

# NTID RESEARCH BULLETIN

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*Gerald P. Berent, Ph.D., NTID Department of Research, conducting an English as a Second Language Workshop for faculty from Russia, Czech Republic, Japan and the Philippines.*



*William Clymer is an associate professor at NTID.*

## **Postsecondary Education Network International For Students Who Are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing**

By E. William Clymer and James J. DeCaro

On June 29, 2001, dignitaries from the Rochester Institute of Technology, National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Tianjin University of Technology (China), Bauman Moscow State Technical University (Russia), Tsukuba College of Technology (Japan) and the Nippon Foundation (Japan) signed a formal agreement establishing a cooperative partnership to create an international network supporting the technical education of postsecondary deaf students from around the world. This network, The Postsecondary Education Network International (PEN-International), funded by the Nippon Foundation of Japan, supports the sharing of expertise among universities teaching science and technology to deaf students.

In the 16 months since the signing ceremony, PEN-International has moved quickly to realize its goals. By working closely with NTID faculty, staff and students, the PEN-International team has been able to facilitate sharing the collective NTID experience and state-of-the-art expertise in postsecondary deaf education with international partners.

### **PEN-International Goals**

PEN-International is the first-of-a-kind international partnership of colleges and universities serving the postsecondary education needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Faculty training, online learning technology, information technology and instructional technology are being used to improve teaching and learning, increase the application of innovative instructional technology, and expand career opportunities for deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

Over a five-year period, PEN-International will include up to six nations. PEN-International will enhance local capability and global networking in each participant country. Member institutions will develop the ability to export what has been learned through the project to other programs serving deaf and hard-of-hearing students in their home countries and to other countries around the world.

### **Implementation Strategy**

Two key elements of collaboration with each PEN-International partner are central to project success: the creation of a professional faculty development model and training plan, and the design and construction of an instructional multimedia computer lab with videoconferencing capability.

• **Training.** PEN-International training is based upon a professional development model that begins with a needs assessment, the creation of workshops that are objective-based, web-based workshop resources and a formative and summative evaluation of effectiveness. The ultimate goal of the entire effort is to improve student learning at partner universities. The training model is based upon the successful NTID Instructional Technology Consortium (ITC) (<http://www.rit.edu/~ntiditc>) faculty development paradigm. The ITC is a collaborative, faculty-driven initiative for enhancing teaching and learning with deaf and hard-of-hearing students through the use of technology and related innovative teaching strategies. PEN-International depends upon successful teachers teaching other teachers about proven strategies for use with postsecondary deaf students. As with the ITC, the key component of PEN-International training is the experienced NTID and TCT faculty and staff who are willing to share their experience with their colleagues from around the world.

• **Multimedia Computer Laboratory.** Each PEN-International partner is establishing a multimedia computer laboratory with videoconferencing capability, which can support student learning and faculty development of technology-based teaching solutions. To design a multimedia lab that meets local needs, teachers and technical experts from each partner university consult with NTID technical experts and tour the various multimedia classroom configurations at NTID. When completed, these labs offer faculty a teaching/learning environment with the latest instructional technology. When not used for classroom instruction, the labs are generally available to deaf students for independent work. Videoconferences can also be scheduled in the labs for seminars and instruction.



*James DeCaro is a research professor at NTID.*

*NTID technical experts conduct a tour of the NTID English Lab for faculty from Bauman Moscow State Technical University and Charles University, Czech Republic.*



*Bill Clymer is coordinator of the Postsecondary Education Network International, and coordinator of the Educational Technology and Education of the Deaf Symposium, to be held at NTID in June, 2003. He recently served as the coordinator of the NTID Instructional Technology Consortium and was the coordinator of the 2001 Educational Technology and Education of the Deaf Symposium. For more information, he may be contacted at EWCNCP@RIT.EDU.*

*Jim DeCaro is research professor and immediate past dean for NTID, a post he held for 14 academic years. He is currently director of PEN-International. For more information about this project, contact DeCaro at JJD8074@RIT.EDU.*

## **Partners**

Tsukuba College of Technology (TCT) for deaf and visually-impaired people was modeled after NTID when it was founded in 1990. It was the first college of its kind in all of Asia and has proven in a very short period of time to be a leader in the technical education of people who are deaf and hard of hearing. These credentials led NTID to partner with Tsukuba College of Technology to create the Postsecondary Education Network International and to begin work with universities in China, Russia, and the Philippines.

Tianjin Technical College for the Deaf of Tianjin University of Technology (TUT) is the first technical college for the higher education of people who are deaf in China. Established in 1991, the college enrolls students from throughout China. Presently, more than 125 deaf students study technical disciplines that prepare them for productive membership in Chinese society. A total of 12 members of the TUT faculty have been trained at NTID since June, 2001. An 18-station multimedia computer classroom was installed at TUT and opened in October, 2001.

Bauman Moscow State Technical University has been educating deaf students since 1934. In the early 1990's, the university administration determined to expand programs and services for deaf students and established the Center on Deafness. Presently, approximately 250 students study in various programs across the university as well as in compensatory programs at the Center on Deafness.

Members of the Bauman faculty traveled to NTID in July, 2002 for training regarding "English as a Second Language for Deaf Students at the University Level." This week-long series of seminars was specially designed and developed by Gerald P. Berent, Ph.D., NTID Department of Research. The seminars were presented by senior members of the NTID faculty, based upon their years of experience in deaf education and English as a Second Language instruction.

During the same week, two technical experts from Baumann worked with NTID technical experts in developing specifications for their computer classroom and video conference facility, which will be dedicated in late November 2002.

The School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies at College of Saint Benilde (CSB), De La Salle University, Manila, is the latest network member. CSB offers a bachelor's degree in Applied Studies. The college is the first to educate significant numbers of deaf students in the Philippines. Established in 1991, initially as a small program for the Deaf, it evolved into one of the schools of the college in 1996. The School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies has a 26-member faculty, with a current enrollment of 120 students. Two administrators from the CSB have attended small group seminars conducted by administrators and faculty from NTID and TCT, in the USA and in Japan. Additionally, a member of the CSB attended the English as a Second Language workshop this past July at NTID. CSB is constructing a multimedia computer lab, which will be officially opened in January, 2003.

PEN-International is evaluating its impact using a model suggested by Guskey (2002). This model is used to measure the impact of faculty development, beginning with faculty participant reaction to training and learning, and progresses to measuring changes in student learning outcomes.

## **Collaborative Spirit**

The goal of providing high quality education to deaf students at the postsecondary level is the unifying goal shared by all PEN-International partner faculty and technical experts. Those NTID faculty and staff who have developed and presented workshops for PEN-International modeled the collaborative spirit that is the hallmark of this program to improve the educational circumstances of students who are deaf around the world.

Additional information about PEN-International is available on its website, <http://www.pen.ntid.rit.edu>.

## **References**

Guskey, T.R. (2002). Does it make a difference? Evaluating professional development. *Educational Leadership*, 59, 45-51.

Rochester Institute of Technology

National Technical Institute for the Deaf  
Center for Research, Teaching and Learning  
Lyndon Baines Johnson Building  
52 Lomb Memorial Drive  
Rochester, NY 14623-5604

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