

E. William Clymer '70, '83 MBA; Bringing Postsecondary Deaf Education Abroad

Life is a series of opportunities, missed or otherwise, and if E. William Clymer '70, '83 MBA had grabbed one 30 years ago, he wouldn't be at this interview.

In the late 1960s, Clymer worked after school at the Madison (New Jersey) Photo Shop. One day a distributor for photographer Ansel Adams stopped in and offered to sell young Bill a signed Adams print for \$100. Clymer—who was earning \$1 per hour at the time—was aghast at the huge sum and declined. And although he might be comfortably retired if he'd bought that print, he seems quite content with where he is today: using the skills he gleaned from RIT to influence education for deaf students in developing countries.

Clymer is coordinator of the Postsecondary Education Network-International (PEN-International), an NTID grant program sponsored by The Nippon Foundation of Japan. He works closely with PEN Director James J. DeCaro to bring 21st century educational technology to deaf students around the world.

It's a perfect fit for Clymer, who uses his photography and educational media skills to create training programs, and his business acumen to help international colleagues develop plans for their own campuses. PEN currently works at colleges in China, Russia, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, and the Czech Republic.

How did this "camera nerd" end up in this plum job? Give some credit to the Madison Photo Shop, which gave Clymer several

opportunities (Ansel Adams notwithstanding) to develop his photo skills.

"I never went home with any of my pay," he laughs, "because I spent all my money on equipment and materials at the store."

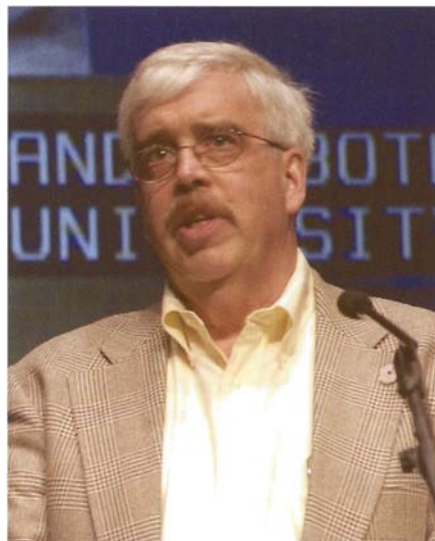
Clymer received his bachelor's degree in Professional Photography from RIT in 1970 and became a staff photographer at the SUNY Cortland Learning Resource Center. After becoming interested in merging photography and media, he decided to pursue a master's degree in instructional technology at Syracuse University. After that, it was on to NTID, where for several years as a media specialist he created educational products for teachers. He then enrolled in RIT's MBA program to get the advanced management skills he needed, graduating from that program in 1983.

"RIT's program was a great mix of theory and practice," he says, "giving me the chance to work with teams of students and improving my understanding of project management and team building."

In 1994, DeCaro, then dean of NTID, tapped him to lead an international technology symposium at NTID. Success in that endeavor led to chairing several other committees and, in 2000, DeCaro invited him to join PEN-International.

"Bill's competent and steady hand has made it possible for us to become an international change agent," says DeCaro.

Clymer estimates that he traveled nearly six weeks last year on PEN business. On one trip to England, he was able to visit son Ben,



E. William Clymer '70, '83 MBA presides as chair of the 2003 International Symposium on Educational Technology at NTID.

21, spending a year abroad studying at Oxford. Clymer and his wife, Beryl, a speech-language pathologist for the Rochester City School District, also have a daughter Abbey, 24, who is a graduate student at Syracuse University.

"My role with PEN combines all of my interests and allows me to apply them to a job where we can make positive change happen quickly," Clymer says. "It's the best job I've ever had."