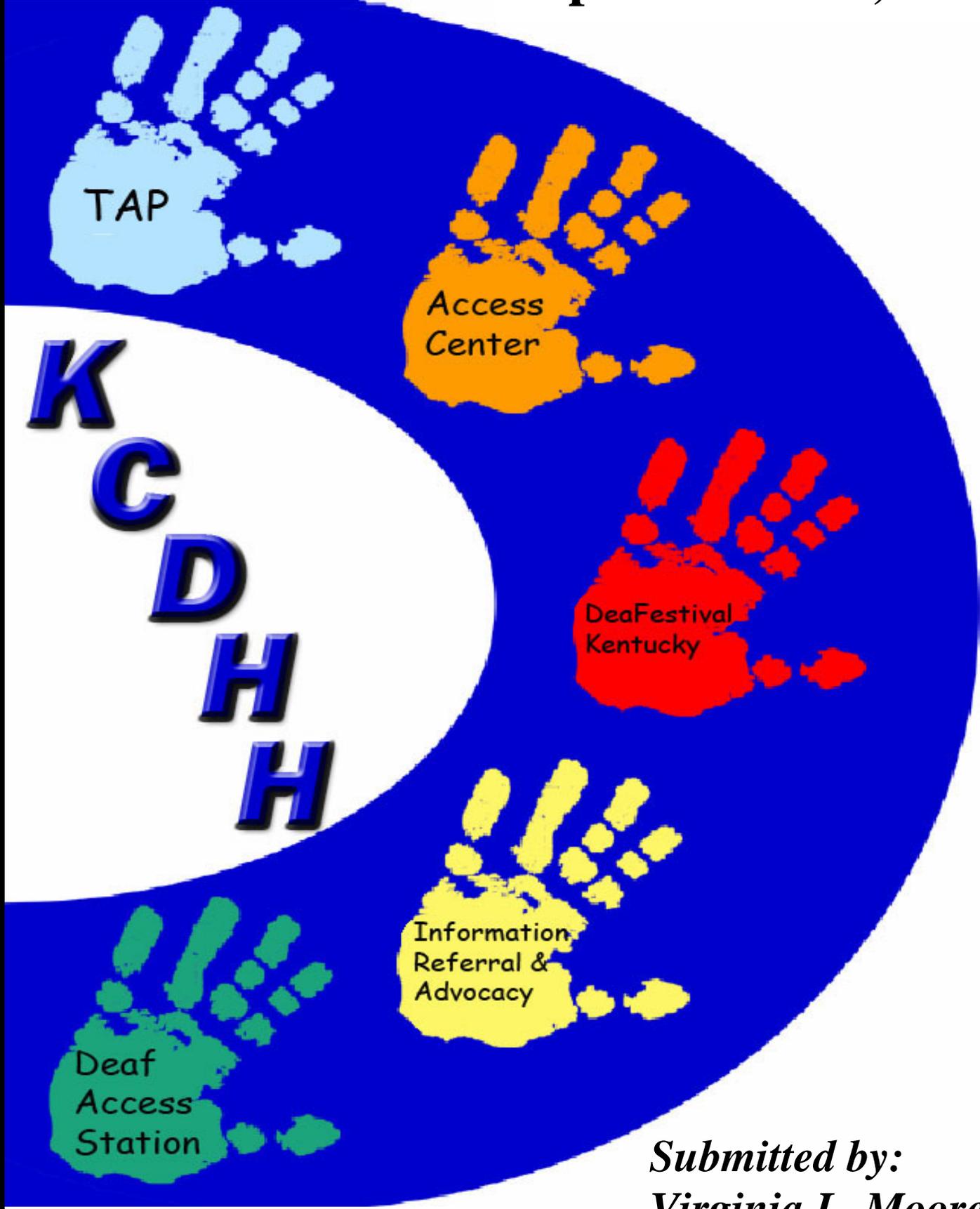


# Agency Report

July 1<sup>st</sup> through  
September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015



TAP

Access  
Center

**K**  
**C**  
**D**  
**H**  
**H**

DeaFestival  
Kentucky

Information  
Referral &  
Advocacy

Deaf  
Access  
Station

*Submitted by:*  
*Virginia L. Moore*

## **KCDHH Quarterly Activities**

**July 1, 2015 to September 30, 2015**

### ***Legislation***

On July 8, the Executive Director, Internal Policy Analyst III and Executive Staff Assistant met with Senator Alvarado to discuss issues on the forefront with KCDHH for the 2016 General Assembly session. Topics discussed included:

- Advocating for stronger legislation regarding better hearing screenings for school aged children, which we have pushed in the past, and the education study group continues to focus on. An improved hearing screening form has been drafted and support is needed from the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). Statistics regarding the number of children screened; when they are screened and how they are referred were obtained from KDE. A private analyst reviewed the information and categorized it in a format that shows the gap in services. Legislators provided with this information have been very supportive of improving screening procedures and are shocked that stronger requirements are not being imposed.
- The fact that some Internet Service Providers (ISP) are moving toward capping data usage for consumers. Data caps have a negative and harmful impact on videophone (VP) and Captioned call users as they quickly consume their allotted monthly data. Such callers are no longer able to make calls unless they increase their data cap, which is costly and inequitable. We have been working with the Executive Director and Program Coordinator from the Office of Broadband Outreach and Development who strongly supports Kentucky being one of the first states to move legislatively to set a precedent on promoting a waiver to cap expenditures.

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

### ***Budget***

Agency expenditures are on track. Budget preparations for the 2016-2018 biennium budget cycles have begun. The Executive Director, Financial Officer and Internal Policy Analyst III are working together to prepare the document to be submitted to the Cabinet in October.

### **Governors Transition Plan**

KCDHH was contacted to provide information to the Cabinet for the Governor's Transition team. A list of information the team needs from each agency was requested for the incoming Governor. The purpose and outline of KCDHH will be included with the information provided to the team for the upcoming transition.

### ***Personnel***

The Information Office Supervisor position has been posted through the Personnel website and applications are being received by the Executive Director for review and scheduling of

interviews. This position fulfills the public relations responsibilities for the agency and all its programs and also supervises the information, advocacy and referral department.

## **Education**

### **American Sign Language as a Foreign Language**

On July 1, the Executive Director and Executive Staff Advisor met staff from the Office of Next-Generation Learners, Division of Program Standards and staff from the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) within the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) as well as the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) Superintendent to further discuss the process of getting American Sign Language (ASL) taught as a foreign language in public schools. Issues discussed were the need to invite additional staff from the KDE Department of Professional Learning & Assessment in order to address questions about the Praxis exam in further detail. Discussion was also held about the World Language website and how we could add information about ASL.

We also discussed what qualifications were needed to teach ASL as a Foreign Language in the K-12 school system. We were advised that the Praxis exam will be required for qualifications to teach ASL. Discussions regarding the low passing rate of the Praxis by deaf and hard of hearing teachers were discussed and a proposed alternative test (C-Set) from California was proposed. The EPSD indicated they would look into the current requirements and review the C-Set testing to see if this test would be a viable substitute.

*(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.)*

### **Department of Education**

For the last six months the deaf and hard of hearing community, alumni and parents have contacted KCDHH expressing their concern about the lack of communication on the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) campus and classrooms. Per the Commission Board the Executive Director met with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary and Deputy Secretary, regarding the lack of communication at KSD. As a result of this meeting and with input from the Secretary and Deputy Secretary, the Chair of the KCDHH Board drafted and sent a letter to the Kentucky Department of Education Commissioner Holliday. The letter requested information regarding the communication policy and education of students at KSD. It was met with a response from Commissioner Holiday indicating disbelief that there are any problems at KSD and asked that a meeting with KSD's administration be scheduled. The discussions are ongoing.

*(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.)*

### **Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Moratorium**

During the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Conference held in New Orleans this past August, RID announced that a moratorium will be placed on all National Interpreter Certification (NIC) testing, starting January 1, 2016. The moratorium includes all

performance exams and credentialing, and is being imposed, according to RID, because the organization is undergoing a risk assessment. This greatly impacts state licensure in Kentucky as licensure cannot be obtained without national certification. A letter to RID was sent stating the impact this decision has on Kentucky, and a response was received. Since that time, KCDHH's Executive Director has been in communication with the Interim Executive Director of RID, Anna Witter-Merithew. On September 15 the Executive Director met with the Kentucky Board of Interpreters (KBI) Chair, KBI Vice Chair, Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (KYRID) President, and the KBI attorney. Discussions included the possibility of amending state regulations to offer an alternate certification to permit interpreters to work in Kentucky. KBI has formed a sub-committee to discuss possible solutions and regulation changes. A timeframe for ending the RID moratorium has not been released and states with programs that require licensure are currently suspended until alternative solutions can be found.

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

### **Kentucky Correctional Facility**

A recently settled lawsuit filed by the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) indicated that deaf inmates incarcerated in Kentucky correctional facilities have the right to sign language interpreters, videophones and other accommodations that will afford equal access to effective communication. With this settlement Kentucky correctional facilities are required to provide accessibility training to all correctional employees. KCDHH's Executive Director was contacted by the Executive Director of the State's prison systems to establish a partnership in providing this training. KCDHH will assist in developing the training to be provided across the state. Partnership efforts are ongoing.

*(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.)*

### **National Association of State Administrators for the Deaf and Hard Hearing conference calls**

On July 13, August 17 and September 14 the Executive Director held videoconference calls with members of the National Association of State Administrators for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NASADHH). During these meetings members discussed how we can make a stronger impact for our communities on a national level. NASADHH is working to partner with the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) to provide feedback and opinions with regards to the lives of deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their needs nationwide.

*(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.)*



## **National Black Deaf Advocates Conference**



KCDHH was a partner in hosting the National Black Deaf Advocates Conference held in Louisville on August 5-8. Approximately 500 attendees were represented from all parts of the United States. The conference workshops consisted of information on education, advocacy and various others topics which included discussions about issues facing the black deaf community specifically. On the last night of the conference, a banquet and Miss Black Deaf America pageant was held. KCDHH had an exhibitor booth to promote DeaFestival 2016 and to make attendees aware of KCDHH programs and services. The Executive Director, Administrative Assistant II, Executive Staff Assistant, Interpreter I and Information Coordinators for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing all attended.

*(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.)*

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

KCDHH partnered with the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) Kentucky Chapters to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> biennial Regional Conference in Louisville on September 11-12. The Executive Director, Executive Staff Advisor, and Internal Policy Analyst III each gave presentations to the attendees related to advocacy, legislation and the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP). KCDHH also had an exhibitor booth for attendees to learn about KCDHH's programs and services, general information on hearing loss, and DeaFestival 2016 as well as the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP). Justin Osmond, nephew of Donny and Marie Osmond, was the keynote speaker at the banquet on September 12. Mr. Osmond gave an inspirational speech about how he learned to cope with his hearing loss. He also talked about the foundation that his family supports to improve hearing for children all over the world. The Administrative Assistant II, Document Processing Specialist II, Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Network Analyst II, Interpreter I and Executive Secretary II also attended.

*(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.)*

## **National Association of State Relay Administration Conference**

The Executive Director and Internal Policy Analyst III attended the National Association of State Relay Administration (NASRA) national conference held in Jackson Hole, Wyoming September 23-27. This meeting allows professionals who manage, or are actively involved in the administration of a state's telecommunications relay service (TRS) to network and update each other on current issues/concerns, particularly at the national level. Workshops included discussion on TRS Interstate funds, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) calls, IP Captioned telephone services and the possible transition of funding to states, Real Time

Text possibilities and presentations from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as well as Australia, Sweden and Taiwan. Outreach and multi-state contracts were also discussed. *(5.1 Seek professional and personal development opportunities for staff members and Commissioners.)*

### ***Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Administrators Conference***

The Internal Policy Analyst III, TAP Program Coordinator and Executive Director attended the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Administrators (TEDPA) national conference held in Jackson Hole, Wyoming September 27 – 30. This meeting allows administrators and program staff to network and find solutions to problems they might be having with distribution of specialized telephone equipment in their state. Attendees also share progress their states have made toward providing more technologically advanced equipment which better meets the needs of the consumers. Topics surrounding funding and outreach concerns were also touched upon. Networking with vendors who provide equipment to see and test new products which could be included in the TAP in the future. This year, the Executive Director moderated a panel discussion and the Internal Policy Analyst III sat on the panel to discuss the successes and barriers faced by states distributing wireless devices. Kentucky remains the leader in the nation in this arena. Panels also discussed accessories and apps for wireless devices, and spoke with the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) about the transitioning of IP Captioned based services from federal to state responsibility.

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

### ***TELTEX filming with Gracie***

Representatives from Teltex, one of our TAP vendors, came to Kentucky on September 10 to film a promotional video with a child who lives in eastern Kentucky. Teltex provided her with an iPad, as she is underage to qualify for TAP, and she is utilizing it to learn to read, do math and other school activities. She is multi-disabled and has a severe vision loss as well as a hearing loss. She was quite personable and made us realize how much technology can do for individuals with disabilities to level the playing field in social, educational and life activities.

## **KCDHH GOALS**



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

### ***Cabinet for Health and Family Services Collaboration***

The Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (DBHDID) Program Administrator for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services coordinated three meetings with the Department of Community Based Services (DCBS) and KCDHH on July 6, August 3 and September 16. These meetings addressed the need within DCBS to look at improving individualized language access needs for children who are deaf and hard of hearing, and their families, who are receiving services within the cabinet by selecting a

liaison or liaisons that could address and develop protocols with outside agencies such as specialists at Bluegrass and Seven Counties. The group includes DBHDID Program Administrator for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, KCDHH Executive Director, Director of the Division of Protection and Permanency, the Assistant Director of Division of Protection and Permanency within Foster Care, Adult Protection and Adoption services, and the KCDHH Interpreter Referral Specialist. The Division of Protection and Permanency Internal Policy Analyst is looking at building capacity to serve children who are deaf or hard of hearing in and out of home care, ensuring language access at all points of DCBS services, and accurately tracking individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing as they move through the system.

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

### **KyRID/KAD Fall Conference Meeting**

The Executive Director and the Interpreter Referral Specialist have met several times with a core group of representatives from the Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (KYRID) and representatives from the Kentucky Association for the Deaf (KAD) to develop a joint fall conference on November 6-7. Conference tracks include using Video Relay Interpreting (VRI) in the hospitals, personification, jump into sports, and a history lesson during the luncheon with Keynote Kevin Kreutzer and a call for Cross-Movement Activism: “Achieving Deaf Access to Justice & Disability Justice in Communities of Color.” Planning continues ongoing with the conference committee.

*(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.)*

### **National Interpreter Certification (NIC) Opportunities**



KCDHH offered four National Interpreter Certification (NIC) Interview and Performance Exams, along with two Specialist Certificate: Legal (SC:L) Performance Exams, during this quarter

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

### **Access Center Assignments**

Requests	Filled /pending assignments	Cancelled assignments	Interpreting Hours	Average # of contacts per assignment request
Request for Interpreting	363	7	1602	9
Request for Captioning	4	0	30	11
Request for Videoconference	0	0	0	0

## Telecommunication Access Program Activities



The Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) submitted a Request for Bid (RFB) for TAP equipment in May and a contract was awarded in June. However, one vendor filed a protest with the Finance Cabinet which put a hold on vendors until a legal decision could be made. In early September a decision was rendered and the original contract stands as awarded in June.

This delayed ordering equipment for a short time, but orders were placed in September to catch up the waiting list and TAP is back on a timely schedule.

On September 11-12 Teltex, the vendor that distributes our iPads with the specialized communication apps, conducted training sessions at the Hearing Loss Association of America biennial conference in Louisville. Approximately 20 consumers came for individualized training sessions which were deemed very beneficial. Other states continue to contact us as they pioneer distribution of wireless devices in their states, asking how we were able to get wireless surcharges, how we implemented wireless and the pros and cons we have discovered since implementation. Last year, only two states distributed wireless equipment, but this year fifteen states are including advanced wireless technology.

On August 19 the TAP Program Coordinator attended the Louisville Association of the Deaf (LAD) monthly meeting and conducted a presentation on the new equipment available through the TAP and the qualifications for receiving equipment, including wireless devices such as iPads, iPhones and signaling devices.

*(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.)*

## Telecommunication Access Program Statistics

Request	Applicants Receiving Equipment	Pieces of Equipment Distributed	Pending Order / Waiting List
Applying for STE	469	596	97



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

### Hear It Here

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended the annual *Hear It Here* workshop on July 10 in Louisville. The booth distributed parent packets, general KCDHH information, and PR items. Parents of deaf and hard of hearing children and professionals took the opportunity to learn about our programs and services and they collected information. There were approximately 100 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 Audiology Academy Conference**

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Interpreter I attended the annual Kentucky Audiology Academy (KAA) Conference in Lexington on July 24. Two representatives from the Kentucky Assistive Technology Services (KATS) Network joined KCDHH to educate the audiologists about the new Statewide Hearing Aid Assistance and Reuse Program (SHARP). Each audiologist was required to stop at each booth to learn about the agency and organizations. KCDHH distributed general information, TAP flyers, PR items, and displayed the TAP demo telephones.

*(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 School for the Deaf Alumni Association picnic**



The Program Coordinator and Administrative Specialist II attended the annual Kentucky School for the Deaf Alumni Association's (KSDAA) picnic on August 1 on KSD's campus. A KSDAA Hall of Fame Ceremony was held where six individuals, including the TAP Program Coordinator, were inducted into the Hall of Fame for their service to the community. There were approximately 500 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.)*

## **DeafNation Expo**



The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Executive Secretary II, Interpreter Referral Specialist, and Document Processing Specialist II attended the DeafNation Expo at Freedom Hall in Louisville on September 19. The booth distributed TAP information, general KCDHH information, and PR items. It also promoted DeaFestival 2016 "Save the Date." The Executive Director was interviewed by Joel Barish about how the agency came to have a strong standing in the state government, explaining that lobbying is the key to a successful Commission. There were approximately 2,000 attendees and the introductory welcome speech came from Louisville Mayor, Greg Fischer.

*(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.)*

## **Main Street Baptist Church Health Fair**

The Administrative Specialist II attended the 4th annual Fall Health Fair at Main Street Baptist Church in Frankfort on September 19. The purpose of the Health Fair is to provide individuals with health tips to promote healthier living. KCDHH had an exhibitor booth with various TAP phones for demonstration, TAP applications, brochures, and information flyers about the entire agency's programs and services.

*(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.)*

## **BBQ on the River**



The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing traveled to Paducah to the annual BBQ on the River on September 24-26. A booth was set up for individuals to learn about TAP, as well as KCDHH and all of its programs and services. A Commissioner and an Interpreter volunteered their time at the booth as well, to help raise awareness within their local community. Approximately 40,000 attended

*(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.)*

## **Community Health Fair**

On September 26, the Administrative Specialist II attended the 4th annual Community Health Fair at the Louisville Central Community Center. KCDHH had an exhibitor booth to demonstrate TAP phones and to disseminate TAP applications/brochures, flyers and general information about KCDHH's programs and services.

*(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.)*

## **Northern Kentucky Senior Expo**

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing traveled to Newport on the Levee on August 13 to the Northern Kentucky Senior Expo. The KCDHH exhibitor booth allowed attendees to gather information such as the KCDHH flyer, TAP flyer, and also to see and test the TAP demonstration phones. Approximately 1000 individuals attended.

*(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 State Fair**



KCDHH again partnered with Sprint and Heuser Hearing Institute to host a booth at the Kentucky State Fair from August 20-30. Heuser conducted hearing screenings and provided information. The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) also had a table with information. KCDHH distributed a wide variety of flyers regarding our programs and services, and included TAP equipment demonstrations given to the public so they could

experience how specialized phones assist people with hearing loss. Brochures geared to reach out to veterans to offer assistance with coping with hearing loss (the number one disability of returning veterans) were also popular. Different models of TAP equipment were displayed in the cabinet, including new wired/wireless signaling units with smoke alarms and CO2 detectors. KCDHH staff and numerous volunteers were available to answer questions throughout the ten-day event. Once again, KCDHH was located within the Health Horizons area of the South Wing. KCDHH received 421 requests during this outreach.

*(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.)*

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

The Office of Information Services received **9,437** new contacts and **2,054** new requests during this quarter, broken down as follows by category:

<b>Nature</b>	<b>Contacts</b>	<b>Closed Requests</b>	<b>Pending Requests</b>
AC: Request for Captioner	47	3	1
AC: Request for Interpreter	3348	313	57
AC: DAS	3	2	0
Administration	110	21	4
DeaFestival	61	37	0
IRA: ASL & Linguistics	133	62	2
IRA: Deaf Culture	10	4	0
IRA: Deafness & Hearing Loss	411	204	0
IRA: Education	14	5	0
IRA: Employment	11	2	0
IRA: Families & Children	26	11	0
IRA: Human Services	119	41	2
IRA: Interpreting	88	37	2
IRA: Legal Rights of Deaf and HOH	171	44	4
IRA: Outreach	18	9	0
IRA: Senior Citizens	8	3	1
IRA: Sports	6	2	0
IRA: Technology	166	68	0
PUB: Communicator	104	76	0
PUB: Directory of Services	4	2	0
PUB: Ice Cards	6	3	0
PUB: Visor Cards	51	23	0
Special Projects	7	1	0
TAP: General Questions	37	15	0
TAP: Status Check	42	18	0
TAP: Outreach	4	2	0
TAP: Received Application for STE	2847	12	230
TAP: Repair	66	18	2
TAP: Requested a TAP Application	1436	676	3
TAP: TAP ISSUES	68	29	3
<b>Report total:</b>	<b>9437</b>	<b>1745</b>	<b>311</b>

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

## Public Relations Output

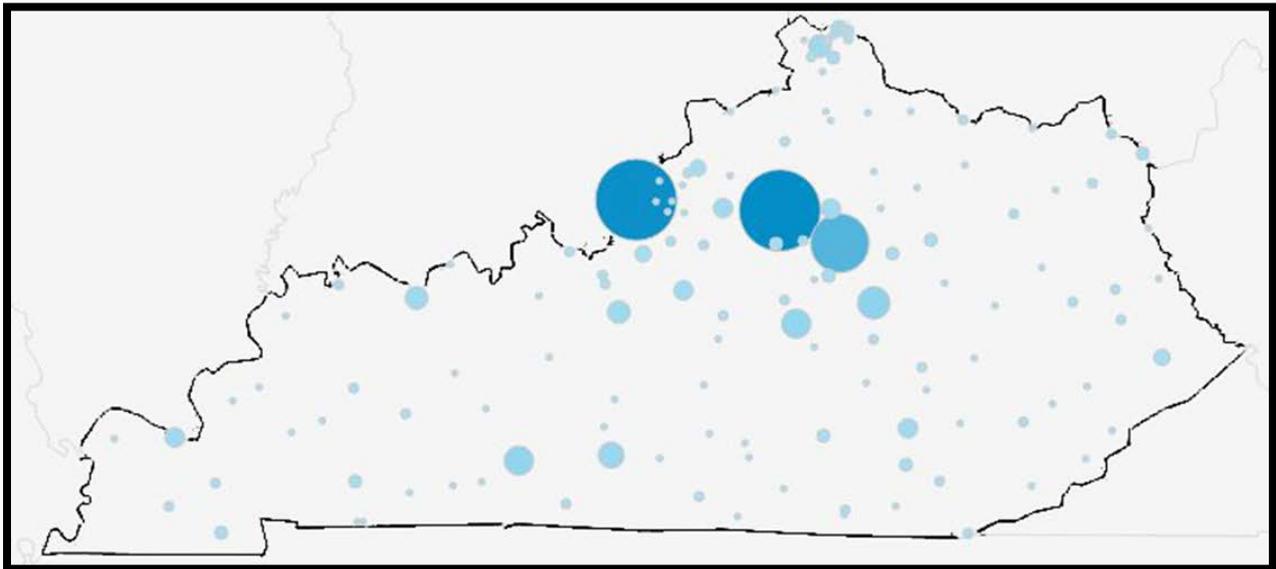
The Office of Information Services focuses on Public Relations (PR) efforts and outreach activities to increase awareness of services offered by the agency. **47,529** informational and public relations items were distributed during the quarter as follows.

PR Dissemination	
Method of Dissemination	Number Disseminated
Hard Copy	19,962
Blitz	16,300
Social Media	11,267
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47,529</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: July 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015

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



We have had a total of 3,974 visitors from Kentucky this quarter which represents a 3.54% increase of visitors from the previous quarter. Requests appear to remain steady and there appears to be a rising interest in DeaFestival 2016.

*(2.5 Broaden the Web site to be inclusive of issues and needs of Kentucky's 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.**

### ***Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) Advisory Board Meetings***



On August 11, the Executive Staff Advisor attended the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) Advisory Board meeting. Board members had several questions related to hiring practices and establishing a campus wide communication policy at KSD. After much discussion it was determined that the administration did not feel confident in their understanding of the role and responsibility of the board as a whole. It was suggested that someone from the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) be invited to the next meeting to do a presentation and answer questions about the purpose and responsibilities of the advisory board.

The Executive Staff Advisor attended the September 9 meeting of the KSD Advisory Board where Attorney Todd Allen from KDE's Office of Guiding Support discussed the legal role of the Advisory Board and answered various questions related to their rights and responsibilities. Included in this discussion was how the board would advise and make recommendations to the KDE Commissioner and the Kentucky Open Meetings Act. The next meeting will focus on hiring practices and the development of a campus wide communication policy both with to goal of drafting a letter to the KDE Commissioner.

*(3.1 Advocate for improved education for deaf and hard of hearing students.)*

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

On July 21, the Executive Director and Executive Staff Advisor met with the Regional Outreach Director/Consultant and administrators from the Statewide Educational Resource Center on Deafness (SERCD) and First Steps to begin outlining a training plan. Discussion centered on a general outline of the training, how many trainings would be needed, who would attend and where they would take place. Subsequent meetings were held on August 25 and September 24 to further discuss how the training would be designed and what information would be included as well as what specific information will be disseminated at each training. The partnership with First Steps, KCDHH and SERCD was created to provide information to families of children identified with a hearing loss between 0-3 and provide as much early intervention as possible.

The first training took place in Florence and 24 members of the First Steps Point of Entry (POE) staff were present. The training was 8 hours long and focused on addressing the "Whole Child" rather than just the hearing loss. It was emphasized that First Steps needs to make sure the SERCD consultants are part of their team so that they can ensure the multiple issues that need to be dealt with are addressed with the family.

Seven other trainings will be held across the state between October 1-November 18 for an additional 150 POE staff.

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

### ***Kentucky Statewide Hearing Aid Assistance and Reuse Program***

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended a meeting to get an update on the Kentucky Statewide Hearing Aid Assistance and Reuse Program (SHARP) on July 30 in Frankfort. This meeting was an opportunity for all representatives to discuss the current progress of the program and how SHARP may continue to receive funding for sustainability. Also, donations of used hearing aids are being accepted, which are recycled through Starkey, to help fund refurbished hearing aids or any repairs needed. SHARP financially assists individuals who qualify for hearing aids through Hear Now.

*(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 Access Needs Collaborative***

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended the Kentucky Functional Access Needs Collaborative meeting on September 16 in Versailles. The meeting was held as part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) visit to Kentucky, after four *states of emergency* declarations were issued this year. The group focused on discussions related to Kentucky's needs assessment of high risk, frail, disabled or seniors living in HUD-funded housing. Follow up meetings are ongoing.

*(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.)*

### ***Kentucky Assistive Technology Services Network***

On September 4 the Internal Policy Analyst (IPA) III attended the Kentucky Assistive Technology Services (KATS) Network Advisory Council meeting in Louisville. The IPA III was reappointed by the Governor for a third and final term to serve on this board through March of 2018. Reports were provided by the regional Assistive Technology (AT) Centers and all reported good progress on training individuals to utilize AT and opportunities to reach out to the communities they serve. The KATS Coordinator reported that the AT Act was recently renewed nationally and they transitioned those programs to the Independent Living Centers. We will see no real changes, but reporting requirements will change. Quarterly reports were given by the following programs; KATS, Coordinating and Assisting the Reuse of Assistive Technology (CARAT) project, Statewide Hearing Aid and Reuse Program (SHARP), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator, Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC), Office for Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Independent Living Centers (ILC), Office for the Blind (OFB), Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC), Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT) and KCDHH. Each of these entities work together to ensure the disabled individuals in Kentucky has AT available to them to meet their needs.

*(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***

Due to a conflict with another meeting, the Internal Policy Analyst III was unable to attend the Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) meeting on September 22 in Louisville. However, as Chair of the Board of Directors, a report was provided which included updates from 5/3 bank, financial reports, reaffirmation of electronic voting on loans approved or denied during the quarter and marketing activities. To date, 205 loans have been approved in 2015, for a total of \$973,421.00. KATLC holds a balance of \$81,685.00 in checking and \$1,662,179.23 in investments to sustain the program. The KATLC staff continues to do outreach at conferences and partners with KCDHH on some activities.

*(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.**

## ***Hands & Voices National Conference***



The Executive Staff Advisor attended the national Hands & Voices (H&V) conference in New Braunfels, Texas on September 17-21. The purpose of the conference allows Hands & Voices members and staff from around the country to network with each other to see how their chapters function and to learn about new practices in the field, with the goal of improving individual state chapters. Various speakers gave presentations and workshops. The Executive Staff Advisor co-presented for two sessions on topics related to “Serving Families Without Bias” and the “Journey of Hearing Loss.” International chapter members from Russia, China and Nigeria were also present.

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

## ***DeaFestival Kentucky 2016 Children’s Program meeting***

On September 28, the Interpreter Referral Specialist met with Mr. Peter Cook, performer, longtime friend and Master of Ceremonies for the DeaFestival Children’s program. The meeting was held to brainstorm new ideas and partnerships for DeaFestival 2016. Logistical planning is also ongoing for the Labor Day 2016 event.

*(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.**

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

The Executive Secretary II, Interpreter I, and Interpreter Referral Specialist attended the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) National Conference in New Orleans on August 8-12. This gave staff the opportunity to earn continuing education credits, obtain professional development, and network with over 1,000 interpreters in attendance. Many worthwhile workshops were provided related to business practices, conflicts in interpreting, Deaf-Hearing team interpreting, interpreter standards and practices, leadership roles, certification issues, strategies for interpreting in various situations (medical, legal, educational, emergency management, social justice, and video relay services, international, multilingual, multiracial and domestic violence) as well as a business meeting for the members to discuss pertinent issues.

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

### **Retirement Seminar**

The Administrative Assistant II attended a retirement seminar in Frankfort on August 28.

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

### **Kentucky Employees Health Plan**

On July 30, the Executive Director provided the Cabinet with the initiatives KCDHH has accomplished to encourage employees to meet the KyHealthNow goals set by the Governor. We have added links to our website, created vlogs about mental health workshops, posted additional health information to our social media site, website and eblitzes, encouraged staff to obtain flu shots and ensured that staff enrolled in the Health Vitality program and completed health assessments. Staff are tracking workout time amongst themselves and competing to become more physically fit.

The Kentucky Employees Health Plan sponsored a statewide step challenge from September 15-30 called the “15 Day Dash.” This event increases mobility and promotes exercise in an employee’s daily routine. The two Information Coordinators for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Interpreter Referral Specialist, Document Processing Specialist II, and the Administrative Specialist II formed a team to participate in the challenge.

### **Staff Meeting**

A staff meeting was held on September 15 to catch up each department’s activities and priorities, and projects currently in the works, to bring each other up to speed on the goals for the agency during the next quarter. Budget preparations are time consuming and will be a priority for the Executive Director and support staff.

## **Celebrations**

The Executive Staff Advisor celebrated her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday with staff on July 29<sup>th</sup>.

On July 31<sup>st</sup> the Executive Director and Internal Policy Analyst III attended a retirement party in Frankfort for Ms. Gerry Gordon-Brown, a longtime employee and Director of the Client Assistant Program (CAP) which provides assistance to individuals with disabilities.

On August 26<sup>th</sup> the Executive Director and Internal Policy Analyst III attended the surprise retirement party in Danville for Ms. Artie Grassman, a longtime employee of the Kentucky School for the Deaf and Director of the Statewide Educational Resource Center on Deafness (SERCD) Coordinators.

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing celebrated her birthday with staff on August 28<sup>th</sup>.