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RIT gets international attention

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Joylynn Whitfield, WROC-TV

A delegation of Vietnam government officials and two Vietnamese students are visiting RIT's National Technology Institute for the Deaf.

"The government has a policy for disabled people including the deaf, however we need experience, exposure to other international experiences and approaches to educating the deaf," said Luong Phan Cu, a member of the Vietnam National Assembly.

Their visit is part of the PEN International Project. The goal is to provide technical support to colleges and universities in the Pacific region. Since the NTID has four decades of experience, they've become an international model.

"They can study over 300 different academic programs. Students are able to pursue their academic degrees and get very good jobs," said NTID Dean T. Alan Hurwitz.

On their visit the Vietnamese delegates wanted to learn at least two things: How to better educate deaf students and get ideas to help students transition into better career opportunities.

"We would like to provide them with all the information about our program and have an opportunity to interact with deaf and hard of hearing individuals who are successful in their careers," Hurwitz said.

"We need to develop a good resource of people, educators," said Phan Cu.

Vietnamese leaders say in just a two day stay they already have ideas to take back to their country. Perhaps the most important lesson gained is giving everyone an equal opportunity to learn. "The education is one way that the deaf and hard of hearing individuals can become productive citizens and be able to get good jobs. And support themselves and their families."

There is only one school for the deaf in Vietnam. The country is working toward adding two more schools each in the northern and central part of the country. This was the first visit Vietnam officials made to the U. S. to learn about educating deaf students. Their next stop is Washington D.C to visit another world-renowned school

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