activities to increase awareness of services offered by the agency. Quarterly activities included:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of Communication</b>	<b>Topic of Public Relations Announcements and Outreach Activities</b>	<b># Items Distributed</b>
January 5, 2012	Outreach	Police Department requested bulk police visor cards.	20
January 5, 2012	Outreach	Hearing Loss Association of America at Lexington, KY. Items disseminated included: KCDHH flyers, TAP, Deaf Resource Library flyers, DOS and PR items.	60
January 23, 2012	Outreach	Barren River Area Development Distract at Bowling Green, KY. Items disseminated included: KCDHH flyers, TAP, Deaf Resource Library flyers, DOS and PR items.	100
January 25, 2012	eBlitz	eBlitz sent to constituents regarding IRS' ASL/captioned videos covering various tax issues.	3,147
January 26, 2012	eBlitz	eBlitz sent to constituents regarding the DeaFestival page being updated with new DeaFestival 2012 information and videos.	3,122
February 3, 2012	Outreach	Kentucky School for the Deaf's Pancake Breakfast at Danville, KY. Items disseminated included: KCDHH flyers, TAP, Deaf Resource Library flyers, DeaFestival flyers and PR items.	320
February 10, 2012	eBlitz	eBlitz to inform out constituents of two job vacancies at KCDHH, Information Coordinator and Interpreter I.	3,124
February 10, 2012	eBlitz	E-b blitz to inform our constituents about the passing of Chuck Baird.	3,128
February 13, 2012	Outreach	Family Learning Vacation meeting at Danville, KY. Items disseminated included: DeaFestival flyers, KCDHH flyers, Deaf Resource Library flyers, Child ID kit, TAP and PR items	150
February 22, 2012	Outreach	Kentuckiana Regional Planning & Development Agency (KIPDA) at Louisville, KY. Items disseminated included: KCDHH flyers, TAP, Deaf Resource Library flyers, DeaFestival flyers and PR items.	125
March 23, 2012	eBlitz	E-b blitz informing constituents of a KOIN Weather Alert	2,206
March 23, 2012	eBlitz	E-b blitz about upcoming Town Hall meeting in Bowling Green	2,205
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17,707</b>

## ***Outreach Exhibits***

The Executive Director and the Internal Policy Analyst III attended the Barren River Area Developmental District (BRADD) Council meeting in Bowling Green on January 23. The Executive Director gave a keynote presentation during lunch regarding the mission and goals of KCDHH and the programs and services offered by the agency, particularly the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP).

Staff members from KCDHH attended the annual Pancake Social at Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville February 3. The staff mingled with students, alumni and other advocates in the deaf and hard of hearing community, fielded questions from consumers about the state's popular Telecommunications Access Program, and promoted DeaFestival-Kentucky 2012 and the 51<sup>st</sup> Biennial National Association of the Deaf conference in Louisville.

The Administrative Specialist II and Information Program Coordinator delivered the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) equipment demonstration cabinet No. 6 to Bluegrass Assistive Technology Center in Lexington. TAP applications and other informational material were left for consumers and staff to explain about the TAP program. Equipment was demonstrated to staff so they can assist consumers with testing. Consumers are being asked to go to these sites to test TAP equipment if they have a concern with which device to select from the TAP.

<b>TAP Cabinet Locations</b>	
<b>Location</b>	<b>Address</b>
Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (2 cabinets)	632 Versailles Road Frankfort, KY 40601
Northern Kentucky Services for the Deaf	19 West Pike Street Covington, KY 41011
Heuser Hearing Language & Speech Center	117 East Kentucky Street Louisville, KY 40203
Western Kentucky Assistive Technology/Wendell Foster Campus	815 Triplett Street Owensboro, KY 42302
Bluegrass Assistive Technology Center	409 Southland Drive Lexington, KY 40503

The Executive Staff Advisor attended the Green River Firefighters Association Officers School and manned a booth during their "Evening with the Vendors" to disseminate information about our programs and services as well as answer questions related to deaf and hard and hearing individuals. This Expo was for all officers and firefighters in the Green River Area III region. Due to their profession, firefighters are at greater risk for hearing loss themselves, as well as police officers.

## ***Revamping Website***

The overhaul of the Web site is still ongoing. We are nearly finished with the menu and the organization of the site. Next we will focus on updating the content of the Web site throughout. Our overall goal is for a consumer to find the information they are searching for within two clicks of the mouse. We are still investigating ways to effectively and economically transfer our web information to a Hispanic content. However, this is proving to be a bit costly and will have to be evaluated considering agency budget cuts.

## ***KCDHH Web Counter Hits***

According to our Google Analytics Site Usage report, the number of visits from users inside Kentucky during the first quarter of 2012 — 5,861 — increased 27 percent from the first quarter of 2010, the previous DeaFestival year.

Visits from within the state continue to be predictable — evenly spaced, but with most visits coming from the more heavily populated areas. We are starting to see an increase in visits from within the state and especially from outside the state, largely due to the upcoming National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Conference which will culminate in DeaFestival-Kentucky 2012.

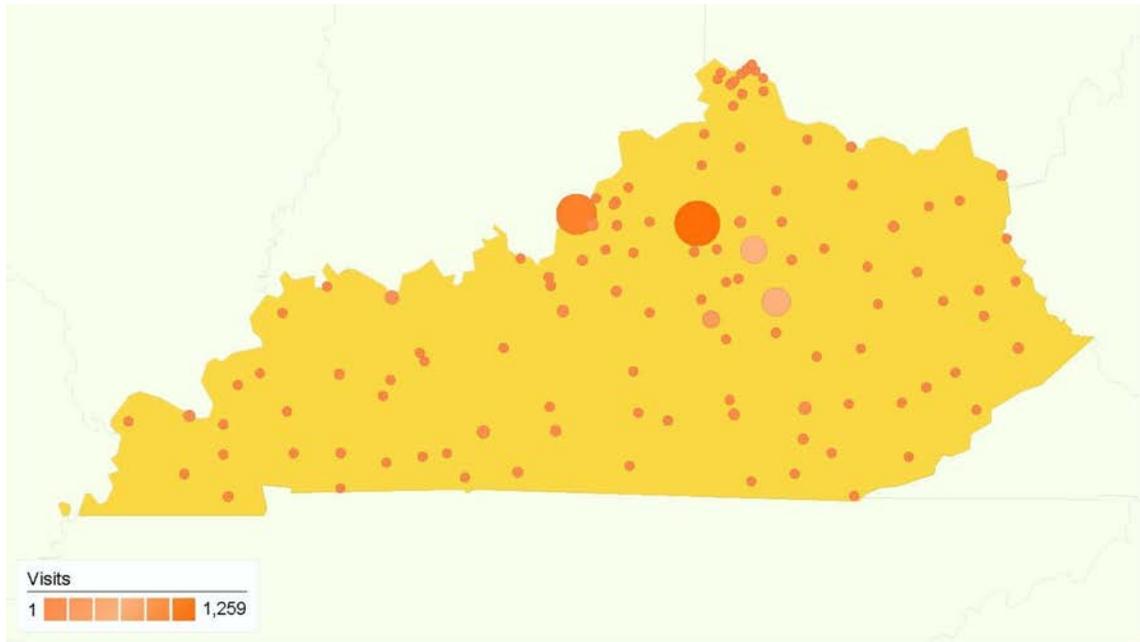
On March 29, the Information Office Supervisor and Information Program Coordinator attended a daylong training in Lexington on the use of social media. Together with Executive Director and Executive Staff Advisor, they may implement strategies to maximize contact with our network of followers on Facebook. As of March 30, the commission's Facebook page had 798 followers. Suggestions were made to add a Twitter account to reach constituents who may exclusively get their social media experience from that platform. Both the Facebook and Twitter accounts can be managed from a free online dashboard program called Hootsuite, which allows users to post simultaneously to Twitter and Facebook. It also can be used to schedule Facebook wall posts and tweets ahead of time, giving the agency the capability to post pre-written items about an event like DeaFestival-Kentucky and have those items automatically be posted on a daily or weekly basis, according to a schedule set by the user. KCDHH is researching the possibility of using this program to post tweets and Facebook announcements and may implement this once a policy is developed.

There are several Internet sites that can help us assess how effective our social media outlets are performing for us. They allow us to “eavesdrop” on Tweet, Facebook wall posts, and other online interactions that mention KCDHH, DeaFestival or other keywords that pertain to our mission.

## Facebook Statistics

As of March 31, 798 Facebook users “liked” the KCDHH Facebook group page. We added 43 new “likes” in the first quarter, up 26 percent from the fourth quarter of 2011. In the first quarter of 2010, the year of the previous DeaFestival, KCDHH’s Facebook page had 642 “likes.”

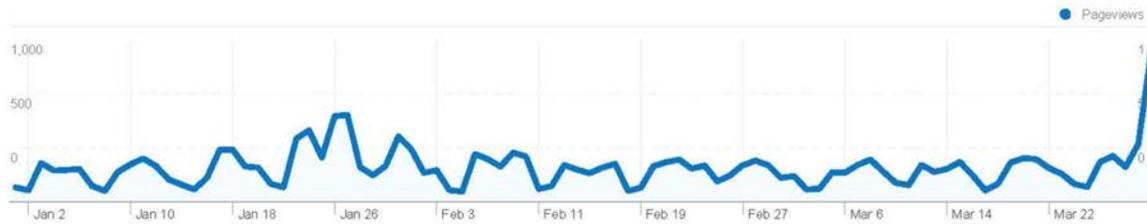
During this quarter, our Vlog recorded 578 hits, possibly because of the TAP announcement regarding AT&T’s change to customer plans.



This state sent 5,861 visits via 115 cities

Site Usage						
Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate		
<b>5,861</b>	<b>2.28</b>	<b>00:03:06</b>	<b>56.34%</b>	<b>52.98%</b>		
% of Site Total: 63.20%	Site Avg: 2.08 (9.72%)	Site Avg: 00:02:35 (20.47%)	Site Avg: 63.28% (-10.98%)	Site Avg: 57.66% (-8.11%)		
City	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate	
Frankfort	1,259	2.50	00:03:50	31.61%	55.92%	
Louisville	1,089	2.13	00:02:41	62.08%	53.08%	
Richmond	680	2.38	00:03:41	40.74%	52.79%	
Lexington	613	2.19	00:02:22	68.52%	53.83%	
Danville	279	2.17	00:02:06	29.75%	35.13%	
Owensboro	150	2.11	00:02:38	73.33%	52.67%	
London	114	2.28	00:02:18	70.18%	57.89%	
Bowling Green	106	2.40	00:03:34	83.96%	52.83%	
Jefferson County	98	2.06	00:03:06	75.51%	57.14%	

We have also just experienced a dramatic spike in visits at the end of March. This is most probably due to the recent changes in the TAP program brought on by AT&T, and our consumers need to access information through the ASL vlog.



### ***Information and Referral Requests***

The Office of Information Services received 1,477 new requests during this quarter.

<b>Nature</b>	<b>Closed Requests</b>	<b>Pending Requests</b>	<b>Incomplete Requests</b>	<b>Incoming Contacts</b>	<b>Outgoing Contacts</b>
AC: Evaluations	6	0	1	27	15
AC: Free Test Slot	2	0	0	4	2
AC: Outreach	3	0	0	12	9
AC: Request for Captioner	2	0	1	18	22
AC: Request for Interpreter	96	21	20	886	768
Administration	3	0	0	3	3
DeaFestival	28	0	1	32	30
IRA : Facebook	1	0	0	2	10
IRA: ASL & Linguistics	5	0	0	5	6
IRA: Deaf Culture	1	0	0	2	2
IRA: Deafness & Hearing Loss	21	1	0	23	60
IRA: Demographics & Statistics	5	0	0	5	5
IRA: Education	4	0	0	4	5
IRA: Employment	0	0	0	0	0
IRA: Families & Children	4	0	1	6	9
IRA: Human Services	13	0	0	15	17
IRA: Interpreting	13	1	4	28	19
IRA: Legal Rights of Deaf and HOH	35	1	0	53	84
IRA: Outreach	9	0	0	10	10
IRA: Technology	34	0	0	34	60
Library	2	0	0	4	2
PUB: Communicator	0	0	0	0	0
PUB: Directory of Services	2	0	0	2	3

PUB: KCDHH Publications	0	0	0	0	0
PUB: Visor Cards	37	0	0	37	63
Special Projects	0	0	0	0	0
TAP: Outreach	4	0	0	4	2
TAP: Received Application for STE	37	1	285	665	1014
TAP: Received Equipment	118	0	0	121	1
TAP: Repair	11	0	1	15	3
TAP: Send TAP Application	421	0	5	425	432
TAP: Status Check (ATT Inquiries also)	212	6	1	253	328
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1128</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>2695</b>	<b>2984</b>

### *Advocacy*

Consumers continue to contact the agency with advocacy requests on a variety of issues. Here are examples of some noteworthy requests of the first quarter of 2012:

- The agency fielded complaints from consumers statewide stating that their doctors or specialists refused to provide an interpreter to ensure effective communication. KCDHH contacted the offices and hospitals, explained the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and provided a listing of qualified interpreters. The services were provided, as requested.
- In response to a request from a person who had been fired from their job, KCDHH intervened with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to get that agency to expedite the case. The consumer complained to KCDHH that the EEOC was not handling the case in a timely manner.
- When one consumer complained that an attorney was refusing to provide an interpreter even though the consumer was paying for the attorney's services, KCDHH contacted that attorney's office and the attorney agreed to provide the interpreter.
- The agency received multiple complaints about the Social Security Administration (SSA) refusing to provide interpreters. KCDHH intervened, explained the ADA and SSA complied.
- A patient was billed by their doctor's office for failing to show up when an interpreter was already contracted. KCDHH investigated the complaint and discovered that the patient had canceled the appointment three weeks prior to the scheduled date, but that the hospital failed to inform the interpreter. KCDHH advised that the contract is between the doctor's office and the interpreter and that the patient cannot be held liable for obvious lapses from the doctor's end.



**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.**

***Senior Citizen topics***

Since the implementation of the KCDHH study group, “Accessibility to Nursing Homes for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing,” KCDHH has presented to several different organizations that represent senior citizens such as Protection & Advocacy, Ombudsman, Office of Inspector General, Office of Attorney General, Adult Protective Services, Guardianship, and Area Agencies on Aging and Independent Living.

KCDHH is working with several nursing homes that have contacted the agency seeking information regarding accommodations for their deaf and hard of hearing residents. The agency has already set up future presentations with other organizations to educate them on the issues and legal rights associated with deaf and hard of hearing consumers. The study group has allowed opportunities for KCDHH to network with organizations that are unfamiliar with the concerns of deaf and hard of hearing individuals and do not know KCDHH’s role as a community resource.

The commission staff took to the airwaves March 7, recording a broadcast with Marilyn Minnick, host of the Savvy Senior radio program on Louisville’s WKJK 1080 AM. The Executive Director, Executive Staff Advisor and Interpreter Referral Specialist answered questions about the agency’s role in the state, the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP), misconceptions about hearing loss, deaf and hard of hearing rights, and the upcoming NAD conference and DeaFestival-Kentucky 2012. The show aired on March 10.

On January 18 the Executive Director and Interpreter Referral Specialist made a presentation at the Northern Multiagency Regional, which discussed deaf and hard of hearing awareness training and how to use the services that are already set up in Kentucky for their deaf and hard of hearing consumers. On February 22 the Executive Staff Advisor and Interpreter Referral Specialist presented to the Kentuckiana Regional Planning & Development Agency (KIPDA). KIPDA provides regional planning, review and technical services in the areas of public administration, social services and transportation as well as community ridesharing programs.

***Addressing Service Needs Study Group***

The Executive Staff Interpreter serves as liaison for this study group and a quarterly report is provided in the Agency Report packet.

### ***K-12 Education Study Group***

The Executive Staff Advisor serves as liaison for this study group and a quarterly report is provided in the Agency Report packet.

### ***Nursing Home Study Group***

The Interpreter Referral Specialist serves as liaison for this study group and a quarterly report is provided in the Agency Report packet.

### ***Emergency Preparedness***

In the wake of severe weather in late February, and the tornadoes that destroyed parts of Eastern Kentucky in early March, KCDHH monitored operations by the Commonwealth Emergency Operations Center daily from February 29 to March 29 regarding recovery operations and disaster resources available to individuals impacted by severe weather during that time. We worked with the Governor's Office and sent an interpreter to the command center during the disaster period, to provide access to the Governor's announcements. KCDHH continues to work in conjunction with Emergency Management personnel to ensure the needs of deaf or hard of hearing individuals impacted by such disasters are met immediately, including those that may be sustained in shelters during an emergency.

The Information Office Supervisor and the Internal Policy Analyst III met with Michael Houston from the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) regarding providing services to those impacted by the storms that have a disability. Deaf himself, Mr. Houston is familiar with the needs of the community and agreed to work with KCDHH now and in the future to ensure the needs of our community are met during disasters and emergencies. The Executive Director met with him on March 20 to follow up regarding assistance KCDHH can provide him with, interpreters in the field, and the needs of individuals in shelters. We agreed to serve on a resource planning committee that FEMA has coordinated to work with local and state agencies to ensure the needs of our community are met.

At a January 18 seminar presented by the Community Emergency Preparedness Information Network (CEPIN) and the Inclusive Preparedness Center (IPC) on fire prevention and safety related to deaf and hard of hearing individuals and families, the Executive Staff Advisor and Information Office Supervisor learned of a FEMA grant to pay for smoke alarms for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. In addition to distributing the smoke alarms, the grant also covers an educational component that, when implemented, will empower the deaf and hard of hearing community to come up with emergency escape plans in their own homes in the event of a fire. The educational component puts firefighters and other first responders together with deaf

and hard of hearing individuals and families, where, together, they will come up with emergency evacuation plans for their respective homes. It is very rare for anyone — even in the hearing community — to get to interact face to face with firefighters in a nonemergency situation. This kind of educational component serves two functions: it lets municipal fire officials know that there is a deaf and hard of hearing population to be served in their community and it gives the deaf and hard of hearing community a chance to let fire personnel know their needs as it relates to fire and emergency service. KCDHH staff was given several copies of Action Planners, to be distributed at the Commission office. These planners walk families through steps to establish an escape route and emergency plan in the event of a fire. The planners also are available as PDFs, which were made available for download on the KCDHH website.

Following up on that meeting, Commission staff met with the Executive Director of the Kentucky Fire Commission, and the State Fire Rescue Training Division Director, to discuss KCDHH collaborating with the state fire commission in applying for a grant to purchase smoke detectors for deaf and hard of hearing households in Kentucky. The KCDHH Executive Director gave the fire officials demographic information on the state's deaf and hard of hearing population — 647,000 current deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians; 1 in 5 young people will develop a significant hearing loss — which underscored the need for being proactive in disseminating fire safety equipment and information to the deaf and hard of hearing community. The representatives expressed their support in joining with KCDHH in applying for a FEMA/Homeland Security grant. Success in getting grant funding likely will depend on developing an effective way to follow-up with the smoke alarm recipients to make sure that they have properly installed the equipment, have tested it and have formulated their own plans for escaping their homes in case of a fire or other emergency. KCDHH has submitted requests for quotes from three different companies: Lifetone, Silentcall, and SafeAwake. As of March 30, only Lifetone had provided a quote. This number is critical to determining how much money we need to request in the grant proposal.

The Information Office Supervisor is also researching other groups across the country that were successful in their grant proposals. Those groups include the Oklahoma Assistive Technology Foundation, the Mississippi Department of Insurance and State Fire Marshal's Office, the Institution of Fire Engineers (Vision 20/20 program) and the State Fire and Building Safety Division of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. It was suggested that successful applications to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) include an educational component because DHS prefers the money go to programs that will educate and equip a segment of the target population rather than just hand out free equipment.

Information Office Supervisor, as the point of contact, completed a subcommittee selection survey for the Kentucky Functional Needs Coalition (KFNC) regarding

preference for service to meet 2012 goals. KCDHH serves on this coalition as part of the Public Health Preparedness group activities to ensure the needs of deaf and hard of hearing consumers are met during emergencies.

### ***Kentucky Hospital Association***

The Executive Staff Interpreter attended two meetings of the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) board in Louisville. A four-hour cultural competence course highlighted the board's January 13 meeting. The course was designed for anyone who encounters people of varying cultures on a regular basis. In an independent rating of Norton University courses conducted by Evaluation Works, the course received the highest rating in "total satisfaction for general leadership courses."

At the March 9 KHA board meeting a guest speaker gave a presentation titled "What's the basis for a good hospital interpreter program?" The board began its individual committee work. The Executive Interpreter was part of the "Interpreter Agency Audits/Brainstorming results", a part of the board's "Effective Communications in Hospitals" goals. Consensus from the meeting was that there would eventually be an interpreter agency "request for proposals" form written for hospitals.

KCDHH's involvement with KHA has encouraged hospitals to be more understanding of their need for interpreters, especially those hospitals partnering to consider a full-time staff interpreter. In March Jewish Hospital announced it had hired a full-time ASL medical interpreter. The interpreter will be available Monday through Friday during first shift. She also will facilitate use of a video remote interpreter service and other resources to meet patient needs. KCDHH's work with groups like the Kentucky Human Rights Commission has helped bring the need for medical interpreters in those hospital settings to light.

### ***Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC)***

The Internal Policy Analyst III, serving as Chair, attended the Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) Board of Directors meeting in Louisville on March 22. The Board reviewed the 5/3 Bank report, verified loan approval and denials conducted via email in the last quarter, reviewed the financial report, marketing activities and consumer satisfaction reports. One consumer who had filed an appeal was heard and with additional documentation provided the denial was overturned and the loan request for hearing aids was approved. KATLC was recognized in the national Alternative Financing Program "A Decade of Making a Difference" report, with a Kentucky consumer featured testifying to how the loan acquired made a substantial difference in his life and future. KATLC continues to be one of the top five most successful programs in the nation.

The Internal Policy Analyst III attended the KATLC Board retreat held at General Butler State Resort Park March 27-28. Members reviewed and made final changes to the bank renewal agreement on March 27 and worked on Kentucky Administrative Regulation amendments to update current policy and procedures for KATLC into the state regulations on March 28. The biggest change involves pursuing collections on delinquent loans and how repossession and repayment transactions will be handled and by whom.

### ***Kentucky Arts Council***

On February 8, the Interpreter Referral Specialist attended the Kentucky Arts Council (KAC) Accessible Advisory Group. The Arts Council just received a National Endowment for the Arts/National Arts and Disability Center grant to hold statewide forums this year on careers in the arts for people with disabilities. This is an excellent opportunity to identify emerging artists across Kentucky and provide support in their careers. The group shared input in identifying participating artists and planning activities. KCDHH is collaborating with KAC to assist with providing the training needed to meet the grant requirements. KCDHH has scheduled an educational marketing informational workshop with KAC, to be given to the visual artists that participate in DeaFestival-Kentucky 2012. Per our agreement with KAC we will also work with entities that run artists galleries, theaters, and other art related entities to ensure they provide access to the deaf and hard of hearing.



**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.**

### ***UK Graduate Class***

The Executive Staff Advisor gave a presentation to a Masters level rehabilitation class at the University of Kentucky. The presentation focused on Deaf Culture and Deaf Awareness.

### ***Case Manager Training***

The Executive Staff Advisor teamed with the State Mental Health deaf and hard of hearing coordinator and a mental health counselor for the deaf and hard of hearing from Seven Counties to give a workshop to various case managers working with deaf and hard of hearing individuals in Kentucky. The workshop was titled “Resources to Address Hearing Loss Across the Lifespan: A Training for Children’s Service

Providers in Mental Health, Child Protection, and Other Social Services.” Demographics and information regarding the deaf and hard of hearing population was shared with the case managers.

### ***Hands Alive***

The Executive Staff Advisor and the Executive Secretary II attended the Hands Alive event in Louisville in March. The Executive Staff Advisor gave a presentation titled "Dare to Dream" to a group of parents and encouraged them to have their children dream big and not let their hearing loss prevent them from being all they can be.

### ***ASL/English Bimodal Bilingual Webinar***

The Executive Staff Advisor participated in part one of a two-part webinar on American Sign Language (ASL)/English bimodal bilingual early childhood education provided by the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. Presenters Susanne Scott and Dr. Laurene Simms shared different strategies on how to incorporate both ASL and English into daily activities to promote language acquisition for deaf and hard of hearing children as well as how to be your child's advocate for developing an individual language plan.

### ***Operation Preparation***

The Executive Staff Advisor attended an Operation Preparation planning meeting. Operation Preparation is a joint effort of the Kentucky Department of Education and the Department of Workforce Development and provides a powerful opportunity for schools, students, parents and communities to collaborate in the process of effective advising and focus attention on the importance of planning for college and/or career. During the week of March 12-16, trained volunteer community advisors met one-on-one with every 8th- and 10th-grade student.

The Executive Staff Advisor agreed to design a postcard with information about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and how it applies to deaf and hard of hearing students to be disseminated during the March event discussed above. The postcard was designed and printed and other information items were solicited from Gallaudet University for dissemination to the students. These were mailed out to each Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) Outreach Coordinator to disseminate to the students in their Region.

The Executive Staff Advisor met with Meg Deckert, a new staff member at the Louisville Center for Accessible Living. Ms. Deckert introduced herself and talked with KCDHH to familiarize herself with our services so that we can work together more effectively in the future. She was provided with a tour of the office as well as

information and brochures related to our programs and services.

The Executive Staff Advisor met with representatives of the Statewide Family Support Center and Program Administrator for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services to make plans for the Family Learning Vacation (FLV), scheduled for June 15 and 16 at the Kentucky School for the Deaf. The Executive Staff Advisor suggested deaf professional Heather Harker as a possible presenter and Kay Harker as member for the Parents of Adult Deaf children panel. There was discussion about involving various Community Emergency Responders to assist families in making their own Emergency Preparation Kits while at the FLV.



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

### ***KYRID Workshop***

The Executive Staff Interpreter, Interpreter Referral Specialist and the Executive Secretary II attended the Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (KYRID) spring conference on March 23-24 in Morehead. One of the workshops, titled "Ethical Decision Making in Educational Settings," discussed the impact and ethical considerations for interpreters. On Saturday, March 24, the Executive Secretary II attended a workshop titled "Syntactic Differences between American Sign Language (ASL) and English." This workshop addressed the differences between ASL and English and how the languages differ syntactically and semantically. At the luncheon, the keynote speaker conducted a short workshop called "Embracing the Leader in YOU" and spoke about the word "leadership" and what it meant to everyone and about how being a leader is very important in the interpreter field of study.

### ***Staff Meetings***

The Executive Director called staff meetings throughout the quarter to discuss daily operations of the office, special projects, administrative duties and current priorities to ensure that all departments are working together efficiently.

### ***Birthdays***

KCDHH celebrated the birthdays of the Executive Director and Information Program Coordinator during this quarter.