

# Unique Program Helps Deaf Students Celebrate The Arts and Explore The Future

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The National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), a college of Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, N.Y. will help deaf students throughout Texas experience the arts and plan for the future February 22-24 at the 11th annual "Imagination Celebration for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing" in Fort Worth. This unique cultural and artistic experience, the only program of its kind in the nation, exposes deaf students to live theater, and allows them to participate in multi-media workshops and interact with deaf artists.

More than 650 deaf students ages 11-17 from regional deaf programs in 31 Texas school districts will attend performances and workshops presented by members of NTID's Performing Arts Department and a host of individual artists and performers from throughout the country on topics including sculpture, woodcarving, origami, line dancing, theater, and more.

"Imagination Celebration helps emphasize that the arts are a critical component of our communities' education goals and makes young people aware of the wealth of cultural institutions that can be used as lifelong learning experiences," said Dianne Fisher, Imagination Celebration coordinator. "By extending this program to deaf students from throughout the state, we are providing them with new opportunities and experiences and making a powerful statement for accessibility to the arts for all."

More than 150 students attending the event will also participate in NTID's "Voyage to the Future," a program of self-exploration and career and college planning for deaf high school students.

"NTID developed Voyage to the Future to help students get the information they need to make better decisions about their future and how they can achieve their goals," said Jean Bondi-Wolcott, NTID coordinator for outreach and transition services. "Combining Voyage with Imagination Celebration is a perfect fit with NTID's mission to provide well-rounded educational opportunities for deaf students."