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October 10, 2005

NTID Student Winners Visit Japan

From: NTID - Oct 10, 2005

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NTID STUDENT WINNERS VISIT JAPAN

ROCHESTER, N.Y., Oct. 10— Five student winners of a Haiku poetry contest sponsored by the National Technical Institute for the Deaf visited Japan in a cultural exchange funded by the Postsecondary Education Network-International, an NTID grant program dedicated to bringing 21st century technology to deaf college students in developing countries. PEN-International is largely funded by The Nippon Foundation of Japan.

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The Robert F. Panara Poetry contest, begun by PEN-International in 2001 as a way to bring culture to a program whose main focus is on technology, is named after NTID Professor Emeritus Robert Panara. Students from NTID and Tsukuba College of Technology in Japan submit original haikus (unrhymed poems of three lines with five, seven, and five syllables) that are judged by an international panel.

NTID students Stephen McDonald, Sam Sepah, Jessica Thurber, Jack Williams, and Christopher Zahniel, accompanied by faculty and staff members Jerome Cushman, Luane Davis Haggerty, Aaron Weir Kelstone, Debra Makowski, and Ethan Sinnott, began their visit in Tokyo, where they met the president of TCT and were entertained by a Taiko drumming group. They also saw the National Theatre of the Deaf perform, visited various museums and regional attractions, and met with officials from The Nippon Foundation, which has provided more than \$5.5 million dollars to NTID in support of PEN-International.

Students performed their original haikus for local media and created proper scroll representations of their haikus with a professional calligrapher. On their final day, the group enjoyed a traditional tea ceremony and had dinner at a

karaoke palace.

To learn more about the competition and trip, visit the PEN-International Web site at www.pen.ntid.rit.edu.

NTID is the first and largest technological college in the world for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. One of eight colleges of RIT, NTID offers educational programs and access and support services to its 1,100 students from around the world who study, live, and socialize with 14,400 hearing students on RIT's Rochester, N.Y., campus.

Web address: www.rit.edu/NTID.

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