

EXECUTIVE ORDER

01.01.2009.10

Maryland Disability History and Awareness Month

- WHEREAS, The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was enacted to end disability-based discrimination, and to promote inclusion, full participation, economic self-sufficiency, and equality of opportunity for all people with disabilities;
- WHEREAS, In 2000, the United States Census Bureau listed 845,345 people with disabilities out of a total population of 5,296,486 in the State;
- WHEREAS, Maryland families have often been enriched by one or more members' life experience with disability;
- WHEREAS, The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services reported that, during the fall of 2006, the State served 106,739 students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- WHEREAS, Students with disabilities encounter social challenges in academic settings and community-based activities;
- WHEREAS, Increasing public awareness of the history of disabilities and the disability rights movement will help to include more fully people with disabilities into society;
- WHEREAS, In 1945, Congress designated the first week in October as "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week" and in 1988, changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month" and directed that appropriate ceremonies take place to enlist public support for, and interest in, the employment of workers with disabilities who are otherwise qualified;

WHEREAS, The University of Maryland recognized Disability Awareness Month in October 2008 and sponsored programming designed to recognize social and cultural contributions made by people with disabilities and to increase campus awareness of the changes needed to create equal opportunities and an inclusive environment; and

WHEREAS, Proclaiming and observing a Disability History and Awareness Month will increase public awareness and respect for people with disabilities in Maryland and beyond.

NOW, THEREFORE I, MARTIN O'MALLEY, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

A. State of Maryland Executive Branch agencies shall annually observe October as Disability History and Awareness Month.

B. The Department of Disabilities shall take steps to increase public awareness of the history of disabilities and the disability rights movement, including the following:

(1) Collaborate with other State agencies that serve people with disabilities to coordinate activities and events throughout the State which draw attention to and increase public awareness of the history of disabilities and the disability rights movement;

(2) Promote and foster activities around the State that are sponsored by other State departments or other organizations, consistent with the goals of Disability History and Awareness Month; and

(3) Provide information and other assistance to the State of Maryland Executive Branch agencies, the Maryland State Department of Education, the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, Saint Mary's College of Maryland, the sixteen public community colleges, and local governments in meeting the goals of this Executive Order.

C. The Maryland State Department of Education shall encourage and assist local boards of education to provide instruction in the history of disabilities, people with disabilities, and the disability rights movement during the observance of

Disability History and Awareness Month. County boards are encouraged to incorporate such instruction by measures such as:

- (1) Supplementing existing lesson plans;
- (2) Holding school assemblies;
- (3) Hosting disability-focused film festivals;
- (4) Seeking assistance from individuals with disabilities or knowledgeable guest speakers from the disability community;
- (5) Organizing other appropriate school activities; and
- (6) Recognizing at the local level the accomplishments of students and citizens who have life experience with disabilities.

D. The Boards of Regents of the University System of Maryland and Morgan State University, the Board of Trustees of St. Mary's College of Maryland, and the boards of trustees of the sixteen public community colleges are encouraged to promote activities at each institution that provide education, awareness and understanding of disability history, people with disabilities, and the disability rights movement.

Given Under my Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis, this 26th Day of July, 2009.

Martin O'Malley
Governor

ATTEST:

John P. McDonough
Secretary of State

