

## **NTID partners with Hungarian deaf schools**

February 1, 1999

Thanks to a \$500,000 grant from George Soros' Open Society Institute (OSI), a first-of-its kind partnership called Project Access has been formed between NTID and the eight schools serving deaf students in Hungary.

The funds will help NTID faculty train Hungarian teachers in the latest information technologies, provide updated curriculum, and state-of-the-art computers starting February 8, when 14 Hungarian educators arrived at NTID for a week-long work session.

Hungary was chosen for this project due to OSI's particular interest in Central and Eastern Europe. RIT/NTID was chosen for its international experience, and expertise in deafness and advanced technology. Since 1990, RIT has developed technology transfer projects and educational programs in 10 countries of Central and Eastern Europe. NTID has reciprocal relationships with universities in China, Japan, Russia and Thailand.

The project includes four phases: introducing Hungarian faculty to computer and Internet use in educating deaf youth in the U.S.; installing hardware and software; intensive training for faculty and administrators at each of the schools in Hungary; developing a Hungarian Deaf Education home page to be operated by Hungarian teachers and students.

The Hungarian National Union of Schools for the Hearing Impaired, the Hungarian National Association for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, the Hungarian Foundation for the Technological Progress of Industry, and the Hungarian American Chamber of Commerce have endorsed the project. Dr. James J. DeCaro, former dean of NTID, and Dr. Kenneth R. Nash, director of International Partnerships at RIT, developed the project with Hungarian colleagues Egon Toth, director of the Budapest School for the Deaf, and Istvan Muzsnai, faculty member of the Budapest School for the Deaf.

OSI, a private operating and grantmaking foundation that promotes the development of open societies around the world, is part of an informal network of autonomous nonprofit organizations created and funded by philanthropist George Soros, operating in more than 30 countries.