

FALL/WINTER 2018

# FOCUS

## NTID

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • Rochester Institute of Technology



**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Alumni Reunion**



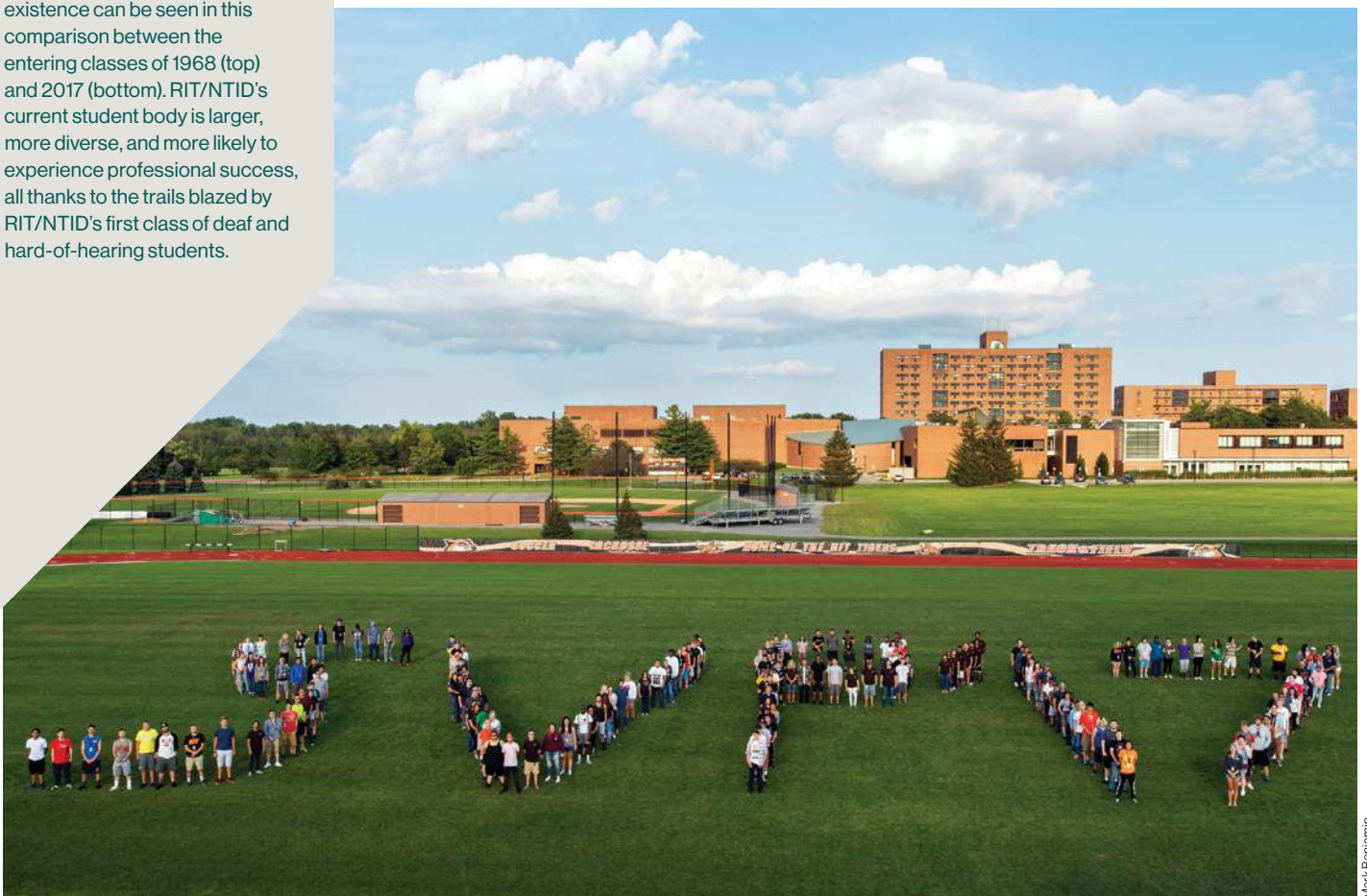
## 50 Years of Growth

# Then and now



Archival Photo

RIT/NTID's growth and success over the first 50 years of its existence can be seen in this comparison between the entering classes of 1968 (top) and 2017 (bottom). RIT/NTID's current student body is larger, more diverse, and more likely to experience professional success, all thanks to the trails blazed by RIT/NTID's first class of deaf and hard-of-hearing students.



Mark Benjamin

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**About the Cover** More than 3,000 people attended NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion Weekend June 28 – July 1, 2018. See photos and more information from the reunion on pp. 3-9 in this issue.

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# FOCUS

NTID

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Mark Benjamin

## Celebrating transformation

We were thrilled to welcome back to campus more than 3,000 alumni and friends, along with current and former faculty, staff and administrators, for NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion Weekend June 28 – July 1, 2018. It was a wonderful celebration of 50 years of education, transformation and Tiger spirit.

The festivities began with an alumni golf tournament and continued with an opening ceremony hosted by alumnus and actor CJ Jones. Other activities during the reunion weekend included a barbeque dinner; mini-reunions for current and former members of numerous clubs and organizations, including fraternities and sororities; and entertainment by popular alumni such as Sean Forbes, Rosa Lee Timm, Amber Zion, Kris Pumphrey and Daniel Durant. (See photos and more information from the reunion on pp. 3-9 in this issue.)

In addition to alumni from NTID's "pioneer" class and founding faculty members, we were honored to welcome back four of NTID's past leaders: Dr. D. Robert Frisina, founding director; Dr. Robert Davila, NTID's first deaf leader; Dr. James J. DeCaro; and Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz. (See photos and more information from the reunion on pp. 10-11, which is being rerun from the Spring/Summer 2018 issue of *FOCUS* with corrections.)

The Dyer Arts Center hosted an

outstanding exhibition, *50 Artists, 50 Years*, featuring works by 50 RIT/NTID alumni artists (see pp. 14-15). The center also hosted the unveiling of a triptych entitled *Together*, created by alumna Susan Dupor and commissioned for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The work portrays the flourishing life and history of NTID over 50 years (see back cover of this issue).

The reunion kicked off a year-long celebration of NTID's 50-year history, which coincides with RIT's move to the Henrietta, New York, campus. It was an opportunity for many to return "home," reconnect and marvel at the transformation of our campus, our college and the greater university.

Following the reunion, RIT made a major announcement about the university's future—a \$1 billion blended campaign, the largest fundraising effort in the university's history. NTID has a significant role in the campaign, which is titled *Transforming RIT: The Campaign for Greatness*, as we seek support from a variety of investors, including alumni, government and corporate partners, and research foundations and agencies. (Learn more about the campaign at [rit.edu/transformingrit](http://rit.edu/transformingrit), and visit NTID's website for more information on ways you can be part of this historic campaign: [ntid.rit.edu/giving](http://ntid.rit.edu/giving).)

This fall, RIT launched a new brand strategy that focuses on how RIT is using the power of technology, the arts and design to shape the future and improve the world. The purpose is to showcase RIT and enable the university to continue its growth and transformation. You can see some of the graphic elements of the new brand, including the new logo, in this issue of *FOCUS*. Future issues will incorporate more elements of the brand.

As we celebrate NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of RIT's move to the Henrietta campus, we pause to reflect on all who have helped lay the foundation on which we are continuing to build as NTID and RIT move into an exciting future of making a positive difference in the lives of students and in the world.

Gerard J. Buckley, SVP '74, '78  
NTID President  
RIT Vice President and Dean



# NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion: A look back

BY JAMES MCCARTHY

When NTID admitted its first class in 1968, the number of people in the world who knew about the new college was very small. An optimist might put that number at around 500. This past summer, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion boasted more than 3,000 official registrations and saw hundreds more pass through LBJ Hall's front doors.

That number doesn't include the more than 1,000 alumni who participated in the Reunion Roadshow events across the United States in the months leading up to the Reunion Weekend, or the thousands more who, for one reason or another, were not able to participate, but sent their best wishes and shared their fond memories on social media.

By every objective—and subjective—measure, the Reunion Weekend was a resounding success. We want to share that success with you, so over the next few pages, please enjoy a very small selection of photos from what is possibly the largest alumni event ever hosted by RIT or NTID.

## WEB EXTRA:

To see more photos, visit [bit.ly/NTID50photos](http://bit.ly/NTID50photos).



**A warm welcome** This decal, on the front windows of the Dyer Arts Center, welcomed alumni to the lobby of Lyndon Baines Johnson Hall.

Mark Benjamin



**Getting reacquainted** Kevin Nolan ('68, '71) greets fellow alumni during the first day of registration in the CSD Student Development Center.

Mark Benjamin



**Checking in** Student and alumni volunteers turned out in large numbers to handle the monumental task of checking in more than 3,000 alumni in only two days.



**A hearty meal** Tom ('68, '72) and Carol Virnig enjoy a barbecue meal provided by the NTID Alumni Association on Saturday afternoon.

Amelia Hamilton



## NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion: A look back

### Days with friends

The days of the Reunion Weekend offered a variety of activities. Alumni were able to reunite with their enrollment-year cohort to take a group photo on the track field and attend mini-reunions focused on their major, group affiliation, fraternity or sorority, or topic of general interest. Workshops, demonstrations and panels discussed topics ranging from new tax-preparation information to deaf women's issues.

Overall feedback was positive, and most events saw standing-room-only crowds. Temperatures also rose into the 90s on the day all 3,000 attendees were expected to walk to the track field and take photos with their enrollment-year groups, but spirits were just as high as the temperatures.



Mark Benjamin



A. Sue Weisler



A. Sue Weisler



Mark Benjamin

**What's old is new again** After a welcome-home celebration led by NTID President Gerry Buckley and his wife Judy and alumni Christopher (SVP '86, '94) and Staci ('92) Wagner, classmates reunited for photos with their enrollment-year cohort. Many of the classes remembered their departed peers, including the class of 1971, who lost Carmen Sciandra (SVP '71, '74) just weeks before the reunion opened.





Mark Benjamin



Mark Benjamin

**Discussing and learning** Reunion attendees were offered a wide variety of workshops, panels and demonstration activities during the mornings. Alumni like Sam Holcomb (SVP '74, '77) and Tim (SVP '91, '98, '00) and the late Stephanie Smith (SVP '85, '88) Albert led workshops focused on topics like deaf history and the lives of people of color within the Deaf community.



Mark Benjamin



Mark Benjamin



Amelia Hamilton



Amelia Hamilton

**Reuniting, recollecting and reflecting** Around 25 different groups hosted mini-reunions during the weekend, remembering their years on campus while appreciating a common bond. African American alumni met in the Commons to see Fred Beam (SVP '81, '85), one of the founders of the Ebony Club, and NTID's Greek organizations enjoyed seeing their group across the generations. Mini-reunions were also more intimate and personal, including those friends and family of Dr. James DeCaro, dean emeritus and former interim NTID president.



**A hard-working team** Christopher and Staci Wagner brought the team of alumni volunteers, who had arranged the entire weekend up on stage to thank them for all of their hard work.



Mark Benjamin

## NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion: A look back

### Evenings to remember

Each evening during the Reunion Weekend, alumni had the option to attend an event at the Gene Polisseni Center. Each event featured multiple performers, honored speakers and dozens of alumni working together to create an unforgettable show.

On the first night, an opening ceremony was orchestrated by CJ Jones, alumnus and award-winning actor, and featured current and past presidents of NTID, an appearance by reunion core team co-chairs Christopher and Staci Wagner and a look at the team of alumni

responsible for pulling it all together.

The next two nights were devoted to Tiger Night Out, events featuring a variety of alumni storytellers, performers and entertainers. Attendees were able to enjoy the talents of performers, including Rosa Lee Timm (SVP '95, '00), a renowned storyteller; the nationally famous deaf hip-hop artist Sean Forbes (SVP '00, '04, '08); and JJ Jones (SVP '74, '77), a mime. Attendees could view the Performing Arts program's production of *The Wonderful World of Oz*, an entirely alumni-run and -produced show.

All of it added up to one unforgettable weekend.



Mark Benjamin

**Talent on display** The Reunion Weekend saw dozens of talented alumni take the stage. Some, like Ruthie Jordan (SVP '77, '01, '02, '08) and Perseus McDaniel (SVP '13, '18), did double duty as MCs and performers, while others showed off their well-honed craft, like longtime entertainers Peter Cook (SVP '81, '86) and Kenny Lerner. For some, like PRISM, this represented their return to the stage after many years away, and the audience loved every minute.



Mark Benjamin

**A masterful greeting** Alumnus CJ Jones ('69, '73) served as master of ceremonies for the opening ceremony.




Mark Benjamin

**A row of leaders** RIT/NTID's leaders, both past and present, enjoyed the Reunion Weekend's opening ceremony: (left to right) David Munson, president of RIT; Gerry Buckley, president of NTID; Judy Buckley; T. Alan Hurwitz; James DeCaro; Robert Davila; D. Robert Frisina.









**A good team** A foursome, including the NTID Center on Employment's John Macko, far right (SVP '85, '91, '98), Department of Business Studies' W. Scot Atkins, far left, retired Business Studies chair Mary Lou Basile, and retired NTID Counselor Bill Moore enjoy a leisurely round of golf before entering the hubbub of the Reunion Weekend.

Amelia Hamilton

## NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion: A Look Back

### A friendly contest

A group of around 80 alumni participated in the golf tournament, a reunion tradition. The golf tournament is an opportunity for participants to spend some time together in a more intimate setting, compete against one another and win prizes for various feats, such as making the longest drive.

Hosted at Mill Creek Golf Club in Churchville, the golf tournament was an enjoyable event with plenty of bragging rights to go around. The morning might have been foggy, but the delight felt by attendees was clear.



**A good time** Kathleen Szczepanek (SVP '87, '90, '92), a faculty member in NTID's Business Studies Department, celebrates after a particularly good shot.

Amelia Hamilton



# Capturing 50 years of SVP

BY ILENE J. AVALLONE

Each summer, deaf and hard-of-hearing students entering the National Technical Institute for the Deaf attend an orientation called the Summer Vestibule Program. Students who attend SVP strongly identify with their SVP cohort. So, when more than 3,000 alumni returned to campus this past June to celebrate NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, one of the most eagerly awaited events was SVP class photos on Tiger Field. Capturing the individual class photos was not an easy task and would not have been successful without the talents of NTID photographer Mark Benjamin, RIT photographer Sue Weisler, and Amelia Hamilton, an RIT/NTID student photographer. The photo event was another great opportunity for alumni to reconnect and make new memories with their fellow classmates.

## WEB EXTRA:

Alumni may acquire their free SVP photo from NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reunion weekend using this easy method:

1. Visit [bit.ly/NTID50photos](http://bit.ly/NTID50photos).
2. To download and save an image, right click and select "save image as." Click this to save the photo to a computer, tablet or phone.



A. Sue Weisler



A. Sue Weisler



A. Sue Weisler



Amelia Hamilton



# Milestones in NTID history

BY JAMES MCCARTHY

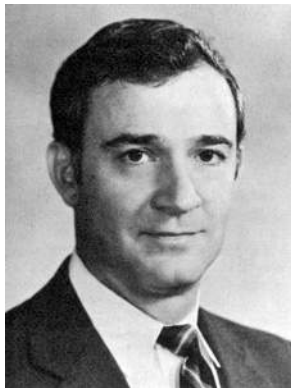
In 50 years, RIT/NTID has seen its fair share of change. Having gone from a group of 70 deaf and hard-of-hearing students who didn't have a building to call their own to more than 1,100 students spread across a functional and attractive complex of buildings, backed by a worldwide population of more than 8,500 alumni, "transformation" could be considered an understatement for NTID.

Here, we review only a few of the high points in the past 50 years, paying attention to common themes of leadership and growth in pursuit of NTID's mission of ensuring employment for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Running through Dr. Frisina's appointment as NTID's first director to Greg Pollock's second election as president of RIT's Student Government,

overseeing the campus activities of over 16,000 students, we can almost glimpse the road that RIT/NTID has been—and still is—traveling, as an institution and a community.

*Editor's Note: This timeline is a corrected version of one that ran in the Spring/Summer 2018 issue of FOCUS.*

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL PHOTOS ARE ARCHIVE IMAGES.



**1967**

Dr. D. Robert Frisina begins his first year leading NTID.



**1971**

The groundbreaking ceremony for the NTID complex is held.



**1972**

The first NTID Student Congress Board of Directors is elected; clockwise from bottom left: Mark Feder (SVP '71, '74, '76), vice president; Miriam Sotomayor ('72), secretary; Jerry Nelson, president; and John Swan (SVP '70, '74, '76), treasurer.



**1976**

Dr. William Castle is appointed NTID's dean.

**1968**

NTID's first class of admitted students—known as the "Charter Class"—begin classes.

**1974**

Lady Bird Johnson, widow of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, kneels next to a plaque at the dedication of LBJ Hall.







A. Sue Weisler

**1978**

The NTID Center on Employment is established, solidifying NTID's commitment to job placement for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

**2006**

Elizabeth Sorkin (SVP '99, '07) is elected the first deaf president of RIT Student Government.



Mark Benjamin



A. Sue Weisler

**1988**

The theater in LBJ Hall is named "Robert F. Panara Theatre" after Dr. Panara, pictured above with his wife, Shirley.

**1996**

Dr. Robert Davila is appointed NTID's first deaf—and Latino—vice president.

**2010**

Greg Pollock ('12) is the second deaf president of RIT Student Government—and the first to win a second term.

**1978**

John "JT" Reid graduates as the first deaf captain of an RIT varsity team (wrestling).

**1995**

Dr. James DeCaro, who served as NTID dean 1985-1998, is named dean and interim director of NTID. He served as interim president and dean of NTID in 2010.

**2003**

Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, who was named first deaf dean of NTID in 1998, is appointed vice president and dean of NTID. In 2008, he was named NTID's first president.

**2011**

Dr. Gerard J. Buckley ('78) becomes the first alumnus to be appointed leader of NTID.



A. Sue Weisler



Mark Benjamin



Mark Benjamin



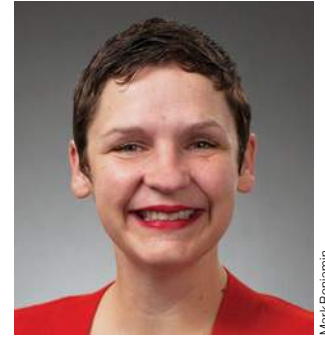
# NTID history on display

BY DYLAN PANARRA

As part of the NTID 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion celebration, the Dyer Art Center featured two special exhibitions. One focused on 50 artists across 50 years (see article on pp. 14-15) and another focused on NTID's history.

The history exhibition featured banners along with physical items, such as the orange blazer of Greg Pollock, the second deaf RIT Student Government president; *FOCUS* magazines through the years; older school spirit outfits, publications made by former students; and much more. It was a small glimpse into the history of life at NTID over the years.

“This project took so much work and effort, but I loved learning about NTID history and the impact it has had on deaf people everywhere. I’m grateful for the opportunity to have done the research and to be able to put together the text panels.”



Mark Benjamin

Tabitha Jacques  
Director of NTID's  
Joseph F. and Helen  
C. Dyer Arts Center

**National Technical Institute for the Deaf**

**The Grand Experiment**

During the 20th Century, expectations for being the deaf American was to become a hard-working and self-sufficient member of society. Sameness and integration were valued and deaf people were no exception. Barriers and attitudes towards deafness within mainstream society provided challenges to employment for deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

NTID began as a “grand experiment” to see if a technical education and individualized attention would increase employment opportunities for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. Over the course of 50 years, NTID’s educational philosophy has gradually changed, as have the demographics of the people who educate deaf and hard-of-hearing students, as will be shown in the accompanying panels. The institutional goals for students, which are outlined in the next panel, have remained the same, but the students themselves have changed, desiring more autonomy and agency. Today, many alumni enjoy successful careers as leaders, advocates of their community, and innovators.

This exhibition will illustrate how attitudes toward deafness have changed and recognize how NTID alumni have served as representatives and drivers of that change.

**Pioneers of Innovation**

NTID was founded to accomplish two primary goals: to offer technical training to young deaf and hard-of-hearing adults and to ensure job placement. A corollary goal was the education of deaf and hard-of-hearing students in interaction and assimilation in hearing-dominated workplaces to this end, it was equally important that NTID be located within a larger, majority-hearing institution.

In the early years, the Basic Interpreting Training Program (BITP) was also founded. Although hearing students had been recruited to live with deaf and hard-of-hearing students, learn how to sign, and interpret for their deaf counterparts, the more-formalized BITP was an early step toward the emphasis on communication access evident in NTID today—in both deaf- and hearing-majority classrooms.

Near the end of the 1980s, the Grand Experiment had largely become an established institution with entrenched ideals which would be challenged and refined by the next generation of students, setting the stage for changes to come.

NTID’s administration, faculty and staff were primarily composed of hearing people who recognized the ability of deaf and hard-of-hearing people to contribute to society, and worked tirelessly toward ensuring that those contributions were realized.

At the time, simultaneous communication (Sim-Com) was widely used. This form of communication was used so that students theoretically could benefit from lip-reading and learning English grammar. Classes were not limited to technical studies; lip-reading and speech classes were also offered. The administration felt that this would help NTID’s students get jobs and sustain careers.

NTID students were in many ways considered pioneers. They used educational technologies that were available, and provided input for improvements. They created a deaf space by setting up the NTID Theatre program along with Robert Panara, a deaf faculty member. After graduation, some of them took jobs that became available at NTID, while others took jobs in government or industry, paving the way for future generations of deaf and hard-of-hearing workers.





Kenzie Robbins



## Collective Advocacy

When the movement toward disability right appeared in national headlines, deaf and hard-of-hearing people began to see the work that needed to be done to ensure equity for themselves. These headlines came about because of events like the Deaf President Now (DPN) protest movement at Gallaudet University and the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in Congress. Those two major events shook the stereotypical perception of deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

The NTID Student Congress, which had been established in the early 1970s, became more active in asserting the rights of its constituents. RIT/NTID student leaders were actively involved with Deaf President Now, naming a list that would allow RIT/NTID students to join their counterparts in Washington, DC, as well as leading their own protests in Rochester.




NTID students join 'deaf power' in D.C.

Around the same time, students began to explore identities other than deafness. This led to affinity organizations, such as Ebony Club and Latin American Deaf Club. This was a response to seeing the need for creating their own spaces outside of the mainstream organizations. During this time, two deaf individuals came to lead the college. Dr. Robert Davis, who is Latino, became the first deaf Vice President of RIT for NTID. Dr. T. Alan Harvett, who is also deaf, succeeded him as Vice President and became NTID's first deaf President and Dean.



Between DPN and the passage of the ADA, deaf and hard-of-hearing faculty and staff at NTID gravitated toward the desire to recognize Deaf culture and to encourage an environment where deaf and hard-of-hearing people were viewed as equal. NTID's Deaf Cultural Studies courses emerged during this time. The Campaign for Accessibility Now movement coalesced in response to faculty and staff not signing in public spaces.





## Agents of Change


Rapid technological change—including the rise of social media—enabled many positive shifts within the lives of deaf and hard-of-hearing people. Suddenly, they were able to communicate with hearing people without depending on interpreters. The increased flexibility enabled more job opportunities and allowed deaf and hard-of-hearing people to become more self-sufficient.

Social media was a channel for increasing awareness about the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing people in every aspect of public life, from education to employment to services. This was a time of agency and empowerment for deaf and hard-of-hearing people, and RIT/NTID alumni and students were part of this exciting era. Social justice, diversity, inclusion, communication styles and access came to the forefront of discussions within the NTID community.

During this time, NTID hired increasing numbers of deaf and hard-of-hearing people in administrative roles. Dr. Gerard Buckley became the first deaf or hard-of-hearing alumna to lead NTID. Three deaf and hard-of-hearing students were elected president of RIT's Student Government Association. A deaf student became the captain of the RIT men's baseball team, continuing a tradition of deaf and hard-of-hearing leadership dating back to John Reid's. The era capstone of the wrestling team, RIT/NTID alumni became President of the National Association of the Deaf, engineers for Microsoft, leaders in deaf education overseas, and more.



The Center on Access Technology, a research center focusing on accessibility in education, was established and led in large part by deaf and hard-of-hearing engineers. Many RIT/NTID students worked on technology to increase accessibility for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. More alumni started new businesses or became business leaders. The Next Big Idea, a program that encouraged RIT/NTID students to create a business plan and compete to sell their ideas, was established, providing the winners with seed money for their businesses.




## A Shining Beacon

The political, social, technological, and cultural shifts of the American landscape have strongly influenced RIT/NTID over the decades. People's attitudes towards deafness in the early years ensured that institutional goals were limited to helping deaf and hard-of-hearing people get jobs and contribute to society. These were goals that paved the way for deaf people to receive the education and services they needed in a society that still did not know how to respond to people with disabilities.

However, in the intervening years, various movements, legislation, and technological advancements have shifted social attitudes. In response to that shift, RIT/NTID propelled students to become agents of change in various ways. RIT/NTID has become a deaf culture space for students with various communication styles and preferences. RIT/NTID alumni from all around the world acknowledge that NTID has made a lasting impact on their lives.

While NTID has greatly benefited from being one of the colleges of RIT, RIT has also benefited from NTID's presence. The uniqueness of NTID as a college has helped put RIT on the map, becoming a highly desired university by people all over the world. NTID faculty, staff, and students have shared technological innovations, teaching experience, accessibility for all students, and more with the campus.



AMERICAN CLUB




Panels designed by Kenzie Robbins



# Showcasing NTID's historic art exhibit

BY SUSAN L. MURAD

Throughout history, art has been a way for individuals and societies to express their views and interpret the world around them. This is particularly true for the Deaf community, and was one of the driving forces behind the *50 Artists, 50 Years* exhibition that was on display June 22 and ran through Oct. 20, 2018, in RIT/NTID's Dyer Arts Center.

As part of NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the exhibition showcased 50 alumni artists, and more than 100 works of art, including mediums such as painting, photography, mixed media, wood, textile, watercolors and more.



**Deaf Education Pinball**

Works by well-known artists such as the late Chuck Baird, along with local Rochester artists including Laural Hartman and many others, were included in the exhibition.

Locating the art and curating the exhibit was the job of Dyer Arts Center Director Tabitha Jacques, who worked with NTID Director of Alumni and Constituent Relations Loriann Macko. They put out a call for submissions, and established a committee of jurors to help



**Echo Mode**

select artworks.

"It was a real challenge because we got so many great submissions and had to sort through them all," says Jacques. "Members of the committee had to think about the artists' history at RIT/NTID, the quality of their work and how many we could select so that other artists were well represented as well."

Along with the *50 Artists, 50 Years* exhibition, the center hosted an NTID history exhibition in the Milton H. and

Ray B. Ohringer Gallery, displaying a variety of memorabilia and highlighting the contributions made by RIT/NTID alumni, faculty, staff and students (see p. 12 for more on the history exhibition).

As part of the reunion festivities, NTID commissioned a triptych—or three-paneled work—called *Together* by deaf artist and alumna Susan Dupor.

"*Together* honors the people of our past who have aspired to create a better future for us; we now take the time to look back and give appreciation and gratitude for their efforts," Dupor says.

*Together* portrays the flourishing life and history of NTID over 50 years. In the painting, 50 people are gathered together on the Frisina



**Love Comes in Diversity**  
Theresa Matteson





James Canning

**Cantata**

Quad, which is central to NTID. Surrounded by the Dining Commons, Lyndon Baines Johnson Hall and Tower A, figures from five decades are juxtaposed by a color scheme and fashion trends of their eras (see back cover).

“NTID is a palette of people from all walks of life, which makes it an extraordinarily global community,” Dupor says. “Figures are conversing in sign language; each signed word has a special connection and meaning representing NTID. The figures symbolize everyday people who elicit long-lost memories of people we have known in the past who have been buried in the deepest recesses of our minds.”



Ray Conrad

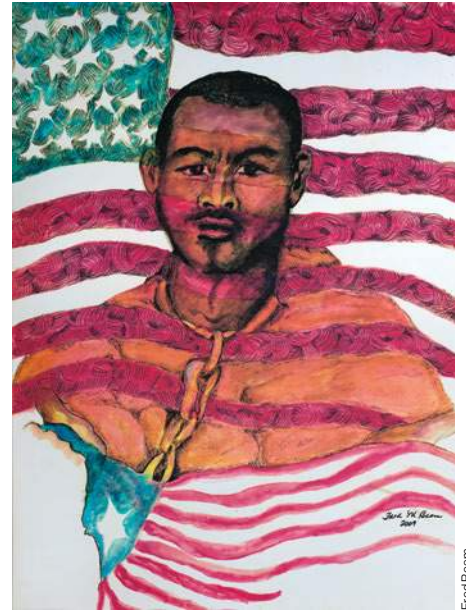
**Being Present**

Approximately half of the works in *50 Artists, 50 Years* were from RIT/NTID’s permanent collection, thought to be one of the largest permanent collections of works by deaf and hard-of-hearing



Chuck Baird

**Rainbow**



Fred Beam

**Through Black Deaf Eyes**

artists in the world.

“The oldest artwork included was actually made in 1968, and the newest piece was made in 2018,” Jacques says. “I loved that the exhibition covered all of RIT/NTID’s 50 years and had something for everyone.”



Laurel Hartman

**Domestication**



Nancy Rourke

**Second Wave of Milan**



# 50 years of *FOCUS*

BY ILENE J. AVALLONE

For 50 years, *FOCUS* magazine has reported on and helped advance the visibility of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf—keeping readers informed about what makes NTID unique.

The magazine began in 1968 with the establishment of the college. NTID's founding director, Dr. D. Robert Frisina, wanted to develop a publication that could be shared with NTID's National Advisory Group, government officials and others to show the progress of what he called "The Grand Experiment."

With that charge in mind, *FOCUS* magazine has spent the past 50 years bringing friends of NTID, parents of current students, donors, alumni, corporations, schools, organizations, and other audiences around the world coverage of the college's growth and transformation. From highlighting achievements of students, alumni, and faculty and staff, to covering new institutional initiatives and cutting-edge research, *FOCUS* magazine aims to inspire and educate its readers, and



**FOCUS through the Years** A look back at *FOCUS* front covers as NTID celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which also is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *FOCUS*.

promote NTID's world-class offerings for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Today, *FOCUS* magazine is published

biannually by NTID's Communications, Marketing and Multimedia Services Department, and is distributed internationally to more than 20,000 subscribers.

"With every issue, *FOCUS* magazine strives to strengthen the important bond between the college and our readers by sharing noteworthy accomplishments and compelling stories about members of our community who are making an impact on RIT, NTID, and out in the world," says *FOCUS* editor Pamela Carmichael, assistant vice president of NTID Communications, Marketing, and Multimedia Services.

Gerry Buckley, SVP '74, '78, NTID president and RIT vice president and dean, says the magazine is a significant piece in NTID's history for reporting on NTID's successes.

"Fifty amazing years later we are still producing inspirational and educational content in every issue, showing how The Grand Experiment is a grand success," he says.

Past issues of *FOCUS* magazine are available at [rit.edu/FOCUS](http://rit.edu/FOCUS).



**From the Archives** As part of the college's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, a display of *FOCUS* magazine covers was created by Dyer Arts Center Director Tabitha Jacques.





Mark Benjamin

# A history of outstanding leadership

Five of the individuals who have led NTID during its 50-year history were together for the college's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion Weekend. Pictured here on June 29, 2018, are: top row, L to R: Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, Dr. Gerard J. Buckley. Bottom row, L to R: Dr. James J. DeCaro, Dr. D. Robert Frisina, Dr. Robert R. Davila.

Dr. D. Robert Frisina was NTID's founding director. He led NTID January 1, 1967 through December 31, 1976.

Not pictured in the photo above is Dr. William Castle, who led NTID January 1, 1977 through December 31, 1994.

Dr. James J. DeCaro led NTID on an interim basis January 1, 1995 through December 31, 1995, and again as

president and dean January 1, 2010, through December 31, 2010. He also served as NTID dean 1985-1998 and was founding director of NTID's PEN-International and Center on Access Technology.

Dr. Robert R. Davila led NTID January 1, 1996, through November 30, 2003. He was the first Latino vice president of NTID.

Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz led NTID December 1, 2003, through December 31, 2009, and served as dean 1998-2009. He was the first deaf dean of NTID and was named the first president of NTID in 2008.

Dr. Gerard J. Buckley has led NTID since January 1, 2011. He is the first RIT/NTID alumnus to lead the college.



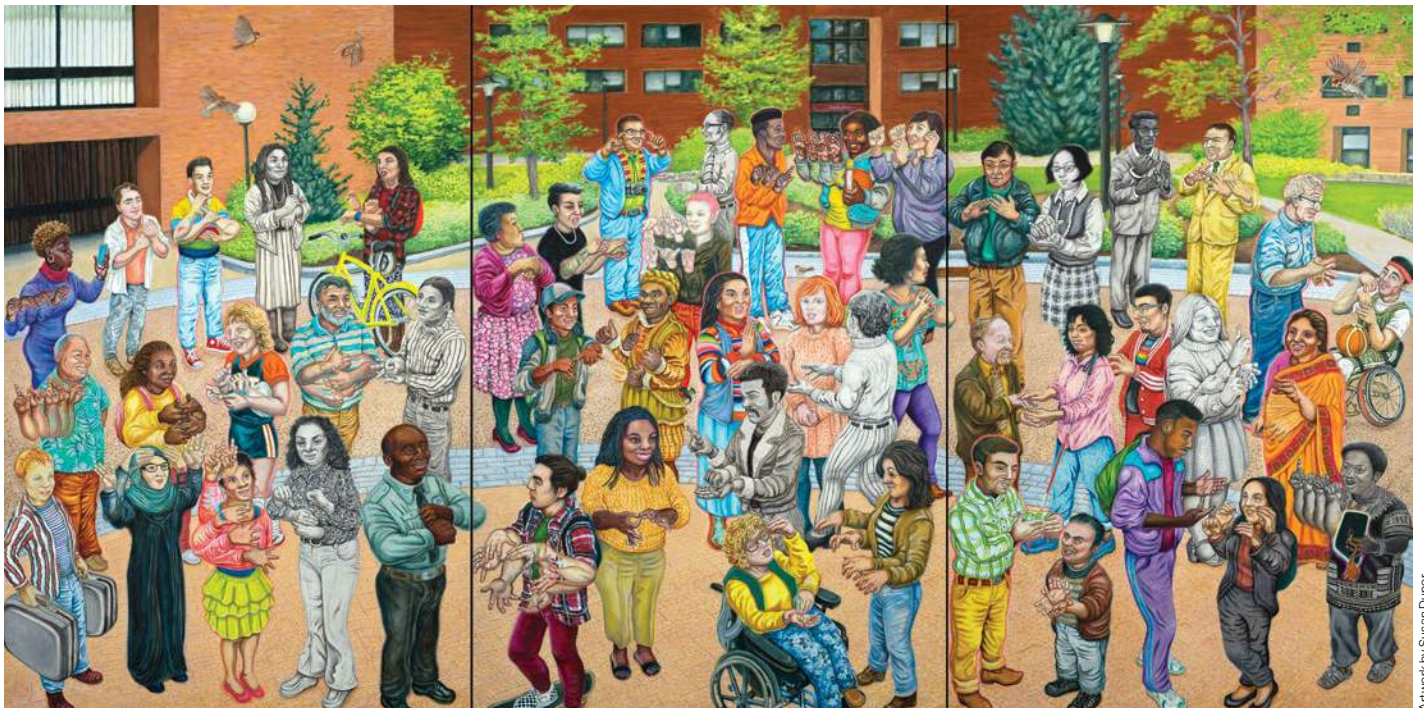
# RIT

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Artwork by Susan Dupor

**History on Canvas** Susan Dupor, an RIT/NTID alumna and acclaimed deaf artist, was commissioned to create an artwork to commemorate 50 years of NTID. A portion of the triptych she created was featured in the Spring/Summer 2018 issue of *FOCUS*. The full work, which was unveiled during the "Welcome Home" Celebration at NTID's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion Weekend, June 28-July 1, 2018, is pictured here.