

NTID Job Fair Brings Together Employers, Students

April 22, 2003

A recent job fair hosting 27 companies including Kodak, IBM, Hewlett Packard, Proctor and Gamble, and Strong Health gave the National Technical Institute for the Deaf students at Rochester Institute of Technology a chance to mingle with company representatives and learn about potential jobs and careers. Job fair activities began a couple of days earlier with various workshops for students and employers.

"The representatives were friendly and showed a lot of enthusiasm when sharing information about their companies, and that motivates me to work for them," said Ben Stromme, an information technology student at NTID. "I was really impressed with Hewlett Packard because they talked about their deaf communities and mentioned that they are trying to improve and expand them."

Scott Van Nice, a NTID/RIT graduate now employed by Proctor and Gamble, understands the benefits of attending such events. "From an employer's point of view, it was well set-up and there was an excellent turnout of students," he said. "The NTID job fair does a great job of making each deaf student feel unique while at the same time, addressing his or her concerns about being lost in the job application process."

Other employers found the job fair to be a great source for potential employees. "When we look at the disciplines NTID/RIT has to offer, they match our skill sets and their students have the abilities we look for," said Terrence Deas of Hewlett Packard. "We view NTID/RIT as another resource for quality hires."

Bob Foley of Raytheon couldn't agree more. "This is a rich environment for a defense contracting business," he said. "The students here have exactly the training we need."

Kodak's Mary Jane Stark noted that communication wasn't an issue for the three co-op students who worked in her company. "Those at Kodak who have worked with the co-op students say it was a great experience," she said. "The text-based pagers work really well, so if the employee has a question or problem, a text message usually answers or solves it."

"The fair really helped to expand my perspective of the real world," said Stromme. "It also helped me to start figuring out how to narrow down my job search within the information technology field. Now I have the contact information I need when I'm ready."

"We had a great turnout this year," said Allen Vaala, director of NTID's Center on Employment. "Both students and employers benefit greatly from events like this, so we're looking forward to doing it again next year."

The first and largest technological college in the world for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, NTID, one of eight colleges of RIT, offers educational programs and access and support services to 1,100 students from around the world who study, live, and socialize with 14,000 hearing students on RIT's campus.

Web address: www.rit.edu/NTID.

For more NTID news see www.rit.edu/NTID/newsroom.