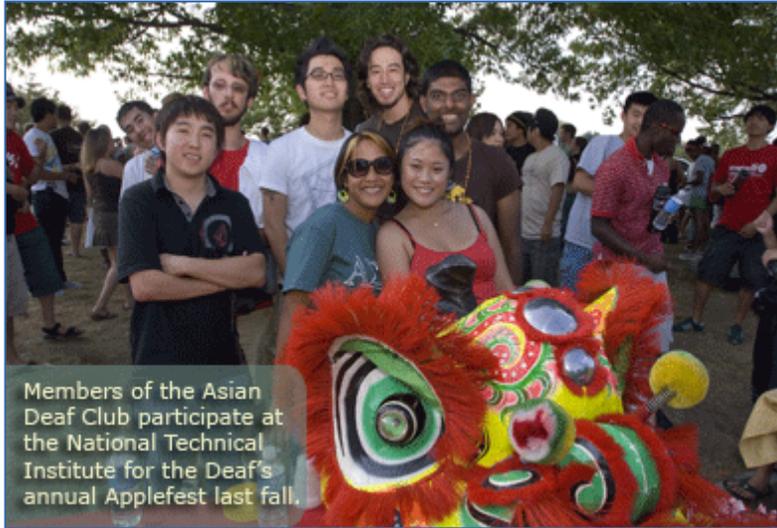


COMMUNITY COLLEGE TIMES



Bringing international experiences to deaf students

By CARISA CHAPPELL, *Published February 4, 2008*

The mission of the Rochester Institute of Technology's National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) in New York is to prepare students for technical and professional careers in a technologically global society.

Alan Hurwitz, NTID's dean and CEO and Vice President of Rochester Institute

of Technology/NTID, places a heavy emphasis on global. A variety of study-abroad opportunities and bringing foreign students on campus help bring an international perspective to the college, which is an opportunity not often afforded to deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

"The international program is important for our students as it provides cultural enrichment in interacting with students from other countries," Hurwitz said.

NTID, the first and largest technical college in the world for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, was permitted to admit international students when Congress reauthorized the Education of the Deaf Act in 1992. Since then, the college has served students from 46 countries.

This year, there are 49 international students enrolled at NTID from countries such as Chad, China, Ghana, India, Japan, Malaysia, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tanzania and Thailand.

NTID is not allowed to use federal funds to support recruitment of international students. The college is limited to 15 percent of student enrollment for international students.

With no formal recruitment program and limited financing available for international students, most student applications come to NTID through word of mouth, said Greg Livadas, director of

media relations for the college.

While international students do not qualify for federal student aid, Livadas said that they may apply for limited private funds designated for international students, such as the Royichi Sasakawa Endowed Scholarship Fund.

NTID students can also study abroad. RIT and NTID collaborate to provide the students with the services they need in other countries.

A major ongoing project centered at the college is the PEN-International program, a multinational partnership of colleges and universities to improve and expand postsecondary education for deaf students, especially in developing countries. It was created in 2001 with funding from the Nippon Foundation.

As the primary host of the programs, the college often receives international visitors who want an overview of the college and the support access services it provides students. Most recently, NTID hosted a 10-member delegation from Vietnam.

Through PEN-International, NTID this summer will hold the International Symposium on Technology and Deaf Education, which is held every two to three years and draws about 300 people.

Domestic students also benefit through the program. Several NTID students participated in a leadership symposium in England in 2006 sponsored by PEN-International.

Such events help bridge the gap of both language and cultural differences to understand the importance of leadership and advocacy as individuals and in the larger international deaf community, Hurwitz said. It also gave students a global perspective of how deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in different cultures work to get the access services to help them succeed, he said.

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