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Media » NTID News

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Grads Better Sell Themselves

5.1.2009

RIT/NTID Student Named in
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New NTID Student Congress Officers
Vow to Be Receptive 4.27.2009

Be Amazed. Be Astonished. Be
Inspired. 4.24.2009

Winners Named in National Math
Competition at RIT/NTID 4.17.2009

Georgia Educator Named Scouten
Intern at NTID 4.17.2009

Congress Allocates \$64.2 Million to
NTID 4.16.2009

Christopher Wagner is NTID's
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DARE TO ASK: The deaf are strong part of work force

The Florida Times-Union - February 6, 2007

DARE TO ASK: The deaf are strong part of work force

By PHILLIP MILANO, The Times-Union

Question:

"What do deaf people do to earn a living? I rarely see deaf people in my corporate role, in retail or service industry roles, or anywhere else."

Laura, 48, Jacksonville

Replies

OK, now that I have calmed down . . . I have many friends who are deaf. My ophthalmologist is deaf. They work for the federal government. They are computer technicians, own their own businesses, are artists, work in banks. They work at Wal-Mart and Publix. My boyfriend was the first deaf member of the carpenters union in Connecticut. Most of all, they are proud of their culture, which starts with a capital "D"!

Carol, 52, Jacksonville

I've had several co-workers who were deaf and could read lips and speak so well you wouldn't have known they were deaf until they told you. And for those who can't, I know here on the First Coast there is the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. I'm sure for those people, being a teacher at a specialty school for deaf children or something along those lines is an option.

Cassy, 22, Jacksonville

You can find deaf people working in jobs such as data entry, as cashiers in stores and also as educators, readers to the blind, etc.

Michele D., 38, Jacksonville

Expert says

Listen, and listen good, says Karen Black, spokeswoman for the National Technical

Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology:

Deaf . . . people . . . work!

"There are deaf engineers. IT specialists. Chemists. There are deaf people in the courtroom, operating room, boardroom. In fact, there are so many more higher-educated deaf workers in recent years that it's caused a shortage of higher-educated interpreters."

According to a study published in 2001 in the Journal of the American Academy of Audiology, 58 percent of deaf people in the 18 to 44 age bracket were employed, compared to 82 percent of the general population in that age range, while 46 percent of deaf people ages 45 to 64 were working, compared to 73 percent of the general population that age.

Deaf people often tend to cluster in cities and companies that are most open to them, Black noted. For example, at nearly 13 percent, the Rochester, N.Y., metro area has the largest deaf population per capita in the U.S., according to a New York Times article published in December. Nationally, employers such as Raytheon and Citigroup have attracted large numbers of deaf employees, often using NTID as a resource.

"With excellent lip-reading, hearing aids, cochlear implants or hair that covers the ears, you may not even know a deaf or hearing-impaired person is working with you," Black said.

"I know at first I was intimidated and felt unable to communicate with deaf people, so I avoided them. But people with hearing loss are the most patient, kind people. They just want to communicate. They don't want to be isolated in the workplace. So please make the effort."

Send cross-cultural questions and replies to Phillip Milano at www.yforum.com. Or mail to him c/o The Florida Times-Union, P.O. Box 1949, Jacksonville, FL 32231. Include contact information.

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Rochester Institute of Technology

National Technical Institute for the Deaf

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