

NTID

F O C U S

FALL 1991



Reflections of NTID, p. 3

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • A College of Rochester Institute of Technology

Westward bound Students Renee Barnes, from South Burlington, Vermont, Michelle Johnston, from Royal Oak, Michigan, who graduated in May, and Thomas Popowski, from Wood-Ridge, New Jersey, embarked on a cross-country bicycle trip in June in an effort to draw attention to environmental concerns. Popowski wheeled into San Francisco July 28, Barnes and Johnston made it as far as Nebraska.



F O C U S

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About the cover In this issue, these four 1991 graduates share their myriad NTID experiences. From left are William Riba, Sally Jo Neal, Marilyn Hughes, and Brian Crites. (Cover photography by A. Sue Weisler.)

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changing TIMES



Through bold initiatives, NTID continues to mature and set standards that light the way for other organizations concerned with the education of deaf people.

NTID has determined to face change and manage it rather than to wait for change to control us. Thus, in March, the Institute began a strategic planning process that will evaluate NTID's strengths and weaknesses in an effort to better prepare for the challenges and opportunities of the coming decades.

Currently, a 15-member Strategic Planning Committee, composed of NTID faculty and staff members as well as a student and alumni representative—along with more than 100 others who serve on special task forces—is in the process of taking a broad look at how we do business in light of changing demographics and improved technological developments in the workplace. Next May, after months of extensive research and evaluation, the committee will make its recommendations for how best to utilize available resources to continue to meet the postsecondary educational needs of deaf students.

"NTID Reconsidered," which begins on page 18, outlines the initial steps that the Institute has taken to launch its strategic planning program. In the coming months, as results of these efforts take shape, *Focus* will continue to inform readers about this exciting process.

Another venture undertaken by the Institute to improve the quality of education for deaf students is the recent establishment of communication requirements for faculty members seeking promotion and tenure. While NTID faculty members always have been required to develop communication skills, this new policy delineates specific skill levels necessary to best serve the diverse communication needs of NTID's students.

In support of the Institute's continuing commitment to provide deaf students with an eclectic communication

environment, faculty members must develop both sign language skills—either American Sign Language or English-like signing—and oral communication strategies and techniques. The policy also requires ongoing faculty participation in learning activities to cultivate sensitivity to deaf cultural issues.

I am very pleased that we have more clearly detailed the communication requirements for tenure and promotion in our college. I believe that this is a significant step forward since this policy is fair, thorough, and realistic. "Setting the Standard," on page 24, gives a detailed description of this new policy, including how it was developed and how it will affect both students and faculty members at the Institute.

NTID's commitment to educate deaf students through a variety of communication styles and modes in no way detracts from the significant role that American Sign Language plays in deaf culture. For this reason, all students and faculty and staff members are invited to attend the Institute's annual ASL Lecture Series, which focuses on specific themes related to the language.

The 1990-91 series, titled "ASL in Life and Work," brought six RIT graduates back to the Institute to discuss how the language has affected their personal and professional lives. Their stories, which you can read about in "Language of Pride" on page 7, reflect their sense of pride in a language that helps shape their cultural identities.

Now in its seventh season, the NTID ASL Lecture Series not only educates about this important aspect of deaf culture, it also adds yet another dimension to the Institute's ongoing campaign to enrich the cultural fabric of our educational community.

William E. Castle

Dr. William E. Castle

A Kaleidoscope of Experiences

Colorful fragments of NTID memories

by Deborah R. Waltzer



Graduation from RIT—and saying farewell to a familiar place—was a bittersweet experience for four NTID-sponsored students last May. Excited about the future, yet sad to be leaving the Institute, these graduates experienced a kaleidoscope of emotions.

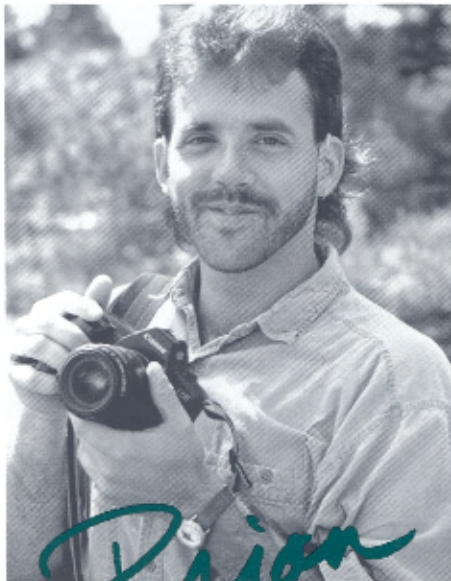
While cramming for final exams and completing term projects during the last week of spring quarter, these four graduating students—three enrolled in NTID and one in the College of Graphic Arts and Photography—took a few hours out of their frenetic schedules to reflect on the meaning of NTID and RIT in their lives.

Shooting Toward a Dream: Brian Crites

If it hadn't been for a concerned vocational rehabilitation counselor in Little Rock, Arkansas, who encouraged Brian Crites to apply for admission to RIT through NTID four years ago, "I'd probably be flipping burgers right now," says the Kansas City, Missouri, native who in May earned a bachelor's degree in applied photography through RIT's College of Graphic Arts and Photography.

Instead of having his hands smeared with hamburger grease, Crites has spent the past four years lathered in photographic emulsions and fixers, tools of his trade.

And instead of drifting from various community colleges and universities to temporary jobs—as he did before arriving at the Institute in 1987—Crites has served his fellow students as a resident



advisor, produced two photography exhibits of trips to the Soviet Union with other deaf RIT students and NTID faculty and staff members, and developed deep friendships with classmates.

Exposure to new cultures and ideas was a trademark of Crites' college tenure. While traveling in Tbilisi, Georgia, in the Soviet Union, Crites had an eye-opening encounter with a small group of deaf Georgians. Upon

removing an irritating contact lens from his eye, his new Soviet friends gestured their astonishment at the miniscule size of his corrective lens—a sight they'd never before seen.

While shooting 70 rolls of film in the Soviet Union, Crites was struck by what he perceived as a repressed lifestyle of the country's average citizens. Still, he managed to find and capture on film an elderly man pulling his young grandchildren in a wagon through a city park from darkness into light. That scene symbolically represents for Crites optimism about the future.

Closer to NTID, the 27-year-old's favorite college memories are of two weekend camping trips taken outside Toronto with 10 new friends made during NTID's Summer Vestibule Program.

"There we were, people from all over the country, swapping stories around a campfire," he recalls. "For the first time in my life, I was able to share my sense of hearing loss with others who really understood. I haven't felt that kind of togetherness since."

Other experiences, like helping to dissuade an agitated residence hall student from committing suicide, have contributed to Crites' personal growth.

"I've become much more open-minded to the diversity of people," he says. "I used to be bullheaded and believed that things were either black or white. Now I'm more receptive to other people's ideas, and I listen better."

Though he is excited about preparing his photography portfolio for job interviews with daily newspapers and national magazines, Crites' face falls when he speaks of saying farewell.

"I feel a real sense of sadness and loss about leaving RIT and NTID," he says. "You get into a four-year routine here, and four years is longer than some people stay married. In a sense, you marry an institution, but this is merely a separation, not a divorce. Maybe someday when the time comes for me to settle down, I can advocate for the school and give something back.

"NTID has been really good to me," he continues. "My advice to new students is to believe in the Institute's system because it works for every person who does. Even though the world is competitive, I feel confident and know that things will eventually take off for me.

"I'm apprehensive, but I'm not scared."



Combining Technology with Caring:

Sally Jo Neal

Homesickness for her family in Mansfield, Ohio, nearly drove Sally Jo Neal back to the nest during her first year at NTID in 1987.

"As a freshman, I honestly didn't know if I'd make it through the academic program," she recalls. "I'm close to my family, and there were many times I wanted to go home."

Neal didn't flee, though. Instead, her loneliness steered her in the direction of NTID's Business Club, where she found a haven.

"I really liked the other students I met at the club, and as I got more involved with the group, I learned a lot about myself and became a much happier person," she says. Subsequently, friends from the Business Club became her closest chums.

Not only did she decide to stay at NTID, but Neal, who earned an associate degree in office technologies, thrived in the ensuing years. She was appointed student advisor for the Business Club, responsible for acting as a liaison between School of Business Careers students and faculty members to help develop course curricula and resolve concerns.

Looking back, the 24-year-old says her favorite college experience was serving as a teaching assistant to Dr. Barry Culhane, RIT student ombudsman, and Dr. Christine Licata, assistant dean for administrative services, who jointly taught NTID's "Freshman Seminar" course, an experiential program designed to orient first-year students to college life.

As teaching assistant, Neal helped guide first-year students through activities at RIT's Red Barn, an on-campus facility designed for exercises that develop leadership skills; tutored in various subject areas; and assisted students in conducting library research.

Having experienced a difficult first year of college herself before "Freshman Seminar" was created, Neal could relate easily to some of the tough adjustments new students needed to make.

"I went through a rough first year because no one advised me about what to anticipate from college," she says. "After that experience, I wanted to help other students learn what to expect so they wouldn't feel miserable and consider leaving college.

"I enjoyed the experience thoroughly," Neal continues. "In fact, I put my work time for 'Freshman Seminar' above my personal time."

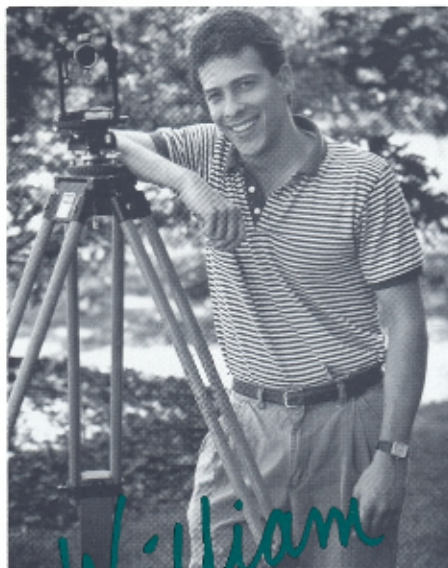
Outside the classroom, Neal learned more about her chosen field of word processing through two summer co-operative (co-op) work experiences.

"NTID has really prepared me for a career by requiring summer co-op," she says.

As an office clerk for Cardinal Industries in Columbus, Ohio, and later as a word processing technician for that city's Child Support Enforcement Agency, Neal discovered that she preferred a work setting that combines computers with people contact. She currently is applying for employment in word processing departments at hospitals in Rochester, New York, where she can provide technical support in a social service environment.

Neal is glad she persisted through her difficult freshman year. "I feel like I just started my education at NTID yesterday. Time has gone by really fast," she says with amazement.

Her advice to others is to make the most of their college years. "There are many opportunities for NTID students to get what they really want."



Constructing a Future:

William Riha

By the age of 12, William Riha knew he wanted to be a civil engineer.

As a young lad growing up in Stockholm, New Jersey, Riha played with trucks, perused architectural plans, and regularly wheedled his parents into pulling over to the side of the road so that he could watch activity at construction sites.

Now, some 10 years later, Riha has achieved a milestone in pursuit of his dream: In May he earned an associate degree in civil technology from NTID. Without skipping a beat, he has enrolled in RIT's civil engineering technology program for the 1991 fall quarter and expects to obtain a bachelor's degree in a few years.

And he may not stop there. The 22-year-old is considering enrolling in law school to prepare himself for a career in environmental law that would combine his passions for design, construction, and preserving the environment.

"I'm satisfied with my education at NTID," says Riha, who first visited the Institute as a high school freshman at the encouragement of his guidance counselor. NTID was Riha's first choice for college because of its range of academic programs and support services.

Raised predominantly in a hearing

world and educated in a mainstream high school, Riha says, "I was overwhelmed when I arrived at NTID and saw hundreds of people signing in front of me. I hardly knew any signs, but I realized that if I wanted to make friends here, I had to learn sign language.

"It took me some time to learn about deaf culture. I started socializing with other deaf students through athletic activities, and I began to understand their point of view about deaf culture," he explains.

While working on co-op with a consulting engineering firm in Mineola, New York, Riha, a detail-oriented person, thrived while learning about computer-aided design (CAD), land surveying and mapping, and concrete and asphalt testing.

"My co-op experience was great," he says. "I used CAD on two different computers, and my supervisor gave me plenty of work to do. Some days I balanced five separate projects simultaneously.

"Civil engineering is a very conservative and picky profession, but it has to be," he continues. "If we're not attentive to details, a building could collapse."

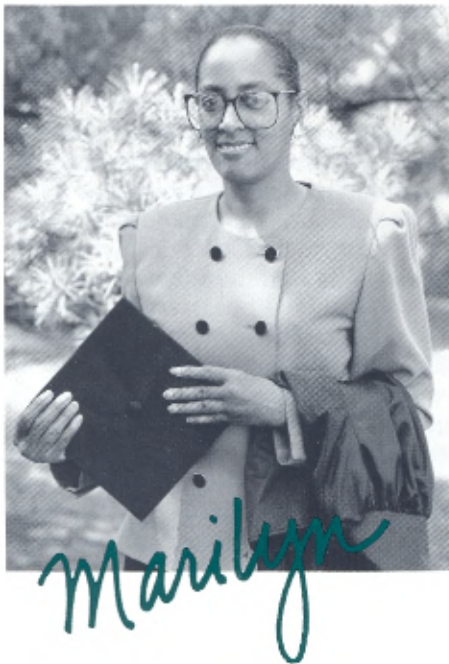
Aside from technical engineering skills that he developed at NTID, Riha says that improving his English language skills has been the most important lesson learned.

"When I came to NTID, I realized that my English skills weren't that good," he says. "I had to work my butt off to improve my English, but it's so important because I'll have to write throughout my whole life. I read a lot of novels because I figure the more I read, the better I'll write. Learning English is not only essential for my college education, but for my future, too."

Riha credits Robert Keiffer, associate professor in the construction technologies department, for increasing his enthusiasm both for English and the civil technology field.

"Mr. Keiffer's teaching skills and knowledge encouraged me to learn more and inspired me to continue my education in civil engineering," he says.

"I'm a goal-oriented person," Riha explains. "My first goal was to graduate from high school, and I did. My second goal was to obtain my associate degree, and I did that, too. Now my third goal is to receive my bachelor's degree, and I know I can accomplish that. After that, who knows? Maybe law school..."



Her Hands Do the Talking: Marilyn Hughes

Today, college classrooms are filled with older, nontraditional students in pursuit of academic degrees. So the fact that Marilyn Hughes, a 41-year-old grandmother of five, enrolled two years ago in NTID's educational interpreting program is not all that unusual.

What does make her story atypical is that Hughes has struggled over the past several years with systemic lupus, an inflammatory connective-tissue disease that can result in weakness, fatigue, and joint pain resembling that of rheumatoid arthritis. Yet while an NTID undergraduate pursuing an associate degree, Hughes' symptoms practically disappeared.

"I became permanently disabled from lupus 12 years ago," Hughes recalls, "and my doctors told me I couldn't do much of anything."

Depressed by this news, she turned to religion for comfort. While attending Bethel Full Gospel Church in downtown

Rochester, she saw a man using sign language to interpret the worship service.

Intrigued by her first contact with the visual language, Hughes enrolled in sign language classes and developed a new skill. Determined to continue learning, and despite her immunologist's concern that interpreting might compound her physical problems, she registered for the educational interpreting program's introductory summer session. After passing the entrance exams, Hughes began the program full time in September 1989.

"Previously, I knew nothing about deaf culture, but as an NTID student, I was exposed to cultural diversity," she says. "I learned that deaf people are very honest with one another. They'll say, 'Hey, I see you've put on weight,' and that's okay, whereas hearing people generally aren't that open.

"Unlike some students," she continues, "I kept, rather than sold back, all of my textbooks because I didn't want to part with any of them. I really enjoyed the educational interpreting program; in fact, I wish it lasted four years instead of just two."

To gain hands-on interpreting experience, Hughes performed two required practicums: Last winter, she worked as a classroom interpreter in RIT's College of Liberal Arts, and during the spring she interpreted for three deaf eighth-grade students enrolled in Rochester mainstream program. While interpreting technical terminology in the RIT class was difficult, Hughes enjoyed the middle school interpreting stint because of the relaxed classroom atmosphere. Hughes also interpreted for YMCA swim classes and at church.

Throughout the program—and much to her own and her doctor's surprise—Hughes' physical pains diminished.

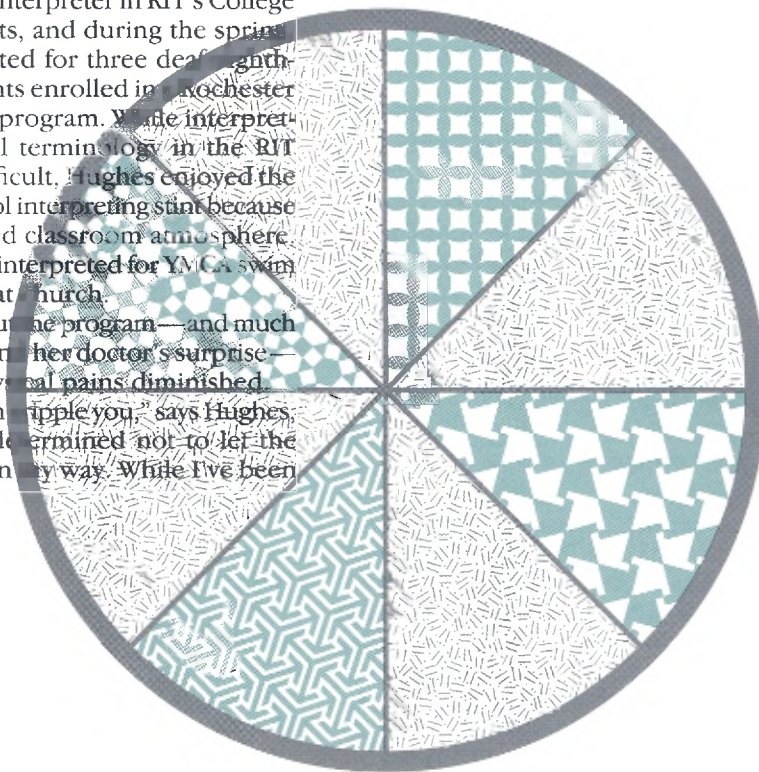
"Lupus can cripple you," says Hughes, "but I was determined not to let the disease get in my way. While I've been

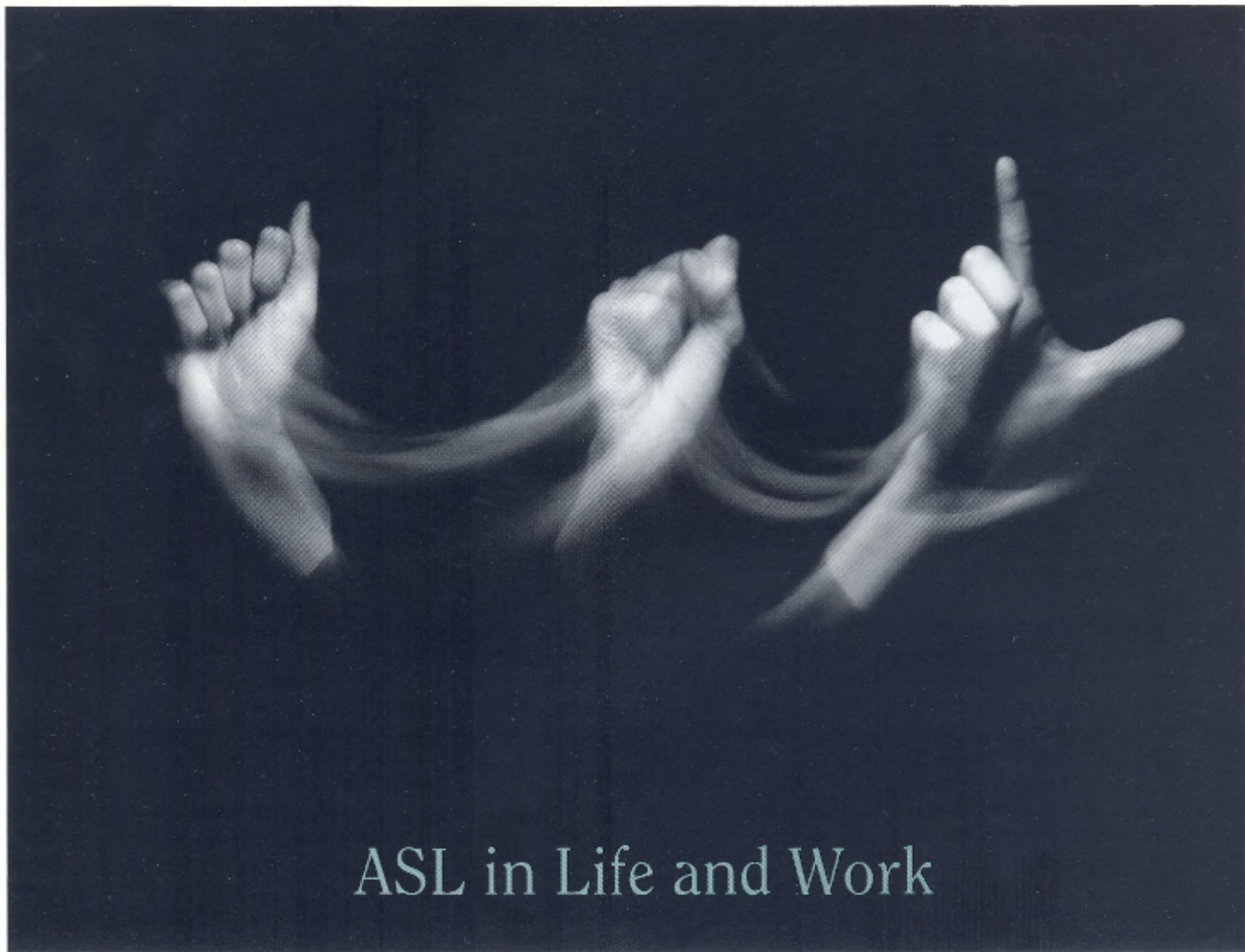
interacting with others in school during the past two years, I haven't been sick at all. I sure don't want to sit home now and be concerned about a disease," she says with determination.

Currently, Hughes' goal is to establish a deaf ministry at Rochester's New Life Fellowship Church. Additionally, she plans to continue interpreting part time and is considering eventual enrollment in NTID's Joint Educational Specialist Program, a master's degree program that prepares individuals to teach deaf students.

"I've enjoyed being a student at NTID," she says. "As an older student returning to school, I was really afraid. But throughout the program, I maintained a 3.0 grade point average. I often thought to myself, 'She's an old lady, but she can do it.'

"NTID has really prepared me for a new career," adds Hughes, a former secretary. "The past two years in school have been wonderful, and now I'm looking forward to an exciting career."





ASL in Life and Work

Language of Pride

by Pamela Seabon

Stacy Finkle, a 1991 criminal justice graduate, wanted to learn as much about deaf culture as possible before leaving RIT.

Stimulated by the number of deaf students and friends on campus, Finkle began formal learning about deafness last year when she enrolled in RIT's College of Liberal Arts' three-quarter series of American Sign Language (ASL) courses. The courses examine linguistic features and basic vocabulary of ASL as well as provide knowledge about deaf culture. Finkle also attended NTID's ASL Lecture Series, which, she says, was most influential in developing her

appreciation for and understanding of deaf culture.

"I attended the lectures to see how ASL affects the lives of those who use it daily," says Finkle. "I've found ASL to be a fascinating language that tells a lot about the history and culture of deaf people."

Initiated six years ago to provide information about ASL to teachers, researchers, and designers of instructional materials, the ASL Lecture Series invites scholars, alumni, and faculty and staff members of NTID to discuss various aspects of the language each academic year. Lecturers are selected on the basis of their knowledge of ASL and their

ability to contribute to specific themes.

Previous themes have been "ASL in Grammar and Discourse," "ASL and Deaf Culture," "The Role of ASL in Language Learning," "The Role of ASL in Education," and "ASL and History."

Although NTID's philosophy about communication is eclectic, the Institute recognizes that ASL is a culturally rooted manual-visual language that affects the lives of many professionals and students.

"ASL provides the basis for other kinds of signing in the United States," says Dr. Susan Fischer, research associate in the department of communication research and co-coordinator of the



Dr. Susan Fischer: "ASL provides the basis for other kinds of signing in the United States. It is the root of sign language and sign systems used throughout this country."

ASL Lecture Series. "It is the root of sign language and sign systems used throughout this country."

The 1990-91 series, "ASL in Life and Work," focused on RIT graduates who use the language at home, on the job, and throughout their lives. The lecturers—six of them—included an actor, engineer, government official, linguist/poet, interpreter, and missionary. Though the guests had different stories to tell, their lectures communicated one significant message: ASL is a language of pride, dignity, and respect.

Lecturer Barbara Jean ("B.J.") Wood, a 1975 RIT social work graduate who now is commissioner of the Massachusetts Commonwealth Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, remembers well how she grew to love and respect ASL.

Encouraged by her family and speech therapists to speechread and use her voice, Wood identified minimally with deaf culture until entering NTID in 1970.

She began to learn sign language, and, through interaction with her classmates, she soon grew to appreciate deaf culture. But what really opened her eyes and heart was her first job as a rehabilitation aide for deaf clients within a Massachusetts statewide organization for independent living, based in Boston.

"It was at that point that I discovered

ASL and decided to make it my preferred language," she says.

Wood's lecture, "You Speak So Well, Why Aren't You Using Your Voice?," described the anguish she experiences whenever people ask her this question.

"This is one of the most oppressive statements that can be made to a deaf person," she says. "It's like me saying 'Why don't you master ASL?' to a hearing person.

"My presentation was intended to educate people to think more creatively," she continues. "Instead of making oppressive statements, I want people to ask, 'How can we communicate better? What is the best way to do this?'"

Like Wood, Clayton Valli, a 1973 NTID photo/media technologies graduate, often grew frustrated when he realized that hearing people felt sorry for him. He recalls an instance when he was 12 and attended a national conference for 4-H Cooperative Extension clubs. He had prepared a project for the event and assumed that all he had to do was display it. But when he realized he had to deliver a speech during the convention, anxiety set in.

"My speech therapists had been telling me that I spoke well, and they often commended me for my efforts," he explains. "But when I got up on stage and began to tell other 4-H members

about my project, their faces told me something different."

Though he was awarded a blue ribbon for his endeavor, Valli, at that point, decided not to use voice again as his primary means of communication.

"My voice turned off that day," he says.

Today, this instructor in the department of linguistics and interpreting at Gallaudet University is an ASL linguist who uses the language proudly. A teacher at the university since 1985, Valli visits schools for deaf students across the country, presenting ASL poetry and lecturing about the importance of the language and its role within the deaf community.

"I want students to know that ASL is as valid as English," he says. "I want to stir up enough emotion to make them stand up and be proud of the language."

His lecture, "Self-Discovery of a Deaf Adult," explored how he became familiar with ASL and began to cherish all that it has to offer.

Treasuring ASL has never been a problem for 1982 RIT College of Engineering graduate Robert Cagle. In his presentation, "Integration of English and ASL in My Life," he explained how growing up in an all-deaf family exposed him to and encouraged him to use ASL as his first language. A proud signer



Barbara Jean ("B.J.") Wood: "My presentation was intended to educate people to think more creatively. Instead of making oppressive statements, I want people to ask, 'How can we communicate better?'"

with a strong deaf heritage, Cagle often felt restrained when asked by hearing people to use his voice.

"Some people tried to force me to talk," he says. "I felt that was pointless because I am a native ASL signer, and I am comfortable and proud of that."

Fellow signer Emory Dively, a 1980 RIT social work graduate, says that deaf people must be careful not to lose their perspective in their climb to success.

A missionary and director of the Deaf International Bible College in Minneapolis, Dively says that some people want to achieve such prosperity and respect in the world that they begin to lose their identity with deaf culture.

"Deaf people can find happiness in the hearing world, but we must go back to our culture to get recharged from time to time," he says. "We must remember who we are and where we're from. ASL is an integral part of deaf culture, and we must keep the culture alive."

Full-time interpreter for a deaf faculty member at the University of Rochester and 1985 graduate of NTID's interpreter training program, Aaron Brace knows that he never will understand ASL or deaf culture the way that deaf people do. His message was similar to those of other lecturers: "There is a real need for ASL and for people to understand what it is."

In his presentation, "On Becoming Real," geared toward interpreters and hearing people who sign, Brace discussed how important it is for interpreters to go beyond the use of signed English, a system in which signs are linked together in English word order and based on English meaning and pronunciation. In order to facilitate successful communication with deaf people, interpreters must know the mechanics of ASL, learn the rules, and have a basic understanding of the language, he contends.

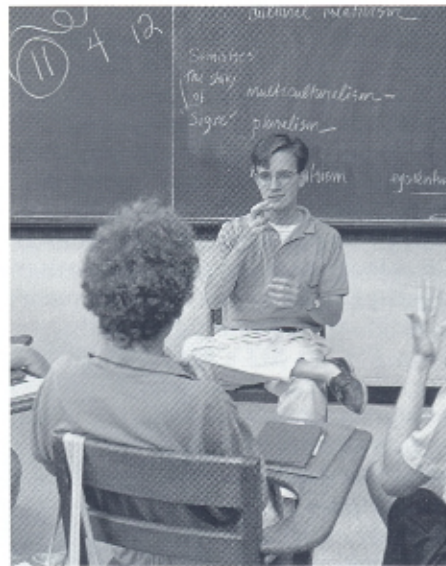
"ASL is a 'real' language," he says. "We must respect that it was developed by and comes from within a culture. We must learn the language from the community in order to use it properly."

The appropriate use of ASL poses a challenge to Michael Lamitola, a 1980 social work graduate who now is a professional actor. He sometimes finds

it difficult to translate lines from a script into ASL because, he says, there are so many ways to express a situation that it is difficult to tell if he's delivering the message effectively.

"Communication can become distorted," says Lamitola. "People often interpret messages differently and therefore pass them on to others differently."

Lamitola, whose lecture was titled "Acting with ASL," believes that his job goes beyond acting. He thinks of himself as an ambassador of information who must use many methods of communication in order to deliver an effective



Aaron Brace: "ASL is a 'real' language. We must respect that it was developed by and comes from within a culture. We must learn the language from the community in order to use it properly."

message. Although he uses communication methods other than ASL, the language does play a vital role in his understanding of and link to deaf culture.

Though not a veteran signer, Dr. James Graves, chairperson of the department of performing arts, also finds ASL a vital link to deaf culture. He finds the ASL Lecture Series to be an excellent vehicle for teaching people about deaf culture. He appreciates having the

choice of either translating the lectures for himself or listening to voiced interpretations through provided headsets.

"I prefer not to use the headsets," explains Graves. "The series challenges my receptive skills and helps improve my signing ability."

For Susan Dauenhauer, office systems specialist in the department of information services, the lecture series provides a structured medium of exposure to ASL.

"The series lets people actually see ASL without signed English or voice interpretations interfering," says Dauenhauer. "And it's good to see that ASL is being used in lectures, where it is highly visible and can gain more respect."

"It was interesting to see the various personal styles in relation to the use of the language," says Leslie Greer, adjunct instructor in NTID's Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education.

A veteran ASL signer, Greer commends the series organizers for inviting such a diverse panel of ASL signers.

The ASL Lecture Series is but one NTID program designed to educate the RIT community about deafness and deaf culture. Other efforts include ASL/Deaf Culture credit courses offered to students through the College of Liberal Arts; RITSign, a noncredit program for hearing students that is led by deaf RIT student-teachers; and the RIT Intensive Summer Sign Language/Deaf Culture Program offered for its second year this past summer to non-NTID faculty and staff members.

"RIT is committed to fostering a richer environment through recognizing and valuing the cultural and individual diversity within the community," says Dr. Jeffrey Porter, assistant dean and director of the division of general education programs. "The more people within RIT who have a shared understanding of sign language and deaf culture, the more we are able to contribute toward enriching our overall academic environment."



After Class

Students mix and mingle through post-*class*-ical activities

by Kathryn Schmitz

At RIT, there's an extracurricular club for nearly every interest because, after all, there's more to college life than just classes.

Students join clubs for all kinds of reasons. Some seek fellowship through cultural or religious groups, some want to work on environmental or political issues, others like being part of a social or service fraternity or sorority, and still others find academic support through technical clubs.

In almost all cases, students can't help but grow through their club experiences, according to Eleanor Rosenfield, chairperson of the department of human development and former faculty advisor to the NTID Student Congress (NSC). She observes that when students work together in an extracurricular organization, they change.

"They become more articulate and assertive," says Rosenfield. "They develop organizational skills, thinking skills, public speaking skills. Sometimes they don't see their own growth because they're busy with some issue in their club. Crisis times are excellent times to grow, but students don't realize that until they look back."

As president of NTID's Ebony Club, Pamela McClain, who received an associate degree in accounting in May and now is a second-year social work student, says she has become a leader through club activities.

"When I first came to Ebony Club meetings, I was shy and quiet," she explains. "After I'd been in the black deaf

community for a while, I realized the community needed someone to keep the club alive. I became more assertive, and I developed leadership skills."

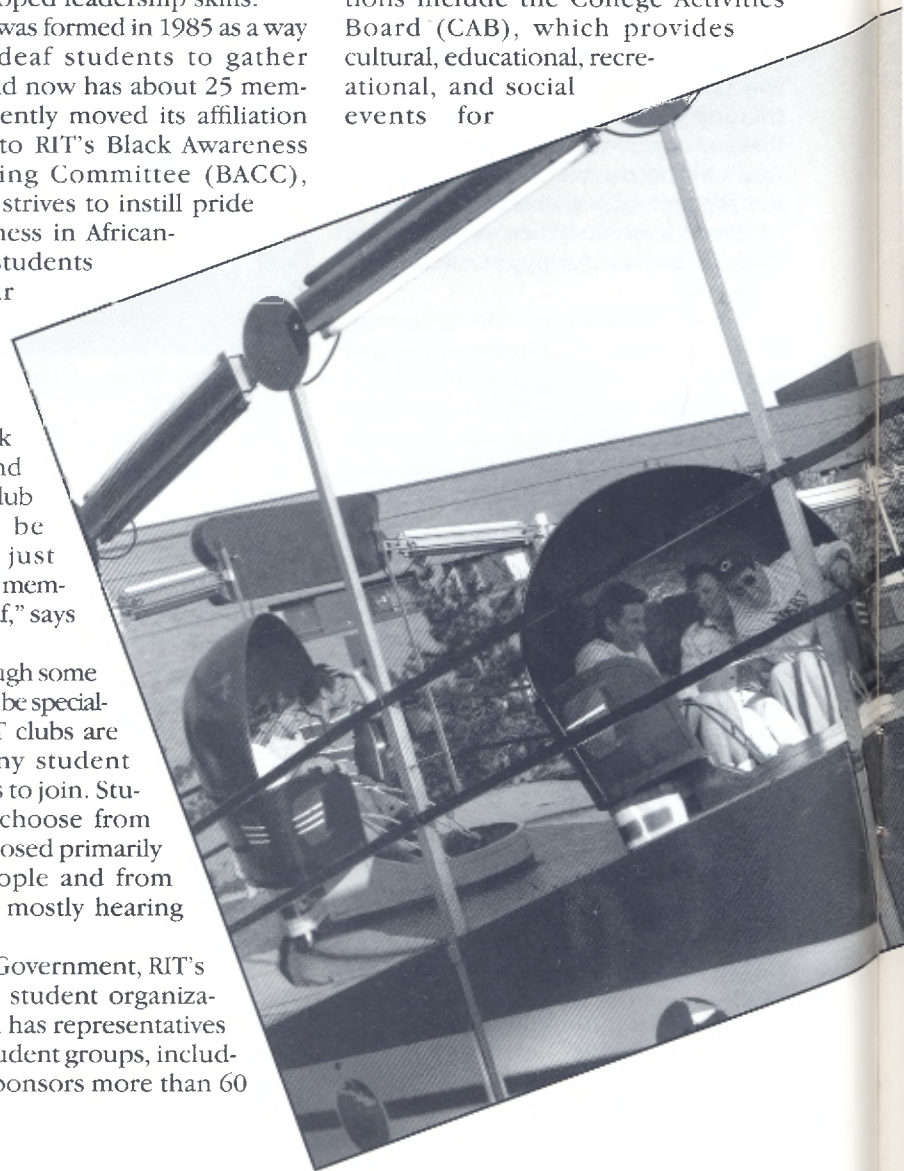
The club was formed in 1985 as a way for black deaf students to gather together and now has about 25 members. It recently moved its affiliation from NSC to RIT's Black Awareness Coordinating Committee (BACC), which also strives to instill pride and awareness in African-American students and their culture.

"I think all black students should work together, and the Ebony Club shouldn't be separated just because our members are deaf," says McClain.

Even though some may seem to be specialized, all RIT clubs are open to any student who wishes to join. Students can choose from clubs composed primarily of deaf people and from those with mostly hearing people.

Student Government, RIT's centralized student organization, which has representatives from key student groups, including NSC, sponsors more than 60

clubs. The Greek Council is the umbrella organization for 16 fraternities and sororities. Other major organizations include the College Activities Board (CAB), which provides cultural, educational, recreational, and social events for



students; Off-Campus Student Association, which represents all students living in RIT-owned apartments and other off-campus housing; Residence Halls Association (RHA), which represents all resident students and is concerned with improving life in residence halls; *Reporter*, RIT's student magazine; *Techmila*, the yearbook; and WTR radio.

According to Marie Bernard, liaison in the department of interpreting services who is responsible for scheduling interpreters for club events, many RIT organizations have as few as one and up to 10 deaf members who show up regularly.

"The strongest activity by deaf students is within organizations with mostly deaf members," says Bernard. "A variety of other organizations on campus appeal to deaf students as well."

One particularly well-mixed club is the RIT Student Music Association, founded in 1988 by deaf members of the NTID Combo to promote music

on campus. Sandra Lemmon, third-year business administration student and secretary of the club, describes the group, composed of equal numbers of deaf and hearing members, as "cohesive."

"Our love for music brings us together," she says. "The club is successful because hearing and deaf members want to make it work."

Like the music club and other RIT organizations, clubs sponsored by NSC are open to anyone interested in joining. NSC represents all NTID students and provides financial support and guidance to clubs seeking to establish themselves. It sponsors the Asian Deaf Club, Bible Believer Club, Business Club, Chess/Backgammon Club, Engineering Club, Scuba Diving Club, and Signatures and Co. (a dance group). More than 200 students are involved with NSC and its affiliated organizations.

NSC's mission is three-fold: to represent NTID students to the rest of the RIT community; to help deaf students develop and maintain clubs and organizations that meet their needs and interests; and to provide opportunities for NTID students to interact academically, athletically, culturally, and socially with other students at RIT.

"NSC is an organization that helps students who have an interest and want to set a goal," says Anthony DiGiovanni, NSC president and first-year business computer science student. "We encourage students to form clubs because we want them to

get out of their rooms and get together with people with similar interests."

NSC also works to make the RIT community aware of issues that are important to deaf members. One "hot" issue that has been resolved was the lack of captioning for on-campus movies, which in effect made the movies inaccessible to deaf students.

All RIT students pay an activities fee each year that helps fund campus activities, including the Talisman Cine

Arts program, run by the CAB, which shows current movies on campus.

For years, Talisman scheduled interpreters for movie showings. When closed captioning became more widely available on television and rental movie videotapes a few years ago, deaf student attendance at Talisman events dropped because students found watching the interpreters distracting. Deaf viewers preferred captions.

NSC picked up the issue last year and began to lobby CAB to show captioned films.

"It's NSC's duty to make sure that campus life is accessible to deaf students," says DiGiovanni. "We all pay the student activities fee, so we all should be able to participate."

CAB began to show captioned films every Thursday night this summer and, beginning this fall, agreed to show the captioned versions during the early screening on Fridays and the late screening on Saturdays.

NSC did not work alone on the captioning issue; it had the help of RHA.

"By working together within each of our groups and within the RIT community, we can resolve problems," says Ian Ratner, fourth-year computer science student and vice president and past president of RHA. "We heavily supported NSC members in their fight for captioned films, and they worked with us on this year's Block Party [a spring campuswide event]. It really is natural for hearing and deaf students to work together; it just takes a bit of effort. It's beneficial to us all."

Ratner began his affiliation with RHA during his first year at RIT when he served as a floor representative to his residence area government, Ellingson-Peterson-Bell (EPB) halls, which has the highest population of deaf students on campus. Ratner comments that the EPB area government had a roughly equal ratio of deaf and hearing students.

"I liked the area government because the group came together rather than separating into hearing and deaf factions," he says. "There wasn't a majority pulling it one way or another."

Ratner dislikes what he perceives as a tendency to label a group as deaf or hearing.

"I don't like the phrase 'deaf fraternity' or 'hearing fraternity,'" he explains.

Rosenfield offers another view of such labeling, however. She recalls that NSC did not receive voting privileges on Student Government, formerly Student



More than one way to have fun
Students take a break from studies by attending campus events like RIT's Spring Carnival, sponsored by Student Government; Block Party, sponsored by Residence Halls Association and NTID Student Congress; and a chess tournament (next page), sponsored by NTID's Chess/Backgammon Club.

Directorate, until seven years ago. She also remembers that, until 10 years ago, RIT did not encourage the formation of fraternities or sororities composed predominantly of deaf members.

"Only three to five deaf students would pledge

fraternities each year," says Rosenfield.

"They simply were not visible. Now, with 'deaf' fraternities and sororities, more deaf students are involved with the system. There's actually more positive interaction."

Rosenfield notes that each of the three predominantly deaf fraternities and two sororities has a vote on RIT's Greek Council, giving their collective 250 members considerably more political power than they would have as members dispersed in other Greek organizations.

Such formal interaction has helped develop more social mingling among the groups. For the first time, a primarily deaf fraternity, Sigma Kappa Tau (Σ KT), and a mostly hearing sorority, Zeta Tau Alpha, are planning a dinner/dance together to be held next spring.

"This party should be an example of how open and receptive we in the Greek community can be of each other," says James McDonald, fourth-year printing production technology student and Σ KT brother. "We all can work together to do anything we want."

The social scene is not the only area in which people learn to work together. DiGiovanni and Michelle Price, third-year social work student and vice president of NSC, have been promoting greater awareness of the needs of deaf students to their hearing peers in Student Government.



Members of all major RIT student organizations on campus, including NSC, attended a Student Government leadership retreat last fall. The retreat resulted in a new requirement that all Student Government board members take sign language classes.

"Deaf and hearing people are starting to make adjustments when deaf people are present at meetings," says Price.

One such adjustment is the use of a "communication ball," held by whoever is speaking. When finished, the speaker then passes it to the next speaker in a group, minimizing interruptions that deaf people find difficult to follow. NSC members demonstrated this technique at the retreat during a workshop on deafness.

Price notes that the retreat was successful for everyone, deaf and hearing.

"Communication barriers came down so much," she says.

"People asked questions they'd been afraid to ask before," agrees Helene Manglaris, director of RIT's department of student activities, who organized the retreat. "Hearing students wanted to know how to work with interpreters

and how to communicate with their deaf peers."

Bernard notes that despite strong efforts made this year toward deaf awareness, including the proposal made by the president of Student Government to RIT's Policy Council that learning basic sign language become a mandatory part of orientation for incoming freshmen, many of the same challenges remain.

"The people in student groups change every year," she explains. "We always need to educate new people about the needs of interpreters and deaf members. There's never a permanent fix."

One potential solution that DiGiovanni is striving to implement is the standardization of procedures used to register upcoming campus events. Working with Student Government, he plans to ensure that registration forms include reminders to organizers to request interpreters or arrange for captioning.

"I want to make the system work for everyone," he explains.

Working together on issues and events in clubs tends to bring out creative and caring solutions from students who learn to cooperate.

"If student leaders take extra steps to communicate and learn to become more understanding with one another," says Manglaris, "in the long run, that attitude will permeate the rest of RIT."

According to Todd Hicks, fifth-year civil engineering technology student and tournament director of the Chess/Backgammon Club, club participation has other benefits that apply to academics and life after college.

"Besides making friends and developing a network of people around the country and the world who play chess, we develop analytical strengths that we can use in our careers," he says. "In addition, everyone, deaf and hearing, learns to mix and mingle."



THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR

NTID Big Brothers/Big Sisters 'adopt' area deaf and hard-of-hearing kids

by Deborah R. Waltzer

Growing up in a hearing world can be frightening and confusing for some deaf and hard-of-hearing children. When they live in a world devoid of contact with other deaf people, these children sometimes believe they'll eventually outgrow their deafness or even fear that they won't grow up at all. Since they've never actually seen a deaf adult, they can't conceptualize adulthood and might conclude that they will die prematurely.

Driven by the philosophy that deaf children need adult role models familiar with deaf culture in order to negate such scary thoughts, the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program in Rochester, New York, established a Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing Mentoring Project late in 1990. Funded by nine local corporations and founda-

tions, the program matches deaf and hard-of-hearing children, ages 5-17, with volunteer mentors—deaf, hard of hearing, or hearing—who have extensive knowledge of deaf culture.

Although nearly 500 Big Brothers/Big Sisters agencies are responsible for some 75,000 volunteer-child matches across the country, only a handful of programs are designed specifically to serve deaf and hard-of-hearing children, according to Colleen Watson, director of marketing and communications for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, an 87-year-old organization based in Philadelphia.

Administrators of Rochester's Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, which boasts more than 875 adult/child matches in the metropolitan area, felt

there was a need for a special program to serve deaf youths because the community has one of the highest per capita deaf and hard-of-hearing populations in the country, says Brian Fox, mentoring project supervisor.

"Deaf and hard-of-hearing children usually have contact with many hearing people," explains Fox, who is hard of hearing, "but they really need a deaf person in their lives to be a role model, an advocate, or just someone to have fun with.

"We tell volunteers they don't have to buy the child everything or become a taxicab service," he adds.

Volunteers just need to be good friends, Fox continues. Pairs are encouraged to meet for a few hours weekly for an outing and conversation.

Eleven-year-old Michael Rogers of suburban Pittsford, New York, is one child who needs a good friend. The only member of his family with a hearing loss, Rogers is hard of hearing as a result of premature birth.

"Michael is extremely frustrated and angry with his hearing loss," says his mother, Deborah Rogers, senior clinical research coordinator for Cytologies, Inc., and a single parent who has custody of Michael while his twin brother and older sister live with their father.

"Michael has excellent speech and reads lips well," she adds, "but he falls between the cracks because he's not deaf and he's not hearing."

Enter John Kirsh, visiting instructor in NTID's physics and technical mathematics department, who, like Rogers, is hard of hearing. An announcement about the new mentoring project in the Institute's employee newsletter last winter caught his eye.

"What appealed to me most about the program was my belief that kids need role models to look up to," explains Kirsh, a 1989 RIT applied mathematics graduate, who during high school was a camp counselor for deaf children in his hometown of Des Plaines, Illinois. Like Rogers, Kirsh is the only person in his seven-member family with a hearing loss.

Following standard screening measures—interviewing with John Blevins, mentoring project college coordinator and a deaf 1991 RIT social work graduate; submitting three letters of reference; agreeing to a police background check; and participating in a four-hour training session—Kirsh was matched with Rogers.

Typically, Friday nights are reserved for the pair's get-togethers. Excursions

might include a bite of supper at a casual restaurant followed by bowling, a trip to a video arcade, or a stop at a sporting event.

But, both say, their favorite pastime is simply talking and comparing notes about what it's like to grow up as a hard-of-hearing person.

"Some of the things that have happened to me also happened to John," says Rogers. "He told me that when he was a kid sitting around the dinner table, his mom or dad would say something funny. Because he's hard of hearing, John would miss it, so they'd have to repeat it. But it just wasn't as funny the second time. That has happened to me, too."

Kirsh adds: "It's exciting for me to relate to Michael's experiences by remembering my own childhood. I suggest ways for him to cope and try to help him avoid making some of the same mistakes I made."

"It's really exciting to see 'my kid' learning something new."

The Big Brothers/Big Sisters Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing Mentoring Project has received praise from numerous corners.

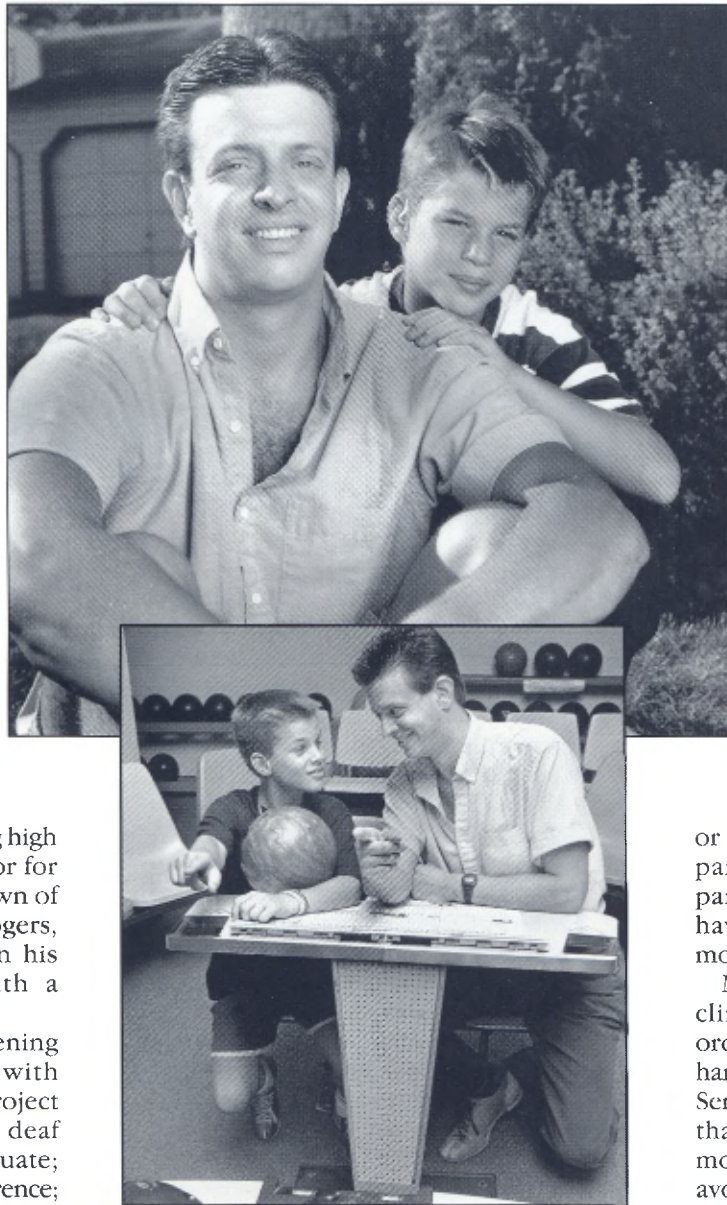
Dr. Elizabeth O'Brien, professor in NTID's English department and project leader for NTID's parent outreach project, feels that the mentoring program is "a wonderful idea and long overdue." Citing the statistic that 90 percent of school-age American children who are deaf

or hard of hearing have hearing parents, O'Brien says, "These parents want opportunities to have deaf adults serve as role models for their kids."

Meredith Low, a hard-of-hearing clinical social worker and coordinator of services for deaf and hard-of-hearing people for Family Service of Rochester, Inc., believes that exposure to positive role models might help deaf children avoid some of the difficulties her adult clients experience.

"Deaf and hard-of-hearing kids often are socially isolated," she says. "This program serves needs that may not be filled otherwise."

When the mentoring project was



He's my brother Eleven-year-old Michael Rogers knows that he can count on Big Brother John Kirsh for friendship, understanding, and good times.

launched late last fall, two other NTID staff members, in addition to Kirsh, volunteered.

Michelle Cutler, former career development counselor in the School of Visual Communications, was intrigued when she read about the mentoring project.

"I love kids, and I don't have any of my own, so I thought it sounded like a great way to get involved," she says.

The Buffalo, New York, native, who is hearing, had become immersed in deaf culture through her work at NTID. She received a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling for the deaf from San Diego State University and has excellent sign language skills.

Cutler was matched with Melinda ("Mindy") Harrison, coincidentally the 11-year-old daughter of two of Cutler's deaf friends. Describing her young friend, she says, "Mindy's a doll. She's bright and sparkly, and I really enjoy her company."

As a student at the Rochester School for the Deaf, Harrison saw a poster advertising the project and told her parents she wanted to participate. Cutler and her "sister" communicate in American Sign Language and meet every few weeks for roller skating, indoor ice skating, or dinner at Cutler's home.

Word of the pilot project interested NTID staff member Ronnie Mae Tyson, too. Feeling sad about missing numerous nieces and nephews in her native state of Florida motivated the career opportunities advisor in NTID's department of career outreach and admissions to become a Big Sister.

Tyson fondly recalls her first encounter with her 9-year-old "little sister" Jennifer Young.

"At our first meeting, Jennifer was very shy," says Tyson. "For our second meeting, we went to a park, and she started to open up a little bit. Then I took her to McDonald's, and suddenly

she was extremely talkative!"

Before their first get-together in April, Tyson was concerned that their racial differences—Tyson is black and Young is white—might pose a problem.

"I was worried that it would not work out," she says, "but we get along fine. I think Jennifer really likes me because she asked me to bring her to my house for dinner, and she invited me to dinner at her house. I thought it was interesting that she mentioned that so early in our relationship."

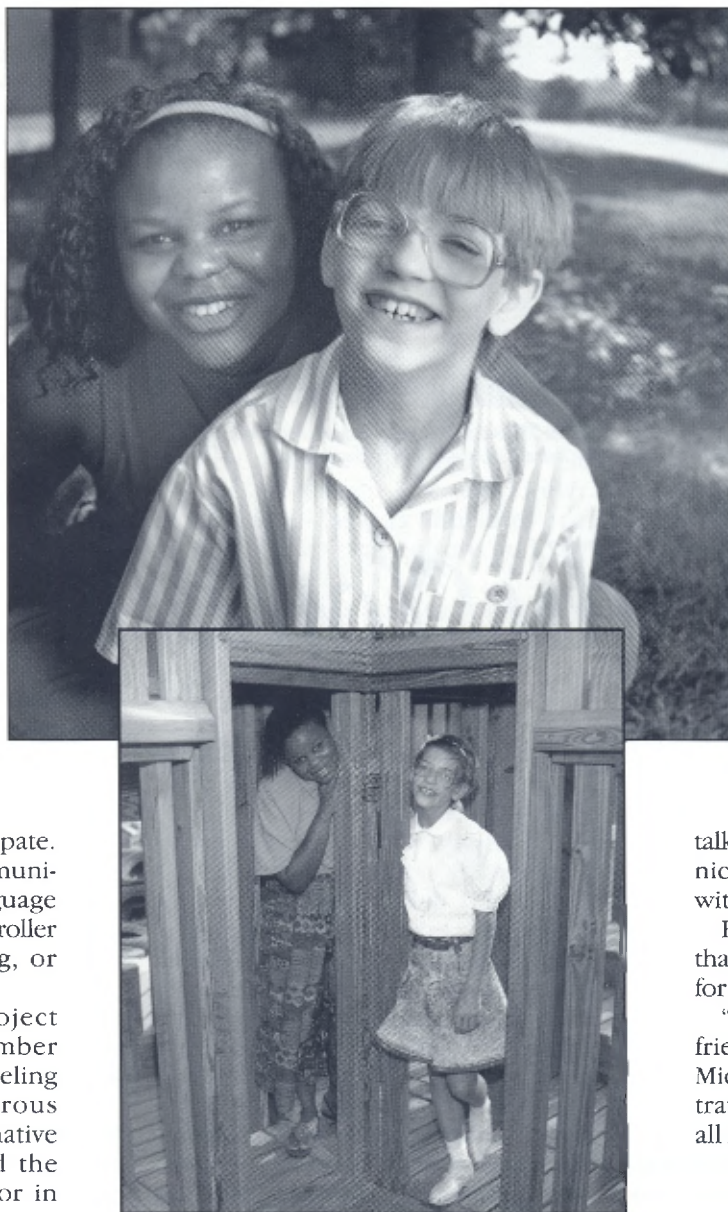
Responding to the early success of the project that to-date has matched six pairs of children and volunteers, Pearl Rubin, president of Rochester's Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation, a major benefactor of the project, says, "It's important for deaf and hard-of-hearing children to have adult friends who take an interest in them because it makes them feel good about themselves."

Having Big Brother Kirsh in his life with so many experiences similar to his own has helped Rogers tremendously.

"I have someone to talk to," says Rogers. "John is really nice and kind. I have a lot of fun with him, that's for sure."

Rogers' mother strongly believes that Kirsh is a positive role model for her son.

"I hope they will be lifelong friends and that John will guide Michael through some of his frustrations," she says. "After all, we all need people we can relate to."



Sisters at heart Big Sister Ronnie Mae Tyson and Jennifer Young share lots of laughs during their weekly get-togethers.



No pearly gates here The Rev. James Sauers, director of Campus Ministries, welcomes students to RIT's Kilian J. and Caroline F. Schmitt Interfaith Center, made of everyday brick.

"Not until college years do some students ask questions like 'Why am I here?' and 'Will what I do matter?'" says the Rev. Lawrence ("Butch") Mothersell, an Episcopal minister who has been a member of the Campus Ministries staff for seven years. "It's then that they enter the realm of wanting and needing to find answers to those questions."

For many students, both deaf and hearing, exposure to religion while at college is vastly different from what they experienced in their places of worship at home.

"Generally, students are introduced to their own [way of celebrating] faith for the first time while at college," explains the Rev. Jeffrey Hering, a Lutheran pastor and campus minister. "At home, students are part of their parents' place of worship, but at college they begin to investigate their own faith."

There are many ways in which students can choose to investigate or celebrate their faith. Campus Ministries is one option available to students who wish to fulfill their spiritual needs while attending RIT.

"We are here for students and faculty and staff members during times of crisis as well as rejoicing. We're part of the fabric of campus," explains the Rev. James Sauers, director of Campus Ministries.

In addition to daily or weekly services, one-on-one meetings with students, and discussion groups, other religious activities that are accessible to both deaf and hearing members of the RIT community include holiday get-togethers and special events. Campus Ministries staff members also have organized and presented activities with a special emphasis on issues related to deaf people.

The 10 Campus Ministries staff members, representing various religious denominations—including African/American Fellowship, Assembly of God, Catholic, Episcopal, Jewish, Lutheran, Methodist, Protestant, and Southern Baptist—have open-door policies and are available to discuss everything from religion to personal concerns to students' coursework.

Like Gorman, some students have formed special relationships with Campus Ministries staff members.

Adebola ("Bola") Desalu, second-year student in the information systems program, and Linda Dolby, minister of the Genesee Valley United Methodist Church and a part-time campus minister, meet weekly at RIT's Kilian J. and Caroline F. Schmitt Interfaith Center to

Faithfully Yours

At RIT's Campus Ministries, the door's always open

by Beth M. Pessin

When Kathy Gorman was 12, she begged her mother to stop taking her to church.

Gorman and her brother, both of whom are deaf, had become bored with the weekly services because they were not interpreted.

"We never understood what was being said," comments Gorman. "So my brother and I would sit in church and fool around."

Eleven years later, Gorman, third-year student in NTID's medical laboratory technology program, decided to learn more about her religion and to seek answers to the questions she had had all those years.

"I didn't want to feel like an outsider anymore," says Gorman, who plans to be married this summer and wanted to

be confirmed in the Catholic Church before her wedding day.

To do so, she sought the help and support of RIT's Campus Ministries. For six months, she worked individually with Sister Marlene Vigna, a campus minister, to prepare for Confirmation, the last sacrament of initiation in the Catholic faith. Gorman says she now has a better understanding of the church and enjoys attending services; since they are interpreted, she understands the significance of the rituals.

During their college years, students often develop new ways of looking at a range of issues, including religion. For deaf students, access to their religion may be a new experience, and like Gorman, they may have a strong desire to learn more about their faith.

discuss questions related to Desalu's religious studies.

"Bola has a hunger for understanding her faith," says Dolby. "From the first time I met her, I was struck by the fact that she is a special person."

"Religion is important to me; I come from a strong religious heritage," says 19-year-old Desalu, whose grandfather is a lay reader in the Anglican Church and whose great-grandfather is a bishop for the United African Methodist Church.

Desalu has been attending the Genesee Valley United Methodist Church ever since she met Dolby during NTID's Summer Vestibule Program last year.

"I visited the church, and after the service, everyone welcomed me. Everyone was so friendly; it immediately felt like a real family," says Desalu.

"Having services sign language interpreted makes a big difference," she adds. "When I used to go to church at home, I was lost. I had no idea what the minister was talking about even though I would stare at the pastor.

"I'd watch the colored windows and think that God was telling me not to be frustrated. I'd imagine God saying, 'One day you'll be able to understand.' That happened when I came to RIT. My faith is stronger now."

Campus Ministries staff members are sensitive to frustrations related to communication accessibility that students may have encountered in the past.

"Some deaf students may have had limited access to their faith at home because of communication barriers," says Sauers, a Catholic priest.

"Often there is no support in the community for deaf and hearing-impaired people [interested in religious services and instruction], and that makes their journey harder," agrees Vigna. "Some parishes are not prepared for hearing-impaired members, and consequently, those individuals fall through the cracks."

Simeon Kolko, director of RIT's Hillel Foundation, which offers opportunities to worship in the Jewish tradition and study Jewish culture, adds, "Because of past communication barriers, some deaf students might lack knowledge about their religion. We are sensitive to that, and it makes what we do doubly important."

To ensure that religious services are accessible to all members of the RIT community, interpreters are provided for most worship services and a loop system—a length of wire encircling a



Mass appeal The Rev. Lawrence ("Butch") Mothersell celebrates Mass using simultaneous communication.

room that amplifies sound, which then is picked up by a hearing aid—has been installed in the Interfaith Center. In addition, Campus Ministries staff members take deaf culture and sign language classes.

Staff members employ a variety of educational methods and communication strategies to teach students about their religion.

"The primary teaching mechanism I use is preaching at Mass," explains Sauers. "I try to apply the faith to experiences in life rather than presenting a dogma or law and order. The essence of the Christian faith—loving God, neighbors, and ourselves—is what I try to get across in a way that is clear and understandable to both hearing and hearing-impaired people," he continues.

In addition to community-wide services, students often seek further explanation of rituals or want to discuss different ideas or problems on a one-on-one basis with campus ministers.

Robert Amend, a 1990 graduate who received a bachelor of fine arts degree in industrial design, says that Campus Ministries played an important role in helping him through some difficult times in his life.

"Campus Ministries tries its best to help students who may be feeling low or just don't know where to turn," he says. "I always liked to stop by to see Father Butch [Mothersell] because he has a special energy that really stands

out. I couldn't help feeling better being with him."

"Students often come in for counseling and ask for information they didn't get along the way," says Mothersell, who also is a member of the World Congress Commission of Spiritual Care, an international group that meets annually to address how to respond to the religious needs of deaf people.

For some deaf students, one need can be finding a place of worship that has a deaf ministry.

"Deaf ministry," Dolby says, "is not just providing an interpreter for worship services. It's important for deaf people to be able to talk with their pastor and to participate in church activities and feel like part of the family."

"I believe that one encounters God through community and culture," says the Rev. Raymond Fleming, pastor of St. Mary's Church of the Deaf in Rochester, whose congregation has a liaison relationship with Campus Ministries through its deacon, Patrick Graybill, visiting assistant professor in NTID's performing arts department. "For deaf students, I feel we're a role model of a community of deaf adults who try to live out their faith from the heart of deaf culture."

Fleming explains that there are cultural adaptations to masses at St. Mary's. For example, congregation members do not bow their heads during prayer service as often is done in predominantly hearing congregations.

"We never bow our heads because we couldn't see what was happening," says Fleming, who is deaf. Services at St. Mary's are celebrated in American Sign Language and voice interpreted for people who do not communicate through sign language.

For many students, being able to participate and grow in their faith and community is an enriching experience.

"I have the feeling that people really care about me," says Desalu. "It's been great being part of the RIT Bible Study Group and sharing experiences."

Interaction with students also is enriching for the campus ministers.

"What I most enjoy about my work with Campus Ministries is that students are full of questions, and they are always challenging me to grow in new ways," says Dolby. "It's an honor to be invited into their lives."



NTID Reconsidered

NTID undertakes a strategic planning process

by Lynne Bohlman

The times they are a-changin' at NTID. Or at least they soon will be.

In March, after 23 years of serving as a highly successful experiment in postsecondary education, NTID commenced a strategic planning process that will assess internal strengths and weaknesses, external forces that pose challenges as well as opportunities, and Institutional values.

In figurative language, strategic planning means that NTID is taking a long, hard look in a mirror; peeking around its brick walls to assess the realities of the larger world; and probing its heart—all in order to create a vision and plan of action that will carry the world's largest technological college for deaf people into the 21st century. Given the increasing diversity of the work force and improvements in technology, change appears inevitable.

Leading this effort for the Institute is a 15-member Strategic Planning Committee, composed of faculty and staff members as well as a student and alumni representative. Seven members of the committee are deaf or hard of hearing; all are proficient in sign language. Dr. Bonnie Meath-Lang, chairperson of the technical and integrative communication studies department, is chairperson of the planning committee, which will make its recommendations to NTID's executive directors in May.

"What's exciting about this process," says Meath-Lang, "is that we're being encouraged to envision the future collectively. We have an opportunity to

question intensely what we want to be, what we want to look like, what kind of education we want to provide, what kind of people we want to serve. And

Robert Shirley, president of the University of Southern Colorado and a leading consultant in the field of strategic planning, Shirley has worked as an academic strategic planning consultant with more than 125 postsecondary institutions throughout the country, including community colleges (Jamestown Community College), private colleges (Baylor, Lehigh), and major research universities (University of Tennessee, University of Missouri).

Shirley's planning model is similar to others in that it requires examination of the external environment and identification of institutional strengths and weaknesses. What makes his model unique, he says, is that it examines the values and culture of an organization; strongly emphasizes decision-making; and involves all major constituents, including students, faculty and staff members, alumni, employers of students and graduates, and trustees.

If there's one key to success using his model, Shirley says, it's "commitment to decision-making, individual involvement, and boldness in creating a future for the Institute."

"I'm really impressed by NTID's commitment to undertake this process in a very, very vigorous way," Shirley says. "A lot of institutions enter it without the commitment to boldness and creativity that NTID obviously has."

While many institutions undertake strategic planning to resolve a crisis, this is not the case for NTID. NTID today is reasonably healthy, fiscally and other-



Strategic strategists NTID's Strategic Planning Committee members will make recommendations concerning the future directions of the Institute in May. From left to right, front row, are Catherine Clark, student Michelle Price, chairperson Dr. Bonnie Meath-Lang, Rose Marie Toscano, and Sharron Metevier Webster; middle row, Gary Mowl, Kathleen Martin, Dr. Marie Raman, Dr. Karen Conner, and Al Smith; back row, Thomas Callaghan, Michael Servé, and Gary Meyer. Missing from the photo are alumna Mary Karol Matchett and Dr. Michael Stinson.

we can work toward the answers not by way of fantasy but through a realistic process."

The process NTID has adopted is based on a model developed by Dr.

A STRATEGIC PLAN & VISION ARE BORN!

DETERMINATION OF

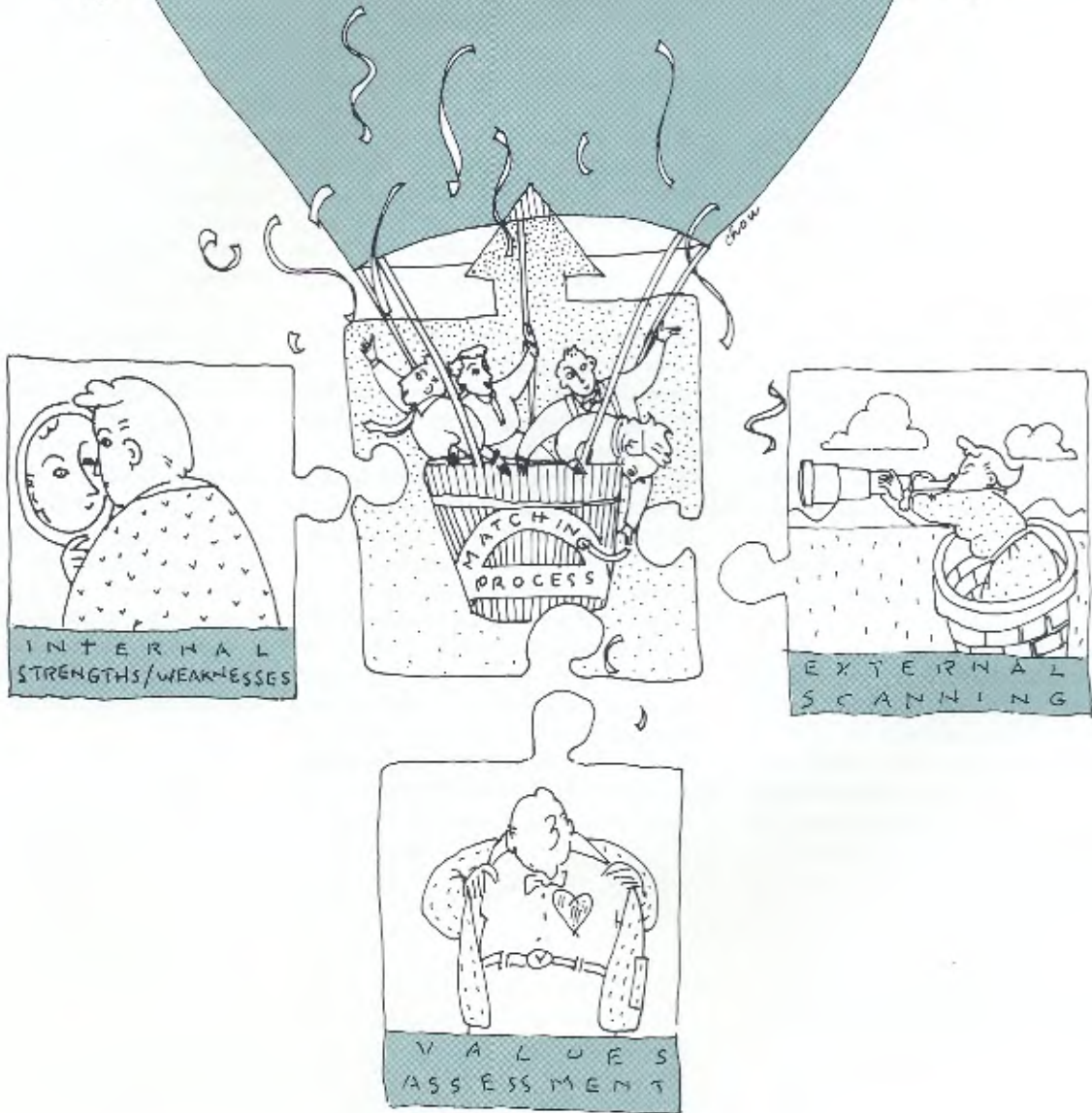
▼
 BASIC MISSION:
 reason for existence of Institute

▼
 CLIENTELE:
 those served by the Institute

▼
 PROGRAM/SERVICE MIX:
 program offerings, determination of priorities, new program developments

▼
 COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE:
 identification of unique aspects

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 KEY OBJECTIVES:
 action steps necessary to move the Institute from now to the desired state



wise. However, changing fiscal, demographic, economic, and technological factors need to be considered. For example, NTID may face a leveling or decline in federal support. In addition, NTID's traditional student pool continues to shrink while the number of minority members within that pool increases, and businesses are demanding that potential employees be skilled in using the most advanced technology.

In announcing the commencement of strategic planning to NTID faculty and staff members, Dr. William Castle, director of NTID and vice president for government relations for RIT, said: "We have amassed an impressive record of accomplishment and have surpassed, in many ways, the expectations of the architects of the Institute. However, our world has changed dramatically since 1967, when NTID's eight basic responsibilities were established. Economic, demographic, cultural, political, and technological factors have changed markedly, and the postsecondary opportunities available for deaf people have increased significantly.

"Now, from a position of strength, it is time to capitalize on our nationally recognized stature as an academic leader and develop a strategic vision that will carry us through not only the '90s, but also into the coming century."

Strategic planning, says committee member Gary Meyer, career opportunities advisor in NTID's National Center on Employment of the Deaf, "is one of the best things ever to happen to NTID because it's an opportunity for everyone in the community to look into the future and determine who, what, where, when, and how."

Meyer, a 1981 RIT accounting graduate, emphasizes that, like other committee members, he is not a representative of his department, but rather is a representative of the entire NTID community, including all faculty and staff members and alumni.

Another alumnus and committee member, who has been charged specifically with gathering information from and identifying issues with alumni, is Mary Karol Matchett, a 1988 RIT social work graduate who now works at the Alcoholism Treatment Center of the John L. Norris Clinic in Rochester, New York.

Throughout the spring and summer, Matchett contacted recipients of NTID's Distinguished Alumnus Award as well

as other fellow graduates through the NTID Alumni Chapter Network, NTID Alumni Chapter of Greater Rochester, and the National Advisory Group.

"We need to talk to everyone to learn about their experiences and needs," she says.

Committee member Rose Marie Toscano, assistant professor in the liberal arts support department, sees the committee's task as synthesizing, analyzing, and making decisions about the information it receives.

Though she describes the process of strategic planning as "very intense... enlightening... problematic... and not easy," she also views it as necessary.

"Strategic planning is important now because of the reality of the current economic and demographic situation throughout the country. All universities, including RIT, are facing these challenges. It's a wonderful idea to think all this through.

"The situation is not unique to NTID. All universities will have to face these decisions. What's unique is that we're planning for the future."

While strategic planning can result in exciting new programs and opportunities, Dr. James DeCaro, dean of NTID, acknowledges that the process also can be anxiety-producing. Still, he prefers to look forward to the opportunities it will offer.

"If I am apprehensive about the process at all it is not because things will change," he says, "but because they might not change enough. Status quo will not be acceptable."

Whatever changes occur, it seems certain that they will most profoundly benefit NTID's primary constituency: its students.

"I tell people that I'm not sure what the results of strategic planning will be," says Toscano. "But if it ends up with our students entering the work world with more power, more knowledge, and more ability, then that's what it's about for me."

Because the results of strategic planning will have a significant impact

on students and their educations, the Institute has included student representation on the Strategic Planning Committee and among the more than 100 people who are serving on task forces: values assessment; internal strengths and weaknesses; strategic issues identification; external scanning (political/legal/economic, technology, social/demographic); and program/service mix (academic, academic/student support, administrative).

Michelle Price, third-year social work student from Reseda, California, is the student representative on the planning committee. Her goal, she says, is to overcome apathy and involve as many students as possible in the strategic planning process to ensure that their needs are accommodated.

"Student representation on the committee is crucial," says Price, also vice president of the NTID Student Congress. "Faculty and administrators cannot speak for us. We have to have our own voice. We know what we need."

While strategic planning is, as Meath-Lang says, "... something very contemporary that challenges traditional structures of organizations," it is not unfamiliar to NTID, which has a tradition of innovation.

Dr. Robert Frisina, NTID's first director, used strategic planning in 1967 to determine the original mission of NTID and its eight basic responsibilities.

"Those eight objectives served to clarify and focus the different points of view that people held about what NTID should be," says Frisina, currently director of NTID's International Center for Hearing and Speech Research.

Frisina agrees that now seems an appropriate point in NTID's history to reassess those eight objectives and to consider new goals for the future.

"Since NTID truly is the only institution of its kind," he says, "it has an obligation to be the best that it can be."



Commonly Asked Questions

(and Uncommon Answers)

Concerning Strategic Planning at NTID

by Geoffrey Poor

Q: Will NTID find it difficult to examine itself in a mirror?

A: This process originally was assumed to be difficult indeed because of the challenge of finding a mirror big enough to encompass all of NTID. However, it turns out that the manufacturers of the Hubble Space Telescope have several extremely large and powerful mirrors available at very reasonable prices.

Q: Why does the Strategic Planning Committee have 15 members?

A: A team of anthropologists has researched the question and discovered that this was the number used by the early Stone Age committee that came up with the perfect design for the wheel. Our committee felt that following in the footsteps of the wheel's designers would help them resist any tendencies they might experience to reinvent it.

Q: NTID has a number of people involved in research in several fields. How will their special skills be used?

A: NTID's Office of Very, Very High Technology Research has designed a time machine that will allow the Institute to bring the following people on board to assist in their special areas of expertise:

HANNIBAL: *Pachyderm Management*

GENGHIS KHAN: *Crowd Control*

JULIUS CAESAR: *Geographical Coordination*

THOMAS EDISON: *Lighting Design*

NOAH: *Flotation Equipment*

GOD: *Guidance Counseling*

PHARAOH RAMSES I: *Corporal Vessel Disposition*

SOLOMON: *Conflict Resolution*

BABETTE: *Refreshments*

PABLO PICASSO: *Facial Rearrangements*

Q: What can the Institute do to ensure that it maintains standards of excellence as it goes through this process?

A: This is an excellent question. Some very specific steps should help with this. First, NTID will distribute approximately three million stickers with the word "excellent" printed on them to all academic units. These stickers will be attached to every piece of equipment, each faculty and staff member's forehead, and each lesson plan until the completion of the strategic planning process. Second, the Institute will replace the social security number of each member of the NTID community with the word "exc-el-lent." In cases where this causes confusion as to identity, it is suggested that people use their names for clarification. Third, all dictionaries, both print and electronic, will be edited so that the only words in them are variations of the word "excellent."

Q: We understand that strategic planning efforts will be designed to lead us into the next century. What will happen if NTID takes a wrong turn and winds up in some other century by mistake?

A: This is the risk involved with bold leadership. NTID certainly hopes it won't happen because of the potential for confusion. For example, if the Institute finds itself in the 12th century B.C., there will be no wall sockets in which to plug computers, and NTID's photography majors will

have no place to buy film. Looking on the bright side, however, NTID will be the undisputed leader in many fields.

Q: It recently was announced that the Empire State Building is for sale, with an asking price of \$50 million. Will this affect the strategic planning process?

A: Probably not. However, if space becomes a problem in NTID's current buildings, the Institute might find itself becoming a more vertically oriented organization. Such a change in physical configuration would have the additional advantage of providing NTID with an outdoor playground for giant gorillas, a facility the Institute currently lacks.

Q: What information was obtained through the recent values assessment survey?

A: The Institute learned that the following topics, listed in order of their stated importance, are on the minds of faculty and staff members:

- 1) Oprah Winfrey's diet plans
- 2) the choice of floor wax for the Lyndon Baines Johnson street area
- 3) the number of racquetball courts in the new Student Life Center and whether or not they'll be air-conditioned
- 4) why the Ted Mack Amateur Hour was only a half-hour long
- 5) if early to bed and early to rise really does make a rolling stone worth two in the bush.

Editor's note: *Geoffrey Poor, assistant professor in NTID's Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education, is quietly confident that the new millennium will get here by the year 2000 or so, depending on traffic.*

S

Simply Sharaine

by Pamela Scabon



When Sharaine (Rawlinson) Rice sets her mind to something, she does it. One thing this 1981 graduate of RIT's social work program has decided to do is make life better for deaf people.

"Sharaine is a prime example of what a social worker should be," says Dean Santos, chairperson of NTID's department of social work support. "She is an intelligent, well-studied, people-oriented individual who gets involved

and solves problems."

For more than 10 years, the 31-year-old humanitarian has spent countless hours—both as a paid professional and volunteer—evaluating, developing, implementing, and monitoring strategies and services to better serve deaf people's needs and provide a better understanding of deafness to those who are unfamiliar with it.

Two organizations to which she has committed her time are NTID's National

Advisory Group (NAG) and Interim Alumni Association. NAG members advise NTID's director on the technical training and general education needs of NTID students, and the alumni association was established to provide a focal point for paving the way to greater alumni involvement in the Institute.

In backing issues regarding education, equality, and legislation that support deaf citizens across the nation, Rice is steadfast.

"There is a tendency for hearing people to be patronizing or discriminating toward people who are deaf and those with disabilities," she says. "I have a real problem with discrimination. I don't believe in it."

As director of services for deaf and hard-of-hearing people for the Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH) in Kansas City since 1988, Rice is responsible for monitoring services to deaf and hard-of-hearing clients who receive psychiatric treatment, are mentally retarded, or have developmental disabilities as well as those enrolled in alcohol and drug abuse programs.

Because Rice travels throughout the state visiting and consulting with various rehabilitation teams and treatment facilities, she doesn't meet regularly with many DMH clients. However, she makes it a high priority to note and celebrate their progress by attending, for example, closing ceremonies for clients in the alcohol treatment program.

"Some clients visit regularly to keep me updated on their progress," says Rice. "I think it's important to let them know that I am interested in their growth and am here to talk to them if they'd like."

Although DMH has identified 1,200 hard-of-hearing or deaf clients within its program, Rice is certain that the actual number of people who need mental health services is much greater.

"Many deaf Missourians have not come forward because they feel that DMH will not be able to communicate with them, won't provide interpreting services for counseling, and will misunderstand their problems," she explains. "With these feelings, potential clients prefer to deal with problems themselves or simply ignore them."

Rice, however, has orchestrated the establishment of programs and technical services for DMH's deaf clients. She also has heightened the awareness of

deafness and deaf culture throughout the department.

"Sharaine has educated the department about the needs of deaf and hearing-impaired clients," says Keith Schafer, director of DMH. "She helps us realize and understand that in order to provide services to the deaf community, we have to know about and understand deaf culture."

"There are 12,000 DMH employees," says Rice. "It is important that they know about deafness, deaf culture, and American Sign Language in order to communicate effectively with deaf clients."

Rice can empathize with the apprehension felt by deaf clients. As someone who became deaf later in life, she, too, was apprehensive about being understood by and understanding those of a different culture.

Rice became deaf at 14 when she contracted spinal meningitis after assisting a nurse as she walked a quarantined patient within an isolated area at a hospital in Duluth, Minnesota. Rice had been visiting her father for the summer and decided to volunteer as a candy striper at the local hospital during her five-week stay. On her last day of work,

the nurses were short-staffed and asked her to push an intravenous stand while a nurse helped a patient walk through the room. Though Rice was capped, wore gloves and a gown, and had a thorough scrubbing, she still caught the disease and lost her hearing.

Although difficult for her to accept at first, Rice grew to love and respect deaf culture after entering NTID in 1977. Attracted by the mixture of hearing and deaf students on campus, she decided that the RIT environment would suit her best.

Making certain that the profession she entered would put her in daily contact with people, Rice decided to follow her family's people-oriented career tradition and entered RIT's social work program.

"My mother is a psychologist, and my stepfather is a professor of social work in California," explains Rice. "I enjoy being around people, so social work seemed the natural job for me. It is the right choice."

Her husband, C. Patrick Rice, a lawyer who practices social security disability law, agrees, adding, "Sharaine definitely is a people person. It would devastate her to be a part of something that didn't

involve interaction with others."

A residence advisor and active participant in various student clubs while at NTID, Rice, however, did experience some discomfort with her deafness, according to friends.

"Sharaine was resistant to accepting the idea of being deaf," says Sharron Metevier Webster, systems analyst in the department of information services and a 1983 business administration graduate. "She felt different from the rest of us. We understood it was harder for her since she became deaf at a later age.

"We grew closer once Sharaine became comfortable with her deafness," she says.

"At NTID," says Rice, "I realized that deaf culture is one of pride and dignity. I am deaf 100 percent and proud of it."

Rice shares her pride by helping to make life easier not only for DMH deaf clients, but also for deaf people throughout the United States as well. She is a member of Southwest Missouri State University's Communication Disorders Advisory Board, the first deaf person to serve in that capacity. She is a charter member of both the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Greater Kansas City American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association, which presented her with the Outstanding Service Award in October 1990 for her "spirit, enthusiasm, and tireless devotion" to the field of deafness.

"That's a very high honor, and it doesn't surprise me that she received it," says Dr. Gerard Buckley, chairperson of NTID's department of summer career exploration and outreach development and Rice's close friend. "Sharaine is dedicated to her work, cares about people, and is a high achiever. If there is anyone who deserves such an award, it's Sharaine."

Adds Santos: "She is a mover and shaker who sees people in their day-to-day struggles; works with them individually to make things better; then goes after the larger, systemic problem. She truly is an activist in the best sense of the word."



Cultural communicator Sharaine Rice's responsibilities with the Missouri Department of Mental Health include presenting lectures throughout the state on deafness and deaf culture to professionals who work with deaf and hard-of-hearing people.



Setting the Standard

Institute establishes guidelines for promotion and tenure

by Susan Cergol

An optimistic anxiety is meandering through classrooms and offices at NTID.

"We are nervous," admits Sidney Barefoot, associate professor in the speech/language department. "We can't be sure how it will all work; we're only sure that this is the right thing to do."

Barefoot and 12 colleagues, who constituted NTID's Communication Task Force, worked for more than three years to develop a new policy that is likely to have a dramatic effect on the Institute's process of granting tenure to and promoting faculty members. The policy, which was approved in January by the faculty body, outlines specific skill levels in sign language and suggestions for developing oral communication strategies that NTID faculty members now are expected to fulfill for career advancement.

Doing the Right Thing

"Communication is an emotional issue for both deaf and hearing people," says task force chairperson Gary Mowl, also chairperson of NTID's Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education. "At NTID, we obviously value the importance of communicating with

deaf people, so this was an important issue to address."

While faculty members always have been required to develop communication skills, this new policy spells out and standardizes the criteria by which NTID educators will be evaluated:

The Institute expectation for NTID faculty is that they will strive for, achieve, and maintain the ability to communicate in sign language at a level of vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, comprehension, and fluency that allows faculty to participate effectively in communication situations applicable to work and social topics.

The policy defines sign language as either English-like word order—with or without voice—or American Sign Language (ASL). Among various means of measuring sign language skills is a required specified achievement level on the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI), a nationally recognized evaluation tool.

Developed at NTID by two members of the communication research department—William Newell, research associate, and Dr. Frank Caccamise, senior research associate—the SCPI employs

a one-on-one conversational interview to assess sign language competency based on a functional scale of "0" to "superior plus."

Faculty members seeking tenure or promotion to assistant professor now are expected to achieve an "intermediate plus" rating on the SCPI, defined as exhibiting "some advanced level skills, but not all and not consistently." Those seeking promotion to senior ranks (associate or full professor) are expected to achieve an "advanced" rating—"able to sign with sufficient grammatical accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations...."

In addition to sign language skills, faculty members also are encouraged to develop oral communication strategies and techniques:

The Institute expectation for NTID faculty is that they will strive for, achieve, and maintain the ability to use oral communication strategies and techniques. Oral communication is considered to be speech, with or without voice, used expressively and/or receptively, alone or to complement a message communicated with signs.

According to Dr. James DeCaro, NTID dean, the purpose of instituting guidelines for both sign language skills and oral communication strategies is to ensure that "the needs of deaf students, regardless of their preferred mode of communication, are met." However, citing "reasonable accommodation," DeCaro notes that deaf faculty members will not be held to the same oral skills expectations as hearing faculty.

"There are some deaf people who do not have intelligible speech," he explains. "We're not going to hold them accountable for something they aren't able to do."

The policy itself reinforces this position:

It is not the intent of the Communication Task Force to violate the rights of deaf or hearing faculty to select the communication modes, techniques, or adaptations that will best serve the needs of any given communication situation. The purpose... is to promote skill development—what one can do—rather than to prescribe communication style—what one must do.

The policy stresses that what all faculty members *can* do is develop communication skills through sign language classes and other professional development opportunities and participate in learning activities to foster sensitivity to deaf cultural issues.

Aside from specifying the communication skills expected for promotion and tenure, the comprehensive 56-page policy also outlines the required documentation for each stage of the evaluation process. In addition to SCPI ratings, this documentation includes confirmation of successful completion of courses and seminars, classroom observation, student evaluations, and evidence of ongoing participation in activities involving deaf people.

A Policy Emerges

During his annual address to faculty and staff members in September 1987, DeCaro announced his intent to establish a task force that would develop clear and consistent communication expectations for faculty members seeking promotion or tenure.

"The time had come for the Institute to focus on promotion and tenure as

two driving forces related to educational quality," explains DeCaro. "The fundamental issue always has been improving the quality of education for young people who are deaf."

DeCaro convened 13 members of the NTID community, including faculty members, administrators, and a student representative, to study the issues and recommend guidelines for faculty communication skills development.

In his charge to committee members, which appears as a preface to the task force's final recommendations, DeCaro asked them to consider NTID's basic educational philosophy when developing their guidelines:

[NTID] continues to be committed to selecting and using the best elements of all communication systems to meet the educational and future employment needs of its students. The classroom environments at NTID usually have a broad mix of students with various skills in oral/aural communication, signed English, and ASL... the present philosophy of eclecticism regarding communication skills will continue to be intrinsic to NTID's educational policies....

Between 1987 and 1989, the task force held a number of open meetings for faculty members and students to provide feedback on preliminary recommendations. The committee then reviewed all suggestions and, where necessary, made modifications. Finally, after deliberating for more than three years, the Communication Task Force in December 1990 submitted its final recommendations to DeCaro, who then put them to a faculty vote.

Of the Institute's 235 tenured and tenure-track faculty members, 145 participated in the poll—"the largest number of faculty members to participate in a balloting process during my six years as dean of the college," says DeCaro.

Faculty members agreed 2-to-1 with the recommendations as they pertain to granting tenure (97 voted their support while 48 opposed); recommendations pertaining to promotion to senior ranks were passed by a somewhat narrower margin (89 supported, 52 opposed).



Candid camera William Newell and Dr. Carol DeFilippo, research associates in the communication research department, demonstrate the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI). Developed by Newell and fellow NTID researcher Dr. Frank Caccamise, the SCPI uses videotape equipment to record a conversation in sign language, which the evaluator then reviews on a "split screen" monitor.



Leading the way Gary Mowl, chairperson of NTID's recently established Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education, led the 13-member Communication Task Force through more than three years of deliberations in order to develop a communication policy that he believes is "fair, reasonable, and consistent."

"When you see a vote as positive as that, with as much participation in the voting process," says DeCaro, "that's pretty progressive to my way of thinking."

Mowl believes that the Institute community will benefit from communication requirements that are "fair, reasonable, and consistent."

"The Institute now can clearly define communication expectations of its faculty members," he says. "We expect this new policy will have a huge and positive impact on the quality of interaction between hearing and deaf people at NTID."

The Storm Before the Calm

"The Institute was ready to grapple with this difficult issue," says DeCaro. "I commend our faculty members for acting in good faith on an issue that raised a lot of cognitive and emotional dissonance—and for working through it to this end."

Throughout the feedback-review-modification process that the task force undertook before submitting its final recommendations to the dean, com-

mittee members confronted the concerns of students and faculty members.

The inclusion of oral communication strategies was a troublesome issue for some faculty members—for two opposing reasons. While many were concerned that there was not nearly enough attention focused on the oral communication needs of students, others felt that the committee should eliminate any mention of oral skills and concentrate on the "real" problem—poor sign language skills.

Discussion of this issue during open meetings drew a range of feedback from faculty members, from "*Sign language is not all there is to good communication; only a small segment of students complain about the quality of sign*" and "*Most of my students have been orally trained and don't sign at all*" to "*Sign language is probably the most important issue for deaf people*" and "*Faculty members should be skilled in sign language before they are hired and put in the classroom.*"

Some faculty members were concerned that there isn't a standardized evaluation tool—comparable to the SCPI—to measure oral communication skills development.

Others questioned the appropriateness of using the SCPI to evaluate sign language skills ("*We should conduct an evaluation of signing in the context of a teaching situation, not a sign language evaluation.*"); the availability of evaluators ("*We must separate the training and evaluation processes—and personnel responsible for each.*"); and the proposed achievement levels ("*The concept of a level will foster a plateau in skill development.*").

Additionally, some faculty members were concerned that the proposed "intermediate plus" level for faculty tenure isn't high enough. This was a particular concern for NTID's Deaf Professional Group (DPG), composed of deaf faculty and staff members who advocate for the needs of deaf people on campus. However, after discussing the issue with Mowl, who was invited to a number of DPG meetings to answer questions about the policy, the group agreed that it was better to establish lower communication guidelines than none at all.

"Our goal is to raise the sign language expectation to 'advanced' for all faculty members," says Sharron Metevier Webster, systems analyst in the information services department, who served as DPG liaison to the Communication Task Force. "But at least this is a good place to start."

Task force members agree that such feedback played a crucial role in developing the policy. Ultimately, however, the committee solidified its final recommendations through an examination of NTID students' communication needs.

During a number of open forums held so that students could express their opinions about the recommendations, participants tended to emphasize a desire for stronger sign language skills—particularly ASL—among faculty members.

However, Barefoot notes that many students who communicated with the task force through other channels, such as to an individual teacher or directly to a committee member, indicated that "regardless of their identity as a deaf person, they would not want to lose oral communication at the Institute."

Mitchell Levy, 1991 information systems graduate who served on the Communication Task Force for two

years, brought a student's viewpoint to the deliberations.

"I've seen two perspectives," says the former vice president of NTID's Student Congress. "I can understand some students' need for ASL, but then there are oral students who rely on speech-reading...and it's impossible to voice English and use ASL at the same time."

Barefoot is confident that the policy will accommodate the diverse communication styles of students and will provide them with the best educational environment possible.

"It's a fact that our students are diverse in their communication skills," he says. "We really believed we were doing the right thing when we offered recommendations that would promote the right of all students to use their optimal communication skills in interacting with faculty and staff members."

Moving Ahead

Once final recommendations were approved by faculty members, DeCaro set about examining how to put policy into action. In February, he called together a four-member implementation committee to "translate the spirit and intent of the recommendations into operation."

"The communication policy helps to define the kind of language community we want to be," says committee chairperson Dr. Christine Licata, assistant dean for administrative services. "Now, we need to make sure that creating this community is possible—and seen by faculty members as achievable."

Barefoot, who also served on the implementation committee, agrees. "Faculty members are in a waiting period; many are concerned that they won't be able to meet the expectations," he says. "There was enough support of the policy to gain approval, but there are faculty members who have reservations about pieces of the policy, and others who have serious questions about how to implement it."

The implementation committee met weekly through the end of June to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations for the dean's review and approval. These recommendations suggest the context within which training opportunities should be offered to faculty members, propose strategies and timelines for phasing-in the new requirements, offer guidance on establishing



Putting theory to practice Members of the implementation committee review their final reports and discuss producing a compilation to distribute to the NTID community. Committee members, from left: Sidney Barefoot, Dr. Christine Licata, Solange Skyer, and Dr. Karen Conner.

a research and evaluation plan, and outline the administrative support needed to enact the communication policy.

Such support includes the recently established Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education, which brings together the two NTID departments responsible for sign language instruction—sign communication and support service education. This new resource is designed to improve the quality and availability of sign language classes by taking advantage of cooperative and interdisciplinary efforts of the two previously separate entities.

Other efforts to support faculty members' abilities to fulfill increased communication expectations include attempts to expand the number of SCPI interviewers and raters, establishment of an independent office to oversee the SCPI assessment process, and development of training opportunities to improve oral communication strategies.

"While the responsibility to develop communication skills rests with faculty members, it is essential for them to see that they're being supported in the process," says Licata.

Although the policy allows for a three-year transition period for current faculty members to bring their communication skills up to expected levels, it officially went into effect at the start of the 1991-92 academic year. Now all

letters of hire for new faculty members refer to this policy as a requirement for employment at NTID.

In addition, DeCaro expects to see an immediate increase in numbers of faculty members enrolling in sign language classes and oral communication learning activities as well as taking the SCPI.

"There's a developmental spirit to the new policy; it's not intended to be a punitive system," says DeCaro. "We're going to work together to achieve the skill levels that are needed to provide the best support, programs, and services possible for people who are deaf."

Barefoot agrees that the years of struggle to put this policy in place definitely helped move NTID closer to its goal of serving the communication needs of its students.

"A powerful driving force throughout the process was a consideration of the characteristics of our students and what they believe they need," he says. "We respect their right to choose, and we are setting standards that give them the best chance of having faculty members who can respond to their needs."



A Matter of Degrees

AOS degree offers
another option
for students

by Kathryn Schmitz

Michael Feigenbaum, a 1991 business technology graduate, came to NTID to learn a profession. He chose to pursue an associate of occupational studies (AOS) degree in a program that helped him develop problem-solving abilities and technical expertise through courses suited to his interests and abilities.

"I liked the AOS program because I could focus on my career goals," says Feigenbaum. "I was able to take all my technical courses without having to worry about standard liberal arts requirements."

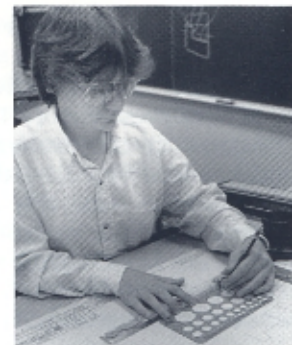
AOS degree programs at NTID give students like Feigenbaum the option of earning a college degree by completing coursework suited to their level of English skills.

NTID students have several program choices: They can earn certificates, diplomas, AOS degrees, or associate in applied science (AAS) degrees. Deaf students also can pursue bachelor's or master's degrees through programs in one of RIT's other colleges. All of RIT's programs offer technical and professional training that prepares students for careers in their fields of study.

The newest and probably least known degree program offered at NTID is the AOS. NTID offers AOS degrees in five programs: ophthalmic optical finishing technology (since 1986), industrial drafting technology (since 1987), business technology (since 1988), printing production technology (since 1989), and manufacturing processes technol-



Ophthalmic optical finishing technology



Industrial drafting technology

ogy (since 1991). Since 1986 NTID has graduated 43 students with AOS degrees compared to 101 with AAS degrees in the same fields.

Considered a "terminal degree," the AOS degree is designed to give students an associate degree-level education. Unlike the AAS degree, it is not also designed to lead to study at the baccalaureate level. Both AOS and AAS degree programs at NTID are three-year programs.

NTID's AOS degree programs are characterized by technical training that does not require strong English language skills. Like those offered at community colleges around the country, they are ideal for students seeking to enter technical fields with well-defined functions and parameters.

"Many aspects of printing are visual and do not require high English skills," explains Jonathan Gosse, chairperson of the printing production technology department. "Printers often communicate through job tickets, which list information about printing jobs such as color, quantity, size, typeface, and paper stock."

Students in AOS programs often take more technical courses than AAS degree candidates.

"In business technology, AOS students are required to have more in-depth accounting and word processing skills than students in the AAS program in office technologies," says Dr. William Rudnicki, chairperson of the department of business occupations. "It's the more difficult program technically."

Like the business technology program, the industrial drafting technology and manufacturing processes tech-

nology programs also train graduates for work that does not require advanced English skills.

"Both programs teach skills for careers that deal with data," explains Dr. Edward Maruggi, professor in the industrial technologies department. "For example, most industrial drafting technology graduates become CAD [computer-aided design] operators who will be given a picture and measurements of an assembly that must be drafted on a computer."

Ophthalmic optical finishing—the making of eyeglass lenses prescribed by physicians and optometrists—also does not require advanced English skills, as Kathleen Long, a 1991 ophthalmic optical finishing technology graduate and lab technician for Waldert Opticians in Rochester, New York, points out.

"I don't need advanced English skills on my job," she says. "I just need to know how to read a lens prescription, which isn't really English."

AOS degree candidates do not take the traditional liberal arts courses that AAS degree candidates do. Instead, they take NTID general education courses, which expose students to the concepts and issues addressed in the social sciences and humanities. Using a variety of teaching strategies, the interdisciplinary course sequence involves students in creative activities, including discussions of captioned films and interviews with professionals working in social agencies and social action projects, as well as more traditional activities such as analyses and discussions of social science and literary texts.

"We use both social science reading and literature to help students get a feel



Business technology



Printing production technology



Manufacturing processes technology

for the challenges people face in life," says Dr. Laurie Brewer, staff chairperson of the general education instruction department. "The courses combine different kinds of influences, such as biology, the environment, and personal decision-making.

"Students are capable of discussing and investigating complex issues in the social sciences and humanities using a wide variety of communication strategies and sources of information," she adds.

Dominic Peroni, lecturer in the applied science/allied health department, agrees.

"Students can take challenging general education courses that teach them liberal arts skills such as investigating, library work, research, debating, and writing," he explains. "They learn about themselves and how they fit into the world."

Peroni feels that general education courses complement technical training in preparing students for life after NTID. Before he began teaching at NTID, he worked for six years in the optical field, garnering practical experience as well as technical skills, which he shares with his students.

"I brought other skills from industry that help with my teaching," he explains. "I talk from the heart with students about what they'll experience. I share with them the things that made me successful—basic things like being punctual and willing to work overtime."

NTID students also get a taste of what their chosen careers will be like through cooperative (co-op) work experiences, mandatory introductions to the world of work in which students learn by doing.

"The co-op experience is invaluable," says Gosse. "When students are finished, they've learned how to use their educations on the job."

Rudnicki agrees, saying, "Co-op helps them hit the ground running when they graduate."

Before making the decision to offer the AOS degree, each department conducted surveys of employers to determine whether AOS graduates would be able to find jobs. They learned that employers were most interested in potential employees' technical skills.

Thomas ("Eddie") Hanna, a 1991 printing production technology graduate, verified this last summer when he performed his co-op in his hometown of Columbia, South Carolina.

"I asked my boss and people at other printing companies what they thought of an AOS degree," he says. "They told me that my technical skills were more important than liberal arts classes."

Larry Green, lab manager at Waldert Opticians, is another employer who respects the skills offered by AOS graduates. In his four-year association with NTID, he has hired 20 students either for co-op, part-time, or full-time work. In addition to Long, he employs two other NTID ophthalmic optical finishing technology graduates: Sara Johannsen (AOS, 1989) and Randy McDonald (AAS, 1990).

"I have the golden opportunity of interviewing NTID students and being able to hire the cream of the crop," he says. "I'm looking for workers with good skills and behavior. The specific degree doesn't matter as much to me as the person does."

Long is one of Green's protégés. He first employed her for a co-op position

in the summer of 1989, then full time during the summer of 1990, part time throughout the 1990-91 academic year, and now again full time.

"Kathy is an excellent person," says Green. "She communicates well and has grown from being quiet and shy to talking with everyone. Her attendance is excellent. I can give her something to do and not worry about her getting it done."

Long is willing and able to work on a number of tasks in the lab, depending on what needs to be done, because her NTID training was immediately applicable at Waldert.

"We used the same kinds of machines as NTID," she explains. "Also, if there is a machine that I don't know how to use, I can learn it quickly because I know the other ones."

Like Long, Feigenbaum has returned to work for the same company for which he performed his co-op two years ago in Los Angeles, his hometown. During his co-op, he found that he used all of the skills he had learned at NTID, which made him feel comfortable with his job and motivated him to look for other challenges there, such as learning to use the company's computer system.

Feigenbaum's and Long's successes illustrate the value of an AOS degree to both students and employers.

"The AOS degree is valuable because students still get the technical skills and experience that are important for employers," says Gosse.

"I think it's important to provide options. Students can decide what's best for themselves."



Attaining satisfaction and success in the workplace requires more than good skills, hard work, and luck. As many NTID graduates have learned through their on-the-job experiences, communication accessibility also is essential.

"For many deaf people, lack of communication accessibility is a major barrier to promotion," says Dr. Susan Foster, assistant professor in NTID's National Center for Postsecondary Career Studies in Deafness. Foster recently completed a manuscript for a book based on interviews she conducted with 20 hearing managers who work with deaf employees.

"As a result of new technologies and national legislation, we are entering a new era of opportunities for deaf people in the workplace," Foster says.

Today, a range of technologies—from TDDs (telecommunication devices for the deaf) to electronic mail systems to computers that simulate the human voice—are being used by deaf employees to enhance communication in the workplace.

A handful of companies—a Citibank branch in Rochester, New York, and the

U.S. Army Proving Grounds in Aberdeen, Maryland, for example—have taken the lead in providing such accessibility. These businesses are ahead of the game since passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in July 1990 marked a changed work force climate for people with disabilities. The civil rights legislation, designed to bring people with disabilities into the economic and social mainstream, provides protection in the areas of employment, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunication.

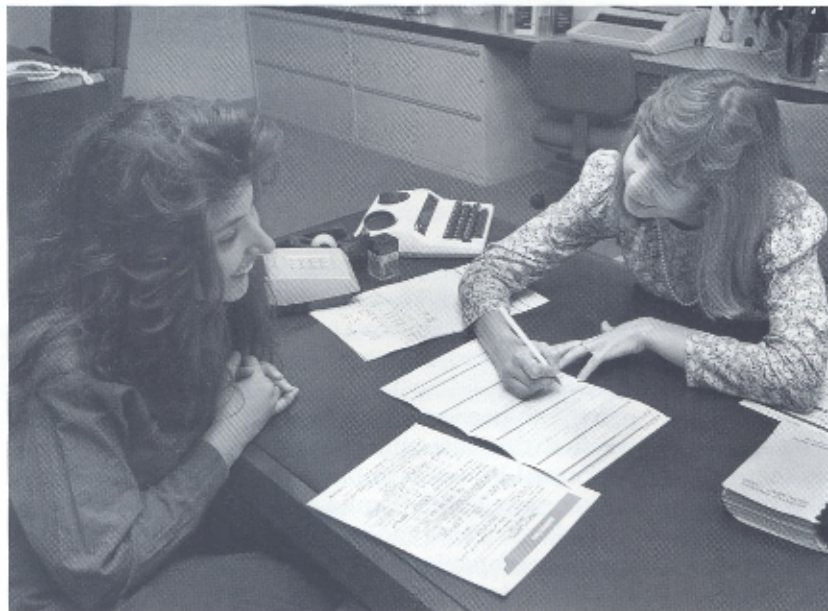
When Title I of ADA goes into effect in July 1992, employers will be required to reasonably accommodate the disabilities of qualified applicants or

employees, unless an undue hardship would result. Reasonable accommodations for deaf employees might include amplified telephones, TDDs, or job restructuring. Overall size of a business, type of operation, and cost of the accommodation will be considered in determining if undue hardship exists.

A Citibank (NYS) branch in Rochester is one business that already has implemented change to accommodate a new employee who is deaf. Cheryl Mason, a 1984 NTID graduate who received an associate degree in accounting, benefited when her manager attended the workshop "Working Together: Deaf and Hearing People," sponsored by NTID's National Center on Employment of the Deaf (NCED), before she started work as a customer service representative in 1989.

"The employer was sensitive to her communication needs," explains Dr. Diane Castle, telecommunications specialist in NTID's audiology department. "The bank bought a TDD and also developed a protocol for conducting meetings that would improve communication accessibility."

Communication



Sensitivity to communication needs Customer service representative Cheryl Mason, right, says that her employer—a Citibank (NYS) branch in Rochester—has developed strategies and provides technologies to accommodate her communication needs on the job.

A New Work Ethic

Even before ADA takes effect, many companies are providing on-the-job accessibility

by Beth M. Pessin

challenges of deaf and severely hard-of-hearing people in the workplace is the focus of a study initiated this fall. Sponsored by NTID's Educational Development Outreach Project, Castle and Gary Meyer, NCED career opportunities advisor, are interviewing deaf employees to learn which telecommunication technologies are used on the job and how these technologies improve accessibility.

"The goal is to share this information to enhance opportunities for deaf people in the workplace," says Castle.

When the study is completed, a series of videotapes and printed materials addressing the various issues discussed during interviews will be developed and shared with deaf adults, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and other professionals working with deaf people.

"Once employers understand deaf employees' needs, they are better prepared to integrate them into the workplace and also are more open to providing technologies that can enhance communication," says Linda Iacelli, NCED senior career opportunities advisor.

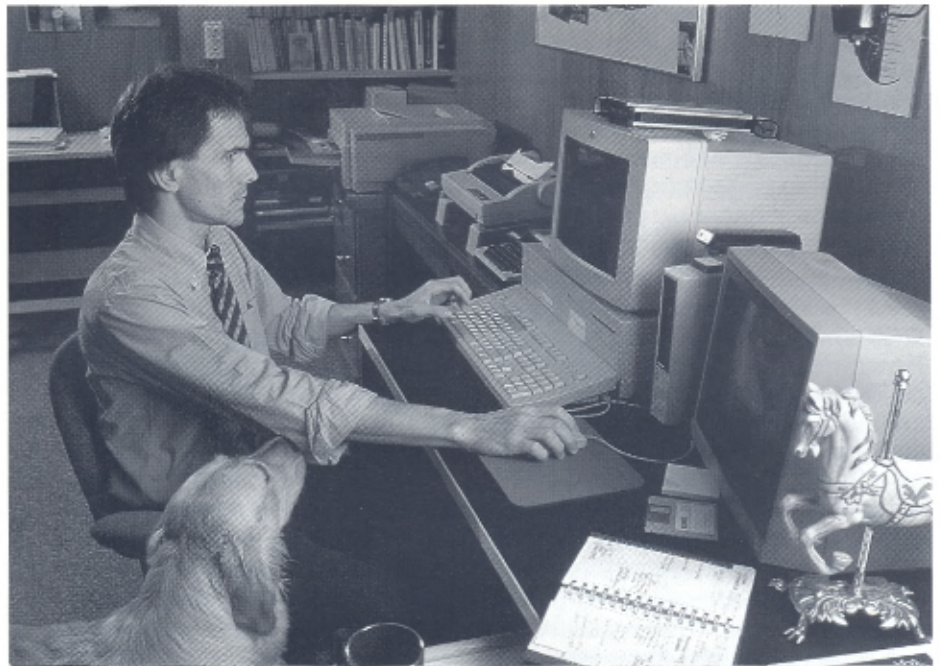
"Employers need to know that communication is a shared responsibility," Iacelli adds. "Each deaf person is an individual and has his or her own communication preferences. It's best to address those needs with the employer."

Because education plays an important role in informing current and prospective employers of NTID graduates and students about the communication needs of deaf employees, NCED provides the "Working Together" workshop. The four-hour workshop promotes awareness of deaf employees' communication needs.

"The workshop provides a basic understanding of deafness through experiential exercises," explains Iacelli. "These exercises provide opportunities for hearing people to develop their own strategies for improving communication with a deaf person. It's a good learning experience because it puts the employer in the shoes of the deaf person."

"We stress that supervising a deaf employee is not that much different from supervising a hearing employee. Their communication needs are just different," she adds.

MDT Corporation, a hospital equipment manufacturing firm in Rochester, has three deaf employees—all NTID graduates—and also frequently hires



Increasing accessibility To enhance communication with clients as well as co-workers, David Michalowski, art director of Carousel Mediaworks, Inc., uses a TDD (telecommunications device for the deaf), facsimile machine, the electronic mail option on his computer, and the New York Relay Service. Michalowski works from a home-based office.

deaf students for cooperative (co-op) work experiences. MDT recently installed a computer system that has an electronic mail option, which, Manager Richard Rommel explains, assists with communication among deaf and hearing employees.

Electronic mail as well as other computer options, such as conference notes and messaging, are quickly becoming viable communication modes in the workplace because they are so efficient.

At RIT, electronic mail is among the most popular of the Institute's VAX system features, which also include Notes, Phone, and other messaging options. VAX allows students and faculty and staff members to write and send letters, memos, and files to others on campus and around the world without ever handling a piece of paper.

Dr. Gerard Buckley, chairperson of NTID's summer career exploration and outreach development department and a 1978 graduate of RIT's social work program, uses electronic mail as a quick and convenient way to reach the more than 25 colleagues with whom he must communicate regularly.

Buckley also points out that the

technology is useful outside of RIT because it can be implemented by many employers' computer networks.

"Many companies eager to hire deaf individuals are concerned about communication," he says. "Electronic mail represents an opportunity for these companies to take advantage of technology that allows deaf professionals to participate in the mainstream of the business world."

Sharron Metevier Webster, systems analyst in NTID's department of information services and a 1983 graduate of NTID's business administration program, concurs.

"The VAX system is wonderful because it makes us all equal and helps me do my job right without having to depend on a co-worker or the New York Relay Service to make a call for me," says Webster, referring to the various VAX features, including the VAX Phone, a feature that enables up to six users to "converse" simultaneously.

David Michalowski, a deaf RIT graduate who received a master of fine arts degree in computer graphics design in 1989, says he finds that electronic mail and other technologies such as facsimile

(FAX) machines are assets to his work.

As art director of Carousel Media-works, Inc., an interactive computer graphics firm in Rochester, Michalowski works directly with clients to design computer-based training programs.

"The technologies I use are beneficial for sending notes as well as work samples," he explains.

Like others who use the computer to send messages, electronic mail helps Michalowski eliminate "telephone tag." However, when Michalowski really needs to converse with a client, rather than just sending a note, he uses that old standby: the telephone (by way of the relay center).

The New York Relay Service, which began operating in January 1989, provides a third-party link between hearing- and speech-impaired people and hearing people. A relay operator transmits conversation, almost simultaneously as it is either typed by a TDD user or spoken by a non-TDD caller. Currently, 20 states provide relay systems. Under Title IV of ADA, all states must have relay systems in place by 1993.

Foster says that relay systems will make a tremendous difference in providing opportunities for deaf people in the workplace.

"Deaf and hard-of-hearing people describe access to telephone communication as critical to enhancing their job mobility and promotion opportunities," Castle notes.

Castle developed and teaches two courses to prepare students to use the telephone in the workplace. She conducted videotaped interviews, which she uses as teaching tools, with graduates and co-op students regarding their experiences with telecommunication on the job.

The information on the videos alerts students to problems others have experienced on the job related to telecommunication and how those individuals solved their problems.

For example, Castle explains, one co-op student showed his manager how to use the TDD, but later found that he had provided too much information, which confused the manager. The same student also explained how the TDD worked to switchboard operators, but didn't know that there were shift changes.

Castle also is author of *Maximizing Telephone Accessibility for Deaf and*

Hard-of-Hearing People, a brochure that outlines a range of telecommunication options.

"NTID has been working hard for many years to prove that our graduates have the skills to get jobs. Now we have to look at how to get those employees promoted, and the telephone is one important factor," says Castle.

Michalowski, who works from a home-based office, has no support staff to assist with telephone communication, but keeping in touch with co-workers and clients has not been a problem. When setting up offices for the business, his boss and owner of Carousel, Denny McElroy, purchased two TDDs—one for himself and another for the company's four employees—so that all could maintain daily contact with Michalowski. McElroy frequently travels, so he carries a portable TDD in his car and uses it with his cellular phone when he needs to contact Michalowski.

"I also heavily use the New York Relay Service to contact my clients, and they feel very comfortable with that service,"

says Michalowski.

Although Michalowski finds the relay useful, he says that it can be a time-consuming way to converse with clients about technical information.

"Often, the phone operators are not familiar with technical terms used by the clients and me," Michalowski explains. "Most of the time, however, I know what my clients are talking about because I'm involved with the project."

Although James Cahill's position as mechanical engineer at the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) in Silver Spring, Maryland, does not require such extensive telephone communication, he notes a similar frustration in using a relay system.

"Technical terms and computer jargon are often misunderstood by the relay person, and that can lead to miscommunication," says Cahill, a 1986 RIT graduate who received a bachelor of science degree in engineering and now does research and development at NSWC. To better utilize the skills of deaf employees and to provide equal access, many employers now are

"Deaf and hard-of-hearing people describe access to telephone communication as critical to enhancing their job mobility and promotion opportunities."



Timesaving technology Construction inspector Douglas Matchett finds that a vibrating, digital read-out pager is a big timesaver on the job.

equipping offices with TDDs as well as more sophisticated and newer technologies to enhance communication. Under ADA, reasonable accommodations may include such technologies.

For example, the U.S. Army Proving Grounds in Aberdeen, Maryland, last year purchased a computer software package, the IBM Phone Communicator.

Thomas Martin, a 1990 NTID graduate who received an associate degree in electromechanical technology, was the first person at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, a military weapons testing site, to utilize the new technology.

"The system allows hearing- or speech-impaired people to communicate with others by using a telephone instead of a TDD," says Martin, who does testing at various sites at the facility and must call in reports daily.

When an individual calls Martin's number, the computer, which simulates the human voice, explains how the technology works.

"People can talk to me by entering their message using a telephone keypad," he says.

The message appears on Martin's computer screen. He replies by typing his response, which the computer, using a simulated voice, then reads to the caller.

Martin says Phone Communicator saves time and effort and also increases his productivity because he lets the computer do the talking for him.

"Without the system, I would have to stop my work, drive to a site, and then converse with the intended audience by reading his or her lips," he explains.

Martin and his supervisor, Thomas Dieter, requested a demonstration of the IBM Phone Communicator after reading about it in a computer magazine.

"The demonstration convinced us that the system would enhance Tom's communication in the department and also would make him a more productive employee," says Dieter.

"My first reaction was, 'It's unbelievable,'" says Martin. "I was thrilled."

Because Martin has used the computer program so successfully, others at Aberdeen Proving Grounds now are interested in learning more about it, and Martin often gives demonstrations of the system.

Other technologies also are available to overcome communication challenges. Douglas Matchett, who received an associate and bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from RIT in 1983 and 1989 respectively, recently found that a relatively small piece of equipment—a vibrating telephone pager that provides a digital read-out message—helps him with communication while on job sites where no telephones are available.

Matchett, a construction inspector for Monroe County (New York) Public Works, says the pager's biggest advantage is that it saves so much time. Before his department obtained the device, Matchett would spend up to several hours a day driving to find pay phones so that he could use a portable TDD to contact his office through the relay center to find out where the next job site was located. When the batteries in the TDD were low on power, Matchett had to search even harder for a pay phone that also had an electrical outlet. "The pager has cut down about 90 percent of the time it took to use the TDD," he says.

The alpha-numeric pager, manufactured by Motorola, can store up to 16 messages, with 80 characters per message. Now, when contacted by pager, Matchett just flicks a switch to read the message rather than hopping in the truck and searching for a phone booth.

"My work production has increased since I got the pager," he says.

"There are many ways to solve problems, depending on where an individual works," says Michalowski. "But there is no one solution. Thanks to the growing number of available technologies and reasonable prices, there are several options to improve communication.

"My best suggestion is to read magazines about technologies available or talk with experienced deaf workers," he recommends.

"It's important to be an advocate for your rights, but also to keep an open mind to restrictions and point them out to employers rather than hiding them," says NSWC's Cahill. "I point out the problem in a positive way and then provide an answer since I am the person experiencing the situation."

Cahill has found that his employer has been open to discussing ways to improve communication in the workplace.

"The federal government has done more in this area [of equal access for all workers] than have private companies," says Anthony Finks, senior career opportunities advisor in NCED.

Although the federal government has taken the initiative, many private companies—both large and small—now are making strides toward providing equal access for deaf and hard-of-hearing employees.

"I think our challenge is to remain innovative and creative," says Buckley. "We should share how we use these technologies to create new and exciting opportunities for deaf people. Access to communication technologies in the post-ADA era will be a critical factor in career mobility for deaf citizens."



FOCUS On...

Fred Hamil

by Kathleen Smith

Fred Hamil loves to teach. He says he gets “excited” being in the classroom. A lot of teachers say that, but not many begin their teaching careers by asking a class full of skeptical sixth graders to abandon their seats and sit on top of their desks for a spelling bee...while the students’ staid, retiring teacher looks on.

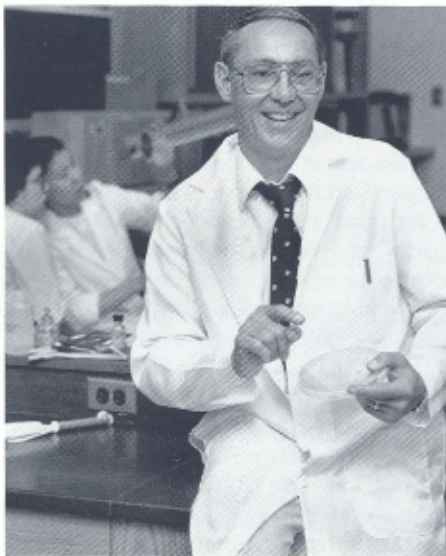
Hamil’s distinguished, if somewhat unorthodox, teaching career spans 31 years, 23 of which have been spent at NTID as chairperson of the applied science/allied health department. The department comprises programs in medical laboratory technology (MLT), medical record technology (MRT), and ophthalmic optical finishing technology (OFT).

Hamil has the distinction of being the only department chairperson to have served in that capacity since NTID was established in 1968.

He’s weathered a lot of storms along the way—School of Science and Engineering Careers Assistant Dean and Director Marie Raman calls him a “survivor”—and he’s created a few, too.

Former colleague Ronald Greaves, now a district science supervisor in suburban Rochester, New York, recalls one explosive episode in particular.

“Fred once needed a test solution for his high school science class at Charlotte [High School]. We required a solution that contained mercury, and we thought we could make it ourselves. We mixed nitric acid and mercury, and



the tube fumed and bubbled. Clouds of brown gas billowed out the door.... I said, ‘Fred, go get a catalog and buy that solution!’”

Hamil taught biology, math, earth science, and general science at Charlotte for four years (following a four-year stint at Rochester’s Elementary School #17) before coming to NTID in 1968.

“There were three people in NTID’s science department in ‘68,” Hamil recalls. “We didn’t have any materials; we used RIT’s College of Science for everything.

“We made some awful mistakes,” he continues. “But we had great leader-

ship and support, and no one criticized our motives.”

His own classic faux pas involved purchasing three large portable laboratory tables, only to discover that they wouldn’t fit through the science building’s door.

“We ended up putting them in a new science facility that was under construction,” he says. “I guess they built around those tables!”

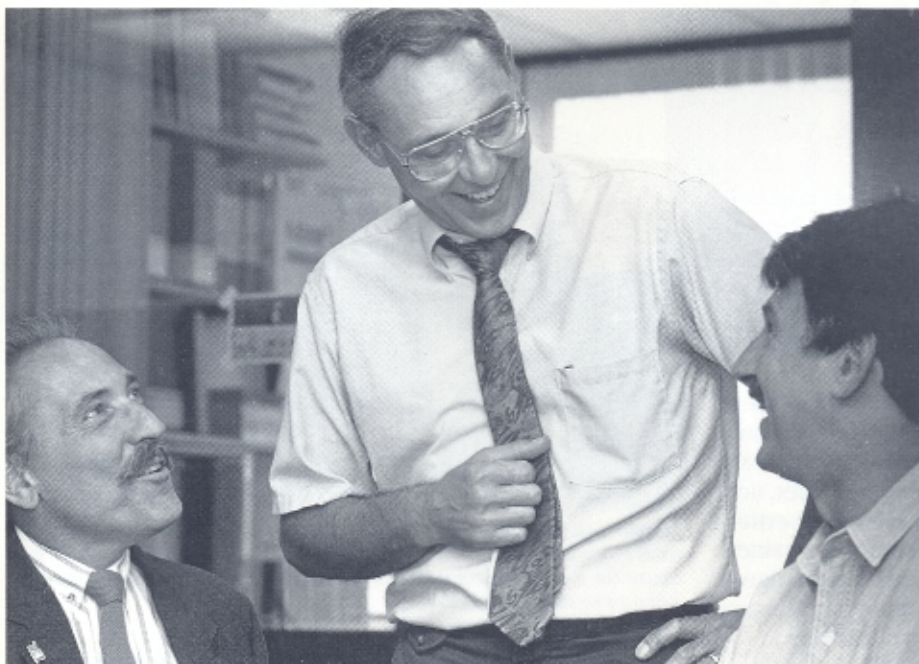
MRT Program Director Marilyn Fowler remembers meeting Hamil when she was hired in 1970 to establish the MRT program.

“The concept of an MRT program at NTID was not positively accepted by the American Medical Record Association,” she recalls. “During the accreditation process, which took eight years, Fred was very supportive and offered great encouragement.”

During those early years, Hamil, like many of the new Institute’s small group of staff members, often worked long hours. With two small children, Hamil, who strongly believes in balancing work and home life, made it a point to spend Friday evenings “out” with his wife, Carolyn.

However, as former babysitter Debra Fromm Faria, daughter of NTID staff member Ruth Fromm, recalls, those big nights out all were spent at Rochester’s Strasenburgh Planetarium, where Hamil voluntarily operated the equipment needed for the facility’s shows.

“That was typical of Fred,” says Fromm Faria, adjunct faculty member



Do you know the one about...? Sandwiched between cohorts Dr. Thomas Raco, left, and Dr. Vincent Daniele, Fred Hamil maintains his "balance" at work.

in RIT's social work program. "He was always using his knowledge of science to educate people."

Hamil continues to share that knowledge in many ways. And he's *still* known for working long days, often arriving by 7 a.m., and for doing everything from setting up computer programs and driving vans for student outings to moving classroom furniture and washing dishes after department parties. No task, it seems, is beyond him.

He once diverted his Volkswagen from Cleveland or Erie, Pennsylvania, to pick up several large boxes of medical records that a hospital had donated to NTID. Never mind that the small car also carried the Hamil family and their vacation belongings.

Carolyn, head nurse at the Rochester School for the Deaf, says that wasn't the first time her husband had cramped her style a bit.

Thirty-six summers ago, she was a nurse working at a small hospital in the Southern Tier town of Cuba, New York. Hamil was a college student working at the hospital while his family vacationed at nearby Cuba Lake.

Since his duties involved everything from admitting patients and collecting blood to doing laundry, he knew his way around the hospital quite well. So it was that he met Carolyn.

"Fred and one of his cohorts used to

tease me all the time," recalls Carolyn. "Of course, I teased them back. One day they got fed up with me, so they put me upside down in a laundry basket."

Such shenanigans seem out of character for a man universally described by colleagues as "even keeled," "low key," and "level headed."

Hamil, however, has a gregarious alter ego known only at NTID to an inner circle of veteran faculty members who periodically convene for professional and social hijinks.

"Fred is quiet, but the quality of his work...clearly demonstrates that he is a person 'outstanding in his field,'" says ringleader Dr. Barry Culhane, RIT student ombudsman.

Culhane's tongue-in-cheek tribute recalls Hamil's 50th birthday in 1987, when his "friends" arranged to have a live sheep spend the day in a fenced area outside Hamil's first-floor office window.

As longtime colleague Dr. Marvin Sachs, chairperson of NTID's physics and technical mathematics department, notes, "When you meet Fred for the first time, you don't expect him to roll up his sleeves and joke a lot. But he's very good at it."

Raman concurs that Hamil is equally at home with the serious or the sublime.

"One day he might be bustling through the halls setting up a room for a workshop, and the next day he might

be in a suit speaking before a large group of accreditation professionals. He'll do anything and do it well."

Says Douglas Wachter, director of the ophthalmic optical finishing program, "Fred is a Pisces. That means that he is creative, romantic, optimistic, and wise."

Hamil's wisdom extends to his philosophy of "shared governance," an approach appreciated by his staff.

The applied science/allied health department is known for its many extra-curricular offerings for students, including clubs, games, picnics, and parties.

Last year, faculty members celebrated Canada's Thanksgiving Day—complete with turkey and all the trimmings—for the department's Canadian students, among NTID's first group of international students.

"Several of those students were spending their first holiday away from home," Raman says. "To have the department recognize their national holiday meant a great deal to them. They clearly were moved."

So, too, was Hamil, when Raman two years ago gave ties to her six male chairpersons as holiday gifts. She jokingly told the men to wear the ties to the department's weekly meetings, a request honored by most for a week or two. Not Hamil. He wore the tie every week until recently, when he began sporting a new tie given to him by a Japanese student.

"That's Fred," laughs Raman. "He's always most appreciative."

In addition to attending weekly administrative meetings, Hamil frequently fills in for department faculty members who are ill or on leave and somehow maintains both his teaching and administrative tasks with aplomb.

"One quarter he taught 18 credit hours," Raman says. "Other administrators might agree to that load only if they could get overtime or compensation, but Fred just did it."

"It's good for the students to see me in the classroom," Hamil says. "It also forces me to keep current."

"I *love* to teach with Fred," says Beverly Price, medical laboratory technology program director. "He's easy to work with, he's creative, and he presents the material in such a way that students' interest is captured. He's simply a natural teacher."



Porter Receives Fulbright Scholarship



Dr. Jeffrey Porter, assistant dean/director of NTID's division of general education, has received a Fulbright Scholar Grant for 1991-92 to study at the University of York in England. Porter will conduct research on how people in two different societies — the United States and the United Kingdom—define

disability, both sociologically and philosophically. He also will study the systems that have been established in each of those countries to work with disabled learners at the postsecondary level.

"In higher education there is increasing diversity among students," says Porter. "More culturally diverse, older, and disabled students are entering colleges and universities. Educators are trying to figure out better ways of supporting these diverse learners."

Porter will live in England for three months beginning in April 1992. He will observe classes at the university and talk with administrators and students who are disabled.



Memorial gathering Four NTID faculty and staff members were witnesses as hundreds of Soviet citizens assembled in Moscow's Red Square to honor the three civilians who were killed during the first days of the coup attempt in that country.

Four from NTID Experience History in the Making

What started as an information-sharing trip to the Soviet Union turned into a real-life history lesson for four NTID faculty members and administrators in August as they witnessed the coup attempt to oust President Mikhail Gorbachev.

"It was wonderful to be in Moscow at that time and have that firsthand experience," says Maria Shustorovich, assistant professor in NTID's department of physics and technical mathematics, who emigrated to the United States from Moscow 14 years ago.

In addition to Shustorovich, group members included Dr. William Castle, director of NTID and vice president for government relations for RIT; Dr. Diane Castle, telecommunications specialist in NTID's audiology department; and Dr. Thomas Raco, assistant dean/director of NTID's School of Visual Communications.

The group had a dual purpose in making the two-week trip, August 18-29: The All-Russian Federation of the Deaf, with headquarters in Moscow, had invited the four NTID delegates to share their

expertise and to initiate discussions about setting up a college similar to NTID at the Moscow State Technical University; and group members also were trying to establish an exchange of artwork between deaf Soviet students and deaf RIT students.

Group members first heard news of the coup on the morning of Aug. 19, but continued with their scheduled events that day.

Although group members could see tanks lining the streets from their hotel window, Raco explains that events during the first day of the coup were relatively quiet.

"Everything was so calm and relaxed, it was hard to believe that anything of consequence was happening," he says. "Children were climbing on the tanks, and there were open discussions among citizens about the coup."

Although a few of their scheduled activities were canceled, the delegates agree that they were able to accomplish much of what they had set out to do on the trip: share their expertise related to education of deaf people.

NEWSMAKERS

- Ten NTID faculty and staff members attended the World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf, held July 2-11 in Tokyo. The travelers were **Robert Baker, Dr. Diane Castle, Dr. William Castle, Dr. James DeCaro, Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, Vicki Hurwitz, Stephen Nelson, Dr. Ross Stuckless, Kip Webster, and Sharron Metevier Webster.**

- **Marcia Dugan**, director of the division of public affairs, was elected to the national board of directors of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc. (SHHH) at the sixth international SHHH convention, held June 28-July 1 in Denver. SHHH is a volunteer organization of hard-of-hearing people and their relatives and friends, with headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland.

- **Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz**, associate vice president for outreach and external affairs and associate dean and director of educational support service programs, was named in June to the board of directors of the National Captioning Institute, a nonprofit organization located in Falls Church, Virginia, that brings captioned television to deaf people nationwide.

- **Dr. Dale Metz**, research associate in the communication research department, has developed the Formal Intelligibility Assessment Tool (FIAT), a system that uses a computerized neural network to assess speech intelligibility. FIAT helps audiologists and speech therapists better understand which acoustic parameters are important in speech.

- **Ronnie Mae Tyson**, career opportunities advisor in the career outreach and admissions department, received a 1990-91 Merit Award for Excellence in Academe from RIT's Office of Minority Student Affairs. The award honors her high grade point average in RIT's career and human resource development graduate program.



Dear Friends of NTID,

Learning at RIT involves activities that extend far beyond classrooms and laboratories. The acquisition of knowledge and skills that will prepare our students to be professionals and citizens also occurs in student government meetings, on the playing fields, on the job, during theater rehearsals, in the residence halls, and during various student club meetings and activities. Participation in extracurricular activities encourages students to develop skills in leadership, cooperation, teamwork, and communication. Through such experiences, students acquire the confidence and ability, upon graduation, to participate in and contribute to the larger global community.

All colleges and universities provide beyond-the-classroom developmental opportunities for students. Extracurricular learning at RIT, however, has a unique added dimension: Students who are deaf play an integral role in the activities, leadership, and decisions that occur at RIT.

While at RIT, deaf students can elect to become involved in activities in two different ways. Students can choose to participate in clubs, fraternities, and programs composed primarily of deaf students, or they may elect to become involved in organizations that represent both deaf and hearing students. Either choice allows students to reap the benefits described above. But when deaf and hearing students work together, the challenges and rewards are enhanced.

RIT is the only university in the country where this kind of integrated activity takes place on such a large scale, where together deaf and hearing students set agendas, achieve goals, and thus overcome communication barriers and cultural differences. At RIT, we are proud of such distinction that changes lives.

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

Dr. M. Richard Rose
President, RIT



Rochester Institute of Technology

National Technical Institute for the Deaf
Lyndon Baines Johnson Building
Post Office Box 9887
Rochester, NY 14623-0887

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Dr. Diane Castle promotes workplace accessibility, p. 30



Photography by Mark Benjamins

A new look is coming into Focus—Winter/Spring 1992!