

WINTER / SPRING 1993

FOCUS

NTID

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





Total recall John Reid, 1978 social work graduate, reminisces about his NTID experience for a videotape celebrating the Institute's 25th anniversary. The program, which will include historical material about NTID, clips from the 25th anniversary alumni reunion to take place this summer, and interviews with alumni, will commemorate NTID's first quarter-century of educating deaf students.

Photography by A. Sue Weisler

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25 YEARS AND COUNTING

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ABOUT THE COVER

A. Sue Weisler's photograph reflects the innovation that has been NTID's hallmark for 25 years. Throughout 1993, the Institute will celebrate 25 years of providing innovative technological education to students who are deaf.

FOCUS

NTID

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As NTID celebrates its 25th year, FOCUS asked Director William Castle and Dean James DeCaro to look ahead to the NTID of the future. Their comments reflect how NTID's leaders of today envision the Institute —fiscally, physically, and spiritually —25 years from now in 2018.

As we celebrate our 25th anniversary, it seems appropriate to speculate about the next 25 years and envision the NTID of 2018. The groundwork for such speculation lies in the strategic plan that NTID has begun to implement.

First, because of increases in NTID's Federal Endowment Matching Grant Program, additional private fund-raising resources, and special grants and contracts, NTID will be less dependent on federal appropriations for its operations.

The NTID Foundation, the Institute's newly established link to private contributors, will have undertaken several fund-raising campaigns to seek gifts-in-kind and private dollars for our endowment, special projects, and equipment and supply purchases. I expect that we will have as many as five professorships endowed at \$2 million each, a \$65 million endowment for general operations, and an accumulation of gifts-in-kind worth \$15 million. All of this will be supplemental to an annual operations appropriation of more than \$130 million.

In regard to our student population: Nearly 50 percent of the 1,250 students sponsored by NTID in the year 2018 will matriculate into one of RIT's other colleges, and 10 percent of all deaf students will come from other countries.

In addition, NTID will offer new programs, including baccalaureate programs in architecture, electromechanical technology, and educational interpreting as well as master's degree programs for training secondary teachers of deaf students, sign language teachers, social workers and counselors who serve deaf people, art teachers, audiologists, and speech pathologists who specialize in serving deaf people. A growing number of deaf students will pursue master's degrees and doctoral programs in the other colleges of RIT.

Finally, NTID's outreach efforts will be extensive, both nationally and internationally, and will have a significant impact on secondary programs for deaf students, orientation of parents and teachers to career education for deaf people, and training of deaf people to be self-advocates and leaders. The number of interns will be twice as great as it is today (24 in 1992), with 50 percent of interns coming from other countries. In addition, NTID faculty members will serve in an advisory capacity to other countries that have established or plan to establish postsecondary programs for people who are deaf.

These are but a few of the things that will be different about NTID 25 years from now. However, some things will remain the same, particularly the quality of the programs and dedication of a community of people like those who have brought NTID to its current position of excellence.

William E. Castle

Dr. William Castle

2018: THE DEAN'S VISION

I would like to muse about those descriptors that will characterize NTID 25 years from now: excellence, integrity, and credibility.

Some time ago, I heard a commentator on National Public Radio contrast success and excellence. I found the distinction intriguing.

Success can be, and often is, fleeting—the exhibition of some behaviors that might eventually blossom into excellence. It is, more often than not, measured by a comparison to others and marked by competition with others.

Excellence, on the other hand, requires a commitment in perpetuity to being the best one is capable of being, irrespective of actions taken by the competition. Excellence requires a commitment to improving service, even though one may be at the top compared to the competition.

Excellence is marked by a resistance to short-term “profit taking” and may even require short-term hardship in order to make an investment in the future. As John Gardner suggests, excellent individuals and institutions extend themselves, challenge themselves, and demand the very best of themselves.

Excellence is not measured by “star quality” or “notoriety,” but rather by consistent and ever-improving contribution. A commitment to success is a commitment to being at the top, while a commitment to excellence is a lifetime commitment to quality. To paraphrase the philosopher Toulmin, excellent people and institutions analyze their practices not simply for what they are, but for what they might be made to be.

Twenty-five years from now NTID not only will exhibit excellence, it will demonstrate educational integrity. *Integrity*—an incorruptibility regarding the trust placed in us by this nation to educate people who are deaf; a trustworthiness regarding our pledge to prepare deaf people to enter society and the workplace and compete on a par with their hearing peers; the ability and will to remain true to our responsibility to prepare honest and moral human beings who can contribute to the welfare of our society at all levels.

As an educational enterprise, NTID also will demonstrate credibility. NTID will be credible by doing what it professes to do. Its credibility will be based upon an honest reporting of successes and failures in the teaching and learning processes, founded in the fundamental belief that people who are deaf can and will continue to grow and derived from an “ability” rather than a “disability” approach to teaching and learning.

When our contributions to teaching and learning are reassessed in 25 years, the words of Virgil will ring true: “*Experto credite*”—Trust one who has proved it” (*Aenid*, XI.283).



Dr. James DeCaro

95%

Ninety-five percent of NTID graduates who enter the workforce find employment in their fields of study. In 1967, 85 percent of deaf adults were unemployed or underemployed.

1,130

Among RIT's current enrollment of approximately 13,000 students are 1,130 who are deaf. In 1968, 71 students enrolled in NTID's first class.

\$527

Research demonstrates that the average net weekly earnings of deaf RIT alumni 10 years after graduation is \$527.

46


This year, deaf RIT students come from 46 states and one territory (U.S. Virgin Islands). A total of 45 international deaf students attend RIT from seven countries around the world.

30%

In fall 1992, 30 percent of deaf students were enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs in other RIT colleges, compared to 15 percent 10 years ago.

102,682

Since opening its doors in 1968, NTID has welcomed 102,682 visitors from around the world.



Throughout NTID's first 25 years,
thousands of students, hundreds of faculty
and staff members, and many friends
have passed through NTID's doors.
These individuals have left their mark
on the Institute, just as NTID
has influenced them.

**In celebration of the human spirit
and of NTID's 25th anniversary,
FOCUS spotlights 25 of these individuals.**

NTID's 25th anniversary logo, a stylized tree, was created by James Leonard Urso, associate professor in RIT's School of American Studies. It symbolizes the growth of NTID students as well as the expansion and success of the Institute. The computer-generated design was created by Jennifer P. Hinkle, a senior graphic design student and computer graphics student from the School of Connecticut

by Kathleen S. Smith

Twice a week, Dr. Albert Simone, RIT's new president, starts his day with a cup of coffee, a bowl of cereal, and a sign language book. Not many college presidents have in-home tutoring sessions at 7 a.m., but Simone, who began his tenure as RIT's eighth president in September, knows that he has a lot to learn about the deaf students who attend RIT, and he doesn't want to waste any time.

On Monday and Wednesday mornings, Sam Holcomb, sign communication specialist in NTID's Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education, visits Simone's home and conducts an American Sign Language class for Simone; his wife, Carol; and their 22-year-old daughter, Laura.

"They're doing well," says Holcomb of his students. "Dr. Simone has a limited sign vocabulary right now, but he expresses what he knows very well.

"Their attendance also has been superb," Holcomb jokes.

Simone's desire to learn sign language fits well with his clear vision of where he would like RIT—and NTID—to be in 10 years.

"I'd like people to think of RIT as a school with a strong academic reputation and a special culture—Deaf culture—that spills out into everything that we do," says Simone, former president of the University of Hawaii system.

He envisions an RIT where new students are immediately



Albert J. Simone
You Can Call Me Al

aware of NTID and visitors to campus are met at the gate and given directions by a person using sign language—a place "where visitors will see hearing people using sign language in

residence halls and offices just as naturally as they breathe."

"I'd like to see questions about deafness answered with respect, meaning that people will have learned, as I expect

to, about how to approach and understand the challenges faced by deaf people," he continues. "I hope that people here will develop a better understanding of what life is like for deaf people."

Simone has gotten a taste of that firsthand since hiring deaf student Sherri Corcoran to work in his office. It is the first time ever that a deaf student has worked in the RIT president's office.

"I feel very comfortable there," says Corcoran, a 27-year-old office technologies and applied accounting student. "The people are friendly, and they've even begun to learn sign language."

Corcoran has taught Simone a few signs that he'd like to put to use in the classroom.

"Wouldn't it be great," he muses, "if I could teach a leadership course next year and use sign language?"

He should know better than to set such lofty goals. Soon after joining the University of Hawaii in 1985, he took on several friendly wagers that he would "break 90" within a month of learning how to play golf.

"I paid for a lot of dinners on that one," he says, shaking his head.

He admits that his many goals related to NTID are "just rhetoric until I achieve them.

In a year, I will be in a much better position to evaluate my progress. But I'd like people to know that I have good intentions." ■



1964

1965

April 1

FOCUS 5

Robert G. Sanderson, president of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), addresses an NAD workshop in Knoxville, Tennessee, saying: "The deaf must have better educational opportunities and vocational training."

Bills to establish a national technical institute for the deaf are introduced in the U.S. Congress. Sen. Lister Hill introduces the bill in the Senate, and Reps. John Fogarty and Hugh Carey introduce the bill in the House. Carey eventually authors the final National Technical Institute for the Deaf Act.

by Pamela Seabon

"I've been teaching at NTID a long time," says 20-year veteran Dr. Shirley Allen.

During that time, Allen has witnessed many changes at the Institute. One thing that has remained constant, however, is her affection for her students.

"I love them," affirms the associate professor in the department of general education instruction. "They are capable individuals who deserve to be treated as such. All they need is a little guidance and encouragement.

"My students are smart," she adds. "I'm just here to help them see that."

Over the years, Allen has helped hundreds of students recognize their self-worth and the value of those around them.

Although she says that assisting and watching her pupils grow is rewarding, she confesses that it hasn't always been an easy task, particularly in her early teaching days when she encountered skepticism because she was the only black and deaf faculty member at the Institute.

She recalls walking past students in hallways and either being stared at as if she were out of place or simply ignored. These responses did not disturb her though.

It was the students who were surprised when they entered one of their life skills classes and realized that the black woman they had passed in the corridor was their instructor.

"The students looked as if they'd seen a ghost when they walked into the classroom and saw me," Allen says. "Many had never seen a non-white teacher before."

Today, students have a far greater likelihood of interacting with faculty and staff members as well as peers who are members of minority groups. Since 1985, when the Institute initiated aggressive affirmative action hiring strategies, NTID has significantly increased the number of minority employees—from 17 eight years ago to 54 as of last fall.

That kind of progress is important to Allen, who last year became the first black deaf American woman to receive a doctorate. She believes that it is important for all students to meet instructors, advisors, counselors, and other professionals working in academia who come from a variety of backgrounds. She contends that students need as much exposure to "life in the real world" as possible.

"Diversity is a fact of life," she says. "People from different cultures live beside one another. We must share our knowledge, thoughts, and feelings so that we, as members of the human race, can understand and appreciate one another."

Known around the Institute for her unbridled honesty, Allen reveals a more nurturing character when talking about her students. Although she sometimes is considered "difficult" by students, she remains respected because her lectures contain messages that go beyond anything they'd find in textbooks.

"Professor Allen treats us like adults," says Damon Tidwell, second-year student in the photo/media technologies program who took Allen's "Psychology and Your Life" course last fall.

"She doesn't give us breaks when it comes to homework and

Shirley Allen
Lessons in Life



class assignments," he explains. "She will not do the work for us. She wants us to be capable of doing things on our own.

"Professor Allen sees a future in us." ■

June 8



The drafted bill becomes Public Law 89-36 when it is signed by President Lyndon Baines Johnson. The law provides for a National Advisory Board (NAB) to aid in the establishment and operation of the new institute. Robert Panara, who later will become the first deaf faculty member at RIT and serve as chairperson of NTID's English and theater departments, is the only deaf member of the board.

by Kathryn Schmitz

In 1966, Gustave Rathe Jr.'s expertise was educational programming, not deafness. Still, he led the group that decided more than 25 years ago that RIT would be the best place for a national technical institute for the deaf. As chairperson of NTID's National Advisory Board (NAB), Rathe was part of the group instrumental in selecting RIT as the host institution for NTID.

Rathe's involvement with the Institute began with a breakfast meeting with John Gardner, then secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Gardner commented during the meeting that he believed the industrial component of society needed to work on social problems with the same energy that it expended on military ones.

Rathe, director of education for IBM at the time and now retired, agreed, adding that he felt that industry had a great deal to contribute to the fields of education and social work.

Two weeks later, Gardner appointed Rathe to the 12-member NAB, precursor to NTID's National Advisory Group.

"With his background at IBM, Gus provided insight into the job markets for our future graduates as well as other opportunities that were available to college students, such as grants and scholarships," says Robert Panara, NTID professor emeritus who also served on the NAB. "He was a brilliant organizer and knew how to make people work together, which is why we appointed him chairperson of the NAB."

Rathe soon converted his initial naiveté regarding deafness into enthusiasm.

"At that time, I had an objectivity that grew out of ignorance," says Rathe. "I had no experience or knowledge of either oralism or sign language, issues that were hotly discussed in board meetings, but I was ready to support education for all deaf persons regardless of method of communication."

In search of a place to provide technical education for deaf people, the NAB reviewed applications from 20 colleges and universities interested in host-

ing NTID on their campuses. Four were selected for site visits: University of Tennessee, University of Pittsburgh, University of Illinois, and RIT. After completing the site visits, board members reconvened and unanimously selected RIT as the host institution.

"RIT was the only institution that had long and varied experience in programs that were not exclusively aimed at the liberal arts," says Rathe.

A National Advisory Group member from 1967-73 and trustee of Gallaudet University for 23 years as an outgrowth of

his NAB service, Rathe has followed the growth of educational opportunities for deaf people for more than a quarter of a century and applauds NTID's successful development.

As he reflects on the Institute's 25 years of preparing deaf college graduates to pursue professional careers, Rathe notes, "There are enough success stories in opening up new career opportunities for deaf people in the past 25 years of NTID's existence to conclude that its original goals have been achieved." ■

Gustave Rathe
**He'd RATHER
Be in Rochester**



Of the initial 20 educational institutions that sought to have NTID located on their campuses, four—Rochester Institute of Technology, University of Illinois, University of Pittsburgh, and University of Tennessee—are chosen for site visits.

October 1

After visiting each of the four institutions, NAB members, under the leadership of chairperson Gustave Rathe Jr., as well as consultants for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) and Congress, unanimously agree to recommend RIT as the host institution.

1966

May 27

FOCUS 7



Robert Frisina **Two Men and an Institute** *William E. Castle*

by Susan Cergol

Like many healthy 25-year-olds, NTID has flourished and matured into early adulthood, in part, through the wisdom and guidance of devoted guardians—one who nurtured it through infancy and childhood, another through the challenging teen years and beyond.

Drs. Robert Frisina and William Castle, by virtue of their respective tenures as NTID director, in effect have parented the Institute and were instrumental in raising it to its position as a worldwide leader in the education of deaf people.

“Twenty-five years after its establishment, NTID has had tremendous influence on the education of deaf students as

well as on how the hearing world perceives deaf and hard-of-hearing people,” says Frisina, now director of RIT’s International Center for Hearing and Speech Research.

When Frisina accepted the position as NTID’s first director in 1967 and selected Castle as the Institute’s first dean the following year, there were few postsecondary educational op-

portunities for deaf students, and virtually none in technical studies. As a result, he notes, about 85 percent of deaf adults at that time found themselves in unskilled or semiskilled jobs.

Today, roughly 95 percent of deaf RIT graduates who enter the work force find technical or professional jobs in their areas of specialization.

“One of NTID’s most

December 20

An agreement is reached between the government and RIT. NTID is formally established.

February 1



Dr. Robert Frisina is named the first director of NTID.

important contributions is our success regarding employment of our graduates," says Castle, who has served as Institute director since 1977 when Frisina stepped down to head RIT's institutional advancement program. "NTID opened the doors of business and industry as places of employment for deaf people. No other institution has done that as dramatically as we have."

And that, Castle notes, was Congress' intent when it enacted the National Technical Institute for the Deaf Act in 1965, which mandated the establishment of NTID.

Congress did not, however, spell out exactly *how* this new college would prepare deaf students for the world of work. "That befell our inventiveness," quips Frisina.

"I came in to bridge the gap between legislation and educational methodologies," he says. "My job was to transform the legislation into a living entity."

With an extensive background in audiology, psychology, and education of deaf students, including teaching experience at the Missouri School for the Deaf as well as administrative positions at Gallaudet University, Frisina was well-prepared for the arduous task he faced.

Armed with basic guidelines written by NTID's National Advisory Board (a precursor to the current National Advisory Group) and supported by a small group of faculty members with "talent, integrity, and an ability to work cooperatively with others," Frisina set about developing academic programs that would provide real opportunities for deaf

students and prepare those students for the work force on a par with their hearing peers.

"We couldn't accept any existing system of education because we already knew that none fit deaf students' needs," says Frisina. "We were doomed to fail if we demanded exact, immediate inclusion into an existing educational system."

Instead, by steadfastly keeping with an innovative approach

visibility among individuals and organizations concerned with education of deaf people. In addition to serving as NTID dean for nine years and director for 16, Castle has served two terms as president of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and traveled abroad extensively—from Europe to Africa, Asia to South America—spreading the word about NTID.

"NTID started as an educational experiment. We had to prove that it could succeed."

to educating deaf students, Frisina says that the Institute's founders "maintained the integrity and intent of the legislation that created NTID."

"NTID started as an educational experiment," he adds. "We had to prove that it could succeed."

Succeed it did. Lacking any models of technical education programs for deaf students in a mainstream collegiate setting, Frisina guided the creation of a program that has set the pace in its field.

"NTID has become the model of technical education for deaf students," says Castle, adding that the Institute, particularly its comprehensive system of support services, is emulated throughout the world.

NTID's renown can be attributed largely to Castle's high

Castle also is well-known on Capitol Hill. As a result of his frequent trips to Washington, D.C., in defense of NTID's funding requests from the federal government, Castle—in his trademark dress of brightly colored suit jackets—has become a highly recognized and respected figure on the federal scene.

Maintaining the federal appropriation level necessary to support the Institute has been one of Castle's primary challenges as NTID director.

Before 1981, the Institute was virtually assured of receiving the level of funding requested. Every year since then, however, Castle and other administrators have had to travel to Washington to reinforce the importance of the needed funding.

"We've essentially been successful every year—not always getting everything that we want, but almost," notes Castle optimistically.

Castle also is optimistic about the future. Although Frisina says that his greatest fear when establishing NTID was "institutional arteriosclerosis," NTID has bypassed such hardening of the arteries by remaining flexible and willing to grow with changing times. Castle believes that the Institute's recent strategic planning process is testimony to committed evolution.

"Strategic planning, as we have witnessed it during the past two years, is simply a dramatic way of dealing with change, and NTID has undergone constant change," he says.

The strategic plan calls on the Institute to develop better strategies to recruit female and minority students and minority faculty and staff members as well as improve sign language skills and awareness of Deaf culture on campus.

In addition, NTID will place an even greater emphasis on outreach efforts during the next several years, sharing its findings about technological and educational opportunities for deaf students with educators and employers throughout the country and abroad.

"There is so much that NTID has learned in our 25 years that we haven't yet shared widely," says Castle. "People around the world will continue to look to us for this expertise, and we will continue to be responsive." ■

September

Dr. William Castle is named the first dean of NTID.



Winter Quarter

NTID's first technical degree programs—architectural drafting, mechanical drafting, machine tool operation, and office practice—are offered. Today, NTID offers 20 different programs that lead to certificates, diplomas, or associate degrees.

by Pamela Seabon

When Lorraine Cosgrove began her temporary secretarial position at NTID in 1969, she assumed that all she had to do was answer telephones, type letters, and file documents for a few weeks. But Cosgrove was in for a big surprise.

"When my two weeks were up, they told me that I couldn't leave," she chuckles, "and I was offered a permanent position.

"The Institute was just developing its classes, and there was tons of work to be done," she says. "I simply could not walk away from the students and the Institute."

Cosgrove, secretary in the School of Science and Engineering Careers, is one of a handful of support staff members who have been at the Institute practically since its inception. She has helped shape, define, and implement NTID's Summer Vestibule Program (SVP), a monthlong orientation for incoming students, and other student-centered projects over the past two-plus decades.

Cosgrove, 62, began her NTID career in the department of human development, which, like many NTID departments at the time, was located in Grace Watson Hall. When the Lyndon Baines Johnson Building was completed in 1974, Cosgrove's area moved in.

Although Cosgrove was excited and pleased by the expansion, she confesses to also feeling a tad saddened. The inevitable growth of the Institute brought with it a loss of the camaraderie that she and others had grown to cherish.



Permanently Temporary

Lorraine Cosgrove

"There was a time when the Institute would host a party in honor of faculty and staff members," Cosgrove explains, "and everyone would show up. There never was a question of whether or not someone would attend because we all looked forward to going.

"Today, because of the size of the Institute and the location of staff and faculty members in the Hugh L. Carey Building across campus, we know less about one another personally,

and we simply can't interact as much," she says.

To know Cosgrove is to know a woman of integrity, commitment, and good spirit, according to Jane Mullins, career development counselor in the School of Science and Engineering Careers. Mullins has worked with Cosgrove for 16 years.

"Lorraine is one of the most caring and compassionate people I have ever known," says Mullins. "She gladly goes the

extra mile for those of us in the department. I sometimes affectionately call her 'Mom' because she is a nurturing person—not only to me, but to others throughout the Institute.

"With more than 20 years of committed service to and vast knowledge about NTID," Mullins adds, "Lorraine's contributions simply are unmatched." ■

The Student Interpreter Training Program, a forerunner of the Basic Interpreter Training Program, is established. NTID is the first in history to offer such a program.

Fall

NTID's Vestibule programs are initiated to orient deaf students to the postsecondary experience and curricula available and to inform students about career opportunities. An eight-week Summer Vestibule Program (SVP) also is established for intensive evaluation and orientation for those students who had been admitted to NTID for the fall quarter. Seventy-six newly admitted students participate.

John H. Haynes

Continuing Education

by Pamela Seabon

Like thousands of people across the country, NTID graduate John Haynes has returned to school to further his education and career. At the encouragement of his family and friends, Haynes again enrolled at RIT in 1986, this time to pursue a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering.

After graduating with a diploma from NTID's manufacturing processes technology program in 1978, Haynes worked for nine years as a journeyman in Eastman Kodak Company's tool and die department before resuming his studies at RIT.

Now a fourth-year student in the College of Engineering, Haynes realized that in order to fulfill his goal of becoming an engineer at a large industrial company like Kodak or Xerox Corporation, he needed to return to school. Since 1988, Haynes has pursued his bachelor's degree full time and expects to graduate next spring.

"Getting my bachelor's degree is very important to me," says Haynes. "After having spent many years in the work force, I now realize that having an advanced degree and being able to apply what I know determines how successful I will be."

As an older and wiser student, the 34-year-old returns with information and experiences that he believes can be beneficial to his hearing and deaf academic peers. Haynes says that he has a lot of knowledge about the work force to impart to others.

"Older students who have worked for a number of years before returning to further their education can provide a much clearer idea of what the workplace requires," says Dr. Raymond Grosshans, assistant professor in NTID's manufacturing processes technology program. "Those students confirm what instructors teach about the skills and attributes needed for success on the job."

Since returning to campus, Haynes has been impressed by students' increased activism regarding university issues. He says that students appear more mature, responsible, and apt to speak up when they feel that issues concerning them aren't being fully addressed.

He cites as an example the Campaign for Accessibility Now, a highly publicized week-long series of rallies, meetings with university administrators, and presentations to NTID's National Advisory Group in the fall of 1991, during which students expressed a need for



greater access to safety measures and services on campus.

"Students came together as one voice to be heard by the administration," says Haynes. "The students were organized, knew what they wanted, and rightfully demanded changes."

Haynes believes that students should maintain such constructive energy throughout their lives, adding that although life may sometimes appear tough, it's up to the individual to be strong and persevere to overcome obstacles. ■

1971

After two years of growth and development, the NTID drama club presents four major productions, two special performances, and three workshops. More than 100 students and six faculty members participate as performers, designers, technicians, business agents, and advisors.



June 4

Groundbreaking for NTID's Lyndon Baines Johnson Building takes place.

by Kathryn Schmitz

Although they came to NTID during different eras, Kevin Nolan and Sharon Hensley, both 47, got a fresh start at the Institute. In 1968, Nolan was a member of NTID's first class; today, almost 25 years later, Hensley is beginning her work toward a bachelor's degree at RIT.

Nolan, who received a bachelor's degree in business administration from RIT in 1971 and now is guidance counselor and director of alumni affairs at Clarke School for the Deaf in Northampton, Massachusetts, entered NTID as a transfer student from a community college in Franklin, Massachusetts.

"Coming to NTID was the turning point in my life," says Nolan. "During high school and junior college, I had no support services so I got very little from my classes. My mind exploded at NTID because I could understand everything in class."

Hensley, even though she has earned four associate degrees at different junior colleges around the country, was unable to land a job. Representing a growing group of older students at the Institute, Hensley takes her studies seriously because she feels that a bachelor's degree from RIT will improve her chances of employment.

"School is tough," she says, "but I'm learning a lot. The more I learn, the more I realize how little I know."

When Nolan and his 70 classmates began their first year at NTID 25 years ago, the world was watching.



Sharon Hensley
**Student Studies:
Yesterday and Today**
Kevin Nolan

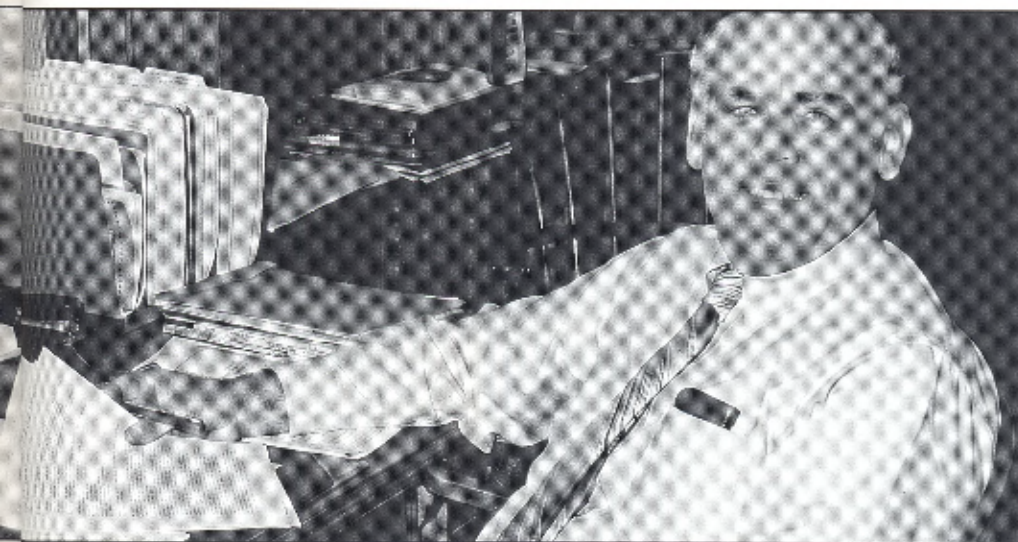


June 5

NITD graduates its first class. Fifty-four students, among them the first student officially accepted for entrance to NTID (William Ingraham), participate in RIT's commencement exercises.



"Coming to NTID was the turning point in my life.... My mind exploded at NTID because I could understand everything in class."



"RIT has a lot to offer students... that I didn't get at other colleges."

"Dr. [Robert] Frisina [first director of NTID] told us, 'I want all of you to know that you are now in the fishbowl,'" says Nolan of his initial experience at a college that did not yet have its own facilities.

Nolan took his responsibility as a representative of a new deaf student body seriously, getting involved in Sigma Pi fraternity, helping to establish the drama club, and working closely with NTID's new teachers to get courses and programs underway.

"We all knew one another," says Nolan. "Because we used RIT's facilities, we also

socialized a great deal with hearing students."

Enjoying technological advances and facilities that have been developed since Nolan's graduation, Hensley now is studying social work at RIT. Her daughter, Deborah, 23, also is in her first year at RIT, studying criminal justice.

"RIT has a lot to offer students—technical courses, support services, tutoring—that I didn't get at other colleges," says Hensley.

One feature that wasn't available to Nolan but is important to Hensley is the VAX computer system, which, among other functions, has contained the library's resource listings since 1978.

"I was so surprised to find no card catalogs in the library," says Hensley. "I had to learn how to use the computer to get information."

Hensley also uses the VAX to send electronic mail via Internet to her husband, a third-year education student at Gallaudet University.

While Hensley has many resources and options to choose from at RIT that were not available to Nolan, the pioneer is happy to have had the opportunity to begin with a clean slate.

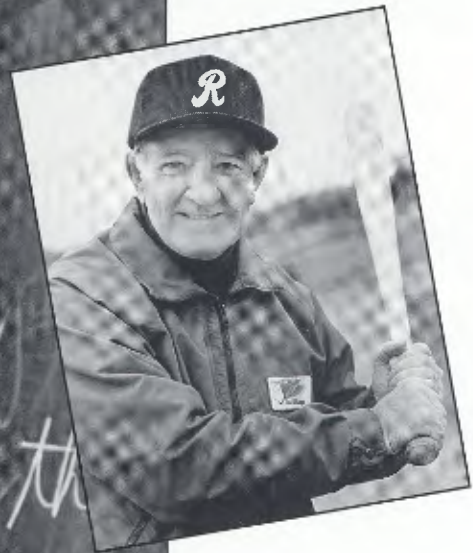
"I'd do it all over again," Nolan says.

"One of my appreciations," he says of NTID, "is that the dream became a reality, one that we started from scratch." ■

NTID's student government—named NTID Student Congress (NSC)—is established. During fall quarter 1971, NSC officers are elected.

Summer

A pre-employment program is developed to assist students in selection of realistic career choices, identification of job-related responsibilities, and development of an understanding and awareness of the world of work.



by Lynne Bohlman

Though separated by 150 years, Robert Panara's educational adventure at RIT closely parallels that of Laurent Clerc at the American School for the Deaf.

Although Clerc, Panara modestly concedes, was more pioneering because he was THE first deaf teacher at THE first educational program for deaf students in the United States, Panara is a pioneer in his own right. In 1967, Panara achieved his initial first at RIT when he became the first deaf faculty member at the Institute as it prepared to open its doors to deaf students.

That first year was a tough one for Panara, professor emeritus, who frequently questioned his decision to leave Gallaudet University, where he

October 3



NTID's Experimental Educational Theatre, an outlet for creative expression, presents *The Taming of the Shrew*. It is the group's first production in the Institute's new facilities.

Robert Panara

A Major League Teacher

had taught for 18 years. Being the only deaf person at RIT in 1967 was akin to what Jackie Robinson must have experienced when he broke the racial barrier in the major leagues, says Panara, who is as fond of baseball metaphors and anecdotes as he is of quoting literary greats.

Panara missed his peers at Gallaudet, all of whom communicated fluently in sign language and speech. In 1967, there were no trained interpreters at RIT and only a handful of staff members skilled in using sign language.

Panara also missed his beloved teaching, which he gave up that first year in order to undertake an internal public relations campaign to educate faculty, staff, and students about deafness and what they might expect the next year when the first class of 71 deaf students would arrive.

Still, Panara realized the importance of having "a person with 'deaf experience' be involved" in helping set up the Institute.

He was motivated, in part, by memories of his own education.

Panara recalled his experiences in public schools after becoming deaf at age 10 following a bout with spinal meningitis.

"I had firsthand knowledge of what it was like to be a deaf student enrolled in a class of hearing students. I wanted to help eliminate the barriers that deaf students would surely face."

If Panara's first year at RIT was particularly tough, the following 19—he retired in 1987—were filled with personal and professional achievement and satisfaction.

"I felt a new energy, and I had a new vision, which before I really never had," he says. "I was part of a ground swell, and I was given the leeway to be creative and innovative."

Panara founded and was the first chairperson of both NTID's English department and Experimental Educational Theatre program. Today, NTID's 500-seat theater is named in his honor.

Panara also helped train interpreters and new NTID staff members, provided support services for deaf students, and taught integrated classes in RIT's College of Liberal Arts—something he did for 20 years

"to prove that a deaf person could teach both deaf and hearing students."

Of NTID's accomplishments, Panara says, "Our students have proven for the greater part that they can meet the challenge of a mainstream education.... Our batting average of something like 95 percent placement proves our success."

In addition, Panara notes a more subtle accomplishment of the experiment to bring together deaf and hearing students on a single college campus: Hearing students benefit, too, and in turn spread the positive message about deaf people's potential.

"Many [hearing students] learn to bridge the communication gap. They also learn a greater sensitivity to and respect for cultural diversity," he says.

"Many of them have chosen careers that are related to deafness and deaf people. Others have succeeded in other areas and can recall the courage, resourcefulness, and capability of their deaf schoolmates. They've helped educate their own employers and co-workers to what deaf people can do, which has opened doors for many."

NTID's first 25 years represent the promise of budding youth and the sweetness of its fulfillment.

"For me," Panara notes, "it was a growing experience. If I helped others to grow and develop a new awareness of deafness and of the potential of deaf people, so much the better."

Panara's immense impact on the shaping of NTID is

undeniable. He inspired hundreds of students to explore the beauty and power of English literature—a passion he discovered as a child and fueled throughout high school as he snuck poetry or novels from his desk while teachers droned on about history or math or a foreign language.

Panara also inspired a love of the written word in his son, John, who can recall waking up Saturday mornings to the sounds of his father reciting lines—such as those from *Kubla Khan*, which sparked the imagination, and those from *The Tyger*, which evoked a haunting beauty.

Part of what made his father an effective teacher, says John Panara, who has worked at NTID for 14 years, was his ability to make the words come alive for students. Whether a literature or drama course, his father would enact the lines through signs and his own interpretations.

"For some students, literature is just words on a page. A good teacher is like a magnifying glass, helping students to see images and discover ideas," says the younger Panara, adjunct English instructor and senior captioning specialist, who provides access to the power of language through a different medium.

An understanding of the power of language and the access that understanding provides students—access to mainstream society as well as to self-awareness—may be Robert Panara's most enduring legacy. ■

October 5



NTID's \$27.5 million complex, comprising an academic building, three residence halls, and a dining hall, is dedicated. During dedication ceremonies, keynote speaker Lady Bird Johnson, former first lady, plants a tree in front of the building named in memory of her husband.



James F. Northcutt Building Alumni Ties

by Beth M. Pessin

He greets people with a big smile and a hearty "howdy." Born and raised in Louisiana and now a resident Texan, James Northcutt is the essence of Southern warmth.

With his friendly, outgoing personality, it's not surprising that this 34-year-old NTID alumnus is involved in a vari-

ety of social, athletic, and professional organizations.

Although he graduated from NTID a dozen years ago, Northcutt still has ties to the Institute. As president and founding member of the NTID Alumni Chapter of Greater Houston and board member of NTID's Interim Alumni Association, Northcutt remains an active member of the NTID community.

There's no question about what motivates the 1981 architectural technology graduate, who is an American Institute of Architects intern with the Castles Design Group, Inc., in Houston.

"NTID got me where I am today," he says. "The Institute supports its students and assists its graduates in finding jobs."

While one goal of the Houston alumni chapter is to keep members aware of the Institute's progress and changes, Northcutt says members also are interested in repaying the Institute's support. The chapter is working to establish a scholarship fund for NTID students as a way of supporting the Institute.

Northcutt says that the alumni organization mainly serves a social function, however. The approximately 40-member group is affiliated with two athletic associations, the American Athletic Association of the Deaf and the Southwest Athletic Association of the Deaf, through which the group has softball and basketball teams that provide further opportunities for members to socialize.

Northcutt forged another link to his alma mater when he was named board member of NTID's Interim Alumni Association in 1990. Since then, the group has met twice a year to develop a formal alumni association and to plan and organize NTID's 25th anniversary alumni reunion, which will take place in Rochester July 7-11.

"I hope that there will be a big crowd of alumni," says Northcutt enthusiastically. "I expect that it will be a great time to share memories and meet with friends."

According to David Staehle, administrator of NTID's alumni relations office, Northcutt is a good organizer as well as a perfectionist. Staehle says that Northcutt has had a strong influence on development of bylaws for the NTID Alumni Association and that he is dedicated to his role as board member.

A firm believer in giving back to the educational institutions that helped prepare him for future responsibilities, Northcutt also is vice president of the Louisiana State School for the Deaf Alumni Association. He attended the school in Baton Rouge from 1967 until he graduated in 1977.

He is as proud of his career as he is of his accomplishments with the alumni organizations.

Northcutt says that he gained familiarity with the "working world of architecture" while studying at NTID and through his cooperative work experiences. When he entered the workplace in 1981, Northcutt says he was well-prepared.

"Jim is one of the best examples of what a student who is eager to learn and succeed can accomplish," says James Jensen, chairperson of NTID's construction technologies department.

Northcutt, who says NTID taught him how to persevere, applies his desire to succeed to his profession as well as to the Institute through his work with alumni organizations.

"The credit for his success goes to him," says Jensen, who still corresponds with Northcutt. "He took charge of his education and career development, and he still does." ■

Spring

Dr. Robert Frisina becomes senior vice president for RIT, and Dr. William Castle is named NTID director.

November

NTID's tutor/notetaker training program is initiated.

EYES ON NTID



Murphy



M. C.

Just what is it that makes a college environment such an exciting place to work and study? Sure, there are plenty of stimulating intellectual discussions and activities taking place, but most people will tell you that the highlights of their college experience involve the friends they make and the fellowship they enjoy. At least that's what FOCUS staff members discovered when we asked students and faculty and staff members to tell us—visually—about their NTID experience. In celebration of NTID's 25th anniversary and the individuals who breathe life into our community, FOCUS presents "Eyes on NTID," a photographic collection of life at NTID as seen through the eyes (and lenses) of Institute community members.

Bob Baker





Hon C. Siu



Jennifer Kirkpatrick



Jeffrey Halperin



Hon C. Siu

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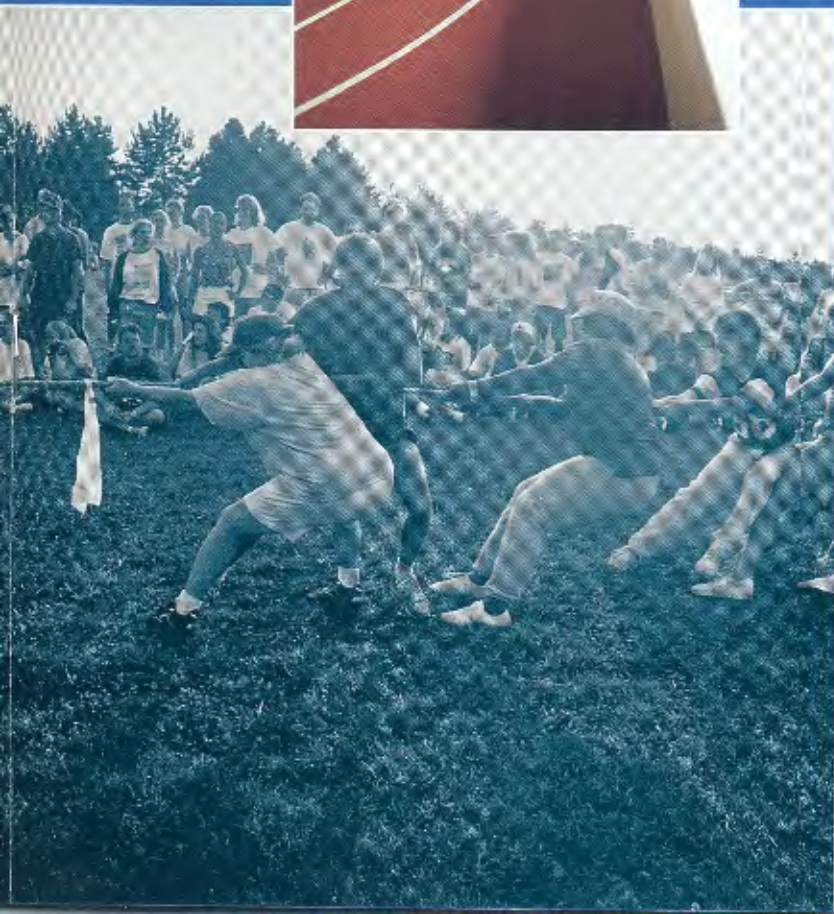
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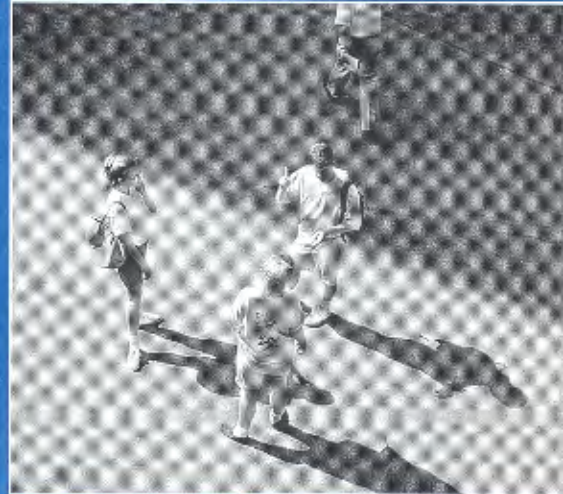


Hon C. Siu



Hon C. Siu

Rick Raymond



Victor Magide



by Pamela Seabon

NTID is fortunate to have a friend like Paul Meyer. For 17 years, Meyer helped provide many NTID students and graduates with summer cooperative work experiences and permanent employment opportunities with the U.S. Department of Defense.

"I can't speak highly enough about the abilities of NTID students," says Meyer, now deputy executive director of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. "They come to the workplace with tons of enthusiasm, energy, and the skills necessary to perform well on the job."

Meyer's association with NTID began during his 24-year tenure at David Taylor Naval Ship Research and Development Center in Carderock, Maryland, where he was instrumental in developing equal employment opportunity networks and recruiting people with disabilities. Meyer began his recruiting efforts with colleges throughout the country in 1974; NTID was one of the first colleges that he contacted.

"I had heard lectures during a conference in Washington, D.C., that year about the college and the technical education it provides," Meyer recalls. "I was so impressed by NTID's efforts that soon afterward I contacted the Institute and began working with employment advisors."

Meyer continued providing job opportunities for NTID students and graduates at the research center until January

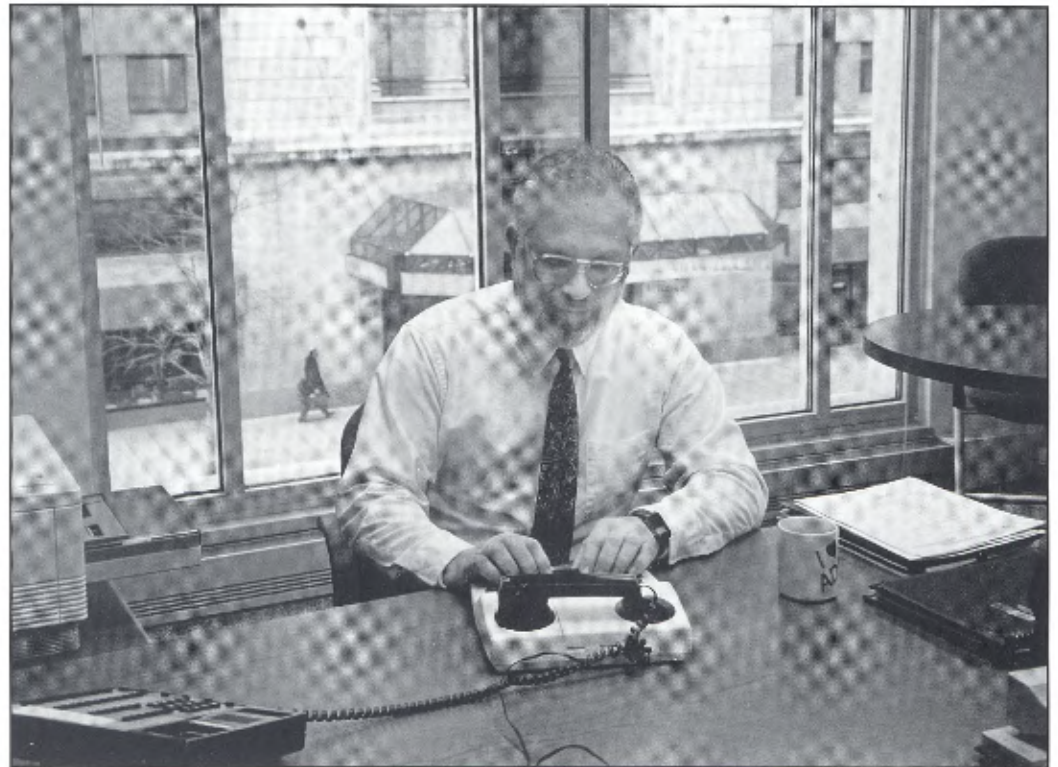
1992 when he accepted his current position.

"Just because I've left David Taylor doesn't mean the center's program has ceased," he maintains. "In fact, the program continues under new leadership as a nationwide referral system for the Army, Navy, Food and Drug Administration, and a variety of other federal agencies."



The Institute marks its 10th anniversary, and 50 percent of NTID's alumni return to campus for a three-day summer celebration. Prominent sculptor and RIT alumnus Carl Zollo is commissioned to create a piece for the anniversary. The sculpture, "The Split Cube," which reflects the dynamics of the educational process and student life at NTID, is located at the main entrance of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Building.

Paul Meyer A Friend, In Deed



In recognition of his contributions and commitment to the Institute, Meyer was honored by NTID's National Center on Employment of the Deaf (NCED) in 1987 and received a special award from NTID's National Advisory Group in 1989.

"Paul certainly is deserving of the awards," acknowledges Linda Iacelli, coordinator of em-

ployer outreach and training in NCED. "He sees the Institute as an excellent source of technical talent. Because he believes in and supports the knowledge and skills we provide, he lets other organizations know about NTID."

"Paul has been an invaluable friend to the Institute and our students." ■

Embracing Education

by Kathryn Schmitz

Dr. Robert Davila has dedicated almost 40 years to the education of people who are deaf, 25 of which overlap with NTID and its educational mission.

Davila, former assistant secretary for special education and rehabilitative services in the U.S. Department of Education and project officer for NTID, was the highest-ranking deaf person in the federal government during his three years in office. He worked to make available educational and vocational services to all people with disabilities, not just deaf people.

"I want people, both deaf and hearing, to understand through my example that deaf people—and for that matter, all people with disabilities—are capable of unlimited success given the appropriate support, opportunities for education and training, and confidence and motivation to venture into uncharted places," says Davila, who lost his hearing at age 8 because of a high fever. He is fluent in Spanish and American Sign Language as well as English.

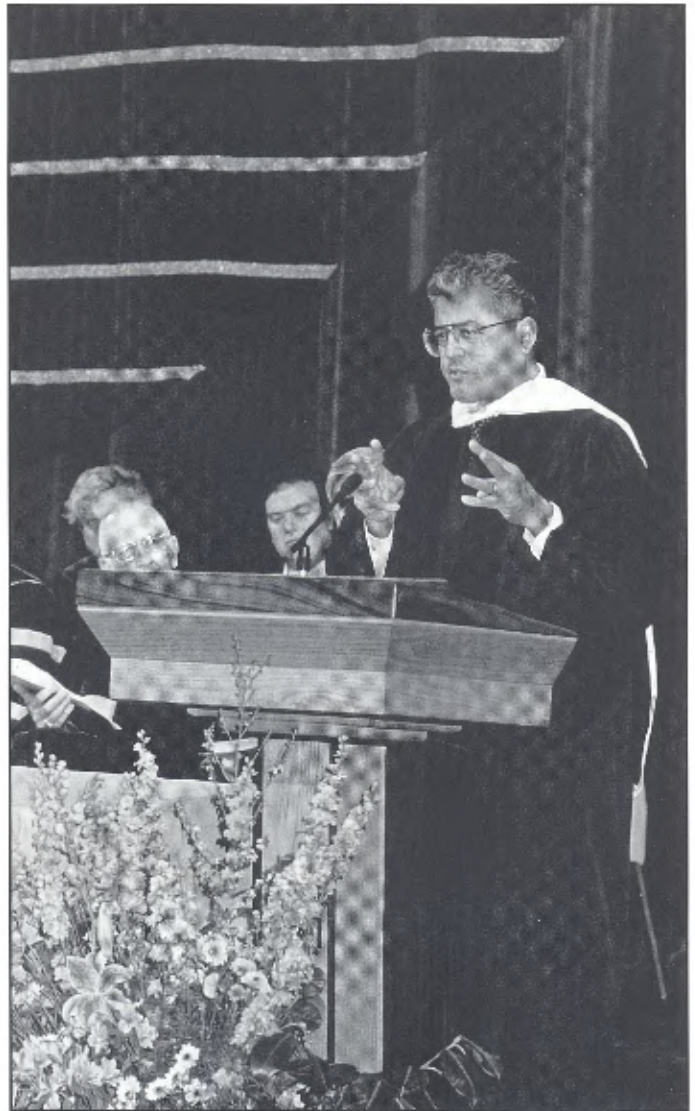
Davila's association with NTID began when he was

preparing for his doctorate in the area of technology-related studies at Syracuse University almost 25 years ago. The Institute served as a resource center and practicum site for both Davila and Dr. James DeCaro, dean of NTID. Davila was a member of the federally funded instructional technology program's first class, and DeCaro was part of the last class six years later.

"The program gave both of us the opportunity to serve in a leadership role in the field of deafness," says DeCaro. "Bob has since developed a remarkable network of people who know and respect him. He truly has responded to the deaf community through the years."

In recognition of his work toward creating and improving opportunities for deaf people, RIT awarded Davila an honorary doctor of humane letters degree in 1991.

"Receiving this recognition was one of the high points of my career," says Davila. "I consider it a significant honor to be recognized for my service to deaf people. The message that RIT sent by giving me this award is that deaf people, to whom the Institute is so solidly



committed, can achieve unparalleled success."

Davila is encouraged by NTID's commitment to achieving its recent strategic planning goals for the future.

"I have no doubt that the same forward, adaptive, and flexible thinking that has made

NTID a success thus far will keep it flourishing as we embrace the new world the future will bring," he says. "By staying relevant and keeping on top of the change that inevitably will become our present, NTID can help us be ready for the future as it rushes toward us." ■

Dr. William Castle is named vice president of RIT for NTID.

July



NTID buildings are officially named: Lyndon Baines Johnson Building; Alexander Graham Bell, Mark Ellingson, and Peter N. Peterson halls; and Hettie L. Shumway Dining Commons.

Dr. Milo Bishop is named dean of NTID.

October

by Susan Cergol

Somewhere between his right and left hands lies the heart of Richard Smith's delight in his work.

"I was drawn to interpreting because of the richness of deaf people's language and culture," says Smith, coordinator in the department of interpreting services. "Sign language is genuine and energetic; the message and emotion are right on the surface. That's what attracted me, because I see myself as a very expressive person."

Smith, 34, became interested in interpreting as a senior in high school, when he was introduced to sign language through two deaf members of his church youth group.

He took a few sign language classes, and after graduating from Rochester's Aquinas Institute in 1976, enrolled in RIT's Free University sign language series, an informal program taught by students, faculty members, and interpreters in the 1970s. In the summer of 1978, he completed NTID's 10-week Basic Interpreter Training Program

(BITP) and was hired by the Institute as a full-time interpreter the following January.

A 14-year veteran of the department, Smith (fondly called "Smitty" by many around the Institute) has seen a steady evolution in the status of the profession as well as in the role of interpreters—from "helpers" of deaf people to bicultural/bilingual translators who are knowledgeable about and respectful of Deaf culture.

"My role as an interpreter is to provide a service of communication between people who are using different languages and come from different cultural backgrounds," he explains. "I need to be aware of and respect what both the deaf and hearing people want from each interaction."

Smith notes that the educational interpreting field and NTID are nearly the same age

and that, in fact, the two developed virtually in tandem.

Because it was the first post-secondary institution established to educate large numbers of deaf students in a mainstream setting, NTID initiated the first large-scale classroom interpreting program, following the lead of California State University at Northridge, which had been offering interpreting services to deaf students for a number of years. Today, RIT employs the largest staff of educational interpreters in the country.

NTID also was a pioneer in establishing formal interpreter training programs—first the Student Interpreter Training Program (later renamed BITP) in 1969 and then, in 1981, an associate degree program in educational interpreting.

"The profession is still growing," says Smith, noting that interpreters at RIT—like others across the country—still are learning about cumulative trauma disorder, a group of debilitating injuries to the hands, wrists, and arms; debating the appropriate length of time that an interpreter should work before a break; and negotiating higher salaries and professional status.

"Although there is more to be done, the Institute has been responsive to the needs of interpreters as well as to the deaf and hearing people we serve," says Smith.

"NTID is only 25 years old—we're still learning how best to empower deaf men and women to go out and get jobs and be self-sufficient," he adds. "I think we're going in the right direction." ■

Richard Smith His Heart's in His Hands



Mission: Possible



by Pamela Seabon

Linda Nelson has a rather modest goal: to succeed in all she sets out to do. So far, the 1973 College of Business graduate has quite an impressive track record.

Nelson has achieved a great deal of success through numerous posts she has held with organizations dedicated to the advancement of deaf people. She has served on a committee that advocated enactment of an American Sign Language (ASL) act in Minnesota schools and is a board member of the NTID Interim Alumni Association,

which is responsible for establishing the official NTID Alumni Association in July.

"I believe that when people want to accomplish something, they should establish goals and work toward making them a reality," says Nelson. "That's what I do."

Such a productive attitude not only has enabled Nelson to achieve a great deal, but also has won her recognition, admiration, and respect from her colleagues as well as the deaf community. She has received acknowledgments and certificates from many organizations, including NTID.

Last spring, Nelson received the 1992 NTID Distinguished Alumnus Award.

"To be selected for the award by your friends and people who know you personally is the true reward," she notes.

"Linda certainly is deserving of the honor," says David Strom, career opportunities advisor in NTID's National Center on Employment of the Deaf and member of the 1992 distinguished alumnus committee.

"She is a leader in the deaf community, presenting workshops and lectures and serving on various deafness-related boards. She also is accomplished in her profession."

A counselor in the Hearing-Impaired Health and Wellness Program at St. Paul Ramsey Medical Center in Minnesota for more than 15 years, Nelson also has lent her energies to establishing programs and services for deaf people within her home state.

By 1994, thanks in part to Nelson's effort to improve the quality of education provided to deaf children in Minnesota, all teachers of deaf pupils will be required to pass a minimum-level proficiency exam in ASL.

"We are very proud of this legislation," says Nelson. "Minnesota will be the first state to enact such a law, which will help ensure that deaf children get the kind of education they need and deserve."

One academic agenda that Nelson does not question is NTID's. She knows the energy and enthusiasm that go into preparing students for life outside the Institute.

To help promote that energy and enthusiasm beyond the RIT campus, Nelson joined the board of the NTID Interim Alumni Association three years ago to help make it possible for the Institute's graduates to keep in contact with and support one another.

"We [graduates of NTID] have a responsibility to one another," she says. "We must come together to share information and ideas and assist one another in every way possible."

"Together, we can persevere when we think that we can't go on," Nelson says. "Together, we can achieve success." ■



Construction begins on a new NTID academic building on the southwest side of campus (Hugh L. Carey Building) to accommodate the increasing numbers of deaf students enrolling at the Institute. The enrollment increase reflects an epidemic of German measles (rubella) in the early 1960s that caused twice as many infants to be born deaf than would normally occur.

NTID celebrates its 15th anniversary.

Wendy Maruyama

Carving Her Own Niche

by Kathryn Schmitz

Like each piece of wood furniture that she shapes and paints, Wendy Maruyama is unique in her approach to her work.

Maruyama, the first deaf master of fine arts graduate of RIT's School for American Crafts, creates furniture that reflects her break from what she considered in the late 1970s to be a traditional, conservative woodworking program.

"I wanted to do something different and unconventional," she explains. "Back then, no one painted furniture. Color is a very important part of my work."

Her RIT experience was positive in that it gave her the opportunity to rebel and develop her own sense of self. As an older student at RIT, Maruyama, 40, felt somewhat isolated even as she took advantage of note-taking and counseling services.

"I felt stuck in the middle," she explains. "I had to work hard to break into the hearing community because it seemed that NTID students were sequestered from the rest of the university."

Compelled to find her own way in her studies as well as her art, Maruyama conveys hard-earned self-confidence in her work, which has been



September

Dr. Peter Pere is named dean of NTID.

The "rubella bulge" pushes NTID's enrollment to an all-time high of 1,319.



"I wanted to do something different and unconventional. Back then, no one painted furniture. Color is a very important part of my work."

displayed in more than 65 exhibits throughout the United States and Europe and in more than 40 publications. She has worked with wood for 20 years, teaching her craft to others around the world.

In her work, Maruyama addresses not so much her hearing loss as her differences with the male-dominated world in which she lives and works.

"I'm motivated to do 10 times better than men," she explains. "I don't want my work to look obviously like a woman's work, but I want it to be many things in one package."

Furniture by Maruyama always has a distinctive appearance, whether because of shape or color, and always is functional, never frivolous. Her current art is inspired by primitive and organic forms, derivative of

plant and animal shapes, using colors reflective of her home city of San Diego.

One highboy made by Maruyama in 1989 is painted a rich forest green occasionally flecked with bright pink and yellow lines. The highboy also sports a copper-coated pyramid top, prominent sculptured legs, and ornamental "ears" on either side.

Last year Maruyama made a mahogany table with a cast bronze pedestal, titled "A Lesson in Excess from Louis XIV." The table's pedestal is festooned with large bronze leaves covered with a green patina.

"Wendy's work broadens our expectations of functional forms and captivates both our mind and spirit with her sheer exuberance for life," says Lorry

Dudley, director of Peter Joseph Gallery in New York City, which shows and sells Maruyama's work. "There are a great many collectors who vie for her work."

For about five years after she graduated from RIT in 1980, Maruyama devoted a good deal of time to making contacts with galleries by subscribing to various art magazines, reviewing ads, and sending out letters, slides, and photographs of her work. Now she is represented exclusively by Peter Joseph Gallery.

Head of the woodworking and furniture design program at San Diego State University (SDSU)

since 1989, Maruyama also continues to design and make contemporary furniture on commission and by inspiration.

A committed artist, Maruyama tells her students that they too can be successful if they are motivated. In addition to working at SDSU, she has taught at the California College of Arts and Crafts and the Appalachian Center for Crafts at Tennessee Technological University.

"You have to work for success," she says. "The years have paid off for me. Now the challenge is to not slack off and to keep doing new things in furniture." ■

April

Rep. Louis Stokes and other members of Congress express concern over NTID's low minority representation in its staff and student body. The Institute establishes affirmative action as one of its chief priorities. During the summer of 1985, goals and strategies are developed and the Affirmative Action Advisory Committee is established.



Dr. James DeCaro is named dean of NTID.

Explore Your Future, a technical career sampling program for high school juniors, is initiated.

by Kathleen S. Smith

The task for which he has volunteered is formidable, but William Loftus isn't fazed. The former senior financial officer of USAir and Allied-Signal Inc. has spent his career directing the finances of large corporations, so his new

task as chairman of The NTID Foundation figures well with his skills.

"I grew up with a sense of responsibility that says you have to put something back into society," he says, "and NTID is a perfect fit for me now."

The NTID Foundation, created in 1991, is designed to garner

private support for Institute programs and qualified young deaf people interested in an NTID education.

Loftus' interest is personal, since his son, William Loftus Jr., is a third-year student in NTID's School of Business Careers.

"Bill has become a more focused and serious young man since coming to NTID," says Loftus proudly. "And through his association with NTID, I have come to believe in this Institution and want to do something to help it."

Loftus brings to the job of foundation chairman both corporate know-how and small-town mores.

Of his upbringing in Lewiston, New York, a rural community near Niagara Falls, Loftus says, "There was a sense of belonging and a sense of values."

Loftus, a high school math whiz, laughingly recalls contemplating his college options with the help of a placement office whose resources consisted of "a small box of college catalogs on the closet floor of the driver education teacher's office."

He went on to graduate from Yale University and received his law degree from the University of Michigan. He has completed graduate studies at both Harvard and New York universities.

Loftus, 54, began his corporate career as a Wall Street lawyer. He then spent 10 years with DuPont, another decade as vice president of Allied-Signal

Inc., and one year as chief financial officer of USAir.

Loftus acknowledges that the educational needs of his son often precipitated family moves, which over a 20-year period included nearly a half dozen cities nationwide.

In each of those cities, his community service credentials reflect his conviction that "You've got to take a little time out of your life to do something worthwhile."

He is a founding trustee of the New Jersey Association of the Hearing Impaired; has raised funds for the National Captioning Institute; was chairman of a New Jersey citizens advisory board for the Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf; and is a member of the board of directors of the Deafness Research Foundation. His wife, Bonnie, is the longest-standing board member of the American Society for Deaf Children.

Loftus says that as chairman of The NTID Foundation, his goal is "to raise a significant amount of funds during my tenure and to leave a board of talented, committed people who can continue the work that we have begun. If I get such a group of people in place, my longevity becomes irrelevant.

"NTID is a big part of my life now," he adds. "My hope is that when I've finished my work with The NTID Foundation, I'll have made a difference." ■



William Loftus
Lofty Expectations



NTID offers its first associate in occupational studies degree (AOS) program, providing deaf students with high-level technical training without the liberal arts requirements needed for other degrees. NTID now offers five AOS degree programs.

The NTID Federal Endowment Matching Grant Program is established as part of the Education of the Deaf Act of 1986. The program calls for the government to match dollar for dollar private donations to Institute endowed funds.

by Lynne Bohlman

NTID and Barbara Ray Holcomb grew up together.

The two were first introduced 22 years ago during Holcomb's senior year at St. Rita School for the Deaf in Cincinnati, Ohio. Until her senior class trip to NTID and Gallaudet University, Holcomb had never thought about attending college.

"I never dreamed that I would go to college," she says. "I'd never met deaf people who had obtained an advanced education or job."

Holcomb, sign communication specialist in the Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education, has been at the Institute since she entered as a student in 1971—graduating with an associate degree in medical record technology in 1974 and working as a sign language instructor ever since—and she has never considered leaving.

"I grew up in Huntington, West Virginia, in a small-town environment," she says. "It's the same way here. NTID is like a family."

A shy, introspective teenager, Holcomb blossomed as a student at NTID, largely through participation in theater activities and the NTID Student Congress.

Following graduation, she was hired as a part-time sign language instructor. Her skills as a teacher were quickly recognized, and Holcomb was encouraged to stay on—rather than enroll at Gallaudet as she had planned—and continue

her schooling at nearby State University of New York College at Brockport, where she earned a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary arts in 1978. In 1985, she earned a master's degree in career and human resource development from RIT.

Through her relationship with the Institute, Holcomb gained the skills and confidence to pursue a career as an educator. She, in turn, has contributed to the Institute's growth and development.

Throughout her professional tenure, Holcomb has worked to enhance NTID's communication strategies and policy.

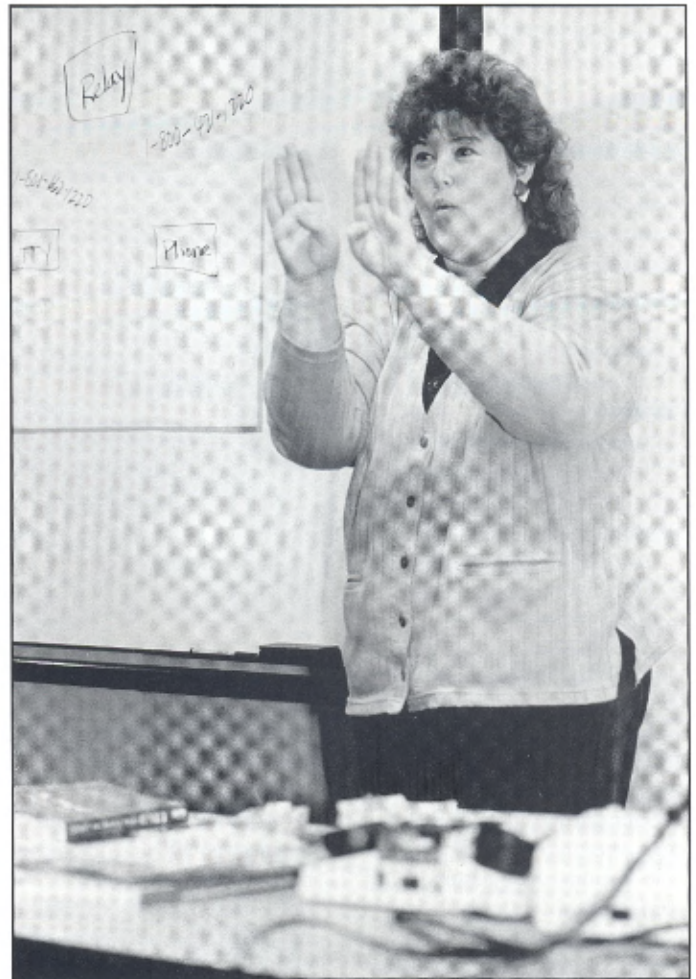
When she first began teaching sign language at the Institute, Holcomb says, it was taught as a rigid manual form of English that she describes as "awkward." Today, she notes, NTID's sign language classes emphasize American Sign Language and Deaf culture.

"I remember when I first arrived here, the emphasis was on oral/aural skills," she says. "Now, students are given an option. Sign language courses are considered equal to oral/aural courses."

As a member of the Institute's Communication Task Force, whose recommendations for achieving prescribed sign language skill levels as qualifications for promotion and tenure were adopted by faculty members in 1991, Holcomb helped NTID embrace a communication policy that recognizes the continual need for sign language development and views the "deaf person as a whole, not just as an ear and a mouth."

Growth Spurt

Barbara Ray Holcomb



Holcomb teaches faculty and staff members as well as students, but it is helping to empower students that is her favorite aspect of the job.

"When students first come to NTID, they're lost," she says. "By the time they're ready to

graduate, they have self-respect and confidence. You can just see the growth."

Indeed, Holcomb knows firsthand about growing up at NTID. ■

The Communication Task Force is created to establish Institute expectations and guidelines for faculty sign and oral communication skills development. The final guidelines will be overwhelmingly approved by faculty members in 1991.

October

1988

Prompted by the "Deaf President Now" movement at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., NTID students initiate discussions with administrators regarding ways to enrich educational opportunities at RIT.

NTID's Educational Development Outreach Project is initiated.

FOCUS 29

by Beth M. Pessin

When the National Technical Institute for the Deaf bills were introduced in the U.S. Congress in 1965, Albert Pimentel followed the proposed legislation with great interest.

As a teacher of deaf children since the early 1960s and political activist in the deaf community, Pimentel saw clearly the pressing need for a technical college for deaf students.

"It struck me as ironic that there was no technical institute for deaf college students at a time when a majority of the young deaf people attending college were prelingually deaf," says Pimentel, who now helps shape NTID policies as chairperson of the National Advisory Group (NAG) and a member of RIT's Board of Trustees.

"NTID has significantly influenced educational and career options for deaf students," says Pimentel, director of career education for the deaf at Northwestern Connecticut Community College and former executive director of the National Association of the Deaf.

"Because of NTID's existence, young deaf people today have deaf adult role models who are pursuing technical careers in business and industry. Diversity of employment options for deaf people is no longer a theoretical possibility, it is an opportunity that exists and continues to expand."

Pimentel, whose interest in technology dates to his childhood, considered a career as an electrical engineer while in high school. By the time he entered

college in 1954, however, he had set his sights on a history and political science degree, which he received from Gallaudet University. He then obtained a master's degree in educational psychology from Louisiana State University in 1959.

Pimentel's career working with people who are deaf has spanned three decades. During that time he has been committed to creating opportunities for deaf people in the workplace, especially in technical fields.

When the invitation to serve as a NAG member was offered in 1984, Pimentel says that he was "delighted."

NAG advises NTID's director on policies governing the operation and direction of the Institute. The group meets twice each year to review policies and make recommendations.

Pimentel believes that the 16-member group, comprising educators, alumni, business leaders, and government officials, provides fresh perspectives to the issues it addresses.

"As an outside group, our perspective often differs from that of those on the inside," he says, referring to NTID administrators and faculty and staff members who develop programs and policies for the Institute. "When you are removed from a situation, you can see the whole better. As an advisory group, we don't hesitate to raise red flags when caution in some area is needed."

According to NAG member and 1981 RIT social work graduate Sharaine Rice, Pimentel is a skilled and detail-oriented leader with a reputation for promptness.

"Al is very good at what he does," Rice says. "He is a competent leader and a pleasure to work with."

Since beginning his NAG tenure, Pimentel has witnessed a change in attitude at the Institute.

"I've seen a greatly enhanced sensitivity to the aspirations of deaf people among faculty and staff members," he says.

"There's more awareness about Deaf culture and a greater response to the language choices of deaf people."

Pimentel anticipates that his relationship with the Institute will continue for some time. Last year, he was appointed NAG chairperson for a four-year term.

"NTID provides many outstanding programs and recreational, theatrical, and cultural activities to students as well as a sense of professional satisfaction to faculty and staff members," he comments. "That makes me want to continue to be a part of the NTID experience." ■



Albert Pimentel
Advisor to the Advisors

NTID alumni, students, and faculty and staff members celebrate the Institute's 20th anniversary.



May 19

NTID's theater is dedicated in honor of Robert F. Panara, first deaf faculty member of NTID.

by Kathleen S. Smith

Alice Beardsley's name forever will be woven into the fabric, life, and history of NTID as the Institute's first interpreter and one of its most beloved members.

Beardsley, 70, was born hearing, became deaf at age 5, and then was brought back into the hearing world at age 42 after having corrective surgery.

Her unusual life has been filled with twists and turns that should have dampened, if not extinguished, her spirit years ago.

It was that spirit, however, that carried her through a troubled childhood, which included abruptly being sent to live at the Rochester School for the Deaf (RSD) at age 8. It sustained her through the painful adjustment to life away from home, the death of her mother during her first year at school, and, in her adult life, a difficult marriage arranged by the superintendent of RSD. How did she survive?

She smiles, shrugs, and acknowledges that she seems to have a strong inner spirit, which has endeared her to students and faculty and staff members at NTID and beyond.

"NTID's interpreting history really comes from Alice," says Linda Siple, assistant professor in the Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education. "When she began interpreting [in 1968], there were no rules, books, or theories. You worked intuitively, and Alice had excellent intuition.

"The relationship that Alice had with students wasn't a typical interpreter-student one," Siple continues. "It was more like a parent-child relationship.



Alice B. Beardsley **Unforgettable Alice**

Her students loved her. She was, after all, the best of both worlds for them. For a 'native' sign language user to become an interpreter was wonderful."

Beardsley chose interpreting as a profession in the mid-1960s in order to maintain her ties with the two worlds between which she floated. Her 1964 surgery had restored full

hearing in one ear, and, with the help of a hearing aid, she had almost full hearing in the other. It turned out to be a mixed blessing.

"Alice had to relearn the meaning of sound and frequently was tormented by the intrusion of sounds that people with normal hearing can ignore," says Joseph Avery,

associate professor in the Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education, who is writing Beardsley's biography.

That biography includes Beardsley's retirement from NTID in 1990 and her brief return to teaching two years later. She was asked to teach an in-service training class to professional staff interpreters, but had to give up the position mid-quarter when she became ill.

"We surveyed our interpreters about topics that might help them improve their skills in the classroom," says Patricia Sapere, coordinator of professional development and in-service training in the department of interpreting services. "Many expressed the desire to brush up on fingerspelling, and Alice's name was mentioned several times as the ideal instructor. They wanted the best."

It's impossible to count how many friends Beardsley made over her 22-year career at NTID. But many were at a recent Genesee Valley Region of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf meeting at which she received a special award.

Recalls Gary Mowl, chairperson of the Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education, "The award presenter first asked that everyone in the room who had ever been taught by Alice stand up. Then those who had been influenced to pursue careers in interpreting were asked to stand. And finally, those whose lives Alice had touched in some way or another were asked to rise. There were nearly 200 people at the meeting, and almost all were standing. It was an impressive tribute." ■

March

1989

The International Center for Hearing and Speech Research, which brings together the talents and experiences of research scientists and clinicians from RIT and the University of Rochester, is established.

1990

July

The Americans with Disabilities Act, national civil rights legislation that provides disabled individuals with legal protection from discrimination in a range of public and private areas, is signed into law. Dr. William Castle attends signing ceremony in Washington, D.C.



by Pamela Seabon

Attending college seemed an impossibility to Khaled Hothili while growing up in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He thought he would graduate from primary school and then do menial work around the city as do most deaf people in his homeland.

Thanks to his father, things turned out differently.

A member of the Saudi army, Saleh Hothili wanted his son to obtain a good education, one that would teach him fluency in Arabic as well as an ability to understand English—the kind of education that most hearing Saudi children receive.

However, during the mid-1970s there were no secondary schools for deaf children in Saudi Arabia and no opportunities for deaf students to learn English. Saleh realized that his son would have to attend school outside the country in order to obtain the education he deserved.

“My father knew that there were good schools for deaf students in America,” says Hothili. “He knew that I was interested in learning English, and he wanted me to come to the United States.”

In 1982, Hothili enrolled at the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, and began his discovery of the English language as well as American Sign Language (ASL). After years of coaching by English and ASL instructors and practice with classmates at the American School for the

Deaf and Gallaudet University's English Language Institute, Hothili has become an effective communicator.

Today, the first-year applied computer technology student is using his communication skills at NTID and working toward becoming a computer programmer, thanks to the Institute's international student program. Since it was initiated in 1990, the program has made it possible for more than 50 deaf students from other countries to prepare for careers at NTID.

“NTID is like no other college in the world,” says Karen Hopkins, director of NTID's division of career opportunities. “We have the expertise to train deaf people for highly technical careers. Programs of this nature do not exist in any other country,” she says.

Hothili, 29, says that he feels fortunate to be a student at NTID. Of all the knowledge he has gained, he has grown to value a good education and good communication skills most.

“Being able to communicate well with others opens doors to a variety of opportunities,” says Hothili, who someday wants to return to his native country to work as a computer programmer while teaching part time at the high school for deaf students recently established in Riyadh.

“There is so much that I've learned at NTID and the other schools I've attended in this country,” says Hothili. “There is so much I'd like to take back and share with other deaf people in my homeland.” ■

World-Class Education

July 29-August 3

NTID hosts the 17th International Congress on Education of the Deaf, an event that occurs every five years. Some 1,631 people from 69 countries and territories attend the event to share information and look to the future of education of deaf people. It is the largest international gathering ever to take place in Rochester, New York.



September

NTID accepts its first international students for admission. Seventeen students—one each from Australia and Japan and 15 from Canada—begin their studies at the Institute. ■

Bonnie Meath-Lang Future Tense

by Kathleen S. Smith

As a child, she was “horrible in grammar,” “precocious,” “a misfit,” and “a nerd.”

She entered the convent for a brief time in the 1960s, seeing it as “a way to work effectively for social justice.” But Dr. Bonnie Meath-Lang, 43, eventually found her calling as an extraordinary teacher at NTID.

In 1972, Meath-Lang was a 23-year-old graduate student teaching writing at Western Illinois University when her father called from Rochester to tell her that an English teaching job was available at NTID.

After a series of “interesting and occasionally loony” interviews, Meath-Lang, whose wanderlust made the prospect of returning to her hometown less than appealing, nevertheless decided to take a chance on the young Institute.

“I thought that it was quite visionary of Dr. [William] Castle [NTID director and the Institute’s first dean] to gamble so much on hiring young people,” she recalls.

With her sharp Irish wit (“I get that from my mother”) and fervent social consciousness, Meath-Lang fit right into the exciting climate that surrounded NTID in its infancy.

She soon met physics professor Harry Lang, who introduced himself during new staff training by inviting Meath-Lang to come

to the front of a room and touch a Van de Graaff generator that “made my hair stand on end.”

“I thought, ‘I like this guy. He’s fun!’” Meath-Lang recalls. Their first date, that same evening, consisted of lengthy discussions about poetry. Meath-Lang says it was obvious that they “clicked,” and they were married the following year.

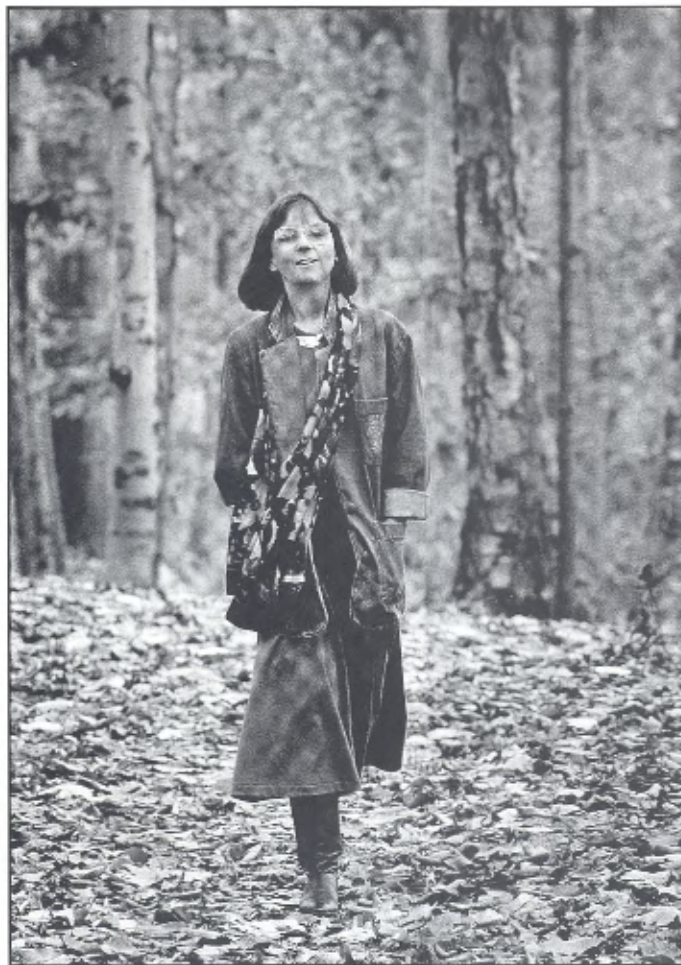
At the time, Meath-Lang never dreamed that her career at NTID would span two decades. Today she is both a teacher in the English department and chairperson of the technical and integrative communication studies department.

“I think the reason I’ve stayed is that I find NTID a very exciting place,” she explains. “People here have the opportunity to grow intellectually.”

Says department colleague Eugene Lylak, who has known Meath-Lang since 1976: “Bonnie leads our department by example. She isn’t driven by personal success; she’s guided by her own inner morals. She never takes anything for granted. I admire that—and her.”

Meath-Lang’s reputation for diplomacy, creativity, and fairness led NTID’s administrators to tap her in 1991 for the difficult job of leading the Institute’s Strategic Planning Committee, whose one-year task was to develop a plan to lead the Institute into the next century.

“I certainly didn’t volunteer for the job,” she notes with a smile.



She believes that the final strategic planning document, shared with the Institute community last May, provides a valuable map to guide the Institute in coming years.

“RIT has an enormous amount of talent,” Meath-Lang says. “The strategic plan allows for more opportunities to work together.”

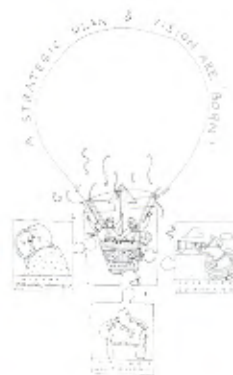
Meath-Lang was honored for her work both as a teacher and leader of the Strategic Planning Committee with a 1992 Outstanding Service Award from

NTID’s National Advisory Group (NAG), which is responsible for guiding the policies and direction of the Institute.

In presenting the award, NAG Chairperson Albert Pimentel said: “We applaud you for your knowledge, commitment, talent, dedication, and service to NTID. You embody qualities that exceed the highest expectation of the Institute.”

Not bad for a precocious misfit. ■

The Institute initiates a strategic planning process. More than 100 faculty and staff members participate in the 15-month process that also includes an examination of external forces that impact on how NTID continues to meet the career development needs of deaf students and deaf adults. Strategic planning decisions will be implemented throughout the next several years.





Adrian White

Students Adopt a Can-Do Attitude

Anthony Williamson II

Fall



Hundreds of students rally on campus to bring attention to the need to make RIT a fully accessible living and learning environment that recognizes deaf people's culture and communication requirements. As a result of the Campaign for Accessibility Now movement, additional TDD pay phones are installed at various sites on campus, more TDD machines are made available to RIT faculty and staff members, and visual alarm systems are installed in 145 RIT student apartments.

by Beth M. Pessin

It started as a classroom experiment to test deaf students' accessibility to phone services on campus and, when the findings were disappointing, evolved into a movement for equal access (Campaign for Accessibility Now—CAN).

As the movement gained momentum through campus rallies and meetings with campus administrators throughout the fall of 1991, two student leaders emerged: Anthony DiGiovanni III and Adrian White. These two young men continue to be among those instrumental in negotiating with administrators policies to enhance accessibility on the RIT campus for deaf students. They represent RIT's changing and empowered student body, students committed to working toward improving the RIT community.

DiGiovanni, fourth-year accounting student in the College of Business, says that participation in a variety of student-centered activities not only allows him to contribute to the campus community but also helps him develop analytical, management, and negotiating skills—skills that he perceives as “basic elements” for success in the workplace.

In addition to serving as a student senator representing NTID in RIT's Student Government, DiGiovanni, from New Hyde Park, New York, is past president of the NTID Student Congress and treasurer of his fraternity, Delta Sigma Phi.

His hard work and dedication

recently were rewarded when DiGiovanni, along with RIT Student Government President White, earned the 1992 Office of Student Ombudsman Award for Excellence in the student category for their work to make the RIT campus more accessible to deaf students.

“That Anthony and I shared the award is a real indicator of the teamwork that occurred last year in furthering the cause of accessibility,” says White, fourth-year commercial photography student in the

a range of provisions that allow deaf students to equally participate in the RIT campus community. Examples of accessibility include training more service staff members in sign language and increasing the use of TDDs (telecommunication devices for the deaf) by hearing staff members.

In enhancing RIT's accessibility, DiGiovanni says that some changes have been more easily made than others.

“We've seen progress regarding physical changes, such as

“Attitude is the key motivator for those types of changes,” he says, “and it also can be the biggest barrier.”

White, from Lynchburg, Virginia, concurs.

“In terms of accessibility, our strengths become our weaknesses. We [RIT] provide such great resources for accessibility that we forget the human aspects.”

However, he notes that the Institute is making a transition. Since the 1991 accessibility movement, the walls dividing hearing and deaf communities on campus have begun to break down, according to White.

“NTID is becoming a college of RIT, not in name as it always has been, but in spirit,” he says. “New leadership for the Institute under President [Albert] Simone is furthering the cause of camaraderie and unification.

“It is my hope that administrators will continue to do what is in the best interest of all of our students in assuring the opportunity for a fair and complete educational experience.”

Although much was accomplished as a result of the student movement, White says that RIT, as the host institution of NTID, still faces a challenge.

“Clearly, we must continue our strides toward accessibility, but RIT's challenge for the future does not reside on this brick campus,” he says. “Our graduates must be ambassadors of goodwill. Theirs is the task of conveying the message of equality and accessibility.” ■

“Our graduates must be ambassadors of goodwill. Theirs is the task of conveying the message of equality and accessibility.”

College of Imaging Arts and Sciences.

Students also have teamed with administrators, including NTID Dean James DeCaro, to improve accessibility and influence attitudes.

“Anthony and Adrian have been tireless and constructive advocates for accessibility on this campus,” says DeCaro. “Their leadership efforts have borne significant fruit, and a coalition now is being established to continue the efforts. It is a pleasure to work with such bright and productive people.”

Accessibility issues relate to

installation of additional visual alarms in campus apartments [145 such alarms were installed in the summer of 1992, increasing the total number of strobed apartments to 244] and more TDDs on campus,” says DiGiovanni. “Those changes are easily achieved.

“In contrast, the human-level changes have been slower, and there is still room for improvement.”

For example, he says that a greater understanding of deaf people's communication needs and greater awareness and appreciation of Deaf culture are ongoing issues.

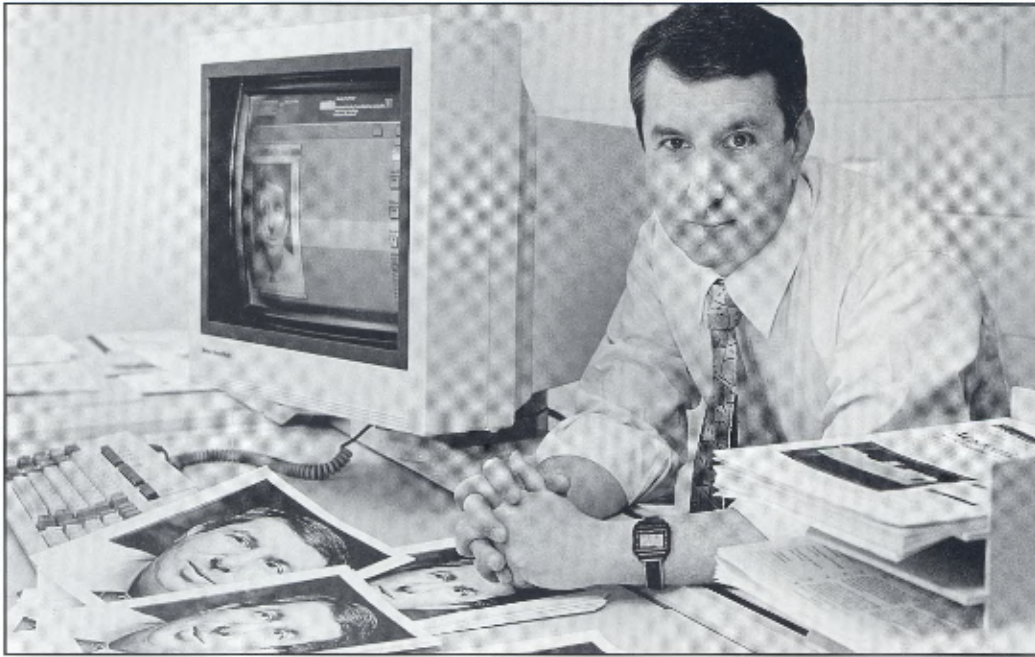
The NTID Foundation is established to formalize the relationship between NTID supporters and the Institute.

October

1992

April

FOCUS 35



Michael Kleper High (Tech) Hopes

by Pamela Seabon

A concept that's been contemplated for 10 years finally has become a reality, and Michael Kleper couldn't be happier.

Last fall, NTID established the High Technology Center for Electronic Publishing and Imaging, which brings together the disciplines taught in the School of Visual Communications. Kleper, an authority in

the field of electronic publishing and imaging (EPI), was instrumental in creating the center and now serves as its coordinator.

"The purpose of the center," explains Kleper, professor in NTID's printing production technology department, "is to allow faculty and staff members to learn about and become familiar with today's latest technology in EPI so that they can take that knowledge to classrooms and share it with students."

Kleper played a key role in the center's establishment, according to Dr. Thomas Raco, assistant dean and director of the School of Visual Communications.

"Mike has been a member of the faculty-based computer commission responsible for initiating the center since 1983," says Raco. "Backed by his steadfast interest in and credibility with the EPI industry, he provides the center's users with insight as well as the technical assistance they may need."

Kleper began his career at RIT in 1969 as assistant education specialist in the College of Graphic Arts and Photography, now the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences. In 1971, he became a faculty member in NTID's printing production technology program and has been there ever since.

Faculty members such as Kleper, author of several publications in the EPI field, including the acclaimed *The Illustrated Handbook of Desktop Publishing*, have led efforts to continually modify the production technology programs in response to changing technological and industrial needs. These modifications have provided students with better skills, which allow them to be more effective and creative in their professional fields.

The program's most recent emphasis on EPI grew out of today's demands for a work force skilled in desktop publishing, Kleper says. He adds that students enrolled in the program not only benefit from the knowledge imparted by their professors but also eventually will gain from hands-on experience offered by the center.

With state-of-the-art equipment donated by industry leaders such as Xerox Corporation, Eastman Kodak Company, Agfa Corporation, Hewlett-Packard Company, and others, the center helps keep faculty and staff members and students current in the field of electronic publishing and imaging.

"I feel good about what's happening in the center," says Kleper. "We have the necessary equipment as well as assistance from companies to make sure that the function of the center meets the needs of the NTID community as well as industry."

"Because people see the need for and are committed to the existence of the center," he says, "I have no doubt about its success." ■

October 29

The NTID High Technology Center for Electronic Publishing and Imaging opens. The center represents a melding of industry and academia. Nearly 40 businesses and corporations donate equipment and funds totaling more than \$750,000.

Since opening its doors, more than 3,200 deaf students have graduated from NTID's 20 certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs or from one of RIT's baccalaureate or master's degree programs. NTID graduates enjoy a placement rate of approximately 95 percent.





OWLs in the classroom Across the country, more and more OWLs—that is, older and wiser learners—are flocking to college classrooms. In the upcoming summer issue of *FOCUS*, you'll spot a story about the challenges and rewards these "mature" students face at RIT.

Photography by A. Sue Weisler



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Mark Benjamin

Smiles, streamers, and a silver anniversary—NTID turns 25!