

NTID

FOCUS

SUMMER 1987

*From the portfolio
of Robert Gurecki '82... p. 15*

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Pomp and Circumstance Just before the 1987 NTID Academic Awards Ceremony, Linda Gibbs adjusts the mortarboard of daughter Karen, who graduated with an A.A.S. in Applied Accounting. (Photograph by A. Sue Weisler)

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Kudos and Memories



With this issue of *NTID Focus*, we find ourselves with the pleasant task of describing the accomplishments of our students, graduates, and faculty members; lauding those companies whose hiring practices have made a difference in the lives of our students; and remembering a very special visitor to the Institute.

That visitor was actress Marlee Matlin, whose performance in the film *Children of a Lesser God* netted her this year's Academy Award for Best Actress. Matlin spent a day at NTID visiting old friends and making new ones.

Another story is about the most recent person to come to NTID under the auspices of IBM's Faculty Loan program. NTID has been the beneficiary of this program in the past; this time, in a delightful turn of events, the executive lent to the Institute to work with students is a 1980 graduate, Patrick Murray.

One thinks of most of NTID's graduates as being deaf persons, but there is a group of hearing students receiving degrees from NTID each year as well, of whom we are equally proud. These are the graduates of our Educational Interpreting Program, and this issue contains a story about one of them, Karen O'Connor '83.

While faculty members spend most of their time in the classroom, many of them devote part of their energies to research. Given the nature of NTID, it is not surprising that a number of those have chosen to study some aspect of

sign language. In a second story related to research at NTID, you will meet the team responsible for managing NTID's Speech Analysis Laboratory, and find out about a few of the interesting discoveries they have made.

Another team is described in a story about NTID's In-House Co-op, which joined forces with the Eastman Kodak Company and the Boy Scouts of America in an unprecedented cooperative venture. The co-op students, under the direction of Kodak employee Robert Green '75, produced a booklet for the Boy Scouts.

Finally, we close this issue with three stories related to outstanding graduates.

Paul Tomiyasu '87 left his home and family in far-off Hawaii at the age of 35 to begin his academic career at NTID; his high degree of motivation garnered him a slew of awards and a permanent job in Hawaii following his graduation in May.

Another highly motivated graduate, Robert Gurecki '82, has carved out a career for himself in the sophisticated and competitive world of news wire photography.

Sharron Metevier '83 has just been promoted to the job of senior programmer in NTID's Systems Development and Operations Department.

Thank you for sharing in our pleasure.

William E. Castle

Dr. William E. Castle



Marlee

ACADEMY AWARD WINNER VISITS NTID

by Emily Andreano

Three years ago she was just another teenager, living an unremarkable life in the comfortable Chicago suburb of Northbrook. She's 21 now—"legal," as she puts it—and has moved out of her parents' house, although she still goes home for celebrations and Jewish holidays. Even today, she could blend easily with the packs of Valley Girls who cluster at

shopping malls, and admits that shopping is indeed one of her favorite pastimes. ("I love clothes.")

One of these days, in fact, she would like to get together with her friend, Liz Tannebaum, and open a clothing boutique. They would call it, appropriately enough, "Best Friends."

But right now she's a little busy.

Marlee Matlin was catapulted into fame by her selection, after an extensive search, to play the lead role in the film version of *Children of a Lesser God*, Mark Medoff's 1980 Tonyaward-winning play. Matlin's performance drew critical raves, prompting *Time* magazine to observe, "a new young actress glows," and *Newsweek* to call her "brilliant, funny—and deaf."

Time's Richard Schickel wrote of "a beautiful young woman and an actress of awesome gifts.... she has an unusual talent for concentrating her emotions—and her audience's—in her signing. But there is something more here, a fierce but not distancing wit, that the movies, with their famous ability to photograph thought, discover in very few performances. *Children of a Lesser God*... cannot transcend the banalities of the play. But Matlin does. She is, one might say, a miracle worker."

Jack Kroll, of *Newsweek*, judged her performance "so good that she is likely to be the first deaf actress to get an Oscar nomination."

Kroll's guess proved correct; in fact, Matlin won the Oscar for Best Actress. Additionally, she captured the Golden Globe Award in the same category.

The review also included a tip of the cap to NTID Visiting Performing Arts Instructor Howie Seago, as one of a number of deaf actors for whom "this is a breakthrough time." Kroll termed Seago's work in the title role of Peter Sellers' production of Sophocles' *Ajax*, "astonishing."

It was through Seago's friendship with her that Matlin became NTID's most recent "Special Speaker," taking part in a lecture series aimed at broadening the scope of students' interests and understanding by offering them the chance to meet and ask questions of someone in whom they have a lively curiosity.

Matlin did not need to coax the inquisitiveness from her audience. Most concentrated their queries on the film, asking when it was made (August–November 1985) or what her work schedule was like (six days a week, 10–14 hours a day). But a few ventured inquiries about her highly publicized

...an actress
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and her audience's—
in her signing."



No wallflower Matlin, flanked by interpreter Jack Jason, readily fields questions from the NTID audience.

offscreen romance with co-star William Hurt, about which she was understandably reluctant to answer questions.

When asked why she moved from Chicago to New York (Hurt's home), for example, she tossed her striking mane of chestnut curls defiantly and with a small stamp of her foot answered, "Because I WANTED to, okay?"

She is the first to admit to a touch of hotheadedness. "I gave my parents," she says, "a very hard time when I was growing up."

Her father Donald is a used-car dealer, and her mother works in a jewelry store. She has two brothers: Eric, 33, a stockbroker; and Marc, 30, a loan officer for an automobile dealership.

Matlin was born hearing. Her invented first name was derived from a great aunt, who bore the Yiddish name of Malka.

When she was 18 months old, her parents took her on a plane trip to visit relatives in California, despite the fact that she had developed severe roseola and was running a high fever at the time. Soon afterward, an audiologist diagnosed her deafness.

Her mother put her on stage at age 8, with the Children's Theater of the Deaf, an arm of the Center on Deafness in Des Plaines, Illinois, where actor Henry Winkler saw her perform during her eight years with the group. But as she outgrew the troupe, her interest in acting languished, and she entered William Rainey Harper Junior College in Palatine, Illinois, intent on studying criminal law. ("My dad and I watched a lot of cop shows.")

After she had spent three semesters there, local auditions were announced for a touring company of *Children*. A friend, remembering the acting she had done as a child, asked her if she wasn't going to try out. She resisted at first, but her friend's persistence won out, happily for her, for it was at the first performance of this production, in which Matlin played the secondary role of Lydia, that she was spotted by a talent agent. The agent was embarked on an international search that included hearing and deaf actresses to find someone suitable to play the lead role of Sarah Norman. After the performance, the agent videotaped each of the performers individually.

Shortly thereafter, an astonished Matlin received a call from Paramount Pictures, asking if they might have a tape of her in the role of Sarah. Director Randa Haines, who won an Emmy Award for her 1984 television movie *Something about Amelia*, later flew her twice to Los Angeles for in-person auditions, and the part was hers.

People magazine, which dubbed Matlin "the hot new actress of the moment," quoted Haines as saying, "The...chemistry between Marlee and Bill was there from the first screen test." Haines reportedly was pleased by this development, feeling that it enhanced the film and bolstered Matlin's confidence.

"Now," said Haines, "instead of acting with a movie star, she was making her screen debut with her best friend."

Matlin does not appear nonplussed by the tumultuous events of her recent past, although she admits that when she won the coveted role her parents were as nervous as she. To heighten the ten-

sion, their lives slowly began to change.

"People we hadn't heard from in years were calling us," she says. "Some friends started treating me differently."

But the end result was worth the momentary anxiety, for Matlin reveals that when she first watched the movie with her parents, "my mother held my hand and my father cried." Her relationship with her family has improved in general since the making of the picture, she says, exclaiming that both brothers have invested in TDDs in order to stay in touch.

"But
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but not distancing
wit..."

Jason, a New York University graduate student in educational television whom Hurt hired to act as Matlin's personal interpreter. Jason captured the plum assignment by dint of an impeccable reference, the actress and comedienne Whoopi Goldberg.

He worked for an off-Broadway theatrical interpreting agency called "Hands On," and through this agency was selected to interpret Goldberg's one-woman Broadway show. The two happen to hail from the same hometown—Berkeley, California—and thus struck up a friendship.

Matlin brought Jason with her to NTID, introducing him to her audience as "a good guy—someone I can trust, and so can you."

Through Jason, Matlin reiterated what seems to be the party line from those involved in making the movie regarding the controversy surrounding the film's deviation from the original script. In the play, when the lead characters argue and separate, the future of their relationship is left in doubt. At the end of the picture, they reconcile.

"The movie," insists Matlin, "just clarifies the ending of the play."

She also told her audience about the film she just made in Nicaragua, a historical drama called *Walker* that is set in the 1850s and will star Ed Harris. The title character's girlfriend happened to be deaf, so Matlin landed the role.

The fledgling actress' newfound stardom does not seem to have turned her head, although she does admit to a certain impatience when people "go on and on about how much they liked me in the movie when I'm in a store and just want to buy something and get out."

Perhaps a more characteristic story is one she tells on herself when she was seated aboard an airplane. Across the aisle from her was a passenger reading the copy of *People* in which she was featured.

"I wanted to lean across to him and say, 'Hi, it's me,'" she gestures with a wave of her hand, "but I didn't."



VIP tour Matlin was treated to a tour of the Institute by NTID Director William Castle. As she sees Dr. Castle's words being interpreted by Jason, her fascination with the college is apparent.

Dragging hungrily on cigarettes before and after her onstage presentation, Matlin appeared as charmed and fascinated by her first visit to NTID as the students did with her. She gaped at the array of equipment displayed in various laboratories, pausing to chat with starstruck students at each point in her brief tour.

The cigarettes are a holdover from the role of Sarah. She had to learn to smoke for the part and has not quit, perhaps in service to the notion that it will control her weight, although her physical attributes seem in little danger.

At lunch with a group of student and faculty members, for example, she did

more smoking than eating or drinking, regaling guests with tales of her evening at the 1985 Academy Awards with Hurt, where he was given the Best Actor Oscar for his performance in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*.

"We saw Elizabeth Taylor leaving the reception after the ceremony. She is so beautiful," reports a saucer-eyed Matlin. "We couldn't resist this chance to meet her and went running after her; she was very nice, and even told Bill how much she enjoyed his performance." The couple also met actor George Hamilton. ("What a tan! His face is *black*!")

Sharing in the excitement of Matlin's recent good fortunes is interpreter Jack

STILL at the HEAD of the CLASS



"Patrick is teaching, tutoring, and serving as an academic advisor," says Orlando. "His presence here has a positive impact on our faculty members, but I think his impact on the students is greater. Here's someone who has faced everything these students will face—and he's made it at one of the most prestigious companies in the world."

Patrick Murray gets a second education at RIT

by Vincent Dollard

Patrick Murray is working on borrowed time. Thanks to IBM's Faculty Loan Program, NTID was able to "borrow" Murray, a senior associate programmer for manufacturing and cost estimating systems at IBM in Boca Raton, Florida, for the 1986-87 academic year.

Murray, 30, is a 1980 graduate of RIT's Computer Science program. The only deaf person in his family, he boasts of 11 older siblings and a fondness for warmer climes. The Louisiana native says that, having spent five years at RIT, he knew what to expect from Rochester weather.

Without any prior teaching experience, Murray is earning his wings at NTID, teaching data processing, COBOL, and on-line processing and programming to deaf RIT students.

Dr. Christine Licata, assistant dean and director of NTID's School of Business Careers, says that Murray is learning fast. She notes that much of his success can be attributed to his "rapport with students."

"We're lucky to get someone like Pat," agrees Robert Berl, chairperson of NTID's Data Processing Department. "He brings us a fresh perspective—as any new faculty member will—and he's a great role model."

Berl says Murray's co-workers have nicknamed him "Champagne," because of his bubbly enthusiasm.

Richard Orlando, chairperson of NTID's Business/Computer Science Support Department, says that Murray brings more than technological expertise to NTID.

Murray relishes the responsibility entailed in being a role model. He points out that he can offer students insight into the employment picture that they might not get from their co-op experiences.

"I know both worlds," Murray says, referring to his deafness and his professional experience. "Students can look at me and realize that they can achieve their dreams. I'm proud to represent a company as outstanding as IBM, and I'm proud to represent deaf people in the working world."

Murray's educational experience began at Chinchuba School for the Deaf, just outside of New Orleans. From there he went to Ridgewood Preparatory School, also in New Orleans, where he spent four years in high school without support services.

"Ridgewood was a small school where everybody knew each other," he says, mentioning that while he was comfortable there and played the clarinet in the school band, maintaining solid grades without support services was a struggle.

"I remember during graduation ceremonies," he says, "the principal stopped when he got to my name and presented

a brief background about me and then I got a standing ovation.

"Later, my mother asked me why I thought I'd received the ovation. I thought it was because I was deaf, but she told me it was because I had accomplished a great deal at that school."

Mrs. Murray says that even as a toddler, her youngest was "a pretty smart little fellow.

"When he was 4 years old," she says, "he had been boarding at Chinchuba, but he never liked to go back after vacations. His brother, Bill, was driving him back to school one time and Patrick, sitting in the back seat, caught a policeman's attention by waving and making signs like he'd been kidnapped, then pointing to Bill. Needless to say, his brother was not very happy when he was pulled over.



Exploring the world of data processing Michael Flynn, a second-year student, finds Patrick Murray a valuable source of information.

"Patrick's father was with IBM all his life," says Rathé. "His older brother also works with IBM, and I think a child tends to think about his family's career path."

After one quarter at NTID, Murray transferred to RIT's Computer Science program. He attacked his studies with seemingly inherent motivation, which he now displays in his role as a teacher and advisor.

Murray's motivation blends with his concern, and he extends himself by getting involved with students and the RIT community. Licata points out that having Murray on campus is like having "a window to the business community."

That availability is at the heart of IBM's Faculty Loan Program, which matches IBM employees with educational institutions serving minority and disadvantaged students. Murray is one of more



Experience plus a caring attitude Murray uses his knowledge and experience to carefully explain data processing techniques to his students.

employees who have expressed interest in the program and whose skills match the needs of the school.

"We essentially play a matchmaking role," says Burke. "We look for employees whose particular skill will fit into a certain educational situation."

A second program, the IBM Social Service Leave Program, also began in 1971, and has allowed more than 900 employees to serve full time on the staffs of non-profit, community-based organizations with salary and benefits paid by IBM.

Murray says with a laugh that the biggest difference between IBM and NTID is that, "I don't have to wear a tie every day." He also mentions the difference in his daily routine.

"I can set up my own time and be flexible with my schedule," he says.



The happy family Murray, his wife Donya, and their hearing ear dog, Buddy, recently added son Julian Patrick to their number.

"He was never very handicapped," notes Mrs. Murray. "And he's always been a loving, caring person with a happy disposition."

After high school, Murray was introduced to NTID by Gustave Rathé, retired director of Education at IBM and a member of NTID's first National Advisory Group. Rathé and the Murray family maintain an old friendship bred from a close working relationship between Rathé and Murray's father.

"When Patrick was young," says Rathé, "I noted that he had better than average speech that I felt should be maximized. At NTID, he could move into programs that didn't require extensive special services."

Rathé also points out that Murray had a natural interest in computers that he felt could be nurtured at NTID.

than 100 IBM employees nationwide who this year have been "loaned" to schools to teach, conduct seminars, or work with administrators.

James Burke, information representative for IBM, says that most IBM employees who participate in the program serve as teachers or counselors to students.

"The Faculty Loan Program," says Burke, "is designed to increase the participation of disadvantaged students in their own education."

IBM has loaned more than 700 employees since the program began in 1971. Murray is the third faculty loan person to be assigned to NTID. Typical teaching assignments are in engineering, computer science, and business administration. IBM pays participants full salary and benefits, and provides relocation assistance.

Requests usually are initiated by the educational institution and are filled by

His wife Donya, a Texas native who, prior to coming to RIT, had never seen more than a light dusting of snow, says, "We're happy here, and this is a good experience for both of us—but it's too cold to do much outside."

Donya is taking advantage of Murray's academic venture by taking data processing courses at NTID. She points out that they spend what little free time they have shopping "at different baby stores," since they had their first child, Julian Patrick, in February.

Murray looks to the future and hopes that it holds, among other dreams for his family, a teaching position within IBM.

"I have to admit that the barrier between hearing people and me is communication," he says. "But it is still possible."



Karen O'Connor is



SCALING MUSICAL HEIGHTS

by Jean Ingham

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How does one choose between two loves—singing and interpreting? Karen O'Connor's solution was to marry them.

O'Connor's singing career began when she was 4 years old. She sang in a family band called "Five Hits and a Miss" composed of herself and her five brothers. But the band broke up when O'Connor was in fourth grade, and everyone went their separate ways.

They still have musical interests, but today only O'Connor and her brother, Kevin, still perform, as a duo called "Karevin."

How then, does one talented musician become an accomplished interpreter? Why would she take such a path?

O'Connor's mother, Diane, says, "Karen's interest in sign language began when she was about 10 years old. Safeway Markets were using grocery sacks with the manual alphabet printed on them. Karen easily picked up the hand-shapes and became quite adept."

O'Connor says her interest in working with handicapped people dates from the sixth grade, when she played with a boy who had muscular dystrophy.

While attending Salida High School in her hometown of Salida, Colorado, O'Connor watched an interpreter sign a song and "fell in love. I knew then that someday I'd be doing that."

After high school, she attended Colorado State University and enrolled in sign language classes. Because she enjoyed the classes so much, she began looking for information on becoming an interpreter.

O'Connor also fell in love with and married a deaf man, Richard Luse (they have since divorced). Together they came, "as a result of my quest for the best interpreting program," to NTID in 1982.

"I learned a great deal at NTID," O'Connor says with a smile. "Not only is the program excellent, but mingling with deaf students definitely accelerates the learning process. I enjoyed the school, the people, being a part of their world, and having them accept me."

Linda Siple, assistant professor for Support Service Education at NTID, remembers O'Connor as an "interest-



All the world's her stage Whether accompanying herself on the piano...

ing, fun-loving woman whose favorite expression was 'mercy.'

"I was impressed with Karen's ease with sign language," Siple says. "She was very committed and possessed a natural ability."

"Our interpreting program is intensive and stressful," Siple continues, "but Karen always found the light at the end of the tunnel. She was a very optimistic person, the bright light in class."

"When Karen arrived at NTID," says Associate Professor Joseph Avery, "she already possessed the basic skills. She also had the necessary enthusiasm and drive. I remember her as a vivacious young lady whose beautiful singing voice had a touching emotional edge."

The "emotional edge" referred to is a natural talent that O'Connor continued to develop while attending NTID. Robert Mowers, a music teacher in the Performing Arts Department, encouraged her to continue her studies because he saw her potential.

"She often sang with the Tiger Band," he continues, "when we performed for hearing organizations or at a sporting event. She is a gal with lots of talent."

While at NTID, O'Connor worked both as a student interpreter and as an interpreter for the City of Rochester. Encouraged by her professors, she received her Comprehensive Skills Certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf before graduating from NTID in 1984.

Returning to Denver, where she now resides, she began working for the Red Rock Community College of Aurora, Colorado, the Denver Center on Deafness, and the Community College of Denver.

Karen King, interpreter scheduler for the Denver Center on Deafness, says, "Karen is a charming young lady who can interpret any situation. She does quite a bit of legal, medical, and courtroom interpreting for the Center's clients."

At Red Rock Community College, O'Connor interprets for a wide assortment of classes—"English, algebra, history, carpentry... anything they'll let me, I interpret," she says happily. "I generally interpret about 20 hours a week, which is normal for most interpreters. Too many hours of interpreting can damage an interpreter's wrists."

"Interpreting is not an easy job," she continues. "But anyone who has the patience and enthusiasm can do it."

Her other love continues to be a lucrative "second job." O'Connor and her brother have been singing in the Colorado area for about three years. Her parents encourage her and O'Connor says, "Mother's enthusiasm and pride sometimes embarrass me. But my mother is the person who dreamed of me combining my two loves—interpreting and singing. And she was right...it does work!"

One evening, O'Connor's brother told her about a conversation he had with a deaf friend during a break in their performance.

"Kevin asked him if he was enjoying the music," O'Connor says. "His answer—'There's no need for music in my world. It means nothing to me'—prompted me to sign my next number."

"It changed his musical viewpoint," O'Connor gloats. "Now he often calls to find out where I'll be singing."

O'Connor's father was the one who encouraged her to submit an audio-cassette tape to the Nashville Network's "You Can Be a Star" contestant search. From the more than 2,000 tapes received, O'Connor's was one of 144 chosen to compete for a spot on the show. She went to Nashville, was videotaped, and returned to Denver to wait.

Two long weeks later, she learned that she was a semifinalist. Back she went to Nashville to be taped live for a show that would air nationally August 15, 1986.

As O'Connor stood nervously in the wings, awaiting her cue, she thought, "I'm not ready for this. Why did I ever let my father talk me into this? Videotaping is difficult, but now I'm going live in front of the cameras...millions of people will be watching me."

But as she stepped onto the stage and the music began, O'Connor was every inch a professional. Her fingers flew as



...or interpreting, Karen O'Connor is a seasoned pro.

she signed and sang, "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face."

The three country-western judges were a bit bewildered at first—they had never seen a singer use sign language. They soon realized, however, that O'Connor was a special performer. Their votes, plus those of the audience judges, made O'Connor a finalist for the following night.

She did not win that night, but neither did she feel defeated.

"I looked over the field the first night and realized my chances were slim," she explains. "I was flabbergasted that I even made it to the finals."

She feels that one reason she didn't win is because most of the finalists were true country singers, which O'Connor insists she is not.

"I'm more soft rock," she says. "Also, many of the singers performed original work. I didn't, although I've done composing. Perhaps if I had, I'd have placed higher."

"But it was a good experience and I'm glad I did it. Since then, I've entered other contests. In the Colorado Composer Classic, I won fifth place for the best original song out of 460 entries. I placed sixth in another, for vocalists, which was very encouraging."

O'Connor's singing career has blossomed and this summer she will spend four months performing at an exclusive health club, The Snowmass Club, outside of Aspen, Colorado.

Although music seems to be taking prominence in her everyday life, O'Connor "will never give up interpreting; it is an important part of my life."



Aventures in Linguistics

Sign language research at NTID

by Emily Andreano

There is no one communication mode espoused by NTID. The Institute's diverse population has entailed an "eclectic" approach: students are assisted in communicating by whichever manner they choose, and teachers gear their communication methods to the needs of their students.

Consequently, a great variety of communication styles is seen on campus. Many of them are studied by Institute researchers, with the expectation that such study ultimately will benefit students.

One of the most commonly used communication methods among the students is some form of sign language. Hence, the number of NTID faculty members whose research relates to some aspect of using, teaching, or understanding sign language is great, and the diversity of topics they explore is even greater.

In the words of Sign Communication Department Chairperson William Newell, "NTID's research is applied and instructional in nature. We have taken research and test instruments and applied them directly—this fits right in with NTID's mission, which is to be primarily an instructional Institute. Our projects represent the application of theoretical information to a practical problem."

In keeping with this philosophy, much of the research is conducted by persons whose primary responsibility is teaching. Dr. Betsy McDonald is one of these. An interest in languages drew her to study American Sign Language (ASL) while a graduate student at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Since McDonald's parents are deaf, she had seen this language throughout her childhood, but had never fully understood it, as her parents chose to communicate orally with her. As a linguistics student, McDonald already had explored the nuances of French, Russian, and Swahili.

"In my classes I heard definitions of what constitutes a language," she says. "I would ask the teacher, 'What about sign language?' 'That's not a separate language,' I was told. 'It's related to English.'

I remember thinking, 'That's not true in my experience.' It also troubled me that ASL often was described as unique. I felt that such a notion ultimately would work to the detriment of deaf people."

Searching for a language akin to ASL, McDonald elected to compare it to the Navajo language as the subject of her doctoral dissertation. Her study revealed a surprising number of similarities.

Although she came to NTID in 1975 as an instructor in English, and is now an assistant professor, McDonald's interest in ASL is unflagging. Her use of ASL in the classroom is twofold. She often lectures in ASL to promote understanding of her explanations. In addition, she translates particularly difficult English syntax into comparable ASL syntax.

In the time that she has been at NTID, McDonald has continued researching what she calls the "nuts and bolts" of the language—the rules for predicting what a sign will look like, ways to create new ones, and when certain handshapes can be used.

Her study of ASL has been as gratifying as it is edifying.

"It feels good to be able to carry on a real conversation with my parents," says McDonald. "I also hope I'm making some contribution to deaf people's lives."

While she is not engaged currently in any formal research effort, McDonald is collecting data on the growth of ASL reception in hearing basic signers. She does this at several points in their course

The data she has collected thus far have shown this method to be useful in evaluating student progress and identifying the source of common errors of misinterpretation. Her reasons for collecting the data are, however, more far-reaching than simply to develop a classroom teaching tool.

"I am constantly searching for ways to improve my sign language instruction," she explains. "In addition, however, I hope to show that, if information on the grammar is provided, it is possible to develop fluent ASL reception."

Her research has yielded other hypotheses on the teaching of ASL as well—for example, that ASL reception should be taught before expression.

"Children can understand ASL for years before they have the musculature to be able to reproduce it," she says.

McDonald's views are shared by Sign Communication Instructor Geoffrey Poor, who conducts his "Basic I" sign communication classes with an eye toward "the natural approach," a second-language teaching method based on the belief that reception precedes expression in learning any language. Thus, for the first four weeks of the eight-week course, Poor does not require his students to express themselves in sign language.

"When expression does emerge," he says, "it is allowed to do so at its own pace. Thus I do not expect immediate

incorporate some grammatical features of sign not present in spoken grammatical English, such as the use of facial expression, and spatialization, and directionality."

Confronted by the oft-leveled criticism that ASL can't "keep up" with the complexity of the English language, McDonald counters that while it may appear so to the unskilled signer, written languages merely have more "dense syntactic structures" than unwritten ones such as ASL. She admits, in addition, that there may not yet be a sign for each technological term that is creeping into common usage, but that "language usually rises to the challenges," ASL being no exception.

She would love, in fact, to do a word-coining study, exploring the various ways in which new words come into the language, whether it be "loan signs" (fingerspelling from English or initialized signs), predicate classifiers (families of verbs), or restructuring (adding to the uses for a particular sign or modifying it slightly to signify a related word, such as the difference between the signs for "school" and "college").

"Does the way a sign is coined depend on what it's needed for?" she muses. "For example, if it's needed for a technical field, does it tend to be an initialized or fingerspelled loan sign? If it arises within the deaf community alone, such as a description that's only useful in deaf culture, is it coined differently?"

Meanwhile, she keeps at the daily business of fueling her students with the English skills they need to compete in a world unforgiving of disability.

"My hope," she says, "is that someday deaf RIT students will be able to enjoy an education that gives them deaf cultural identity as well as the English skills needed for socio-economic mobility. In other words, I hope that they will enjoy

of instruction by showing them a videotape depicting fluent ASL signers. She then records their comments, noting the difference in comments among skill levels and in the students' individual progress.

full-sentence answers and will accept a one-word response. That's the way people do it in any environment where there is a new language to learn—they spend some time taking it in before they start producing it."

Poor cites as another reason his desire to give students a chance to "notice and

ASL





'Nuts and bolts' Dr. Betsy McDonald admits that she's happiest in the classroom.

a true bilingual, bicultural experience."

This she sees as a goal that can be realized in the not-too-distant future.

"Others have told me that they see this happening at NTID as soon as 1990, which I find tremendously reassuring. This is a very special place; we just need to get even better at what we're doing. Then deaf students will not have to make a choice—to sacrifice a deaf identity for the sake of getting ahead, or to feel that being deaf is incompatible with being successful. There will be growing numbers of socially mobile deaf professionals, because of the efforts of NTID."

Dr. Susan Fischer, communication research associate, can see the results of her work in the classroom, for much of her sign language research over the past 15 years has been applied to NTID's sign language instruction curricula.

She and Visiting Sign Communication Specialist Keith Cagle have compared the differences between the way hearing and deaf people use facial expression when communicating in ASL. Currently, she is studying the language's grammatical structure. As is the case with all of her research, this study will be applied in the instruction of students, faculty and staff members, and interpreters. She also is writing a monograph and editing a volume of conference proceedings devoted to the subject.

Earlier, she worked on a study commissioned by Bell Laboratories, in an effort to discover whether sign language, rather than TDD messages, could be transmitted over regular telephone lines. To explore the question of how limited a channel can be used to transmit sign language, Fischer, in concert with another researcher, filmed a person signing while wearing gloves. Attached to the gloves were a series of dots; only the dots were visible on videotape. Fischer found that the dots alone were sufficient to be understandable, i.e., people are able to make the leap from the dots to the mental images of the signs.

"The human mind," she comments, "is amazing."

Although she has been conducting research for many years, Fischer finds sign language such a constant source of fascination that she has schooled linguistics students in field methods at Linguistic Society of America summer institutes, and has taught the linguistic structure of sign language to NTID interpreters.

"I'm still learning along with my graduate students," she confesses.



Fascinated Dr. Susan Fischer is as interested in sign language research today as when she began 15 years ago.

McDonald and Fischer are not the only people at NTID to take an interest in American Sign Language. In fact, the curiosity of one person, Margaret Daiss, a media specialist in NTID's Department of Instructional Design and Evaluation, led to the establishment of a lecture series focusing on the subject.

Last year, she teamed with Fischer and a former staff member to create the first series. Daiss, Fischer, and Cagle planned this year's.

She explains her reasons for initiating the series: "I kept wondering about the

connection between imagery and language. We have people here who are doing research into ASL, and people who are illustrating materials for the classroom. I thought we could make a connection between the two."

The series consists of four lectures. Last year's were delivered by McDonald, Fischer, and Drs. Judy Shepard-Kegl and Ted Supalla, faculty members at Princeton University and the University of Illinois, respectively.

It is geared (as last year's poster advertising the event put it) to "educators, linguists, curriculum designers, cognitive psychologists, artists and designers of deaf education materials, interpreters, sociologists, and students."

Lectures explore a variety of topics. Fischer spoke on "Showing Cause in ASL: Non-Manual Contributions to Syntax"; Supalla reported on "Recent Developments in ASL Research"; Shepard-Kegl presented "Characteristics of Literary Narrative in ASL"; and McDonald shared her doctoral research, speaking on "Characteristics of ASL Predicates: Shape in ASL Production and Perception."

This year's series covered an equally broad spectrum. Leading it off was "Images of Language," delivered by Dr. Carol Padden, assistant professor of Communication at the University of California at San Diego. In March, Professor Scott Liddell of Gallaudet University reported on an ASL notation system he developed. The April lecture was delivered by Cagle, who spoke on the role of facial expression in ASL. Finally, University of Rochester doctoral student Patricia DeCaro addressed the role of ASL in deaf culture.

The series now is co-sponsored by NTID's Divisions of Communication Programs and Instructional Design and Technical Services. Padden's lecture also was sponsored by the Student Life Team of the Department of Human Development, as she was a featured speaker in its Deaf Culture Speaker Series as well. The purpose of that series, according to Chairperson Eleanor Rosenfield, is "to allow the general NTID student population to gain an appreciation for this language."

Two of the four speakers delivered their lectures in spoken English and ASL, for the benefit of deaf staff members who prefer not to use an interpreter. For those wishing interpreters, each English lecture was supported by a signed English interpreter. During the ASL lectures, a voice interpreter was available

“Just as we often say that language is a window on the mind, sign language in turn provides a window to language itself.”



Hooked on video Sign Communication Department Chairperson William Newell shows off the newest wrinkle in sign language instruction, the video disk.

through a “loop” system for deaf people who wear hearing aids equipped with a telecoil that picks up the signal. Hearing people were able to request earphones through which they received voiced interpreting via a wireless transmitter.

“It was an experiment,” explains Fischer, “for hearing people who understand ASL and wished to devote their full attention to it. It’s the first time that we’ve tried it at NTID, although it was done at conferences on ASL and interpreter training last year. I think it will be the wave of the future.”

The series attracted scores of positive evaluations from last year’s attendees, in response to whom this year’s innovative system for interpreting was developed. Fischer shares their enthusiasm.

“Just as we often say that language is a window on the mind,” she remarks, “sign language in turn provides a window to language itself.”

Other sign language research not focusing on ASL also has been conducted at the Institute.

Newell, along with Dr. Frank Caccamise, professor and senior research associate in the Communication Research Department, has overseen the develop-

ment of the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI), a test that now is used not only at NTID, but also by schools for deaf students and vocational rehabilitation agencies in Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, and Minnesota. The purpose of the interview is to provide a standard measure of a person’s overall proficiency in signing.

“Traditional sign language assessments,” says Newell, “evaluate knowledge of vocabulary, fluency, or speed. At the end of the test, I still might not know if you can communicate with deaf people.”

The SCPI on the other hand, by virtue of its structure as a conversation about familiar topics, provides a more accurate skill assessment.

“With the SCPI,” he explains, “form is less important than function.”

While it may seem like a subjective test, a measure of objectivity is obtained through the use of three different raters. Interviewees are rated from “novice” to “superior plus”; on an occasion when raters can’t agree, procedures are established to re-interview or call upon additional independent ratings.

Newell also worked on the development of sign language instructional materials using both videotape and video disk. The latter now is thought to be superior for supporting sign language learning. He explains why: “With the video disk, the student has almost instantaneous access to the exact frame containing a particular sign or part of a sign. The video disk technology also allows for clear video images of slow and fast speeds. For the same reason, fingerspelling, speechreading, and technical signs practice can be made more accessible to students.”

Future plans call for developing video disks for each technical field, which will incorporate both signs and fingerspelling, much as actual signed communication often does. These will be produced under the aegis of the Technical Signs Project, an ongoing national effort headed by Caccamise.

This project has undertaken the formidable task of compiling signs from various technical fields and cataloging them on videotape and in books. The Technical Signs Project has produced 49 videotapes in 22 technical areas to date, in addition to eight manuals.

Working with Caccamise, in addition to Newell, are Cagle; Support Service Education Lecturer Marilyn Mitchell; Communication Research Assistant Dolores Oglia; Donna Pocobello, assistant professor in Sign Communication and the Department of Technical and Integrative Communication Services (T&ICS); and Communication Research Assistant Cheryl Prusinski.

Newell’s hope for the video disk is that students will acquire fingerspelling skills more rapidly when they see words spelled in context rather than in groups using similar combinations of letters, as fingerspelling has been taught traditionally.

“Our contention,” he says, “is that it’s better to have a student look at fingerspelled words of varying lengths right from the start instead of trying to figure out short words first. This reinforces the concept of not looking for every letter in the word.”

Newell also hopes to apply to sign language the DAVID program, a speechreading program on video disk. DAVID, the creation of Audiology Department Acting Chairperson Donald Sims, stands for Dynamic Audio/Video Interactive Device.

Caccamise, along with Poor, also has worked on projects known as the LBQ and SIPI. The former is the Language



With hand and voice Assistant Professor Donna Pocobello, left, and Dr. Diane Castle are studying simultaneous communication.

Background Questionnaire, the latter the Sign Instruction Placement Interview. Both now are used to measure students' abilities and place them in classes appropriate to their needs and skill levels.

In addition to his stewardship of the Technical Signs project, a task that he likens to a dictionary in that it is "never finished," Caccamise has done other research related to sign language. He has been involved in a study on simultaneous communication (SimCom) done by Fischer and Dr. Dale Metz, communication research associate, with Dr. Paula Brown, a visiting research associate in the Department of Educational Research and Development.

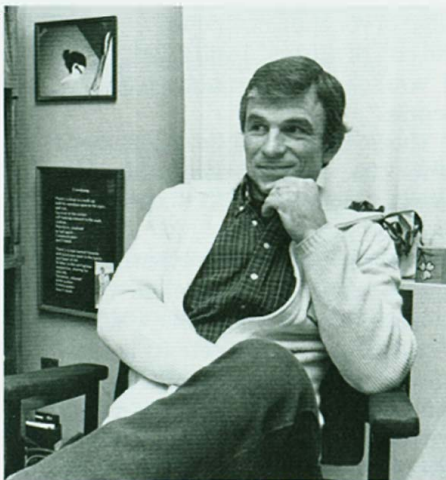
The group tested the hypothesis that when students attempt SimCom, either their speech or signing is less clear than in isolation. The group found, however, that both speech and signs were equally intelligible in isolation or together.

Many other faculty and staff members have done research relating to sign language. Dr. Michael Stinson, research associate in the Department of Educational Research and Development, Communication Research Chairperson Robert Whitehead, and Assistant Professor Jeanne Wells are studying the analogy between non-manual behaviors in sign communication and vocal intonation in spoken language. Wells is a member of the Department of Support Service Education, which trains interpreters. Dr. Laurie Brewer, chairperson of the General Education Instruction Department, has studied the processing of sign language.

In the Division of Communication Programs, two faculty members are looking at effective SimCom. Leading this activity is Dr. Diane Castle, professor in T&ICS. Working with her is Pocobello.

In assessing the need for their activity, they wrote, "There is little research and information available that address the specific characteristics of Simultaneous Communication. Furthermore, there is limited discussion in the literature about the characteristics of *effective* simultaneous communication. Of special interest are the contributions of clear lip movement, appropriate facial expression and body language, appropriate sign choices, and appropriate uses of grammar from both American Sign Language and English."

The team's objectives are to investi-



Lexicographer Dr. Frank Caccamise is at the helm of the Technical Signs Project, a national effort to catalogue signs for technical fields.

gate the major characteristics of effective SimCom, and to explore applications of these findings to curricula where it is taught. To accomplish this, they reviewed the current literature dealing with characteristics of SimCom, and are reviewing videotapes both to find models of SimCom and to identify its characteristics. In the future, they hope to identify strategies to enhance effective SimCom training. Annual summaries of their activities and findings will be shared with their respective departments.

The project was engendered, in Castle's words, by the fact that "approximately 30 percent of students entering NTID before 1984 understood less than half of a message presented only in sign language; they come primarily from oral, auditory backgrounds.

"I noticed a lot of emphasis on teaching faculty members to improve their use of sign language, but fewer efforts on how to improve their oral skills. I was concerned about this, because so many of our deaf students depend on their teachers' oral skills."

Castle discussed this with Newell, who suggested that she present a brief workshop on effective simultaneous communication to faculty members. He also suggested that she join forces with Pocobello, who he knew had an interest in the subject.

"SimCom has always been an issue with me," explains Pocobello. "Personally, it's the method of communication that I'm most familiar with and use most of the time. It seems to be the method used most at NTID. I've wanted to look at how we can describe it and then teach it, how we can evaluate it, and why some communication strategies are effective and others are not."

Although Caccamise and Newell have presented information on SimCom in some of their workshops, Castle and Pocobello's never materialized. As the pair began preparations, they found that much advance research would be required in order to present such a workshop, and asked Boardman to join them in their efforts. At this point, they are unsure as to when—if ever—they will be equipped to make such a presentation.

"I see this as work that is never ending," says Castle with a small laugh.

"The challenge is to find the best way to integrate all modes of communication—fingerspelling, signing, and speaking—into an intelligible whole."

Peripatetic Paparazzo

Robert Gurecki has a nose for news

PRESS

This card is issued to the undersigned for use while actually reporting or photographing spot news events. It is not transferable and may be revoked for cause.



Robert J. Gurecki
Signature

Roaming eye Gurecki's self-portrait is actually a picture of his press pass, set amid mementos of his photographic forays.

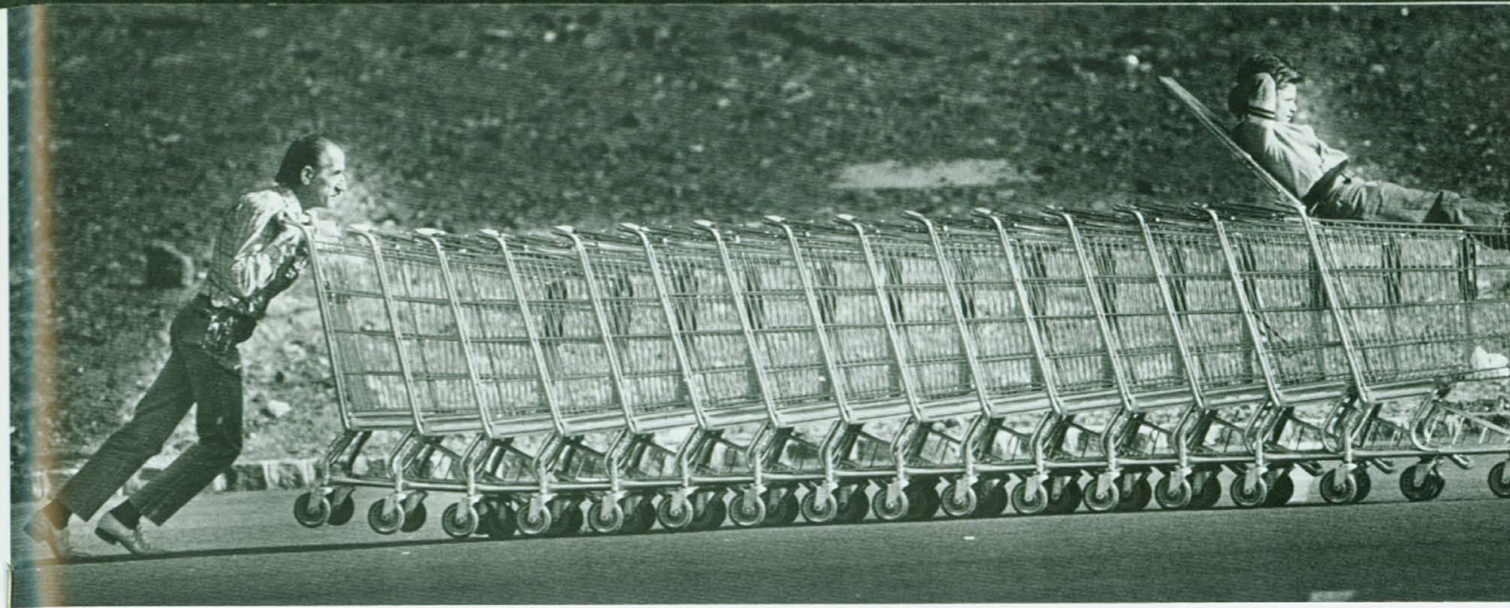
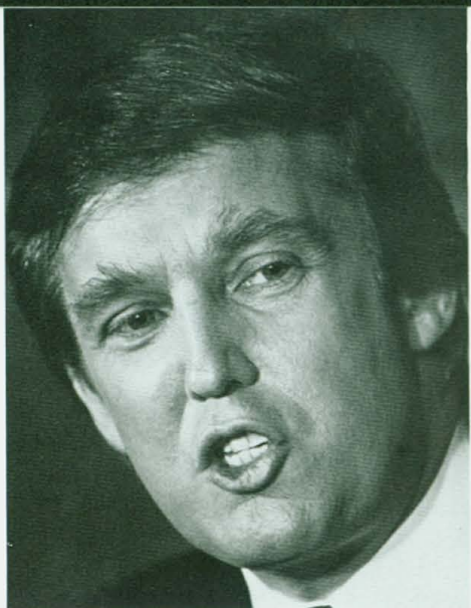
by Emily Andreano

Robert Gurecki's offhanded description of his hearing loss is the first clue that his view of the world is just slightly off center.

"I have a very rare form of nerve deafness. My audiogram looks like an inverted bell curve: I have the most trou-

ble hearing the human voice, but it kind of tails up in the 'other noise' area. Very useful," mutters the 34-year-old photographer for Agence-France Presse, a news wire service comparable in size to the Associated Press, Reuters, or United Press International.

Gurecki is one of only two photographers in the New York bureau of the venerable news organization. Coincidentally, the other not only is an RIT graduate, but also Gurecki's former classmate.



While he blithely tosses off his quick climb to success, the rapid pace at which he has risen through the ranks is even more remarkable in light of Gurecki's hunch that in the furious scramble for interesting photographic assignments in New York City, being deaf "does not help."

Not only is Gurecki's work glamorous—photographing the most important events of the day in the tri-state area for worldwide publication—but his office is, too. For it is located on the 10th floor of 50 Rockefeller Plaza, overlooking the famed statue of Prometheus and the Promenade, which at Yuletide becomes a glittering collage of ice skaters, Christmas tree, and trumpeting angels.

"Maybe I can't hear anything, but what I get to see is terrific," cracks Gurecki.

The photographer's breezy informality belies the diligence that must have attended his move up the career ladder. A Buffalo, New York, native, he is the only deaf member of his family, and was "mainstreamed" in public schools.

He learned to speak more or less by rote—"mechanically," as he puts it. No support services were available to him; he was forced to rely on speechreading, which sharpened his powers of observation—a skill that undoubtedly stands him in good stead in his current occupation.

After graduating from high school in Bridgeport, Connecticut, he took a job managing a small photo lab, and then became an understudy for a studio photographer. From there, he went to a large photo lab, until he decided that he'd "rather be on the shooting end" of photography. Because of his deafness, he sought educational advice from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation,



which suggested NTID. However, Gurecki was late in his inquiries, and had to be placed on a waiting list. Impatient to begin his studies, he enrolled in Buffalo's Erie County Community College in January 1978.

In the fall of 1979, Gurecki entered RIT. While he did receive support services from NTID, as well as career placement assistance, he immediately cross registered into RIT's College of Graphic Arts and Photography, from which he received a B.S. degree in Professional Photography in 1982.

While at RIT, Gurecki encountered other deaf people for the first time. He never did learn sign language, managing to communicate in other ways.

Conversations with his fellow deaf students about their earlier lives proved enlightening. He realized, he says, how many more obstacles deaf persons face in attempting to accomplish the business of day-to-day living. Knowing that his problems were shared left him feeling "less alone."

"The world away from Rochester," he remarks, "is not a sensitive place."

His criticisms of RIT lie not with the academic instruction, which he terms "excellent," but are of the variety one hears from students at any large private university: registration is "a zoo," financial aid was "never enough." An internship with the *Buffalo Evening News* convinced him that his future lay in news photography, but as graduation approached, he found himself without job prospects and "wondering where the rent money would come from."

Through a glass, brightly Gurecki's official beat is "hard news," yet his camera lens captures the drama in the stuff of everyday living as well.

*“The world away from Rochester...
is not a sensitive place.”*



Tragedy... Gurecki's shot of the widow of a Bronx, New York, police officer approaching the gravesite during funeral services.

Apprised by his teachers of an opening in the public affairs division of the Veterans Administration, he “applied along with everybody else.” Gurecki’s lucky streak began here, as he became one of only six people nationwide to be selected for a four-month position documenting the VA’s services. Gurecki proudly points out that not one, but two of the six chosen were RIT graduates.

Since that time, the enterprising photographer has held a number of interesting positions up and down the East Coast. Word of mouth is his calling card: editors see or hear of his work and, with nary a square foot of pavement pounded, Gurecki finds himself on the receiving end of a telephone call requesting his services.

After he finished at the VA, he spent three months doing freelance work for the *Clearwater* (Fla.) *Sun*. While there, he got a call from the *Tampa Tribune*, asking him to run its color darkroom. Three months into that position, a spot for a staff photographer opened up at the *Newark* (N.J.) *Star-Ledger*.

Gurecki joined that paper in April 1983. “Ready for a move” and “more challenging assignments,” he next sought a position with Agence-France Presse. His prospective employer apparently liked what he saw; Gurecki was hired and began work in October 1986.

Now his beat is New York’s “top 30 news stories of the day.” The job keeps him hopping. One day last winter he begged to be excused from a telephone call so that he might race downtown to catch the shenanigans on the trading floor at the New York Stock Exchange. For the third straight day, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was expected to soar above the 2,000 mark, setting new

records—Gurecki was instructed to record the ensuing pandemonium on film.

On a second occasion, he again pleaded urgent business that would tear him away from the phone. He was off to the New York Giants' Meadowlands Stadium, to photograph that football team's victorious return home after the 1987 Super Bowl.



He photographed former Miss America Vanessa Williams on her wedding day. The assignment appears on the surface to have been one of Gurecki's more pleasant duties, particularly upon inspection of his results, which reveal Williams' somewhat décolleté wedding gown. Gurecki quickly dispenses with that notion, terming the assignment "the type I dread; it consisted of nothing more than waiting for hours outside the church."

His taste runs more toward going for the jugular, for he speaks with relish about the sense of excitement and adventure involved in the tracking of the once headline-making "Baby M," the child born by surrogate mother whose custody remains in dispute.

The infant was expected to celebrate at least part of her first birthday with Mary Beth Whitehead, the surrogate mother, but the location of the party was a well-guarded secret. Gurecki specu-

lated that it might be at the home of Whitehead's court-appointed attorney.

He telephoned a friend at the *Bergen County Record* in order to find out the attorney's name and hometown. However, the attorney's telephone number was unlisted.

Using a real estate directory as a guide, he raced around the town inspecting every property owned by someone

Mario Biaggi was arraigned on criminal charges, referring to it as the photographic equivalent of gang rape.

One tactic many news photographers employ involves listening to police scanners to catch the latest action. Gurecki compensated for his hearing problem by attaching earphones to the scanner.

"I live by my wits," he says. "So far, it



... and triumph On a pleasanter note, he also photographed former Miss America Vanessa Williams on her wedding day (left), and (right) New York Giants football team coach Bill Parcells brandishing the Vince Lombardi Super Bowl trophy and being doused with confetti rather than the traditional Gatorade in celebration of his team's victory.

with the same last name as the attorney. As he rounded the corner to approach the last possible location, he spotted the baby's adoptive parents on a sidewalk, and was able to lay in wait and claim an exclusive picture that was reprinted worldwide.

"Now *that*," he remarks, "is what I like—a *thinking* assignment."

By way of contrast, he speaks with distaste of the many times he has had to elbow other photographers out of his way in order to record others' misery, such as the day New York Congressman

seems to be working."

Gurecki's personality seems well suited to life in the Big Apple. His talk is studded with one-liners—more repartee than conversation. An attempt at an early-morning interview produces the response that he "can't think before he's had his first cup of coffee," yet he manages to murmur something about an expected event—covering the day "[Gen. Alexander] Haig tosses his helmet into the ring."

His wanderlust seems cured for the moment; he enjoys the distinction of being one of Agence France-Presse's *paparazzi*. Thus, when asked about future plans, he replies, "Just to stay right here where I am." He pauses. "And maybe win the Pulitzer Prize."



Employers Make the Honor Roll

by Ann Kanter

Repeat business" is a phrase more commonly heard in the halls of corporations than in the ivy-covered environs of a college campus. However, in the case of NTID's National Center on Employment of the Deaf (NCED), "repeat business" has spelled success both for the Institute and for the numerous companies nationwide that have dedicated themselves to providing job opportunities for deaf students.

To honor such organizations, NTID in 1986 established the "Recognition of Service Award," which has been presented to 18 companies.* What each of these companies has achieved is the result, in large part, of networking between NTID and equal employment opportunities administrators at the companies.

"It may sound strange to think of networking when it comes to employer development as a placement strategy for deaf students," says NCED Manager Elizabeth Ewell, "but our experience tells us that it often underlies a successful relationship.

"Among the companies we have honored," Ewell continues, "are three whose relationship with NTID is relatively new: the Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) in Aberdeen, Maryland; the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company in New York City; and Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford, Connecticut."

**Companies that have received this award include AT&T Bell Laboratories, Citicorp, Emerson Electric Company, General Electric Company, General Motors Corporation, Griffiss Air Force Base, Grumman Aerospace Corporation, Hewlett-Packard Company, IBM Corporation, Morgan Guaranty Trust Company, New York State Department of Transportation, Pratt & Whitney, Prudential Insurance Company of America, The Standard Oil Company, The University of Rochester, U.S. Army Aberdeen Proving Ground, U.S. Department of the Navy, and Xerox Corporation.*

Aberdeen Proving Ground

Pat Adelhardt, selective placement coordinator for the handicapped at the U. S. Army Aberdeen Proving Ground, has a close personal tie to NTID through Linda Iacelli, an NCED employment advisor.

In the 1970s, the two became friends while working in the personnel department of the CIA in Washington, D.C. Then, in December 1984, one month after Iacelli began work at NTID, she phoned Adelhardt to suggest NTID as a source for employees.

"I was delighted to have such a good contact," Iacelli says. "I know Pat is creative, and she's 'a doer.'"

The following spring, Adelhardt visited NTID and interviewed 12 students for summer jobs.

Subsequently, she was able to obtain a

commitment to the program from Aberdeen's post commander, who agreed to do all in his power to encourage the hiring of deaf students for co-op and permanent placements.

Thanks to this support, Adelhardt was able to offer positions to all the NTID students she had interviewed. As some of them already had accepted other employment offers, she hired five. One of them was Deborah Blauer, an A.A.S. degree graduate in Data Processing who now is working toward a bachelor of science degree in Personnel and Human Resource Management in RIT's College of Business. Blauer worked in the Test Operations Division, where her supervisor was Louis Teletski.

"We have about 11,400 people in the command," he says. "We're like a corporate headquarters; we have 2,100 active



A four-star salute The U.S. Army Aberdeen Proving Ground "represents a model of a developing relationship..." noted Employment Advisor Linda Iacelli in presenting a Recognition of Service Award to Major General Charles Drenz, installation commander of the U.S. Army Aberdeen Proving Ground.



Summer standout Deborah Blauer is the only summer student ever to receive Aberdeen's Certificate of Achievement.

projects at any one time. Debbie worked with the data base to keep track of these projects, their milestones, and their financial status.

"She's so work oriented, the only problem I ever had was getting her to take a break."

Although Adelhardt was prepared to hire NTID students again in 1986, a hiring freeze prevented that. Nevertheless, Adelhardt was able to get Blauer back that summer as a "rehire."

During her second summer, Blauer won a Certificate of Achievement, making her the only summer student to receive such an award, according to Teletski.

True to the "doer" label given her by lacelli, Adelhardt worked to implement

sign language classes at APG. Initially, she offered basic sign classes twice weekly during the lunch hour—20 people signed up. The following year, the list of applicants ballooned to 150.

She also invited NCED staff members to APG to offer a program on NTID and the implications of deafness. The response to that program was gratifying—30 supervisors and co-workers attended.

"Debbie's presence seems to have heightened her co-workers' awareness of deafness," comments lacelli.

In January 1987, lacelli presented Major General Charles Drenz, Aberdeen's Installation Commander, with a Recognition of Service Award for continuing support of NTID's co-op and graduate placement programs. In presenting the award, lacelli said:

"NTID offers this award to cement a mutually beneficial relationship, whose success from the beginning was due to commitment from the highest level. The U.S. Army Aberdeen Proving Ground represents a model of a developing relationship between NTID and an employer."

Morgan Guaranty Trust Company
Sarah Young, assistant vice president in the employment unit at Morgan Guaranty Trust, recalls the day when she spotted "NTID" in a stack of resumes on her desk.

"The name brought back memories of my first job after college," she says. "I was a rehabilitation counselor at the

Crotched Mountain School for the Deaf in Crotched Mountain, New Hampshire.

"Some NTID students came up for the summer to serve as assistant sign language teachers. Their skills and personal conduct made such a strong impression on me that when I was in a position to hire some students for Morgan, I naturally thought of NTID. I knew that the college backed up what it promised, and that it would provide any necessary support.

"'Hiring the handicapped' to do someone a favor is not what my job is about," says Young, who has been with Morgan since 1983. "We don't, for example, approach a line manager about the concept of hiring a deaf person. We bring qualified students in for the summer and place them where they fill a need."

In the spring of 1985, Young learned that NTID was looking for a site for its training program for supervisors of summer co-op students in the New York City area. She offered to host the group, which included supervisors and personnel representatives from 40 major corporations and government agencies.

That fall, Young visited NTID to see how she could become more involved. After attending a two-day training program, she again felt "the old excitement of working with people who'd overcome special challenges." Before she left, she decided to expand Morgan's program for the upcoming summer.

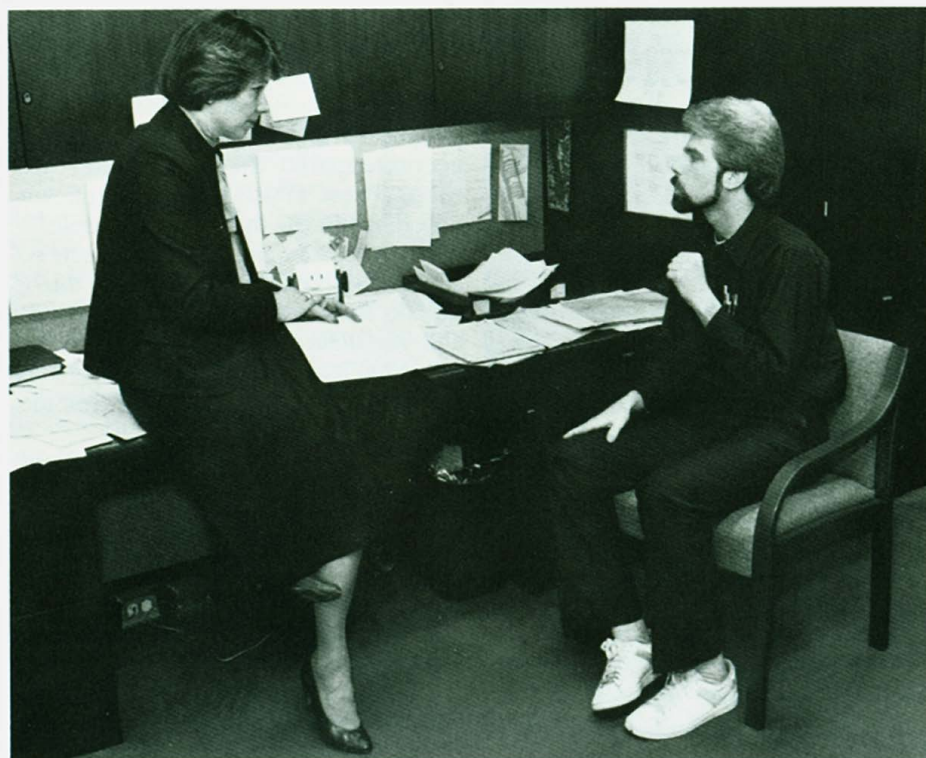
"I knew that I had my manager's full support in my commitment to working with NCED in recruiting, hiring, and training NTID students," she says.

When she returned to Morgan, she spoke to supervisors in different areas of the bank, looking for good matches between each area's needs and the abilities of the student applicants. She wanted to be sure that each student would get "a meaty job."

After her personnel representative pre-screened 12 students on the NTID campus, Young interviewed and chose five for co-op assignments.

"These students are exceptional in terms of the population in general, not just within the deaf population," she says. "They would make it anywhere.

"They're a diverse group in many ways," she adds. "One is a strong ASL [American Sign Language] user; another speaks so well, you would hardly realize he has a hearing impairment. Some are two-year students, others are working toward bachelor's degrees. Some have studied exclusively at NTID; others



Learning the ropes Sarah Young, assistant vice president in the employment unit at Morgan Guaranty Trust Company in New York City, discusses job strategies with graduate Michael McNulty.



This is what it's all about. Above, students begin their co-op experience with a tour of Pratt & Whitney's jet engine manufacturing plant; left, Jack Clarcq, associate vice president, RIT and director, NTID Technical Assistance Programs, and John Knight, administrator of Pratt & Whitney's EEO Program, met through committee work for the state of Connecticut.

are enrolled in the other RIT colleges; and they run the gamut of majors, including Accounting, Photography, Printing, and Office Technologies."

Michael McNulty, a Printing Production Technology student, was one of that group. "He's responsible and a hard worker," says Young.

McNulty did such a good job during his internship that in June 1986, one month after his graduation from RIT through NTID, Morgan asked him to join its full-time staff.

"Mike's experience is exactly what I have in mind for all co-op students," says Young. "He began by working here for the summer, but he did such a great job that his supervisor asked me to hire him on a permanent basis."

Pratt and Whitney

A relationship initiated through a committee involvement was the way that Pratt & Whitney's John Knight, adminis-

trator of the company's EEO program, learned about NTID.

Based in East Hartford, Connecticut, Pratt & Whitney, a division of United Technologies Corporation, is a leading designer, developer, and manufacturer of jet engines for the commercial and military markets. Knight is responsible for Pratt and Whitney's Affirmative Action Program.

He also is chairman of the Career Education for the Deaf Advisory Committee at Northwestern Connecticut Community College. Through that committee, he met Dr. Jack Clarcq, associate vice president at RIT and director of Technical Assistance Programs at NTID, who was serving as a consultant to Connecticut on educational programs for deaf students. The two established a warm relationship that afforded opportunity for much discussion about NTID students as potential employees.

"Not only do we [Pratt & Whitney] want to demonstrate our compliance with the government's EEO/AA legislation," says Knight, "we also want to demonstrate that we are good corporate citizens."

In 1985, Knight visited NTID to attend an NCED workshop and to learn more about the college and its programs. One year later, he returned to recruit students for summer positions. To ensure that the students hired would be successfully integrated into the work environment, he invited NCED staff members to conduct an on-site program for 10 Pratt and Whitney supervisors and EEO/personnel representatives.

"This workshop, prior to the students' arrival, was critical to our program's success," says Knight.

Roger Scales, of the Travel Audit section of the Group Financial Department, supervised NTID Accounting student Steven Simmon, one of four students placed during the summer.

"I had planned for Steven to do filing and other clerical work," says Scales, "but I soon realized that would not be enough of a challenge for him. He caught on so fast that I had him auditing for me. He's a bright, likeable young man, and I'd like to get him back again this summer."

Knight says that Pratt & Whitney's relationship with NTID benefits the company in three ways. "It enhances our alliance with the academic community; it strengthens our commitment to outreach and affirmative action; and it identifies technically qualified individuals for future staffing needs."

In December 1986, while visiting Pratt & Whitney to present the Recognition of Service Award, Clarcq said, "The sensitivity, energy, and commitment of Pratt & Whitney people and the relationship that they've developed with us at NTID have opened doors for deaf people to enter the workplace and accommodated them once they are there. These efforts make a significant difference in the lives of deaf people."

"Because the program has been so successful," says Knight, "we are introducing the concept to other divisions and subsidiaries within United Technologies. It's a 'win-win' program, and it's been a very special project for me since its inception.

"Anyone who might be leery about hiring deaf employees should visit NTID and observe the talent hidden beneath the hearing impairment," Knight concludes. "And anyone in business who needs qualified individuals in a college-level technical field should consider NTID as a source."

PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

NTID's Speech Analysis Laboratory puts it all together

by Vincent Dollard

In NTID's Speech Analysis Laboratory, it's not what you say that counts, it's how you say it.

One of several labs within the Department of Communication Research, the Speech Analysis Lab was developed and equipped throughout the early 1970s and is designed for the study of the physiologic and acoustic properties of speech. It exists so that researchers might gain a better understanding of the speech characteristics of deaf people and the relationship of those characteristics to speech intelligibility.

"The thrust of our efforts," says Dr. Robert Whitehead, chairperson of NTID's Communication Research Department, "is to find answers to some fundamental questions and apply them to the assessment and instruction of speech production for deaf persons."

Application takes time, however, and Dr. Dale Metz, research associate, points out that "individual research projects are just parts of a large puzzle. Certain basic questions must be adequately answered prior to general application of the results."

To determine what can go wrong during the speech process, Whitehead and Metz, in conjunction with other NTID researchers and other colleagues, particularly two from the State University of New York at Geneseo, Drs. Nicholas Schiavetti and Ronald Sitler, examine the process itself in exhaustive detail.



Aerodynamics and the fine art of speech Researchers at NTID have developed a system to study how speech aerodynamics interact with other factors involved in producing speech.

"A number of NTID's studies," says Metz, "are based upon speech physiology and how that physiology influences the acoustic signal known as speech."

Metz points out that years of research are just now leading to a more complete understanding of the intricate relationships involved in producing speech.

One example of that understanding is a series of experiments aimed at determining how speech breathing patterns,

speech aerodynamics, and the movements of the larynx interact and influence the resulting speech signal.

While studies of these "biomechanical properties" contribute heavily to knowledge about speech production, they remain only part of the picture.

"We've also come a long way through the use of computers," says Metz. "We can isolate aspects of the speech signal



that we know, based on previous research, directly influence speech intelligibility."

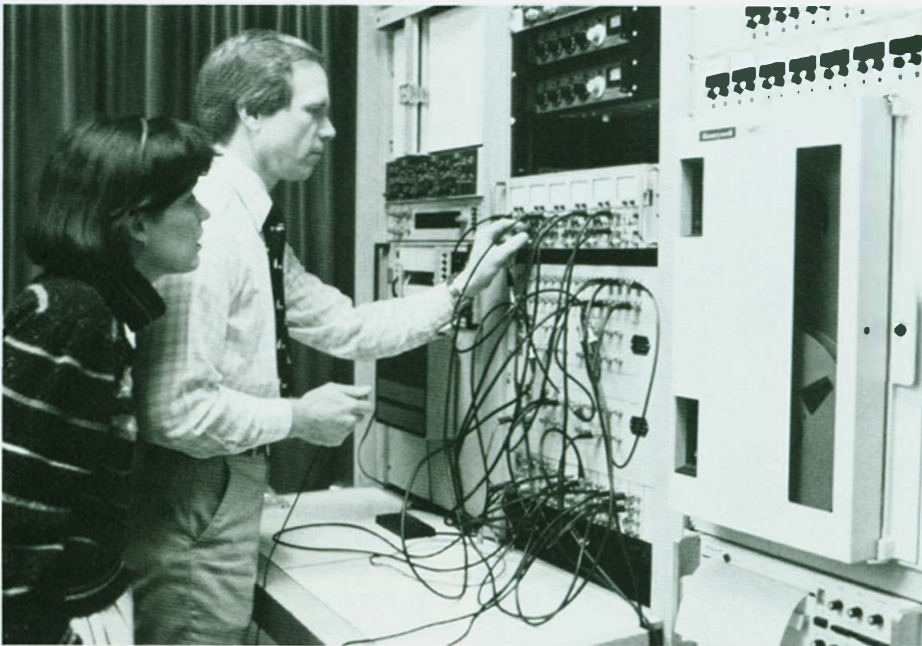
The series of experiments, conducted by Whitehead, Metz, and Dr. Vincent Samar, research associate at NTID, involve recording the acoustic properties in the way a person says, for example, "Pete" and "beet," then isolating certain acoustic properties of those words. By isolating aspects of the acoustic signal of the different sounds in these words, investigators can determine to what degree these aspects influence speech intelligibility.

A recent project called FIAT, or Fast Intelligibility Assessment Tool, is a result of such experiments.

"This project came about last year," says Metz, "when we realized that we could isolate these acoustic features of speech, that they play a major role in intelligibility, and that they are readily measurable by computer."

The FIAT system, which is still being developed, incorporates an Apple computer, a data acquisition system that digitizes speech to make it readable for the

High speed cinematography Top and above, Dr. Robert Whitehead, chairperson of NTID's Communication Research Department, uses powerful lamps and heat filtering mirrors to photograph the motions of the larynx.



Evaluating data An impressive array of computers and electronic equipment help researchers fit together the pieces of the speech process puzzle.

computer, and software that tells the computer what to analyze.

Metz notes that the FIAT system extends research findings into a practical clinical tool for rehabilitative purposes.

Both Whitehead and Metz enthusiastically acknowledge the increasing influence of computers in biomedical research. When asked, however, if the scientist's role is becoming that of a programmer (since a greater amount of scientific work is conducted by computers), Whitehead points out that, while the computer is an important tool, it remains a means to a projected end.

"Computers allow us to analyze data rapidly and objectively," says Whitehead. "They enable us, in all fields, to delve into areas of research and to do it quickly and accurately."

Indeed, the Speech Analysis Lab is equipped with computers and devices that look as imposing as they are technical. The large room has a decidedly cluttered look that somehow eases any "technophobia" one might experience when confronted with the array of electronic equipment.

Adjacent to the lab is a small room with an ophthalmologist's chair, the focal point of a custom-designed system

of mirrors and lamps used by Metz and Whitehead to photograph, at 4,000 frames per second, the motions of a person's vocal folds. The information gathered is used in ongoing research to learn more about the biomechanics of the larynx.

All of the research conducted in the laboratory, such as photographing the larynx, requires volunteer subjects. NTID researchers, audiologists, and speech pathologists work closely to identify appropriate NTID students to act as subjects based on the needs of a particular project.

The response from students is positive and many inquire about "how they did" and ask to return for other projects.

"It's always voluntary," says Metz, "typically paid, and always outside of classroom time. Also, any new studies go through an institutional review board to make certain the subject's rights are protected.

"That's fairly typical of the way subjects are selected elsewhere, except that we have a resident population at NTID."

That population is just one reason why NTID's Speech Analysis Lab is not a typical scientific workshop.

"In terms of physiology and acoustics," says Whitehead, "there are not too many other researchers who are trying to look at the speech system in as complete a picture as we are."

Whitehead points out that in view of the equipment that is used and developed, and the population on campus, NTID's Communication Research Department is considered a major center for studies of this nature.

In spite of the variety of projects conducted over the course of the last 12 years, the basic premise underlying every piece of data that is studied at NTID remains simple and in focus: a better understanding of oral communication characteristics of deaf young adults.

"It is a difficult area to measure," says Whitehead. "Speech happens fast and it requires sophisticated equipment and a relatively long time to collect data. By trying to analyze parts of the system as they relate to the whole, to assess intelligibility, we're working to help speech pathologists identify areas for assessment and instruction."



"In terms of physiology and acoustics...there are not too many other researchers who are trying to look at the speech system in as complete a picture as we are."

A Project with



Teamwork Kodak designer Robert Green '75 and third-year student Timothy Martz compare copy length with a sketch of the booklet they designed for the Boy Scouts of America.

by Lynne Bohlman

If the Eastman Kodak Company and NTID were Scouts, the local council of the Boy Scouts of America might award them merit badges for exemplary cooperative effort.

Last spring, in a three-way partnership, a graphic designer from Kodak and a group of Applied Art students designed and produced for the Otetiana Council of Scouts a 16-page, four-color booklet that will serve as the Council's major 1988 marketing publication.

"This program offered a way for industry and academia to collaborate and give something to the community," says Michael Krembel, associate professor of Applied Art, "without talking dollars and cents."

The program did, however, make a lot of sense for each of the organizations.

Students in Krembel's Graphic Applications class—an experiential learning course in which third-year art students simulate the workplace by designing posters, brochures, and other products for in-house and non-profit clients—had an opportunity to work with a professional designer, who also happens to be a 1975 deaf graduate of RIT's College of Fine and Applied Arts.

Robert Green, a graphic designer at Kodak, served as guest art director in the day-long class every Thursday during the spring quarter, gaining basic computer design skills that he could transfer to his job in Kodak's Package Manufacturing Division.

The Boy Scouts acquired a comprehensive brochure promoting its 1988 summer activities. The brochure will be mailed this fall to families of the more than 17,000 Scouts in the Monroe County area.

"We've always gotten help from groups in the community, but this is the first time we've been involved in a three-pronged cooperative effort," says Richard Trier, director of camping for the Otetiana Council.

MERIT

"It just happened to be a perfect three-way arrangement in which everyone benefited: our students, Kodak, and the Boy Scouts," says John Cox, chairperson of the Applied Art Department.

The department, he says, was interested in the program as a means of providing experience that increases students' employment potential.

Traditionally, cooperative work experiences in the applied art field have been difficult to establish, Cox notes, because advertising agencies and art studios often feel that by the time students learn their particular methodology, it is time for the co-op to end.

In order to satisfy students' needs for experiential learning, the department developed the three-quarter sequential Graphics Applications course, a home-grown co-op.

"It gives students a real opportunity to focus on their careers," Krembel says, "and it eases the transition from school to work."

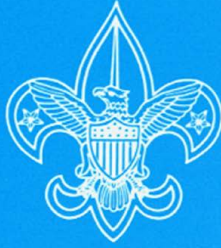
In addition to the experience that Graphic Applications students normally gain—working with clients, meeting deadlines, and operating within the confines of a budget—the cooperative effort with Kodak gave students the opportunity to collaborate with a professional designer who has encountered many of the same experiences as these students.

Not only did Green serve as a role model, Krembel says, but as guest art director, he shared with the 10 students his layout and design skills, offered a perspective different from their instructor's, and provided a glimpse of the interaction that takes place among professionals in the field.

The partnership, Krembel says, "allowed students to experience the interaction and communication that occur on the job. Before, the process was simulated, discussed, or theorized; now it's real."

In a classroom/studio decorated with posters announcing plays, a human sexuality workshop, a student honors show, the Eastern Figure Skating Championships, and various lectures, Krembel advised, guided, and instructed students on projects that may hang on these very walls in years to come, while Green concentrated on the Boy Scouts booklet.

While Krembel suggested that a student leave more white space between letters of a poster title, Green worked with third-year student Tim Martz on one of four Macintosh computers.



"It just happened to be a perfect three-way arrangement in which everyone benefited: our students, Kodak, and the Boy Scouts."



Helping hand Associate Professor Michael Krembel offers some friendly advice to Green and Martz.

Shoulders hunched, the two compared a sketch of the Boy Scouts booklet with a page design created on the Macintosh. "Bob and I, together," Martz says, "are solving the problem of how to design on a computer."

Martz taught Green the basics of computer design, while Green shared with Martz his layout and design expertise.

"It's a give and take situation," says Green.

Green's presence at NTID was timely for Kodak as well, since his division is ready to invest in computer graphics equipment to give it better design capabilities and quicker turnaround.

Kodak was attracted to this particular program for two reasons, says Mary Beth Hill, Preparation Department manager. Promoting the artistic excellence of NTID students, she says, is good for the field.

Also, through the partnership, she adds, "Kodak gained knowledge of how computer graphics are being used. We learned something for our use."

"There are many possibilities and we wanted to be sure we got what was best for our area. Because the computer graphics field is changing so rapidly, you need to be close to the discipline," she adds.

Considering the benefits each partner in this cooperative effort received, it's possible that Kodak and NTID don't need merit badges after all. The merits of the program are reward enough.



DEFYING THE ODDS

Hawaiian Overcomes Obstacles



In his element Paul Tomiyasu is right at home in NTID's Printing Production Lab.

by Ann Kanter

On a cold Rochester morning, Paul Tomiyasu sips hot chocolate and tries to warm up. At age 35, he has left behind a wife, a good job, and a home in Honolulu, Hawaii, to further his education at NTID.

The job was as a duplicating equipment operator/supervisor in the Office

of the Adjutant General Publications and Reproduction Section of the Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC) in Honolulu.

Despite outstanding work for which he received several awards and commendations, when his department had an opening for a manager, Tomiyasu was turned down for lack of sufficient theoretical knowledge.

To increase that knowledge as well as his communication skills, Tomiyasu enrolled at NTID in 1985 to study Printing Production Technology, specializing in electronic type composition.

Deafened at the age of 3 months from meningitis, Tomiyasu has garnered more awards in his 35 years than many hearing people do in a lifetime, and in 1984 was selected by the United States Jaycees as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men of America.

In a publication describing these men and their accomplishments, Tomiyasu was quoted as saying, "The goals in my heart, kept alive through many setbacks and frustrations, enable me to keep trying to better myself. I'm also committed to bettering the lives of others."

One of the ways in which he did this was to organize "Deaf Awareness Week" in Hawaii in 1978. The program was so successful that it inspired beneficial reforms throughout the state, including sign language instruction for police officers and the installation of telecommunications devices at hospitals and police and fire stations.

Tomiyasu had been employed since 1981 at the TAMC, where his original assignment was to operate and maintain duplicating, bindery, and platemaking equipment. When he arrived, the shop was operating with a traditional offset lithographic system and had a 2½-year backlog of unfinished work.

Shortly after his arrival, Tomiyasu wrote a proposal comparing the dated equipment with an updated Multigraphics Total Copy System #6, which he requested. His report, which was sent to U.S. Army Medical Headquarters in Houston, Texas, gained speedy approval, and within a few months, the new equipment arrived. Production methods were streamlined, and the center was soon up to date on its work.

For this Herculean accomplishment, Tomiyasu received a certificate of achievement from the commanding general—one of many that he would receive from various high-ranking Army officers.

Documentation accompanying one of these awards states, "He [Tomiyasu]

has developed a 'sixth sense' of diagnosing differences undetectable to many operators. Through his achievements, Mr. Tomiyasu has served as a constant inspiration and a positive influence toward opening opportunities for handicapped persons in the Federal Service."

Soon after Tomiyasu's retooling of the TAMC's Publications and Reproduction Section, his responsibilities increased to include supervising the workflow, maintaining files, and making monthly reports on completed jobs.

While working days for the Army, Tomiyasu also was spending 2½ hours several nights during the week teaching sign language to deaf and hearing people at the Kaimuki, McKinley, and Mililani Schools, a job he has had for the past 10 years.

An irony in this situation is that despite his prelingual deafness, Tomiyasu was not exposed to sign language until he was 6, and could not use it fluently until he was 13.

His first school experience was at the Sultan Pre-School for Crippled Children, a residential school run by the Easter Seal Foundation for children of various disabilities. Here, he used speech-reading for receptive communication.

Every day after school, while his parents worked, Tomiyasu taxied to his grandparents' house, where his grandmother instructed him in various aspects of Chinese culture. At the same time, however, his grandparents' Chinese language further complicated his struggle to learn English.

After a brief and frustrating experience at the oral Jefferson Elementary School for Special Education of Deaf Children, he transferred to the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB). Here Tomiyasu had difficulty understanding his new classmates' sign language.

In an effort to help, his father enlisted a friend, a teacher of deaf children, to tutor Tomiyasu in English, reading, writing, and arithmetic. On occasion, the teacher also instructed him in sign language.

Between the tutoring and daily contact with his classmates, Tomiyasu finally became fluent in sign language. For the first time in his life, he was able to communicate comfortably with other people.

In his senior year of high school, he divided his days between HSDB and the McKinley High School for hearing students, both of which he graduated from in 1972.



Being a workaholic pays off Despite a busy academic schedule, Tomiyasu worked two evenings each week as an assistant in the Printing Production Lab and still managed to maintain a 4.0 grade point average.

Tomiyasu then took a job as press operator in the print shop of the Dillingham Corporation, a Honolulu construction firm. He could hardly have guessed, as he walked through the door, that he would spend almost the next 10 years of his life there, or that his new co-worker would make a dramatic change in his life.

Lydia Ho had never met a deaf person, and upon learning that Tomiyasu was hired, was "scared to death." Rushing to the library to find a book on fingerspelling, she spent the weekend before Tomiyasu's appearance studying.

"By the time he started on Monday, I could fingerspell," she says.

Under Tomiyasu's tutelage, she learned to sign "The Lord's Prayer," "The Pledge of Allegiance," and "Silent Night." Subsequently, she enrolled in a sign language course and eventually wrote her own book, "Basic Sign Language for Hearing People," which Tomiyasu then used in the sign language courses he taught. In 1976, they were married.

In 1981, Tomiyasu left Dillingham for the position at the TAMC, where he remained until July 1984. In August he arrived at NTID.

Ecstatic with the two new hearing aids that he now wears, he says, "I still can't hear people talking, but at least I can hear car horns and dogs barking."

He also is grateful for the assistance he received from NTID instructors.

"I appreciate all the professors' and staff members' understanding of what deaf students go through to learn. They spent a lot of time helping me to understand my assignments."

Although Tomiyasu worked as an assistant in the Printing Production Lab two evenings each week, he still managed to maintain a 4.0 grade point average.

In 1986, he received NTID's James Ventimiglia Award, presented each year to an outstanding Printing Production Technology student.

"Paul is dedicated to the ideals that the Ventimiglia Award represents," says James Hendrix, Printing Production Technology chairperson. "We in the department felt lucky to have him with us because of his friendly nature and continual helpfulness to other students in the program. Not only did he want to learn, but he also was willing to share his knowledge."

At NTID's Academic Awards Ceremony in May 1987, Tomiyasu scooped up two more awards—the Academic Achievement Award and the Outstanding Student Award for the School of Printing.

As he flew home the next day, his plans for the future centered on finding a job to satisfy the 10-week cooperative work experience still standing between him and his diploma in printing. The job he found not only filled that requirement, but was offered in the form of an executive appointment to a permanent position as duplicating equipment operator with the U.S. Army Western Command (Westcomm) in Honolulu.

Although his title is the same as his former title at TAMC, his permanent status is an obvious improvement.

He also is working at a higher level in the Army chain of command, since Westcomm commands all Army military forces in the Pacific area.

"The excellent training I received at NTID has increased my self-confidence," says Tomiyasu, "and I feel better qualified for whatever opportunities may arise for advancement."

Tomiyasu knows that the years ahead will not be easy, but he is prepared to meet their challenges, as he has overcome so many in the past.



FOCUS On...

Sharron Metevier

by Kathleen Sullivan Smith



Sharron Metevier got even with the law. Two months after appearing in a courtroom for a minor traffic violation, Metevier, a senior computer programmer in NTID's Systems Development and Operations Department (SD&O), again found herself "appearing" before law enforcement officials—this time as a guest speaker to 72 Monroe County Sheriff's deputies.

In October 1986, Metevier was flagged down on a local road by an officer who "came over to my car, mumbled something, and then walked away and wrote out a ticket. I had told him that I was deaf and needed to read his lips, but he didn't pay much attention and just handed me a ticket. I accepted it and left, but decided to appeal in person."

Metevier's "day in court" so frustrated her ("No one told me when my case was called, and I had to wait a *long* time in the courtroom...") that when NTID's Training and Development Department asked her to participate in the workshop for local court deputies, she was happy to oblige.

"Sharron was the perfect choice," says Shirley Baker, formerly of the Training and Development area. "She was very professional, and an excellent ambassador for the Institute. And she spoke from a personal viewpoint."

That viewpoint had a profound effect on one person in attendance.

"There was a woman in the group," recalls Baker, "who listened intently to Sharron's recollections of how her parents felt when they discovered that she was deaf. Suddenly, the woman left the room, obviously quite upset. It turned out that she had a youngster who had just been diagnosed as deaf."

"Eventually, she returned to the presentation, and I encouraged her to talk with Sharron. When the woman left, she was beaming. Sharron changed her outlook on deafness."

Educating court deputies about deafness has nothing to do with Metevier's computer programming responsibilities, aside from the fact that both endeavors present the opportunity to eliminate some common "stereotypes," a challenge on which Metevier quietly thrives.

"It was important to present to this group someone like Sharron," says Baker. "She is a deaf professional, a full-time RIT employee, and a graduate of RIT as well."

"I like to be 'the first' at something," Metevier, 28, admits.

As an NTID student in the late 1970s, Metevier spent a year as a resident advisor (RA) to a floor of 25 deaf and hearing students. The following year, she signed up again, and found that she had been appointed resident advisor to an all-hearing floor of incoming students—a first for a deaf RA at RIT.

"I couldn't believe it," she recalls incredulously. "I thought, 'How am I going to be able to handle all these students?'" With common sense and a little coaching from a fellow residence administrator, Metevier soon found herself happily immersed in handling the typical problems of new students—including disputes over noisy stereos.

"I told the group that they needed to work out the problem together, so we established floor rules. When students broke them, they were penalized under guidelines established by their peers."

In addition to being an RA for two years, Metevier also was vice president of the NTID Student Congress and a tutor in the Math Learning Center. In between, she pursued a degree in Business Administration.

After spending one co-op as a financial analyst at Whirlpool Corporation in Michigan and another as an accounting trainee at Hewlett-Packard in Maryland, Metevier returned to RIT with a keen interest in computers. In fall 1982, to fulfill her last co-op "block," she applied for a six-month position at NTID.

James Wilson, systems specialist in SD&O, recalls interviewing Metevier: "We had had a negative experience with a deaf employee in our department, so I was somewhat apprehensive when I interviewed Sharron. However, I was impressed immediately with her communication skills, her sense of humor, and her intelligence."

"I love going home for visits with my family, but I'm enjoying my life in Rochester."



From statistics to sawdust At home, Metevier trades in her keyboard and printer for saws, paint scrapers, and wrenches as she renovates her charming 19th century farmhouse.

Metevier concurs, "I told the interviewers that I could do the job and do it well—so they hired me for six months as a programmer trainee. At the end of that time, I was offered a permanent position as a junior programmer."

Seeing Metevier at work in her tidy office, decorated with, among other things, a license plate from her home state of Michigan, one wonders at the ease with which she has successfully made the transition from student to professional staff member at her alma mater.

Settling in Rochester was a move toward independence for Metevier, who was raised in suburban Detroit.

"My father wanted me to move back home after college," she recalls, "because most of his family has stayed in the same area and they are very close. I love going home for holidays and visits with my family, but I'm enjoying my life in Rochester."

That life includes renovating and re-decorating an 1826 farmhouse in rustic Honeoye Falls, to which she has devoted considerable time and energy.

It is with that same energy that Metevier pursues her computer projects, whether completed independently or with "users" from the NTID community.

"Some projects can be accomplished in a day," she says, referring to simple programs that she writes and produces on her personal computer. "Others, depending on the complexity, may take weeks or even months."

"We encourage our programmers to interact with users and to set their own priorities," says Carole Pepe, manager of SD&O. "We're a small enough group to do that, and I think that our environment, therefore, is conducive to mobility."

Since becoming a full-time staff member in 1983, Metevier has advanced from junior programmer to programmer to senior programmer. To keep "current" in her profession, she taught data processing as an adjunct faculty member in 1985, and plans to resume her master's degree program in computer science at RIT. (She took a break from those studies to work on her house.)

"I'd really like to see Sharron reinitiate her interest in her master's degree program," Pepe says. "She would be one of very few deaf RIT graduates to get a master's in the computer science field."

Getting an advanced degree has a special significance to Metevier, who distinctly remembers being overwhelmed when she attended a National Association of the Deaf convention in St. Louis, Missouri, as a student.

"I had never met so many accomplished deaf people before," she says. "There were Ph.D.s, executives—lots of people with really high level jobs. I realized then that I still had a long way to go."

Based on her track record thus far, Sharron Metevier is well on her way.



Courtyard celebration Guests and Institute members gathered in NTID's courtyard after Rep. Tony Coelho (15th District, Cal.) spoke at NTID's Annual Academic Awards ceremony in May. Pictured are, from left, Dr. M. Richard Rose, RIT president; Rep. Coelho; Dr. William E. Castle, director of NTID; Rep. Louise Slaughter (30th District, N.Y.); and David Nelson '81, member of the newly formed Commission on the Education of the Deaf and computer system manager for Rep. Coelho's office.

Pilobolus at RIT

Jonathan Wolken, artistic director and founding member of the innovative Pilobolus Dance Theatre, presented a three-day workshop on movement, "The Creative Process in Dance," at RIT in March. The Pilobolus Dance Theatre performs for stage and television audiences worldwide, promoting "process versus performance" orientation to choreography. Both hearing and deaf students participated in the workshops, which were accessible to dancers and non-dancers alike.

Fellowship Granted

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) has awarded Fellowship to Dr. Robert Whitehead, chairperson of NTID's Communication Research Department. Fellowship is an award of highest esteem and is presented by the association in recognition of outstanding professional or scientific achievement by an ASHA member.

Cushman Receives Award

A production of *Macbeth* by NTID students was one of five plays chosen in competition with 42 other entries to be presented at the Northeast Regional Competition of the American College Theatre Festival in Ithaca, New York. Director Jerome Cushman, associate professor of performing arts, received the organization's Meritorious Achievement Award.

Clarcq Appointed

Dr. Jack Clarcq, director of Technical Assistance Programs at NTID and associate vice president and professor at RIT, will serve as NTID's official representative to the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (PCEH). NTID is one of more than 600 institutions and individuals who work to provide the leadership necessary to achieve maximum employment of people with disabilities.

Is It Really Love?

Sol Gordon, Ph.D., director of the Institute for Family Research and Education and professor emeritus of Child and Family Studies at New York's Syracuse University, presented "How Can You Tell if You're Really in Love?," to an overflow audience in the NTID Theatre in March. Dr. Gordon is the recipient of the American Humanist Association's Raymond B. Bragg Award for Scholarly Contributions and Personal Commitment to Humanism, and the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists Award.



An Outstanding teacher Maria Shustorovich, assistant professor of physics and technical mathematics at NTID, received RIT's Eisenhart Award for Outstanding Teaching in May, based on her "dedication, commitment, and service to students." A Soviet emigré, Shustorovich has taught at the Institute for seven years.

Honor Roll

During a May ceremony, NTID's National Advisory Group honored four members of the Institute for outstanding service. Recognized were: Jean DeBuck, Division of Public Affairs; Charles Johnstone, Instructional Television and Media Services; Nicholas Orlando, Speech/Language; and James Wilson, Systems Development and Operations. Three retiring faculty members also were feted: Patrick Coyle, Applied Science/Allied Health; Earl Lake, Industrial Technologies; and Robert Panara, Liberal Arts Support.

Licata Honored

Dr. Christine Licata, assistant dean/director of NTID's School of Business Careers, is one of four RIT staff members named 1987 "Celebration of Excellence" honorees.

Licata joined NTID in 1979 as chairperson of the Department of Business Occupations. She has worked to encourage student-faculty interaction, both in and out of the classroom, and has been instrumental in promoting annual student-faculty events.



Scholarship winners NTID students Christine Kastrop of Coconut Grove, Florida, and Kevin Mountain of Schenectady, New York, received John Dunlap Scholarships from the Electronic Industries Foundation at an April breakfast in Washington, D.C.



Dear Friends of NTID,

In this issue of NTID Focus, you learned about students who found challenging positions in the work force after first having served their employers during a cooperative work experience.

This is an especially appropriate tribute to RIT's co-op program, as we celebrate its 75th anniversary. RIT is a pioneer in cooperative education, offering one of the country's oldest and most sophisticated programs for students to combine on-the-job experience with classroom instruction.

Another story highlights RIT's partnership with industry in other ways, in this case a joint effort with the Eastman Kodak Company. This strong commitment to serving industry and thereby strengthening the ability of our graduates to find meaningful employment is a hallmark of an RIT education.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "M. R. Rose". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

*M. Richard Rose
President*



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Actress Marlee Matlin visits RIT, p. 3.

