

FOCUS

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National Technical Institute for the Deaf • Rochester Institute of Technology



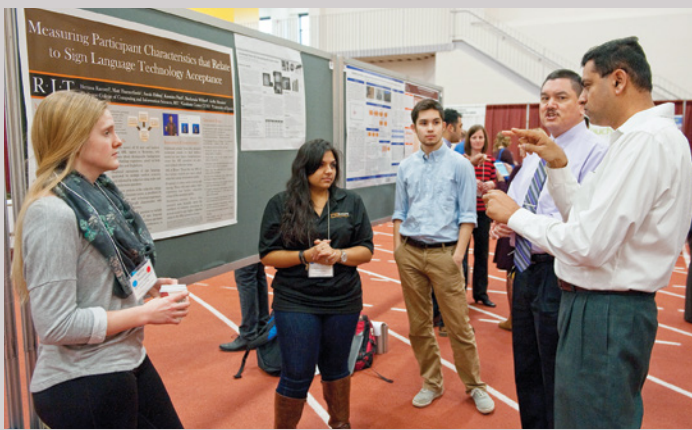
RIT's third-annual Effective Access Technology Conference



MARK BENJAMIN



ELIZABETH TORGERSON-LAMARK



MARK BENJAMIN

Sharing Innovative Solutions More than 50 exhibitors and poster presenters participated in RIT's third-annual Effective Access Technology Conference, held in November in the Gordon Field House and Activities Center on campus. The event, which included keynote speakers and a product competition, brought together researchers, service providers and developers to share ideas and innovative solutions for access and inclusion. NTID was a sponsor of the conference, and a number of NTID students, faculty and staff participated in and attended the event.



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FALL / WINTER 2015

FOCUS

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ALL COVER PHOTOS BY MARK BENJAMIN

ABOUT THE COVER

A record number of students and alumni attended NTID's 15th annual Job Fair in October. A total of 43 employers sent representatives to the fair; many of them were RIT/NTID alumni who came back to their alma mater to help recruit new employees for their companies. See p. 3 for more information.

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FOCUS

NTID

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MARK BENJAMIN

Pride and appreciation

The fall semester of the new academic year has just wrapped up, and the excitement on campus is palpable. Along with a new group of incoming freshmen, we welcomed a new group of faculty this fall, and they already are doing great work (see p. 12). What a pleasure to see the energy and enthusiasm these individuals are bringing to the classroom. Many of them also are engaged in interesting areas of research that are providing additional opportunities for our students to conduct research and learn about the research process.

We are pleased that NTID's DeafTEC grant was renewed for another four years (see p. 8). DeafTEC has had a tremendous impact in its first four years, building a network of high school, community college and industry partners across the country, all focused on preparing individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing for careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). We look forward to seeing DeafTEC's work continue as they expand their network and provide more opportunities for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

NTID has much to be proud of, and that's reflected in our strong outcomes

(see p. 9). We continue to provide the finest career preparation available for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. It is exciting to walk through the main NTID building during our annual Job Fair and see our students, dressed in their best career attire, meeting employers and pursuing co-op and career opportunities (see pp. 3 and 5).

A growing number of our students are interested in starting their own companies (see p. 4). These young entrepreneurs are full of good ideas, and they're applying cutting edge technology to fill a need in the marketplace. Innovation and creativity are alive and well on our campus.

Our alumni continue to make us proud as well, and we were pleased to welcome them back for Brick City Homecoming this fall. The SVP '75 Reunion took place during Brick City, and many alumni from that group shared how much they appreciate RIT/NTID and the experiences they had here as students. They also were impressed with all of the changes and improvements on campus. We are grateful for the growing number of alumni who are volunteering their time and giving back to RIT/NTID as well as leading national organizations that serve the deaf and hard-of-hearing community (see pp. 15 and 16).

We also take great pride in the outstanding female faculty and staff members who are "lighting the way" and serving as role models for our students (see p. 6). These women are breaking new ground in their fields, and we are fortunate to have them in our ranks.

Our campus community continues to grow and thrive. It's an exciting time for NTID, and we look forward to all that is to come this academic year and in the years to come.

Dr. Gerard J. Buckley
NTID President
RIT Vice President and Dean

Job fair brings alumni recruiters back to campus

BY KATHY A. JOHNCOX

At the 15th annual NTID Job Fair this fall, a record number of nearly 400 students and alumni presented resumes and interviewed with representatives from 45 private employers, federal and state agencies and non-profits. The Job Fair itself and related events filled three days in October with job-related opportunities for students, alumni and visiting employers alike—and, for the first time, nearly one-third of the more than 100 employer representatives were RIT/NTID alumni.

The NTID Center on Employment is responsible for the fair and has worked to build relationships with employers—relationships that make employers continue to come to tap well-qualified, highly trained students and alumni for co-ops and permanent jobs. Alumni employed by BNY Mellon, the Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Finance and Accounting Service, The Dow Chemical Company, Harris Corporation, National Association of the Deaf, NAVSEA, ZVRS and more, came back to campus for the Job Fair.

From NCE's perspective, director John Macko says, "Most 18- to 20-year-olds have never met people who are involved in their career at this point. And alumni returning to work the Job Fair know they are role models for our students, real proof that deaf and hard-of-hearing people can succeed in the workplace."

Lizzie Sorokin graduated from RIT/NTID in 2007 with a bachelor's degree in film and animation and currently is the director of communications for the National Association of the Deaf. She has been at the Job Fair representing NAD for several years and says, "I come back each year because I love to greet current students, especially when they realize that I graduated from here and ended up working at a nonprofit serving deaf and hard-of-hearing people. I always look forward to what current students have to offer NAD. They bring applicable experience and learn fast!"

Joe Riggio, sales manager with Business Video Solutions at ZVRS, graduated with a degree in applied arts technology in



A Productive Day Thirty-three alumni from private employers like The Dow Chemical Company and Harris Corporation, and from federal and state agencies and nonprofits, came to the Job Fair this year to hire co-ops and permanent employees from the ranks of RIT/NTID's highly qualified and well-prepared students and graduates.

2001, and also is president of the NTID Alumni Association.

"ZVRS has a long history of partnering with RIT/NTID, and I'm proud to say we have a large number of RIT/NTID alumni employed with us," he says. "Coming back to the Job Fair enables alumni to see some of their peers finally 'breaking the glass ceiling,' a place where we couldn't have gotten 20 to 30 years ago. And, of course, we always are impressed with students' interview etiquette and preparation—it keeps us coming back to the Job Fair every year."

Each year at the Job Fair, NCE presents the Outstanding Employer Partnership awards to three companies who consistently have hired deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. This year's awardees were The Gleason Works in Rochester, New York; Purple Communications, headquartered in Rocklin, California, and Seattle, Washington; and the University of California, San Diego (Moores Cancer Center).

The evening before the fair, an employer panel drew 116 students who came to learn about and ask questions of employer representatives from Aetna, Microsoft, National Institutes of Health, National Security Agency and The Learning Center for the Deaf. And the day after the fair, many employers scheduled full interviews with students they had screened at the event.

"Our alumni can't say enough good things about the event," says Lorian Macko, NTID director of alumni and constituent relations. "I repeatedly witnessed alumni representatives commenting that 'The students are GREAT,' and 'I'm so excited about the interviews we have lined up for tomorrow.' Our alumni see the quality and work ethic of our students on display, and they can look back with pride on their experiences as students here. In turn, our students see terrific role models in the alumni who return to campus to represent their companies. It's a win-win all the way around."

Student innovators and entrepreneurs aim to solve real-world issues

BY ILENE J. AVALLONE

RIT/NTID student Greyson Watkins didn't set out to be an entrepreneur. Yet he's founder of Hz Innovations, a group of student developers who created Wavio, a cutting-edge wireless sound recognition system that soon will be marketed across the country. Sound-capturing units plugged into outlets throughout the home are tied into a single central processing unit. When a doorbell rings or a smoke alarm beeps, the unit notifies the homeowner via smartphone, smart watch, tablet or laptop, and identifies the sound. The homeowner can record any sound in the home that they deem important.

"There's an entrepreneurial spirit at RIT/NTID," says Assistant Professor of Business Studies Scot Atkins, who teaches an introductory course on entrepreneurship for deaf students every spring semester. He also is a faculty advisor for NTID's Next Big Idea competition.

Over the past several years, RIT/NTID has seen a growing number of deaf and hard-of-hearing student entrepreneurs—innovative, creative and motivated individuals, seeking to create their own destiny and impact the world in which we live.

Through an array of hands-on, interactive programs and competitions such as NTID's Next Big Idea, RIT's Summer Start-Up Program and RIT's Tiger Tank, as well as dedicated on-campus research facilities, including NTID's Rosica Hall and RIT's Simone Center, RIT/NTID supports student entrepreneurs who are deaf or hard of hearing in growing their skills and building their networks, helping transform the students into the change-agents they strive to become.

Patrick Seyapura, a fourth-year management information systems major, has worked on several entrepreneurial endeavors. He was former co-founder of Cenify, a home automation system that allows users to use their smartphones to control items like alarm clocks, lighting, coffee-makers and blinds. Seyapura also



Information Sharing RIT/NTID student innovator Greyson Watkins (left) explains his team's groundbreaking project to Brennan Coon, RIT assistant director of Intramurals and Club Sports coordinator, at the RIT Effective Access Technology conference held this fall.

worked with packaging science major Justin Simmons on ThermoCheck, a fraud detection system made up of chemical-based tags that can tell if items such as clothing are worn and used for a given length of time, which gives clothing retailers a defense against retail fraud.

"Having the ability to think of solutions that can improve lives or business operations is motivating," says Seyapura. "Through these endeavors, I have gained life-long career skills such as learning the development methodologies for team projects, communicating effectively among the stakeholders and a strong understanding of business development."

Industrial design major Jordan Stemper is creating an innovative piece of equipment for people with disabilities who use sit-skis to improve mobility around ski resorts.

"I have experienced accessibility issues throughout my life with my deafness, and I wanted to see if there was anything I could do to improve the accessibility for my favorite sport, so individuals of all abilities can enjoy skiing," he says.

And what is Stemper learning from this pursuit?

"Anything is possible if you set your mind to it, and don't be afraid to fail. You will learn more from failure than success."

This sentiment resonates with Sarah Margolis-Greenbaum, a management information systems major, and Haley Leet, a business studies major. Both were team members on developing ASL Bam, a website and DVD that allows people who are interested in developing American Sign Language skills to learn style characteristics, including body shifts and facial expressions. The team won second place in last year's Next Big Idea after a failed attempt to place the year before.

"Entrepreneurs are relentless and are programmed to not include the term 'give up' in their vocabulary," says Seyapura. "Many entrepreneurs will fail with their attempts, but they should never give up their journey as an entrepreneur; think of it as a series of lessons."

"It is great to see entrepreneurship becoming a part of everyday undergraduate life," says Gary Behm, director of the NTID Center on Access Technology, "because the leadership and innovation that drives entrepreneurship is what leads to change and great new ideas."

RIT's co-op program may be a requirement, but it's also a big draw for savvy students who know that getting real-world work experience while in college can confirm their choice of major and their future career. Co-op Corner chats with a number of students for each issue of "FOCUS" to give a snapshot of their co-op success.

BY KATHY A. JOHNCOX



MARK BENJAMIN

Christine Kim

Hometown: Fairfax, Virginia

Degree program: B.S., Chemistry, 2017

Employer: State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York

Job duties: My co-op was part of a research experience for undergraduates through the National Science Foundation. I worked with a graduate student, and she taught me how to use instruments to implement a technique called Dynamic Light Scattering. The purpose of this project, and my co-op, was to probe behavior of laponite dispersions relevant to their use in the oil recovery process associated with oil spills in order to create more environmentally friendly oil-recovery fluids.

Benefits of co-op: This co-op helped me consider what I want in a future career. When I started at Stony Brook, I knew nothing about grad schools, and now I am considering a master's program and possibly a Ph.D. Co-op is the best way to start to gain some experience, which will help me figure out what kind of job I want before I start out in the real world.



MARK BENJAMIN

Ashley Barone

Hometown: Slatington, Pennsylvania

Degree program: A.A.S., Design and Imaging Technology in Graphic Design Production, 2016; BFA, Visual Media, 2017

Employer: Frank Mitman, Digital Photographic Imaging, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Job duties: As a student intern at this photography studio, I planned, captured, edited and produced photographic images for display and use in print and digital media. I sized pictures, and set up lights and backdrops for photo shoots. I worked with Frank Mitman Jr., my boss, to take pictures at local television stations, community events, high school senior portraits, baseball games and more.

Benefits of co-op: I improved my ability to retouch photos and do photo shoots. I also developed more confidence from interacting on a professional level with my boss and co-workers. Most valuable was learning that although I don't yet know enough to do all the requirements of my position, I already had the skills to learn what was necessary.



MARK BENJAMIN

Patrick Seypura

Hometown: South Windsor, Connecticut

Degree program: B.S., Management Information Systems, 2016

Employer: Haynes and Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Job duties: I worked as a quality control analyst, and my co-op involved conducting internal quality control to ensure project data integrity, analyzing reports and understanding the value of data for investors, and working with team members on research engagements and special projects.

Benefits of co-op: Between the education I have received at RIT's Saunders College of Business and the experiences from my co-ops, I feel confident going into the workplace next summer. I have been offered and have accepted a job at Whirlpool.



MARK BENJAMIN

Steven Carranco

Hometown: Perris, California

Degree program: A.A.S., Design and Imaging Technology, 2016

Employer: University of California, San Diego, community outreach program in La Jolla, California

Job duties: I worked on a National-Cancer-Institute-funded research study, Coping with Cancer. As an illustrator and a researcher, I managed data, reviewed scientific literature and created visual designs. I served the local deaf community with this outreach work and gave public presentations on coping with cancer.

Benefits of co-op: Through the presentations I gave on co-op and the research I accomplished, I significantly improved my public speaking, academic and professional skills, all of which will benefit me throughout my academic and professional careers.

STORY EXTRA:

- See more co-op stories online at ntid.rit.edu/NCE/success-stories



Denise Kavın



Paula Grcevic



Margaret Kangai

Women lighting the way at RIT/NTID

BY LAUREN SOUSA, fourth-year RIT/NTID student, majoring in journalism and minoring in advertising and public relations

Among RIT/NTID's faculty and staff are women who are paving the way for the next generation. Their hard work and dedication have made them role models as well as teachers for the next generation of women at RIT/NTID. Read on to learn about some of RIT/NTID's powerhouse women. With them lighting the way, the path to success for young deaf and hard-of-hearing women is bright.

Denise Kavın

Denise Kavın of Chicago, Illinois, is a lecturer in NTID's Department of Liberal Studies. Her primary responsibilities are to teach a variety of developmental English and Introduction to Psychology courses to deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Kavın also is responsible for co-managing the DeafTEC program, a resource for high schools and community colleges that educate deaf and hard-of-hearing students in STEM programs, with the goal of enhancing their educational and employment opportunities. In addition, Kavın coordinates NTID's study abroad programming and has developed seven program offerings to date.

Kavın earned her bachelor's degree in communication arts and psychology from Gallaudet University, then went on to earn a master's degree in education and social policy from Northwestern University. She earned another master's degree in secondary education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing from RIT/NTID. Kavın also earned her doctor of education degree in leadership and educational policy studies from Northern Illinois University.

She lives with her family in the Rochester area, and she says that they keep her very busy. In her down time, she enjoys baking, reading autobiographies and doing needlepoint.

Paula Grcevic

Paula Grcevic of Youngstown, Ohio, is a professor in NTID's Visual Communications Studies Department. Her primary responsibilities are to teach classes on visual idea development, design principles and color, as well as drawing courses.

Grcevic earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. She has been recognized with RIT's Eisenhart Awards for Outstanding Teaching for the 1991-92 academic year as well as 2005-06.

In her free time she enjoys traveling with her partner and hiking with and without their dogs. Whenever she travels, she brings her sketchbook with her, and uses it often.

Margaret Kangai

Margaret Kangai, originally from Kenya, is a counselor/academic advisor in NTID's

Counseling and Academic Advising Services Department. Her primary responsibilities are to work with associate degree students on their academic planning, career exploration and personal issues that may affect their academic and overall well-being. She also provides referrals to campus services available to students.

Kangai earned her bachelor's degree in criminal justice from RIT, and then went on to earn a master's degree in social work from the Greater Rochester Collaborative MSW Program through SUNY Brockport and Nazareth College. She currently is in her last semester of studying for a master's degree in vocational rehabilitation counseling with a focus on deaf/hard-of-hearing/deaf-blind individuals through the Virginia Commonwealth University's Distance Learning program.

As a student, she came to RIT/NTID after being awarded a Sasakawa Scholarship through The Nippon Foundation. Kangai also volunteers for the Campus Advocacy, Response & Support (CARES) program at RIT.

In her free time she enjoys riding her



JORGE SAMPER

Marguerite Carrillo

bicycle. She loves gardening, reading for leisure and trying new restaurants. A self-described introvert, she says that it took years to build up her confidence to work in the social services field, but is glad she persevered.

Marguerite Carrillo

Marguerite Carrillo of Las Cruces, New Mexico, is a lecturer in the American Sign Language and Interpreting Education Department at RIT/NTID. Her primary responsibilities are teaching ASL to interpreting students and hearing, hard-of-hearing and deaf students. Carrillo also works to develop and maintain the ASL curriculum and coordinates the New Signers Program for incoming RIT/NTID students who are new to ASL.

Carrillo earned her bachelor's degree in business management, and then went on to earn her master's degree in secondary education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, both from RIT.

She volunteers at the Rochester School for the Deaf and is involved with their Parent and Staff Association.

She loves spending her free time with her husband and two-year-old daughter. They enjoy traveling and attending festivals. When she has time, Carrillo likes cooking authentic Mexican food and baking sweets.

Deirdre Schlehofer

Deirdre Schlehofer of Chaplin, Connecticut, is an assistant professor in the Cultural and Creative Studies



MARK BENJAMIN

Deirdre Schlehofer

Department at NTID. Her primary responsibilities are teaching and research. Her research interests include language and literacy across cultures, Deaf studies, critical theory, deaf women's health issues and qualitative research methods with signing communities.

Schlehofer earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Alaska at Anchorage, then went on to earn her master of philosophy degree from the University of Bristol, England, and her doctorate in teaching and curriculum from the University of Rochester. She served on the Executive Committee at the Rochester School for the Deaf 2013-2015 and currently is on the Board of Directors. In 2012, she was selected for an RIT Faculty Scholarship Award, and received the RIT Pre-Tenure Scholarship Award in 2015.

She is highly interested in women's health and human rights. Schlehofer enjoys traveling, meeting people and CrossFit. As a teacher she says, "nothing makes me happier than seeing students accomplish their goals."

Rachel Mazique

Rachel C. Mazique of Arlington Heights, Illinois, is an instructional/support faculty member in NTID's Department of Liberal Studies.

Mazique earned bachelor's degrees with honors in education and English at Gallaudet University. She went on to earn her master's degree in English from the University of Texas at Austin, where



PROVIDED PHOTO

Rachel Mazique

she is a doctoral candidate in English. Her research interests are American and British Deaf literature, queer and gender studies, theories of ethnicity, human rights law, Deaf studies, disability studies, transatlantic literatures and cognitive literary studies.

She has earned numerous awards, including the National Association of the Deaf Ambassador Award, the Maxine Hairston Prize for Excellence in Teaching, a writing residency at the Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies—funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, and a Dissertation Excellence Fellowship from the University of Texas. Mazique has published a number of pedagogical musings and presented at conferences across the country. She has taught courses such as Literature, Visual Culture and Deaf Studies for the Department of English and Disability in Pop Culture for the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at the University of Texas.

Her responsibilities at RIT/NTID include teaching First-Year Writing to deaf and hard-of-hearing students enrolled in RIT's Writing Seminar course and collaborating with RIT's University Writing Program, among others.

WEB EXTRA:

- To view more profiles of NTID Women Lighting the Way, visit bit.ly/NTIDWLTW

DeafTEC

BY KATHY A. JOHNCOX

The National Technical Institute for the Deaf sponsors and encourages research designed to enhance the lives of deaf and hard-of-hearing people. Research, scholarship and grant-funded activities at RIT/NTID are focused on strategic areas that will continue to be important for the future success of deaf and hard-of-hearing people—teaching and learning; communication; technology, access and support services; and employment and adaptability to social changes and the global workplace. One of NTID's grant programs that focuses on many of these strategic areas is DeafTEC: Technological Education Center for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students, a National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education Center of Excellence. DeafTEC partners with high schools, community colleges and industry in California, Florida, Illinois and Texas to improve access to technological education and employment for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in those regions.

Initially funded four years ago by a \$4.45 million grant from the National Science Foundation, DeafTEC is the recent recipient of an additional NSF grant of \$4 million to continue and expand their work.

“Integrating more deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals into the workplace in highly skilled technician jobs in which they are underrepresented and underutilized has always been DeafTEC's goal,” says Donna Lange, DeafTEC's principal investigator.

The importance of employment is reflected in DeafTEC's focus on STEM-related (science, technology, engineering, and math) programs. Since studies indicate that deaf and hard-of-hearing workers in STEM careers earn on average 31 percent more than deaf workers in non-STEM fields, the importance of education and training in STEM areas is vital. DeafTEC has developed online resources for employers that include information employers can use to attract, interview and hire deaf and hard-of-hearing employees and successfully



MARK BENJAMIN

Access to a Technical Education DeafTEC partners with high schools, community colleges and industry in targeted regions of the country to improve access to technological education and employment for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

integrate them into their workplace.

DeafTEC also provides online resources for students, parents and educators, which include:

- an extensive collection of strategies on how to provide better access to learning for deaf and hard-of-hearing students in mainstream classrooms;
- resources for teaching math that include more than 60 video tutorials providing full access for deaf and hard-of-hearing students;
- resources that relate to incorporating a Writing in the Disciplines approach in STEM classrooms, and instructional strategies for helping students write lab reports;
- materials on career opportunities in selected STEM disciplines, and career awareness videos of deaf professionals working in STEM to serve as role models for students.

Workshops on best teaching practices for educators and for helping employers integrate more deaf and hard-of-hearing people into their workplaces are offered by regional partners in California, Florida, Illinois and Texas.

DeafTEC also offers a dual-credit program called Project Fast Forward, which allows deaf and hard-of-hearing students across the country to earn college credit in STEM-related courses while they are still in high school. The ultimate goal of the project is to help deaf and hard-of-hearing students transition from high school to associate degrees, bachelor's degrees and beyond in the STEM fields.

In the future, DeafTEC will work to expand regional partnerships, and build on current resources to provide greater educational access for veterans who have lost hearing in the line of duty.

“We are pleased that the National Science Foundation has renewed its commitment to fund NTID's innovative DeafTEC program,” says NTID President Gerry Buckley. “The program will broaden participation in technical careers among deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals by providing them, and their teachers, counselors, employers and co-workers, with the resources that will help them succeed in the classroom and on the job.”

NTID By the Numbers

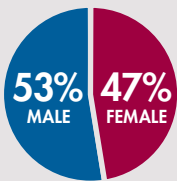
BY ILENE J. AVALLONE

The National Technical Institute for the Deaf has grown exponentially since enrolling its first class in 1968. Numbers don't tell the whole story, but they do give you a glimpse of what NTID looks like today.

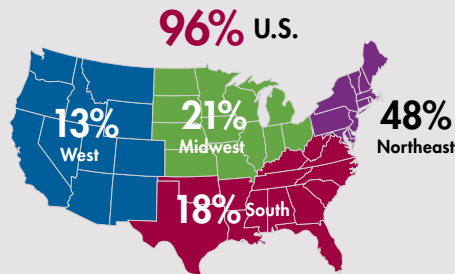
Student Enrollment

1,413 TOTAL ENROLLMENT

BREAKDOWN BY GENDER:



BREAKDOWN BY GEOGRAPHIC REGION:



4% International

Bermuda, Brazil, Canada, China, Ghana, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Jamaica, Jordan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Tanzania, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela



MORE THAN 8,000 ALUMNI

Employment/Earnings After College

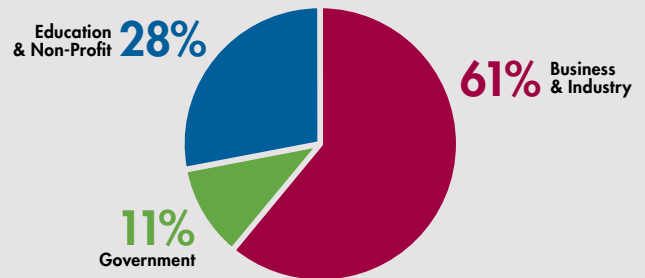
235 STUDENTS COMPLETED A CO-OP LAST YEAR

New RIT/NTID grads are ready to succeed



Last year, **94%** of students who sought jobs after graduation found one within a year

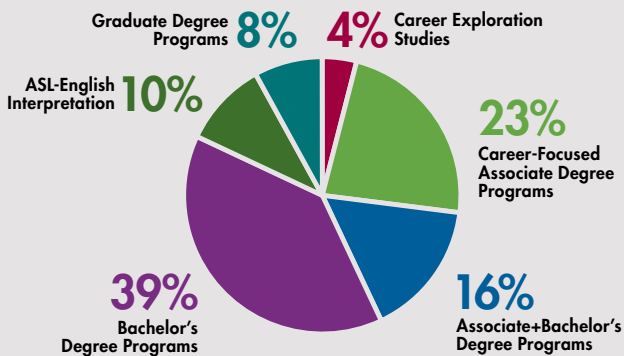
New RIT/NTID alumni thrive in all economic sectors



Employers include:

BNY Mellon, Boeing Aircraft, Inc., Central Intelligence Agency, Google, Microsoft, NASA, U.S. Department of Defense, Walt Disney Company

Academics



RIT/NTID graduates are competitive in the marketplace

RIT/NTID associate degree graduates earn

95%

more than deaf and hard-of-hearing graduates from other postsecondary institutions*.

RIT/NTID bachelor's degree graduates earn

178%

more than deaf and hard-of-hearing graduates from other postsecondary institutions*.

*median salary at age 50 compared to average

169 FACULTY

STUDENT/FACULTY RATIO

8:1



361 STAFF

INCLUDING



120 INTERPRETERS



55 CAPTIONISTS

Student Access Services

Hours provided (2014-2015 academic year)

	In Classroom (B.S. Degree Programs)	Outside Classroom
Interpreting	105,983	34,274
Captioning	21,459	782
Notetaking	60,195	

Christopher Caulfield

BY ILENE J. AVALLONE



A. SIEWESLER

Another college recruited Christopher Caulfield to play Division I basketball, but a back injury during high school required him to shift his focus to academics instead of the sport he had played competitively for many years.

He chose RIT to pursue the web and mobile computing program, and to meet successful deaf role models that he never had encountered back home.

“I am the only deaf person in my family and was the only deaf person in my school growing up, so meeting other people like me was an important factor in my decision to enroll at RIT,” says Caulfield, 20, a third-year student from Champaign, Illinois.

“Here, I’ve felt like I fit in since day one.”

A recipient of the Dr. Frank W. Lovejoy Scholarship and NTID Presidential and Merit Scholarships, Caulfield is enjoying his college experience. He works as a research assistant in the RIT Linguistic

and Assistive Technologies Lab and is a resident advisor and a student ambassador for the RIT Career Services and Cooperative Education Office.

“Meeting other people like me was an important factor in my decision to enroll at RIT.”

He also is a member of Sigma Chi fraternity, the Deaf Basketball Association, Cru and the Catholic Campus Ministry and plays intramural soccer, basketball and volleyball.

Caulfield completed a cooperative work experience at Utica National Insurance Group last summer that provided valuable hands-on experience.

“I want to be successful, and the RIT/NTID community provides the resources and encouragement I need to help me on my way,” he says.

Susana Flores

BY KATHY A. JOHNCOX

Susana Flores is planning to be the curator of an art gallery one day. Flores, 24, a museum studies major from Antioch, California, is the only deaf person in her family and the first to go to college. Flores became deaf after an illness at 18 months old, and her educational experience was in mainstream schools with hearing friends and interpreting support services.

“Still, I always felt I was searching for something,” says Flores. “I soon realized I needed to explore my Deaf identity, something I found here at RIT/NTID.”

Upon her arrival, she found her “home away from home” in RIT’s Latin American Deaf Club, where she developed leadership skills. Flores appreciates the diversity and accessibility at RIT. She sought out ways to continue her interest in leadership and put her skills to good use by working for the Student Life Team. She continues being active with LADC, is an RIT/NTID



JORGE SAMPER

cross-registered student representative and volunteers with organizations both on and off campus.

“After my co-op working with historical artifacts and papers with a team at the American School for the Deaf, not only could I see the importance of having good leadership skills, but I also

“I soon realized I needed to explore my Deaf identity.”

realized that I had found my niche in the museum studies program,” says Flores. “Now, I couldn’t be happier.”

Kelly Jo Hilleshiem

BY ILENE J. AVALLONE

The NBA Indiana Pacers' dance team wanted her, but Kelly Jo Hilleshiem, 22, chose RIT/NTID instead.

"I knew getting a college education was the better path for my future," says Hilleshiem.

Raised in Indiana, Hilleshiem became deaf after getting meningitis at 16 months old and was the only deaf person in school growing up. She was outgoing, a homecoming queen and a cheerleader, but she felt something was missing.

"I wanted to experience being part of a Deaf community, so for my last semester of senior high, I transferred to Indiana School for the Deaf," says Hilleshiem.

"For the first time, I connected with other deaf people my age, so I decided I wanted to continue learning, living and socializing with deaf peers in college."

At RIT, Hilleshiem is an NTID student ambassador and a member of the Brick City CrossFit Club and Gymnastics Club.

She received an associate degree in



MARK BENJAMIN

administrative support technology and is pursuing a bachelor's degree in marketing with a concentration in public relations. After graduation, Hilleshiem plans to pursue a career in the fashion industry.

"Clothes help me express my personality, and this has played a significant role in my life," she says.

She has her own fashion blog, developed by fellow RIT/NTID student Patrick Seyapura, called, "That's so Fashionating," where she showcases trendy wardrobes on a student budget and provides beauty and fashion tips. Check it out at thatssofashionating.com.

Jonathan Roman

BY KATHY A. JOHNCOX



A. SJE WEISLER

"I feel like fate brought me to RIT/NTID," says Jonathan Roman, 24, a third-year student in the American Sign Language-English Interpretation program. Roman, from Rochester, New York, was introduced to sign language in elementary school by a "Talking Hands" performance group, and took ASL in middle and high school and community college. He enrolled in the ASL-English Interpretation program at RIT/NTID at the suggestion of his American Sign Language teacher at Monroe Community College. And here, he found his purpose—to bridge the gap and connect the hearing and the deaf worlds.

After arriving at RIT/NTID, Roman connected with the Latin American Deaf Club where he made many friends and was elected treasurer.

"LADC feels like family to me," says Roman.

And because of this, he has made it his goal to spread knowledge of Latin

culture campuswide.

Roman is a recipient of NTID's D. Robert Frisina Scholarship, and in addition to his studies and a busy social life, he works several part-time jobs. He continues to excel academically and

"It would be great to interpret in various settings to help deaf and hearing people in the community connect."

has definite plans for the future.

"Connecting people is my passion," says Roman. "I'd like to be a community interpreter. It would be great to interpret in various settings to help deaf and hearing people in the community connect," says Roman. "Then, eventually, I'd like to teach in the ASL-English Interpretation program at RIT/NTID."

This year, a number of new faculty have joined RIT/NTID. Bringing with them experiences from around the country and throughout the world, these teacher-scholars—several of whom are RIT/NTID alumni—are poised to lead today's students on their journey of knowledge and inquiry. Here are the stories of five of these new faces in the classroom.

BY SUSAN L. MURAD

Alesia Allen



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Visiting Assistant Professor in NTID's Department of Liberal Studies, Allen teaches introductory courses in psychology and abnormal psychology.

A native of Ohio, Allen attended RIT/NTID and earned a bachelor's degree in psychology in 2004. She earned a master's degree in clinical psychology from Gallaudet University, and expects to defend her dissertation in 2016 and earn a Ph.D. from Gallaudet in clinical psychology.

She is the recipient of the Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program Achievement Award, Officer Appreciation Award and Outstanding Advocacy Award presented by NTID's Student Government for advocating for the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing people on campus. She also was honored for her service to the Philadelphia community for providing services for deaf

and hard-of-hearing individuals with mental health concerns.

"In my opinion, teaching goes beyond the classroom and consists of advising and mentoring," says Allen. "This is critical because I believe effective teaching involves building rapport and being sensitive to students' needs. Another important responsibility involves scholarship and staying up to date with research trends in the field. Currently, I am working on completing my dissertation, which focuses primarily on hard-of-hearing individuals and their overall psychological well-being. I encourage students to get involved in research and provide support to them in their efforts. Finally, there's a service component of my job. Service initiatives may include getting involved on committees to help provide feedback on improving goals of the department, mentoring students, or getting involved in some efforts to help the Rochester community."

Jason Nordhaus



JORGE SAMPER

Jason Nordhaus joined the faculty in NTID's Science and Mathematics Department as an assistant professor and theoretical astrophysicist. He is a core faculty member in RIT's Center for Computational Relativity and Gravitation in the School of Mathematical Sciences, and a professor in the astrophysics Ph.D. program in RIT's School of Physics and Astronomy.

Previously, Nordhaus was a National Science Foundation Fellow at RIT and a Post-doctoral Fellow in the Department of Astrophysical Sciences at Princeton University. He earned bachelor's degrees in mathematics, physics and astronomy, a master's degree in physics and doctorate in physics and astronomy, all from the University of Rochester. Nordhaus is working on the

theory of core-collapse supernovae, the origin of strongly magnetized compact objects, and the fates of planets when their stars die.

His work has been published by the National Academy of Sciences, highlighted by "Time" Magazine as one of Top 50 science results of 2010 and has appeared on NPR. He has presented his findings on supernova theory, evolved stars and binary systems nationally and internationally and has won several fellowships, including the National Science Foundation's Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral (AAP) Fellowship, a U.S. Department of Energy Horton Fellowship, and a U.S. Department of Education Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) Fellowship in addition to being named a 2002 U.S. Congressional Goldwater Scholar.

Laural Hartman



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Laural Hartman is a lecturer in NTID's Visual Communications Studies Department, teaching core courses such as *Drawing and Principles of Design and Color*.

Born and raised in the Los Angeles area, Hartman graduated from RIT/NTID in 2005 with a BFA in illustration and went on to earn a master's degree in NTID's master of science program in secondary education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing in 2007.

After graduating from RIT/NTID, Hartman moved to San Francisco where she bought

an antique press and established her own letterpress shop, Dirty Beard Press. Prior to moving back to Rochester, she taught high school at The Learning Center for the Deaf (now Marie Philips School) in Framingham, Massachusetts.

Her custom work has been exhibited at The Berkeley Art Center, the Minna Gallery in San Francisco and the Delaplaine Gallery in Frederick, Maryland.

She enjoys participating in craft and trade shows, being a member of the letterpress community and hiking with her sheepdogs.

Joseph Hill



JORGE SAMPER

Joseph Hill is a faculty member in NTID's American Sign Language and Interpreting Education Department.

Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, Hill earned a bachelor's degree in systems analysis from Miami University of Ohio, and went on to earn his master's degree and doctorate in American Sign Language linguistics from Gallaudet University. In 2008, he was named a Fulbright Scholar, and held a National Science Foundation Fellowship 2003-2006.

He is a member of the Linguistic Society

of America, National Association of the Deaf, National Black Deaf Advocates and the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Language, among others. He has presented at conferences throughout the United States and internationally, and has published numerous peer-reviewed articles. He previously taught at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Siena School for Liberal Arts in Siena, Italy, and at Gallaudet.

Hill recently was instrumental in bringing a tribute to missionary Andrew Foster, known as "The Father of Deaf Education in Africa" to NTID's Dyer Arts Center.

Viet Q. Le



JORGE SAMPER

Viet Q. Le is a faculty member in NTID's Science and Mathematics Department.

Le earned a bachelor's degree in biochemistry, with an emphasis on chemistry, and a doctorate in chemistry, with an emphasis on biochemistry, both from Wichita State University in Kansas. He was the recipient of a U.S. Department of Education Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) Fellowship 2007-2010.

His research focuses on identifying the

mechanism of cell death behind Parkinson's disease. Le's work has been published in the "Journal of Neurochemistry," and he has presented his findings at the American Chemical Society conference and Capitol Graduate Research Summit in Topeka, Kansas, where he won first place. Prior to RIT/NTID, he served as a teaching assistant in the Chemistry Department at Wichita State University, where he also served as a Disability Support Services tutor.

NTID's history is rich in milestones and achievements that have fueled the success of thousands of students and graduates. This "FOCUS" feature provides a look at some of the people and events that have been significant in the history of our college community.

BY ALLISON POLK



ARCHIVAL PHOTO



ARCHIVAL PHOTO

Deaf Women of Rochester, 1979

More than 50 women attended New York's first statewide Deaf Women's Conference held at RIT/NTID 37 years ago.

Sponsored jointly by the Empire State Association of the Deaf and NTID, the conference focused on four main topics: assertiveness training (in photo, above right); changing roles of women; deaf women's rights; and a dialogue between homemakers, working mothers and career women.

Conference chair Vicki Hurwitz, who, at the time, was serving as a records supervisor in NTID's Math Learning Center, said the day-long meeting was the first of many planned for the future.

By 1981, Hurwitz, Sally Taylor, Joan Dickson and Pam Hatch (L-R in photo above) banded together to found Deaf Women of Rochester.

The organization grew out of the friendship of Taylor and Hurwitz, both long-time staff members at NTID, who started getting together in the 1970s with other deaf mothers to discuss raising children and other interests.

From the Archives



ARCHIVAL PHOTO

Trivia Tidbit BY SAM HOLCOMB

Q: Which NTID building is named after a deaf person?

A: Peter Peterson Hall. Born in Sweden, Peterson arrived in the United States in 1887 as a teenager and shortly thereafter became deaf due to illness. He is known as being an advocate for a technical college for the deaf in the 1930s, decades before NTID was established.



MARK BENJAMIN

Sam Holcomb is a retired faculty member from NTID's American Sign Language and Interpreting Education Department.

Celebrating NTID's First Decade A band plays amidst balloons and streamers at the celebration of NTID's 10th anniversary in 1978.

Alumni lead national deaf organizations

BY ALLISON POLK



Chris Wagner
Bradenton, Florida
B.S., Social Work, 1994
Vice President of Customer Experience, ZVRS



Tim Albert
Indianapolis, Indiana
Diploma, Applied Computer Technology, 1994
A.A.S., Imaging Technology, 1997
Dean of Students, Indiana School for the Deaf



Joe Riggio
Indianapolis, Indiana
A.A.S., Printing Production Technology, 1992
B.S., Applied Science and Technology, 2001
Sales Manager, Business Video Solutions, ZVRS

“As we get closer to NTID’s 50th anniversary, it’s an exciting time to see the college grow and develop new leaders,” says Chris Wagner, SVP ’88, ’94.

Wagner is president of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD). He is one of three RIT/NTID alumni currently at the helm of a national deaf-related organization.

“NTID strives to offer programming and educational experiences that foster the skills necessary for leadership roles,” says NTID President Gerry Buckley. “We couldn’t be more proud of our alumni who are contributing to organizations throughout the country.”

Coming to RIT/NTID was an “awesome and enriching experience,” says Tim Albert, SVP ’91, ’94, ’97, and president of the National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA). “There was some culture shock. I was born and raised in New Orleans, and suddenly I was meeting people from

all these different countries and areas in the United States.”

Wagner agrees about the undergraduate social experience.

“RIT prepared us for reality: how to navigate politics, how to develop strategy and how to work with diverse groups of people,” he says.

Albert credits Dr. Jim DeCaro, who was dean at NTID when Albert was a student, with encouraging him to attend his first NBDA conference in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1994. It was there that he gained an appreciation for the importance of networking. “It’s important for us to grow, professionally and individually, and to become stronger as we work in legislative, political and advocacy areas,” he says. “Meeting NBDA members, making new friends and learning how best to support each other is important for that.”

“We learned so much in our formative years,” says Joe Riggio, SVP ’88, ’92, ’01,

about his time at RIT and its impact on his leadership role. “RIT/NTID contributed greatly to who I am and my success.”

Riggio is the president of the NTID Alumni Association (NTIDAA). While he, like Wagner and Albert, has certain goals he’d like to accomplish during his tenure as president, he’s especially interested in sharing his passion for and dedication to RIT/NTID. To do so, he has turned to social media and is leveraging the NTIDAA’s online presence to draw attention to the ways alumni can continue to give back to the community.

Wagner and Albert also consider social media important in their organizational efforts. Albert, for example, has implemented a monthly vlog on the NBDA’s webpage and Facebook feed.

“I encourage aspiring leaders to get involved and be visible any way they can,” adds Wagner. “It’s about the passion. It’s about making a difference for other people.”



Dramatic Reveal DEAF Inc. Marketing Director and RIT/NTID alumnus Tony Nitko (left) and NTID President Gerry Buckley (center) draw the curtains back from “Stronger Than Ever,” as the artist looks on.

JORGE SAMPER

Brick City Homecoming full of firsts

BY ALLISON POLK

Some 17,000 students, parents, alumni and their families participated in Rochester Institute of Technology’s three-day Brick City Homecoming & Family Weekend this past October. For some RIT/NTID alumni, it was a special one full of firsts.

The first Summer Vestibule Program (SVP) reunion took place on campus, with more than 30 members from the SVP class of 1975 and friends attending. The SVP reunion included a dinner cruise and a special breakfast with NTID President Gerry Buckley, as well as access to all the other RIT/NTID events throughout the weekend.

An NTID tailgate event was held for the first time in the lobby of the First Federal Plaza building in order to accommodate a growing number of attendees. The location also was convenient for the

short walk to Rochester’s Blue Cross Arena, where alumni helped cheer on the RIT Mens’ Hockey team.

Friday night featured, among other events, the unveiling of “Stronger Than Ever,” a painting by renowned artist Rick Rush, donated to RIT/NTID by DEAF Inc. of St. Louis, Missouri. DEAF Inc. Marketing Director and RIT/NTID alumnus Tony Nitko joined NTID President Gerry Buckley in the Dyer Arts Center to reveal the large giclée, which will become part of NTID’s permanent collection. Rush also was on hand to provide commentary on the historical significance of the artwork’s content.

“The Dyer Arts Center is home to one of the largest permanent collections of works by deaf artists and deaf-related art anywhere in the world,” said Buckley. “We are thrilled to be welcoming a new

and exciting piece to our collection today. Many thanks to DEAF Inc. and all who were involved in making this possible.”

Guests also attended the RIT Presidents’ Alumni Ball Friday night, during which the university honored RIT Outstanding Alumnus Andrew Brenneman, ’88.

Brenneman (accounting, business management) is the first deaf alumnus to serve on the RIT Board of Trustees.

In addition to this award, he was previously honored as NTID’s Distinguished Alumnus in 2007 and RIT’s Volunteer of the Year in 2010. This most recent award is the highest honor RIT can bestow on an alumnus.

“Andrew is one of the most enthusiastic ‘cheerleaders’ for RIT and NTID you will ever find,” said Buckley at the ball. “His dedication to his alma mater is one of the many reasons he is being honored tonight.”

Q: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO ATTEND RIT/NTID?

"I chose to enroll at RIT/NTID because a friend, an RIT graduate, encouraged me to attend. She told me RIT had a suitable major, an Asian Deaf Club, and other activities that would make it a good fit for me. I did some research and realized that RIT offered a great opportunity because it had the major I wanted, diversity, and many campus organizations to join."



NAME
Kim (Hoa) Hoang

HOMETOWN
Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma

MAJOR
Design and
Imaging
Technology

"I chose RIT/NTID because I grew up mainstreamed in the hearing world, and I never got to experience the Deaf world. I came here for EYF (Explore Your Future) camp, and for the first time, I got to meet other deaf people like me. Ever since, I have been exposed to this whole other world that I never knew. I also felt I would do better academically here than any other college."



NAME
Lily Irwin

HOMETOWN
Woodbridge,
Virginia

MAJOR
Applied
Liberal Arts

"I chose RIT/NTID because it was close to home, and it's a pretty big Deaf culture hotspot. For most of my life, I really wasn't involved with Deaf culture until now, and I'm enjoying it so much! I've made new friends, the courses here are pretty okay, and the professors are superb."



NAME
Jassiem Jackson

HOMETOWN
Poughkeepsie,
New York

MAJOR
Applied Computer
Technology

"Before I made my decision, I did my research. I chose RIT/NTID because I read and heard that RIT offers one of the best business programs, and the social life here fits me well.

I visited here and fell in love with RIT/NTID. I thought it was perfect for me because RIT/NTID has a mix of deaf and hard-of-hearing people, not just hearing."



NAME
Ryan Glynn

HOMETOWN
Crestwood,
Illinois

MAJOR
Accounting
Technology

"I chose RIT/NTID because I believed the world here on campus is the world in which I belong."



NAME
Tianna Dudley

HOMETOWN
Detroit, Michigan

MAJOR
Administrative
Support
Technology

"I came to RIT because of the excellent job placement rate due to the co-op requirements. At the time, RIT was one of the few schools in the country that had a strong focus in management information systems, which was perfect for me as I have a passion for business as well as technology. Having a degree with RIT's name is extremely attractive to hiring managers."



NAME
Patrick Seyapura

HOMETOWN
South Windsor,
Connecticut

MAJOR
Management
Information
Systems

R·I·T

Rochester Institute of Technology
National Technical Institute for the Deaf
Lyndon Baines Johnson Hall
52 Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, NY 14623-5604

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Rochester, NY
Permit 626

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Deaf and Loud on Campus Hip-hop artist and RIT/NTID alumnus Sean Forbes, '08, returned to campus as part of his "Deaf and Loud" tour on October 9 in Panara Theatre. Forbes is an accomplished songwriter, performer and musician. He also is the founder of D-PAN, the Deaf Performing Artists Network, which has created videos produced in American Sign Language that interpret popular songs. Forbes has opened for the nationally known rap artist Ludacris and has been featured on CNN, National Public Radio and the Ovation Network series, "Motor City Rising." Articles about him have published in "Spin," "New York Post" and "The Washington Post," among others. He has performed hundreds of live shows for both deaf and hearing audiences and has achieved viral success on YouTube.