

SPRING / SUMMER 2005

# FOCUS

NTID

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • Rochester Institute of Technology



The CSD Student Development Center

# Congratulations to the Class of 2005!

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Juan Rodriguez

**J**uan Rodriguez from Hoboken, N.J., who graduated with an A.A.S. in Accounting Technology, was selected as the 2005 commencement delegate for NTID. While attending RIT/NTID, he worked as a residential advisor and a tutor and served as an administrative assistant for the American Society for Training and Development. Juan plans to continue his education at RIT in the fall to pursue a bachelor's degree from the College of Business. In the future, he'd like to run his own business.

In his commencement address, Juan told fellow graduates, "Here I am

standing before you today and proving to the world that our reach is unlimited. Let me give you some advice: Do not rely on the world, but let the world rely on you. ... Once you leave that door, opportunities are waiting for you. And when you see those opportunities, grab them, and use them..."



Stephanie Shubert

**S**tephanie L Shubert, from Lincoln, Neb., who graduated with a B.S. in Imaging Science, was selected as the 2005 commencement delegate for the College of Science and was chosen to deliver the convocation address. The recipient of many awards and scholarships, Stephanie was an ACCESS student assistant, working with other deaf students and their professors to improve access for all students in the classroom. Last summer, she was a computer intern for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; prior to that, Stephanie was an image analyst for Kresge

Hearing Research Institute. She plans to pursue a master's degree in Imaging Science at RIT in the fall and eventually to work as an imaging scientist in research and development for medical imaging or remote sensing systems.

In her convocation address, Stephanie encouraged fellow graduates to invest in the lives of others and in their communities.

"Go and do your job well!" she said. "That is why we came to RIT. We believed in a quality education and strove for excellence while here. As we graduate, this mission does not end."

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### ABOUT THE COVER

This spring NTID broke ground on the \$4.5 million CSD Student Development Center, named for Communication Service for the Deaf, Inc. (CSD), which committed the first lead gift for the two-story, 30,000 square-foot center that will be connected to NTID's Lyndon Baines Johnson Building. Read more about the CSD Student Development Center on Page 3 of this issue.

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# FOCUS

NTID

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## ALAN'S UPDATE



# Benefactors Strengthen NTID

Friends of mine once shared their amazement at the level of fundraising success their children's school enjoys, each year raising thousands of dollars from donors who believe in "giving back."

NTID is truly fortunate to have its own set of generous benefactors: alumni, employers, parents, patrons of the arts, NTID faculty and staff and community-minded individuals.

Longtime friends of the college, Joseph and Helen Dyer (who died in 2001), for whom our beautiful arts center is named, recently finalized an agreement providing endowed funds for the maintenance of the center, a gift that will ensure that, for many years to come, the Dyer Arts Center will be a beautiful showcase for deaf artists, both local and national.

Then, there's Benjamin Soukup, CEO of Communication Service for the Deaf, Inc. (CSD), whose leadership gift has allowed us to move forward with plans for a new student development center on campus. Ben has built CSD into a hugely successful national resource center for deaf people and, as he mentioned during groundbreaking ceremonies for the center, "With success comes responsibility ... a responsibility to give back."

And half a world away, The Nippon Foundation of Japan has pledged another \$1.25 million to support the Postsecondary

Education Network (PEN)-International. In the past five years, this foundation has donated more than \$5 million to PEN, whose goal is to benefit deaf and hard-of-hearing students by bringing 21<sup>st</sup> century technology to underdeveloped countries.

Closer to home, faculty and staff support NTID through the RIT Capital Campaign. Dr. Linda Siple initiated an idea to allow NTID departments to "adopt" named scholarship funds, with department members hosting receptions and other events to raise funds for "their" scholarship. A wonderful idea!

More alumni also are giving back to the college, both those who attended NTID in its early years and recent graduates. We are grateful to all of them.

As you read this issue of *FOCUS*, we hope you appreciate learning more about the inspirational and philanthropic efforts of so many who are part of our community. They collectively represent the best of what makes NTID such a strong and viable institution.



**A New View** When it's completed in fall 2006, the CSD Student Development Center will open onto the quadrangle on the north side of NTID's Lyndon Baines Johnson Building. The quadrangle will be redesigned to feature open walkways, seating for conversation, a garden and more private areas for contemplation as well as a gathering space for students, faculty, staff and visitors. The new quad will be named The D. Robert Frisina Quadrangle Garden at RIT in honor of NTID's founding director.

# CSD Student Development Center is a Dream Come True

by Pamela L. Carmichael

The NTID community gathered this spring for a special event to commemorate RIT's 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and celebrate the groundbreaking for NTID's new \$4.5 million CSD Student Development Center.

Communication Service for the Deaf, Inc. (CSD), a private, nonprofit telecommunications and human services organization based in Sioux Falls, S.D., committed the first lead gift for the two-story, 30,000 square-foot center that will be connected to NTID's Lyndon Baines Johnson Building.

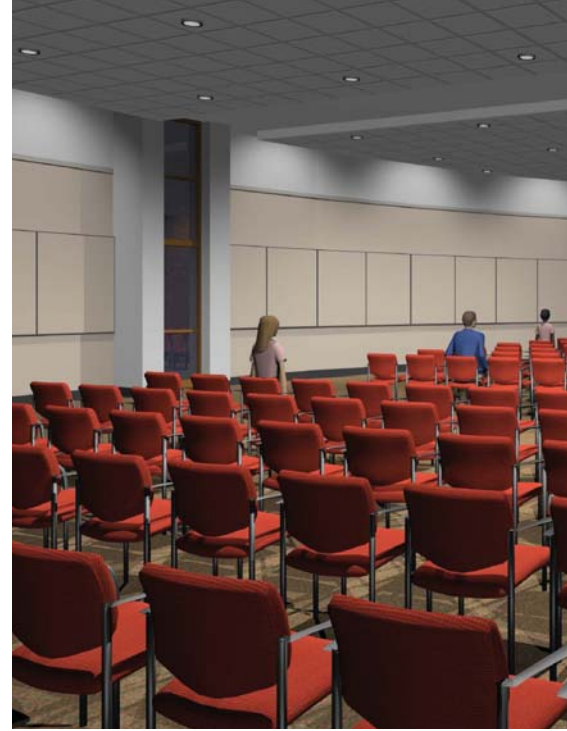
When it's completed in fall 2006, the center will provide opportunities for

students to enhance their learning experiences and foster their potential for leadership and community service through the various educational and recreational activities that will be housed there. The center will be home to the NTID Student Congress, Student Life Team and multicultural clubs. It also will house a study center, club and commuter lockers and informal spaces that will facilitate interaction and socialization among students.

"The CSD Student Development Center is the culmination of years of dreaming and thousands of hours of planning," explains Dr. T. Alan



**Celebrating Together** RIT Vice President and Dean for NTID Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, right, and CSD CEO Dr. Benjamin Soukup enjoy the festivities at the Student Development Center groundbreaking.



**A Gathering Place** The CSD Student Development Center will provide spaces inside and out for students to gather together, both formally and informally. At left above, a view of the outside of the center. At right, a rendering of the building's conference center with capacity for up to 150 people. This multipurpose room will be the largest gathering space in any NTID building.

Hurwitz, RIT vice president and dean for NTID. “This center will serve as a gathering place where education can continue day and night in a centrally located area with a safe, supportive atmosphere. This will be a place where students can enrich and celebrate their unique talents and skills.”

The CSD Student Development Center is named to recognize CSD’s lead gift and the organization’s many contributions to the educational, social, cultural and economic development of deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

“We are extremely honored and delighted by this recognition,” says

Dr. Benjamin Soukup, president and CEO of CSD. “CSD has always believed in giving back to the community. As a technical institute, NTID’s mission complements our own. We are proud to contribute to NTID in such a meaningful way, so that the passion for learning and creating a better future can be nurtured and enhanced in tomorrow’s leaders.”

“Personally, I would like to thank NTID for thinking about the students first,” says student Nina Campbell. “This is such a wonderful opportunity for the students and student organizations.”

“Having dedicated space focusing on our students’ lives outside of the classroom it a testament to the importance we place on valuable extra-curricular opportunities for learning and growth,” says Dr. Ellie Rosenfield, associate dean for student and academic services at NTID.

“The center will be helpful for deaf student leaders to grow their skills, to associate more, to be more visible and to understand each other’s cultures,” adds student Jon LeJeune.

Designed by Harrison Bridges & Associates Architects, with input from students, faculty, staff and a consulting architect who is deaf, the center will offer



**Ceremonial Groundbreaking** Wielding shovels in the ceremonial Student Development Center groundbreaking are, left to right, Bruce James, chairman of the RIT Board of Trustees; RIT President Dr. Albert Simone; Dr. Benjamin Soukup, CEO of CSD; RIT Vice President and Dean for NTID Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz; and NTID Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services Dr. Ellie Rosenfield.



**In the Atrium** The CSD Student Development Center will include an atrium with plenty of open space.



**Energetic Entertainment** Guests at the groundbreaking and community celebration enjoyed a variety of entertainment, including a performance by Flux Fusion, a dance group of NTID students, including Lauren Bain, left, and Kriston Pumphrey.

maximum accessibility through technology, lighting, room design and seating.

Throughout the building, pictures and documentation of student activities, representation of classes through the years, and images of alumni, past visitors and guests of the college will line the halls and various rooms, both preserving and celebrating NTID's rich history.

"We hope these displays will

help students see themselves as part of the larger history of the deaf education movement in our country," Hurwitz says.

"This will be a wonderful benefit for all students," says student Becca Larsen Mowell. "A nice meeting place and also a great place for the community to build better roots. I feel this will help enrich the Deaf heritage we have."



**Applause!** Students share their excitement at the groundbreaking ceremony.

### Editor's Note

For information about contributing to the CSD Student Development Center, please contact the NTID College Advancement Office at 585-475-6836 (voice/TTY).

# Women in Science and Engineering: A New Breed

by Kathy A. Johncox

“My generation is a new breed,” says Annemarie Ross, who graduated from RIT’s biochemistry program in May. “There are plenty of women around me as I take classes; however, when I am on my internships, there is an obvious higher male-to-female ratio. At first it’s intimidating, but knowing there are plenty of women on their way to even out the ratio is reason enough for me to continue breaking down those ‘male’ doors.”

Indeed, the doors for women in math, science and engineering are being broken down, but it’s not happening at the speed of light. Despite the fact that women have been successful scientists and engineers since at least the fourth century, women still make up only 22 percent of scientists and engineers today.

Throughout history, just a few of the women who have made it in this “man’s world” have been responsible for discovering radioactivity; creating drugs for AIDS, leukemia and malaria; inventing the windshield wiper; and creating Kevlar (one of the substances used in bullet proof vests).

Experts say that early exposure to math, science and engineering will be key to encouraging the next generation of female college students to pursue careers in these areas. Toward that end, RIT’s Women in Math, Engineering, Science and Technology program, offered each spring, invites female high school juniors and seniors to attend a daylong conference at RIT. Successful women from across the country who work in these fields, spend the day leading seminars to share how they entered their fields and why, what they do, and how much they enjoy it.

A growing number of deaf and hard-of-hearing women at RIT/NTID

currently involved in teaching or learning capacities in science or engineering, share that enjoyment and are in the vanguard of a new generation of women in science.

**“I strongly urge all students to get technical degrees. Today, a significant number of jobs in this world are closed to you if you don’t have math and science.”**

United States Air Force Colonel and NASA Astronaut Pamela Melroy at the Society of Women Engineers Region E Conference hosted by RIT in April

“Science and engineering are hard fields for women to break into, but I feel opportunities for women are growing,” says Paula Doane, a visiting instructor in the Computer Aided Drafting Technology (CADT) program at NTID and an RIT/NTID alumna who in May earned a master’s degree in Cross-Disciplinary Professional Studies.

Lindsay Buchko agrees. She has noticed more women choosing careers in science and engineering, but believes it still is a challenge. Buchko holds a bachelor’s degree from RIT in Industrial and Systems Engineering and is working on a master’s degree in Quality Applied Statistics through RIT/NTID’s Professional Fellowship Program, which offers a master’s degree in a professional or technical field, for free, to qualified candidates.

“Part of the challenge,” Buchko says, “is that men tend to approach problems and perform tasks differently, and you either have to try to think like they do or try to help them understand your perspective.”

“It is hard with the double whammy of being a woman and being deaf,” says

Wendy Dannels, an RIT/NTID graduate and design engineer for Qualitrol Corporation in Fairport, N.Y., who also is an adjunct faculty member in NTID’s Industrial and Science Technologies Department. “I don’t think disability and gender issues will ever completely go away. But more than the gender issue is the challenge of generating a smooth communication between me and another individual or a group of people.”

A high school electro-physics course set Buchko on the road to pursuing her non-traditional educational path.

“After the idea of engineering began to appeal to me as a high school senior, I was drawn to RIT/NTID for many reasons,” Buchko says. “Support



**In the lab** Annemarie Ross studies an experiment by understanding and applying the physical chemistry approach to solving problems in the lab environment.



services for students in technology majors are excellent, and there were multiple programs to choose from. Also, NTID offered me the ability to develop my leadership skills through deaf clubs and organizations and to have a social life with both deaf and hearing people.”

“I enjoyed science class and science projects, and my fifth-grade teacher encouraged me a lot,” Doane says. “My parents always told me I could do anything I set my mind to, and there was the support here at NTID. Dom Bozelli and Markey Hoblit, faculty members in the RIT College of Applied Science and Technology Engineering Support Department, both told me I could do this, and encouraged me to continue with engineering.”

“As for making my college choice, it was a no-brainer,” Dannels says. “RIT/NTID outdid other colleges. It’s an institute that is well organized and gave me a professional introduction to the college world.”

“The internships I have received through the co-op program at RIT have shown me real-life applications of what I have learned here,” says Ross. “I have worked in different settings—academic research, industrial research and management—all good experiences. Those experiences will help me decide which job path in science is right for me.”

In following the road to opportunities for women in science and engineering, Olivia Liu is an experienced traveler. Formerly a systems analyst for four global service sites at Solectron Corporation, a Fortune 500 company in California, Liu is pursuing a master’s degree in industrial engineering at RIT through the Professional Fellowship Program.

“I am new to RIT/NTID this year,” Liu says, “and already I appreciate both the bi-cultural community and the comprehensive body of technical knowledge available to students here.”

In addition to offering a wealth of technical knowledge, RIT’s College of Applied Science and Technology supports women with a New York State Vocational and Technical



**Role model** Paula Doane, standing at right, who enjoys being a role model, has female students in her Precision Measurements class, part of the CADT program. “I feel that if female students see me working and succeeding in the field, they will feel they can do it too,” says Doane.

Education Act grant. Scholarships to attend the Region E Society of Women Engineers Conferences are available for freshman and sophomores. At the conferences they learn more about the issues facing women currently in the field, and are encouraged by the successes of women blazing the trail.

No matter how much support they have had, all five women agree it takes more to succeed. When asked what they would tell young women today who are choosing careers in math, science and engineering, they had the following advice.

“Have confidence,” says Ross. “You need to have confidence, to work hard, and to have the commitment to learn to succeed.”

“Go after your goal with passion and be adventurous,” says Dannels. “Have faith in your future. And above all, do it because you love it.”

“It will be challenging, but don’t let the challenges destroy your dreams,” adds Buchko. “If you dream it and want it bad enough, it will come to you.”

Doane says, “Look to your future. Jobs in science and technology are possible for you, probably more now than ever before.”

“I can foresee great opportunities for women,” says Liu. “I feel gender

doesn’t matter to the field that you choose, but passion does. Women, with their uniquely feminine sensibilities, can make a special contribution to traditionally male fields. And they will be doing something that few females are doing. It’s not an easy path to follow a career in these fields, but if you love science or math or engineering, if you have a passion and are willing to work hard, you’ll be able to reach your goal.”

### A Resource for Women in Science

Deaf Women in Science and Engineering is a nonprofit organization founded by Namrita Owens, an RIT alumna and a senior electronics engineer at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland. The organization is dedicated to serving the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing women in science and engineering and those who are considering a career in those fields. To visit the Web site, go to [www.geocities.com/dwse2001/](http://www.geocities.com/dwse2001/).

# Reut Gal

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher

In Hebrew, Reut Gal's first name means friendship. This is particularly apropos for the third-year Administrative Support Technology (AST) student who was born in Israel.

"My fondest memories of growing up in Israel," Reut says, "are those of my friends, my teachers and the classes I was in, and the activities after school."

With her parents and two sisters, Reut came to America for her education when she was 12 years old. They settled in Cherry Hill, N.J., and Reut attended a mainstream high school in Philadelphia



with a program for deaf students. Her interests there included computer and gym classes.

In the summer of 1999, Reut attended NTID's Explore Your Future Program, and one year later, she returned to RIT to enroll in the AST program.

"I've enjoyed all my AST classes so far," Reut says. "My favorite classes have been Database Applications, Word Processing and Keyboarding. Working on the computer

keeps me motivated and inspires my creativity."

Reut has worked hard in her studies, earning her way to the Dean's List

twice. In her free time, Reut has participated in NTID Performing Arts programs, including *Romeo & Juliet*, and in activities for NTID/GALLY Weekend, an annual sports and social event for deaf and hard-of-hearing students at Gallaudet and RIT. Last summer, she and some friends took a road trip from California to Georgia.

"Travel is one thing I really enjoy," says Reut. "When I'm with my friends and we're having fun, I like to take pictures. It's one way that I can save those good times as fond memories."

A positive outlook keeps Reut focused on success in her studies and in her career after she graduates.

"Having low grades isn't my thing," Reut says. "I set my mind on being positive and doing well in high school and in college, so I can have a good life now and in the future."

# Don Petit-Homme

by Pamela L. Carmichael

"I came to RIT/NTID because I wanted new opportunities and new experiences," says Don Petit-Homme.

And that's exactly what he found. The 36-year-old transfer student likes to stay active, so he hits the gym in RIT's new Gordon Field House to work out several times a week. He also enjoys running and playing tennis, and even joined RIT's crew team for a few months.

Don also works part-time as a custodian in the residence halls on campus. And he makes time to serve on a number of committees for RIT's International House, an organization that provides opportunities for students to learn about a variety of cultures and customs.

Don was born in Haiti and lived there until age 10 when his parents moved the family to Baltimore, Md., seeking better educational

opportunities for their children.

After high school, he attended Gallaudet University for two years before leaving to travel and work.

Because he enjoys working with people, Don accepted a job in a group home and later at Maryland School for the Deaf, where he worked one-on-one with students as a residence hall counselor.

After working for a number of years, Don decided he wanted to continue his education, and chose RIT/NTID because of the quality of the academic programs available to him here.

"RIT/NTID is a wonderful place that offers excellent access to information

as well as opportunities for deaf, hard-of-hearing and hearing people to interact," he says.

Accounting Technology is a perfect

major for Don because he enjoys working with numbers and is skilled in mathematics. He plans to pursue a career in accounting, but also has an interest in civil engineering and architecture, and hasn't ruled out the possibility of extending his education to study in those fields.

For now, he says, "I'm looking forward to completing an accounting co-op assignment this summer. I sent out my resume to companies in

New York City, Maryland, Texas, and Virginia. I've had a number of interviews and am waiting to find out where my assignment will be."

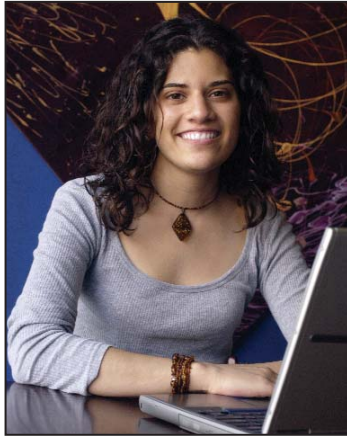


# Sofia Siliezar

by Kathy A. Johncox

“Being at RIT/NTID is my dream come true,” says Sofia Siliezar, 21, from Burke, Va. Sofia’s road to Rochester started in Guatemala where she was born. Both she and her older brother are deaf, having lost their hearing from meningitis episodes as small children. Their mother was intent on them having educational experiences appropriate to their needs, so at age 14, Sofia and her family moved to the United States for better schools and a better life. Sofia attended a mainstream high school in Fairfax, Va.

“My mother, sister and brother all encouraged me to go to college. My



whole family views education as a good opportunity to get a great job and have a better life.”

Sofia, a second-year student in Accounting Technology, works part-time in the NTID Office of Admissions, a good match for her enthusiastic attitude and skills.

“I would definitely tell high school students to come here,” she says. “It’s a great education.

People help you find what you are looking for and provide for your special educational needs. And you meet new people every day—deaf and hearing together.”

Between work and studies, Sofia still finds time to exercise at RIT’s new field house and play soccer with her friends. Drama club, movies, dancing, painting, and drawing balance her love for numbers and problem-solving. Awards in high school for motivation and good attitude and current Dean’s List status fit well into her future plans.

“It has been said that real success is finding your lifework in the work that you love. My accounting major will give me the skills to work with people and with numbers, and that’s just what I want to do. Eventually, I’d like to contribute in government or in a large corporate setting where there are teams of co-workers to work with and learn from. For now, I am focusing on myself. I just want to experience life.”

# Joshua Allmann

by Kathy A. Johncox

“There was never a question of going to college; it was just a matter of where,” says Joshua Allmann, 19, a first-year Computer Science major from Irvine, Calif. He chose RIT/NTID because of the technical focus and support services already in place that he felt he could use to his advantage.

“I almost went to college in California, but felt there was more opportunity for me here,” Josh says. “And I’ve made so many friends since I arrived. This is such a unique place. The fact that there are more than 1,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing students to interact with, in addition to thousands of hearing students, can’t be beat.”

Josh, who lost his hearing after having meningitis at age 2, grew up with a sister and two brothers in a hearing family and went to mainstream schools.

“When I was younger, I would have to say I was lazy, and my parents were always telling me to apply myself,”

Josh says. “They wanted me to be independent. Now, I work hard, both at water polo and my courses.”

Josh played water polo all through high school and currently is very involved with the RIT water polo club.

“I really enjoy water polo,” says Josh, “I work hard and practice hard.”

It requires seven or more hours per week in the pool, and his passion for the sport earned him a goalie spot on the U.S. water polo team at the Deaflympics in Melbourne, Australia. The team took fourth place at the competition.

What was it like to be at the Deaflympics?

“Really exciting!” he says.



For fun, Josh enjoys “chilling” with friends and playing video games. He also is the rush/public relations/social chairman for the Sigma Nu fraternity, and is on the Dean’s List.

For Josh, it all comes back to technology. “I have always been fascinated by it,” he says. “I have learned you can do anything with computers. When I

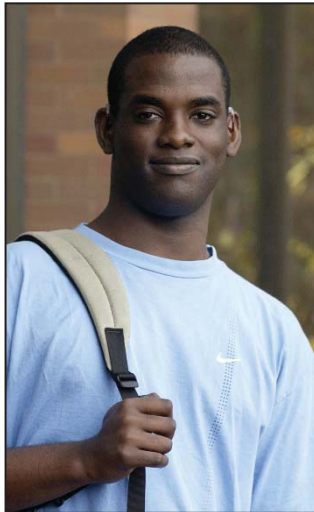
have time, I even program computers outside of class for fun. It’s the challenge that’s satisfying for me, the challenge of problem solving. There’s plenty of that here, so this is a great place for me.”

# Pierre “Wess” Donald

by Pamela L. Carmichael

From the time he was young, Pierre “Wess” Donald’s family was committed to ensuring that the best educational opportunities were available to him.

Wess is from the Bahamas and attended school there until third grade, when his mother heard about St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis, Mo., and sent Wess there to study through the eighth grade. His parents then sent him to the Denver Academy in Colorado, where he studied for one year before returning to the Bahamas. A short time later, his mother passed away, and Wess stayed in the Bahamas to be with his family and complete high school.



When Wess learned about RIT/NTID, his father encouraged him to apply because of the opportunities available for him here.

“My father wanted me to come here to get a good education and to be independent,” he says. “I feel very comfortable here. I can understand the teachers, and they help me stay on track. And there are counselors available and tutoring if I need extra help.”

Wess’s interest in computers led the 20-year-old to major in Applied Computer Technology. After he completes his associate degree, he is considering continuing his education to pursue a bachelor’s degree in a

computer-related field. And although he’s only a first-year student, he already has plans for his career.

“I want to create software and write my own programs,” he explains.

Wess, who has a reputation with his friends for being funny, likes to spend time chatting with them and joking around. He enjoys the social opportunities available to him through NTID’s Deaf International Student Association, and also likes to play basketball, baseball and football. And because college life sometimes can be hectic, Wess likes to relieve stress by lifting weights at RIT’s new Gordon Field House several times a week.

Although he misses his family, especially his 2-year-old nephew, Wess says he’s had no trouble adjusting to college life and is looking forward to getting a U.S. driver’s license and completing a cooperative work assignment this summer.

# Jamie Garver

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher

Take RIT’s career-oriented college programs, add the uniqueness of NTID, mix with water, and you get Jamie Garver.

The second-year American Sign Language (ASL)-English Interpretation student and middle-distance swimmer for the Women’s Swimming Team came to RIT from Trenton, Maine, to major in Computer Science.

“My first year at RIT, my roommate was an interpreting major,” recalls Jamie. “She introduced me to her friends, and I decided I wanted to take an ASL class. I loved it! Then I researched the field of interpreting and realized that it was what I really wanted to do, so I switched majors.”

With a concentration in Criminal Justice, Jamie plans to finish NTID’s associate degree program in interpreting and continue on to the bachelor’s

degree program.

“I hope to someday interpret in court and other legal settings,” says Jamie. “I know it’s a highly specialized and demanding area of interpreting. It will take some time and education, but I have good teachers, and I am motivated to do my best.”

Swimming competitively since she was 8 years old, Jamie says that the sport has helped her learn how to set goals and achieve them.

“Balancing school, swimming and spending time with my friends is sometimes very

challenging,” says Jamie. “Whenever I have a lot to do, I make sure that I leave enough time to get everything done. Swimming also lets me think about things, and it gives me an outlet for any frustrations I may have.”

Since her switch from Computer Science to Interpreting, Jamie twice has earned a place on the Dean’s List. The change has been a good one for her, she says.

“Some young adults are afraid to make changes,” Jamie says. “If I had been afraid to change my major to interpreting, I may not be doing as well as I am now.”



# Todd Pagano

by Kathleen S. Smith

Anyone passing by Laboratory Science Technology (LST) Assistant Professor Todd Pagano's first-floor lab might see him flailing on a table to show molecular vibration schemes. Or dancing on a countertop to demonstrate electronic transition states in ultraviolet-visible spectroscopy.

Offbeat? Yes. Successful? Very. LST is one of NTID's fastest growing programs, in large part due to Pagano's tireless efforts to share with students his love of science.

Students interested in careers related to the environment, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, food analysis and forensics gravitate to LST.



"Professor Pagano asked me if I liked science, and I told him I didn't," recalls student Anita Kurian of her first meeting with Pagano. "He said if I came to his class, he guaranteed I would. We did DNA electrophoresis, and I fell in love with the program."

Kurian likes the hands-on experience she gets with equipment in the LST lab.

"Other programs give students limited exposure to such instrumentation," Pagano says. "Our students set up, calibrate, operate, maintain and even troubleshoot the

instruments. They'll need to do these things on the job; why not give them experience now?"

Pagano's efforts on behalf of his students have not gone unnoticed. In May, he received the Richard and Virginia Eisenhart Provost's Award for Excellence in Teaching. He also has served as advisor to the NTID College Bowl and flag football teams.

He particularly likes "inquiry-based" teaching opportunities, such as when a student shared a newspaper article about mercury levels in fish. Pagano begged a butcher for small quantities of several kinds of fish, then brought them back for students to analyze.

"I couldn't pass up the opportunity to grab onto this student's innate curiosity and make a lesson out of it that the entire class would enjoy," he says.

"Professor Pagano's class is full of exciting demonstrations," says student Ahmed Ibrahim. "You never know what he's going to do."

# Adrienne Morgan

by Kathleen S. Smith

Adrienne Morgan knows all about finding your "niche" as a college student. During her first few months at NTID in the late 1990s, she was homesick, confused about her classes, and several times considered "getting on a Greyhound bus" and returning home. Everything changed, however, when Morgan attended a meeting of the Ebony Club, a special interest club for African-American deaf students.

"I felt an immediate connection," Morgan says. "I found a group of people to whom I could relate."

Morgan became secretary and president of the club. And today, in her job as NTID's multicultural student programs coordinator, she is the club's faculty/staff advisor.

As coordinator, Morgan works with nearly all of NTID's special interest

groups, which include student government, Asian Deaf Club, Hispanic Deaf Club and others. Each club has its own "Celebration Week" during the school year, and Morgan supports the efforts and activities of each one. She also handles the annual Deaf Presenter Series, which brings local and national speakers to campus to discuss various topics with deaf students.

Morgan received her bachelor's degree from RIT in Applied Arts and Sciences in 2003. She plans to return to school to study human resources or perhaps secondary education.



Morgan loves spending time with students, and for the past four years, has lived in the residence halls, making her uniquely accessible to students at all hours of the day and night.

"During the day, students are focused on their school work. At night, they tend to sort through things that are happening outside of class. If they are having problems, I try to help them or refer them to a person who can help them in a better way.

"I work from my heart," she says of her interactions with students. "I've been in their shoes, so I know how they feel. With that knowledge, I try my best to be honest and supportive."



Connecting with friends via e-mail pager are RIT/NTID students, left to right, Sarah Gordon, Ibukun Odunlami and Shabnam Razmpour.

# Campus Community Creates Circles of Friends

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher

Ancient Mayans celebrated friendship around a communal fire. Celebrants danced in a “Circle of Friends” and shared their hearts, expressing one another’s good qualities while remembering good times together. Even though the embers faded, the flames sealed their friendships forever.

For students, college is a catalyst, kindling friendships that support them during their years in college and well beyond graduation.

“One of the major benefits of college, I believe, is the great number of friendships formed,” says Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, RIT vice president and dean for NTID. “College

friendships are some of the strongest and most important in one’s life.”

Forming friendships is important to Art & Computer Design student Ebony

Williams. It’s one of the primary reasons she chose to attend RIT/NTID in 2003.

“I didn’t have that many deaf friends before coming to NTID,” says Williams. “At NTID it’s so much easier to join in conversations and enjoy fun activities with students. I have an opportunity to see the real world and to meet other individuals like me who are deaf.”

The sphere of potential friendships among RIT’s 1,100 deaf and hard-of-hearing students and 14,000 hearing students is enormous, especially when

compared with most colleges with much smaller populations of deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

“I was one of about 10 deaf students at the community college I attended before transferring to RIT,” says Business Management student David Spaulding. “It was nearly impossible for me to meet up with my deaf classmates.

“NTID provides greater opportunities for socialization, and I attend courses with other deaf business students. We all share a similar passion for knowledge. As friends we visualize the concepts of business much better together.”

Photojournalism student Sarah Gordon came to RIT from a large state university in the Midwest where she was the only deaf student on campus.

“I had to fight my way to get certain things I needed to be successful academically,” Gordon recalls. “Socially,



**Ebony Williams**



**Teammates and roommates** Jenna Newberry, left, who is deaf, and Jacqueline Sergi, who is hearing, are members of the RIT Women's Basketball Team. "Jenna and I chose to become roommates after becoming very good friends last year," says Sergi. "Playing basketball definitely benefits our friendship. RIT has lots of sports and clubs where students share what they have in common with each other. It's a good starting point and a great way to meet new people."

it was a little tough also. I met some great girls who were hearing, but they didn't really understand the frustrations I was dealing with on a daily basis.

"Here at RIT," adds Gordon, "I have many deaf friends. We relate easily to each other. Learning from my deaf friends, I can grow and become a stronger advocate for myself as a deaf person."

Since he already had a number of deaf friends he was close to while growing up, Industrial Engineering student Donald Slate looked at RIT as an opportunity for personal growth.

"I had many great friends," says Slate, "but no one I ever considered as my best friend."

"Through intramural sports, I met my first true best friend. We share the same passions for sports and academic excellence, and we share the same sense of humor. I believe that if I went elsewhere to college, I wouldn't have ever made the same friendship connections."

From there, Slate's circle of friends grew to a group of six who, he says, consider themselves brothers.

"Those five guys have helped me through tough times," says Slate. "And they have celebrated with me, and they have seen me grow. I consider myself lucky to have those five guys on my side,

and it's them I have to thank for who I am today."

Alumna Carmella (Sinaguglia) Ramey, like Slate, also is grateful for the friendships she made and has maintained since she came to RIT as a Business Technology student in 1970.

"Our 'Rowdy Gang' was a group of us from mainstream schools and different states who," as Ramey recalls, "were new at NTID."

"Becoming friends was the best thing to ever happen to us. We have strayed at times, but manage to keep in contact through Instant Message™, e-mail and reunions. Our friendship has become a great support to us as the years have gone by."

The experiences of Ramey, Slate, Gordon and Spaulding are indicative of the quality and quantity of friendships fostered by RIT and NTID.

Film/Video/Animation student Elizabeth Sorkin says that she has been making friends at RIT since she attended NTID's Explore Your Future



**Friends**, back row, left to right, Andrew Donatich, Brian Cosgrove, Sean Forbes, and front row, left to right, Ernie Roszkowski, Donald Slate and Michael Pearlman at Delta Sigma Phi's Sailor's Ball.

(EYF) program the summer between her junior and senior years of high school.

"I had no goals coming from high school," says Sorkin. "I started to make friends here, and opportunities to be involved in the campus community fell in line for me. My friends here play a huge role. Now I have peers and role models I look up to."

Art & Computer Design student James Cooley also appreciates the friendships he has made at RIT/NTID—especially the friendships he has among RIT's hearing students.

"Deaf or hearing, we're all human beings," Cooley says. "I have

taught a few of my hearing friends sign language. It's fun, and, at the same time, I learn more about them. RIT is preparing us to work well and communicate effectively in one world."



# Arthur Babin

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher



Louisiana native Art Babin earned an associate degree in Business Technology–Data Processing from NTID in 1980 and a bachelor’s degree in Computer Systems from RIT’s College of Business in 1982.

Now legally blind from Usher syndrome, Babin has worked at Fidelity National Financial, Inc., in Little Rock, Ark., as an application programmer for nearly 20 years. In the Customer Management and Deposits Development Group, he works on applications for tax reporting,

commercial and installment loans, online collection and demand deposits.

“I believe that I have a keen sense of logic in my mind, and this helps me with my programming work,” says Babin.

As a student, Babin held several key positions in NTID’s Student Congress (NSC), including vice president. His prolific leadership was honored with multiple awards, including Outstanding NSC Cabinet Member two years in a row, and NTID Student Humanitarian in 1982.

“When I arrived at NTID, I was very shy and quiet,” Babin recalls. “Being involved in NSC helped me to overcome my stage fright. I became a more energetic and compassionate person.”

After graduation, Babin returned to Louisiana, married his girlfriend Kimberly, and worked as an application programmer with City National Bank in Baton Rouge.

In 1986, the couple moved to Little Rock, Ark., where Babin joined

Systematics, now Fidelity National Financial. Two years later, the Babins decided to start a family.

Tragically however, Kimberly died from a ruptured aortic aneurysm during labor, and their son, Russell, died 18 days later.

“It was not easy,” says Babin. “With so much support from my dear family and friends, I picked up the pieces and moved on, knowing that’s what Kimberly and Rusty would have wanted me to do.

“Two inspirations guide me today,” says Babin. “One is from my favorite teacher at NTID, Don Beil, who once said that we should expect numerous changes in the business and computer fields and be prepared to adapt to them.

“The second is a motto I follow: Seek a career that you truly enjoy doing—no matter how much or how little the pay, because your happiness is more important than money.”

# Michael L. Cross Jr.

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher

Travel down a reconstructed nine-mile section of New York State Route 394 near Jamestown, and you’ll be treading all over Mike Cross’s hard work, literally.

That’s because the 1996 Civil Engineering Technology graduate of RIT’s College of Applied Science and Technology (CAST) worked on that project for nearly three of his eight years as a design engineer for the New York State Department of Transportation.

“I took on many challenges, and I faced some hard decisions. The project was very successful, and I learned many things along the way,” says Cross.

A native of Buffalo, Cross’s fascination for mathematics started in grade school. His interest in architecture blossomed during high school.

“I would draw and draw,” Cross recalls. “By my teenage years, I was

creating entire cities on paper, complete with buildings and skyscrapers, stadiums, roads and highways.”

Cross took three years of liberal arts studies at Gallaudet University and pre-architecture studies at University of Maryland before transferring to RIT. At the suggestion of faculty in NTID’s Department of Science and Engineering Support (DSES), he merged his interests in math, art and architecture and enrolled in RIT’s Civil Engineering Technology bachelor’s degree program.

“I had many good teachers at RIT,” says Cross. “What kept me motivated were the study groups of other deaf students in CAST and the assistance

we received from DSES.”

In 2003, Cross married RIT/NTID Business alumna Carolyn (Betz) Cross, ‘93.

A former collegiate and Deaflympic track and field athlete, Cross serves on the Deaf Advisory Council for Deaf Adult Services and is a member of the Buffalo Civic Association of the Deaf.

“Deaf students in high school who are interested in science and engineering careers should focus on doing well in their math and science

courses,” advises Cross. “They also should meet with people in the fields in which they are interested. It’s important that young adults ask working professionals about their experiences on the job.”





# New Gift from the Dyers Takes Arts Center to Another Level

by Kathy A. Johncox



**Roses** Painted by Ned Behnke, a deaf artist who received his Master of Fine Arts degree from RIT, this work was featured in a Dyer Arts Center exhibit dedicated to Behnke, who passed away in 1989.

In 2000, Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer, a deaf couple from Delray Beach, Florida, gave \$2.5 million to NTID to fund construction of the Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer Arts Center.

With additional leadership gifts from long time supporters, Mrs. Elizabeth “Cookie” Williams and Mrs. Ray Ohringer, the arts center opened one and one-half years later in October 2001. The 7,000 square foot center is not only a showcase for artists, but also the campus showplace for hosting speakers and presenters and holding gala events revolving around the arts.

RIT/NTID and the Dyers realized that it was desirable to create an endowment fund for the Dyer Arts Center. In 2003, Joseph F. Dyer and the Board of Trustees of Rochester Institute of Technology Finance Committee established the Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer Arts Center Endowment Fund to provide monies to secure and maintain the current space for the center in perpetuity. Following an initial contribution of \$50,000 from RIT, Joseph F. Dyer donated \$50,000 and has periodically contributed like amounts to the Fund to support the purposes for which the Fund was created.

Additionally, a gift, which could amount to \$1,500,000, has been committed to the



**Painted Parasols** G. Peter Jemison, local Native-American artist and painter, exhibited his work in the Dyer Arts Center last fall.

Fund upon termination of a Trust which had been established by the Dyers, subject to certain conditions which are currently being met and will be met for the foreseeable future by RIT/NTID. Earnings from this permanent endowment will support annual operating expenses and allow NTID to take the Dyer Arts Center to a new level of exhibition excellence. Over time, this endowed fund will provide resources for additional curatorial and support staff, comprehensive, regular maintenance and improvements as well as the acquisition of special exhibitions and expansion of the permanent collection. Until this point, most of the exhibits have been the work of local and regional artists. The endowment will allow NTID to bring traveling exhibitions to the Dyer Arts Center and offer new perspectives on art by deaf artists.

Artists who have exhibited in the Dyer Arts Center agree that it is a unique and exceptional venue for exhibitions with its marble flooring, floor to ceiling glass windows, and movable wall panels. The center’s unique design was created to accommodate the visual and communication needs of deaf people. For example, columns supporting the roof were built in corners to prevent

visual obstructions in the main gallery. Artists, both hearing and deaf, have commented that they love to exhibit at and visit the Dyer Arts Center because the sight lines for viewing the art work are excellent and allow spectators to view the works of art from many vantage points.

In the four years since the center’s opening, 43 different art exhibits have been displayed including the NTID Student Honors Show and the RIT School of American Crafts Wood Senior Group Show; paintings by deaf artists Ned Behnke and Nancy Oyos O’Rourke; and a variety of other exhibits featuring sculpture, pottery and photography.

Helen C. Dyer, who passed away just before the arts center was completed, had a life-long passion for art. She was an avid artist and particularly enjoyed oil painting as a means of expression and personal fulfillment. Joseph was a mechanical engineer for a major pharmaceutical company. They both believed NTID to be of great importance to the deaf community and wanted to continue to support the college’s significant contributions to deaf education, technology and the arts.

“The Dyer Arts Center has become an integral part of our college community in so many ways,” says Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, vice president of RIT and dean for NTID. “It is a place where we enjoy celebrations of student and faculty scholarship and artistic achievement, and we host art exhibitions in a wide range of media from students, faculty and local artists. This most recent gift allows us to expand our offerings and bring traveling exhibitions of national note to the Rochester area. It will allow us to showcase artistic talent and enrich the educational experience for our students for years to come.”

# The Nippon Foundation Provides Continued Support for PEN-International

by Kathleen S. Smith



**Sharing Knowledge** Dr. James DeCaro, director of PEN-International, standing at left, gives a presentation for deaf students at Zhongzhou University in China. Translating the presentation into Chinese Sign Language for audience members is Yang Guo Wei, standing at center, who studied at RIT/NTID from 1999 to 2001.

The Postsecondary Education Network-International (PEN-International) is only five years old, but growing by leaps and bounds. The grant program's recent award of \$1.25 million from its sponsor, The Nippon Foundation of Japan, will send the program into its fifth year well positioned to make a significant impact on postsecondary education for deaf students in China, the Czech Republic, Japan, the Philippines, Russia and Thailand.

PEN's goal is to bring 21<sup>st</sup> century educational technology and sound educational practices to students, primarily in developing countries and mostly in the Pacific Basin. PEN currently works with eight colleges and universities worldwide, each of which

has a significant deaf student population. Dr. James DeCaro, PEN-International director, and Program Coordinator E. William Clymer recently visited Hong Kong and Korea to explore additional partnerships.

The Nippon Foundation, which has awarded PEN-International nearly \$6 million to date, is so pleased with the group's efforts thus far that Foundation Executive Director Shuichi Ohno asked the organization to submit a second five-year plan before the end of this academic year.

That's good news to DeCaro and Clymer, who together oversee PEN-International's efforts. The team recently added Dr. Denise Kavin, a deaf woman, who will handle operations in the Philippines as well as lead a summer

2006 institute in England that will focus on leadership and self-advocacy skill development for students from partner institutions.

"I am so pleased to be a part of a team where I can work as a member of a worldwide network that is making a significant difference in the post-secondary education of deaf men and women," Kavin says.

Another five years will mean the chance to offer additional programs and workshops on topics such as teaching English as a second language; leadership development for deaf student leaders from partner institutions; and teaching math, English and sign language to faculty members at partner colleges and universities. PEN-International uses selected NTID faculty members to offer most of its training.

"Involving NTID faculty members in these efforts is a winning proposition for everyone involved," says RIT Vice President and Dean for NTID Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz. "Our faculty benefit from the professional development opportunities that such workshops provide, and partners benefit from the opportunity to learn from some of our most respected and experienced educators."

Indeed, sharing the knowledge gained at NTID in the past 35 years is part of PEN-International's ultimate goal: to move each country from being an "importer" of its services to becoming "self-sufficient" and finally, to "exporter" status.

"Our colleagues in China, Russia, the Philippines and Japan are demonstrating this exceedingly well," says DeCaro. "Russia and China both have added three universities to their networks, and every partner is now exporting what they have learned within their home country."

"We are immensely satisfied with the work that members of the worldwide PEN-International team have achieved," said Ohno. "This is a very worthwhile project."

# Happy Anniversary!

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While RIT celebrated its 175th anniversary this year, several NTID student groups, including Asian Deaf Club, Ebony Club and Hispanic Deaf Club celebrated significant anniversaries as well.

The clubs invited special speakers to their end-of-the-year banquets to share topics from their life experiences to inspire and motivate students. Students presented skits, club officers presented awards, there was music for dancing, and of course, each group selected an array of traditional ethnic foods for their unique cultural celebrations.



**Celebrating 10 Years** Hispanic Deaf Club officers present gifts of appreciation to hard-working committee members and advisors at the banquet.



**Celebrating 15 Years** Asian Deaf Club advisors, officers and members gather to celebrate their hard work and successes during the year. Dessert was a cake decorated with dragons—the club's logo and the symbol, worldwide, for the Asian continent.



**Celebrating 20 Years** A semi-formal social affair makes for great photo opportunities at the Ebony Club Banquet. Kumar Singh, left, banquet master of ceremonies, and Abi Odunlami create their own photo memory.



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**“Lunatics, lovers, and poets”** are among the characters in William Shakespeare’s comedy, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, performed on campus this spring by NTID Performing Arts. Audiences were enchanted by this tale of young lovers who, forbidden by law to marry, seek refuge in the forest, intending to elope. In the forest, the worlds of authority and imagination collide in characters who bring to life this story of mistaken identity and revenge. The play was performed simultaneously in American Sign Language by deaf actors and spoken English by hearing actors for the enjoyment of all audience members.