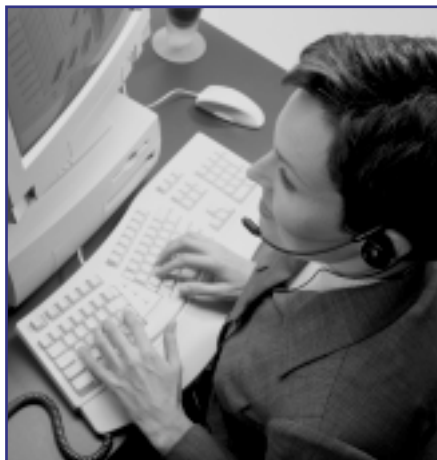


The RELAY Connection

News, information, updates and more from Maryland Relay.

Do You Know Your LD Carrier?



When Maryland Relay users place long-distance calls, the Relay Operator will typically ask them to specify their preferred "LD carrier." For the benefit of our new Relay users, we want to explain the meaning of this term.

The letters *LD* stand for long-distance. The word *carrier* refers to company. Therefore, when the Relay Operator requests your LD carrier of choice, he or she is essentially asking

you to specify the long-distance company you prefer (e.g. AT&T, Sprint, MCI, Excel, etc.). If you do not know your long-distance carrier, contact your local phone company.

By completing a Relay Choice Profile (RCP), your preferred company will automatically be used each time you place a long-distance call. An RCP helps streamline your Relay calls and allows you to establish a personal profile that automatically lets the Relay Operator know your preferred calling options, including your long-distance carrier of choice. All of the information you provide in your profile is confidential, and you may edit your profile at any time. For multiple Relay users calling from the same home or business location, Multi-User Relay Choice Profiles (MURCPs) are available (exception: PBX users).

For more information about RCPs or MURCPs, contact Maryland Relay Customer Service at 1-800-552-7724 (Voice/TTY), or e-mail moreinfo@mdrelay.org.

Voice Relay Callers: Dial 7-1-1 or 1-800-201-7165

What to Do if You're Put on Hold...

While Maryland Relay works hard to ensure prompt, efficient service at all times, individuals who attempt to place a Relay call during periods of unusually high call volume may be put on hold until a Relay Operator is available to assist them.

If you are waiting a long time, hang up and dial again. Most likely, your next call will be transferred to a nearby relay center that is experiencing a lower call volume.

Maryland Relay is committed to offering you the fastest, most efficient calling experience possible, and we appreciate your patience during times of increased call volume. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Maryland Relay Customer Service at 1-800-552-7724 (Voice/TTY), or e-mail moreinfo@mdrelay.org.

Join the GABTR and Help Shape the Future of Maryland Relay

Want to help shape the future of Maryland Relay? The Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay (GABTR) has five vacancies that must be filled immediately. As a GABTR member, you'll work closely with 11 other Maryland residents who have been appointed by the Governor to advise the Telecommunications Access of Maryland program on the level of access and quality of services Maryland Relay offers to State citizens.

The vacancies are for a senior citizen, a person who is mobility disabled and three individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. All applicants must be Maryland citizens, as well as Maryland Relay users. Appointments are for three years, and all GABTR members are required to attend three meetings per year in various parts of the State. (You will be reimbursed for all travel expenses.)

If you are interested in receiving an appointment, send a cover letter and resume, making sure to specify which position you are applying for, to the following individuals:

See GABTR, back page



Recognizing and Rewarding Good Service

By Willis Mann

Some people swear that certain things—the latest high-tech gadgets, for example—stop working the day you finish paying for them. That may happen sometimes, but I believe it's actually quite rare. Something I think is becoming rare, however, is our tendency to recognize and reward good service.

When was the last time you complimented a Relay Operator? Last week? Last year? Can't remember? Unlike the original Model T Ford, a sincere, heartfelt compliment never goes out of style. Relay Operators are human beings

just like you and me, and their work improves when they get a pat on the back every once in a while. So the next time a Relay Operator does a great job handling your calls, why not give him or her the kind of compliment he or she deserves? Or, better yet, ask to speak to a supervisor and tell him or her about your experience. It doesn't take long, and it makes everyone feel good.

From now on, let's remember to thank the Relay Operators for their hard work. With a little effort, we can bring compliments back in style.

GABTR Representatives

You can contact representatives of the Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay (GABTR) at the numbers and e-mail addresses below. They are on this Board to serve the needs of their community and welcome your input.

Mitchell D. Travers, Chair
301-441-2715 (TTY)
mitch.travers@mdrelay.org
Deaf Representative

Isaac O. Agboola
202-651-5040 (TTY)
isaac.agboola@mdrelay.org
Deaf Representative

Brenda Battat
301-657-2248 (V)
301-657-2249 (TTY)
brenda.battat@mdrelay.org
Senior Citizen Representative

Susan Boswell
301-317-8912 (V/TTY)
susan.boswell@mdrelay.org
Hard-of-Hearing Representative

Patricia Bowman
410-767-5768 (TTY)
patricia.bowman@mdrelay.org
Government Representative

Marie Campbell
301-604-1568 (TTY)
marie.campbell@mdrelay.org
Deaf Representative

Rebecca Ladew
410-467-0967 (TTY)
rebecca.ladew@mdrelay.org
Speech-Disabled Representative

Joy Larson
301-588-6545 (TTY)
joy.larson@mdrelay.org
DeafBlind Representative

Susan Miller
410-767-8036 (V)
susan.miller@mdrelay.org
Government Representative

Annette Reichman
202-205-8352 (V)
202-205-9152 (TTY)
annette.reichman@mdrelay.org
Deaf Representative

James A. Stevenson
301-759-2047 (V)
james.stevenson@mdrelay.org
Government Representative

Vacant
Mobility-Disabled Representative

The RELAY Connection

A quarterly publication of the Telecommunications Access of Maryland (TAM) program in the Maryland Department of Budget & Management.

James C. DiPaula,
Secretary

Ellis L. Kitchen,
Chief Information Officer

Willis Mann Editor

For questions or comments regarding Maryland Relay, contact:

Brenda Kelly-Frey	Director
Pam Stewart	Contract Manager
Nancy Seidman	Public Relations Coordinator
Patty Bird	Customer Service
Michael Hollywood	Customer Service
Patty Ferran	Account Manager/ AT&T
Elke Pieters	Account Manager/ AT&T

Telecommunications Access of Maryland
301 West Preston Street; Suite 1008 A
Baltimore, MD 21201
1-800-552-7724 V or TTY
410-767-6960 V or TTY
www.mdrelay.org

GABTR Members Gather for First Meeting of 2003

On June 7, 2003, members of the Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay (GABTR) gathered at the Clarion Hotel in Hagerstown for their first meeting of the year.

Attendees first listened to a series of updates, beginning with a recap of key 2002 TAM and Maryland Relay accomplishments, including the establishment of Maryland Relay's "in-house" customer service program (the first program of its kind in the nation!). News of continued CapTel trial funding, TAM's work with the FCC and *The Relay Connection's* new, quarterly format also were addressed.

Later, those in attendance were invited to express their opinions about specific issues related to Maryland Relay. The minutes from this meeting will be posted on our Web site, www.mdrelay.org, at a later date.

The next GABTR meeting is scheduled for October 25, 2003, in the Lexington Park area of St. Mary's County. More detailed information about this meeting will be posted on our Web site soon.

Spring Internship Proves a Real Eye Opener

By Jennifer Curran (Intern)

As majors in deaf studies at Towson University, Angela McNeece, Tiana Bonds and I served as interns in the TAM office during the Spring 2003 semester. The internship allowed us to experience deaf culture firsthand and gave us numerous opportunities to work with the many dedicated people who make up the Maryland Relay team.

Before we began the internship, all of us knew that Maryland Relay offers a vital communication link between hearing persons and individuals who are deaf. We had experience placing and receiving Relay calls as well. Thanks to our internship, however, we learned that Maryland Relay encompasses so much more. It was an eye-opening experience to witness the incredible array of communication options Maryland Relay offers for individuals who are DeafBlind, speech disabled or hard of hearing—options like Speech-to-Speech, Voice Carry-Over and Video Relay Service. There are even features available for Spanish speakers! The availability of free, specialized telecommunications equipment through the MAT program was another eye opener. The MAT program opens doors that have long been closed to many people by giving them access to the telephone once again.

We were greatly impressed by the dedication of the TAM staff to making Maryland Relay accessible to all citizens of Maryland, and we are proud to have played a small role in that effort.

Maryland Board of Public Works Approves CapTel Trial Extension

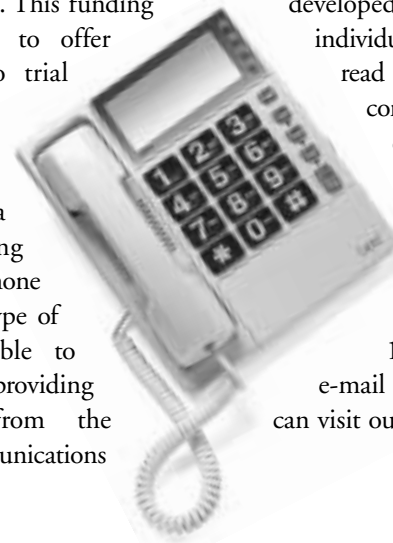
On June 4, 2003, the Maryland Board of Public Works approved a \$2.2 million contract to continue the State's CapTel trial for an additional year, with two, one-year renewal options. This funding will allow CapTel to offer expanded hours to trial participants.

In addition, on August 1, 2003, the FCC announced in a Declaratory Ruling that captioned telephone VCO service is a type of TRS and is eligible to recover the cost for providing interstate calls from the Interstate Telecommunications

Relay Service Fund. This kind of FCC designation will allow trial participants to access CapTel services 24 hours a day.

CapTel is a specialized technology developed by Ultratec® that permits individuals who are hard of hearing to read a captioned version of their conversations on the text screens of their phones and listen to the voice of the person they are calling at the same time.

For more information, call Maryland Relay Customer Service at 1-800-552-7724 (Voice/TTY) or e-mail moreinfo@mdrelay.org. Or, you can visit our Web site at www.mdrelay.org.



MAT Program Site Evaluators Attend Training Session

A dedicated, hard-working team of professionals, the Maryland Accessible Telecommunications (MAT) program site evaluators are responsible for assessing the telecommunications needs of all program applicants.

In May, Susan Levi, a rehabilitation specialist at the Workforce Technology Center, and Brenda Kelly-Frey, TAM Director, led a two-day training session for MAT site evaluators. During the session, participants reviewed assessment practices and participated in new assistive technology demonstrations. The training was beneficial to all attendees and will help the site evaluators continue to serve Marylanders who need assistance communicating over the telephone.

For more information about the MAT program, please call Maryland Relay Customer Service at 1-800-552-7724 (Voice/TTY), or e-mail moreinfo@mdrelay.org. Or, you can visit our Web site at www.mdrelay.org.

MARYLAND RELAY CONTACT NUMBERS

7-11 in Maryland
1-800-201-7165
Voice

1-800-735-2258
Anywhere TTY/HCO

1-888-VCO-WORD
(1-888-826-9673) VCO

1-877-258-9854
Two-Line VCO

1-877-735-5151
ASCC

1-800-785-5630
Speech-to-Speech

1-900-344-3323
pay-per-call, English

1-900-344-4889
pay-per-call, Spanish

1-866-669-0874
Reservation number for
Maryland Conference
Relay, Voice/TTY

1-866-669-0853 (Voice)
1-866-669-0865 (TTY)
1-866-669-0871 (Fax)
AT&T/Maryland Relay
In-House Customer
Service Numbers

1-800-877-1264
Spanish

1-800-552-7724
TAM Office/Customer
Service

Visit our Web site:
www.mdrelay.org

Or send us an e-mail:
moreinfo@mdrelay.org

Maryland Relay's Spanish Translation Team Attends Baltimore's 2003 Latin Festival

If you attended Baltimore's 2003 Latin Festival at Patterson Park, you may have seen Maryland Relay Spanish Translation team members Norma Sierra-Braiterman, Carmina Olaya and Jimmy Gonzales talking with festival attendees about the many features Maryland Relay offers to the Latin community.

At the event, team members made sure to emphasize that Maryland Relay is available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year, with no limit on the number or length of calls a user may make.

Members of the Latin community were very receptive to the many telecommunications options we provide and also grateful to Maryland Relay for establishing services that cater to their specific needs. For more information about the services we offer for Spanish speakers, or to make a call through Maryland Relay using our Spanish translation services, call 1-800-877-1264.

Here are some general Relay calling suggestions, courtesy of the Maryland Relay Operators:

- Remember that the Relay Operator has to type everything you say, so try to speak at a moderate pace.
- Do not try to include the Relay Operator in your conversation. Only speak directly to him or her if you are experiencing a problem during your call.
- Wait until you hear or read "Go Ahead" to begin voicing or typing your response.

Maryland Relay
301 West Preston Street
Suite 1008 A
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

GABTR, from front page

The Hon. Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.,
Governor
Governor's Office of Appointments
Jeffrey Building, 5th Floor
16 Francis Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
and
Brenda Kelly-Frey, TAM Director
301 West Preston Street
Suite 1008 A
Baltimore, MD 21201

Due to conflict of interest issues, Maryland Relay employees are not eligible to serve on the GABTR. For more information about the GABTR and the above positions, visit www.mdrelay.org, or e-mail frey@dbm.state.md.us.

Presorted
Standard Mail
US Postage PAID
WALDORF, MD
Permit 144



IT'S POSSIBLE