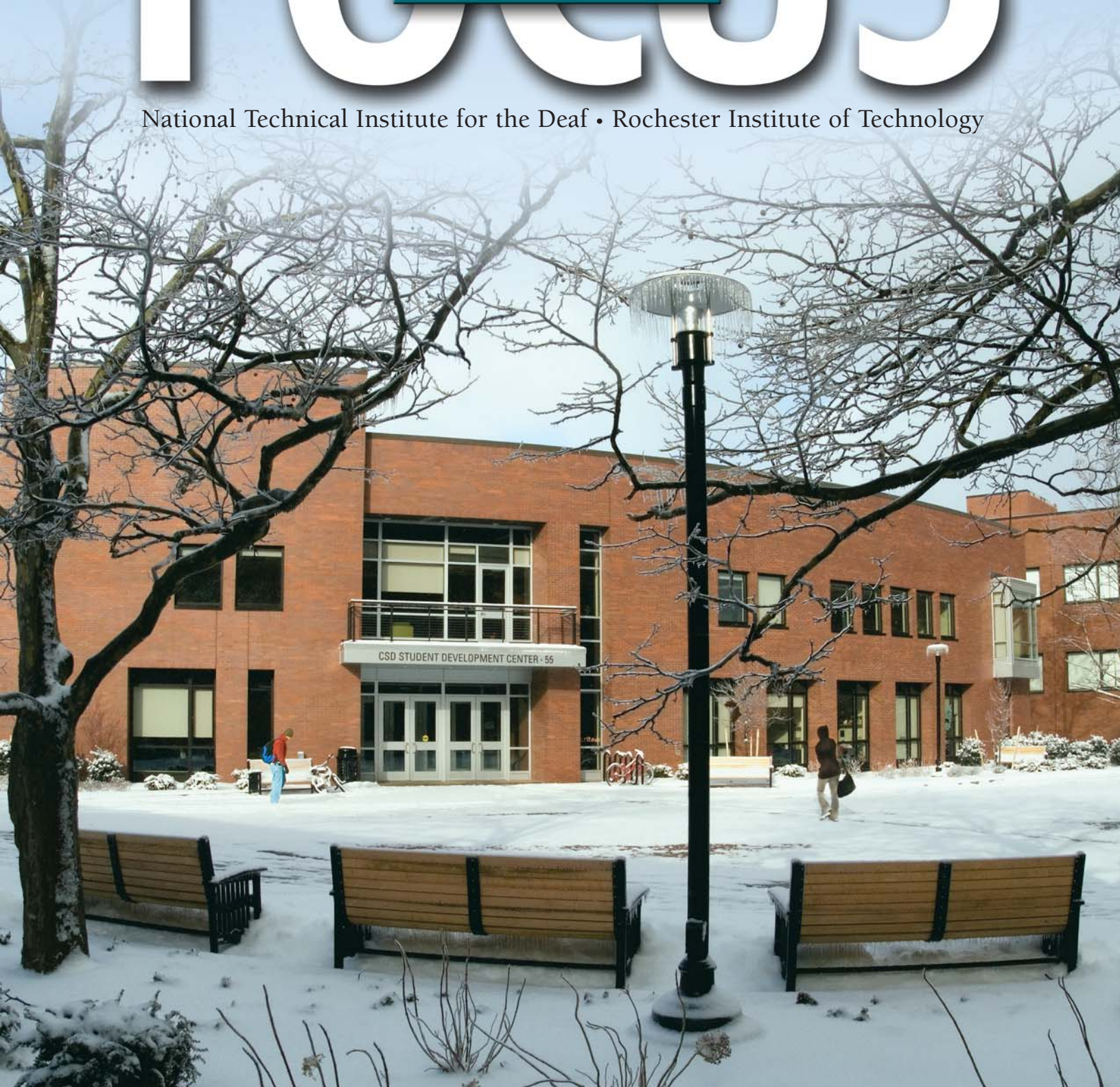


FALL 2006 / WINTER 2007

# FOCUS

NTID

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • Rochester Institute of Technology



# National Honor



**Proud Accomplishment** RIT Vice President for NTID and CEO/Dean of NTID T. Alan Hurwitz (center) accepted a 2006 New Freedom Initiative Award from U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao (left) at a special ceremony in Washington, D.C., in October. The New Freedom Initiative Award recognizes models of excellence in creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Secretary Chao established the award in 2001 to recognize businesses, nonprofit organizations, and individuals who have demonstrated exemplary and innovative efforts in furthering President George W. Bush's New Freedom Initiative objectives. Pictured here with Secretary Chao and Dr. Hurwitz is Department of Labor Assistant Secretary for Disability Policy W. Roy Grizzard Jr.

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# FOCUS

## NTID

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • Rochester Institute of Technology



### ABOUT THE COVER

Opened in fall 2006, the \$6 million, 30,000-square-foot CSD Student Development Center is the culmination of years of dreaming and thousands of hours of planning. Named for Communication Service for the Deaf, Inc. (CSD), which committed the first lead gift for its construction, the center is a true milestone in the history of NTID, giving students a dedicated space where they can enrich and celebrate their unique talents and skills. Learn more on Page 3 of this issue.

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# FOCUS

NTID

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## Much to Celebrate!

While the chill outside reminds us that winter in upstate New York has arrived, this issue of *FOCUS* contains warm reminders of recent accomplishments.

November began with the eagerly anticipated dedication of our new CSD Student Development Center. Hundreds of students, donors, faculty and staff attended, and Dr. Benjamin Soukup, CEO of Communication Service for the Deaf, Inc. (CSD), for whom the building is named, was on hand to see just how well spent his leadership gift was. It was a grand day for all of us! Read more about it on Page 3.

In October, I traveled to Washington, D.C., to accept the New Freedom Initiative Award from U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao. NTID was selected to receive the award for our work in furthering

employment opportunities for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. What an exciting affirmation of the work we do to provide our students with a state-of-the-art education so they're prepared to enter the workforce, and of the work we do to educate employers about the value of hiring deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.

During the spring and summer, NTID launched several new outreach programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing middle and high school students. These programs, which were the result of NTID's Vision 2010 plan, included a writing contest; science fair; ACT prep class; science and technology camp for girls; career exploration program for African-American, Latino American, and Native American middle school students; math competition; and digital arts and animation competition. You can read more about these exciting new initiatives on Page 6.

The summer also found students Michelle Koplitz, Jeremy Quiroga, Christopher Samp, and Elizabeth Sorkin representing NTID at the inaugural International Summer Leadership Institute in Sussex, England. They joined 16 other students from around the world who studied leadership, advocacy, deaf culture, empowerment, employment, diversity, and goal setting at historic Herstmonceux Castle. Read about their experiences on Page 15.

So, despite the winter chill, we are warmed by these accomplishments and the many others featured in this issue of *FOCUS*, and we look forward to all that lies ahead. May 2007 be filled with health and happiness and may you find much to celebrate, too.

T. Alan Hurwitz



**Ribbon Cutting Ceremony** With scissors in hand, ribbon cutting participants are, standing left to right, Sarah Gordon, NTID Student Congress president; T. Alan Hurwitz, RIT vice president for NTID and CEO/dean of NTID; Benjamin Soukup, CEO, Communication Service for the Deaf; Albert J. Simone, president, RIT; and Michael Morley, chairperson of RIT's Board of Trustees.

# A Milestone in NTID History Comes to Life

by Ilene J. Avallone

*“I feel both grateful and proud. Grateful to all the people from the past, the present, and the future who believed in this concept, and proud because of the way so many people worked together to make this happen.”*

Sarah Gordon, NTID Student Congress President

NTID has a rich history of providing an environment where deaf and hard-of-hearing students can embrace, enrich, and celebrate their unique talents and skills. And that environment was further enhanced with the opening of the Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD) Student Development Center (SDC), the new social and cultural center of campus life for RIT's deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The SDC provides greater opportunities for students to explore their interests, develop their leadership skills, and foster their learning.

November 9, 2006, saw crowds of enthusiastic students, alumni, faculty

and staff, members of RIT's Board of Trustees, and NTID Student Congress presidents and vice presidents from the past decade, converge at a community festival and fair. A Celebration of Warmth & Harmony marked the dedication and official grand opening of the SDC. The \$6 million center, one of the most significant building projects for NTID in 40 years, was nearly 10 years in the planning stage and one and one-half years under construction.

The gleaming 30,000-square-foot, two-story building would not have been possible without support from CSD, for whom the center is named. Dr. Benjamin Soukup, CEO of CSD,



**Tiger Walk** NTID students, armed with tiger paws and a lot of spirit, lined the Frisina Quad leading to the SDC. The large group of students offered faculty, staff, alumni, and members of RIT's Board of Trustees a cheering welcome as they entered.

a private, nonprofit telecommunications and human services organization, wanted to help create the building as part of his vision to make deaf America “a brighter place.” His vision and generous lead gift helped bring the concept of the building to reality.

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***“The CSD Student Development Center holds the promise of tomorrow’s leaders, young deaf and hard-of-hearing adults who will participate in student organizations and find their ‘voice’ as useful citizens of our country. It resonates with warmth and harmony. It is, in a word, magnificent.”***

T. Alan Hurwitz, RIT Vice President for NTID and CEO/Dean of NTID

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“The SDC is NTID’s ‘capstone’ building,” says T. Alan Hurwitz, RIT vice president for NTID and CEO/dean of NTID. “It brings together all of the most vital elements of a student’s well-rounded education at NTID—

collaboration, citizenship, support, leadership development, and integrated experiences in and out of class. It’s also a place where deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing students have an opportunity to interact, study, and learn together, and grow personally and professionally.”

“When we first envisioned the SDC, we wanted a space that would promote interaction and enhance our community,” says Ellie Rosenfeld, associate dean for student and academic services. “Now that the building is a reality, it’s thrilling to see that dream realized. The building, our ‘community home,’ is beautiful—a treat for our eyes and hearts.”

The SDC has quickly become the place for students, faculty, and staff to meet and mingle any time of the day, and where education can continue day and night in a centrally located area with a safe, supportive atmosphere.

Inside the building, the design is open and welcoming. Upon entering, visitors enjoy a large, inviting, brightly lit atrium. The words—*A lustrous beacon... of such magnitude and dignity, and décor... that will illuminate the hearts of all who come to be served here*—are prominently shown on the helix of the skylight above the large RIT tiger paw set in the tile floor.



**Carnival Celebration** A carnival atmosphere prevailed at the celebration. From face painting to cotton candy and fried dough, the fair offered food and fun for everyone.

“Dr. S. Richard Silverman, former director, Central Institute for the Deaf, and a member of the National Advisory Board that formulated the guidelines for the selection of the host institution for NTID, spoke these words at the opening of NTID at RIT almost 40 years ago,” explains Erin Esposito, assistant director of the NTID Student Life Team, and overseer of the administrative functions of the building. “We felt it fitting to permanently display these remarks to commemorate the significance of this new building on campus.”

Guests enjoyed celebratory remarks in the large programming area on the main floor, which is equipped with state-of-the-art technology, and then socialized and relaxed in a series of lounge spaces of varying sizes—designed to accommodate both small one-on-one discussions and larger



**A Decade of Planning** The students' vision of a student development center began 10 years ago. Celebrating their dream turned into reality are past and current NTID Student Congress presidents and vice presidents. Sitting left to right are: Matt Sikon, Lizzie Sorkin, and Alim Chandani. Second row standing from left to right are: Chamroeun Dee, Karrieff Norman, Debbie Byrne, Cassie Haynes, and Christopher Samp. Third row standing from left to right are: Charles Sterling, Kamau Buchanan, Sarah Gordon, Daniel Millikin, Mark Schwartz, and Jon LeJeune.

group gatherings. On the second floor, they toured spacious meeting and conference rooms equipped with modern multimedia technology, a locker area for campus commuters, and a renovated dining facility. Both floors of the SDC are also equipped with videophone booths, donated by Sprint, which students can use for video relay calls.

According to guests, perhaps the most exciting aspect of the event was observing the exuberant spirit of the students, and the obvious strong sense of pride they have for their new space.

"I feel both grateful and proud," says Sarah Gordon, NTID Student Congress president. "Grateful to all the people from the past, the present, and the future who believed in this concept, and proud because of the way so many people worked together to make this happen."

"Students were 'partners' in the design process—from identifying space allocations to choosing color schemes," explains Hurwitz. "The result is a building created for them and with them."

Members from NTID student organizations, including the NTID Student Congress, Student Life Team, and multicultural clubs, all are thrilled about having their own dedicated space.

"This is the first time the student organizations and clubs are in one location," explains Karey Pine, director of the Student Life Team, "and it's really helping our students come together and learn from each other."

"Having our own space for our club really helps us work together as a group and better promote our organization to new students," says Marisol Lopez, president of the

Hispanic Deaf Club. "It also helps us socialize with our peer organizations."

Lisa Velez, club member, agrees.

"I like that we are visible now, and that the SDC is helping both deaf and hearing students come together in one central place," she says.

"The SDC is a place that I can meet people, have meetings and see friends," says Lizzie Sorkin, RIT student government president, and former NTID Student Congress president. "It's a safe, central place that we can call 'home.'"

Recently, she and other RIT student government leaders held their annual All-Governance Training session at the SDC.

"The number of requests we are receiving from the RIT community for meeting room space is exceeding our expectations," says Al Smith, NTID assistant vice president for college operations. "I have heard more positive comments about this building than about any other space on campus."

The center already is a vibrant hub of campus activity for RIT's deaf and hard-of-hearing students, and is a true milestone in the history of NTID.

### Support Student Leadership and Leave a Lasting Memory at the SDC

Interested alumni, friends, and corporate and foundation partners who would like to make a gift in support of the new CSD Student Development Center can have their names affixed to areas of their choice in the new building. Areas available for naming are the conference centers, the student study center and lounge, the meeting rooms, and various student organization offices.

For more information about the naming opportunities, please contact the NTID Development Office at 585-475-6836 (voice/TTY).



**Lively Entertainment** Guests at the event enjoyed a variety of entertainment.



**High-Tech Fun** TechGirls from all over the country came to RIT this summer and were both thrilled and challenged by hands-on experiences in science, technology, engineering and math.

# Reaching Out to the Next Generation

by Kathy A. Johncox

When NTID's Strategic Vision 2010 was adopted in 2005, it contained four basic strategic decisions to position NTID for the next decade. One of the strategies was to develop an educational outreach consortium that would allow NTID to share expertise to improve the education and career development of individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. An outgrowth of this decision was a series of new outreach initiatives designed to provide educational experiences for students in grades 6 – 12.

"NTID's pre-college outreach is focused on empowering deaf and hard-of-hearing middle school and high school students and their parents with information that is designed to help their long-term career success," says Gerard Buckley, vice president for

College Advancement and leader of NTID's new outreach initiatives.

Since January 2006, RIT/NTID has welcomed students from all over the country to seven new outreach efforts.

## The RIT SpiRIT Writing Contest

Writers in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade and their teachers collaborated to submit writing portfolios with topics that drew from historical occurrences as well as current events. The first-place winners were Heather Breitbach, Melrose, Minn., and Jennifer Hess, Paxton, Ill. They received prizes that included the choice of an all-expense-paid trip to the contest awards ceremony at RIT, or a scholarship to NTID's Explore Your Future program.

Teacher Diane Shiffler-Dobe says, "When I showed Heather the contest information, she lit up! It was a

great confidence booster for her when she won."

"I believe in my writing skills more now that I won the contest," says Breitbach, "And I really enjoyed my trip to RIT."

## RIT's National Science Fair for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students

Budding scientists in 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> grades submitted their best projects for the science fair held at RIT/NTID April 28 – 29. Amy Ann Lucero, Santa Fe, N.M., took first place in the high school division for studying the effect of video games on heart rate. Adam Richard, Acushnet, Mass., won first place in the middle school division for comparing the rate of decay and characteristics of plant- and animal-based plastics. The first-place team





**Showcasing Science** Denise Lengyel (left), teacher, and Amy Ann Lucero, student, came all the way from New Mexico to compete in the science fair and celebrated a winning weekend.

entry went to Luis Fernandez and Antonio Gomez, both from Providence, R.I., for exploring the relationship between a golf club and a golf ball using height and mass as test factors. The science fair weekend offered cash prizes and plaques for winners and their schools, a tour of the RIT campus, and a chance for students to make new friends who someday may become their future fellow scientists.

### ACT Prep Class

The ACT Prep Class gave high school students with hearing loss the chance to prepare for the ACT college entrance exam. Five NTID staff members and students were trained and certified by a team from the Princeton Review, creators of the ACT, and taught a six-week series of classes in English and in sign language. As part of the class, participants took several practice tests, and they said they felt much better prepared going into the test because they had learned strategies for how to take it. Future plans involve the offering of ACT Prep Class materials online, so students can do at-home practice as well.



**Test Preparation** Princeton Review staff and RIT interpreters brought ACT prep training to deaf and hard-of-hearing instructors in Rochester.

### TechGirlz

The chance to explore their interests in science, technology, engineering and math attracted deaf and hard-of-hearing 8<sup>th</sup> graders to TechGirlz, a week-long summer camp July 30 – August 5. Campers, who came from around the country, had the opportunity to learn more about science and technology,



**Experimenting with Fun** TechGirlz rule with beakers and chemicals in the Laboratory Science Technology lab.

and about jobs and careers in those fields. The girls built their own computers to take home, analyzed a “crime scene,” worked with computer-aided drafting equipment to create a magnifying glass, and enjoyed being commanders on a simulated mission to Mars.

“I got to know what it really feels like at a college level,” says Kelsey

Boykin, Georgetown, Ky. “We actually talked about how scientists test hair to find out about a person’s health.”

A workshop for parents focused on what colleges expect from high school students, and how parents should encourage their students to prepare for college.

“This week has been an awesome experience for my daughter,” said one mother. “Thank you all!”

### Steps to Success

Deaf and hard-of-hearing African-American, Latino American, and Native American students in 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> grades who attended Steps to Success, a career exploration mini-camp August 4 – 6, enjoyed hands-on activities—using computers, working with robots, doing science experiments, and more. Parents and guardians benefited from workshops sharing tips about how to support their student through this time of transition. Said one parent, “Salvador and Lizbeth enjoyed the program and their new friends. We think they are excited about college now and will work hard in school this year. . . . We ourselves have a better understanding of what is needed to help with our children’s success. It was definitely worth the trip to Rochester for all of us to attend.”



**The First Step** Parents and students get acquainted at the Steps to Success welcome luncheon in NTID’s Dyer Arts Center.

## MATHCOUNTS®

Deaf and hard-of-hearing middle school Mathletes® met on October 14<sup>th</sup> to compete in a mini-math competition that tested speed, accuracy and teamwork. The competition was a preview of RIT's first annual MATHCOUNTS competition for deaf and hard-of-hearing students, scheduled for March 24, 2007. The competition challenges students' math skills, develops their self-confidence, and rewards them for their achievements.

The winners of this mini-math competition were: First place, Marc Romal, Rochester, N.Y.; second place, Colin Lemen, Victor, N.Y.; and third place, Blaine Kaplan, West Henrietta, N.Y. Prizes ranged from DVD movies to a camcorder.

"I like the experience for my students," said a teacher from Liverpool, N.Y., who attended the competition. "I like that they will know and meet other hard-of-hearing kids and be exposed to this college."



**Counting a Win** MATHCOUNTS mini-math competition winners enjoy their success.

## The 2007 Digital Arts and Animation Competition

Students with hearing loss in 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades will compete for prizes and an all-expenses-paid trip to Rochester in the inaugural Digital Arts and Animation Competition in March 2007. This national competition will recognize students' artistic expression with awards for first place and honorable mention(s) in Mixed Digital Media, Web Page Design, Graphic Media, 3-D Animation, Interactive Media, Photo Illustration and Free-Hand Art in Digital Form.

Parents, students, and teachers alike had high praise for this year of first-time competitions and camps. With the success of these new initiatives, RIT/NTID is well on the way to its 2010 goal of making outreach a central focus and sharing 40+ years of expertise in access services, program development, and technology for the benefit of the next generation of deaf and hard-of-hearing young people.

"Our outreach work is driven by a passion," says Buckley, "for ensuring that future students will possess the skills and knowledge necessary to be active participants in the 21<sup>st</sup> century American workforce."

For information and entry forms for any of the above competitions or camps, visit [www.rit.edu/NTID/ContestsAndCamps](http://www.rit.edu/NTID/ContestsAndCamps).

## NTID Science, Writing and Math Competition Prize Winners

### RIT National Science Fair for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place-High School Division-\$500

Amy Ann Lucero; 11<sup>th</sup> grade  
Santa Fe, N.M.

"Do Video Games Affect Heart Rate?"

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place-Middle School Division-\$500

Adam Richard; 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
Providence, R.I.

"Characteristics of Environmentally Safe Natural Plastics"

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place-Middle School Division-\$300

Mark Demarest; 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
Ithaca, N.Y.

"The Material Science of Soccer Goalie Gloves"

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Place-Middle School Division-\$200

Scott Matchett; 7<sup>th</sup> grade  
Brighton, N.Y.

"The Atom Model"

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place Team Entry-\$250 each

Luis Fernandez; 12<sup>th</sup> grade  
Antonio Gomez; 9<sup>th</sup> grade  
Providence, R.I.

"The Factors Affecting an Inelastic Collision of Two Marbles"

### SpiRIT Writing Contest

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place-11<sup>th</sup> Grade Category

Heather Breitbach  
Melrose, Minn.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place-11<sup>th</sup> Grade Category

Sarah Kolesk  
Shelton, Conn.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place-10<sup>th</sup> Grade Category

Jennifer Hess  
Paxton, Ill.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place-10<sup>th</sup> Grade Category

Kathy Quintero  
Kissimmee, Fla.

### MATHCOUNTS

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

Marc Romal  
Rochester, N.Y.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

Colin Lemen  
Victor, N.Y.

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

Blaine Kaplan  
West Henrietta, N.Y.

# Harry Lang

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher



When he awoke from a coma brought on by meningitis, Harry Lang's life as a high school sophomore in Irwin, Pa., veered suddenly from a path of eventual employment in a Pittsburgh steel mill.

"That's probably where I would've ended up, if I had not become profoundly deaf," says Lang.

Instead, he transferred to the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (WPSD),

where his interest and aptitude in science and math emerged. Lang later was accepted at Bethany College in West Virginia, where he majored in physics.

After graduating in 1969, he landed a job at RIT/NTID, where he taught physics for 20 years and chaired the NTID Physics Department from 1980 to 1985. Lang then led the Office of Faculty Development at NTID while teaching graduate courses in science and math education.

At the same time, he earned a graduate degree in Electrical Engineering from RIT and a doctorate of education in Science Curriculum and Teaching from the University of Rochester.

Currently, Lang is a faculty member in the Master of Science program in Secondary Education of Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (MSSE) at RIT/NTID.

"Although I never planned to be a

teacher, I am thrilled that I became one," says Lang, who in 2006 received the RIT Trustees Award for his outstanding record of academic scholarship.

Since 1984, Lang has authored and co-authored several books, including *Deaf People in the Arts and Sciences*; *Silence of the Spheres*; *A Phone of Our Own*; and *From Dream to Reality: A History of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf*. He is co-authoring *Moments of Truth: The Journey of Robert R. Davila, Deaf Educator*, and his latest solo work *Teaching from the Heart: The Life and Work of Robert F. Panara* is scheduled to be released in 2007.

Witness to his evolution as an educational researcher, university professor, and author is Harry's wife of 33 years, Bonnie Meath-Lang, professor in NTID's Cultural and Creative Studies Department and artistic director in NTID's Performing Arts Program.

"In a way, Bonnie and I are what RIT is all about," says Lang. "We foster the sciences, engineering, and technology as well as the humanities and the arts."

# Bonnie Meath-Lang

by Ilene J. Avallone

She's a director, a performer, an author, a playwright, and an exemplary educator. Meet Bonnie Meath-Lang, artistic director of NTID's Performing Arts Program, and a professor in the Cultural and Creative Studies Department.

Following in the footsteps of her Vaudeville-performing grandfather, and actor, radio and TV personality father, Meath-Lang knew that theater would be a major part of her life.

She holds a bachelor's degree in English and Theater, master's degree in Dramatic Literature, and doctorate in Curriculum and Teaching.

A phone call from her father in 1973, telling her about an English faculty position available at NTID, changed the course of her life.

Meath-Lang has worn many hats during her tenure at NTID and has been instrumental in growing the Performing Arts Program.

A past recipient of the NTID Student Congress (NSC) Humanitarian Award and the NTID National Advisory Group (NAG)

Service Award, Meath-Lang works tirelessly with 400-500 students to help produce six plays annually.

"Our productions involve deaf and hearing actors and backstage crew, translation and script analysis, special lighting and sound, video access for communication, and often complex staging," she says.

"What excites me most is getting to see all the elements that our performing students bring to their roles as actors and dancers, and the creative talents our tech students bring to make productions come alive. From the beginning of rehearsals to show time, I'm thrilled to see the growth of my students in such a short timeframe. As a teacher at NTID, I continue to learn what each unique student has to offer our program and the world."

In February, Meath-Lang will direct the



play, *Laughing Stock*, a crazy, fun-filled look at backstage life in a small New England summer stock theater.

Outside of work, this Upstate New York native enjoys traveling with her husband, NTID professor in the Department of Research and Teacher Education, Harry Lang, playing tennis, dancing, and spending time with her two West Highland terriers, Eva Destruction and Wai (2K9).

# Sarah Exley

by Ilene J. Avallone



When she couldn't commit to club rowing while in high school, Sarah Exley promised herself to apply only to colleges that had varsity rowing. And since coming to RIT two years ago, she has dedicated herself to the sport. Her passion for crew runs in the family. Her great grandfather was a two-time gold medal U.S. Crew Olympian.

"I am the only rower in my family since my great grandfather," explains the Philadelphia, Pa., native. "I hope to be an Olympic contender like him someday."

Exley is well on her way. She and her RIT Varsity 4 boat teammates won their first-ever gold medal and championship at the New York State Collegiate Rowing Championships last spring.

Exley, 19, is a third-year Professional and Technical Communication student.

"I love to write and read others' work," she explains. "I enjoy editing and proofreading, and I hope to work in publishing or for a magazine or newspaper after I graduate."

"I know RIT is the right choice for me," she adds. "The people here are genuinely nice, and the professors are knowledgeable and extremely accessible. As the only deaf student in my mainstream high school, I like that, here, everyone is respectful of the deaf community on campus."

Exley has been on the Dean's List, was selected for the Michael Swartzman Scholarship, and was named an RIT Athlete of the Week last spring.

In her spare time, she enjoys traveling, drinking tea, going to concerts, and "napping excessively." And she proclaims herself an animal lover who loves the outdoors.

Exley embraces Ralph Waldo Emerson's philosophy: "Do not go where the path may lead. Go, instead, where there is no path and make a trail."

As the writer in Exley so eloquently states, "My future is unknown, but filled with new trails I will make, places I will visit, and ideas I will conceive."

# Ryan Harter

by Kathy A. Johncox



"I always expected to go to college," says Ryan Harter, a second-year Computer Aided Drafting Technology (CADT) student, from Coral Gables, Fla. "My paternal great-grandparents were deaf as were some of my uncles and cousins. I am the first deaf person in my family to graduate high school and go to college. I know my great-grandmother would expect me to go. My family has always supported me and told me I can do anything. I want to be successful and make them all proud."

Harter, 20, came to his major naturally. As a child, he loved building things and drawing as well as working with computers. His exhaustive college research and final selection of RIT gave him the technical program he wanted.

Last summer, Harter combined guidance from the NTID Center on Employment and some networking at home to land a cooperative work experience at an architectural firm in Ft. Lauderdale. Harter worked as a CAD technician and did some three-dimensional work on a Broward County Library project. He also had the unique opportunity to use his AutoCAD

skills to work on a deaf cluster building for the Palm Beach School District, designing classrooms with appropriate visibility and other design elements with good access for deaf students.

"I really used the skills I learned at college, and I learned other drafting programs as well," says Harter. "Each skill I learned at RIT was useful, and I used it on the job. It was a good experience, and I really enjoyed it very much. I liked getting the paycheck, too!"

A self-described movie fan and video game enthusiast, Harter is an officer of the Delta Sigma Phi fraternity, and enjoys basketball, swimming and weightlifting.

"RIT is a great place to get an education and make lifelong friends," says Harter. "And you can get involved here in any way you want—clubs, sports, fraternities, you name it."

He plans to graduate in 2007 with an AAS in CADT, then continue on for his BS in Civil Engineering, and may even see a master's degree in his future.

"You can accomplish much, if you really try," says Harter. "Never give up."

# Eric MacDawutey

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher

**K**eeping a determined eye on his goals, Eric MacDawutey is focusing on success and achieving it through hard work.

“My goal is to become a leading deaf role model,” asserts MacDawutey. “Deaf Africans do not believe they can become successful. The reason is the absence of deaf role models. I hope to change that.”

MacDawutey was born in Tema, Ghana, an industrial port city on West Africa’s Gold Coast. At age 6, he was stricken with spinal meningitis, which left him profoundly deaf in both ears.

“From then on,” says MacDawutey, “schools presumed that a person like me with a disability is a burden on the school.”

MacDawutey’s family was determined to keep their son in mainstream schools, even though there was no access to sign language or speech-language professionals or other students who were deaf.

“My interest since grade school was writing,” says MacDawutey. “I loved

reading great books as well and writing short stories and poems.”

His interest in business started in high school. “When the time came for me to select a college to attend,” says MacDawutey, “I chose RIT over other colleges in the world because RIT gives equal opportunities to every deaf and hard-of-hearing person in a mainstream environment. Here students are free to learn without prejudice and stereotyping.”

When he graduates and returns to Ghana, MacDawutey will take with him the can-do attitude he’s cultivating at RIT.

“There are many smart deaf people in Ghana,” MacDawutey emphasizes, “but they are limited academically, and that affects their employability. I will encourage them to consider RIT/NTID.

“Deaf Ghanaians, or any people, deaf or hearing, should not wait for the cat to jump and watch which way it goes. Instead they should make the cat jump and move toward the direction they set for it.”



# Jasmine Oregel

by Ilene J. Avallone

**B**ecause of her determination to succeed, her family’s enduring support, and tuition assistance from a Max Factor Family Foundation scholarship, Jasmine Oregel, 21, is the first member of her family to go to college.

Born to hearing parents, Oregel became deaf due to illness when she was a toddler. Her parents moved her and her family from Mexico to California to afford Oregel more opportunities.

In spite of her family’s efforts and support, growing up for this Santa Ana, Calif., student was difficult.

“I attended a mainstream school, but for many years I rebelled because I felt like I didn’t fit in with my peers,” she explains. “It took me several years to accept my deafness, and I realized to succeed in life I had to work hard in school.”

So that’s what Oregel did. She excelled in her studies, often taking classes with upper-level classmates as a freshman and sophomore, and she participated on her high school softball and basketball teams.

Of her desire and decision to go to college, Oregel says, “Coming from a

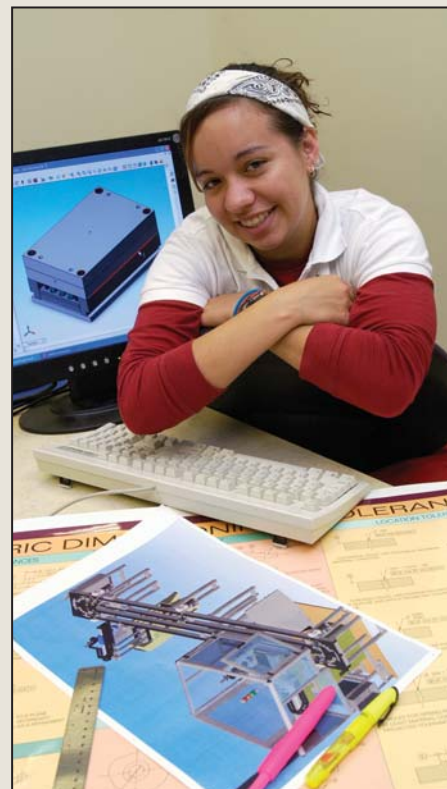
traditional Mexican family, the idea of traveling cross country to attend college was unheard of. Initially, my parents wanted me to remain in California like the rest of my family. But I believed that RIT/NTID was the best choice for me to reach my goals. My parents supported me in my decision because they wanted me to be happy and successful.”

This third-year Computer Aided Drafting Technology student has shown her family it was the right choice.

“Today I am an involved student on the RIT/NTID campus,” she says. “I played on the RIT softball team, and I am a member of Alpha Sigma Theta Sorority. The sisterhood bond I share with my sorority sisters has helped me build my leadership skills and confidence level.”

Oregel’s goal is a bachelor’s degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology, and a job in the aerospace or automotive industries.

“I want to be an example for other women to show that we can do it,” she says.





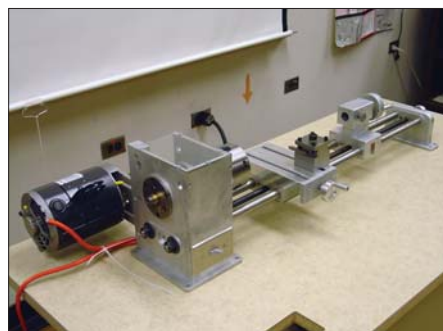
**On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!** RIT students line up with other competitors in the Tour de Sol competition where they won first and second place in the student division and second and third place overall. Bike #4 is ridden by RIT student Radames Marrero. RIT's other entry is ridden by student Sam Sherman (adjusting his helmet to the left and behind rider in blue jacket).

# If They Build It, They Will Learn

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher

It's a scene that is played out at Rochester Institute of Technology every 11 weeks. To make the grade and pass the course, students must demonstrate that they have successfully mastered the appropriate skills and knowledge.

Many of the end-of-course student projects in NTID's Industrial and Science Technologies (IST) degree programs, which include Applied Optical Technology (AOT), Automation Technologies (AT), Computer Aided Drafting Technology (CADT), and Computer Integrated Machining Technology (CIMT), have resulted in creative, hands-on, student-designed and built works, including motorized vehicles and precision machines and instruments.



**Precision Project** CIMT students built this mini-lathe as the final project for their independent study.

## Automation

Last year, AT students from RIT/NTID teamed up with students from other RIT colleges to apply what they had learned in the classroom to build two

electric bicycles, which they entered in the international Tour de Sol, a race for alternative fuel vehicles. They won first and second place in the student division and second and third place overall in the competition in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

RIT/NTID students built one bike from scratch and modified another existing electric bike for the race. Tour de Sol teams competed for \$10,000 in prize money and earned points for acceleration, handling, and range in addition to fuel efficiency and low-climate-change emissions.

"Our students had to balance the bike's stored energy capacity with how quickly to extract that same energy for the motor and drive train," says Scott Bellinger, assistant professor and

advisor to RIT's Electric Bike Club.

"Both bikes survived the grueling three-hour event," Bellinger adds. "Next year, we plan on creating two new bikes, building on the lessons learned."

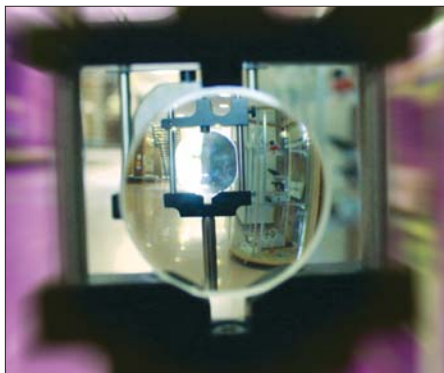
Building the bikes allowed the students to use many skills they learned in their classes, including computer-aided drafting, controls engineering, mechanical engineering, machining technology and project management. The race event was a unique 'final exam' for the students.

"It's great to see the students discover how classroom theory turns into practical knowledge," says Bellinger.

### Optics

In NTID's AOT program, Assistant Professor Dominic Peroni and his faculty colleagues prepare students for careers in precision optics by assigning them to design and build a working Galilean telescope.

"The program is actively providing students with skill sets that help them succeed in precision optics," says Peroni. "This includes manufacturing and testing optical elements for broad applications such as imaging systems for military, medical, telecommunications, and information systems applications."



**Peering into the Future** Students learn about precision optics career options by designing and building a working Galilean telescope.

The student telescope project teaches concepts of imaging and, specifically, how lenses produce images. Students measure varying focal lengths of objective lenses and lenses in the scope's eyepiece. From those

measurements, they calculate the dimensions of their scope and its magnification. CIMT students make the telescope tubes based on AOT student specifications.

"NTID provides exciting career options in optics," Peroni adds, "and the telescope project is one way of demonstrating this to our students."

### Machining

Careers in precision machining are at the heart of RIT/NTID's CIMT program, where students learn how to use highly sophisticated computerized machining equipment to produce precision parts to exact specifications and tolerances.

For an independent study final project last spring, a group of CIMT students used their collective skills to craft the component parts for a Bench Type Centre Lathe, or mini-lathe. The students built the lathe from the parts they made, motorized it, and provided a working demonstration of their precision machine.



**Building with Pride** Student Brendan Bresnahan works on parts for the mini-lathe his team built as their senior capstone project.

"CIMT senior capstone projects must be realistic," says Ronald Till, associate professor and IST chairperson. "The team must spec and build their project, while keeping a close eye on costs, materials, and build time. This is what they'll be doing out in the real world of business and industry."

"The two most important things I learned from working on this project are communication and teamwork," says Brendan Bresnahan. "At the end of it, I can tell everyone which parts I made. That's what I'm most proud of."



**Career Success** John P. Stanton Jr., '80 (right), turned the skills he learned at RIT/NTID into a successful business. As principal owner of Stanton Architects, Inc., in Crest Hill, Ill., he knows the importance of hands-on learning in preparing for career success. Fellow alumnus Kevin Symons, '03, project manager at Stanton, says a project portfolio is as important as a resume for students who want to pursue careers in CAD.

### Drafting

The projects that drafting students create during class, including handcrafted objects, measured renderings, and detailed documentation, fill portfolios and resumes of eager students ready to showcase their applied experiences to prospective employers.

CADT alumnus Kevin Symons, '03, used many of his student projects to showcase his skills and abilities to become project manager for Stanton Architects, Inc., in Crest Hill, Ill., where RIT/NTID alumnus John P. Stanton Jr., '80, is principal owner.

"As CADT students, we knew that every student project completed would be going into our job interview portfolio," says Symons. "In my field of work as a CAD technician, a portfolio is as important as a resume."

"The business world is highly competitive," says Stanton. "As an architect and business owner, I look for quality team players who are confidently skilled and open to advance their abilities."

"I approached every class project during my studies at RIT, as if they were real projects in the working world," adds Stanton. "That mindset helped build my confidence to achieve quality in my career and in my life."

And now the current generation of students is following Stanton's lead and preparing for their careers with exciting hands-on projects.

# John Anderson

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher



In 1989, John Anderson was a first-year Computer Science student at RIT and the term Information Technology, or IT, was just coming into vogue. The Okemos, Mich., native decided IT would be a better fit, so he transferred into RIT's new IT major. "It was much more suitable to my

interests and tastes," Anderson says. "It included the psychological aspects of computing, not just programming. IT prepared me to wear many different hats in the high-tech field."

After graduating from RIT's College of Applied Science and Technology, Anderson worked as an IT professional in a variety of roles at companies such as Paradigm Interactive, networkMCI, and Landmark Community Interest.

Since 1998, Anderson has been working as an applications developer at SAS inSchool, a division of SAS Institute, in Cary, N.C., the nation's leading provider of business intelligence software and services.

"I develop online software for the K-12 educational market," says Anderson. "The goal of SAS inSchool software is to enhance student learning and teacher effectiveness."

In 2005, Anderson's development team won a Duke's Choice Award from Sun Microsystems for SAS inSchool's Introductory Algebra program.

"John brings a rare blend of skills, including Java, DHTML, CSS, XML,

and SQL, to name just a few," says Tom Richards, manager of educational software development for SAS inSchool. "The important thing is fluency in these many widely varied technologies, and John is able to come up with truly innovative and sophisticated approaches to development problems. He is an asset to the SAS team."

Anderson attributes his own penchant for hard work and good study habits in school to his father, a retired college professor and dean who provided his son with encouraging advice along the way.

"My dad would tell me, 'Work as hard as you can and don't worry about it. Good grades will follow,'" says Anderson. "It is very true, and I stuck to that through my time at RIT."

Anderson and his wife, Amanda, have a 5-year-old daughter, Grace. He is an avid windsurfer and enjoys mountain biking and inline hockey. In October, Anderson, with members of his Colonial Baptist Church, traveled to Kagoshima, Japan, to provide fellowship and assistance to members of the Kibou Baptist Church.

# Evelyn Wiggins

by Frank A. Kruppenbacher

The human effort behind the development of drugs to combat cancer, arthritis, hepatitis, and HIV/AIDS is enormous. The contributions of every scientist, researcher, and lab and office technician in this important field of science play a role in the health and safety of mankind now and into the future.

At Human Genome Sciences, Inc. (HGS), a leading biopharmaceutical company in Rockville, Md., Evelyn Wiggins, 2004 Applied Computer Technology (ACT) alumna, works diligently and effectively as a document specialist in the Quality Assurance Document Control Archiving and Issuance group.

"I am not a doctor, researcher, or lab technician," Wiggins says. "However, I have important responsibilities in maintaining all of the controlled document files in all HGS departments."

As a member of the archiving team, Wiggins runs searches and generates database reports, tracks documentation through a review process, and provides

customer support for designated areas or groups and distributes controlled documents.

"The database work I do applies to my background in ACT," says Wiggins. "My work experiences as an RIT computer lab assistant gave me excellent cross-training that helps me work easily and effectively among computers, printers, copiers, and all of the related software applications."

Mary Hufnagel, a supervisor in the archiving and issuance group at HGS, says, "Eve's prior computer experience, her eagerness to learn, and her open and friendly approach led to her being hired. The company has several deaf and hard-of-hearing employees across the organization and an infrastructure in place to fully support them."

Wiggins started her college career closer to home in Southern California,



but transferred to RIT.

"At RIT/NTID I found a better life," she says. "RIT is where I found other students who shared my dreams, especially in black and deaf cultures. Now, thanks to RIT/NTID, I have a good job and a happier life."



# “We Came as Strangers... We Left as Friends”

by Kathy A. Johncox

Last summer at Herstmonceux, a medieval castle in East Sussex, England, four RIT/NTID students and 16 international students, four each from China, Japan, the Philippines, and Russia, bridged the gap of both language and cultural differences to come to an understanding of what leadership and advocacy means to them individually and to the larger international deaf community. The students, plus faculty members and speakers from RIT/NTID, and universities in the four other countries, all participated in the first-ever International Summer Leadership Institute organized and supported by the Postsecondary Education Network (PEN)-International, a grant program funded by The Nippon Foundation of Japan and located at RIT/NTID.

“Gaining access to education and employment is critical for deaf students, and the level of access varies in each country,” says James J. DeCaro, director of PEN-International. “Our goal is to help these students help themselves by giving them critical leadership and self-advocacy skills.”

The summer institute also provided opportunities for the students to get a better understanding of diversity, deaf culture, empowerment, achieving goals, employment, and support and access services necessary for deaf students at the college level.



**Experiential Art** Jeremy Quiroga shows a collage he created as a result of his summer experience, which, he says, “occupies a piece of my heart.”



**Castle Crew** Michelle Koplitz, Jeremy Quiroga, Lizzie Sorkin, and Christopher Samp enjoy the countryside, and each other, outside of Herstmonceux Castle.

NTID’s student representatives were selected based on an application, essay, resume, and letters of recommendation. Dr. Alfred Bader, a philanthropist, supported the travel of these four students. Although they came from very diverse majors—Michelle Koplitz, Biotechnology; Jeremy Quiroga, Metalcrafts and Jewelry; Christopher Samp, Public Policy; and Lizzie Sorkin, Film and Animation—the students all agree that last summer’s experience was outstanding.

“It was an unforgettable experience,” says Koplitz, of Eau Claire, Wisc. “I learned so much about myself as a deaf person and about the history of deaf leaders, leadership styles, and communication methods.”

During the day, students attended workshops about developing effective communication and negotiating skills, what characteristics a successful deaf leader possesses, how to use networking to find employment, how to advocate

for access services for themselves and others, and more. The students also took a field trip to Brighton and the White Cliffs, but the real opportunity for cultural exchange, the students all agree, came in the evenings in a pub at Herstmonceux Castle.

“I probably learned the most about the other countries just socializing in the pub at the castle,” says Sorkin, currently the first deaf president of RIT Student Government. “There I was impressed by the contemporary thinking of the Japanese students, the performance abilities of the students from the Philippines, the goal orientation of the Russian students, and the artistic talents of the Chinese group. The workshops during the day prompted some great discussions there in the evening, and I know I learned a lot about myself and my own leadership style.”

“It was astounding how easily students communicated among themselves,” says Denise Kavin, senior project associate for PEN-International and the program coordinator. “They bonded quickly, learned from each other and exchanged cultural information.”

“This program exceeded my expectations,” says Samp. “Interacting with the participants really opened my eyes about different issues for deaf and hard-of-hearing people happening in other countries.”

“I firmly believe that after this experience, our students have gained a greater sensitivity, understanding, and appreciation of cultural diversity,” says T. Alan Hurwitz, vice president of RIT for NTID and CEO/dean of NTID, who accompanied the group and led several of the workshops. “They also now have a global perspective of how deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in different cultures work to get the access services that will help them succeed.”

For more on the International Summer Leadership Institute, visit [www.pen.ntid.rit.edu/summer-institute.php](http://www.pen.ntid.rit.edu/summer-institute.php).



Bernard Bragg (left) and Robert F. Panara, his mentor and friend, meet outside NTID's Robert F. Panara Theatre, where Bragg's play was performed.

### Theater Benefits from Generosity of Internationally Acclaimed Deaf Actor

Bernard Bragg, internationally acclaimed deaf actor, playwright and director has created the Bernard Bragg Deaf Theatre, Signed Arts, and Deaf Cinema Endowment Fund at NTID. This fund will support scholarships, training, workshops, and lectures related to deaf theater.

"I wish to see deaf people in theater and film, around the world, continue to explore and enhance the quality of their creative works," Bragg said in announcing his gift. "Deaf theater and film groups have made significant and impressive contributions not only to their own deaf communities, but also to the general culture of the greater societies in which they live."

Bragg visited RIT/NTID in November for a reception in his honor. He participated in lectures and attended a 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary production of *Tales from a Clubroom*, a play, much cherished in the deaf community, that he co-wrote with fellow playwright, Eugene Bergmann. The play was performed by RIT/NTID students and directed by Aaron Weir Kelstone, instructional support faculty member in the Cultural and Creative Studies Department at NTID.

Bragg's history is a story of accolades

with an international flavor. As a youth, he went to New York School for the Deaf where he was advised in his theatrical adventures by Robert Panara, who was already noted for his own theater experience, and who later became RIT's first deaf faculty member and director of NTID's Experimental Educational Theatre Program.

Bragg's love for the stage grew at Gallaudet College in 1952. In 1956, he was invited to study in Paris with Marcel Marceau, the world-famous French mime. After traveling the United States as a mime artist for several years, he helped found the National Theatre of the Deaf in 1967. In a groundbreaking cultural exchange, he was artist-in-residence at the Russian Theater of Mimicry and Gesture in 1973, and became artist-in-residence at NTID in 1978. He has traveled all over the world educating, lecturing and performing storytelling workshops. In 2001, he received a Special Lifetime Achievement Award from the World Federation of the Deaf "for his commitment, dedication and leadership in the deaf theater world and his encouragement to deaf actors everywhere."

Bragg currently lives in California, and has been teaching at California State University at Northridge since 1998.

### Roaring to Success: Record \$309 Million Raised in RIT Fundraising Campaign

The spirit of giving has turned into a record-setting "Tiger Roar" for RIT. Thanks to the generous support of more than 30,000 donors, Powered by the Future: The Campaign for RIT, ended in 2006 as the university's largest and most successful capital campaign, with more than \$309 million in gifts and commitments received during the eight-year comprehensive fundraising effort.

The gifts are already contributing to new initiatives at RIT and will continue to help advance the university's mission for decades to come. More than 210 new scholarships and seven new endowed professorships have been created, three colleges named, and several new campus structures added.

A few of many notable additions to the campus landscape include:

- RIT's B. Thomas Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences, currently the largest comprehensive college of computing in the nation.
- The Gordon Field House and Activities Center, a 160,000-square-foot, \$25 million facility featuring event space for gatherings of nearly 7,000 people, a fitness center that is three times the size of RIT's former weight room, an eight-lane pool, a 25-person hot tub and spa area, and a six-lane running track.
- The CSD Student Development Center, a 30,000-square-foot multipurpose building with spaces for various student clubs and organizations, which serves as a leadership and community-building centerpiece for students, particularly those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

For more information on the capital campaign and giving, visit [www.ntid.rit.edu/friends/](http://www.ntid.rit.edu/friends/).

# A Fitting Tribute



**A Creative Thank You** RIT President Albert J. Simone (center right) and his wife, Carolie (center left), were honored for their support to Rochester School for the Deaf (RSD) at the Simonés' annual holiday dinner for RSD students. To honor President and Mrs. Simone for their friendship and support to the school, where Mrs. Simone is a board member and past board president, RSD senior Abigail Worek (center) presented them with a one-of-a-kind framed piece of art she designed. Joining in the tribute were Dr. Harold Mowl Jr., RSD superintendent/CEO (far left), and Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, RIT Vice President for NTID and CEO/Dean of NTID (far right), as well as several RSD and RIT/NTID staff, and student leaders.

Photo courtesy of Rochester School for the Deaf.



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**Honoring True Friends** In October, NTID paid tribute to RIT President Albert J. Simone (left) and his wife, Carolie, for their long-standing support of NTID and the deaf community at RIT.

“President Simone, you and Carolie have been true friends to NTID, to the deaf and hard-of-hearing community on campus, and most importantly, to our students,” said RIT Vice President for NTID and CEO/Dean of NTID T. Alan Hurwitz (right) during the tribute. “From the beginning of your time here at RIT, you understood the importance of NTID and its mission, and through the years, you have demonstrated a deep commitment to this college and to our students.”

President Simone will retire from RIT at the end of this academic year after 15 years of service.