

FALL / WINTER 2001

# FOCUS

NTID

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • Rochester Institute of Technology



**Dyer Arts Center**



**Making it Official** Key delegates from universities in Russia, Japan, and China, and NTID/RIT signed a resolution committing to excellence, integrity, and innovation as they begin a unique collaborative network that will help 10 countries improve high-tech education and career options for their deaf residents. The project, Postsecondary Education Network International (PEN-International) is funded in part by The Nippon Foundation. Shown, left to right, are Nippon Foundation Executive Director Reizo Utagawa, RIT President Albert J. Simone, and RIT Vice President for NTID Robert R. Davila.

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The Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer Arts Center at NTID opened on October 26, 2001. Read the article on pp. 13-16.

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# FOCUS

NTID

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16, 27, IBC, BC  
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RIT School of Photographic Arts and  
Sciences—pp. 22-24  
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18-21, 26

*FOCUS* is published by the Marketing  
Communications Department at the  
National Technical Institute for the Deaf,  
a college of Rochester Institute of  
Technology, Rochester, New York.  
The views expressed in guest columns  
do not necessarily reflect the position of  
NTID or *FOCUS* magazine.

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## Pausing to Celebrate and Reflect

**T**he opening of the Dyer Arts Center at NTID has been a real cause for celebration. Made possible by generous donations from Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer, Elizabeth “Cookie” Williams, and Ray Ohringer, this wonderful facility is itself a true celebration of creativity, community and culture. NTID is indeed fortunate to have this outstanding resource available to enrich the educational experiences of our students.

In the center pages of this issue of *FOCUS* magazine, you can find more information on the Dyer Arts Center and enjoy full-color photographs from the grand opening of this unique facility.

The opening of the arts center is one of many milestones that NTID has to celebrate. As I begin my sixth year as RIT Vice President for NTID, I pause to reflect on the tremendous progress we have made in the past five years, the credit for which goes to NTID’s faculty and staff and to those individuals who devote their time to a number of important committees shaping the college’s goals and direction.

We have indeed made great strides, and our work certainly isn’t finished, but we should take a moment to step back from our many tasks and look with pride at all that NTID has accomplished.

### Curriculum Progress

Our faculty have developed new curricula to meet the demands of the changing marketplace in Healthcare Billing and Coding Technology, Industrial Computer Electronics, Computer Aided Drafting Technology, and Laboratory Science Technology. These new programs have passed review and received approval by internal university curriculum review committees and by the New York State Education Department. An additional program in Automation Technologies is currently being developed.

NTID is also implementing a new bachelor of science degree in American Sign Language and English Interpretation—the college’s first ever. The program offers advanced specialized training to develop greater interpreting skills as well as practical experience and coursework in interpreting in elementary, middle/secondary, and postsecondary settings. It also provides training and experience in working with oral deaf, hard-of-hearing, and deaf-blind people. The New York State Education Department recently informed the university provost of its approval to initiate the program.

In another important curriculum-related development, three years ago we were successful in persuading the federal government to amend the Education of the Deaf Act, giving formal recognition and authority to fund NTID’s Master of Science in Secondary Education for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing



RIT Vice President for NTID Dr. Robert R. Davila chats with Joseph Dyer at the grand opening of the Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer Arts Center at NTID.

(MSSE) through the college's federal appropriation. MSSE continues to prepare teachers to enrich educational opportunities for secondary-level deaf and hard-of-hearing students across America.

### Progress in Access Services

NTID has worked diligently to provide access services to the increasing number of deaf and hard-of-hearing students—more than 40 percent in 2001—who cross-register into the other seven colleges of RIT. Over the past five years, we have increased the number of interpreters on staff and expanded the number of courses they cover. In addition, we have increased use of C-Print®, the low-cost, but efficient and effective real-time captioning program developed at NTID.

### Student Success

While student success always has been NTID's top priority, in the last several years we have marshaled additional resources to focus on student retention and student and

alumni satisfaction. Studies show that students who are engaged in activities and programs early in their academic careers have a better chance of staying in college and graduating. Under the leadership of Dr. Gerard Buckley, associate dean for student affairs, a full-scale implementation of retention strategies is underway.

When we recently surveyed NTID alumni, 98 percent reported that they are satisfied with the academic preparation they received at NTID/RIT and of those, 94 percent would recommend the programs to others. I can think of no better testimonial to the success of this college than to have our alumni think so highly of their experiences here.

### Fund Raising and Development

Since 1996, NTID has increased grant and contract activities from \$1.2 million to nearly \$6 million annually. The multiple-year value of this activity exceeds \$24 million. Development efforts through The NTID Foundation have more than

doubled the size of our endowment over the past five years—from less than \$10 million to more than \$22 million. We have averaged close to \$2 million annually in cash and equipment donations, and today NTID students can take advantage of more than 56 endowed scholarships to help them complete their education. Not only have we looked to outside sources for philanthropic opportunities, but NTID faculty, staff, and alumni have instituted giving programs that continue to grow.

### Facilities

The recently opened Dyer Arts Center is a shining addition to our state-of-the-art facilities. In other facility-related developments over the past five years, NTID began work on residence hall renovations, and in keeping with RIT's "most wired" status among colleges and universities, installed Ethernet connections in all residence halls and academic workspaces. In addition, the college created the new Integrative Communications Laboratory and adapted the Dining Commons area to create space for student government and clubs, further enhancing student satisfaction and retention efforts.

### What's Next

It is now time for us to build on the accomplishments of the past five years and create an even better future for NTID and its students. Whether student, alumni, parent, faculty, staff, or friend of NTID, you have helped shape this unique institution. It is with you that I celebrate the success of the past five years, and it is with you that I look forward, with great anticipation, to sharing the future. Thank you for all that you have done.

# NTID Center on Employment: Making Connections that Work

by Pamela L. Carmichael

Another academic year is underway at NTID/RIT, and when it's completed, another group of students will cross the stage to collect their degrees. After the celebrations have ended and the caps and gowns have been put away, the graduates will begin a new chapter in their lives. For some, that will involve continuing their education; for others, it will mean starting a career.

Historically, up to 95 percent of deaf and hard-of-hearing NTID/RIT alumni who have sought jobs after graduation have found them, and 96 percent of those who responded to a recent survey reported that they are satisfied with their jobs.

Helping graduates make that successful transition from college to career is the goal of NTID's Center on Employment (NCE), whose staff members work with both students and employers, establishing connections that lead to rewarding job and career placements.

"We do all that we can to help our students find not just any job, but a job they feel is the beginning

of a career," says Allen Vaala, NCE director. "Students need a partner who has employer contacts and knows what employers are looking for. At the same time, employers like to develop relationships with key people who can help them find quality employees. NCE serves as a resource for both groups."

## Off to a Good Start

The road to successful job and career placement doesn't begin after graduation for NTID/RIT students—it starts in their freshman year.

"NCE works best when we're integrated into the fabric of NTID," explains Vaala. "Students don't finish their classes and then come to us for help finding a job—we work with them throughout their academic career."

All NTID students are required to take "Job Search Process," a two-credit course co-taught by NCE employment specialists and faculty. The course prepares students for their first cooperative work experience (co-op) by teaching them decision-making and

resume and cover letter writing skills. It also helps them learn to research jobs, contact employers, and prepare for employment interviews.

"We organize 'Job Search Process' into different sections, and each section is tailored to a specific major," explains Mary Ellen Tait, employment specialist and NCE student services team coordinator. "By working with faculty from each major, we can be sure that 'Job Search Process' meets the unique needs of students in each program."

By the end of the course, students have a completed resume, a cover letter template, and a list of employers to contact for co-op jobs. They then work individually with their employment advisor to make employer contacts and secure a co-op placement.

"We stay personally connected with each student," says Tait. "We work with them one-on-one and keep in regular contact throughout their academic career for co-op jobs and beyond to permanent employment."

Tait and her fellow NCE employment specialists lead workshops for students on topics such as job search, electronic resumes, and networking and job fairs. In addition, they teach "Employment Seminar," a course taken later in a student's academic career that provides a more in-depth look at the world of work.

"'Employment Seminar' helps students refine their job-seeking skills," explains Tait. "It also gives them a better understanding of the corporate environment to help prepare them to enter the workplace."

"I learned a lot in 'Employment Seminar,'" says Brian Smith of Des



*"We do all that we can to help our students find not just any job, but a job they feel is the beginning of a career."*

**Allen Vaala, NCE director**



**Sharing resources** NCE Employment Specialist Mary Ellen Tait, left, and Denise Arias, third-year Office Technology student from Brooklyn, N.Y., research prospective employers in the NTID Learning Center.

Moines, Iowa, who graduated from NTID/RIT last year with an associate degree in Electromechanical Technology and Applied Computer Technology and is currently working with NCE to find permanent employment. “The course helped me create a portfolio and work on my interviewing skills.”

Last year, 210 students were enrolled in 21 sections of “Job Search Process” and “Employment Seminar.” A hallmark of both courses is providing opportunities for students to participate in practice job interviews. Conducted in NTID’s television studio facility and Spoken Language Learning and Practice Lab, practice interviews are usually led by NTID staff members who volunteer to serve as “employers.” The interviews are videotaped so that students can later review them with their NCE employment specialist or a faculty advisor to receive feedback on their interviewing technique.

“Students need someone to give them an honest critique of their interviewing skills,” says Vaala. “By offering practice interview sessions, we can work with students one-on-one to improve those skills, which are so important to successful co-op and permanent job placement.”

In addition to conducting individual advising sessions and teaching courses, employment specialists staff a special employment resource area in the NTID

Learning Center (NLC) where students can research prospective employers and identify appropriate employment opportunities. Last year, NCE offered 500 hours of job search assistance in the NLC.

“Our staff is passionate about helping students, but our mission is not to find jobs for them,” he adds.

“Students have to learn that the major responsibility for finding a job is theirs. Our mission is to coach them and provide the resources to help in their search. I tell them, ‘No one should do a better job of selling you than you, and you don’t want to give that away.’”

### The Employer Connection

Helping prepare students is only half of the NTID employment equation; NCE also must work with employers to develop co-op and career opportunities for those students and NTID/RIT alumni.

“Teaching students how to find a job is the same whether a student is deaf or hearing,” says Vaala. “In that respect, NCE’s mission is like other college employment offices. Where our mission differs is that we also must educate employers to change their perceptions about hiring deaf employees.

“Some employers feel that there is a significant barrier to hiring a deaf employee and integrating him or her into the work environment,” Vaala explains. “We have to show them that the barrier is not significant. Is there a small barrier? Yes, but we have to help them overcome that and understand the quality of our students and the value they can bring to the workplace.”

To accomplish their mission, NCE provides consultation, training, and other support services for employers. Last year, NCE delivered employer development presentations to more than 200 human resource professionals and managers, and more than 500 employer representatives received training on effective communication and integrating deaf employees into the workplace. Many participated in NCE’s award-winning workshop “Working Together: Deaf and Hearing People.”

After attending “Working Together” at NTID, Keith Snyder, Design Services/Records and Release supervisor at automotive power train components manufacturer New Process Gear, asked NCE to conduct the workshop at his company’s Syracuse, N.Y., facility.

“Working Together” is a great way to help people better understand how to facilitate communication between deaf and hearing workers,” explains Snyder,



**Lights, camera, action!** Diego Acosta, left, Applied Computer Technology graduate from Leonia, N.J., participates in a practice interview in NTID’s television studio. William Moore, a career development counselor in NTID’s Department of Counseling Services, right, conducts the interview, and Darcy O’Dell, NTID staff interpreter provides interpreting services.





*“We want to make sure that employers know about NTID and the skills our students can bring to the workplace.”*

**Linda Iacelli, Sr. Employment Specialist, NCE**

## Spreading the Word

NCE is working to build awareness among employers about NTID and its students. NCE employment specialists attend conferences and meetings of professional organizations related to the programs of study offered at NTID. By exhibiting and networking at events such as the Association of Professional Color Imagers, NCE can make connections with companies that employ people in fields appropriate for NTID students and graduates.

“We want to make sure that employers know about NTID and the skills our students can bring to the workplace,” says Linda Iacelli, senior employment specialist and coordinator of NCE’s marketing team. “We also want them to know that NCE is here to assist them with proven strategies for hiring and working with deaf and hard-of-hearing employees.”

As part of the awareness effort, NCE recently updated its Web site, expanding offerings for both employers and students. The department also encourages alumni and parents of current students to promote NTID to their employers.

“Parents and alumni can be a conduit for co-op and permanent job opportunities for our students,” says Iacelli. “They also can encourage employers to learn more about hiring and working with deaf employees through workshops such as ‘Working Together.’”

All of NCE’s promotional efforts are paying off. Last year, the number of employer visits to campus was up, and the number of employers requesting student resumes increased by nearly 60 percent over the previous year.

“We are always looking for new opportunities to promote the strengths and capabilities of our students,” says Vaala. “What we offer is a win-win situation. We’re helping employers find quality employees and add to the diversity of their workforce, and we’re helping students find jobs that lead to rewarding careers and productive, satisfying lives.”

*Editor’s Note: For information about NCE, visit their Web page at [www.rit.edu/ntid/coops/jobs](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/coops/jobs).*

whose company currently employs three NTID/RIT alumni. “It helped us realize that some of the issues we initially perceived to be significant challenges, really are minimal.”

“Many employers are committed to expanding opportunities for disabled workers as part of their diversity program,” says John Macko, employment specialist and “Working Together” facilitator. “Our job is to help them do that by sharing information about integrating deaf employees into the workplace and about the pool of capable talent available to them in our deaf and hard-of-hearing student body.”

NCE invites employers to tour NTID/RIT campus facilities and meet with faculty and students. They post employers’ job openings, refer candidates, and coordinate employer

visits to campus to recruit students for co-op and permanent employment.

“Most employers don’t know what to expect before they come to campus,” says Macko, who also coordinates NCE’s employer development team. “That first visit makes a huge impact on them. They’re always impressed with our programs and our students.”

“NCE can make an employer’s job easier,” adds Vaala. “Once we develop a relationship, they know they can trust us, and they know that we’re working on their behalf to help them find quality employees.”

Linda Lippert, senior staffing consultant at Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association-College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF), a leading financial services organization, agrees.

“The relationship we have developed with NTID’s Center on Employment has been beneficial for my company,” says Lippert. “For nearly a decade, I have had the pleasure of recruiting at NTID, and most summers we have hired three students for co-op assignments in various areas of the company. Those involved here at TIAA-CREF have found that the NTID students make solid contributions in their areas and that working with them is a rewarding experience.”



**Getting ready** NCE Employment Specialist John Macko, left, prepares Diego Acosta, center, Applied Computer Technology graduate from Leonia, N.J., and Brian E. Smith, Applied Computer Technology and Electromechanical Technology graduate from Des Moines, Iowa, for practice interviews in NTID’s television studio.



# R·I·T



# "Go Tech!"

## RIT's Deaf Athletes

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher

When students arrive on campus in the fall there is a sense of urgency in the air. As Rochester's seemingly all-too-brief summer gives way to autumn and harvest time in Western New York, the bounty afield is collected and stored on the strength of teamwork and cooperation as nature signals preparation for winter.

Similarly, the mental and physical energies of RIT students come together at this time of the year. Rising in the heart, a competitive quest grows. RIT student athletes form teams and perform together with a united spirit and love of sports. The thrill of athletic competition is shared, the goal of being the best is singular, and the roar of the Tigers' — "GO TECH!" — is deeply felt in the soul and muscle of RIT's entire student body.

RIT is a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III university where young and talented deaf athletes participate equally with their hearing peers in a tradition of athletic excellence. Since 1968, nearly 200 deaf and hard-of-hearing students enrolled at RIT have actively competed in every varsity sports team fielded by the university. Many of these same athletes have joined two or more teams in different sports achieving All-Star, All-American, NCAA champion, and RIT Sports Hall of Fame honors. Last

season (2000-2001) alone, more than 25 deaf athletes tried out and were selected for RIT varsity teams. Many of these same student athletes proudly joined a contingent of NTID/RIT alumni athletes competing in the 2001 Summer Deaflympics (formerly known as the Summer World Games for the Deaf) held in Rome, Italy. Some 25 deaf athletes affiliated with RIT participated in the games.

### Soccer

This year NTID/RIT engineering student **Blake Harrison**, 20, returns as forward for the men's soccer Tigers. The Vineland, N.J., native finished his inaugural season last year playing in five games. Harrison made key goals toward helping his team capture the Empire Eight crown and sealing a bid for the NCAA Division III soccer championship series.

"My experiences on the RIT men's soccer team have been really positive,"

says Harrison. "What I enjoy most is being able to play with the most competitive players out there."

Harrison and his team members developed ways to communicate with each other as they found comfort and confidence to play together at their best. RIT's men's soccer team for 2000-2001 had one of its best seasons, finishing with 12 wins, five losses, and two ties, just one win shy of the national championship.

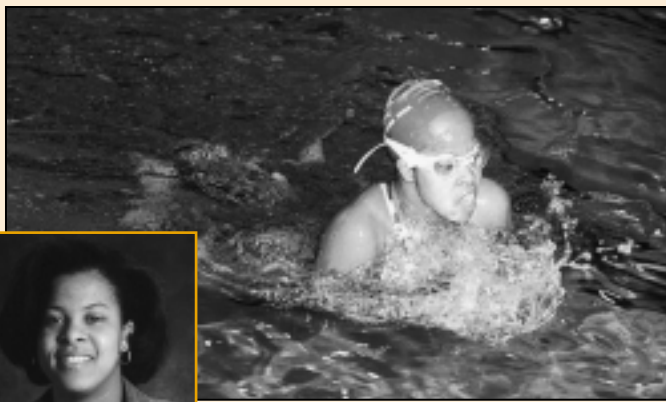
"I think we are champions despite that loss," says Harrison. "I look back at my experience last fall, and I see that I have accomplished my goals — to make the team and go out there to be the best soccer player I can be."

### Swimming

As RIT swimmers take to the water in the fall, lettering on the walls surrounding the pool area acknowledges the names and records set by former RIT swimmers.



Blake Harrison No. 27



## Amira Gumbly

**Fond remembrance** Two-time NCAA champion swimmer Amira Gumbly lit up the scoreboard as she swam 50- and 100-meter freestyle, setting many records for RIT from

1989 to 1993, including RIT's individual best record for most points-career (1364.75). After her RIT swimming career, Gumbly fought a valiant 2 1/2-year battle with cancer. She died in December 1995. This article is dedicated to her.

During her first year of competition as a member of the RIT women's swim team, social work student **Tara Nesbitt**, 20, from Oakville, Ontario, Canada, replaced some of those names and records with her own. Nesbitt set new school records for the 200-meter individual medley and the 50-, 100-, and 200-meter backstroke and was unbeaten in all 26 races in which she competed, on her way to two top-20 finishes for RIT at the 2000 NCAA



Tara Nesbitt

records. Most importantly, it was the team's first winning season in six years (five wins and four losses). I'm very proud of our achievements.

"Athletes at RIT, deaf or hearing, are talented, hard-working, and very committed," says Nesbitt. "It's nice to know that a lot of RIT's athletes are deaf. We are showing that we are equally capable of doing anything, which helps knock down some obstacles between deaf and hearing people."



## Lacrosse

**Peter St. John**, 22, is another modest and hardworking student who, like fellow deaf athletes, finds a happy balance between his love of sports and his studies at RIT. The computer technology student transferred to RIT from the University of Massachusetts/Dartmouth in 1999.

St. John says that for a long time

Division III Women's Swimming Championships in Atlanta, Ga.

Nesbitt characterizes her performance last season as "team phenomenal."

"It was not a very 'individually phenomenal' year for me compared to my first year," Nesbitt says. "As a team, however, we broke a lot of relay



Peter St. John No. 41

he yearned for the chance to play a higher level of lacrosse, but people told him that he had no chance of making a major college team.

"That just motivated me even more to work harder to keep up with the intensity of RIT lacrosse," St. John says. "In fact, I think a few of my teammates didn't notice that I was deaf until the second or third day of fall lacrosse. They didn't care as long as I could play."

In St. John's defensive position for the lacrosse Tigers, communication is essential to good play.

"We have code words and it's hard for me to clearly yell those words,"



Daniel Santos



Michael Spady

## RIT Runners Daniel Santos and Mike Spady

**RIT runners and jumpers** Daniel Santos, 24, of London, Ontario, Canada, and Michael Spady, 20, of New Rochelle, N.Y., credit the mix of deaf and hearing athletes as one of the main reasons why they each participate on RIT's Men's Track and Field team. "We were nervous at first, wondering if we would fit in," says Santos. "All the team members are great guys," says Spady. "They are willing to be friends with every member of the team. We hang out and teach them sign language. We had a feeling that the school would be great for us, and that's exactly how it's turning out."

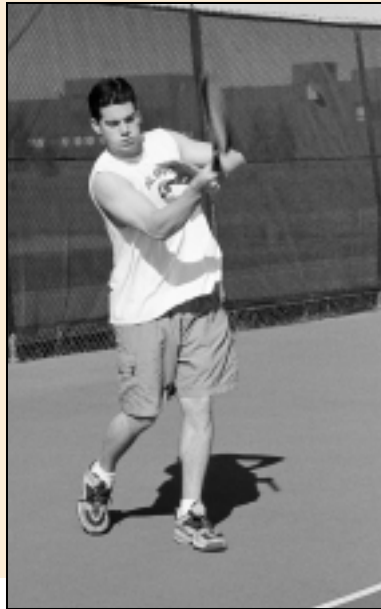


## Joe Neely and Luke Faxon-St. Georges

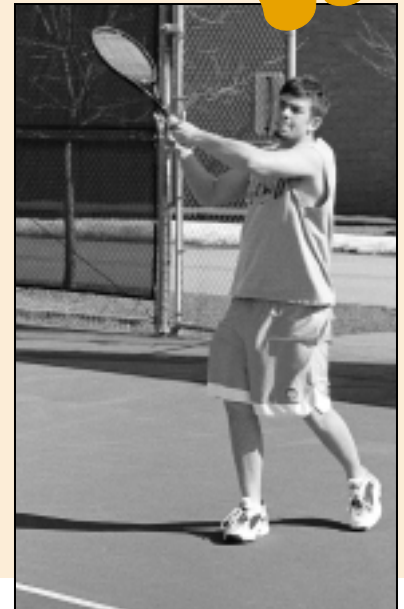


**Tiger tennis teammates** In both singles and doubles competition last spring, Joe Neely, 20, of Virginia Beach, Va., and Luke Faxon-St. Georges, 20, of Rockville, Md., cruised with other members of RIT's men's tennis team to an 11-1 season. The team swept the Empire Eight Championships for a perfect 8-0 conference record. "Last year was a lot of fun on the team," says Faxon-St. Georges, "especially since our coach is extremely wonderful, pushing us to strive and succeed on and off the court."

"Luke and Joe are fantastic tennis players," says coach Ann Nealon. "RIT's deaf students never cease to amaze me with their excellent skills." Off the court, Neely and Faxon-St. Georges are business administration students in RIT's College of Business.



Joseph Neely



Luke Faxon-St. Georges

says St. John. "I explained this to the coaches, and they told me as long as I was yelling and making sure that my teammates knew where I was, that was the important thing."

## Softball

RIT's Michele Halleran led the women's softball team last season with a .467 batting average, seven home

runs, 16 doubles, and 43 runs batted in. She broke the single season women's softball home run record while also besting her own record for runs batted in a season. With a school-record 32

wins, the team went on to make its first-ever appearance in the NCAA women's softball championship series.

"Playing RIT softball for four years really taught me a lot," Halleran says. "It's everything about communication, team bonding, trust building, sportsmanship, and most importantly, having fun!"

"My hearing teammates and I learned how to work with each other, taught each other how to communicate. They forgot I'm deaf because they were so used to having me around. They didn't consider me 'the deaf girl' on the team. It was really nice to know that I was treated as an equal with every woman on the team."

Halleran, 23, hails from North Versailles, Pa. She graduated last May from RIT's College of Applied Science and Technology having earned her bachelor of science degree in information technology.

"With school and playing ball at the same time, I was really forced to focus on my studies," says Halleran. "I always performed well in



**World-class competitors** Twenty-five NTID/RIT students, staff, and alumni competed in the 2001 Deaflympics July 22-August 1 in Rome, Italy. Team RIT Deaflympians representing the United States and Canada proudly collected six gold, eight silver, and one bronze medal. Among the athletes who competed are, top row, left to right, Elaine Coughlin, SVP'86, '89, '92, Luke Faxon-St. Georges, Amy Baxter, Joe Neely, Mark Sullivan, SVP'95, '00, Justin Davis, '01, Willie King; bottom row, left to right, Greg Coughlin, SVP'88, '95, Michele Heise, SVP'85, '89, Russell Ormsby, SVP'00, Donald Slate, and John Macko, SVP'85, '91, '98. Deaf NTID/RIT student, alumni, and faculty/staff athletes have participated in each Deaflympic competition since the 1969 games in Belgrade, Yugoslavia.





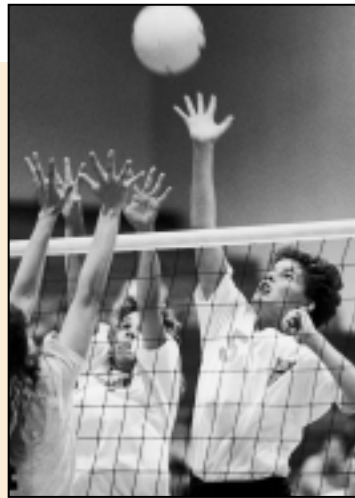
Michele Halleran

school when I was playing ball. Sports often is about performing under pressure, which was a good way for me to be prepared for the real world, I guess.”

For her college sports career, Halleran received 1997 Division III Softball All-American Team and All-ECAC honors, 2000 NCAA Division III All-Northeast region second team honors, and

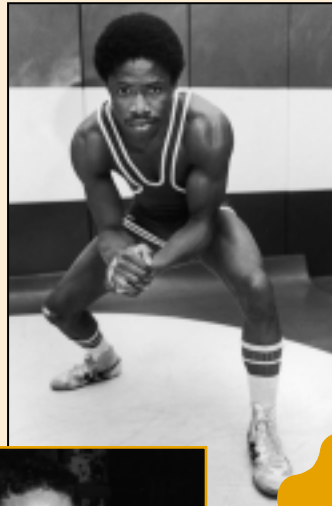
multiple New York State Women’s Collegiate Athletic Association player of the week and RIT athlete of the week honors. She holds numerous individual RIT season records for at bats, homeruns, and RBI. In the off-season Halleran was coordinator of sports assistants for RIT’s intramural sports program.

“Our ballplayers dreamed about reaching the NAAs,” Halleran says, “That’s what we had been playing for since we were kids. It was so emotional for us last season when we went to the nationals. It was a personal goal of mine that I will forever be proud of.”

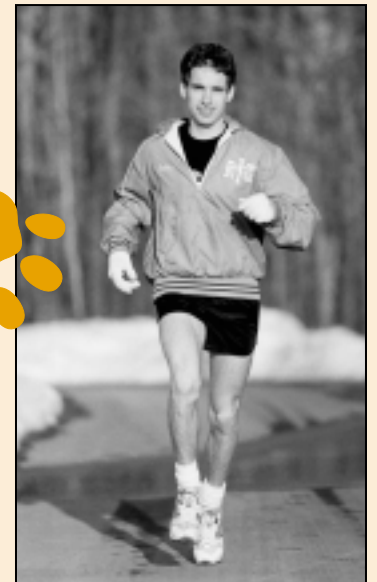


Kris Gray

John “J.T.” Reid



Gerald Isobe



Greg Coughlan



## RIT Sports Hall of Fame Athletes Kris Gray, J.T. Reid, Greg Coughlan, and Gerald Isobe

**Champions!** Four of the best deaf athletes in RIT sports history are members of the RIT Sports Hall of Fame. Inductees for 2000, Kris Gray, SVP’90, ’94, left, and Greg Coughlan, SVP’88, ’95, right, are joined by 1999 inductee John ‘JT’ Reid, ’79, center, the first deaf athlete to be named to the hall of fame. Accolades overflow these outstanding athletes’ trophy cases. Gray excelled in both softball and volleyball. Reid was one of RIT’s most effective wrestlers, and Coughlan was one of the university’s best cross-country and track runners. RIT’s newest inductee for 2001 Gerald Isobe, SVP’71, ’76, bottom left, enjoyed a heralded career as a Tiger golf linksman.

# Age-Related Hearing Loss: Researching a Cure

by Karen E. Black

**P**reventing, stopping and/or reversing age-related hearing loss is the goal of the International Center for Hearing and Speech Research (ICHSR) housed at NTID.

A pretty hefty goal, one might imagine, but not for Dr. Robert Frisina, who 10 years ago founded ICHSR—a unique, collaborative effort combining the skills and research minds of national experts at NTID, the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, and other universities in Buffalo and Syracuse.

ICHSR's primary focus has been age-related hearing loss, known as presbycusis. Its main symptom is difficulty understanding speech, especially in the presence of background noise. The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communicative Disorders estimates that most of the 28 million Americans with hearing loss have presbycusis.

ICHSR made headlines a couple of years ago when researchers discovered that the cause of age-related hearing loss is, in part, a chemical imbalance in the brain. Since then, Frisina and his staff have been working diligently on research leading to possible cures.

"We've learned that the type of damage that develops in the ear and the rate at which presbycusis progresses

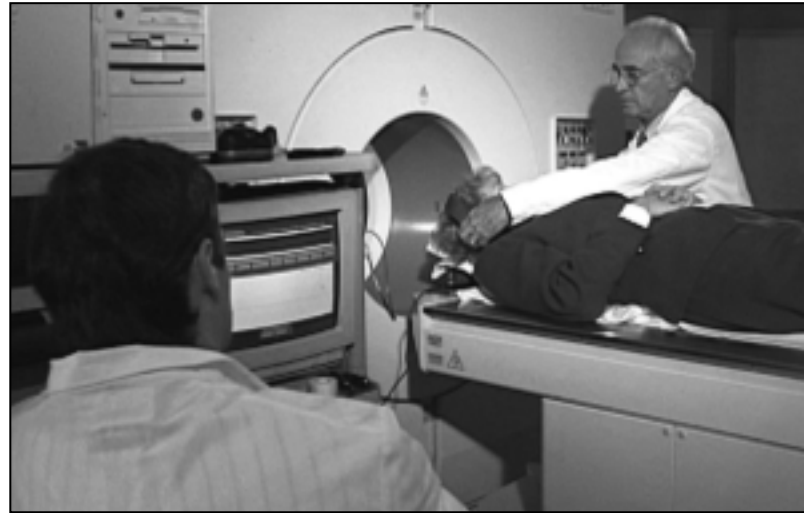
undoubtedly have a genetic basis," Frisina says. "Rapid advances in molecular biology and in sequencing the human and mouse genomes will enhance our understanding of the genes that contribute to age-related hearing loss."

But hearing loss in the elderly can have other causes as well, Frisina says. In particular, hearing loss can be caused by exposure to loud sounds and various therapeutic drugs, including several antibiotics and anti-tumor agents.

"We're studying how the three agents work together," Frisina explains. "But regardless of the exact nature of the interaction, the hearing loss is likely to occur earlier and be more severe than that produced by any one agent alone."

ICHSR's research to date suggests that underlying neural mechanisms begin to change in middle age, or a person's fourth decade, rather than later when the changes noticeably affect speech recognition, often in the sixth decade of life.

"A global finding is that hearing loss associated with aging has a central nervous system component that behaves much like a degenerative disease like Alzheimer's or Parkinson's," Frisina explains. "Scientists from a wide variety of disciplines such as psychoacoustics, neurology,



**Sound research** In this clip from NTID's award-winning video on age-related hearing loss, Robert Frisina Sr., shown here adjusting headphones, and Robert Frisina Jr. conduct tests to determine a research subject's brain activity when exposed to sounds.

neuroanatomy, molecular biology and otolaryngology, to name just a few, have contributed substantially to the understanding of the neural bases of age-related hearing loss."

The efforts of Frisina's dedicated scientists have led ICHSR to several conclusions. Some of them include:

- *Both central (brain stem and cortex) and peripheral nervous systems (inner ear) undergo change with age.*
- *Although the above changes most frequently occur together, either can emerge independently of the other.*
- *Brain stem signal processing declines have been identified in cells located in the mid brain.*

Throughout its short life, ICHSR has moved in an organized manner from

studying the system as a whole, to the study of the individual cell and is now engaged at the molecular level of the auditory system as well. This research has been made possible by significant funding from the National Institute on Aging of the National Institutes of Health.

With the quickened pace of continually improving technologies, the next few years will undoubtedly prove to be even more productive and progressive for ICHSR.

"With new tools and new techniques, we have unprecedented opportunities to approach improving the auditory sensory and central nervous system alternations in serious and productive ways," Frisina says.

# Caroline K. Koo

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher



**W**hat is art?

By definition, it's many things. Art is a skill acquired by experience, study, or observation. It's an extension of learning, and for some, art is an occupation where skills and creative imagination combine to produce aesthetic objects and decorative or illustrative elements.

It seems that art is anything but specific. It's personal. It's a human creation that carries the artist's ideals. In this way, works of art educate, and artists, knowingly or not, are effective educators.

Caroline Kaung Koo, 25, is a teacher and an artist. The New York City native followed her creative passion for interior design, graduating from RIT's College of Imaging Arts and Sciences (CIAS) with a bachelor of fine arts degree in 1998. Wanting to bridge

her artistic expression into the field of education, Koo continued at RIT, graduating from NTID's Master of Science in Secondary Education for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (MSSE) program. Today, she is an elementary art teacher, kindergarten through fifth grade, at Texas School for the Deaf in Austin, Texas.

"I truly enjoy teaching deaf children from diverse backgrounds and seeing the light of learning in their eyes," she says. "I am able to make the most use of both my fine arts and education backgrounds. Both programs prepared me well for this wonderful and rewarding job. I truly cannot imagine where I would be if it weren't for RIT and NTID."

As an artist, Koo finds inspiration in many places. She reads and travels, and says that she doesn't necessarily look for art.

"It's an innate instinct," she says. "Through life's journey, I recognize and appreciate different aspects of art, from traditional masterpieces to magazine advertisements to truly abstract art works. I tell my students, art is everywhere!"

Koo was diagnosed as being deaf at the age of three. She began her schooling in New Jersey, with a focus on auditory and verbal training. When her family moved to Dallas, Texas, she took classes in a

self-contained classroom environment using both the Morphemic Sign System (MSS) and the Signing Essential English (SEE) method. By eighth grade, she was fully mainstreamed.

"As a child, I pretended that I had imaginary students, and I was their teacher," she remembers. "I visualized myself, from as early as I can remember, growing up to be a teacher."

"I come from a wonderful, supportive hearing family, including my parents and younger brother, who is currently a senior in college. My maternal great-aunts were elementary school teachers, and one became a principal. My maternal uncle is a college professor in Hong Kong, China. My family places a high value on education."

During her time at RIT, Koo was activities coordinator for NTID's Summer Vestibule Program, graduate assistant in NTID's Career Resource and Testing Center, and a CIAS art history tutor. When she was not tackling her student teaching assignments in MSSE, she was also prop manager for NTID Performing Arts, English tutor in NTID's Learning Center, and graduate assistant for Educators Fostering Friendship, Ethnicity, Culture, and Teamwork (EFFECT), a multicultural student program offered by NTID's Student Life Team.

Koo completed her student teaching at Scranton State School for the Deaf in Scranton, Pa., and Rush-Henrietta Senior High School in Rochester, N.Y.

"My heart is with children. I have a profound sense of responsibility to try my best to get them on the right foot for their future. All children have potential in developing creativity and expressive skills—very valuable tools in the real world—toward becoming productive citizens and role models in their community."

Koo has been given numerous pearls of wisdom, mostly from her family, as guides and inspiration to her own success.

"If I had to give just one," she says, "I would say that perseverance and optimism are the keys to personal success, and don't forget to learn from your experiences."

"My top achievements so far are getting both degrees from RIT and a good job, and becoming an artist and a teacher and the person that I want to be."

*Editor's note: The MSSE program at NTID/RIT is now in its sixth year. To date, 41 students have completed the program, and all have found teaching positions in residential or mainstreamed settings. MSSE is accredited by the Council on Education of the Deaf.*

*For more information, visit the MSSE program Web site: <http://www.rit.edu/ntid/msse/>.*



*“Tonight, we celebrate the beginnings of an important place within the cultural life of this campus, this community and within the world of deaf culture.”*

**Dr. Anthony Bannon**  
Director, George Eastman House



## *Celebrating Creativity, Community and Culture*

The Joseph F. and Helen C.

# Dyer Arts Center

by Karen E. Black



**Long-time NTID supporter**  
Joseph Dyer, above, and his late wife, Helen, gifted \$2.5 million toward the arts center that bears their names.

Initial renderings and sketches couldn't possibly have captured the beauty of the Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer Arts Center or the excitement on the crisp October evening when 500 people celebrated the grand opening of the world's largest art gallery devoted to exhibiting significant works by deaf artists.

After eight months of watching the transformation of a rarely used outside courtyard into a glass-enclosed showplace that is itself a work of art, donors and RIT community members gathered on Oct. 26 at the Dyer Arts Center, in the heart of NTID's main academic building.

“It's magnificent!” said P. Gregory Hess, an attorney and NTID Foundation Board member.

“The space is so inviting,” commented his wife, Susan Hess, who arrived with Greg from New Jersey for the big event.

In one corner of the arts center, the Italian marble floors dip into a sunken, tiered conversation area designed to hold workshops for art classes or lectures. Sixteen skylight scoops filter the northern light, creating a soft, consistent illumination by which to view the artwork without damaging it.

Long-time NTID supporters, Joseph and Helen Dyer, a deaf couple from Delray Beach, Fla., gifted \$2.5 million toward the center that bears their names. Helen, who passed away just weeks before the grand opening, had a life-long interest in art. Joseph Dyer, 88, a retired mechanical engineer, traveled to Rochester with members of his family for the opening of the arts center.



**Recognizing generosity** RIT President Albert J. Simone, left, greets Joseph Dyer at the arts center grand opening as Elizabeth “Cookie” Williams and RIT Vice President for NTID Robert R. Davila look on.

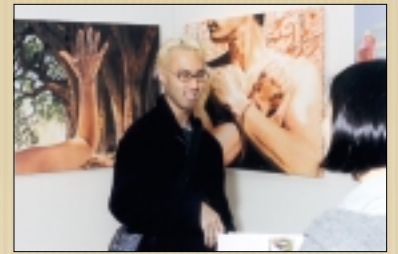
### Art appreciation

Students, faculty, staff, donors and other guests enjoy the artwork at the Dyer Arts Center Inaugural Invitational Exhibit.



### Celebrating the arts

More than 500 people attended *A Celebration of Creativity, Community and Culture*, the grand opening of the Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer Arts Center at NTID.



“We were born long ago into an age when choices for deaf people were limited,” he said. “The founding of NTID gave many new chances for deaf people to advance themselves. That’s why Helen and I wanted to help support NTID. The college has made such significant contributions to deaf education, technology and the arts.”

Guests at the grand opening mingled in and out of the seven exhibition areas within the bi-level, 7,000 square foot gallery, chatting with artists, reporters and other visitors.

“I am overwhelmed by the art and by the facility,” said Roodlene Daniel, a third-year NTID Health Care Billing and Coding Technology student from New York City. “This is ground-breaking in deaf history.”

A variety of artists are featured in the Dyer Arts Center’s Inaugural Invitational Exhibit, including Chuck Baird, RIT alumnus, painter, and honorary exhibit curator. A full-size photographic print of his 1992 painting *Tyger, Tyger*, a dramatic creation that symbolizes deafness and uses the

**“This is a landmark event for RIT. Let’s give a terrific round of applause to NTID.”**

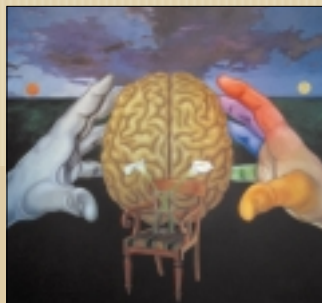
**Albert J. Simone**  
President, RIT

RIT tiger mascot as part of the design, was unveiled during the grand opening ceremony.

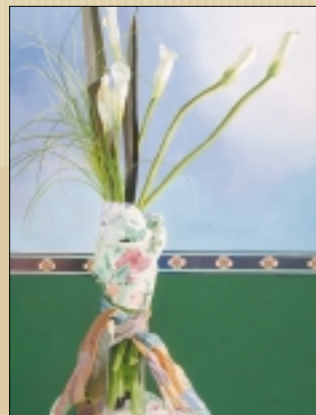
Other featured artists include RIT alumni Rita Straubhaar, photographer; Ron Trumble, woodworker and furniture designer; and Carl Zollo, sculptor. In addition, the handmade-paper works of Paula Grcevic, NTID associate professor in Applied Arts and Computer Design, and pieces by painters Morris Broderson and Charles Wildbank are on exhibit until Jan. 25 along with more than 100 works from NTID’s permanent collection.



“Faraway Thunder...”  
Paula Grcevic



“Left and Right”  
Chuck Baird



“Lillies with Scarf”  
Morris Broderson



“Love”  
Charles Wildbank





**Generous benefactor**

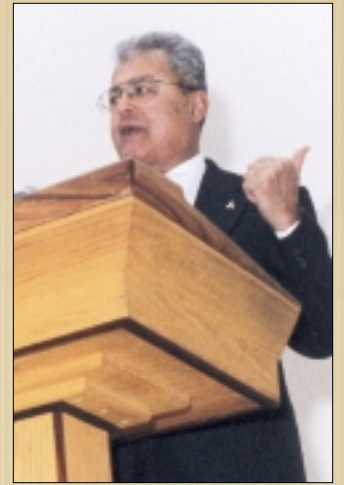
The main gallery in the Dyer Arts Center is named for Cookie Williams, photo at left, whose gift funded its creation.



**A momentous occasion** RIT Vice President for NTID Robert R. Davila, below, addresses the guests at the arts center grand opening.



**Enjoying the festivities** NTID Dean T. Alan Hurwitz, at right in the photo above, welcomes guests to the grand opening celebration.



**Meet the artist** RIT alumnus Chuck Baird, photo at left, honorary exhibit curator, discusses his artwork with students in the Dyer Arts Center.

Future exhibits will feature pieces by both deaf and hearing artists, including works from NTID's permanent collection, student art, sculptures, paintings, photography, visiting exhibits, and a Web-based virtual gallery of works by deaf artists from around the world.

RIT President Albert J. Simone and RIT Vice President for NTID Robert R. Davila spoke at the grand opening ceremony, acknowledging the generous contributions of the Dyers, and longtime NTID supporters Elizabeth "Cookie" Williams and Ray Ohringer for their \$500,000 and \$300,000 donations, respectively. The main gallery in the arts center is named in honor of Williams, and an upper-level gallery is named in honor of Ray and her late husband, Milton Ohringer.

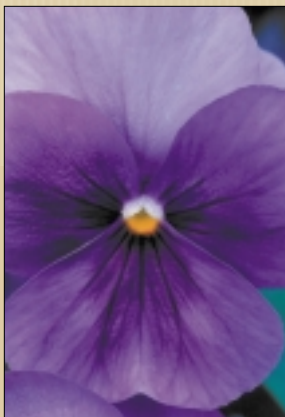
At a private dinner to recognize these donors, keynote speaker Dr. Anthony Bannon, director of the George Eastman House, talked about the relationship between technology and art.

"It's hard to believe there was actually a time in history when some materials were considered inappropriate for art," he said. "For instance, there was a controversy about using aluminum in sculpture and whether or not film and photography could even be considered art.

"But anyone in 2001 who believes that there remains an

*"This is a true milestone in the history of NTID and deaf culture ... that will enrich our students' educational experiences for generations to come."*

**Robert R. Davila**  
RIT Vice President for NTID



"Purple Lady"  
Rita Straubhaar



"Table"  
Ron Trumble



**Ceremonial unveiling** RIT President Albert J. Simone, left, and RIT alumnus Chuck Baird unveil a reproduction of Baird's *Tyger, Tyger* during the grand opening ceremony.



issue between art and technology better get out of the way!” Bannon challenged. “An arts center in a great institute of technology is an opportunity for integrated solutions that can help make a difference and save us from narrow channels of thinking.”

“This is a very special day for me,” Dyer said. “And in memory of my wife, Helen,... the arts center is really a beautiful place, and sets an example for the deaf community!”

Elizabeth “Cookie” Williams was thrilled with the center. “When I first went into the center...,” she said, “I was so impressed... the beauty of the artwork, marble floors, the walls. What can I say? It’s better than the museums in Europe!”

After guests finished a standing ovation for both Dyer and Williams, NTID’s Jill Pranger read a note from Ray Ohringer, who was unable to attend the celebration.

“NTID offers opportunities to deaf young men and women that I did not have,” Ohringer wrote, “like getting a higher education from teaching methods designed to address the learning needs of the deaf and having technical training on the most advanced equipment. I am very happy to be a part of NTID and the arts center.”

All in all, it was an event with a perfect title: *A Celebration of Creativity, Community and Culture*. An event, Davila said, where the impact will last far longer than just an evening of fanfare.

“This is a true milestone in the history of NTID and in deaf culture,” he concluded. “A center showcasing artistic expression, while applying high-end technology in the process—that will enrich our students’ educational experiences for generations to come.”

## The Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer Arts Center Construction



**Creating history** Eight months of construction turned NTID’s center courtyard into the 7,000 square-foot glass-enclosed Dyer Arts Center, the world’s largest gallery devoted to exhibiting significant works by deaf artists.

# William Timmers

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher



**A**s a young America was growing from east to west in the late 1800s, several talented deaf architects emerged from its heartland to ply their design talents into buildings and structures still standing today.

Thomas Marr, Olof Hanson, and Hilbert Duning, despite their deafness and the limited educational opportunities of their times, each became certified architects.

It is with this same pioneering spirit that NTID/RIT alumnus William Timmers, 37, is applying and refining his self-styled concept of “Deafitecture,” a new vision combining deafness and architecture, into aesthetically pleasing deaf-friendly building design.

An architect-in-training, formerly with Minneapolis-based architectural firms The Cunningham Group and KKE Architects, Timmers is sharpening his skills

toward becoming a licensed architect as he pursues his Deafitecture concept of architectural design and construction.

Born in Wheaton, Ill., 25 miles west of Chicago, Timmers is the youngest of six children and the only deaf member of his family. He graduated from Illinois School for the Deaf in 1983 and attended NTID, earning his associate of applied science degree in architectural technology in 1987. He went on to take classes at the University of Maryland and later the University of Minnesota where he earned his bachelor of architecture degree in 1995. It was in Minnesota where Timmers met Bridget DeRusha. The couple married in August 1996 and have two daughters, Melissa and Karissa.

“Ideally, I would have preferred staying at RIT,” explains Timmers, “but the college did not offer a higher degree in architectural studies. The trade off was that I got the degree I wanted, but it took a little longer. I took only three courses at a time instead of four or five because of the language difference. I started with a solid foundation from NTID, and in the end it was worth it.”

During his college career, Timmers says that he searched for a deeper, more personal, meaning

of architecture. He found a key to understanding architecture guided by deaf humorist Ken Glickman’s book *Deafinitions for Signlets: Any Word Pertaining to the World of the Deaf That Isn’t in the Dictionary, but Should Be* (DEAFinitely Yours Studio, 1987), a creatively funny look at words and phrases for many situations that deaf people encounter on a daily basis.

“When I presented my own ‘Deafinitions’ and ideas of ‘Deafitecture’, inspired by Glickman’s book, to the class,” says Timmers, “the professor expressed joyfully, ‘You finally understand what architecture is!’”

“One example of my Deafitecture concept is a building design I created for a teen center at the Illinois School for the Deaf, as part of my thesis project at the University of Minnesota,” Timmers explains.

“In the design I express a juxtaposition of ‘American Sign Language as nature’, ‘Architecture as art’, and ‘Structure as science.’”

Timmers believes that it is important for a building design to lessen or eliminate any negative psychological impact on the building’s occupants, while maintaining appropriate functionality in a visually pleasing setting. He is currently designing and building a residence for his family, in Montrose, Minn., featuring deaf-friendly

environments, including appropriate lighting and signaling devices, and open living spaces for better visual communication.

“Design principles that pay attention to color schemes, lighting, vibrations, and open spacing, once thought to be special assistance, truly benefit everyone,” Timmers says.

“Connecting these with the essence of people as individuals into building designs makes them feel better about their surroundings and themselves. In that way, people will want to naturally come together for their work or to socialize, and I feel good about having a hand in making that happen.”

*Editor’s note: NTID’s architectural technology program was discontinued, with the last group of students graduating in the spring of 2001. The Center for Technical Studies (CTS) at NTID has been revising and updating engineering-related technology programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.*

*In addition to NTID’s new computer-aided drafting technology curriculum, CTS is exploring the feasibility of offering programs in automation technologies, photonics, and geographic information systems. To learn more about technical studies programs, visit NTID’s Web site, <http://ntidweb.rit.edu/academics/>.*





Mary Jordan

### Mary Jordan

Mary Jordan embodies the essence of motivation and positive thinking. The 28-year-old from Columbus, Ohio, says, “You have to hustle to get what you want. You can’t be content with where you are. I’m constantly challenging myself and going beyond what’s required.”

When Mary graduated from high school in 1991, she attended Ohio State University, where she fed her creativity and life-long interest in art by majoring in medical illustration. After two years, financial difficulties forced her to leave school and go to work. She supported herself, working as a hair stylist for five years. During that time, her oldest sister, Angela, the only one of Mary’s five siblings to complete her college education and earn a master’s degree, encouraged her to go back to school.

With vocational rehabilitation and scholarship support, Mary entered NTID/RIT to study graphic design.

“I chose RIT because it offers the major I wanted as well as support services and the chance to experience deaf culture,” she explains. “My opportunity here is a blessing.”

After completing her bachelor’s degree this May, Mary would like to attend graduate school at RIT.

“My sister Angela is my role model,” she explains. “I want to be like her and be the next person in my family to earn a master’s degree.”



Ben Clothier

### Ben Clothier

Originally from Spokane, Ben Clothier, 20, grew up in La Conner, Wash., attending a mainstream elementary school before entering high school at the Washington State School for the Deaf in Vancouver.

During his senior year, Ben enrolled in “Running Start,” a college preparatory program for high school students. He took advanced level classes and received both college and high school credits. Based on that experience, going to college after high school was a given for Ben.



Dominic Vera

“I decided that RIT was the best fit for me because here I get support from peers as I develop my deaf identity while learning about the dynamics of the hearing world,” he says.

Ben initially selected civil engineering as his major, because he liked math and science. After a year, he realized that he didn’t want a job with a clear-cut method of doing things.

“I like to experiment,” Ben says. “I want to learn about the importance and influence of languages, especially sign language, in RIT’s Professional and Technical Communication program.”

Ben helped restructure NTID Student Congress during the 1999-2000 academic year. Outside of his studies, Ben enjoys football, skiing, and scuba diving.

“I tell myself and others to be dynamic,” says Ben. “Throw out all assumptions about anything and try new experiences.”

### Dominic Vera

Learning is an ongoing process, and older students like Dominic (Nick) Vera, 37, are increasing in numbers on campuses across the country.

After graduating from California School for the Deaf, the Glendale, Calif., native attended several colleges in California.

“I had a good foundation from the other colleges I went to,” Nick says, “but I needed guidance and support in order to narrow my career options. I came to NTID to get on the right career track.”

Nick is focused on graduating from NTID’s business occupations program in 2002. His goal is to transfer to RIT’s College of Liberal Arts for studies in Professional and Technical Communication toward a career in the field of media relations.

“It seems like it took me a while to discover what direction I wanted to go,” says Nick. “NTID is not an end to what I have been searching for—it’s a new beginning.”



## Jian Wang

After reading a magazine article that featured NTID, Jian Wang applied to the college. He knew the road to success wouldn't be easy—it meant the 32-year-old had to leave family, friends, and a good job in Shanghai, China.

“I chose NTID because it has great technical courses and support services,” he explains.

Knowing he wanted a career in computer Web work, Jian entered NTID's Applied Computer Technology (ACT) program and then transferred to RIT's Information Technology program, where he continues to work in Web design and development, and database.

Jian has a great passion for art and won an award for an art exhibit in China. When he's not working as a tutor for ACT majors or as a network lab assistant, Jian plays basketball and baseball and is an active member of the NTID Asian Deaf Club.

With three co-op experiences under his belt, and one remaining, Jian is now considering the future.

“I want to work in Web design and development, and create my own e-commerce business,” he says, “and I want to be my own boss.”

For Jian, success isn't far off; he already has the Internet site for his future e-commerce, and though he isn't sure what it will feature, he knows that with hard work he can make it happen.

## Julie Muszynski

Deciding which college to attend was easy for Julie Muszynski. Her father, mother, stepfather, aunt, and uncle are all NTID alumni, and she wanted to follow in their footsteps. But that's not the only reason she chose the college.

“I like the programs and support services here,” explains the 19-year-old from Pittsburgh, Pa. “And there's a lot of diversity. It's great to be able to socialize and interact with so many different people.”

Now in her second year at RIT, Julie is majoring in graphic design.

“I really like art, and I wanted to do something that would support me as an artist,” she says. “I enjoy working with

computers, and graphics technology is pretty advanced. I like the challenge.”

A member of the National Honor Society in high school, Julie received an NTID Vice President's Scholarship and is on the dean's list. In addition to her studies, she works part time at Margaret's House, RIT's on-campus child development center.

Julie is planning a career in graphic design, but for now she's concentrating on college.

“I like to take one day at a time and live it to the fullest,” she explains. “College is a great experience. It's hard work, but you learn a lot and have lots of fun.”

## Hasan Haider

Hasan Haider was born in Pakistan, and grew up speaking Urdu, the country's official language. When he was 10 years old, he moved with his family to Bakersfield, Calif., where he met his first deaf teacher and learned American Sign Language and then English.

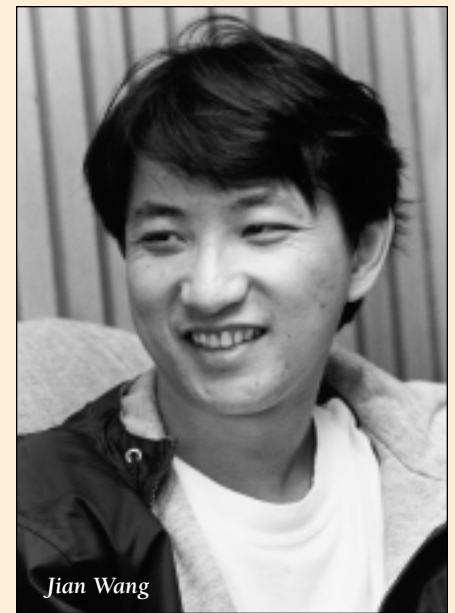
He attended a mainstream high school in Bakersfield, competing on the school's football, baseball, wrestling, and track teams. After graduating, Hasan studied computer science at a California college and then transferred to NTID's Computer Integrated Machining Technology program.

“There's a great environment here and great teachers,” says the 22-year-old. “It's a challenging experience.”

The third-year student plans to continue his RIT education to pursue a bachelor's degree in engineering, and maybe a master's degree.

Two years ago, Hasan traveled back to Pakistan, but says he prefers living in the U.S.

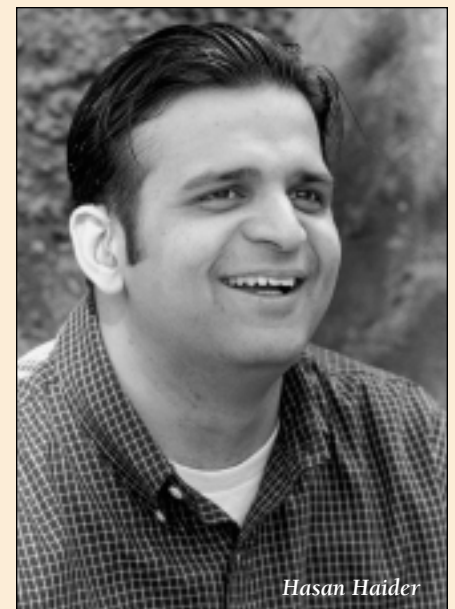
“There are no deaf schools in Pakistan, no captioned television programs or movies, no services for deaf people,” he explains. “I like living in Rochester. There's a huge deaf community here and lots of opportunities.”



Jian Wang



Julie Muszynski



Hasan Haider

Allison Anderson



### Allison Anderson

To Allison Anderson, life is one big playground. With a high school career that included swimming, track, badminton, and softball, Allison proved that in sports, she could hold her own.

The 19-year-old from Phoenix, Ariz., who came to NTID for its support services, credits her drive to her parents. “They really pushed me to excel,” she says, “and I was blessed to have their help and support.”

Though enrolled in an engineering program, Allison has discovered that Industrial Design might be a better match for her playful spirit.

“I want to create toys for kids,” she says.

She confesses to being a technology addict and has created several Web pages related to her many interests. She plays intramural softball and is a member of the Tri-Sigma Sorority. She also plans to become a notetaker for deaf students at RIT.

“I want to challenge the notion that only hearing students are capable notetakers,” she explains.

Eventually, she would like to form an intramural badminton team and become a residence hall advisor to meet new people.

Like she did in high school, Allison plans to make the most of her college career, and she’s off to a good start.

### Roxann Richards

Roxann Richards was born in Jamaica and moved to the United States with her family when she was one year old. She grew up in Scotch Plains, N.J., and came to NTID’s Explore Your Future (EYF) program when she was a high school junior.

“I always liked math, so I came to EYF to learn more about accounting,” says the 19-year-old. “I fell in love with it and knew that it was the right career for me.”

After graduating from high school, she returned to NTID/RIT and is now a second-year Applied Accounting major.

“NTID offers a great opportunity to receive a good education,” she explains. “The support services, teachers, and social environment are great. And

the co-op program offers real-world experience. It helps students make a smooth transition to work after they graduate.”

When she’s not in class or studying, Roxann likes to pursue her other passion—dancing, which helps her “relax and manage stress.” She’s a member of the RIT/NTID dance company and the Ebony Club and works as a student development educator on NTID’s Student Life Team.

Roxann plans to complete a bachelor’s degree and possibly a master’s and then pursue a career in accounting.

### Rebecca Larson

Rebecca Larson, third-year psychology student from Des Moines, Iowa, dreams of becoming a developmental psychologist who works with deaf children.

Born in South Korea and adopted by hearing American parents at 15 months old, she was raised and educated in a mainstream environment her entire life. As a result she uses both sign language and oral skills to communicate with her fellow students and family.

“My parents are terrific,” says the 20-year-old. “We do so many things together especially with my older brother and his wife. We’re all certified scuba divers, and we love to travel.”

One of Rebecca’s latest adventures is to “dive” into the new automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology offered at NTID/RIT. Using specially-designed software and computers, ASR displays speech as it is spoken into a microphone.

“ASR enables me to see my speech skills,” Rebecca says. “It can be very rewarding to know that I have the ability to make hearing people understand me. After taking speech therapy for awhile, I was even able to land a job in the Spoken Language Learning and Practice Lab.”

When she’s not diving in exotic locations or mastering new technology, Rebecca is busy with intramural soccer, shopping, and spending time with friends and her boyfriend.

“Having a group of friends who support me in what I do and finding mentors, counselors, and teachers has helped me go far.”

Roxann Richards



Rebecca Larson





## Joseph Wu

Born in Taiwan, Joseph Wu moved to Chicago when he was three years old. He attended a mainstream high school and was involved in the school's Deaf club, participating as mathematician on their Deaf Academic Bowl team for three years. During the summers, Joseph worked as a clerical worker and a library aide. An interest in computers led him to NTID, where the 20-year-old is now in his third year as an Information Technology student.

"I chose NTID because it has a good technical program and provides great support services," he says.

On campus, Joseph spends most of his time in the computer labs, working as a Web researcher. He also has worked as a lab assistant, but his favorite aspect of computers is programming.

"I like programming because of the logic it involves," he explains.

Joseph spends his free time reading or playing games. His current passion is playing Final Fantasy®, a computer role-playing adventure game. He's not sure what his future will bring, but he does know it will involve computer programming. And the location?

"Probably back to Chicago, because they have the BEST Chinese food there!" he says.

## Hilary Hannah

Deaf athletes have distinguished themselves for their power, persistence, and precision in competition at RIT and Hilary Hannah is no exception.

The 19-year-old Computer-Aided Drafting Technology (CADT) student is a member of the junior Genesee Express synchronized skating team of the Genesee Figure Skating Club, which practices at RIT's Frank Ritter Memorial Ice Arena. The team placed second at the Empire State Games held in Lake Placid, N.Y., last season.

"Oh! I love being on the team," says Hilary. "It's so much fun and full of challenges!"

In synchronized team skating, 12 to 24 athletes skate as one unit, performing maneuvers set to music. Teams are judged on speed, synchronicity, and the difficulty and accuracy of the formations.

"I'm the only deaf skater on the team," says Hilary. "I feel comfortable

being with the hearing skaters and have made many new friends.

"Of course, it's kind of hard for me to hear the music, so I really concentrate visually on the choreography of the routines."

Hilary was adopted from Pusan, South Korea, when she was 2 years old. Since then, she and her mother and adopted sister from Seoul, South Korea, have resided in Royal Oak, Mich. Hilary came to NTID for college because she wanted to build on her interests in art and architecture.

"I enjoy designing houses and buildings," says Hilary, "and I have always wanted to become an architect. That's why I picked the CADT major.

"Showing others that, as a deaf person, I can do it, is great motivation for both my skating and my studies at NTID."

## Adam Stone

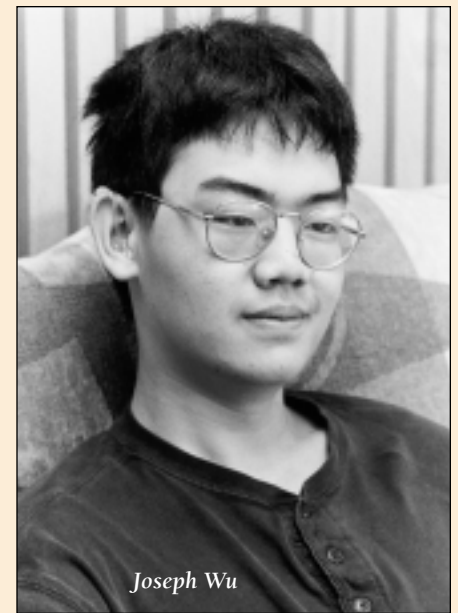
At age 20 and 2,663 miles from his home in Del Mar, Calif., Adam Stone was no stranger to RIT when he arrived on campus last fall. While still in high school, he visited RIT five times to see his sister Liz who attended RIT's College of Liberal Arts with NTID support. Liz graduated from RIT's Social Work program in 1997.

Today, Adam is entering his second year at RIT. As he pursues Professional and Technical Communication studies in RIT's College of Liberal Arts, Adam embraces his college experience with a passion for rigorous academic studies and personal involvement in student activities outside his classes.

"College is made up of extremes in every direction," says Adam. "Students want to do well in their classes and still have time away from their studies to follow their own interests, make new friends, and have fun too."

Last year, Adam held positions in NTID Student Congress, the Brickfest 2001 Committee, and student newspaper *THE VIEW*, while also pursuing acting interests. This year, he's a resident adviser, and looks forward to continuing his community involvement as well as an academic concentration in international relations.

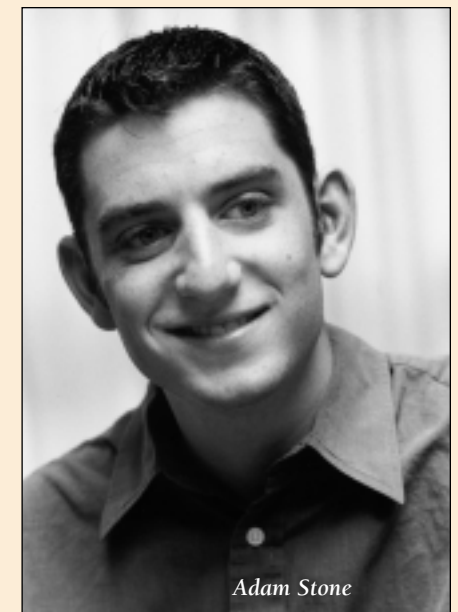
"I've always believed that the college experience was not made to be taken in sips," he says. "Instead, go for the big gulp!"



Joseph Wu



Hilary Hannah



Adam Stone



# BIG SHOT

## Builds Community

by Kathryn L. Schmitz

For 14 years, NTID students and faculty members have been involved in a unique and distinctive project known as the Big Shot. In 1987, Michael Peres and William DuBois, professors of photography in RIT's College of Imaging Arts and Sciences, created a new way of teaching photography students effective use of lighting and exposure by teaching them how to use electronic flashes to "paint with light."

For the first Big Shot, Peres and DuBois gathered their students and several volunteers in front of and around Highland Hospital in Rochester, N.Y., at night. They all repeatedly triggered their camera flashes to illuminate the building while the shutter of a camera operated from the roof of the hospital's parking garage was left open for two minutes. The light provided by the electronic flashes during the long shutter exposure helped create a unique photograph of the hospital.

Since then, 16 Big Shots have been made, with the most ambitious subject

being the USS Intrepid, the 900-foot-long aircraft carrier in New York City's harbor. That project attracted 1,200 participants in fall 1999. The Intrepid event was filmed by CNN for its news programs and featured in numerous publications, including the January 2000 *Studio Photography & Design* magazine, the spring 2000 issue of RIT's *University Magazine*, the fall 2000 issue of RIT's *Biomedical Photographic Communications*, and the Nov. 11, 1999 issue of *RIT News and Events* ([www.rit.edu/NTID/NewsEvents](http://www.rit.edu/NTID/NewsEvents)).

The students in RIT's biomedical photography program selected Big Shot locations the first four years, and since then, the faculty members have made the decisions with input from students, alumni, and others.

Dawn Tower DuBois, assistant professor in NTID's Imaging Arts and Sciences Support Department, has been involved with the project since its inception. In addition to her primary responsibility for operating one of two

4 x 5 view cameras set up to record the event, she has involved RIT's deaf students in the annual project, including Andrea McNeill, who has participated in numerous Big Shots and now is a member of NTID's Imaging Arts and Sciences Support Department.

The Big Shot taken of the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, last March included McNeill, a graduate of RIT's baccalaureate program in Biomedical Photographic Communications and master of science program in Electronic Publishing, and NTID alumnus David Pierce, who brought several other NTID alumni to the event.

For the 1998 Ontario County Courthouse photo event in Canandaigua, N.Y., McNeill dressed in a period costume supplied by NTID's Performing Arts Department. She also participated in the 2000 Liberty Pole event, held in downtown Rochester, N.Y., and in the October 2001 Genesee Country Museum event, in Mumfordsville, N.Y.

"I remember my first Big Shot experience (Silver Stadium in 1996) the most vividly because it impacted me so heavily," says McNeill. "I met so many new faces, and I really didn't understand the whole purpose of the event. When I saw the image in the next morning's *Democrat and Chronicle* it all clicked for me. This was really something BIG! As I learned more about photography and became closer with other students and faculty, I wanted to be more involved in the annual Big Shots.

"I think that this is a good opportunity to have all the photography students together, working collaboratively. It really helps bridge the gaps between the different photography programs and the different cultures."

For more information about the Big Shot, contact Dawn Tower DuBois at [dtdnvs@rit.edu](mailto:dtdnvs@rit.edu) or 585-475-5264 (v/TTY).



HIGHLAND HOSPITAL

GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE



ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY



MT. HOPE CEMETERY



SILVER STADIUM



ONTARIO COUNTY COURTHOUSE



THE ALAMO



GENESEE COUNTRY MUSEUM



**BIG SHOT HISTORY:**

1987

HIGHLAND HOSPITAL  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1988

GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1989

PARK RIDGE HOSPITAL  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1990

FRANK GANNETT BUILDING  
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1991

NAZARETH COLLEGE  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1992

RUNDELL MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1993

ROCHESTER MUSEUM AND  
SCIENCE CENTER  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1994

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1995

MT. HOPE CEMETERY  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1996

SILVER STADIUM  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1997

BROWN'S RACE  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

1998

ONTARIO COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
CANANDAIGUA, N.Y.

1999

USS INTREPID  
NEW YORK, N.Y.

2000

LIBERTY POLE, MAIN STREET  
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

2001

THE ALAMO  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

2001

GENESEE COUNTRY MUSEUM  
MUMFORD, N.Y.



# Mary Jane Hellyar

by Susan L. Murad



**G**rowing up as the oldest of eight children in a small farming community in Southern Minnesota taught Mary Jane Hellyar, member of The NTID Foundation board of directors, that one of the best ways that people learn is by trying and sometimes dealing with setbacks.

“I learn a lot when things don’t turn out as planned,” says the general manager of the Consumer Imaging Film Business, and vice president for Eastman Kodak Company. “Some of my best learning experiences resulted from making decisions that resulted in unexpected outcomes and then quickly regrouping to work my way

through the consequences. Those are the lessons that really stick.”

Hellyar, who received a bachelor’s degree in chemistry and mathematics from the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, Minn., master’s and doctoral degrees in chemical engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and an MBA from the Sloan School at MIT, joined Kodak in 1982 as a scientist in the Kodak Research Laboratories. She held a variety of positions in research and development, including research laboratory head, and then moved into operations and finally, to strategic planning in the Consumer Imaging area.

“In my current role, I can have an impact on the broader business,” she explains. “It’s highly gratifying to know that the energy I invest in my work makes a difference to consumers and to Kodak.”

Making a difference also translates to Hellyar’s work on The NTID Foundation board.

“To be able to give back to the community is important to me—and can so easily be crowded out

of your day with the many other things there are to do,” says Hellyar. “I have been very fortunate in my life—it feels good to share that with others.

“As an engineer, what initially appealed to me about getting involved at NTID was the technology component,” she explains, “but as I learned more, I realized there was a unique leveraging of tools and capabilities to help people grow in a way I had never seen before. That was powerful—to realize what a huge impact NTID has on the lives of deaf students who may not have the same opportunities otherwise. I knew I wanted to be a part of that.

“On my first visit to the college, I was struck by how warm and comfortable the environment was,” Hellyar continues. “I walked around and saw the labs and was impressed by the programs. The faculty and staff all had wonderful attitudes toward the students, and there was a great dynamic—very respectful and open.”

Hellyar, who is married and has two children, ages 12 and 15, values the role

of technology in bringing balance to all of the duties and obligations of life.

“One thing helping many of us juggle the complexities of life is technology. It’s also opening a lot of doors for students. Hopefully, technology will provide the flexibility and opportunity those students need to succeed. In the future, employers will need to become flexible with the ways in which we work. It’s a fun time to think of the opportunities this will present for all of us. Technology is bringing down barriers and putting tools and knowledge in people’s lives to help them reach their potential. It’s an exciting time to be a part of NTID.”

# George Webb

by Kathleen S. Smith



**G**eorge D. Webb II, president of Advised Assets Group, Inc., an investment advice firm based in Denver, Colorado, has shaped a distinguished professional and civic career that now includes membership on The NTID Foundation board of directors.

As the parent of a deaf child—son Jason, 25, is a 2000 graduate of RIT—he has a lifetime of experiences, both exhilarating and painful, that accompany the challenge of raising a deaf child.

Webb and his wife, Candance, remember feeling concerned about whether NTID/RIT was the right fit for Jason.

“It quickly became clear to us, however,” says Webb, “that the rigorous academic challenges offered at RIT, along with the support available through NTID, were a perfect match for our son.”

Jason received a bachelor’s degree in graphic design from the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences and is now enrolled in RIT’s Computer Graphics Design graduate program.

Unlike others who sometimes join foundation boards “because it’s beneficial to their own kids,” Webb feels “completely invested and comfortable” in his position on The NTID Foundation board and is in no hurry to sever the tie that binds him to a college halfway across the country.

“When you have a child with a disability, no matter what you want for him, you soon realize as parents that you can’t give him the same opportunities as other kids. That’s what I believe is so important about the work of the foundation and the work of this college—it gives these young people the ability to

be on a better, more level playing field.”

Webb’s impressive professional credentials include stints as senior vice president of a national insurance company, principal of a Maryland management consulting firm, legislative analyst for the Maryland General Assembly, chief administrative officer of a safe deposit and trust company, and attorney with a Baltimore law firm.

But Webb is proudest of his equally impressive list of civic achievements, for they reflect the values instilled by his first mentor, a fellow lawyer who taught him the importance of civic responsibility.

Webb has volunteered for, among others, the Alexander Graham Bell Association’s International Parents Section (which he chaired until July 2000), the development council of the John F. Kennedy Institute, the Governor’s Commission on Statewide Health and Nursing, and the Greater Baltimore Committee.

He believes the time is right to now curtail his civic activities a bit, in part because his 86-year-old mother, Jane, lives with the Webb family. But it is clear that his position with The NTID Foundation is

not one that he’s ready to give up. He laughingly admits that he has “absolutely no idea” when his tenure on the board ends.

Through his foundation work, he hopes to meet and work with other parents and contributors, help with general fundraising, and facilitate internships for students at his own and other companies.

“I’m willing to do whatever I’m asked,” he says.

In praising NTID’s leaders for their dedication and persistence to the college’s future challenges, he offers three phrases that have shaped his own life, each a powerful statement about NTID’s wisdom in selecting Webb for his foundation role.

“Treat others as you would like to be treated; be ethical; and leave the world a better place than when you entered it.”

# Jane Ratcliffe Pulver

by Susan L. Murad



**R**ochester, N.Y., native, Jane Ratcliffe Pulver attended Rochester School for the Deaf (RSD), the Harley School, and Green Mountain Junior College before graduating from Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., with a degree in home economics and education. Active as a community volunteer in development, fund-raising, education, and deaf adult literacy programs, Pulver is a member of The NTID Foundation board of directors, the NTID National Advisory Group (NAG), and the RIT Board of Trustees. A former teacher, she has been an educator for all of her adult life, a career she chose as a result of the many people who influenced her while growing up.

“I would definitely name my parents, Esther and Fred Ratcliffe, above everyone, who guided me and my older deaf brother, John, with great care and love throughout our growing and adult years and taught us how to communicate in both the deaf and hearing worlds,” she says. “They taught me the value of teaching and volunteerism.

“I also was blessed to have teachers who motivated me and taught me that hard work produces success. At the Harley School, I had a wonderful math teacher who took no pity on my deafness. Whenever I said I couldn’t do something she would say, ‘You can—keep trying.’ Thanks to her persistence, I graduated with honors.”

After living in Pittsburgh for 25 years, Pulver; her husband, Don, a real estate developer; and their three daughters relocated to Philadelphia. The variety of community service experiences she had in Pittsburgh gave Pulver the confidence and communication skills to make the move successful.

“Friends and neighbors in Pittsburgh gave me opportunities to develop leadership skills by planning events for church and our children’s schools,” she says. “A distant cousin introduced

me to RIT, creating an opportunity for me to meet educators on a higher level as a trustee. Then, I was invited to serve on the NAG and eventually on The NTID Foundation board.”

Pulver takes her involvement at NTID and RIT seriously and has established an endowed scholarship fund at NTID to support deaf and hard-of-hearing students enrolled in programs in the other colleges of RIT.

“The best part of my work lies in the area of education,” she explains. “Being involved in the academic world is always a thrill, and even more thrilling is when I discover that there is something I can do to support the school or college programs or enhance the lives of the students and faculty members.”

Involvement in NAG, The NTID Foundation board, and the RIT Board of Trustees gives Pulver the opportunity to be in one place working with highly educated deaf and hearing people from all around the world, sharing, exchanging, and creating ideas to benefit the students and faculty as well as promoting awareness outside the college for funding and recruiting.

“Working with such a diverse group of people, with

interpreters who meet a wide range of needs, creates a very exciting atmosphere, like that of an international summit. Discussing and addressing NTID’s objectives with the group is a genuine privilege, and I feel honored to be involved.”

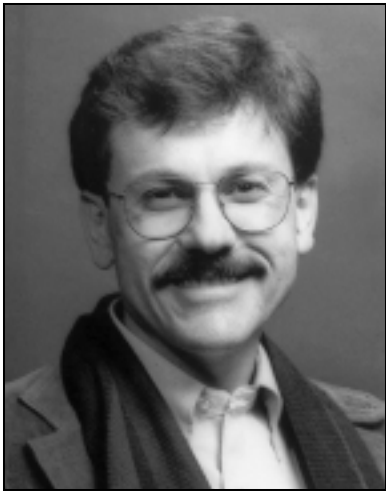
In discussing NTID’s impact on the world of educating deaf and hard-of-hearing students, Pulver believes the college’s role is to prepare deaf students to excel and make significant contributions to the global economy, which requires increasing technological talent and expertise.

“Without NTID, many talented students would not have the academic environment they need to develop their skills and confidence to the fullest, and they would miss opportunities to fully participate in the rapidly advancing world of engineering and technology,” she says. “It is exciting to think that the development of communication technology such as e-mail and the Internet enables students to more easily participate in business, research, and academics. Our students are finding just how far they can go with education and technology as their tools.”



# Paul Ogden

by Susan L. Murad



**D**r. Paul Ogden, professor of Deaf Studies/Deaf Education in the Department of Communicative Disorders and Deaf Studies, California State University, Fresno, has been involved in teacher preparation programs for the last 22 years. Chairperson of the NTID National Advisory Group (NAG), Ogden received his bachelor's degree in mathematics and computers from Antioch College, Ohio, and his master's and doctoral degrees in educational psychology and deafness from the University of Illinois at Urbana-

Champaign. He is the author of *Chelsea: the Story of a Signal Dog* (Little, Brown and Company, 1992) and *The Silent Garden: Raising Your Deaf Child* (Gallaudet University Press, 1996).

"I have a unique background in that I have an older deaf brother, so my family had eleven years of experience with him before I was born," Ogden says. "My parents did not expect me to be deaf, but they were prepared to deal with deafness within the family. I feel blessed to have had a warm and loving environment as a child, one in which communication was fully accessible to me.

"All of my brothers, hearing and deaf, were role models for me, and my parents also were my mentors," he explains. "I am forever grateful to them because they helped me understand the power of knowledge, which led to my love of teaching."

For Ogden, the most gratifying aspect of his career is working with the students at California State University.

"I enjoy getting students involved and taking an active role in the different

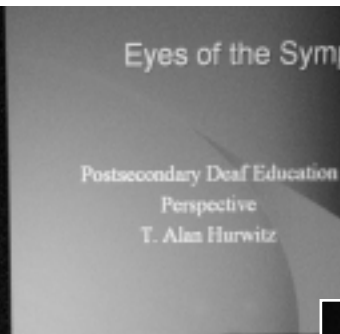
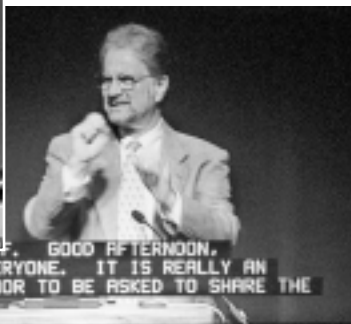
stages of their professional development. It's a pleasure to see the potential within them and then watch it unfold when given the opportunity. I recognize that they are my future peers, and I consider it an honor to play a part in their pursuit of their careers."

In addition to working with students, Ogden enjoys working with families of deaf and hard-of-hearing children. He feels privileged to be able to pass on to them tools that will help them raise their children in an environment full of communication accessibility. His involvement on NAG is a more global version of this type of work.

"I'm very excited about the role NAG has in making suggestions, providing feedback, and exchanging ideas with NTID. In NAG, NTID has at their disposal a whole body of expertise and knowledge, a group of people ready and willing to offer suggestions or help. Seeing NAG's role and recognizing that NTID uses NAG's advice in big and little ways, coupled with the great talent among the leadership at the college, helps me

understand why NTID has continued progressing in the right direction.

"NTID is infused with so much talent and knowledge; and the leadership knows how to tap into people and resources throughout the United States," adds Ogden. "So much is offered to students there; it's really difficult to compare it to other places because of its unique environment. It's a place where students can find their niche, be guided to the right kind of training, and find the full support of professionals in the field."



**Sharing expertise** June 25-29, 2001 NTID hosted the first technology symposium presenting current research and state-of-the-art practice for educators of the deaf in more than seven years. Nearly 200 professionals from around the world who work with deaf and hard-of-hearing learners attended "Instructional Technology and Education of the Deaf: Supporting Learners, K-College," which provided a much-needed forum for learning about current and future innovations and developments using educational media and technology. The conference included hands-on workshops to enhance participant understanding and a variety of presentations by international experts in deafness and instructional technology.



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**Tyger, Tyger** 1992, acrylic painting by Chuck Baird (RIT alumnus), 48" x 48"

**Symbolic Work** In Baird's 1992 painting, a Bengal tiger stares ferociously outward while a figure at its base signs "Tiger." Thus the repetitive title, *Tyger, Tyger*.

RIT purchased the painting in July 1993, and since that time, it has been prominently displayed in President Albert J. Simone's office. The painting is significant to RIT in that the tiger is RIT's mascot and the painting's depiction of sign language is symbolic of deaf culture at RIT.

*Tyger, Tyger* has been photographically reproduced at full size with permission from the artist. This reproduction, unveiled during the Dyer Arts Center grand opening ceremony, hangs in the center as part of NTID's permanent collection of art.