

Views *of* RIT

The university is many things to its many students

RIT students come in a vast variety of flavors – and the “student experience” is different for each one. It’s never been a “one-size-fits all” kind of place. The university is committed to meeting the expectations of each of RIT’s 15,200 students, says Provost Stan McKenzie.

“Our responsibility is to make sure that all our students have a positive experience,” says McKenzie. “It’s a very, very strong student satisfaction environment.”

By way of illustration, here are stories of just four of RIT’s satisfied student customers.

Blending in

For deaf students considering a college experience, a list of potential schools often has RIT in the top three. And for Lindsay Feuer, attending RIT quickly became a no-brainer.

“I visited Gallaudet University and it made me forget I was deaf,” says Feuer, a fifth-year student from Boston. “There, everyone signs, from police and nurses to office assistants. I prefer to be in a blended community where I can keep practicing my skills with speech and culture with hearing people because the world is the hearing world.” Plus, says Feuer, RIT is held in high esteem for the degree program she pursued – graphic design. “So,” she says, “it wasn’t hard to decide.”

Once on campus, Feuer took advantage of more than academic opportunities. She joined Sigma Sigma Sigma, a deaf sorority, and RITSigns, a tutoring program for hearing students.

“I love teaching,” she says. “Any student at RIT can come for free and learn sign language. I am building a Web site (for the program) that will be up in spring quarter.”

Lacrosse was a passion of Feuer in her high school, but she was the only deaf girl on the team – or in her class. Last year, Feuer played lacrosse for the RIT Tigers. “The students on the team knew how to interact with the deaf students,” she says. “Because of the programs here and the community here at RIT, students just know how to communicate. It was better than any team I’ve ever played on.”

After graduation, Feuer hopes to take some time to herself, traveling to Europe. She believes her time at RIT has helped prepare her for whatever comes next.

“I love the deaf community here,” Feuer says. “People com-



Fifth-year student Lindsay Feuer enjoys teaching American Sign Language to hearing students.



Top photo: RIT has taken LaToye Adams '06 from New Jersey to Margaret's House and Sesame Street. Right: For grad student Nagender Kaushik, RIT has brought many "firsts."

plain if there is not an interpreter in every class. But they forget that there is no other school like RIT, where there is so much support for whatever we need."

Running with the tigers

Like most incoming students, Nagender Kaushik had some expectations about RIT before arriving in August 2005. And like every student, he had a few surprises.

"I knew RIT would be big," says Kaushik, a first-year graduate student in telecommunications engineering technology from New Delhi, India. "But I didn't know it would be this big."

Kaushik's experience at RIT has been filled with "first times." In the fall, he ate his first hot dog at a student club barbecue. Here he saw snow for the first time. An avid cricket fan in India, Kaushik has started following another sport in America – RIT hockey.

"Cricket is in my blood and I love it," says



Kaushik, "but hockey is an amazing sport. You have to have a lot of skill and be a great skater."

RIT's International Student Services gave Kaushik aid when he visited relatives in Canada during winter break. Staff workers helped to complete all of the paperwork necessary to cross the border into more new experiences.

Kaushik is working on time management, which he says was learned from other RIT students – friends who work hard and manage their time well.

"I was a laid-back person in India, and I never used to follow rules. You know the phrase, 'Take the bull by its horns'? Now I am taking the RIT tiger by its jaw. I want to be successful, that's why I am here at RIT."

Kaushik, or “Naggy” to his friends at RIT, understands that in addition to his own expectations at RIT, the school itself holds high expectations of its students.

“It’s a really great school – I know of many top companies that think the RIT quarter system is tough and its students are hard workers. It’s bigger and it’s tougher than I thought it would be. It’s beyond my expectations.”

Winners never quit

Roger Haich always finishes what he started, even if it takes 50 years. His RIT experience began in 1950 at the downtown Rochester campus, and ended in 2005 at the “new” campus. He has studied under three different university presidents, and he remembers campus life when there were fewer than 5,000 students. At the time of

his graduation, there were more than 15,000.

After earning his associate’s degree in mechanical engineering in 1953, Haich entered the Navy Reserve. “It wasn’t that I wasn’t interested in a bachelor’s degree,” he



A degree from RIT came to Roger Haich '05 at the end of a successful career.

says. “RIT just wasn’t offering one yet.”

RIT began offering a B.S. in electrical engineering in 1953. Upon returning, Haich began to take night classes – and continued for 13 years.

“Over the years, I had many different kinds of jobs,” says Haich. “So I would take one or two classes a quarter while I worked full-time.” In 1970, Haich was not pleased with the progress he was making. “I felt like getting my degree was like chasing a moving target, and RIT was really still in transition from the move from downtown. I became frustrated and quit.”

However, the classes Haich had taken served him well. He found that he was able to succeed in many fields, at several companies – from LVD (a Kodak company) to Harris Corp., to opening his own successful housing development.

One morning in 2004, Haich, now retired, asked his wife, “I wonder how close I really was to getting my degree? Let’s go down to RIT and see how the numbers work out.”

“They gave me a wonderful confidence that I could contribute to something greater than myself.”

LaToye Adams

Haich needed just three classes, so he took music and business through the RIT Athenaeum. He completed his bachelor’s degree in applied science at the end of the fall academic quarter 2005 and will participate in commencement ceremonies this May.

“I have a high admiration for RIT that I had lost for 38 years,” says Haich.

“I couldn’t have graduated without the aid of student advisors. If RIT did have a problem in the first place, it was fixed by putting good people in the right positions.”

On her way

Can you tell me how to get, how to get to Sesame Street?

LaToye Adams, a fourth-year film and animation student, knows the way. Adams spent last summer as a production assistant at Sesame Workshop, which produces *Sesame Street* as well as other children’s television series and educational programs.

Taking advantage of every moment and opportunity is the way Adams lives her life. At RIT, Adams has served as resident advisor, Student Government senator for the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences, and volunteer and mentor for the Women’s Center. She’s a member of Delta Phi Epsilon sorority and works part-time as a teacher’s assistant at Margaret’s House, a day-care center on campus. Her leadership was recognized early on, when she was one of the recipients of the Freshman Leadership

Scholarship. Her animated film *Mother to Son* was featured in Rochester’s High Falls Film Festival in 2004.

She says the kindness and dedication of people at RIT that have made her college experience a memorable one.

“I started participating in committees and meeting staff members on campus. In spending time in meetings with faculty, staff and President Simone, I began to respect all the work they do. I began to appreciate RIT that much more and worked that much harder to stay here.”

Adams has worked at Margaret’s House since day one of her freshman year to help pay her tuition. And her mother took on a second job. Adams recalls how her family couldn’t afford to make the drive from their home in Patterson, N.J. to visit the campus after she learned she had been accepted. A handwritten letter from an admissions counselor changed their minds.

“It was in a nice little card and I showed it to my mom and she said, ‘We are going to go.’ We were so amazed at the first-class treatment we received during our visit. My mom said, ‘We are going to do what we need to do to get you here.’”

In May, Adams will be the first in her family to graduate from college.

Becca Nelson '06

Nelson completed a co-op in University News Services and is spending spring quarter at RIT’s American College of Management and Technology in Croatia. With additional reporting by Kelly Downs and Kathy Lindsley.

By the numbers

RIT’s total student population of 15,200 comprises many different groups. Some statistics show the diversity:

- 12,033 undergraduate students
- 2,267 graduate students
- 11,541 full-time students
- 2,322 part-time students
- 1,016 students on co-op assignments
- 10,370 men
- 4,830 women
- 1,119 international students
- 810 distance-learning students
- 6,889 students living on campus