

# ntid FOCUS

Mar.-Apr. 1970

Publication of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf.  
Rochester Institute of Technology.



## Engagé

the learning process takes a forward step



# Environmental Learning Center Created

Engagé.

It's a French word that roughly means "involved."

And as one might guess from its sound, (on-ga-zhaé), the word carries a strong sense of action.

At NTID, Engagé is the name of a recently created program which actively involves deaf students from a variety of academic areas in a professional work situation, on a day-to-day basis. The physical setting could be best compared to an advertising agency, and participating students are involved in the various facets of the daily operation, producing multi-media programs for instructional use.

Perhaps the most unique feature of the program is the extensive involvement by students from various academic programs. "We think it's very important for students to gain knowledge of curricular areas other than their own," said Jon Rawleigh, who initiated the program and serves as its director. "In other words, a photography student can learn something about the art and design end of things, for instance, or an art student might get some first-hand experience in the

business aspects of running an agency or studio. The printing student can learn something about photography, and so on."

"This type of exposure," he continued, "can serve many purposes. In some cases it might simply be a means of 'rounding out' the student's experience. Or, in other cases, it could introduce a new career field to the student. But even at worst, it should help a student gain an appreciation for other professions, especially those that are somewhat related to his own area."

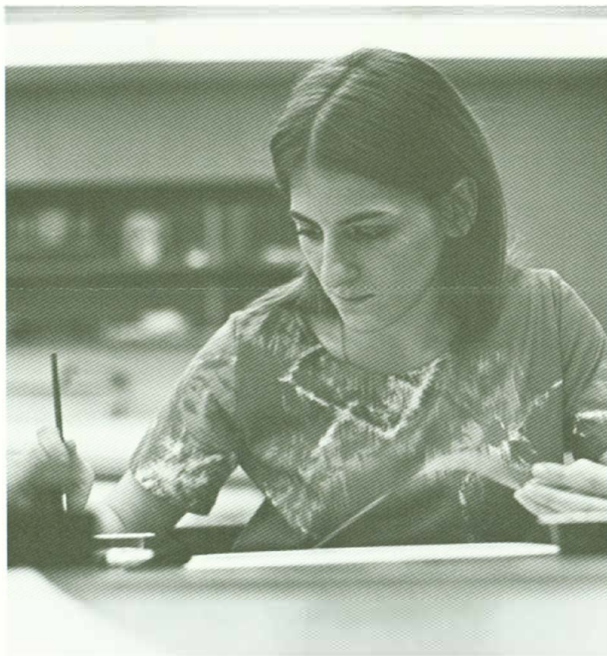
NTID's Director, Dr. D. Robert Frisina, commented: "The key feature of this program really is the inter-disciplinary involvement among students from the various academic disciplines, and it creates a fresh communication means between students and teachers. It's really an ever-changing environment, changing with the people involved, their specific study areas, and the ongoing projects created within this learning center."

Rawleigh's enthusiasm for establishing the Engagé grew out of concern over the lack of job-related experiences available to students. "It's a well-proven fact, he commented, "that the best way to learn is to become involved in the actual 'doing,' to become familiar with the employment environment. With this setup, students are getting a variety of work experiences on a daily basis, that most students never get until they've completed their formal education and begun working full-time."

"Another benefit of this program," said Rawleigh, "is that it will help many of our students in determining their career objectives; and this is especially true because of the variety of areas involved. Through this kind of exposure, a student might find, for instance, that his real abilities lie in some area other than the one he's studying in. If he can find this out now, it's certainly better than discovering it after he becomes committed to an employment situation."

The Engagé also serves as a physical base of operation for NTID staff members Thomas Raco and Mrs. Betty Hahn. Raco is educational specialist for the College of Fine and Applied Arts; serving as an academic coordinator for deaf students in the art curricula. Mrs. Hahn teaches several of the art courses.

"Based upon the various kinds of teaching experiences I've had," Raco commented, "I think that this is one of the greatest and most sincere attempts to break through the old traditional structure of education, and provide students with learning experiences that will be really meaningful!"



ABOVE: Teresa Battisti, Ithaca, N. Y. RIGHT: Staff members Betty Hahn, Thomas Raco, and Jon Rawleigh.





## NAG Member Mary Switzer Retires from HEW Post

A recent tribute dinner, in Washington, D.C., honored Miss Mary E. Switzer, a member of NTID's National Advisory Group, on the occasion of her retirement as administrator of the Social and Rehabilitation Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Miss Switzer's retirement concludes a government service career of 48 years.

In addition to HEW Secretary Robert Finch, several former HEW secretaries were on hand for the occasion, which was attended by more than 1,300 persons from every state in the nation. Among those attending from Rochester was fellow NAG member and R.I.T. Board of Trustees member Mrs. F. Ritter Shumway.

Thousands of appreciation letters were received at the dinner, including one from President Nixon, expressing . . . "deep personal appreciation, and that of the people of the United States", for her services to the handicapped and disadvantaged.

Another highlight of the evening was the presentation of the HEW Department Flag to Miss Switzer, by Secretary Finch. This was, reportedly, the first time that a departmental flag has been presented to anyone other than a Secretary.

Miss Switzer assumes a new job, almost immediately, as vice president of the World Rehabilitation Fund, of which the famed Dr. Howard Rusk is chairman. From her Washington office she will coordinate its worldwide programs with governmental, national, and international voluntary organizations.



In the course of her 48 year career in government service, NAG Member Mary Switzer has received honorary degrees from 16 colleges and universities, received numerous awards for exemplary service, and has published more than 130 articles.

## Deaf Leaders Confer

Nearly 20 deaf leaders from across the nation gathered at the campus recently for a conference entitled: "The Deaf Community and NTID."

Topics discussed during the three-day conference included NTID programs and objectives, various aspects of technical education and employment for deaf persons, various social, educational, and vocational factors affecting NTID and the deaf community, and cooperation between NTID and deaf persons throughout the nation.

NTID Director D. Robert Frisina led the keynote session on March 5, and R.I.T. President Paul A. Miller welcomed the conferees. Other highlights included tours of the academic complex and the Center for Computer-Assisted-Instruction, and a demonstration of the Vistaphone picture-telephone system.



"The Deaf Community and NTID" conferees addressed themselves to a wide variety of topics during the three-day program. LEFT: NTID English Chairman Robert Ponora talks to group. BELOW: (left to right) Jess Smith, first vice president, National Association of the Deaf; Dr. James DeNia, NTID coordinator of short-term institutes; and Arthur Simon, first vice chairman, Oral Deaf Adults Section, Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf.



## Michael Rojas Wins Design Competition

Architectural Drafting students at NTID recently put their work to a real test — judgement by the exacting eye of a prominent professional architect.

The occasion was a home design competition, initiated by their instructor, LeRoy Duning. He assigned each of his 11 students the problem of designing a home from start to finish, complete with detailed working drawings.

To add interest, Duning went one step further and turned the project into a class-wide competition. He contacted former colleague and now prominent local architect, Robert Hallock, of DeWolff Associates, who agreed to act as judge.

The competition drew to a close on Thursday, Feb. 26. First and second place ribbons were awarded to Michael Rojas and Tom Virnig, respectively, and an honorable mention went to Paul Kangas. Hallock then gave a presentation on career opportunities in the architectural field.

Regarding his apparent enthusiasm for the project, Hallock commented: "Like most of my professional colleagues, I'm always interested in doing whatever I can to promote the enthusiasm of young people who aspire toward careers in architecture."

## Panara Speaks on Literature Trends

"Deaf Characters in Fiction and Drama" was the topic for a presentation on Wednesday, Feb. 25, by Robert Panara, English chairman for NTID.

Panara's presentation, based on years of extensive research, included a survey of various images of the deaf as characterized by writers from Daniel Defoe to J. D. Salinger.

By discussing subject treatments ranging from serious and favorable to melodramatic and grotesque, Panara traced the shifting attitudes and interpretations of writers from one literary period to another, and discussed the implications of the increasing appearance of deaf characters in modern literature.

The presentation, which was held in the College of General Studies auditorium, drew a crowd of over 150 students from various area campuses, and other visitors from the Rochester area.

An author in his own right, Panara has several published literary works to his credit, including *The Silent Muse*, an anthology of literary works by deaf writers, of which he was co-author.

NTID Focus is published monthly at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology. Editorial Office is located in the RIT Public Relations Office. Editor: John W. Cox. Phone: (716) 464-2332.

*"The Materials herein were produced in the course of an agreement with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare."*

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*in this issue*

New Learning Center

"The Deaf Community and NTID"

Home Design Competition