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NTID Receives $900,000 Grant for Tablet PC Project

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The National Technical Institute for the Deaf, a college of Rochester Institute of Technology, has received a three-year, $900,000 Steppingstones of Technology for Individuals with Disabilities program grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Grant monies will be used for the project, Evaluation of the Use of Tablet PCs and C-Print to Support Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students, which will be led by Michael Stinson of NTID's Department of Research and Teacher Education. Co-principal investigators are Lisa Elliot, Susan Foster, and Marc Marschark, all of the Department of Research and Teacher Education. Marschark also is affiliated with NTID's Center for Educational Research Partnerships.

Tablet PCs are mobile computers whose touch screen or "tablet" allows users to operate the computer with a stylus or digital pen instead of, or in addition to, a keyboard and mouse. The computer is linked to a network using a wireless or wired connection.

The project will evaluate two options for using tablet PCs to provide support services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. One option uses the tablet to provide real-time notetaking support, and the other uses it to provide graphics as well as real-time text. Middle and high school age student participants with moderate to profound hearing losses, enrolled in public school programs in four locations, will receive either real-time notetaking or speech-to-text plus graphics support.

The research team will examine the effects of tablet PCs on classroom achievement by conducting a study of retention of a simulated lecture with 90 students, a study of fidelity of implementation by the service providers, and an observational study of 16 classrooms using one of these two options. The materials that service providers, teachers and parents can use to facilitate students' use of tablet options also will be refined during this project.

The project will yield knowledge that will be critical in moving toward subsequent widespread implementation of tablet-based notetaking and speech-to-text services.

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

N.Y., campus.

Rochester Institute of Technology

National Technical Institute for the Deaf

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