

# Lights, Camera, Action!

How the film industry represents the Deaf/HoH community

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## CELEBRITY SPOTLIGHT

**Marlee Matlin is a well-known deaf actress in the United States**



Matlin received an Oscar for her first film, *Children of a Lesser God*, in 1987. The 55-year-old actress has also appeared in a number of television shows as both a guest actor and in more permanent roles. Her role as Jerry's lip-reading deaf girlfriend on *Seinfeld* is one of her most memorable comedy appearances. In 2009, Matlin became immortalized on a Hollywood star on the Walk of Fame. Matlin's latest movies, *Coda* and *Run*, are currently in post-production

In the movie *Sweet Nothing in My Ear*, Matlin starred with Jeff Daniels, both as parents – one deaf, one hearing – who deliberate over their son's need for a cochlear implant. Whether on or off screen, Matlin has long been an advocate for deaf actors and wants to see more of them. Her movement on closed captioning included testifying at a congressional hearing in 1995. The law passed, requiring all TV sets larger than 13 inches and sold in the U.S. to

automatically provide closed captioning. Matlin has also worked with several boards and charity organizations including Very Special Arts and the Starlight Foundation. Her focus is on foundations that provide assistance for children.

### Other Facts on Simmonds

- Born in Morton Grove, Illinois
- Marlee lost her hearing at 18-months-old.
- Her first role was Dorothy in the *Wizard of Oz* at age seven.
- She loves to visit local children when traveling to other countries.
- Her next two movies include *Silent Knights* and *Silent Voice*.

