

# NTID Establishes New Center of Excellence

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The National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology has established The Center of Excellence for the Study of Sign Language Interpreting, it announced today.

Experts from around the United States will work together through the Center to better understand how interpreting affects learning and to determine what factors related to interpreting influence comprehension, learning and access.

"People learn different ways, have different background knowledge, and thrive in different settings," said Dr. Marc Marschark, director of The Center and NTID research professor. "Through better understanding of these differences, we can modify instruction to match the strengths and needs of diverse learners and/or bring learners with special needs to a point where they can optimally benefit from mainstream education."

In collaboration with faculty at NTID and other colleges of RIT, The Center will study teaching and learning via interpreting and alternative methods in a variety of content areas and settings. At present, Center projects are focusing on learning in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in postsecondary settings via two grants from the National Science Foundation, totaling more than \$1.5 million.

A Shannon Award from the National Institutes of Health is being used to explore the dynamics of signed and spoken communication among deaf students in classroom discussions.

"We will build on what we already know from previous research projects at RIT and elsewhere. Collaboration among researchers, instructors, students and interpreters is critical to this initiative," Marschark added. "As we gain a clearer picture, many other groups can benefit from our findings, such as K-12 settings, students who have special learning needs, and those with English as a second language."

"We're looking forward to serving as a key source for those seeking information and partnership in bridging research and practice," said Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, vice president for RIT and CEO/Dean of NTID.

NTID established the world's first American Sign Language-English interpreter education program in 1969. Today, NTID also has the leading interpreting services program at both the associate and bachelor's level, and employs more than 100 interpreters who support the 1,100 deaf and hard-of-hearing students on the RIT/NTID campus in and out of the classroom. More information can be found at [www.ntid.rit.edu/InterpretingResearch](http://www.ntid.rit.edu/InterpretingResearch).

The first and largest technological college in the world for deaf and hard-of-hearing students, NTID, one of eight colleges of RIT, offers educational programs and access and support services to the 1,100 deaf and hard-of-hearing students from around the world who study, live, and socialize with 14,400 hearing students on RIT's Rochester, N.Y., campus.

Web address: [www.rit.edu/NTID](http://www.rit.edu/NTID)