

Overall Symposium Evaluation Summary

<http://www.rit.edu/ntid/vp/techsym/>

September 2010

Executive Summary

The National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) co-hosted, with The Nippon Foundation of Japan and PEN-International, its sixth international symposium titled, “*Technology and Deaf Education: Exploring Instructional and Access Technologies*” June 21-23, 2010, at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, New York. The primary goal of the Symposium was to provide a forum for educators supporting deaf and hard-of-hearing students to disseminate information relative to current and future innovations and developments in the use of educational media and technology within the teaching and learning process.

The Symposium consisted of two plenary addresses, 64 formal concurrent presentations, 28 poster sessions, and 11 commercial exhibits. The program was designed to cover a wide range of topics addressing current issues and solutions in both educational and access technologies at both the preK-12 and postsecondary levels.

A total of 289 teachers, administrators, technologists, and researchers representing 17 countries were in attendance. This Symposium, the largest to date, marked the 10th anniversary of PEN-International. Sixty of PEN-International’s network partners, representing all 18 partner and affiliate institutions, participated in the conference by presenting 18 concurrent sessions and four posters sessions.

On June 21, PEN-International Interim Director and Symposium Chair E. William Clymer provided the welcoming address at the Symposium followed by Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman, The Nippon Foundation of Japan, who was the first plenary speaker. Sasakawa spoke in celebration of PEN-International’s 10th year anniversary. Sasakawa provided thoughts and reflections of PEN-International’s accomplishments as well as



Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman, The Nippon Foundation of Japan, opened Symposium as first plenary speaker.



Dr. Mark Leddy, Program Director, Research in Disabilities Education Program, National Science Foundation, addressed Symposium as the secondary plenary speaker.

“This is our sixth and largest Symposium. Such numbers reflect your commitment and interest in improving the educational use of technology for our students.”

E. William Clymer
Symposium Chair

The Nippon Foundation of Japan's goals of supporting deaf education in the future. Immediately following, Dr. Mark Leddy, Program Director of the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Research in Disabilities Education program, addressed conference participants as the second plenary speaker. Leddy provided an overview of NSF investments in technology and educational programming for students who are deaf or hard or hearing enrolled in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs. Both plenary speakers were very well received.

An additional goal of the Symposium was to make the information presented available on its web site for worldwide dissemination. The formal concurrent presentations and poster sessions have been summarized and posted on the web site. Many of the corresponding papers, PowerPoint slide shows, handouts, and captioned files also have been included. In addition, the welcoming address, led by E. William Clymer, Symposium Chair, the plenary speeches, and for the first time, three of the concurrent sessions have been video-streamed and captioned. All of the Symposium information can be found at <http://www.rit.edu/ntid/vp/techsym/>.

In an effort to continuously improve the Symposium, the sponsors, RIT/NTID, The Nippon Foundation of Japan and PEN-International, conducted various evaluations to assess participants' experiences. This report summarizes the Overall Symposium Evaluation results only. Separate evaluation summaries have been generated for each of the formal concurrent presentations. These additional summary reports are available upon request by contacting E. William Clymer at techsym@rit.edu or (585) 475-6894 (V/TTY).

The Symposium was extremely successful. All (100%) of the respondents rated the Symposium as either excellent (85%) or good (15%). Similarly, 100% of the respondents rated the strategies for supporting communication (interpreting, captions) extremely favorable (96% excellent, 4% good).

Respondents said they liked the variety and quality of workshops best; however, networking also played an important role in the success of the Symposium. Many other respondents felt the Symposium was well organized, enjoyed learning about new and applicable technologies, were impressed with the RIT/NTID campus and facilities, and appreciated the cultural mix of presenters and attendees.

Satisfaction levels were consistently high among almost all of the attributes relating to the Symposium. More than 90% of respondents agreed (strongly agree/agree net score) with 12 out of the 13 attributes. Eighty percent (80%) of all respondents strongly agreed that the Symposium was a valuable resource of ideas and insights regarding applications of instructional technologies to support deaf and hard-of-hearing learners. Similarly, 76% of respondents strongly agreed that the Symposium offered information that was useful and relevant to their needs. Respondents suggested improving the Symposium by providing more variety and better quality poster sessions. Most respondents said they plan to implement the new technologies, software, and/or strategies that they learned about at the conference. Others said they will utilize networking contacts, initiate collaboration, and share the valuable information they obtained from attending the Symposium with colleagues and parents.



Helena Mitchell, Georgia Institute of Technology, presents current session that was video-streamed titled "Mobile Alerting for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing."



Gail Hyde, RIT/NTID, presents poster session titled "Planning a Virtual Alliance for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing STEM Students at the Postsecondary Level."

The formal concurrent presentations that were rated most favorably include:

- “Visual Stories of Deafhood” (W9A)
- “Using Distance Learning Tools to Connect Students, Parents, and Staff” (W11C)
- “Enhancing the Notetaking Support Process: Utilizing Graphic Notes and New Technologies” (W11A)
- “Using the NCEs Data Analysis System (DAS) to Answer Questions Posed by Constituents” (T3A)
- “Second Life® as a Learning Tool” (W10D)
- “Structured Online Academic Reading (SOAR): Enhancing Reading Comprehension and Learning Through Embedded Definitions, Pictures, Videos and Questions” (W8D)
- “In Our Hands: The Future of Translation of Frozen Texts to Sign Language” (T11B)
- “English Splash! A Teaching English Online Resource” (T1A)

Ninety percent (90%) of all respondents attending these sessions rated them as excellent. An overview of each of these highly rated presentations is provided below. Further information about each of these sessions can be found at <http://www.rit.edu/ntid/vp/techsym/cgi-bin/sort/sessions.cgi?year=2010>.

Visual Stories of Deafhood (W9A)

Patti A. Durr

RIT/NTID

Email: paddhd@rit.edu

Co-presenter: Karen Christie

Date: Wednesday, 6/23/10 - 9:00 AM

Strand: Using Technology to Support Learning

Audience: All

Abstract: This presentation demonstrates an interactive DVD that examines artistic and literary expressions of the Deaf experience. Designed as a visual textbook, the project includes multimedia timelines, a video who's who glossary, interactive tools to examine Deaf artworks and literary works, and in-depth ASL commentaries from notable Deaf playwrights, poets, artists, and filmmakers.



Using Distance Learning Tools to Connect Students, Parents, and Staff (W11C)

Shelley Ardis

Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

Email: ardiss@fsdb.k12.fl.us

Co-presenter: Richard Flores

Date: Wednesday, 6/23/10 - 11:00 AM

Strand: Using Technology to Support Learning

Audience: All

Abstract: Distance Learning Tools solve the following problems: (1) How do we involve parents so they can see student work, performances and presentations? (2) How can general education staff in schools learn strategies and sign language when they have a single child in their school? (3) How do we inform the community about what our students CAN do?



Enhancing the Notetaking Support Process: Utilizing Graphic Notes and New Technologies (W11A)

Ben Rubin

RIT/NTID

Email: bwr5007@rit.edu

Co-presenters: Larry K. Quinsland, Daniel Thompson

Date: Wednesday, 6/23/10 - 11:00 AM

Strand: Access Technologies

Audience: All

Abstract: This interactive session will provide an overview of new innovative techniques to enhance traditional notetaking in support of learning by deaf and hard of hearing students. A pilot study will be described where presenters experimented with new graphic techniques utilizing new technologies to enhance student learning and independence.



Using the NCES Data Analysis System (DAS) to Answer Questions Posed by Constituents (T3A)

Gerald G. Walter

RIT/NTID

Email: ggwnpc@rit.edu

Co-presenter: Dianne P. Bills

Date: Tuesday, 6/22/10 - 3:00 PM

Strand: Assessing the Impact of Technology in the Teaching/Learning Process

Audience: Postsecondary

Abstract: People often ask questions concerning the national characteristics of postsecondary students including those who are deaf or hard of hearing. A number of national studies include such information. This workshop, conducted by an institutional researcher, and professor of Information Technology, will demonstrate how to use the NCES Data Analysis System (DAS) to create tabular information about postsecondary students. (Participants are encouraged to bring their laptop to the session and register it on RIT's network).



Second Life® as a Learning Tool (W10D)

James Mallory

RIT/NTID

Email: jrmnet@rit.edu

Co-presenters: Gary L. Long, Joseph Stanislaw, Werner Zorn

Date: Wednesday, 6/23/10 - 10:00 AM

Strand: Using Technology to Support Learning

Audience: All

Abstract: Second Life® (SL) has been used primarily as a social networking tool, but there is limited data supporting its effectiveness as a learning tool. At RIT/NTID, many students struggle to learn selected hardware computer concepts. NTID has successfully used SL to enhance students learning of computer concepts and trouble-shooting. The authors will present their findings.



Structured Online Academic Reading (SOAR): Enhancing Reading Comprehension and Learning Through Embedded Definitions, Pictures, Videos and Questions (W8D)

Nora Shannon

RIT/NTID

Email: nbsncp@rit.edu

Co-presenters: Simon Ting, Cathy Clarke, Harry G. Lang

Date: Wednesday, 6/23/10 - 8:00 AM

Strand: Using Technology to Support Learning

Audience: All

Abstract: Structured Online Academic Reading (SOAR) is an interactive instructional approach to enhance reading comprehension and learning through the use of a custom-built IdeaTools widget, including such features as embedded definitions, pictures, videos and questions. Applications from NTID's Master of Science in Secondary Education teacher preparation program will be demonstrated.



In Our Hands: The Future of Translation of Frozen Texts to Sign Language (TIIB)

Benjamin J. Cavaletto

RIT/NTID

Email: bjcdis@rit.edu

Co-presenter: Miriam Lerner

Date: Tuesday, 6/22/10 - 11:00 AM

Strand: Access Technology

Audience: All

Abstract: We will show a prototype website that will foster the creation of translations of frozen texts (that is, texts whose wording will not change, for example, famous speeches) between spoken and signed languages, e.g., English and ASL. The site will host an international video-sharing community that allows lay and professional translators to post, rate, comment on, and improve upon their collective translations.



English Splash! A Teaching English Online Resource (TIA)

Loriann Macko

PEPNet-Northeast

RIT/NTID

Email: loriann.macko@rit.edu

Date: Tuesday, 6/22/10 - 1:00 PM

Strand: Online Learning

Audience: All

Abstract: PEPNet designed the English Splash! online resource as a one-stop-shop for English teachers who work with deaf or hard of hearing students to access downloadable materials, writing tools, educational links, curriculum examples, and much more.



Methodology

Evaluation Design

The evaluation instrument consisted of 20 questions. The types of questions included rating scale, open-ended and classification. Rating scale questions were based on a 4-point scale ranging from “excellent” to “poor” or a 5-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.”

Respondents were asked, in open-ended format, what they liked most about the Symposium, suggestions for improving the Symposium, and what changes they intend to make at their worksite as a result of their Symposium experiences. A copy of the evaluation form can be viewed at http://www.rit.edu/ntid/vp/techsym/downloads/OverallEvaluation_Symposium2010.pdf.

Sampling

The evaluation was conducted using a self-administered methodology. The Overall Symposium Evaluation form was included in the set of materials distributed to all participants at registration. This evaluation form was also available online. Evaluations were accepted through July 31, 2010.

All 289 participants had the opportunity to complete an Overall Symposium Evaluation. Of the 289 participants, a total of 26 evaluations were completed (21 hardcopy and 5 electronic) resulting in a 9% response rate and a $\pm 18\%$ margin of error in estimated values of the entire participant population (based on the finite population correction factor at the 95% confidence level). Although the return rate is low, it is consistent with the response rate from previous Technology Symposiums. Decisions that were made based on previous evaluation data has proven to be accurate and beneficial.



Registration Desk

Analysis

Data obtained from the evaluation forms were tabulated for the entire sample, as well as broken down by curriculum level affiliation (PreK-12, Postsecondary, other) and job function (Teacher, Administrator, Technical Support Specialist, Researcher, Instructional Technologist). Differences between demographic categories were considered statistically significant when p-values (or attained significant levels) are equal to or less than 0.05. SPSS software was used to compile the data.

Most of the findings are presented using percentages. For all rating questions, the total responding to the question was used as the percentage base. For all other types of questions, the total sample was used to compute percentages. The percentages for individual response categories do not always add up to 100%. This results from either rounding factors, a small percentage of no answers, or multiple responses provided by respondents. In addition, all open-ended questions were coded in an effort to quantify responses.

Demographic Profile of Participants and Presenters

The demographic variables relating to job function, captured from participants who completed the Overall Symposium Evaluation, were comparable to the same demographic variables of all Symposium registrants provided by PEN-International. The biggest discrepancy between the respondent sample and the Symposium participant population occurred within curriculum level affiliation. Those participants representing preK-12 were more likely to complete an Overall Symposium Evaluation than participants representing the postsecondary level.

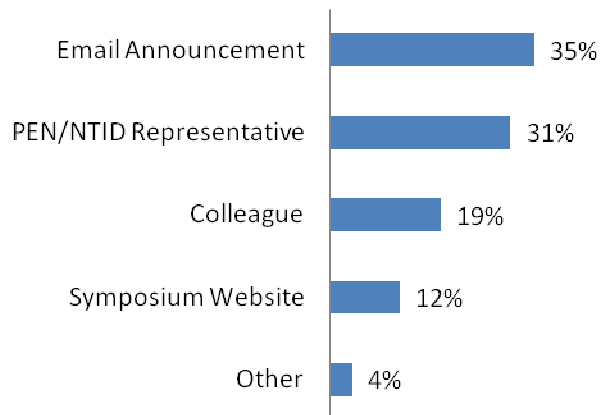
Participants represented nearly 100 organizations from 17 countries, including Russia, China, Japan, Thailand, the Philippines, Czech Republic, Canada, Viet Nam, Hong Kong, Korea, Puerto Rico, and the United States.

RIT/NTID faculty/staff and PEN-International partner institutions conducted 63% of the concurrent sessions, and 62% of the poster sessions.

One-third (33%) of the respondents said they learned about the Symposium through an email announcement. Similarly, 31% said they learned about the Symposium from a PEN-International or NTID representative. Others became aware of the Symposium through a colleague (19%) or visiting the Symposium Website (12%). The number of respondents that learned about the Symposium through an email announcement more than doubled from 2008.

Demographic Profile of Participants Respondent Sample vs. Participant Population		
	Symposium Respondent Sample	Symposium Participant Population
Curriculum Level Affiliation		
PreK-12	54%	14%
Postsecondary	42%	77%
Other	4%	8%
Job Function		
Teaching Faculty	65%	55%
Administrator	12%	22%
Technical Support Specialist	19%	4%
Researcher	4%	10%
Instructional Technologist	15%	7%
No Answer	4%	3%

How did you find out about the Symposium?



PEN-International Interim Director and Symposium Chair E. William Clymer, and NTID Interim President Dr. James J. DeCaro, provide opening remarks at the 2010 Technology Symposium.

Overall Assessment

Respondents were asked to rate their overall experience with the Technology Symposium. Eighty-five percent (85%) of respondents said they thought the Symposium was excellent, and the remaining 15% rated the Symposium as good.

“The Symposium was fantastic and very affordable, even for me coming from outside the United States. I look forward to the next one! You are all an amazing team!”

Respondents were asked, in open-ended format, what they liked most about the Symposium and how the Symposium could be improved.

Forty-six percent (46%) of respondents said they appreciated the variety and quality of workshops.

“The variety of topics and how so many of the sessions matched my interests.”

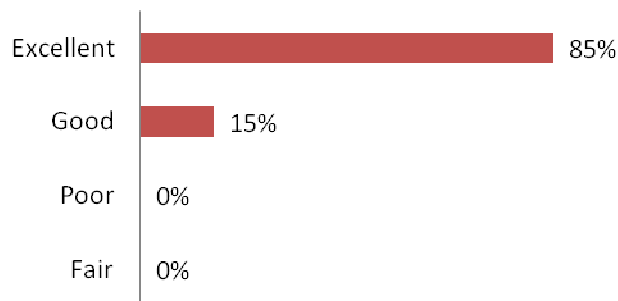
Twenty-seven percent (27%) of respondents appreciated and valued the opportunity to network with colleagues. One-quarter (23%) mentioned the conference being well organized, and liked learning about new and applicable technologies. Others were impressed with the RIT/NTID campus and facilities (15%) and the cultural mix of presenters and attendees (15%).

“It was a great experience. Everything was well organized and the topics varied.”

“The innovative ideas, the chance to connect with colleagues in the field and above all, the way NTID integrates students and presents the closest universal design model I have seen.”

“The variety of cultural and linguistic background of the participants and presenters. It was really an international conference/symposium.”

Overall, I thought the Symposium was...?



What did you like most about the Symposium?

Variety/Quality of workshops	12 / 46%
Networking with colleagues	7 / 27%
Well-organized conference	6 / 23%
Learning about new/applicable technologies	6 / 23%
RIT/NTID campus/facilities	4 / 15%
Cultural mix of presenters/attendees	4 / 15%



Miriam Lerner of RIT/NTID presents a highly rated concurrent session titled “Beyond Academic Writing: Web 2.0 Social Networking and Self-Publishing Technologies in the Writing Classroom.”

Half (50%) of the respondents did not include any suggestions for improving the Symposium.

A few (12%) suggested improving the Symposium by incorporating better and/or more variety of poster sessions. Similarly, 12% mentioned improvement opportunities related to program scheduling. These participants requested not scheduling the preK-12 sessions simultaneously and/or allowing longer sessions for certain topic areas. A couple of other participants (8%) mentioned that some of the spoken language interpreters were distracting and recommended placing them in one designated area.

“Schedule preK-12 presentations in different time slots, not doubled up, so teachers can attend all sessions.”

“Some workshops needed to more than one hour. Offer two hour slots for some workshops.”

Other respondents suggested improving the Symposium by including city/state/country on nametags (4%), incorporating more student-oriented sessions (4%), and covering more strands related to deaf education (4%).

The strategies for supporting communication at the Symposium (interpreting, captions) were rated extremely high. Ninety-six percent (96%) of the respondents rated these strategies as excellent, and the remaining 4% rated these strategies as good.

“Impressive!”

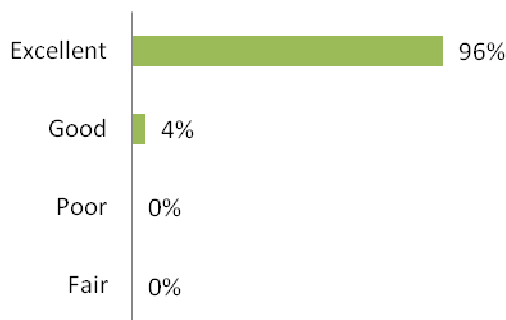
“Outstanding!”

What are your suggestions for improving the Symposium?	
Better/More variety of poster sessions	3 / 12%
Program scheduling	3 / 12%
Place spoken language interpreters in designated area	2 / 8%



Jane Nunes of PEPNet-Northeast presents information to Symposium participants about the poster session titled *“On-Line Resources Designed to Enhance Access and Support Services for Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.”*

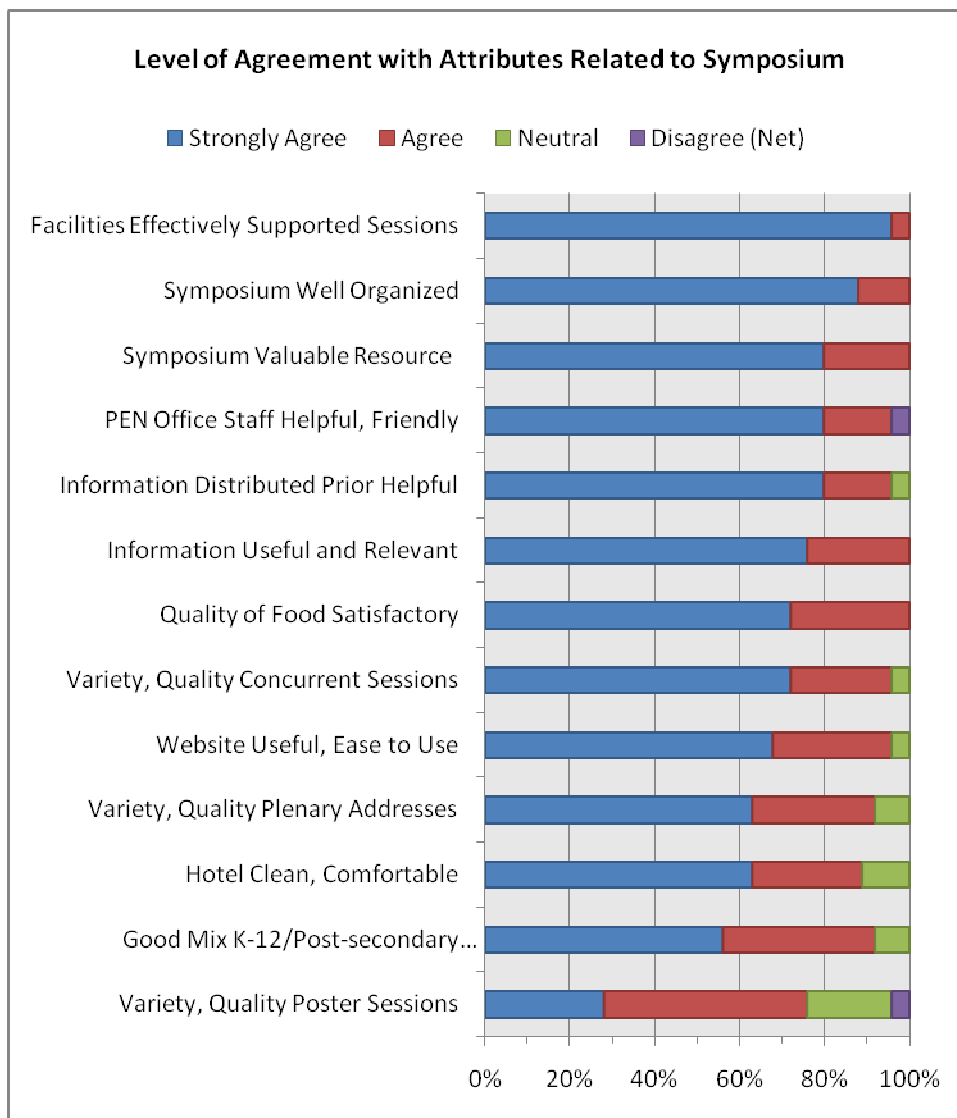
The strategies for supporting communication at the Symposium were...?



Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement/disagreement to a series of statements related to the Symposium. More than 90% of respondents agreed (strongly agree/agree net score) with 12 out of the 13 attributes.

Respondents were most impressed with the NTID Facilities. Ninety-six percent (96%) of respondents strongly agreed that the NTID facilities (meeting rooms, audio-visual equipment, etc.) effectively supported Symposium sessions. Similarly, 88% of respondents strongly agreed that the Symposium was well organized. Eighty percent (80%) strongly agreed that the Symposium is a valuable resource of ideas and insights regarding applications of instructional technologies to support deaf and hard-of-hearing learners, that the PEN-International office staff was helpful and friendly, and that the information distributed prior to the Symposium was helpful in making plans to attend. Respondents also found the Symposium information to be useful and relevant to their needs. More than three-quarters (76%) strongly agreed with this statement.

To corroborate earlier findings, poster sessions and programming were the lowest rated attributes overall. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents strongly agreed that the poster sessions offered the variety and quality that they look for in conference programs, and half (56%) strongly agreed that there was a good mix of preK-12 and post-secondary offerings at the Symposium. Respondents affiliated with the preK-12 education levels are less likely, than respondents affiliated with postsecondary education levels, to agree (strongly agree/agree net score) that the poster sessions offered the variety and quality that they look for in conference programs (57% versus 100%, respectively). The level of agreement with whether the Symposium offered a good mix of preK-12 and postsecondary offerings did not differ significantly by education level affiliation.



Respondents were asked, in open-ended format, what changes they plan on making at their worksite as a result of their Symposium experiences.

More than half (58%) of the respondents said they plan to implement the new technologies, software, and/or strategies that they learned at the conference to improve access for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Twenty-three percent (23%) said they will be utilizing networking contacts and reaching out to colleagues, other schools and/or companies to initiate collaboration. Respondents affiliated with the preK-12 education levels are more likely, than respondents affiliated with postsecondary education levels, to mention that they plan to utilize networking contacts and initiate collaboration based on their Symposium experience (36% versus 0%, respectively).

Based on your Symposium experience, what changes will you make at your worksite?	
Implement new technologies/strategies/ideas	15 / 58%
Utilize networking contacts/Initiate collaboration	6 / 23%
Share information with colleagues/parents	3 / 12%

Other respondents said they obtained a lot of good information that they plan to share with colleagues and parents (12%). One respondent explained the budgetary constraints typically associated with implementing new technologies.

“Hoping to acquire Lambert RFID program, add captioning to existing video, set up collaboration with deaf and hard-of-hearing teachers and interpreters for sign language uniformity, and incorporate SOAR, if Simon Ting will share it!!!”

“I will try the new software and tech tools in my class as well as use the contacts made to build a new outreach program.”

“Remote captioning, remote interpreting, sign bank use by my students. A lot of information to share with parents too.”

“Will try to reinvigorate a student-centered approach to everything we do. Not being an administrator, it is a challenge for me to be able to influence the priorities because a lot depends on budget, but I also believe creativity and passion for what we do with and for our students can produce important results.”



Symposium participants visit exhibitor booths.