

NTID

# F O C U S

FALL 1987



*NTID's Super Sleuths* p. 20



*Celebration! Professor Emeritus Robert Panam is all smiles October 6 after learning that a scholarship fund in his name has been established by the Institute.*

# FOCUS

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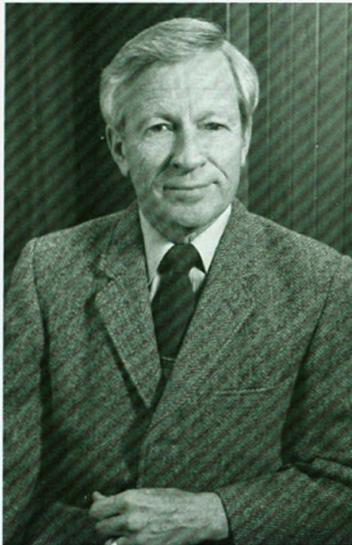
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# 'Never Give Up'



**A** longtime friend of mine, Joseph Wiedenmayer, who is both hearing impaired and visually impaired, recently sent me an outline of his philosophy, which he uses when he talks to young deaf people. That outline is as follows:

- Where there's a will, there's a way
- Those who say I can't—can't; and those who say I can—can
- The extent of a handicap is not as important as the extent of overcoming it
- Parents and spouses of handicapped people deserve and need empathy and understanding, too
- Pity not the handicapped, but rather those with all of their senses who accomplish so little with all they have
- Never give up—NEVER, NEVER, NEVER.

With the support of such a philosophy during his 82 years, Mr. Wiedenmayer has been able, in spite of his handicaps, to serve as a U.S. career diplomat until 1965 and as a special assistant to the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf until 1972; and he continues to do volunteer work among deaf and blind people.

We would like to think that a similar philosophy is instilled in each of our students by the time that they graduate from NTID at RIT. Certainly it is clear that at least components of this philosophy have influenced Lu Ann Liberatori, Michael MacDonald, Solange Skyer, Mark King, Judith Sargent, Leonard Williams, Richard Smith, Cinda Lautenschlegar, and Carl Gustafson, all of whom are deaf and all of whom are featured in this issue of *Focus*.

Mr. Wiedenmayer's philosophy can surely be described as refreshing. It may also be described as pertinent to what is known to be happening to NTID graduates as recently revealed by a research study done in conjunction with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). A study analyzing the 1982 earnings of nearly 2,000 students who graduated or withdrew between 1968-1980 indicates that NTID indeed is fulfilling its mission to reverse employment conditions for deaf people. Within 10 years of graduation, baccalaureate degree graduates repay the government for their education; within 40 years of employment, the federal treasury receives from these same students \$350,000 more than if it had not invested in the education of NTID students.

We like to believe that the educational experience provided by NTID at RIT is of the highest quality. Apparently, the study done in conjunction with the federal government agrees.

Perhaps our apparent outstanding success is attributable at least in part to the special services we offer to students, such as our English Learning Center, which ensures that NTID graduates have a good facility with English to complement their excellent technical skills. This issue takes a closer look at that center.

Most assuredly, our graduates' good fortune is a consequence of dynamic and innovative faculty members such as Dr. Jeffrey Porter, assistant dean and director of the Division of General Education. Dr. Porter is the subject of our *Focus On...* feature for this issue. I hope you enjoy reading about him as much as we enjoy having him as a faculty member.

*William E. Castle*

Dr. William E. Castle

# Readin', Writin', & FLOPPY DISKS



*Decision time Student Maribel Vargas discusses her role in an interactive novel with Larry Hunt.*

by Ann Kanter

**W**hen Frances Pyle, a 1987 graduate with an A.A.S. in Media Production Technology, first came to NTID in the summer of 1984, she didn't have a clear distinction in her mind between American Sign Language (ASL) and signed English. This confusion created difficulties for her in reading, writing, and understanding English. She found help at NTID's English Learning Center (ELC).

During her first year, she attended the center's reading and writing labs for help with written grammar and general communication skills.

"In my second and third years, I would drop in to visit Joyce Horvath and Kenny Lerner," she says. "They helped me with my reading and writing skills, which I needed for the liberal arts courses I was taking.

"I also enjoyed talking to Kenny about newspapers and world events. Joyce helped me see the difference between ASL and English."

Pyle now works as a slide specialist with a photo processing firm in her hometown of Charlotte, North Carolina.

"My improved skills will help me keep records at work as well as in my personal life," she says.

Established in 1974 as an arm of the English Department, the ELC provides individualized and small group instruction that complements regular English coursework. Whether working with students on a one-to-one basis or in a group setting, ELC faculty members such as Horvath and Lerner can take the time to clarify problems that would be difficult to handle in normal classroom time.

Although contained within its own four walls and staffed by a separate faculty, the ELC enjoys a symbiotic relationship with the rest of the department.

"The services of the ELC are vital to our department," says Dr. Sybil Ishman, English Department chairperson, "and in order for it to be effective, its faculty members must be kept apprised of the content, techniques, and direction of the English courses."

Ishman, who has a bachelor's degree in English from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and a Ph.D. in English and Linguistics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is very supportive of the ELC, and especially of its personnel.

"The ELC faculty members are a dedicated group," she says. "I've never seen people work such long hours and show such sensitivity and interest. The students couldn't have a better group to work with."

The center is directed by Dr. Alinda Drury, a reading specialist, and staffed by two part-time visiting faculty members and five adjunct faculty members. Drury, who has a doctoral degree in Language Development from the University of Rochester, previously worked with deaf preschool children in Houston, Texas, as well as with older students in the Rochester School for the Deaf summer language program. As director of the ELC, she plans its curriculum, supervises its operation, advises students, and supplies necessary instructional support.

Most students are assigned to the ELC by their English instructors as part of their course requirements. Others attend voluntarily for independent study or tutorial work.

"Before these students go out into the world, we want to round out their technological education with English language skills and experiences," says Horvath, acting supervisor of the ELC while Drury is on maternity leave.

Horvath, who has a bachelor's degree in Education from Ohio State University, a master's degree from the University of Rochester/NTID Joint Educational Specialist Program, and who currently is

“  
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pursuing a doctorate in Curriculum, says, "We want the students to be able to use English socially as well as to have read and understood a variety of technical and non-technical books. As part of the English Department, we prepare them to apply these skills so that after they graduate, they can read other books on their own, in both their personal and professional lives."

In addition to its role in complementing and supporting existing English courses, the ELC also serves as a laboratory where instructors can develop, refine, and experiment with new classroom materials and techniques.

Housed in a comfortable room on the second floor of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Building, the ELC contains work areas with tables and chairs for writing, a main desk to check out books and computer programs, 15 computers, and a reading section furnished with bookcases and sofas. The lab is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and three evenings a week. During the afternoon and evening hours, it is a beehive of student activity.

Students may participate in individual tutorials, independent self-instruction, or small group instruction. Small groups are comprised of from three to eight students who usually participate in mini-courses for one or two hours weekly. These students have the advantage of meeting with peers from different classes who are experiencing similar problems.

One small group congregates for Drury's "Vocabulary" course, in which the class may spend 10 or 15 minutes on one word—clarifying its meanings and exploring its uses in various situations.



*The right word makes a difference*  
Dr. Alinda Drury goes over the fine points of word usage in the mini-course, "Basic Vocabulary for College-Level Students."

One day last spring, students discussed the words "admire" and "annoy," and Drury helped clarify the meaning by having students name someone they admired and someone who annoyed them. They then discussed the possibility of admiring someone who annoyed them.

One student responded, "Oh, I see what you mean because I admire my sister, even though sometimes she is a pest."

Another popular small group course is "Reading for Pleasure," developed by Horvath and others in 1983 when English faculty members Larry Lo Maglio

and Peter Haggerty noticed students having difficulty understanding a novel that was part of their assigned coursework.

To help these students, the ELC faculty members established voluntary, non-credit, discussion groups, specifically to handle problems with comprehension and analysis of the novels. The groups were well attended.

"We often had 20 to 30 students from 7 in the evening until we finished discussing the assignment at 8:30 or even 9 o'clock," says Horvath. "The discussions went so well that we decided to expand the idea to deal with other books also."

Now students may choose from a variety of books each quarter, including such well-known novels as *Catcher in the Rye*, *The African Queen*, and *The Martian Chronicles*.

"The opportunity to explore new ideas is one of the joys of working in the ELC," says Horvath, "and much of that is

because of Alinda. She knows what you can do and lets you do it. She accepts ideas from everyone and she gives you credit for your ideas."

Another course that Horvath helped to develop is "Inference," whose activities include reading for comprehension and practice in making inferences—a problem for some deaf students.

"When deaf students have problems making inferences, it may be because they lack the background knowledge necessary or because they don't know how to apply the knowledge and experience that they have," says Horvath.

"When hearing students read an introductory sentence describing an old house with rattling shutters on a stormy night, they'll probably infer that they're getting into a horror story. Many deaf students won't do that, because they may have difficulty making the necessary inferences.

"Many students spend a lot of time and energy trying to decode or figure out what a passage or sentence means instead of relating their own experience to the content," says Horvath. "We try to get them to decode *and* relate."

Of the series of courses focusing on writing and composition skills, one of the more popular is "What's Happening in the World?" a current events course taught by Adjunct Faculty Member Kenneth Lerner.

"Students are really interested in what's going on," says Lerner. "They want to know more about ecology and acid rain and the implications of Schultz' meeting with Gorbachev. Often their reading difficulties prevent them from being as well informed as they'd like to be."

Writing assistance also is available upon request, such as for students who elect the portfolio review process as a means to determine their entrance qualifications for the General Education/Liberal Arts writing course sequence. Portfolio requirements include a spontaneous writing sample; ELC faculty members provide students with assigned topics and instructions for the paper, time their writing, and help them decide which writing samples to include.

In 1984, to keep current with technology, a Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) Lab was added to the center. Larry Hunt, visiting English Learning Center resource specialist, was hired to develop this aspect of ELC instruction.

Hunt, who has a master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language, previously taught foreign students at the University of California at Los Angeles and also worked as a cross-cultural aide to missionaries training for overseas assignments.

"Although I had only limited experience with deaf people before coming to NTID," he says, "my experiences with foreign students and the missionaries helped in my adjustment to the deaf world."

In setting up the CALL Lab, Hunt researched how other schools had used computers in teaching English as a second language. He then ordered seven IBM Personal Computers, eight Apple IIe computers, and several software packages.

"One advantage of computer programs is that they complement the role of instructors," says Hunt. He then launches into a discussion of interactive novels played out by students on the computer.

"The students become characters in the book," he says. "Instead of taking a traditional test, they receive instructions from and interact with the characters and objects in the story. They make decisions and type in commands, and the computer tells them the consequences of their actions.

"Students' decisions as characters in the novel affect the plot," explains Hunt, "so they are forced to read actively and critically, paying attention to detail and seeking out and using information. If they are in a dangerous situation and make the wrong decision, the computer may say, 'You're dead.' That's a lot less pedantic than a teacher saying, 'You made a mistake.'

"Interactive novels reinforce thinking ability and comprehension," says Hunt. "Students must struggle with the program to understand the concepts and respond appropriately. The idea is based on current theories that all reading—not just computer novels—is interactive. A good reader carries on a silent, and often unconscious, dialogue with the text."

In addition to motivating students, computers have another advantage in the immediacy of the feedback they provide. This is an improvement over having a student deliver a homework assignment to an instructor and then wait until it is returned to see the instructor's comments.

Included in the computer reading activities is a series of nine programs specifically designed for NTID students by Dr. Edward Lichtenstein, an English Department faculty member. Lichtenstein holds a B.A. in Psychology and Anthropology from Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and a Ph.D. in Psycholinguistics and Cognitive Psychology from the University of Illinois in Urbana/Champaign.

"The interactive nature of computer programs can provide students with communicative, natural contexts for language learning," he says.

The programs he's designed include the interactive novels mentioned by Hunt, some of which are based on novels that students read in their English classes. He also has written two programs that simulate conversations with students.

One of these programs takes the form of a job interview and offers practice in that situation. The computer asks the type of questions that a prospective employer might ask and then follows up with questions that build on the students' answers. Students thus benefit



Photography by A. Sue Weisler

*Verbs have the action.* Joyce Horvath reviews a lesson on parts of speech with student Brian Body.

not only from a trial run of a real-life experience; they also can print out the interview and take it home to study difficult questions and improve their own responses.

Another interactive program, "Chit Chat," uses a conversational approach to vocabulary building. Conversing with the student as the whimsical persona Chit Chat, the program gossips, poses questions and riddles, and tries to define words or concepts that students may not know, as well as to answer questions that students ask.

Although "Chit Chat" emphasizes learning vocabulary in a communicative context, the program also is peppered with historical characters and touches on moral and ethical values.

Ever on the lookout for new program ideas, Hunt plans to increase the CALL Lab's offerings of programs that simulate real life experiences. He talks about a program for students specializing in business careers, for example, in which the computer would assume the role of a grocery shop manager.

The student would have to decide on purchases, stock rotation, personnel requirements, and advertising expenditures. The computer would provide feedback in terms of profits and sales, and the results would indicate any mistakes.

The instructor would then set up situations in which solutions to business problems depend on sharing information and experiences. Students

would get the experience of writing the kinds of memos that business people do on a routine basis.

"The principle is not to teach business decisions," says Hunt, "but ways to communicate about them. It's more effective than a teacher saying, 'Write a memo.'"

Hunt would like to acquire similar programs for science students and says that the computer can simulate scientific experiments.

He also is exploring the possibility of establishing a local area computer network that would allow students to communicate with each other directly in English.

"This would minimize the differences between oral students and those whose primary method of communication is ASL," he says.

Hunt got the idea of computer networking from Dr. Trent Batson, who developed such a system, called English Natural Form Instruction (ENFI) at Gallaudet University. Ishman and Horvath subsequently attended a three-day workshop on the system given by Batson in June 1987.

As a result, they decided to try ENFI at NTID on a modified, experimental basis.

"We want to see how the system meets our needs and can best serve our students," says Ishman. "It's another innovative, experimental technique that is made possible by having a center like the E.I.C."

# LIONS & TIGERS

by Lynne Bohlman

**W**hen is a Tiger also a Lion? When an RIT Tiger joins the world's largest community service organization, Lions Clubs International, of course.

Among those RIT Tigers—the tiger is the Institute's official mascot—who are active in various Lions Clubs across the country is a special group of deaf and hearing alumni, students, and faculty and staff members who account for about half of the 23 charter members of the Rochester Hearing Impaired Lions Club—the first such club in the area, second in the state, and 31st in the country.

Lions members in 157 countries throughout the world have the same motto—"We serve." For a long time, hearing impairment, along with sight problems, has been a major focus of that service.

Many deaf people have benefited from the aid that Lions Clubs offer, including camps for hearing-impaired children, books about deafness for school and public libraries, and TDDs for families who can't afford them. Others, though, remain unaware of the help that is available, in part because of a communication breakdown.

"It's difficult for hearing people to know how to help those who are hearing impaired," says James Schiebel, who was district governor of area Lions Clubs when the Rochester Hearing Impaired Club was formed in June 1986.

"Lions could do a lot more for the deaf community if they knew how to communicate with these people," says Leonard Williams, president of the Rochester Hearing Impaired Lions Club.

"That's where our club comes in. There's so much that we can do and accomplish."

A 1979 graduate of RIT's College of Business, Williams says it was at NTID that he first learned how to be a more effective deaf person.

"NTID prepared me in many ways to improve my life," he says, "and to help me improve the lives of others.



*A Lion with heart, children with courage  
Children at the Empire State Speech and Hearing  
Clinic aren't afraid of Rochester-area Lions;  
they recognize a friend when they see one.*

"I've overcome my handicap," he adds. "A program like the Lions Club can help other people overcome theirs."

A New York State patient resource agent at the Rochester Psychiatric Center, Williams joined the Northside Lions Club in 1984. There he became active in a statewide project to expand the programs and community awareness of the Empire State Speech and Hearing Clinic, a special education summer school program for handicapped children with special emphasis on speech, language, and/or hearing needs.

Impressed by Williams' work on this and other projects, Schiebel asked him to lead the organization of a new Lions Club for hearing-impaired people.

"He felt strongly that such a club could help our hearing-impaired community," says Williams, "and I did, too."

The Rochester Hearing Impaired Lions Club received its official charter on October 3, 1986, appropriately during National Deaf Awareness Week.

In establishing the club, Williams found plenty of support at his alma mater. He discovered an ally in longtime deaf community leader Earl Lake, who retired as assistant professor of Industrial Technologies at NTID last spring.

Lake joined the club, which meets twice a month, not only because he believed it would help serve the needs of deaf people, but also because he thought it would nurture a sense of autonomy.

"If we can spread the gospel of giving instead of taking," Lake says, "maybe we can breed the independence of deaf people."

*If we can spread the gospel of giving instead of taking... maybe we can breed the independence of deaf people."*



*The Lions' den Leonard Williams '79, president of the Rochester Hearing Impaired Lions Club, leads a meeting.*

The past year has been a learning experience for club members. Lake is pleased to see young people joining, learning, and becoming leaders. Members, he says, are getting used to the idea of being Lions, raising funds, working together, and growing with other Lions Clubs.

The club meets on the first and third Tuesday of every month at a local restaurant.

"It feels good to be standing on our own two feet," says Lake.

Williams also found support from hearing members such as Robert Mowers, music director at NTID. About 20 percent of Rochester Hearing Impaired Lions Club members are hearing.

"It's interesting to me," Mowers says, "that for a long time the public at large

felt they were the givers to the handicapped. It's taken them a long time to realize that handicapped people have a lot to give in return."

"I've always liked doing volunteer work and helping other people when they are in trouble," says Club Secretary Allen Rothstein. "The Rochester Hearing Impaired Lions Club offers a good opportunity for me to do what I can."

Rothstein, a 1974 NTID graduate with an associate degree in Electromechanical Technology, works for the Maintenance Engineering Manufacturing Organization, a part of Eastman Kodak Company.

Barry Kramer, a fifth-year Electromechanical Technology student, joined the club to help others and "to show that so-called handicapped people can do

the same things as hearing people, hearing organizations, or any organization, for that matter.”

During its first year, the club has raised funds for various projects, including providing money for hearing ear dog training, decoders to families who can't afford them, and a TDD coupler for a woman who didn't have a job. Members also are active with the Empire State Speech and Hearing Clinic, building with other Lions a cabin for children.

Although hearing-impaired people may and have joined primarily hearing Lions Clubs, members say there are several important reasons for having primarily hearing-impaired clubs as well.

Such a club, Mowers says, “offers another perspective on the problems and needs of the community. It's not better than being a member of a hearing club; it's just a different viewpoint.”

A common bond exists, Williams adds, and communication problems may

be solved more easily. Although communication has been a minor problem for this club, especially when meeting with other Lions Clubs, Williams believes that most of the difficulties have been resolved.

Williams conducts meetings in simultaneous communication and he or someone else will interpret between hearing and deaf members. When the Hearing Impaired Lions meet with another club, one or the other generally hires an interpreter. Nearly 60 clubs in the seven-county district hire an interpreter for district functions, such as parties, lectures, and conferences.

Perhaps the most important reason for a hearing-impaired club, Williams says, is the members' familiarity with the deaf community.

“How many hearing people,” Williams asks, “can say, ‘I know what's going on with that deaf person and I can help?’”

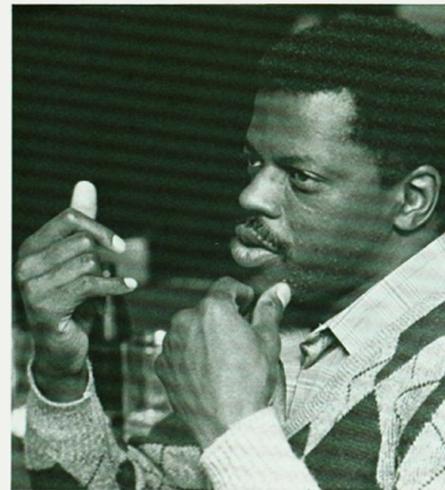
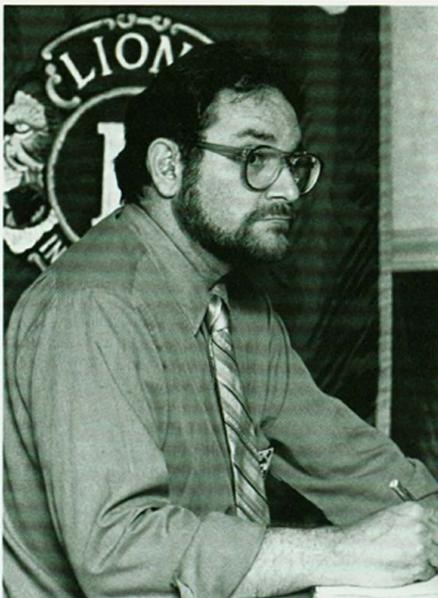
While aiding the hearing-impaired community is the focus of this group, its president says the club is committed to helping anyone in need.

“We're not in the silent world as much as people might think,” says Williams.

Club members have walked in the annual Journey for Sight, contributed to the Lions Clubs International Foundation that provides financial support in times of disaster, and participated in a nationwide program designed to educate students in grades five through eight about drug and alcohol abuse. The club also helped provide financial support for Christina Wilson, a young local girl who received a liver transplant in Chicago during the summer of 1986.

Being a Lion, Williams says, is a lot more than a twice-a-month commitment. Williams spends about four nights a week on Lions business and says he loves it.

“It's all worth it,” he says, “to see the smiles on people's faces when I've helped give them something, or when, because of my service, they receive something they wouldn't otherwise have.”



Photography by A. Sue Weister

*Tigers and Lions Several RIT Tigers are among the charter members of the club, including top, Williams; above, John Haynes '78, first vice president; and left, Allen Rothstein '74, secretary.*

# Video Preacher

Televangelism comes to the deaf community

by Vincent Dollard

**T**he Rev. Michael MacDonald has revived the colorful chautauqua-style ministry of the 19th century and flavored it with a video twist.

MacDonald, 37, travels hundreds of miles each month, in every kind of weather, to tend to his parish. His expansive ministry brings together 109 people in six cities who share two common denominators—deafness and the Lutheran faith.

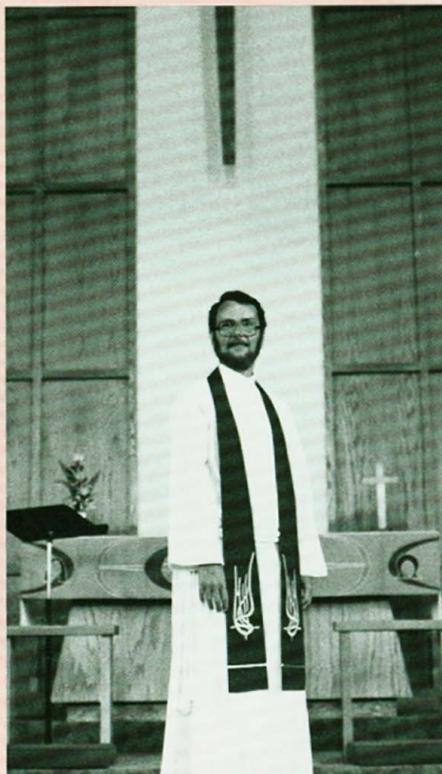
“Pastor Mike,” as he is called, often covers 300 miles of eastern Iowa in one day, visiting the deaf Lutheran congregations that make up his parish.

To compensate for the time he cannot spend with his distant parishioners, every Monday MacDonald mails a videotape of the previous Sunday service to the first of his six “preaching stations.” These parishioners, in turn, mail it to the next city and eventually, all six groups see the service, conducted by MacDonald in both sign language and voice.

“My predecessor started the videotape circulation,” says MacDonald. “We send out one tape and the people get together at their local Lutheran facility, which provides them with a videotape player if necessary.”

MacDonald has been pastor at the Word of God Lutheran Church of the Deaf in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, since July 1986, and when asked about his plans for the future, he quickly responds that he'd like to stay where he is for as long as possible.

Born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware, MacDonald graduated from RIT in May 1981 with a bachelor's degree in Social Work. He then enrolled in the Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne,



*A rare photo The Rev. Michael MacDonald never stands still for very long—his parish includes 109 people in six cities throughout eastern Iowa.*

Indiana, and during his third year, he was sent to Columbus, Ohio, for a year-long “vicarage,” during which he learned the responsibilities inherent in being a pastor. His fourth year was spent back in Fort Wayne.

MacDonald, who is the only member of his family with a hearing loss, notes that his time at RIT provided the spark that sent him on his way to the ministry.

“I grew a lot at RIT,” he says. “When I arrived, I was an introvert. I didn't know

any sign language and I'd always been with hearing people—deaf people made me uncomfortable.

“RIT not only changed my view of the world; it changed me. I made lots of friends and had a great time.”

One of those friends was Julie Bonta, an RIT graduate who now works at the Hillside Children's Center in Rochester. Bonta met MacDonald when he first arrived at RIT.

“We became fast friends,” she says, “because Mike loved to stay up all night and chat. We talked mostly about the ‘big things in life’ like theology, whether God existed, or whether He paid attention to deaf people in a different way.

“Mike had a way of bringing Christianity down to earth. He has an unusual ability to relate theology to real life, and he is a good communicator.”

Julie Cammeron, associate professor in NTID's General Education Program, remembers MacDonald as a “sensitive young man.”

“He was always the champion of the underdog,” says Cammeron, “one of those people you remember forever. He gave as much as he got.”

Cammeron says that MacDonald's caring attitude was especially noteworthy since he was grappling with his own identity problems at the time.

“He was struggling at RIT as a hard-of-hearing person—caught between the deaf and hearing worlds. Yet he continued to extend himself to others whenever he could.”

MacDonald learned more about himself during his first quarter at NTID than he did about Medical Laboratory Technology, his declared program. As a result, he changed to Social Work so that he



A "people person" MacDonald enrolled in RIT's Social Work program because he wanted to "help people."

could be in a position to do what he felt he could do best: help people.

He became a resident advisor, and while he says his was a "quiet floor," he mentions that his most enduring memories were the times that he sat down and talked with fellow students about situations that had gone awry.

"I had both deaf and hearing students on my floor. I remember some typical roommate problems, but nothing serious," he says.

The Rev. Lawrence Mothersell, professor in NTID's General Education Instruction Department, remembers MacDonald as "a remarkable student," noting that he consistently put in extra hours for a Bible study class and often prompted discussions about relationships between deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

"If I could have five students a year like him," says Mothersell, "I'd be a selfishly happy person."

While at RIT, MacDonald heard about the Rochester Alpha Lutheran Church for the Deaf and began attending services on a regular basis. Because he enjoyed the work and in part to help fulfill course requirements, MacDonald began to take an increasingly active interest in community volunteer work through the church.

"I grew up a Methodist," says MacDonald, "and after a short time at RIT, I began thinking about the ministry. A friend told me about Alpha Lutheran, and since I had never been involved in a deaf congregation, I thought I'd try it. I became good friends with the pastor, the Rev. Mark Seeger, and he gave me a lot of encouragement."

As their friendship grew, Seeger became an important figure in MacDonald's life. MacDonald credits him with providing focus and direction, teaching him about the Lutheran faith and serving as a role model for him.

MacDonald notes that it was Seeger who dispelled his image of the pastor as being "more than holy."

"I learned that a pastor is a role model for others, but still a human being," says MacDonald.

Seeger says with a laugh that, on MacDonald's ordination day at Alpha Lutheran, MacDonald quipped that the reason he became a minister was because when he first saw Seeger preach, he said to himself, "I can do better than that."

MacDonald and Laurie, a 1980 RIT graduate through NTID, met during lunch at the Hettie Shumway Dining Commons. She mentions that she was impressed by MacDonald and thought he was "a very respectable person." They married during his senior year and have a 3-year-old son, Joshua, and a 15-year-old daughter, Diane, both of whom have normal hearing.

"We don't have much time to socialize," MacDonald says. "My church duties keep me pretty busy and then I travel the distances to the other churches. But Laurie and I have joined a deaf bowling league to meet more people."

Pastor Mike contributes to the team with a 145 average and notes that his team has climbed from last place to



Family gathering While MacDonald considers his many parishioners as his "family," his immediate family gathers for a photo at his ordination. To his right is his wife Laurie, behind him is his daughter Diane, and he's holding his son Joshua. On his left is his mother Alice MacDonald and on the far right are Laurie's parents, Louis and Frances Clayman.

If MacDonald had not chosen the ministry as his profession, says Seeger, he would be working to help people in some other way since his capacity for caring is so great.

"It's not a put-on or an act," says Seeger. "A pastor needs to care and Mike truly does. He's also not afraid of difficult situations—he is not afraid to face anything."

MacDonald's wife, Laurie, concurs, pointing out that while MacDonald was attending RIT, he had doubts as to whether social work would provide enough contact with people he could help.

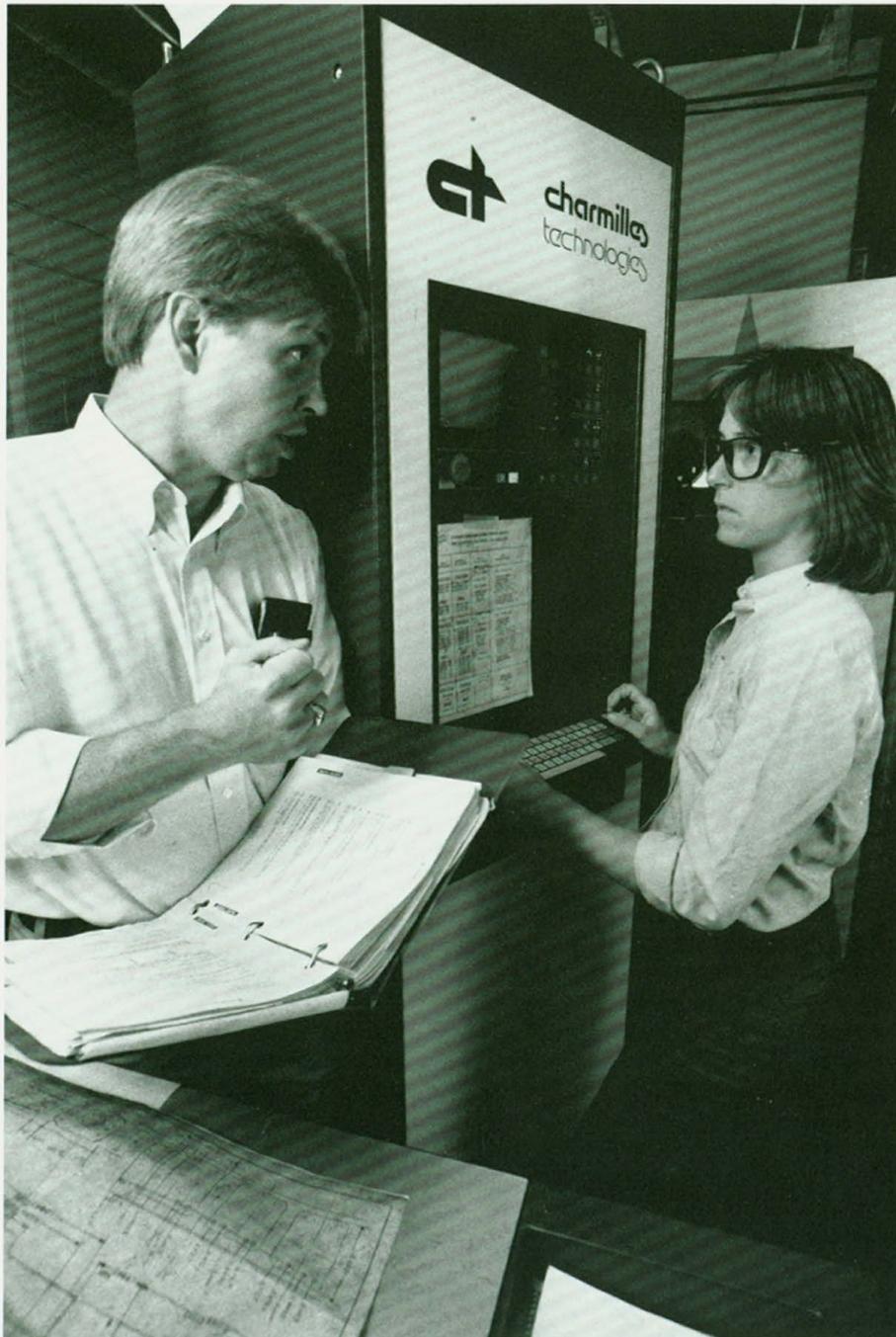
fourth out of six teams—without the help of divine intervention.

MacDonald's busy schedule doesn't mean he's too busy for innovation. He is negotiating with a local cable television channel to air the videotaped Sunday service in the Cedar Rapids area.

"We're working on making the service run a little more smoothly for the audience," he says. "If we can do everything more quickly, we'll have more time for my sermon!"

# TOOLING ALONG TOWARD SUCCESS

by Jean Ingham



Yes, that's right Judith Sargent discusses a procedure with her supervisor, James Grill.

As a young girl growing up in Burgettstown, Pennsylvania, Judith Sargent enjoyed spending time with her father, a Pittsburgh steel mill worker and part-time carpenter. At his side, she learned to wield a hammer and use a saw. "There were many times when she worked alongside me," John Sargent recalls. "She never got in my way, never smashed her finger..."

Even in high school, Sargent leaned toward activities that allowed her to work with her hands. "She took home economics and hated it," says her mother, Jean. "She also learned to type and file—but she didn't enjoy doing them, either."

It's no surprise to the Sargents, then, that their daughter chose a career that is not typical of most women—tool and diemaking.

Sargent, who received her Manufacturing Processes diploma in 1983, was the first woman to graduate from this NTID program. She may be the only deaf woman in the country to choose this profession. Since 1983, she has worked at J. G. Tool and Die, Inc. in Baltimore, Maryland.

Sargent, who was born deaf, attended the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf in Pittsburgh from pre-school through high school. It was here that she learned sign language and received some speech therapy.

When Sargent was a high school junior, her mother heard an NTID counselor speak at a PTA meeting and encouraged her daughter to apply to NTID.

Tool and diemakers set up and operate machine tools such as lathes, drill presses, and milling machines. The machines shape metal into intricate parts, following blueprints and using special instruments to measure and check work.

James Grill, president of J. G. Tool and Die, has nothing but praise for Sargent's abilities.

"Many women begin tool and diemaking studies," he says, "but only about one or two percent finish. It takes a lot of mechanical ability, which is where most women 'flunk out'—their environmental upbringing didn't include such skills. Judy's did."

After graduating from NTID, Sargent enrolled at California University in California, Pennsylvania, to earn an associate degree in Numerical Control. That goal was interrupted when she took a summer job with her present employer.

"The position required knowledge of numerical control, computer numerical control programming, blueprint read-

ing, and math," recalls Sargent. "Those were skills I had acquired at NTID."

J. G. Tool and Die designs and manufactures tools for such diverse objects as space shuttle parts, electrical fuse boxes, car engine parts, and baby bottle nipples.

Grill admits that he "had some doubts" when Sargent applied for a job. It wasn't because she was deaf; he already had two NTID graduates working for him.

"She has such a fragile look about her," he says. "I was worried that perhaps she wouldn't have the needed strength to tighten or loosen bolts."

However, any fears Grill may have had when he hired Sargent disappeared by the end of that first summer.

She performed so well that Grill hired her on a permanent basis. He also provided her the opportunity to become a tool and die apprentice by taking theory courses at a nearby college.

At J. G. Tool and Die, it takes six years to complete the requirements to become a certified journeyman. Every hour worked, even overtime, counts toward the 12,000 hours that must be earned. Sargent was fortunate that Grill credited her with 4,000 hours for her summer employment and for time spent at NTID and California University.

Last year, the company sent her to Chicago for computer-controlled WIRE Electrical Discharge Machine (EDM) training.

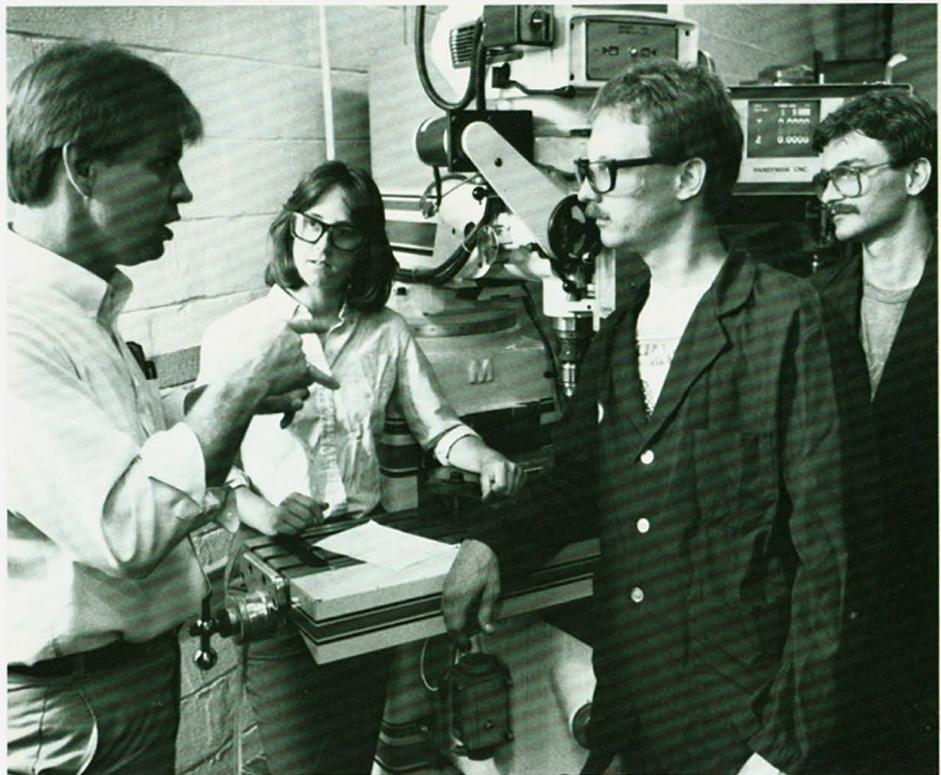
"It takes a long time to become familiar with all the tools and machines that a journeyman works with," Grill says. "Most people spend 10 years before they know their stuff and can work on just about any machine."

Watching Sargent at work is spell-binding. As she prepares a machine to cut a block of steel, she checks the water level in the machine, and makes certain that the coil of thin brass wire is free of curls and kinks. She places a piece of steel stock onto the machine's worktable and positions it where the tool will begin its cut. Then she threads the wire through the "eye" of the tool.

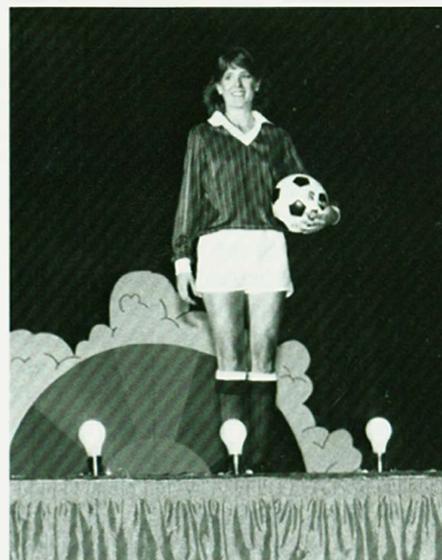
Working from a blueprint, Sargent programs the configuration to be burned into the computer. When all is ready, she pushes several buttons on a computer and sits at the machine to carefully monitor the cutting progress.

What emerges looks like a piece of a puzzle—a neatly cut piece, without any burrs, that easily slides in and out of a larger form.

But all of her time is not spent hovering over a machine. Sargent is a member of a local softball team—the "Silent



Photography by Michael Grissinger



**Rewards and challenges** Top to bottom, NTID graduates Sargent, William Szymanski, and Alan McBeth listen to Grill explain how a new machine will make their work easier; Dr. Jack Clary, director of NTID's Technical Assistance Programs, presented Sargent in 1980 with a certificate recognizing her 4.0 grade point average; and Sargent displayed her athletic form during the 1985 Miss Deaf Maryland pageant.

Orioles"—whose roster includes eight deaf members. The Orioles compete against hearing teams.

In the off season, Sargent keeps busy through membership in the NTID Alumni Chapter of Maryland and the Delta Alpha Sigma Sorority Alumnae Association.

She also is a tennis player and traveled to Europe in 1981 as part of a national deaf team.

"Although we didn't win the tournament, I was able to visit Paris, Brussels, and parts of West Germany," she says. "Perhaps someday I'll go back."

Sargent also is a writer and actress. Her credits include the role of Sarah in the Catonsville Community College production of "Children of a Lesser God" and writing skits for various fundraisers.

One skit, called "A Little Girl's Dream," parallels Sargent's life to some extent. It tells of a girl's dream of finishing high school, getting a job, and enjoying life. In the dream, the girl achieves her goals, and gets married and has children as well.

"It is my dream," Sargent admits. "I just haven't finished it yet."

# Charismatic Counselor

## Solange Skyer is Quota's Deaf Woman of the Year

It was a bright August day when Solange "Sally" Sevigny-Skyer boarded a plane at Greater Rochester's International Airport en route to the posh Greenbrier Hotel in West Virginia. There she was to be honored as the Outstanding Deaf Woman of the Year for 1987, selected by Quota International, Incorporated, an organization of executive and professional businesswomen.

This was the top rung of a ladder that Skyer, an NTID career development counselor, began climbing in 1986 when she became Quota's District 15 (Rhode Island and Massachusetts) Deaf Woman of the Year. The following spring, she reached the next rung when she was chosen Eastern Quota Deaf Woman of the Year for the entire eastern shore of the United States.

"I'm not a Quota member," says Skyer. "In 1976, they awarded me a scholarship to Gallaudet [University], and they've kept in touch with me ever since."

In 1974, one year after receiving her B.S. degree in Education from Rhode Island College, Skyer was earning \$5,000 per year as an assistant librarian in the children's section of the Woonsocket Harris Public Library in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. Although she had achieved her college degree without benefit of interpreters, tutors, or other support services, when she sought permanent, full-time work as a teacher of hearing children, Skyer came face to face with discrimination.

Born profoundly deaf as the result of a hereditary condition that also deafened her brother, Skyer was raised by hearing parents in their culture. An excellent speechreader with good oral skills, she attended mainstreamed schools, graduating seventh in a class of 220 from Central High School in Providence, Rhode Island. Indicative of the quality of her schoolwork is her membership in the Rhode Island Honor Society and her listing in *Who's Who Among American High School Students*.

Because she thought of herself as a hearing person, Skyer's sudden confrontation with discrimination came as a cruel shock. While attempting to recover from the blow, she accepted the library job and used the time to take stock of herself and her career potential.

During this time, Skyer also was accepting substitute teaching assignments with the Woonsocket Public School System and doing volunteer counseling at



*Touches of home Artwork done by her children brightens the walls of Solange Skyer's office.*

the Rhode Island School for the Deaf. She liked working with young people and considered careers in counseling, deaf education, and library science.

No matter which she might choose, she realized that she would need a master's degree. When a recruiter from Gallaudet visited the Rhode Island School for the Deaf, she confided her aspirations to him; and he told her about Gallaudet's counseling program.

Subsequently, Skyer applied to that program as well as to Smith College's program for education of the deaf. She was accepted by both and chose Gallaudet, because she was looking for "a different experience."

While working at the library, Skyer developed a warm relationship with head librarian Doris Chapdelaine, who was president of the Quota Club of Woonsocket. When Chapdelaine learned that Skyer would be attending Gallaudet, she nominated her for the Quota scholarship.

In the fall of 1976, Skyer began her Gallaudet career. With apologies to Charles Dickens, she calls those years, "The best of times and the worst of times."



*Family portrait Above, the Skyer family includes, from left, Richard, Michael, Sally, and Melissa. Right, Skyer receives the Quota International Award for Outstanding Deaf Woman of the Year from Janet Poppyach, club president.*

The worst, because, though deaf, she had grown up in the hearing world. Now, for the first time, she was plunged into the unknown sea of deaf culture. Ignorant not only of sign language, but also of deaf culture, she struggled to stay afloat. In addition, she was forced to face the reality of her own identity as a deaf person.

At first, her deaf peers rejected her, denying her deafness, and saying, "You're oral; you don't communicate the way we do."

After two weeks of such treatment Skyer ached to go home, but realizing that leaving would trap her in the very situation she'd come to escape, she decided to tough it out.

As luck would have it, she soon made friends with a freshman who needed help with her English skills. Skyer was happy to share her knowledge of English in exchange for practice in sign language. With this help and six months



*Photography by Leo Gardner*

time, she became comfortable with her new language.

Once she learned sign language and accepted her identity as a deaf person, she found a new peace with herself. Thus began "the best of times."

With her communication skills sharpened, she became "a sponge, soaking up information." She began to reach out and make friends, relishing the experience of talking late into the night, and realizing for the first time the social isolation that had encompassed her in the hearing world.

"I don't regret the hard times I had," says Skyer. "Remembering them helps me understand and relate to the students I counsel. As I talk about the problems I had, I see a new understanding on their faces. They say, 'Oh! You mean I'm not the only one!'"

Rebecca Phillips corroborates this. A candidate for a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from RIT, she previously had attended hearing schools in her hometown of Newark, Delaware. Like Skyer in her high school days, Phillips considered herself a hearing person. At NTID, she took Skyer's course, "Adjustment to Deafness."

"When I arrived at NTID, I felt awkward signing with other students," she says. "I'd lived in the hearing world for so long that I had no deaf friends and wasn't used to sign language. Once Sally taught me to accept my deafness, I felt more comfortable with my signing classmates."

"Sally told us not to be afraid to speak up and say we're deaf," says Phillips. "She said, 'You can go out into the world and do anything you want.'"

Despite Skyer's obvious success as a teacher, teaching is not her chief assignment at NTID. First and foremost, she is a personal, career, and academic counselor who handles a full caseload of Accounting students.

Sonya Dowd from Kansasville, Wisconsin, a third-year Accounting student, sought Skyer's career counseling.

"When I went on co-op," she says, "I was well prepared because Sally had given me such good advice about selecting courses."

Maria Seguban, a fourth-year Accounting student from Chicago, went to Skyer for personal and academic counseling.

"At first, I was nervous about confiding personal information to a stranger," she says, "but I could see that Sally is very strict about confidentiality—and I'm grateful for the help she gave me."

Skyer first came to NTID in 1978 as a student intern fulfilling a requirement toward her M.A. in Counseling the Hearing Impaired at Gallaudet.

She so enjoyed the environment and friends she made that, in May, while still an intern, she applied for a position as career counselor at the Institute. Despite several other job offers, she waited for the one from NTID.

During that time, she formed many valuable relationships, one of them with a young RIT biology student named Richard Skyer, whom she met in the Dining Commons. The following September Skyer was offered the job at NTID, and so began her career at the Institute.

In defining Skyer's success as a teacher and counselor, Dr. Christine Licata, assistant dean and director of NTID's School of Business Careers, says, "Sally's always been a student advocate; she interacts with students not only as a counselor, but also as a peer who's faced deafness herself."

Skyer's multifarious activities demand an almost boundless supply of energy. Lee Twyman-Arthur, chairperson of the Business Careers Counseling Program,

who's worked with Skyer for nine years, hazards a guess as to its source.

"I think the secret of Sally's energy is the confidence she gets from being 'super organized'—knowing her class material is well prepared and researched frees her to concentrate on the students. She's a dynamo in the classroom."

Dianne Brooks, former Career Opportunities advisor and now manager, Career Outreach and Enrollment Services, views Skyer from yet another perspective. "When everyone is under pressure, you can count on Sally to remain calm and collected—and her bright, personal approach makes people feel comfortable."

Perhaps Skyer is trying to live up to her real name, Solange, which means "angel of the sun" in French; or perhaps her French-speaking parents had ESP when they named her.

Her sunny disposition was one of her early attractions for Richard Skyer, who came from Illinois, where he'd been a pre-med student at the University of Illinois until he suddenly lost his hearing at the age of 20. Fearing the effects of his disability on a medical career, he transferred to RIT and the study of Biology.

The two became good friends, and in 1980, they married. Richard now is a research chemist at Kodak and they have two children: Melissa, 5, and Michael, 2½. Both children are hearing and are learning sign language as well as speech.

"It's difficult to manage marriage, children, and a career," says Skyer. "But Rick is a wonderful husband. We share child-care and the household chores—I couldn't accomplish what I do without his help."

And she accomplishes a lot. Besides teaching and counseling, she is recording secretary and newsletter editor of the Parents and Childrens Organization (a support group for deaf parents in Rochester) and co-chairperson of Deaf Women of Rochester.

To increase understanding between other deaf parents of hearing children, Skyer someday would like to write books and articles. She already has some writing experience, having published a paper, "Psycho-Social Aspects of Deafness Course as a Counseling Tool for the Hearing Impaired," which appeared in the May 1982 issue of *The American Annals of the Deaf*.

"I'd like to write articles and books about deafness, dual careers, and growing up as a deaf person," she says. "I have so much to share."

# THE MAGIC OF MIME

## Ricky Smith weaves stories in thin air



by Ann Kanter



**A**s Richard Smith steps through the glass doors of NTID's Lyndon Baines Johnson Building, he tosses an invisible rose to a woman leaving. Instantly, she understands and catches it. He then places an imaginary long-stemmed rose between the teeth of her companion, whom he has just transformed into Carmen.

Tall and lithe in his costume of snowy shirt and black vest, pants, and bow tie, Smith, a mime artist, wends his way through the halls and offices of NTID, liberally bestowing invisible flowers from a bottomless store of blossoms.

Holder of a 1975 associate degree in Applied Art from RIT through NTID, Smith also has a talent for graphic arts and photography, and from 1974-75, he earned a good living in the graphic arts department of a prestigious Rochester public relations and advertising agency. Although he felt he had a good future there, in his heart he wanted to be a mime.

That desire was born in 1964, when, as a 12-year-old at the New York World's

Fair, he saw his first white-face mime. Initially, Smith thought that, like himself, the mime was deaf. When his mother explained how mime artists communicate through acting without speech, Smith, who had long been frustrated by communication difficulties, was thrilled. He knew that he had found his calling.

A career in acting and mime, however, could not ensure a stable income, and Smith's parents encouraged him to pursue the visual arts as well. His abilities in this area are acknowledged by Dr. Thomas Raco, assistant dean/director of Visual Communication Careers, who remembers him as "a talented graphic designer with a good sense of color and design."

Smith also did well in his work at the agency, but while communication with his fellow workers was adequate for the job situation, socially, he felt isolated.



*Photography by A. Sue Weisler*

Although he is assumed to have been born with normal hearing, Smith as an infant suffered an extended illness that later was suspected of causing his deaf-

ness. Once this was discovered, his parents enrolled him at the speech school at Genesee Hospital in his hometown of Batavia, New York. Then, when he was 4, they sent him to the Rochester School for the Deaf (RSD), where he learned speechreading and fingerspelling.

Smith's parents and older sister learned some fingerspelling and, in a one-on-one situation, he usually could understand them. If there was even one more person talking, however, communication broke down. To a bright child with an inquisitive mind, this was a constant source of frustration.

At the advertising agency where Smith later worked, the personal/social communication situation became worse, and he gradually began to wonder, "Who am I? What will I become?" I had a vision of my life stretching ahead of me," he recalls, "and I saw myself always on the outside, looking in."

This was a sharp contrast to his happy, student days at NTID. At first, he had not understood sign language, because RSD, at that time, used only fingerspelling for manual communication.

Once at NTID, however, Smith learned quickly. He became friendly with nine other students, and together they set up a drama group, borrowed equipment from the Institute, and entertained their peers with skits before the traditional Friday night movie.

"In those days before captioned TV, the Friday night movies were a real social event," recalls James Orr, NTID Performing Arts outreach coordinator. "With Ricky's outgoing nature, he was always in the middle of that kind of situation—that was where he'd shine."

Later, when Smith was feeling isolated at the agency, he was well aware that he could not recreate his college days, nor did he want to. He had matured, and enjoyed his independence, but he

missed the freedom and comfort of working with people with whom he could communicate. He also longed to act.

As luck would have it, at just about the time that he was going through this stocktaking, he received a message from an NTID friend that the Chicago Theatre of the Deaf was seeking actors. Without wasting much time, Smith and Michael Lamitola, another friend from NTID, left for the Windy City.

Smith spent the next two years in Chicago, putting on non-verbal performances at area schools, then spent the next several years giving similar productions for schools and community groups in such far-flung places as Texas and Connecticut. In 1980, he was signed on by the Omaha, Nebraska, Metropolitan Arts Council. For the next five years, the council acted as his agent, booking him for performances at various schools and community organizations.

Smith's histrionic abilities are enhanced by his warm personality and ability to involve the audience in his act, which rewards him with instant rapport with children and adults of all ages.

Standing in a high school library that has become his performance area, Smith points to a young man in the audience and waves him to the front of the room. Reaching into his own pocket, he shares a conspiratorial smile with the audience as he produces an invisible key, with which he promptly locks the young man behind an invisible door. Just as quickly, because Smith's magic has worked, the young man knocks frantically on his side of the door. He wants out. Still smiling, Smith bends down, carefully slipping the key under the door. The young man retrieves it, opens the door, and walks out, to the applause of his schoolmates.

Smith explains how he creates his mime impressions. "You have to feel the force of the object you're moving and relate to it," he says. "When you push something down, for example, your shoulders rise; when you pull up, they drop. You also need to show feelings."

Ever eager to perfect his art, Smith has studied with the famous French mime artist, Marcel Marceau, in Paris, France, as well as with other master performers at the Movement Theatre International Mime and Clown Festival in Philadelphia.

In 1981, Smith bicycled across the United States to promote his work as a mime artist. Setting out from San Francisco, he traveled more than 4,000 miles to his parents' home in Batavia, sleeping in fields and behind billboards along the way. En route, he gave 79 performances



*Best stop on the tour Richard Smith's parents enjoy a visit with their son and his dog, Butterfly, shown in the special basket in which he accompanied his master on a 1981 cross-country bicycle tour.*

and 50 workshops and had seven flat tires.

Accompanying him on the tour was his dog, Butterfly, who traveled in a special basket attached to the bike. The tour attracted so much attention that Smith was invited to appear on a number of television shows, including, "Today," "Good Morning, America," and "Real People."

Smith's movements and expressions are so realistic that it's hard to realize he is not working with invisible props. To achieve this expertise, he practices several hours each day.

The practice has paid off, because when his initial contract with the Metropolitan Arts Council expired, it offered to continue his contract as artist-in-residence. He now works with several other artists, including a photographer, a painter, a puppeteer, and a dancer.



*Beauty is in the eye of the beholder Smith in the male title role of "Beauty and the Beast," as produced by the Emmy Gifford Children's Theatre in Omaha.*

Smith's engaging personality not only delights his audiences, it won him a wife. In 1981, he was performing at the Nebraska College of Business, when Elizabeth Polinski, a student in the audience, was "swept away by his charm." Because the performance was in mime, Polinski, who is hearing, did not realize that Smith was deaf.

His looks and personality captivated her; she loved the show, and afterward, she approached to tell him how much she'd enjoyed it. Suddenly, an attractive young woman appeared on the scene to serve as interpreter.

Not enjoying the role of "third party," Polinski left, pondering the possibility of learning sign language herself.

It was a year before she saw him again, and during that time, she was busy studying sign language in night school at the Metropolitan Technical Community College in Omaha. She turned out to be a star pupil—a natural at sign language.

Subsequently, Polinski transferred to the Iowa Western Community College in Council Bluffs. One day in 1982, Smith appeared there to teach a one-day workshop in American Sign Language (ASL) classifiers and movement. From then on, Polinski contrived to get hold of his schedules and show up at his various performances.

Smith could not help but notice the tall, pretty woman who kept popping up wherever he appeared. They worked together on a production of "Beauty and the Beast," got to know each other better, and began dating.

Before long, they knew they wanted to marry, but Polinski feared telling her parents, who disapproved of Smith as a marriage prospect out of concern for his ability to support a family. When, after six months, Smith finally popped the question, a lengthy discussion ensued, and Polinski's parents realized that the young people were committed to each other. On April 21, 1984, Smith and Polinski were married.

Since then, Liz's father has developed "a very special relationship" with Smith, whose own father died shortly before the wedding.

Although enough time has elapsed for the honeymoon to be over, one cannot spend much time with the Smiths without noticing their exchange of loving glances. It is obvious that Liz agrees with one of her husband's many fans who says, "Ricky Smith is a very special person."

# ENGINEERING

## A Healthy Environment

by Ann Kanter

On May 23, 1987, Cinda Lautenschlegar became the first deaf woman to receive a bachelor's degree from RIT's College of Engineering. She may be the first deaf woman in the nation to earn such a degree—one she hopes to use to improve the ecology of the United States, and perhaps, of the world.

The 24-year-old Loveland, Ohio, native was born deaf to hearing parents and attended mainstreamed schools before entering NTID. She managed to get good grades, despite the lack of tutors, notetakers, or other support services.

"Classes were almost a complete waste of time for me," she says. "Sitting up front wouldn't have helped—the teachers were always walking around the room. Because I couldn't understand, I was bored, and so I got into trouble—talking, throwing paper airplanes, reading books."

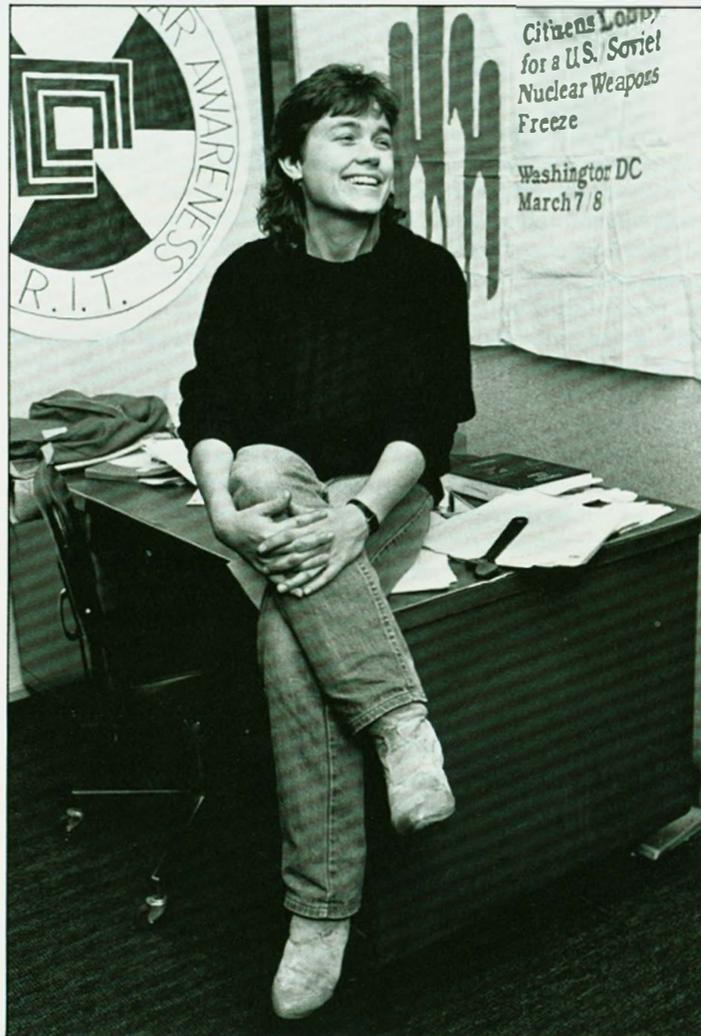
At home, Lautenschlegar made up for the time lost in class by poring over her books and drumming facts into her head. The studies paid off—her marks were all "A's" and "B's."

Despite the extra time spent studying, she also took photographs for the Lovelandhurst High School Yearbook and played on the girl's soccer team. Her athletic prowess and leadership qualities attracted such attention that by the time she reached her senior year of high school, the Soccer Association for Youth hired her to coach its 5- and 6-year-old children's teams.

When she went to seek a summer job, however, the situation she encountered was very different.

"Most people were afraid to hire me because of my deafness," she says, "but eventually I met a woman who liked me and hired me to cook in her hotel restaurant."

There, Lautenschlegar got on-the-job training in preparing such quick-order dishes as omelets and waffles. She worked from 6 a.m. until 2 or 3 in the afternoon for five to six days each week.



*In her element Cinda Lautenschlegar feels at home in the office of the RIT Community for Nuclear Awareness.*

This experience influenced her career choice by increasing her awareness of the obstacles that she, as a deaf person, would face in job hunting. Thus, although her interests are wide ranging, she took a pragmatic approach to selecting a career where her deafness would not create a problem.

Her gray eyes sparkle as she mentions her interest in medicine, ichthyology, and oceanography, as well as engineer-

ing. She calls engineering "a good field," and says, "I think it will offer me the best prospects for employment."

Unlike many students who use NTID's Summer Vestibule orientation program to test and weigh various career possibilities, Lautenschlegar knew when she arrived in August 1981 that she wanted a career in mechanical engineering.

If a student's grades are any indication of a wise career choice, Lautenschleg-

ar's would seem to corroborate her selection. Although the Mechanical Engineering program is one of the more challenging of RIT's academic curricula, Lautenschlegar attained a cumulative grade point average of 3.03 and was elected to membership in Pi Tau Sigma, the National Honorary Mechanical Engineering Society.

She was selected to receive the 1987 D. Robert Frisina Award, given each year

associate professor in the Department of Science/Engineering Support, "one cannot but intensely admire a young person, who happens to be profoundly deaf, for the strength of her convictions and the dedication to try to make a difference in her world."

Lautenschlegar's dedication was born of a sense of outrage at radioactive wastes, oil spills, and contaminated oceans.



Photography by A. Sue Weisler

*This assignment is no drag Lautenschlegar uses a testing apparatus to measure the aerodynamic drag in a wind tunnel.*

to "one or two hearing or hearing-impaired students in any college of RIT who have shown an unusual interest in and dedication to the furtherance of higher education for the deaf."

Previously, she had received the Electronic Industries Foundation's Dunlap Award, given annually to a nationally selected disabled college student.

Such rewards are the fruit of much time, energy, and dedication, and Lautenschlegar applied a similar level of commitment to her involvement in extra-curricular activities. An ardent ecologist, she was an active member of the student chapter of Greenpeace during the international environmental protection organization's one-year existence on the RIT campus, and had been a charter member of the larger organization for several years before that.

She became even more involved with the RIT Community for Nuclear Awareness, a student/faculty organization in which she served as treasurer and president. In April, she and several other student members of the organization went to Washington, D.C., to lobby for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

"Regardless of one's own political and social beliefs," says Dominic Bozzelli,

"There is such beauty in nature," she says. "That's what makes life worth living. What people have done to spoil that beauty upsets me so much!"

An expression that is a combination of incomprehension and exasperation crosses her face.

"There's too little interest in these things. There is no basis for nuclear weapons development or nuclear power."

Committed though she is to such global concerns, Lautenschlegar also made time for involvement on a personal level. For four years, she tutored fellow deaf students in the Math Learning Center and the General Education Learning Center, and eventually she was promoted to head tutor. In addition, she tutored deaf engineering students in the School of Science and Engineering Careers, and through the RIT Office of Special Services, she tutored hearing students.

"I love tutoring," she says. "Helping other hearing-impaired students understand how to apply their skills is important to me. I know the frustration they feel when they don't understand."

She also tutored hearing students, she says, because "I like people generally,

and I like the subject matter [college math, calculus, and physics]. Something drives me to help people understand."

Despite this jam-packed schedule, Lautenschlegar still found time for more leisurely activities. In 1984, she played guitar with the NTID Combo; subsequently, she performed piano solos with the Tiger Band. She also has taken harp lessons.

"When I feel unhappy, playing the piano brings me release," she says, and during her student days, she could, on occasion, be heard playing works from Beethoven in the campus music room in RIT's College-Alumni Union.

It requires a leap of the imagination to picture this caring person with music and beauty in her soul sweating in an automobile plant, but that is exactly what Lautenschlegar did on her first RIT cooperative work experience in the summer of 1983. Having just completed her second year of college, she took on the 10-week assignment at the Chevrolet Engineering Technical Center in Waring, Michigan, where she spent 10 hours a day setting up and running stress tests on 1985 Corvettes.

"It involved a lot of detail and physical work with heavy wrenches," says Lautenschlegar, whose fine-boned, 5-foot-1-inch stature adds to the incongruity of the picture.

In the fall of 1984 and summer of '85, Lautenschlegar did two separate co-ops with IBM Corporation in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. In the first, she was assigned to work as a troubleshooter in the manufacturing department.

As part of that assignment, she was flown to Alabama to work on blueprints. Why would a company the size of IBM select a co-op student for such an important project?

"I was more familiar with that project than anyone in the department," she says, matter of factly.

Now that she has graduated, Lautenschlegar is seeking work that will enable her to apply her engineering background to improving the environment. Devotion to her beliefs has put many restrictions on the jobs that she will consider.

"I'm not interested in working for the Defense Department or a defense contractor," she says. "While I realize that it will complicate my job search, I have to consider the ethics of the work I do."

# NTID research "detectives" unravel mysteries

## The Case of the Earnings Gap

by Lynne Bohlman



**I**n the tradition of Sherlock Holmes, Jessica Fletcher, and Hercule Poirot, the "detectives" in NTID's Office of Postsecondary Career Studies and Institutional Research do not always use conventional methods to uncover the facts.

In their pursuit of knowledge about potential NTID students, current students, and graduates, the researchers rely not only on numerical data provided through quantitative research, but also on explanations acquired through qualitative research.

The difference between these two kinds of inquiries, says Research Associate Dr. Susan Foster, is similar to the difference between an airplane ride and a core soil sample.

"Quantitative research, like a soaring plane, offers a broad view of the entire landscape," she says, "while qualitative research, like a soil sample, provides information about what's beneath the surface of one corner of one field."

While it is not unusual for organizations to use one or the other type of research, it is somewhat uncommon to employ both.

NTID does because "there is a need for a variety of approaches to questions being asked about deaf people," Foster says. "Each approach is necessary because each offers a different perspective."



*Graphic design Welsh uses a graph to explain a point to his colleagues.*



*Dr. Susan Foster*

Last year, the researchers collaborated with an uncommon partner in a study about deaf RIT graduates in the workforce. NTID at RIT is the first educational institution to work with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to gather information about the earnings of its graduates.

NTID's study analyzed the 1982 earnings of 1,928 deaf students who had graduated or withdrawn from NTID between 1968 and 1980. The results indicate that NTID is fulfilling its mission to reverse the chronically depressed employment conditions faced by deaf people. At least in terms of employment and earnings, it appears that NTID is training and educating students to be successful in the workplace.

"The bottom line is that NTID is doing its job," says Dr. William Welsh, research associate and originator of the IRS study. "If graduates are not getting jobs that are commensurate with their education, then NTID is not meeting its objective. Helping students qualify for good jobs is not the only important thing we do around here, but it is the reason we exist."

Welsh has been interested in the employment prospects of NTID graduates since 1978, when he took over the Alumni Feedback Questionnaire (AFQ), which is mailed to graduates each year in order to collect work-related data.

"To my knowledge," Welsh says, "this was the beginning of a systematic collection of information that allows us to track our graduates' careers. NTID became involved in this kind of research because it has a public responsibility to

“**T**he bottom line is that NTID is doing its job.”

demonstrate that it can prepare deaf students for entry into the United States workforce. Now, in the interest of marketing and accountability, other institutions also are doing this type of research.”

In 1981, however, says Welsh, he began to address questions about the AFQ's validity and reliability. Any questionnaire is limited because data are available only for those graduates who choose to respond, and since it is self-reported, it is open to possible response bias.

As a result, Welsh began searching for ways to answer these questions. Through contacts at the Social Security Administration, he was introduced to the Statistics of Income Division at the IRS, which agreed to provide earnings information as long as it could ensure taxpayers' confidentiality.

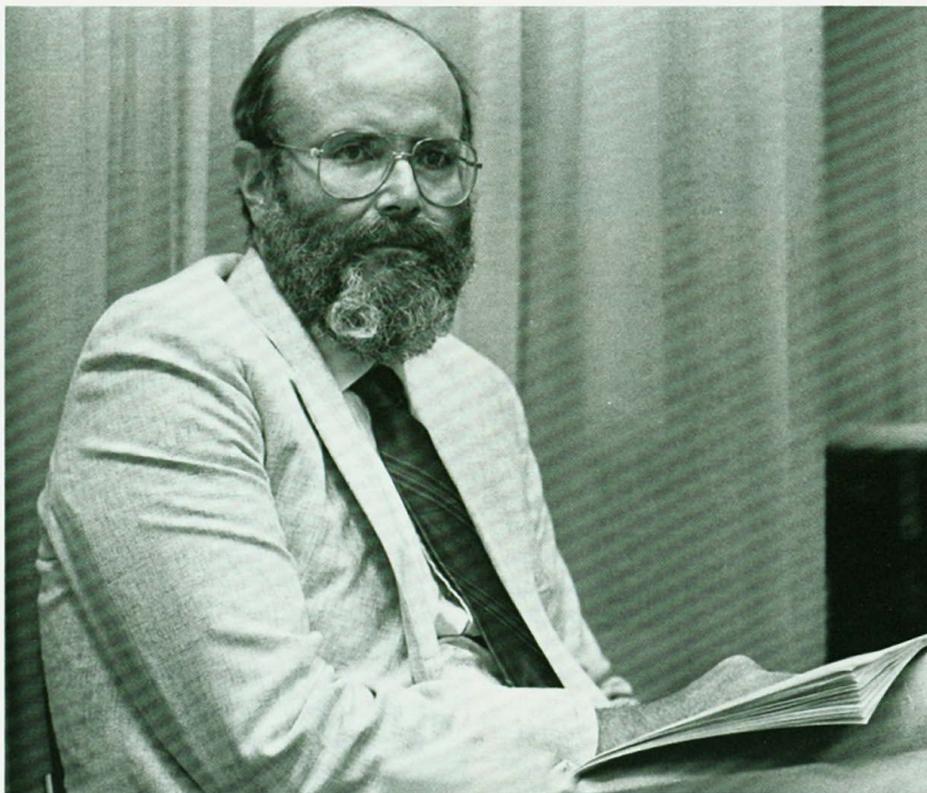
The NTID/IRS study, which is being repeated again this year, unearthed information that is encouraging to NTID students, faculty, and staff members as well as to government officials.

Welsh was pleasantly surprised to find an earnings gap of only seven percent between deaf and hearing baccalaureate degree graduates at RIT. Past studies had reported the earnings gap between deaf and hearing employees nationally at 28 percent.

While the researchers were pleased with this, he notes, at least one deaf person who witnessed Welsh's presentation of results at a faculty/staff meeting was upset by the findings and told Welsh, "They show that deaf people are still lagging behind."

Whatever the interpretation of the findings, the study clearly shows that degree level exerts a significant influence on wages and salaries. Salaries increase at nearly every degree level.

NTID graduates with certificates earn 12 percent more than those who withdraw; those who receive diplomas or associate degrees earn 25 percent more than certificate holders; and students who receive baccalaureate degrees earn



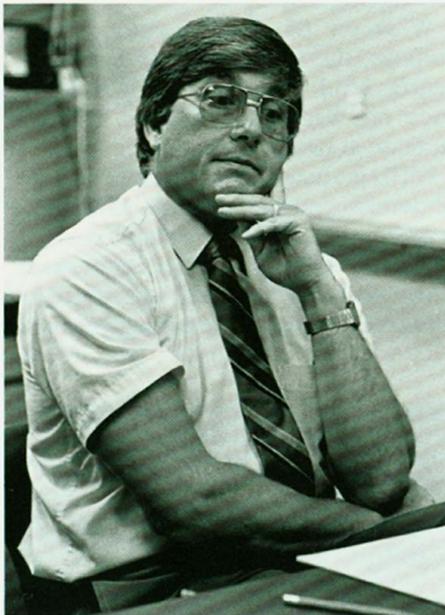
*Dr. William Welsh*

34 percent more than those with diplomas and associate degrees, and 83 percent more than those who withdraw.

Findings concerning the earnings of female NTID graduates are less positive. The female unemployment rate is nearly triple that of males, and female graduates earn only 71.5 percent as much as their male counterparts, mirroring national statistics that show women with some college education earn 73 percent as much as males.

Overall, though, NTID administrators were pleased with the findings. Government officials were interested in the data also.

The Federal Treasury invests more than \$73,000 for a single deaf student to earn a bachelor's degree from RIT through NTID; more than \$43,000 for one who earns a subbaccalaureate degree; and about \$17,000 for each withdrawal.



*Dr. Gerard Walter*

"The government, naturally, is interested in knowing how long it takes graduates to pay back the cost of their education" says Dr. Gerard Walter, associate director of the research office.

The study with the IRS helped provide the answer. It takes NTID baccalaureate degree graduates 10 years to repay the government in income, excise, and social security taxes, but in more than 40 years of employment, the federal treasury receives \$364,023 more than if it had not made the investment. Graduates with subbaccalaureate degrees repay the government in 13 years and return \$165,230 more than do non-graduates.

**I**t's possible for a deaf person to work in a room with 50 others... and feel utterly alone."



*Fine print Janet MacLeod-Gallinger and Walter discuss a paper she is preparing.*



*Janet MacLeod-Gallinger*

Although money is easy to quantify and use as a basis for comparison, and although the IRS can provide NTID with a wealth of earnings data, Walter says, "There is a danger in focusing solely on earnings of graduates to rate success and accommodation. A person has many experiences within the work environment that can be equally important."

The research being conducted by the Office of Postsecondary Career Studies and Institutional Research is responsive to that belief. Hence, research is being conducted on the quality of life for deaf people within the community and family, as well as in the workplace.

Foster's qualitative research on the employment experiences of 25 deaf RIT graduates indicates that there is still room for improvement.



*Her favorite projects Foster shares a story with her children, Brenna, 7, and Colin, 4.*

Foster discovered in interviews with these graduates that, while they generally feel comfortable about their ability to perform the job and to communicate in one-to-one situations, they find it more difficult to break into the social and cultural environments at work.

Participation in the "grapevine," the exchange of informal information that can be important to success and upward mobility in the workplace, is particularly difficult for deaf employees.

"It's possible for a deaf person to work in a room with 50 others," Foster says, "and feel utterly alone."

Foster also found that career goals of graduates are, in many cases, quite modest. Many were not interested in promotion.

"A lot of people with whom I spoke," she says, "were unwilling to risk what they already had for upward mobility."

Because they had worked hard to get where they were, because every day was still a challenge, and because they were anxious about communication, be it on the telephone or with other employees, most of those interviewed did not feel it was possible for them to become managers or supervisors.

The Office of Postsecondary Career Studies does not confine its research only to NTID students and graduates, however. Research Assistant Janet MacLeod-Gallinger is conducting an ongoing project that allows the Institute to be connected with other organizations interested in gathering information about the education of deaf individuals.

At the direction of the Conference of Educational Administrators Serving the Deaf (CEASD), NTID began managing in 1978 a follow-up survey of deaf high school graduates across the country. Each year, deaf adults who graduated one, three, five, 10, and 20 years ago from participating institutions—now, 27 schools in 21 states—are sent a questionnaire that seeks information on post-

secondary education, employment, and earnings.

One encouraging finding of this study, reports MacLeod-Gallinger, has to do with postsecondary education. Approximately 50 percent of all deaf high school graduates will have participated in some form of postsecondary education within 10 years of their graduation. In 1985, it was estimated that more than 8,000 deaf students were enrolled in colleges throughout the country; in 1945, that figure was about 200.

Each year, the completed, confidential questionnaires are forwarded to NTID for analysis. The schools then receive from the Institute individual reports on data specific to their graduates and a summary report on the graduates of all participating schools. The data base now includes more than 4,000 deaf high school graduates.

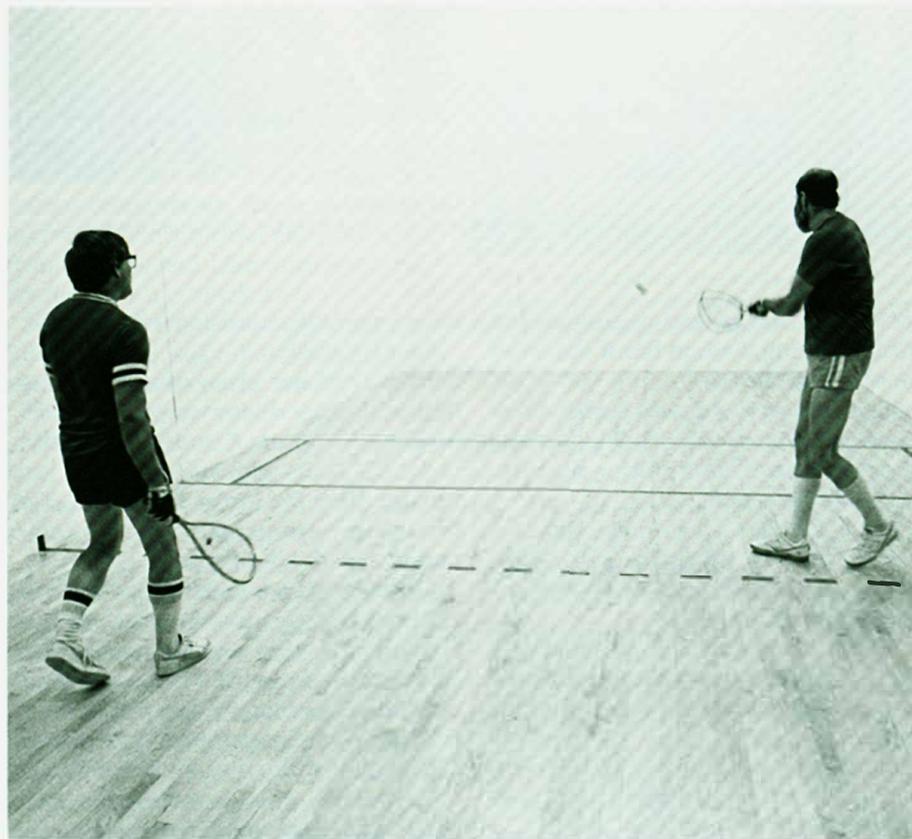
"This study," says MacLeod-Gallinger, "is the only one in the country that taps a large deaf adult audience on a regular basis, providing information about the educational, occupational, and earnings status of a national sample of deaf adults."

However important the researchers' findings appear, says Dr. Jack Clarcq, associate vice president of RIT and director of NTID's Technical Assistance Programs, their real significance lies in the impact they have on NTID as well as on national programs and policies concerning deaf people.

"The key to research is that it be responsive to and/or identify Institutional needs," says Clarcq, who administers the Office of Postsecondary Career Studies. "Then it becomes the Institution's responsibility to intervene and promote change."

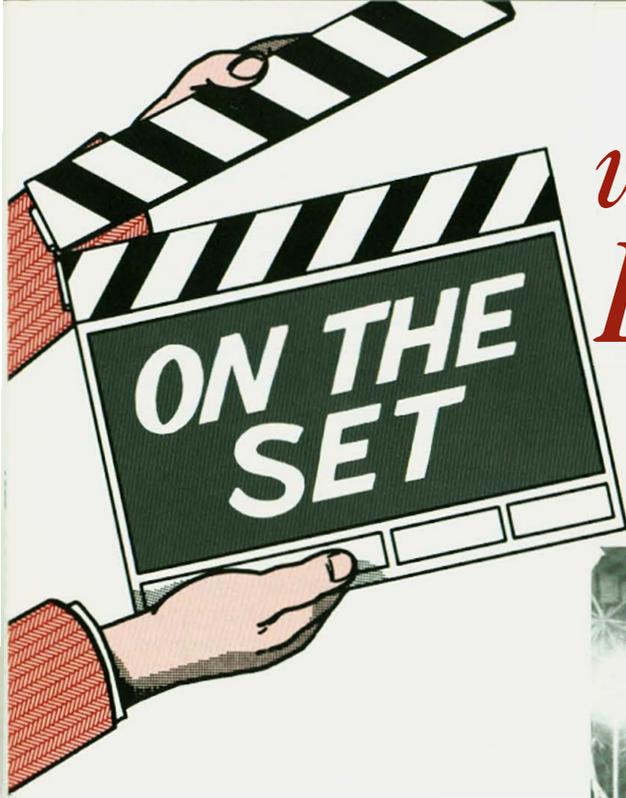
For example, in order for the research to be truly effective, NTID faculty and staff members must counsel students to attain the highest degree their abilities will allow; encourage women to consider better-paying, traditionally male-dominated career areas; offer students and employers strategies for coping with social interaction on the job; and investigate ways to improve career mobility of graduates.

"NTID was created in response to the needs of deaf people," Clarcq says. "In order to effectively fulfill our mission, the Institute must continue to respond to newly discovered needs, and it is through this kind of research that we can identify what our focus should be."



Photography by Chris Quillen

*Pounding out frustrations Walter and Welsh relax by playing racquetball at a local health club.*



# with *Lu Ann Liberatori*

by Vincent Dollard

**L**u Ann Liberatori looks at a tough situation and sees opportunity. The petite 24-year-old Philadelphia native believes in herself and her abilities and is working to share that confidence with others.

Liberatori, who graduated from NTID in 1984 with an associate degree in Medical Record Technology, has since embarked on a diverse series of adventures during which she has been both teacher and student.

In addition to her current pursuit of a bachelor of science degree in Health Records Administration from Temple University, Liberatori is co-host of a television talk show that is broadcast throughout eastern Pennsylvania. And when she is not studying for a course or a TV interview, she describes the merits of hearing ear dogs in speeches to regional groups.

"I'm working to educate people about hearing ear dogs," says Liberatori. "I tell them that I don't need my dog to guide me—I need her to alert me," she says as Suzie, her white poodle, sits comfortably in her lap.

Suzie, in fact, proved to be the starting point for Liberatori's part-time career as a television co-host.

When the Rev. Thomas Tomlinson, host of "Lend-a-Hand," a community access cable television program for hearing and deaf people, learned about Liberatori's dog, he invited Liberatori to bring Suzie on the program.

"At the time, we were looking for a co-host," says Tomlinson. "I was impressed with how well Lu Ann handled



*Focusing on details The Rev. Thomas Tomlinson (back to camera), co-host with Liberatori of the "Lend-A-Hand" television show, provides a few last-minute pointers before filming the interview.*

herself on camera, and as soon as we finished taping, I asked her if she were interested in the job."

Liberatori says she was surprised at the offer but saw it as a good opportunity to learn about the television business and communication.

While Liberatori has been involved with the show for more than a year now, she says that she still gets nervous when the camera is rolling.

"Either I mispronounce a word or I mix up my sign language. I'm camera shy but don't tell anyone," she says with a laugh.

During a recent visit to NTID, Liberatori and the "Lend-a-Hand" film crew interviewed Beth Ann Bull, the NTID student who starred in McDonald's

award-winning television commercial, "Silent Persuasion."

In spite of her claim of nervousness during the taped interviews, Liberatori handled the "Q and A" session under the bright TV lights with aplomb.

"One thing I've learned," she adds, "is that people are people—it's the communication that's different."

Liberatori is a competent communicator who is comfortable in both the hearing and deaf communities. The youngest of three girls and the only deaf member of her family, Liberatori went through Catholic grammar school and high school with no support services.

Twice each week, however, throughout her primary and secondary education, Liberatori worked with a speech

therapist, because her parents felt that speech and speechreading skills were necessary. While no one in the family learned sign language, everyone made a point of including her in conversations and encouraged her to speak up at the frequent large family gatherings.

Liberatori says that as the youngest in the family, she was probably spoiled. Her mother, however, points out that she has worked to instill, in each of her daughters, a willingness to go out into the world and "see what they could do."

"I've been to Lu Ann's speaking engagements," she says, "and I'm amazed at how she can stand up in front of such large groups and be so comfortable—I certainly wouldn't be!

"She's helping to prove that a disability doesn't have to hold a person back."

Liberatori didn't learn sign language until she came to NTID in 1981. She picked it up quickly and, not surprisingly, became active in academic and social activities around campus.

Marilyn Fowler, associate professor in NTID's Applied Science/Allied Health Department, remembers Liberatori as an active student who never "sat back" in class.

"Lou Ann is a gregarious person," says Fowler. "She was involved in medical record technology groups and campus activities. She's a well-rounded person."

"When I arrived at NTID," says Liberatori, "it was like Utopia with all the interpreters and notetakers. But I knew that was not what the real world was like, and when I got to Temple University, I had to fight for support services."

During a law course at Temple, her notetaker quit halfway through the course. When she flunked a test shortly afterward, her professor asked what the problem was and Liberatori explained her need for a notetaker.

When she tried to acquire another notetaker, she was told that the school would not continue the service.

"I was almost ready to quit the course," says Liberatori. "But then my sister, Sandi, encouraged me to stick it out and do the best I could. I did, and I scored 90 percent on the final exam."

Liberatori considers Sandi her "best friend." Sandi, a Philadelphia attorney, has been learning sign language for the past year and is gaining an interest in the legal rights of deaf people.

"I never appreciated what Lu Ann went through in the mainstreamed setting," she says. "I strongly encouraged her to attend Temple; and when I learned of the problems she was having,

I tried to help her attain the services she needed to compete. I became educated at the same time that I was trying to educate others."

Sandi says that the administration at Temple University, which is accessible to a variety of handicapped people, did not actively try to suppress Lu Ann's acquisition of support services—they simply did not understand deafness and her needs. She points out that when they were able to hire an interpreter for classes, notetaking services were refused.

speech therapist who had had such an impact on her life.

The boy now communicates well with his family and counselors.

"I'm not saying it's easy," Liberatori says. "Hearing people have to fight, too. Deaf people just have to fight a little harder."

Liberatori will graduate from Temple in 1988 and plans to seek an administrative position in a Philadelphia hospital. From there, she says she would like to pursue a master's degree in Health Administration.



*NTID Q and A* During a recent visit to NTID, Lu Ann Liberatori (left) interviewed student Beth Ann Bull about her experiences with the award-winning McDonald's commercial "Silent Persuasion," in which Bull starred.

The Liberatori sisters worked with the administration to explain the futility of trying to watch an interpreter and take notes at the same time. Temple has since changed its policy regarding interpreters and notetakers.

"My law professor told me that I am opening doors for other deaf people," says Liberatori.

Opening doors seems to come naturally to Liberatori. After working last summer at a camp for disabled youths, she befriended a young deaf boy with cerebral palsy. She discussed the boy's potential with his mother and recommended that he work with the same

She plans to continue co-hosting "Lend-a-Hand" until, as she says, "Tom gets sick and tired of me."

While opportunities for deaf people in broadcasting are difficult to come by, she hopes that her presence on the "Lend-a-Hand" show may inspire someone to pursue a career in that field.

"Who knows," she shrugs, "maybe someday we'll have a deaf Barbara Walters!"

Given Liberatori's penchant for achieving lofty goals, she just might fit the bill.



# Focused on SUCCESS

by Jean Ingham

**H**e just couldn't wait." That's how Patricia King describes the 1961 birth of her son, Mark, who received a bachelor's degree in Biomedical Photographic Communications from RIT two years ago.

It was while traveling home to Michigan after a family vacation that Mark decided it was "the right time and the right place" to be born. Only 3 pounds, 8 ounces, and six weeks early, he remained in Westmoreland (Pennsylvania) Hospital's premie nursery for five weeks.

As a baby, King was alert but didn't talk much. He also didn't always respond to spoken words. Worried, his mother questioned the family's pediatrician, who thought that since King's older sister, Sally, "did all the talking," Mark probably felt little need to speak.

After an ear infection at age 2, King's deafness finally was diagnosed.

His parents, who knew nothing about deafness at the time, describe the diagnosis as "devastating and frightening."

They contacted the John Tracy Clinic in California, which provides free onsite and worldwide correspondence services to pre-school deaf and deaf-blind children and their families.

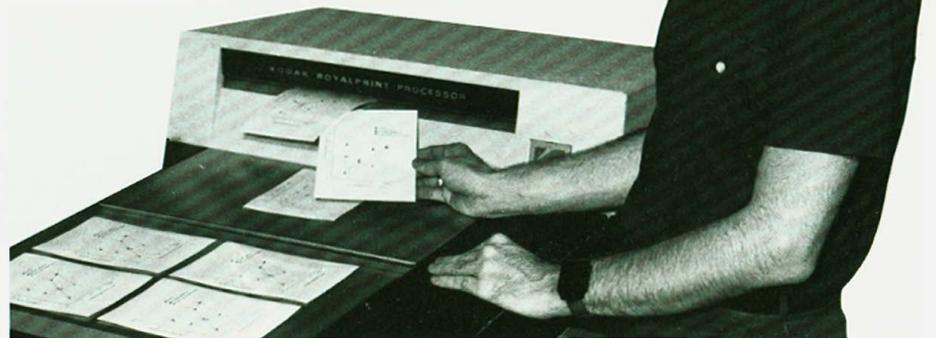
King's mother briefly used the Clinic's correspondence course, but stopped because "Mark became bored too easily."

King then briefly attended a pre-school program at Eastern Michigan University, but the 70-mile roundtrip drive twice a day proved too difficult for the family.

When he was 5 years old, his parents enrolled him at the residential Michigan School for the Deaf in Flint, which emphasizes sign language. Leaving a small child so far from home "was the hardest thing we ever had to do." After one year, wanting Mark to have more opportunities for oral communication, the Kings brought him home.

Frustrated, but determined that their son would have as normal a childhood as possible, the Kings began to look for alternatives. Mainstreamed schools were non-existent in the Brighton, Michigan, area, but Mrs. King and parents of other deaf children worked closely with the district's school board, and mainstreaming soon was introduced.

King, who always had something more important to do than get dressed for school, usually was late for the bus that took him to elementary school. To combat his tardiness, his parents devised a bribery system.



*Good show! Mark King is pleased with the results of a chart he has reproduced for a medical journal.*

"Mark was fascinated by light switches," Thomas King says, "so we told him that every time he put on an article of clothing, he could flip the switch. Shirt—flip, pants—flip, and so on. He really got dressed faster—and he caught the bus!"

King was a charmer who had a knack for "making people feel comfortable. When he walked into a room, he was the center of attention," says his father.

"I don't know what it is that I do," King laughs, "but it's still true today. My

mother says it's a significant part of my personality."

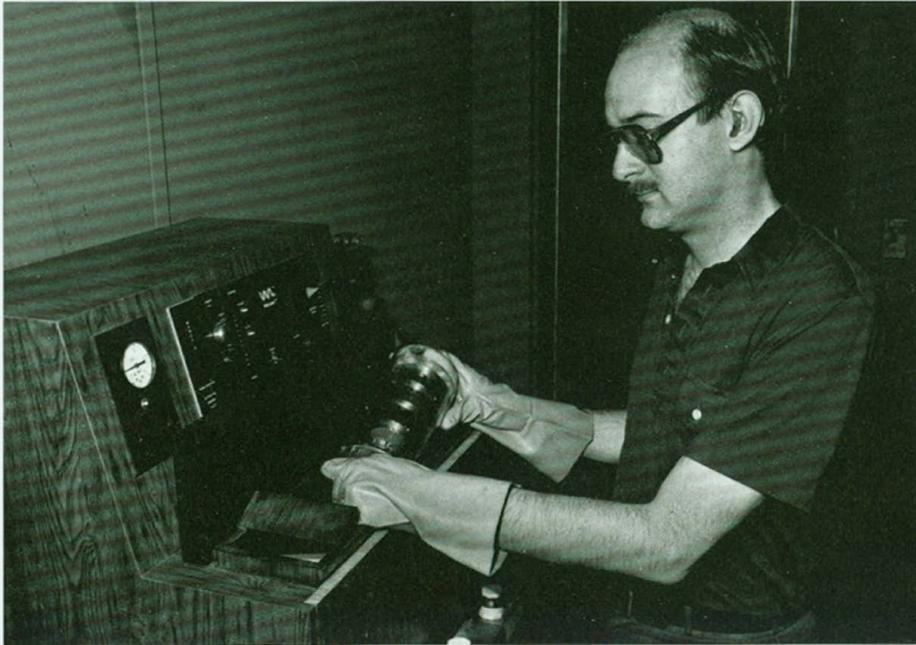
Some teachers thought that his socializing interfered with his classwork. One even sent a note home encouraging the Kings to work with their son because he was "having difficulty with addition and subtraction."

"We were quite surprised to hear this," Mrs. King recalls, "because Mark already was quite capable of doing multiplication and division. He suffered the consequences at home."

In the ninth grade, King scored highest on a preliminary test for a state mathematics competition and represented his school, placing second out of 600 students.

King's parents encouraged him to be independent, and at 14, he began a paper route.

"The first time I went collecting," King says, "my younger brother, Douglas, came along in case I had trouble communicating. But I had no problem—in fact, my tips were better than his!"



*In goes the film King places film in a processing machine.*

However, frustration set in when he applied for other jobs.

"I didn't get many interviews," King says, "because when the question 'Do you have any physical defects?' appeared on the application, I put down that I was deaf. People were afraid to hire me. They felt I couldn't communicate."

Undeterred, King took a variety of jobs, including dishwashing and lawn-mowing. But he knew he didn't want to do that sort of work all his life.

As a result, when he began high school, King suddenly did a complete "about face." He became conscientious and demonstrated that he was capable of much more than anyone realized.

Brighton teacher Peggy Butler persuaded King to apply to NTID.

"Mark was a very good student," Butler insists. "He loved to learn and was aware of what was going on around him. He benefited from his parents' willingness to allow him to cope with problems in his own way."

King decided on NTID's Applied Photography program after completing NTID's Summer Vestibule Program in 1979.

"I wasn't surprised at his program choice," his mother says. "When he was 15, he bought an instant camera, and experimented with different brands of film to see which gave the best quality. He wrote several letters to film manufacturers expressing his opinion."

After one year in NTID's Applied Photography program, Douglas Rea, a professor in RIT's College of Graphic Arts

and Photography, encouraged King to transfer to the Biomedical Photographic Communications program.

"Mark paid attention to detail," explains Rea, "and I felt he would have more opportunity for advancement through the Biomedical program."

King's cooperative work experience at Texas A & M University in College Station was the first time that he was "on his own."

As an assistant in the College of Veterinary Medicine's Audiovisual Department, King "fetched this and that from all areas of the college. But the people were marvelous—so friendly and so willing to help."

When he needed transportation to get from his apartment to work, his supervisor loaned him a bicycle—and a television set complete with a telecaptioning device as well.

Carol Johnson, King's placement advisor at NTID, remembers King as a

"dependable, very responsible young man.

"Mark didn't have everything given to him," she says. "Like many of our students, he paid his dues by scraping and scratching to get through."

Johnson helped King get his current job in the Photographic Services Department at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Penny Stoesser, then manager of the department, contacted NTID's National Center on Employment of the Deaf (NCED) at the urging of a colleague who had attended one of NCED's employer training workshops.

"Truthfully," Stoesser says, "I was apprehensive about interviewing Mark. But he put me right at ease. He is an excellent speechreader, and thanks to his parents' insistence on oral communication, we had no problems.

"We have a busy lab," Stoesser explains. "Mark's very comfortable no matter who he's dealing with, and he fits in well under any circumstances."

More than 2,200 researchers and faculty and staff members are served by the three-person Photographic Department. The full-service lab produces slides and prints and also documents procedures in doctors' offices and operating rooms.

King enjoys his many projects, which have included a slide/videotape lecture series for the University of Illinois' College of Engineering, "before and after" photographs of plastic surgery patients, and illustrations for publication.

But King knows that variety is the "spice of life." He is a board member of the Chicagoland Advocates for Signed Theatre (CAST), a 150-member, non-profit organization established to help promote signed theater performances in the Chicago area. He reveals that his interest in the theater was piqued at NTID, where he appeared in "The Threepenny Opera," and "A Piece of Grease."

King also is active in the NTID Alumni Chapter of Illinois. He feels that this is his way of repaying his college education.

"NTID made my life more complete," he says. "It opened my eyes to my own potential. I learned who I am and what I can do in life.... I treasure my memories of it."



# *Carl Gustafson is "Ichiban!"*

## **CO-OP, JAPANESE STYLE**



by Lynne Bohlman

*A colorful test Carl Gustafson, a Medical Laboratory Technology student, and Associate Professor Beverly Price discuss what various colors mean in a laboratory test.*

**D**ressed in a black and orange Baltimore Orioles jacket, fourth-year student Robert Carl Gustafson professes admiration for other Washington-area teams as well—the Redskins, Bullets, and Capitals. He is in awe, though, of a different kind of team—the team of people making up the Japanese work force.

One of the first NTID students to perform his cooperative clinical experience in a foreign country, Gustafson, a

Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) student, trained for 12 weeks during the summer of 1986 at the U.S. Air Force Hospital in Yokota, Japan.

Both American and Japanese personnel made him feel comfortable, Gustafson says, as if he were a family member. Employees in Rochester-area hospitals where he has worked have seemed to him more individualistic.

"In Japan," he says, "they work more like a team and they're very successful."

The spirit and teamwork displayed by the Japanese workers are reflected in Gustafson's interaction with his fellow students. He is a member of Delta Sigma Phi fraternity and has served as legal and organizational affairs director for the NTID Student Congress (NSC).

In pursuing these activities, Gustafson has relied on his experiences with different cultures. His father is a major general in the U.S. Marines, and the fam-

ily has lived in England and Japan, as well as in several places in the United States.

"He's ready to apply those foreign experiences to this environment," says Thomas Holcomb, Student Life developmental educational specialist and NSC advisor, "and because of that he will make a good leader.

"I believe that from his experiences at NTID, Carl will become one of the major figures in the deaf community," the NSC advisor adds. "He has that kind of drive."

What Holcomb describes as "drive," Beverly Price, associate professor of Applied Science/Allied Health and Gustafson's co-op advisor, describes as "stick-to-itiveness."

"Carl has the attitude that 'This is interesting,'" she says. "He won't let things go by."

When this hard-working student first approached Price with his desire to do his co-op in Japan, she was somewhat disappointed, but undaunted.

Price had arranged for Gustafson to be the first NTID co-op student at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. She also had looked into a position for him in Honolulu when she learned that his father was to be transferred from Hawaii back to Japan. Gustafson had completed his senior year of high school in Japan, had enjoyed living there, and wished to join his family for the summer.

Price says, "I'm not the kind of person to say, 'What? You can't do that; we've never done that before.' So, I said 'Mmmmm, that sounds interesting.'"

Gustafson is different from many NTID students, Price notes, because he has traveled so widely and is therefore not frightened by the unfamiliar.

"He's not afraid of working in a different culture," she says. "More of our students need to realize that if you want a certain kind of job with a certain level of pay, you've got to be willing to go where the job is, and that may not be in your backyard."

The seven-member Gustafson family, of which this wavy blond is the youngest and the only deaf member, has had backyards in Carlisle, Pennsylvania; Honolulu, Hawaii; Washington, D.C.; Bedford, England; Monterey, California; Camp Butler, Okinawa; Havelock, North Carolina; and Tokyo, Japan.

When the family first moved from North Carolina to Japan during Gustafson's senior year in high school, he found the differences between the two countries "crazy and confusing," but he quickly came to appreciate the cleanli-



Photography by A. Sue Weisler

*A loyal fan Despite a tough season, the Baltimore Orioles remain one of Gustafson's favorite teams.*

ness and safety of the Japanese cities, and the friendliness of the people.

Three years later, during which time the family left Japan and came back again, Gustafson was excited to be working in the 200-bed American military hospital in Yokota, a suburb of Tokyo.

While most of the patients and about half of the personnel at Yokota Hospital were American, many of the employees were Japanese, and like many people who work in a foreign country, Gustafson was nervous about communication.

One day, his fears were comically realized. A Japanese man brought to the hospital a bottle of sheep's blood, which is used in some laboratory tests. He handed the bottle to Gustafson and bowed. Each time Gustafson tried to determine if the man had a contract with the hospital, the man would bow. Each time the man bowed, Gustafson, out of respect, had to return his bow. *Question. Bow. Bow. Question. Bow. Bow. Question. Bow. Bow. Bow.* The frustrated Gustafson and the persistent, but respectful, Japanese man finally got things straightened out through a Japanese-English interpreter.

Although Gustafson is among the first NTID students to participate in a co-op

abroad, he likely will not be the last, especially considering the Institute's interest in eventually recruiting foreign students.

To those future students who decide to work abroad, Gustafson strongly suggests that they learn all they can about their host country's culture and laws.

For example, he says, in Japan it would be important to know that persons caught drinking and driving are arrested, even if they have had only one beer.

The MLT co-op program in which Gustafson participated required that he work in several departments, including blood bank, clinical chemistry, coagulation, hematology, histology, microbiology, phlebotomy, serology, and urinalysis.

In a critique of Gustafson's performance, his supervisor in the histology laboratory writes: "Carl's aptitude in the histology department was outstanding. I was impressed with his ability and knowledge in the field ... he seems to be highly motivated. His awareness and interest in the laboratory field should make him an excellent technician."

His clinical chemistry supervisor found that he "demonstrates a willingness to learn and help wherever and whenever needed. [He] continually expresses a caring attitude that will enhance his career in the medical profession."

"I like working with doctors and helping them solve problems by providing them with answers," Gustafson says.

He completed his MLT requirements last year, and is now completing other courses necessary to receive his associate degree. It may not be in the laboratory that you find this ambitious student in the future, however. Gustafson also is interested in obtaining a second degree, perhaps in computer science or political science.

Whatever his future career, Gustafson is not particular about where he works.

"It doesn't matter to me where I get a job," he says. "I have traveled a lot and I'd like to continue traveling, but my eventual goal is to find one place where I want to live the rest of my life."

Maybe, Gustafson says, he'll return to Japan for awhile or perhaps he'll settle in Washington D.C. Either way, he'll be near his favorite teams.

# FOCUS On...

# Jeffrey Porter

by Louise Hutchison



As the lights dim and the music rises, the audience gathered for the annual holiday show in the NTID Theatre eagerly awaits the arrival of "Santa's elves." Laughter and applause greet the elves as they prance onstage, dressed in red long johns and tutus. One in particular is easily identified by the curly, blond hair under his red cap. That elf, in one of his more dramatic roles, is Dr. Jeffrey Porter, assistant dean and director of the Division of General Education.

On a more typical afternoon, Porter can be found, dressed in more traditional academic garb, in his Peterson Hall office. His desk is covered with papers, and a small picture of a family cabin in the hills of West Virginia hangs facing him as he works. The large office window affords a view of NTID's courtyard, an area usually busy with students signing, talking, laughing, and playing out the social dynamics of college life. The view seems appropriate for one whose position centers on the personal,

intellectual, and social growth of students.

As assistant dean, Porter is responsible for a diverse group of departments, including Human Development, Liberal Arts, Performing Arts, and Support Service Education. He also works closely with RIT's Division of Student Affairs and College of Liberal Arts.

As he talks about his role, Porter leans back in his chair, looking relaxed and comfortable. Known for his sense of humor, he often accompanies his comments with a smile, his eyes sparkling with interest and curiosity.

Glancing at the piles of paper covering every horizontal surface in his office, Porter admits that "The paperwork reality is part of the position." The more important part, he says, is the opportunity to work with faculty and staff members to implement student programs.

"I enjoy working with people throughout this environment in taking on new challenges," says Porter. "Part of my role is being supportive of other people in their jobs; another is working with them to provide direction."

Eleanor Rosenfield, chairperson of the Department of Human Development, has worked with Porter since his arrival at NTID seven years ago. She speaks highly of his managerial skills and says, "Jeff really creates an environment in which people can get their work done in a healthy way."

Porter is thoughtful and articulate when discussing the intriguing concept of general education within a technical institute. He admits that the challenge of directing such a program is "the best part of the job. I'm fascinated by the ripe, creative tensions that I sense—they invite the best thinking of whole groups of people, in terms of how they develop programs and educational experiences."

Porter's style and concerns are reminiscent of the idealism of the 1960s. His interest in student growth and development is characterized by expressions like "self-awareness," "self-growth," and "collective consciousness."

He affectionately recalls the '60s as an era of "warm, fuzzy feelings that hovered, but often didn't touch the ground." He finds satisfaction in using his current position to bring those "fuzzy" feelings to the ground—and to feel that he has "helped make a difference."

Porter reflects that he "fell into" the field of special education, leading to his interest in deafness. His father worked for AT&T, and he and his family lived in

many areas of the country. After graduating from high school in Berwyn, Pennsylvania, outside of Philadelphia, he attended the University of Virginia (UVA). After changing his major from psychology to special education, Porter went on to receive both his bachelor's and master's degrees from UVA.

After receiving the latter degree, he gained valuable experience through teaching in programs for mentally retarded, visually impaired, and multiply handicapped students at the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind.

Because he wanted to explore teaching and learning processes beyond the classification system of special education, Porter entered the educational psychology program at Washington University in St. Louis, where, in 1979, he received his doctorate.

While the years in St. Louis provided an opportunity to immerse himself in a research environment, Porter felt the need for practical work experience. After completing his doctoral program, he became director of psychological services at the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind, where he gained an applied perspective by working with students and teachers on a daily basis. During this time, he began to learn about deafness.

When Porter came to NTID in 1980, as chairperson of the Human Development Department, he found the Institute to be "an exciting place." He still feels that way. "It doesn't seem like seven years," he says. "It still seems fresh to me in many ways."

During his six years in that position, Porter was responsible for programs in the Physical Education and Athletics, Psychological Services, and Student Life departments. In August 1986, he assumed his current role.

For Porter, one important way to make a difference at NTID is by working to ensure that General Education "continues to make sense as it gets 'lived out' in real-life settings beyond RIT." He emphasizes that a major objective of the program is to enable students to apply the skills and attitudes that they learn at NTID to the workplace and community beyond the Institute.

"When we talk about helping students develop personal/social and cultural skills," says Porter, "we need to do it in a way that provides some payoff for them in that first real-world experience. The better we understand the realities of the workplace and community life for our graduates, the more we know about how they can use what they've learned here."

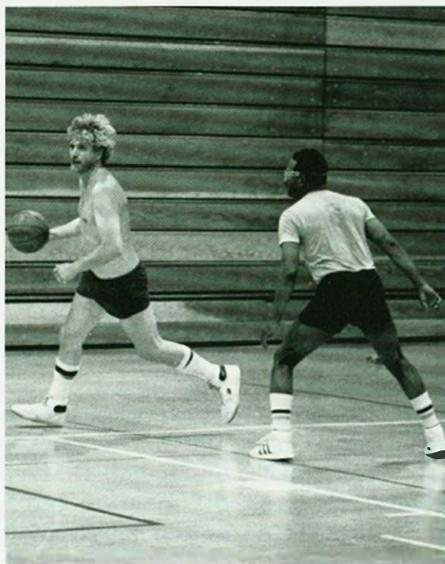
Toward that end, Porter hopes to find ways to involve General Education faculty members in on-site visits to companies that have hired NTID graduates and incorporate the feedback into divisional programming. "There is a growing feeling throughout NTID that general education is a shared responsibility," he says, "and I've felt over the last several years a real willingness to approach it in a collective way."

Porter speaks positively about being part of a larger educational community, and working with people in other RIT colleges to capitalize on the strengths that deaf students bring to the other schools.

"An important part of General Education," he says, "is reaching out and establishing alliances."

"Jeff has done a lot to bring people on this campus closer together," agrees Rosenfield.

Yet this assistant dean is realistic about the nature of change. "I think persistence is an important value—to believe in something and keep after it,



*Holding Court Assistant Dean Jeffrey Porter shoots hoops with the "Noontime Warriors."*

even when it's difficult and immediate success is not forthcoming. Lifelong achievement strikes me as being largely a matter of persistence."

In addition to his administrative duties, Porter likes to keep in touch with students. He has been an advisor to student clubs and organizations, and teaches sections of "Dimensions of College Life," a course that introduces entering students to the issues of college life; and "Life After College," which prepares students to enter the workplace and community beyond NTID. He views teaching as a way of "keeping the

vision alive. If you don't find ways of doing that, you're missing the boat."

Porter's commitment to students' best interests is praised by his co-workers.

"Jeff is terrific to work with," says colleague Dr. Ronald Kelly, assistant dean and director of the Communication Division, "and he's been active in making NTID a better environment for students, both academically and socially."

Those who walk past the RIT gym during the lunch hour might see a different side of Porter, who regularly plays basketball as a member of the "Noontime Warriors." Though he has played since high school, Porter wryly comments on his athletic prowess, "I like to play around on the basketball court, hopefully without hurting myself or others."

Porter exercises his creative abilities as a member of "Global Perspectives," a social group composed of "interested NTID colleagues."

Fellow "Globalite" Frederic Hamil, chairperson of the Applied Science/Allied Health Department, explains one of the group's traditions: "When a member reaches a 'zero' birthday, like 40 or 50, he is presented with a 'living testimony' to commemorate the occasion." Past testimonies have included a bleating lamb, a 40-lb. turkey, and plastic flamingos mounted in a concrete-filled bathtub.

Though, at age 38, Porter hasn't yet received his own special gift, Hamil maintains that Porter "definitely is a contributing member" of the group.

At home, Porter enjoys spending time with his wife, Mary Jo, and sons James, 17, Everett, 14, and Glenn, 5. They attend Little League games and school activities, and take what he laughingly calls "epic family vacations." He describes their recent summer vacation, a three-week sojourn up the West Coast, as "the stuff of a Chevy Chase movie."

Friends and colleagues describe him as intelligent and quick-witted—always ready with a clever comeback.

"I really enjoy humor," Porter says with a smile, "because it brings a perspective to things that makes them more palatable. It reminds us that, in the end, nothing is all that serious, in terms of life and death. It's good to take things seriously, but not too seriously."

## Institute Announces Panara Scholarship Fund



Photography by A. Steve Wenzler

*We were here when... Professor Emeritus Robert Panara and Dr. Ross Stuckless, director of Integrative Research, share memories of NTID's early days during an October celebration in honor of Panara.*

The Robert F. Panara Scholarship Fund, named in honor of Professor Emeritus Robert Panara, was announced at a special Institute celebration October 6. In recognizing Panara, NTID's first faculty member and the first deaf instructor at RIT, Dr. William Castle, director of NTID, said, "He is a man whose daily endeavors reflect an untiring sense of dedication and a seemingly limitless imagination. It is a fitting tribute that we honor him by the establishment of a scholarship fund in his name."

Panara's poetry, prose, and dramatic adaptations have reached assorted audiences, spanned many years, and dealt with a multitude of topics. He was the first recipient of the Teagarden Award for Creative Poetry, and recipient of the Humanitarian Award in Theatre of the Deaf from Gallaudet University. He also is the co-author of two books, *The Silent Muse* and *Great Deaf Americans*.

Panara came to NTID in the summer of 1967 from Gallaudet, where he taught English, language, and literature. A native of New York City, he received a bachelor of arts degree in English from Gallaudet, taught at the New York School for the Deaf, and studied at New York University, where he was awarded his M.A. degree in English. He has continued his scholarly pursuits toward a doctorate through the Catholic University of America.

A retired professor of English and drama at NTID and a pioneer in the development of the National Theatre of the Deaf, Panara was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Gallaudet University and an honorary Doctor of Public Service from MacMurray College in Illinois.

## Memorial Scholarship Fund Established

An endowed scholarship fund has been established at NTID in memory of Lucille Ritter Jennings, widow of Rochester attorney John Arthur Jennings. When she died in 1985, Mrs. Jennings bequeathed more than \$100,000 to the Institute. The scholarship fund will be used annually to help deaf students enrolled in programs at NTID.

"This fund is the Institute's special tribute to the Jennings family and particularly Mrs. Jennings," says Dr. William Castle, director of NTID. "It is a tribute not only to the outstanding interest that both Lucille and John Arthur Jennings had in this area's deaf community, but also to NTID and the Jennings' confidence in the education it provides for deaf students."

## Fulbright Grant Awarded

John Albertini, associate professor, has been awarded a Fulbright grant, for one year, to investigate the acquisition of German by deaf students and the effect of journal writing on language skills.

## Conferences Hosted

The first national conference on Student Development for the Hearing Impaired was hosted jointly by NTID and

the Model Secondary School for the Deaf in June. More than 100 educators from the United States and Canada participated in workshops and discussions on better methods of teaching independent living, motivation, and interpersonal skills.

For four days in July, Deaf Artists of America (DAA), a non-profit organization formed in 1985 by NTID alumnus Thomas Willard '84, held its first conference at NTID. Workshops and presentations included such topics as art therapy, book design, commercial photography, computer graphics, and job hunting.

In August, members of the national organization, Children of Deaf Adults (CODA), gathered at NTID to share their experiences. The conference was chaired by James Stangarone, associate professor and English teacher.

## National Poetry Conference

Three days of celebration of American Sign Language (ASL) poetry were held at NTID in September. Artists Peter Cook, Patrick Graybill, Ella MacLentz, Debbie Rennie, and Clayton Valli conducted performances designed to illustrate current explorations in the new "American Visual Poetry."



*Empathetic audience Participants at the recent CODA conference gather around Lou Ann Walker, author of the book "A Loss for Words: The Story of Deafness in a Family."*



*Dear Friends of NTID,*

*We at RIT are unsurprised, but delighted nonetheless, at the results of the landmark study jointly conducted by RIT and the Internal Revenue Service. That study clearly indicates that RIT is making a tangible positive difference in the lives of our deaf students.*

*Other stories in this issue deal with some of the ways we go about making this difference, whether it be by fortifying students' English skills or ensuring that they receive a broad general education in addition to technological expertise. Thus we fulfill our commitment, proffered equally to deaf and hearing students, to prepare them for "earning a living and living a life."*

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "M. R. Rose". The signature is fluid and cursive.

*M. Richard Rose  
President*



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

*Mime Richard Smith in action, p. 16*



*Photography by A. Sue Weisler*