



A GOOD CALL

Fall 2004

Newsletter of the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program

BURBANK SERVICE CENTER OPEN HOUSE

Free hearing tests were a big draw for consumers to attend an Open House on March 10th at the California Telephone Access Program's (CTAP) newest Service Center in Burbank. The day's activities also included a ribbon-cutting ceremony to "officially" open the center, which began serving customers in August 2003.



Phil Kaplan, Shelley Bergum and Mark Finn complete the ribbon cutting ceremony at the new Burbank Service Center.

Burbank area audiologists Gayle Maund, Jeffrey Gramma and Courtlandt C. Warner generously donated their time to conduct the free hearing tests. Twenty-seven customers who were found to have a hearing loss were able to obtain certification on-site and take specialized phone equipment home with them that same day.

"We looked long and hard to find a location that's really

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CPUC TRANSITION A "WORK IN PROGRESS" FOR DDTP Consumer Services Continue as Before

Many consumers aren't even aware that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) now directly administers the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program (DDTP). In July of 2003, the California Communications Access Foundation (CCAF) won the contract to manage and operate the DDTP on behalf of the CPUC. CCAF is staffed by the same people who previously worked for DDTP, many of whom were instrumental in its recent centralization and expansion.

"We're glad the initial transition process was so transparent to consumers," says Shelley Bergum, who was the Executive Director of DDTP and now heads the CCAF. "When the transition began on July 1st, most customers could not tell the difference between the old program and the new. We've added new products, established a new Service Center in Burbank, and continued to advocate for the benefit of our consumers."

During the final months of 2003, however, some customers experienced delays in obtaining new equipment or having their existing equipment repaired. "We know there has been some frustration *continued on page 4*

TV PSAs to run this fall.



Actors Rafael Sigler and Pilar Camporedondo rehearse their lines. Read about the "ads" on page 3.

OPEN HOUSE

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close to the people who need us," said Carol Jones, who directs the Burbank operation. "Eight senior and retirement complexes are located in the immediate area. Educational facilities serving the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities are also nearby. We want to attract as many people as possible to benefit from our products and services."



Audiologists Gayle Maund and Jeffrey Gramma with CTAP's Carol Jones at the Burbank opening.

The Burbank Service Center, located at 303 North Glenoaks Boulevard, is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and is easily accessed by public transportation. A map can be obtained by calling CTAP at 1-800-806-1191 or by visiting the DDTP website at www.ddtp.org.

"We looked long and hard to find a location that's really close to the people who need us."

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CALIFORNIA RELAY SERVICE UPDATE More Choices Coming Soon

California's reputation as a progressive, innovative state has long been enhanced by our unique relay service. Ours is the only state to offer relay users a choice of vendors. Now, an exciting new era of even greater choice is on the horizon for deaf, hard-of-hearing and speech disabled people.

Currently, the California Relay Service (CRS) offers consumers a choice between MCI and Sprint to access traditional relay services in English or Spanish. Speech to Speech relay service is provided by MCI. And although 7-1-1 is the access number for relay service throughout the country, customers dialing 7-1-1 in California today will reach MCI while customers who wish to make a call using Sprint must dial a toll-free ten-digit number.

When the new contracts are implemented, however, three vendors will provide services, customers will be able to access any of the three by dialing 7-1-1, all vendors will provide STS service and additional services will be available. Once the new CRS program is in place, MCI, Nordia and Sprint will provide CRS services.

There are two main ways relay users can access services: when a customer dials 7-1-1, their call will be routed to one of the three carriers using a predetermined formula; alternatively a customer can complete a form to select the vendor they want to handle their relay calls. After submitting the form, that customer's 7-1-1 calls will automatically be routed through their chosen vendor. If a customer wants to change vendors, they simply complete and submit a new form.

"We are anticipating a great response to these new options being offered to our customers," said David Weiss, CRS Department Manager. "After consumers have had a chance to try all the vendors, we expect many of them will complete forms so they can have the assurance of always getting their preferred vendor."

People who use Speech to Speech (STS) relay service will have the same choice of vendors as users of traditional relay. No special phone number will be needed because all vendors will now provide STS service.

"This is a great new addition for Speech to Speech users," Weiss continued. "We expect to see use of this service continue to grow and having a choice will certainly encourage more consumers to use it."

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PUBLIC SERVICE SPOTS DEVELOPED

DDTP Will Boost Exposure with English and Spanish Ads

DDTP will soon begin to tell TV audiences about the products it offers. Potential new California Telephone Access Program (CTAP) consumers should start to see TV spots promoting the program in English and Spanish. The 30 and 60 second advertisements will be distributed as Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

“This is a wonderful opportunity to publicize CTAP,” says Marketing Department Manager Barbara Bianchi Kai, APR. “The growing number of ethnic TV outlets, in particular, gives us access to many customers we haven’t been able to reach in the past.”

Two different spots were produced. Both were shot in Spanish and English language versions with professional actors.

The first ad is a 30 second spot featuring humorous dialogue between a middle-aged son and his hard-of-hearing mother. Despite their banter, they agree wholeheartedly about the benefits of her amplified phone.

The second spot highlights the wide range of “amazing phone” products available through CTAP. This ad was produced in both 30 and 60 second versions. It addresses the broad community of consumers who have difficulty hearing, seeing, moving, remembering, or speaking.

A great deal of care was taken to guarantee realistic casting for the Spanish-speaking roles, with both mother and son sounding like native speakers with the same accent and diction. “If we hadn’t made sure they spoke as if they came from the same community, without strong regional accents, it wouldn’t have worked,” says Cipriano Iguaran, who was the Spanish-language director for all the ads. “Just imagine how unbelievable it would be to have an English-speaking mother with a New England accent and a son who had a Texas drawl!”

In addition to placement with commercial and public TV stations, the PSAs will be used by DDTP’s Outreach Specialists (see page 5) in their presentations and media placements. “We’ve been wanting to take advantage of the opportunities that television provides for quite a while,” says Bianchi Kai. “These spots will give CTAP excellent exposure, and should provide very long term promotional opportunities for the program.”



Cast as a Spanish-speaking son and his mother, Rafael Sigler and Pilar Camporredondo were selected from the Los Angeles area.



The English-language version of the mother and son “ad” also features humorous dialogue. Pictured are actors Clive Chafer and Wanda McCaddon.



The production set for CTAP’s first professional TV spots. Mark Allen is seen directing the actors.

CPUC TRANSITION

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along the way for customers," said Jack Leutza, Director, Telecommunications Division, CPUC. "We made this a priority and worked to resolve problems quickly. We are very pleased that the program is once again operating smoothly."

The CTAP Call Center and all seven Service Centers continue to provide convenient ways for consumers to obtain information, enroll in the program and receive equipment. The California Relay Service (CRS) and Speech to Speech Relay (STS) also continued their operations without interruption.

Three-Committee Structure Maintained

Both the Equipment Program Advisory Committee (EPAC) and the CRS Advisory Committee (CRSAC) continue to provide their recommendations to the DDTP's principal advisory body, the Telecommunications Access for the Deaf and Disabled Administrative Committee (TADDAC) which, in turn, makes its recommendations to the CPUC regarding its policy for DDTP.

Volunteer consumers continue to play a critical role. "The only voting members on our three committees are the consumer members," says Bergum. "We're grateful for the time, energy and expertise of these advocates and are confident that the DDTP will continue to be improved by the consumers it serves."

CALIFORNIA RELAY SERVICE UPDATE

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Relay and STS services will still be available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with no limits on the number or length of calls. Services are provided free of charge – customers pay only for any long distance or toll charges associated with their calls. CRS and STS are funded by a surcharge that appears on California telephone bills.

Also new to CRS will be the availability of Video Relay Service (VRS) and Web-Chat Relay (WCR) service. These two features are funded by the Interstate TRS Fund administered by the National Exchange Carriers Association (NECA) for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). VRS allows American Sign Language (ASL) users to communicate using ASL through a relay operator who voices or types their signed conversation to the other party. WCR allows users to place calls through their computers via internet access. No TTY is required.

The DDTP website is being redesigned to offer consumers more information, including information on CRS. Additionally, public information and outreach materials are being developed.

"As we get closer to the implementation date of the new CRS services, we are planning to provide more information," Weiss said. "We want to ensure that consumers really get the message about everything that is new and exciting in CRS."

DDTP CONTACT INFORMATION

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(510) 302-1101 TTY
www.ddtp.org

SERVICE CENTERS

BURBANK

303 N. Glenoaks Blvd.
Suite L-130
Burbank, CA 91502

FRESNO

1320 East Shaw
Suite 130
Fresno, CA 93710

OAKLAND

1970 Broadway
Suite 650
Oakland, CA 94612

RIVERSIDE

6370 Magnolia Avenue
Suite 310
Riverside, CA 92506

SACRAMENTO

2033 Howe Avenue
Suite 150
Sacramento, CA 95825

SAN DIEGO

2878 Camino Del Rio
South, Suite 400
San Diego, CA 92108

SANTA ANA

2677 North Main Street
Suite 130
Santa Ana, CA 92705

CALL CENTER

(800) 806-1191 (English)
(800) 949-5650 (español)
(866) 880-3394 (Hmong)
(800) 806-4474 (TTY)
(800) 896-7670 (TTY español)
(800) 889-3974 (Fax)

Please call 1-866-821-3733 if you do not wish to receive our newsletter.

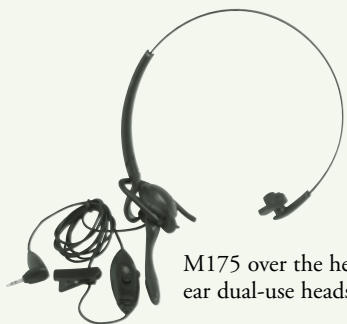
NEW LARGE DISPLAY, HEADSET AND ARTIFICIAL LARYNX DEVICE AVAILABLE

DDTP is now offering the Clarity Large Visual Display for the Dialogue VCO telephone to assist low vision, hard-of-hearing, and deaf consumers. The display is 20" wide and very bright with 1" tall characters; the brightness, the display speed and direction can be adjusted.



Clarity Large Visual Display for Dialogue VCO telephone.

Additionally, DDTP now provides the M175 Monaural Headset with 2.5 mm standard adaptor for low vision, blind, speech, and mobility or manipulation impaired individuals.



M175 over the head or ear dual-use headset.

In response to consumer demand, DDTP is distributing an upgraded artificial larynx. The new TruTone provides a wider variety of pitch options than the previous model.

People who have mild to moderate hearing loss may qualify for the Clarity Amplified telephone.

“The phone is wonderful and very popular. It is a great help for people who are hard-of-hearing,” says Lilia Castellanos, Equipment Department Manager.

The telephone features large black buttons on the base and an LED which lights up when the phone rings. The volume, tone and pitch for the ringer can be adjusted and the ringer can also be turned off. Up to ten numbers can be memorized.

For program materials please call 1-866-821-3733.



Clarity Amplified telephone.

SPOTLIGHT ON: OUTREACH SPECIALISTS

DDTP's 12 Outreach Specialists travel throughout the State spreading the word about the benefits of CTAP. Each month, they make approximately 165 presentations and reach about 9,500 consumers. They



Elena Heredia, Fresno-based Outreach Specialist, is a frequent guest on Spanish-language talk shows.

contact a wide range of groups made up of senior citizens and people who are deaf, deaf and blind, hard-of-hearing, late deafened, visually and mobility-impaired, or speech or cognitively disabled. They also provide information and training for agencies and organizations that must adhere to ADA standards.

The Outreach Specialists are fluent in many languages, including English, Spanish, Tagalog, Hmong, Laotian, Mandarin, Cantonese and American Sign Language. With the use of interpreters, the Outreach Specialists provide presentations in any language requested. Real Time Captioning is also used with many presentations.

SPOTLIGHT ON: OUTREACH SPECIALISTS

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Job Takes Dedication, Includes Lots of Mileage

“These are very dedicated people,” says Lisa Orduño-Arcia, Outreach Department Manager. “They have to be very flexible. This isn’t a Monday through Friday, nine to five type job.”

The Outreach Specialists travel wherever and whenever organizations gather and events take place. And that means plenty of evenings and weekends. Between January 1 and May 31, 2003, the Outreach Specialists drove more than 80,000 miles and made about 47,000 contacts.

The Outreach Specialists also promote CTAP through participation in television and radio interviews. And they write articles that appear in publications ranging from association newsletters to local newspapers.

Elena Heredia, a Fresno-based Outreach Specialist, has been a monthly guest on a popular Spanish-language talk show broadcast by KGST since the beginning of last year. She answers the questions of celebrity host Stella Vasquez-Roma, and responds to inquiries from consumers who call the show. “I really like radio, since it’s such a broad audience,” Heredia says. “Very different people are listening early in the morning, and late at night.”

Heredia has become a radio celebrity of sorts herself. “It’s not unusual for people at presentations to say they recognize my voice,” she laughs. “It’s lots of fun, and makes me feel very welcome.”

MARKETING REACHES THOUSANDS OF NEW CUSTOMERS

Promotes Services to Non-English Speakers

Newspaper ads and radio spots in June 2003 promoted CTAP’s “amazing phones” in both English and Spanish during a two-week media campaign. Consumers were encouraged to learn more by visiting a Service Center or contacting the Call Center.

The ads appeared in newspapers throughout the Bay Area and Central Valley, including San Jose and Fresno. Consumers also heard radio spots on six English-language stations including KGO and five Spanish-language stations that broadcast to the same areas.

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An audience member at an Outreach event asks a question.

“Each month, Outreach Specialists provide approximately 165 presentations and reach about 9,500 consumers.”

MARKETING REACHES THOUSANDS OF NEW CUSTOMERS

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Almost 12,000 new consumers contacted DDTF during and immediately after the campaign, including more than 900 Spanish-speaking customers. The Call Center mailed out more than seven times the 130 forms usually sent out each day, and the Fresno Service Center assisted more than five times the 186 consumers served in the previous month.

In July 2003 another media campaign featured print ads in Chinese, Japanese and Korean newspapers distributed in San Francisco and Los Angeles. These ads announced that fax machines were available for deaf, speech disabled, and cognitively impaired customers whose native language does not use the Roman alphabet (and who cannot use the Relay service).

Although changes in the budget and contracting procedures resulting from last year's transition have slowed media efforts, plans are underway for additional campaigns focused on non-English speakers. "The response to our efforts to reach diverse communities has been phenomenal," says Marketing Department Manager Barbara Bianchi Kai, APR. "We plan to make connections with as many groups as possible, contingent on being able to respond to callers in their own languages."

Outreach Materials In Many Languages

Over the past year, the Marketing Department has developed CTAP Program fliers in eight different languages: Armenian, Chinese, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Tagalog. Consumers have responded enthusiastically, to the use of Chinese, Hmong, Japanese, and Korean language signs and banners at community meetings and celebrations attended by the Outreach Specialists.

"The culturally appropriate materials have helped establish immediate credibility with communities we have not served before," confirms Frances Franco, Outreach Specialist. "The pieces are attractive and user friendly, and especially helpful in the multi-generational communications we do at ethnic and community events."



"The culturally appropriate materials have helped establish immediate credibility with communities we have not served before."



NEW PHONE PRODUCTS OFFERED BY FREE STATE PROGRAM

Read All About It!

Over 60 Amazing Phones Now Offered

See inside for new product information.

www.CallCRS.org *Try It!*

Relay Services help deaf, hard-of-hearing, speech disabled and hearing callers communicate more conveniently than ever before.

At the Helm: The California Public Utilities Commission

The CPUC has assumed leadership of this exciting program and more Californians are using it!



DDTP

Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program

505 14th Street, Suite 400
Oakland, CA 94612



A Program of the California Public Utilities Commission

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Difficulty using the phone?

Check the news – and benefits – inside!