

A letter from Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz

September 22, 2005

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I am terribly saddened to inform you all that a wonderful friend of NTID, Elizabeth "Cookie" Williams of Wilmington, Ohio died Monday, September 19 at her residence. Cookie was born October 16, 1928 in Shaker Heights, Ohio.

To say she was an outstanding supporter of activities involving people who are deaf is such an understatement. Not only was she an important member of the NTID Foundation Board, but she was active in the Ohio Association of the Deaf, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf. But those were only part of her contribution, for an additional partial list of organizations she supported include the National Theatre of the Deaf, the Kentucky Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing, the Deaf Festival in Louisville, Kentucky, the Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis, Missouri, the Boy Scouts of America, Clinton Memorial Hospital, and numerous other charities.

Cookie was also a major benefactor of NTID, having contributed significantly and generously to an NTID scholarship fund in her family's name, the Panara Theatre, and the Dyer Arts Center.

As a deaf woman and mother of three children, Cookie was always struck by the high quality of educational opportunities available for deaf and hard-of-hearing students at NTID/RIT. Her joy in the arts and in supporting causes related to the arts translated into a long relationship with NTID. She even said that she wished she were younger so she could have gone to college here herself.

I am so grateful that we are surrounded by Cookie's memory. We watch many of our students grow personally and professionally, thanks to scholarships Cookie provided for performing arts students. Each time we are in the Panara Theatre, we have her to thank for the beautiful new curtains. Her appreciation for the arts is reflected in her gift toward the Dyer Arts Center, in which she is named. During her life, she made such a positive impact on the lives of hundreds. Because of her commitment and generosity, she will continue to make a difference in the lives of our students. My only regret is they will never experience first-hand her contagious smile and boundless enthusiasm.

The college has lost a strong supporter, the NTID Foundation Board members have lost a trusted colleague, and we all have lost a dear friend. Somehow, even though that long list of activities reflects so well on a life well spent, at the same time it does not do justice to the loss we all feel. We will all miss her terribly.

The family requests that memorial contributions be made to the American Heart Association, Ohio Valley Affiliate, P.O. Box 182039, Dept. 013, Columbus, Ohio 43218-2039 or to any of the organizations that Mrs. Williams supported.

Those who would like other details of her obituary can find them at www.smithandsonfuneralhomes.com.

Alan

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