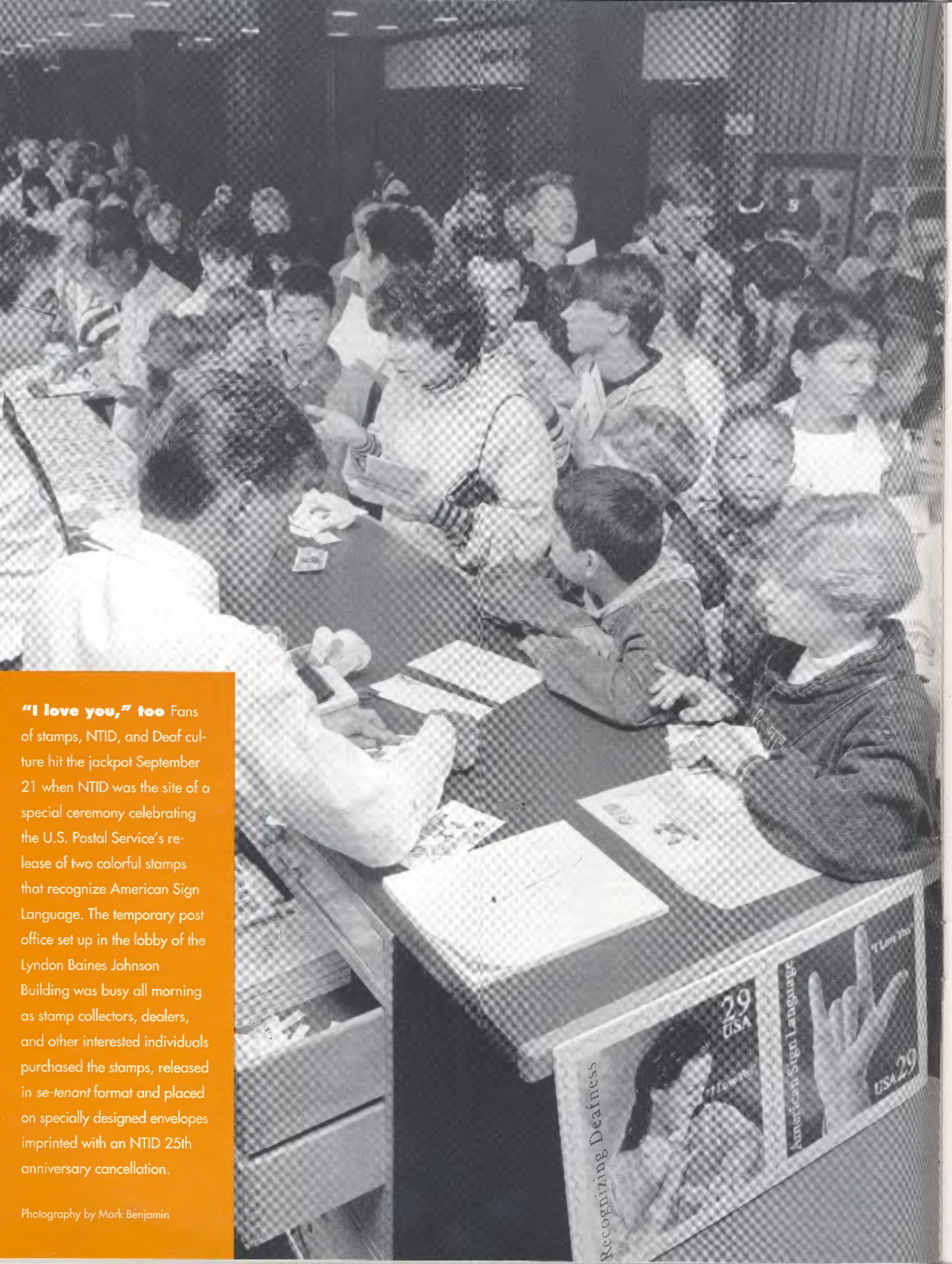
FALL 1993

FOCUS NTID

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • A College of Rochester Institute of Technology



"I love you," too Fans of stamps, NTID, and Deaf culture hit the jackpot September 21 when NTID was the site of a special ceremony celebrating the U.S. Postal Service's release of two colorful stamps that recognize American Sign Language. The temporary post office set up in the lobby of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Building was busy all morning as stamp collectors, dealers, and other interested individuals purchased the stamps, released in *se-tenant* format and placed on specially designed envelopes imprinted with an NTID 25th anniversary cancellation.

Photography by Mark Benjamin

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FEATURES

ABOUT THE COVER

The simple beauty and poise of these two women's hands mask the complex challenges that many gays and lesbians face in their struggle for self-acceptance. Read about those challenges as well as the particular obstacles overcome by deaf gays and lesbians in "Accept Yourself!" page 18.

Cover photography by A. Sue Weisler.

DEPARTMENTS

FOCUS
NTID

FOCUS is published by the Marketing Communications Department at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, a college of Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York.

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NTID archives—pp. 28, 29

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The 25th anniversary of Rochester Institute of Technology's service to deaf students through its National Technical Institute for the Deaf was celebrated with appropriate pomp and festivity during NTID's 25th Anniversary Alumni Reunion, held on the RIT campus July 7–11.

More than 1,800 people participated, including 1,200 alumni. Among those who returned to campus were 25 of the first 71 students to attend RIT under the sponsorship of NTID during the 1968–69 academic year.

Many exciting events took place during those five days in July (see "Rekindling Memories, Renewing Friendships," page 8), but the most important occurrence was the official establishment of the NTID Alumni Association. This association promises to be a vital ingredient in the lifeblood of NTID.

During the reunion's opening ceremony, I was invited to make a few remarks. It was with great pride that I noted:

- In academic year 1968–69, NTID enrolled 71 students. Today NTID students number approximately 1,100. All told, in 25 years NTID has served more than 6,000 deaf students.
- In 1968–69, NTID enrolled no international deaf students; indeed, no international deaf students were accepted at the Institute until 1990. In 1992–93, the number of international deaf students was 45.
- In 1968–69, NTID employed approximately 35 faculty and staff members. Today that number is approximately 600.
- In 1968–69, there was no formal NTID curriculum. Today the Institute offers more than 30 certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs.
- In 1968–69, most of NTID's 71 students pursued remedial work rather than baccalaureate or master's degree programs in RIT's other colleges. In 1992–93, 30 percent of RIT's deaf students pursued baccalaureate and master's degree programs.
- In 1968–69, the NTID budget was slightly less than $750,000. Today it is $50 million.
- In 1968–69, NTID had only one full-time interpreter. Today there are more than 80.
- In 1968–69, NTID had no interpreter training program. Today more than 60 hearing students are enrolled in NTID's associate degree-level interpreter training program.
- In 1968–69, NTID had no alumni. Today our graduates number well over 3,000.
- In 1968–69, NTID had no alumni association. Now it has one.

Surely, the newly established NTID Alumni Association will prosper just as NTID has prospered as part of RIT these past 25 years. And when the 30th anniversary is celebrated in 1998 and the 50th anniversary is celebrated in 2018, I believe that not only will that prosperity continue to show, it will glow!

William E. Castle

Dr. William E. Castle

AROUND THE QUAD

Signs of summer RIT President Albert Simone, center, and his wife, Carolie, spent six days this summer at NTID's annual Silent Retreat, held at Camp Mark Seven in the Adirondack Mountains. The intensive experience, during which only sign language is used for communication, was part of the Simones' continuing efforts to become more familiar with Deaf culture. The Silent Retreat is coordinated by Sam Holcomb, right, sign communication specialist in NTID's Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education.

Educational interpreting video series released

NTID's Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education recently released the first two videotapes in a series titled *Educational Interpreting—A Practical Approach: Consumer Awareness, Rights, and Responsibilities* for deaf and hearing adults and children who work with or employ educational interpreters in classrooms and other teaching and learning situations in grades K–12.

Topics in the series include the role and qualifications of educational interpreters; strategies for promoting a team-based approach and effective communication between teachers, students, and educational interpreters; guidelines for hiring, managing, and evaluating educational interpreters; and advocacy information and strategies for securing services of qualified interpreters in K–12 settings as well as in community and postsecondary settings.

The programs in the seven-part videotape series will continue to be produced through 1995. For more information about the series, contact Jeanne Wells, (716) 475-6890 (V/TTY).

In support of scholarships and more

Sasakawa Foundation awards $1 million for scholarships

The Sasakawa Foundation of Tokyo, Japan, recently gave NTID $1 million to establish the Ryoichi Sasakawa Endowment Fund to provide scholarships for deaf students from other countries, particularly developing countries, that will enable them to pursue postsecondary studies at RIT through NTID.

Postsecondary opportunities outside of the United States are limited for deaf students, underscoring the value of this scholarship fund.

"We are delighted to be able to extend RIT's outstanding programs and services to international deaf students who previously did not have access to programs of RIT's caliber," says Dr. Albert Simone, president of RIT. "We are grateful to the Sasakawa Foundation for this significant gift."

NEC Foundation of America sponsors workshop

Through a $29,000 grant from the NEC Foundation of America, NTID hosted a workshop for math and science teachers of deaf students, held June 16–18 in Dallas. The workshop, "Teaching Mathematics and Science to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students," focused on techniques that can be used by secondary-school instructors.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation supports SAISD

With $38,000 recently donated by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation of New Jersey, RIT's Substance and Alcohol Intervention Services for the Deaf (SAISD) program will develop a captioned and signed videotape about drug and alcohol abuse.

Parsons Foundation gives NTID fourth grant

The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation of Los Angeles recently awarded a fourth grant to NTID. The $127,100 grant will support the expansion of computing and information systems throughout 256 dormitory rooms.

Home is where you hang your hat First-year student Ethan Sinnott, 19, was one of nearly 350 newly admitted students who arrived at NTID this year. Sinnott, from Brighton, New York, plans to study illustration or computer animation.

NEWSMAKERS

Two NTID entries won certificates of distinction in the Creativity '93 Competition sponsored by *The Art Direction Magazine*. The winners were the *1992 NTID Annual Report* and a logo for the International Visual Literacy Association designed by **Cathy Chou**, senior artist/designer in the instructional design and evaluation department. Working together on the annual report were designers Chou and **Dean Woolever**, photographer **Mark Benjamin**, and writers **Susan Cergol**, **Lynne Bohlman DeWilde**, **Kathryn Schmitz**, **Kathleen Smith**, and **Deborah Waltzer**. Both the logo and a photo of the annual report cover were published this fall in *Creativity '93 Annual*, an awards publication.

Seven athletes from the NTID community participated in the World Games for the Deaf in Sofia, Bulgaria, July 24–August 2. NTID's contingent was part of the 160-member U.S. team that competed with 1,945 other athletes from 46 countries. NTID's participants included **Greg Coughlan**, an applied art student from Duxbury, Massachusetts, who ran track; **Reed Gershwind**, instructor in the business occupations department, who swam and played water polo; **Kris Gray**, an applied art student from Grand Rapids, Michigan, who played volleyball; **Trevor Kosa**, an electromechanical technology student from Tacoma, Washington, who swam; **Daniel Scheetz**, an applied accounting student from Canton, Ohio, who played soccer; **David Sheppeck**, a printing production technology student from Butler, Pennsylvania, who played soccer; and **Hon Siu**, a printing production technology student from Los Angeles, who played badminton.

Visiting developmental educational specialist **Vicki Hurwitz** was named one of 12 outstanding adult scholars by the Rochester Area Colleges continuing education committee. She graduated in May from RIT's career and human resource development master's degree program.

NTID awake with activity

NTID could be characterized as "The Campus That Didn't Sleep" this summer. In addition to the 1,800 alumni and guests who attended the NTID 25th Anniversary Alumni Reunion (see story, page 8), hundreds of deaf and hearing professionals and students gathered on campus to participate in one or more of the Institute's educational outreach programs.

Seminars and workshops included such diverse topics as "Building, Maintaining, Upgrading, and Troubleshooting Personal Computers," "Teaching Mathematics and Science to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students," "Electronic Publishing and Imaging: An Overview of Printing Production Today and Tomorrow," "Cumulative Trauma Disorders Among Sign Language Interpreters: Prevention and Management," and "English Language Teacher Outreach Project Summer Institute."

Institute names center directors

NTID officials announced in June the seven center directors who will form the core of the Institute's new leadership team. The directors and new centers both are part of NTID's restructuring of programs, services, and functions to bring the Institute into alignment with goals noted in the 1992 strategic plan. The names of the directors and their backgrounds follow:

Director of the Center for Arts and Sciences is Dr. Laurie Brewer. Brewer, former chairperson of the department of liberal arts, joined NTID 15 years ago and has a bachelor's degree and doctorate in psychology from the University of Rochester.

The Center for Baccalaureate and Graduate Studies is headed by Dr. Peter Lalley. Lalley has been research professor and associate director of the Center for Molecular Biology at Wayne State University. He has a bachelor's degree in biology and chemistry from Siena College, a master's degree in cell biology from Catholic University of America, and a doctorate in human genetics from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Albert Smith, who joined NTID in 1971, is director of the Center for Institutional Services. Smith most recently was director of NTID's division of management services. He has a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Wake Forest University and a master's degree in computer systems management from RIT.

Director of the Center for Outreach is Dr. Gerard Buckley, who joined NTID in 1990 as chairperson of the department of summer programs/outreach development/internships. He formerly was director of Gallaudet University's Midwestern Regional Center. He is an RIT alumnus and is on the advisory board of the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders and is immediate past president of the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association. He has a bachelor's degree in social work from RIT, a master's degree in social work from the University of Missouri, and a doctorate in special education from the University of Kansas.

Director of the Center for Research, Teaching, and Learning is Dr. Marc Marschark. Marschark most recently was professor of psychology at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. He has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Cornell University and a master's degree in cognitive psychology and a doctorate in psycholinguistics from the University of Western Ontario.

Reginald Redding is director of the Center for Student Resources. Most recently Redding was director of educational services and assistant superintendent at the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf. He was co-chair of the 1992 national conference "The Black Deaf Experience: Excellence and Equity," held in Atlanta. He received a bachelor's degree in American studies and a master's degree in deaf education from Gallaudet University, a master's degree in administration and supervision from California State University, Northridge, and currently is completing a doctorate in special education administration from Gallaudet.

An NTID faculty member since 1969, Dr. Thomas Raco is director of the Center for Technical Studies. Raco most recently was assistant dean and director of NTID's School of Visual Communications. He has a bachelor of fine arts degree and master of fine arts degree from RIT and a doctorate in occupational education and curriculum development from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Additionally, Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz is the new associate dean for student affairs. An associate dean at NTID for 14 years, Hurwitz most recently was associate vice president for outreach and external affairs and associate dean and director for educational support service programs. He has served on numerous national and international boards and committees, including a term as president of the National Association of the Deaf. He has a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Washington University, a master's degree in electrical engineering from St. Louis University, and a doctorate in education from the University of Rochester.

Dr. Christine Licata is associate dean for academic affairs. She most recently was NTID's assistant dean for administrative services. Before joining the office of the dean, Licata was assistant dean and director of NTID's School of Business Careers. She has a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in education from Canisius College and a doctorate in higher education from George Washington University.

Exceptional alums

Two graduates received awards of distinction during NTID's 25th anniversary celebration in July. Matthew Moore, a 1983 social work graduate, received the Outstanding Alumnus Award, and David Pierce, a 1988 graduate from San Antonio, Texas, received the Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Moore, whose award was presented by the NTID Alumni Association, is publisher and editor of *Deaf Life* magazine, a national monthly magazine, based in Rochester, New York, that he established in 1987.

"It was a pleasant surprise to receive the award," Moore says. "*Deaf Life* will continue to serve the deaf and hearing communities...as our motto states, 'Deaf awareness is our business.'"

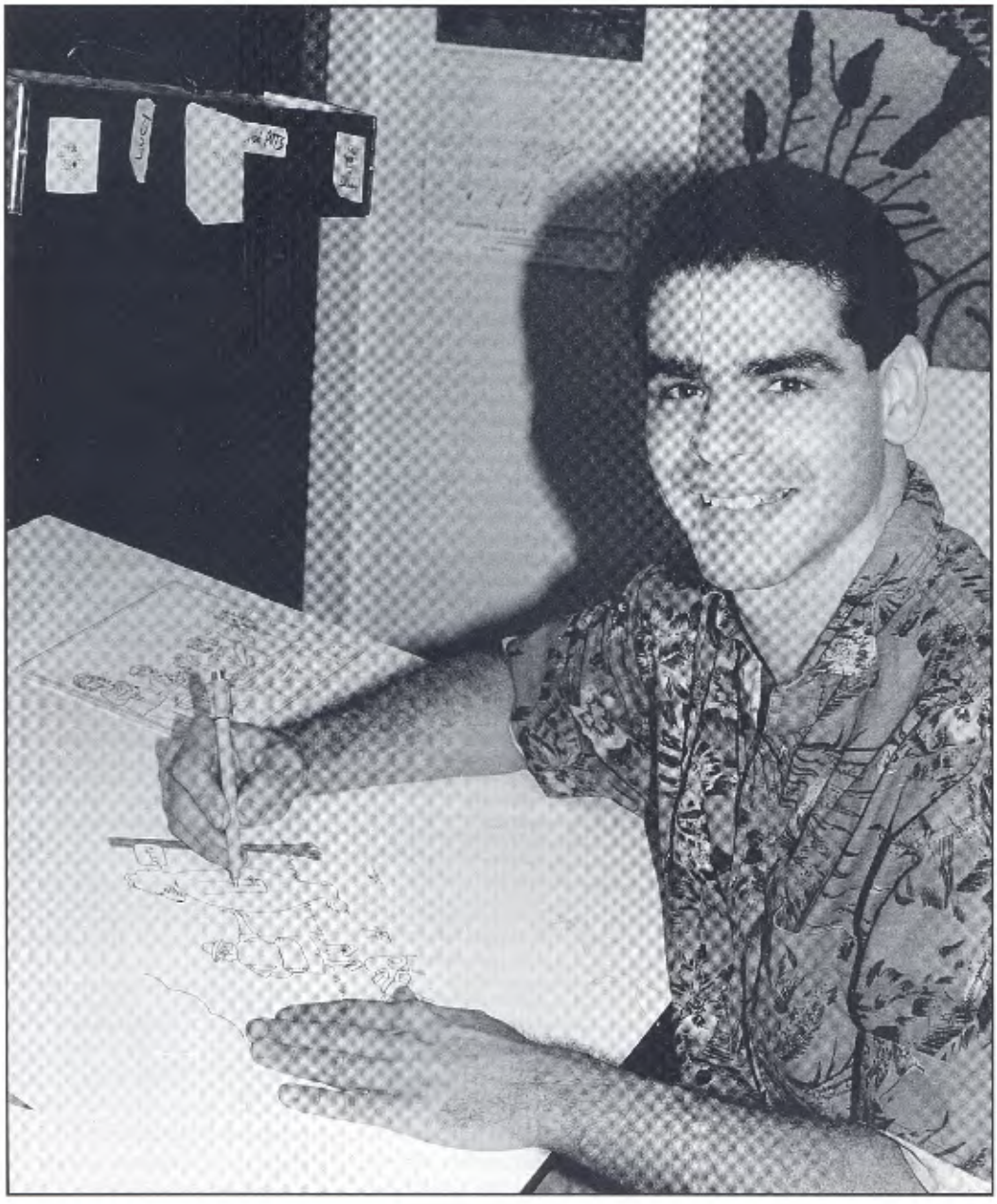
Deaf Life, which has approximately 35,000 readers throughout the world, addresses topics and issues of concern to deaf people, including political legislation, personality profiles, cultural activities, and book reviews. Moore also is the author of the 1992 book *For Hearing People Only*, which is a compilation of the magazine's columns that deal with deafness and Deaf culture.

Pierce, who received an associate degree in media technologies, is vice president of production for America's Disability Channel Inc., a national television network based in San Antonio. He is in charge of satellite operations, production, post-production, captioning, and program acquisitions for the network, which reaches 15 million households. He was selected for the award in recognition of his contributions to the deaf community.

"I am honored that my hard work and perseverance are being recognized by the Institute that provided me with the education that was a principal foundation in forming my television career," he says.

On the far side of deaf humor

by Lynne Bohlman DeWilde



Herbie Quinones

In Gary Larson's *Far Side* cartoon world, a carload of cows "yak" at a pasture full of people.

In a similarly whimsical manner, with a splash of Deaf culture added, Heriberto "Herbie" Quinones' comic-strip world illustrates a sealed coffin connected to a vibrating alarm clock designed to arouse a slumbering Dracula in time for a night of carousing.

"Deaf Vampire's Alarm Clock," published in the April 1992 issue of *Deaf USA*, was Quinones' first venture into the world of published comic strips.

"We find Herbie's cartoons fresh," says Rick Rogers, vice president for production of Eye Festival Communications, the Studio City, California, company that publishes *Deaf USA*. The monthly newspaper for deaf people has printed more than a dozen *Cartoon Factory* comics created by Quinones.

"Herbie takes concerns of deaf people and makes something out of them that readers can relate to and laugh at," he adds. "I read cartoons in other newspapers, but it's unusual to see cartoons that have deaf-related themes. *Cartoon Factory* makes me feel good."

Quinones' skill as an illustrator was discovered early.

As a youngster, he spent a lot of time with his maternal grandparents, who did not know sign language. Because

Deaf Vampire's Alarm Clock

American Sign Language Cereal

they could not communicate with each other easily and because Quinones often was bored, his grandparents gave him crayons and paper and encouraged him to draw. To all of their amazement, Quinones exhibited a natural talent.

"I was thrilled because I knew other people who couldn't draw," says Quinones, "but I could."

Quinones, who graduated from NTID in 1988 with a diploma in applied art, also comes by his sense of humor naturally. "I was born with it," says Quinones, who loves to tell jokes and stage an occasional prank.

As a junior at the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, he once set the alarm clocks of his friends ahead three hours so that they were up and dressed for class at 4 a.m., instead of a more tolerable 7 a.m. Not surprisingly, he says, he's remembered at his high school alma mater as the class clown.

Kathy Voelkl, assistant professor in NTID's applied art and computer graphics department, remembers Quinones a little differently.

"He didn't come across as a class clown," she says. "He was a sincere and kind person. He was a friend to nearly everyone. Herbie interjected humor into situations and was lighthearted, but not in any sort of annoying way."

Quinones arrived at NTID in the fall of 1985 with his healthy sense of humor and genuine talent.

"We helped Herbie organize his work," Voelkl says. "Our department gave him some skills with which he would be able to earn a living in the printing or graphic design industry. With his skill, personality, and motivation, we were sure Herbie would find a niche."

Quinones indeed has found a niche with his brand of deaf humor. Eventually, he'd like his cartoon creations to become a profitable "second job." It appears that *Cartoon Factory* is well on its way to being profitable as Quinones is preparing to release a 1994 calendar with all new cartoons.

Quinones' "first" job currently is as a graphic artist with All About Type Inc. in Jacksonville, Florida. He lives in a Jacksonville suburb with his wife, Diane, and their three children.

To help further his career, Quinones expects to receive later this fall an associate in applied science degree in graphic arts and printing from Florida Community College at Jacksonville.

When he's not studying, spending time with the family, working, or sneaking out for a few hours of fishing, Quinones literally goes back to the drawing board.

In creating a cartoon, he generally has a caption in mind and then takes about an hour to brainstorm ideas for how to match the illustration to the caption. Actually drawing the cartoon only takes him about 20 minutes. Another 20 minutes is required to ink the illustration.

While he's never nervous about the drawing itself, sometimes, Quinones admits, "The caption makes me nervous." So a friend proofs his English.

In addition, Quinones "test markets" his cartoons with colleagues at work.

"They laugh very hard, and they want to learn about Deaf culture," Quinones reports. For example, he notes, "They ask about how deaf people use the telephone."

Clearly Quinones is familiar with using his illustrative talent and humor to overcome communication and cultural barriers.

For Better or Worse, armed with his drawing skill and his natural sense of humor, Quinones certainly is on the *Far Side* of having his *Cartoon Factory* amount to more than *Peanuts*.

Rekindling Memories, Renewing Friendships

NTID's 25th Anniversary Alumni Reunion

by Kathryn Schmitz

Just as Richard Hovey wrote in *A Stein Song* (1898), "For it's always fair weather when good fellows get together," so it was for NTID's 25th Anniversary Alumni Reunion, held July 7–11, when more than one-third of RIT's deaf graduates enjoyed a long weekend of perfect summer weather and a busy agenda of entertainment and workshops on campus.

The event marked the establishment of the NTID Alumni Association as well as a celebration of NTID's 25 years of educating deaf students.

There was something for everyone: Organizations of and for deaf people and vendors were installed in exhibit booths that lined the Lyndon Baines Johnson Building (LBJ) first-floor street area. A time line of NTID's history, decorated with souvenirs loaned by alumni, stood on the second floor of the LBJ building. Artworks by alumni Chuck Baird, Susan Dupor, Susan and Bob Green, Dorothy Hammond, Leon Hom, Margaret Latta, Leslie Rubin-Sunkin, Tracey Salaway, Eddie Swayze, Mary Victoria, and Joseph Viscardi Jr. were exhibited in the Switzer Gallery.

In addition, luncheons and evening entertainment were held on the field southwest of the LBJ building in a huge white festival tent festooned with silver balloons commemorating NTID's anniversary.

Of course, the opportunity to catch up with friends was the main attraction for the more than 1,800 alumni and their guests who attended the reunion. Fingers flew and faces beamed as long-lost friends hugged one another and introduced their partners and children.

Thursday, July 8
Welcoming ceremonies

The business of officially greeting alumni Thursday morning fell to Angela Donnell Officer, 1988 fine arts graduate, who acted as emcee for the welcoming ceremonies, held in the Robert F. Panara Theatre.

After explaining how NTID's 25th anniversary symbol—the flowering crab apple tree—represents the growth of NTID students and the expansion and strength of the Institute, she turned over the ceremony to NTID Alumni Relations Administrator David Staehle, 1978 applied accounting graduate and the primary person responsible for orchestrating reunion events. Staehle joked about having to put in longer hours than John Fitzgerald Kennedy, whose typical workdays lasted from 8 a.m.–11 p.m., in preparation for the reunion and thanked everyone for attending.

Dressed in a purple flowered shirt, Dr. William Castle, director of NTID and vice president for government

relations for RIT, welcomed graduates in his typically "understated" manner and noted with pride that NTID has set an example for RIT in establishing an alumni association.

Dr. James DeCaro, dean of NTID, also welcomed returning graduates. "Things have really changed in 25 years," he joked. "When I first came to NTID, I had hair down to here [pointing to the small of his back], and it was a lot bushier. I was thinner, then, too. I see our older graduates, and the men look like they have less hair and more paunch, but the women are more beautiful."

At the end of the ceremony, Officer introduced the newly elected officers of the NTID Alumni Association: Linda Nelson, president; Fred Hartman, vice president; Howard Mann, secretary; William McGee, treasurer; and Mary Beth Barber and Kevin Nolan, members at large. After the welcoming ceremonies, alumni joined 47 faculty and staff members at the alumni/faculty luncheon in the festival tent.

Opening ceremonies

The featured events of the evening, also held in the festival tent, were the opening ceremonies and official inauguration of the NTID Alumni Association officers.

Kevin Nolan, 1971 business administration graduate, emceed the event, demonstrating with the gloves, raincoat, and umbrella he had packed that he had come prepared for Rochester's unpredictable weather. In predictably unpredictable fashion, however, Rochester experienced a heat wave that week, with temperatures soaring into the 90s every day.

Dr. Albert Simone, RIT president, signed his presentation that evening to the delight of the crowd, which gave him two standing ovations.

"RIT can be a model that shows how hearing and deaf students, faculty and staff, can work together in a single university environment, sharing their cultures and learning from one another," he said. "We know the model can work because you alumni are successful."

DeCaro echoed that sentiment, adding, "We've become well-known over the past 25 years not because of our programs, but because of the success of people like yourselves."

Castle, dressed in a white and silver tuxedo he purchased for his 25th wedding anniversary five years ago, took the stage and introduced each of the 25 members present from NTID's original class, saying, "You are NTID's most important accomplishment."

Dr. Robert Frisina, director of RIT's International Center for Hearing and Speech Research and NTID's first director, reminded everyone that NTID began as an educational experiment 25 years ago.

The questions then, according to Frisina, were: "Could deaf people enter an institution of higher learning and succeed? And if they succeeded, would industry hire them? And if they managed to get a good job, could they move up?" Clearly, he asserted, the answers are, "Yes!"

After Castle swore in the officers of the NTID Alumni Association using the same oath taken by NTID Student Congress officers, Nelson, the new association president and 1973 business graduate, addressed her fellow alumni.

"You are witnessing history in the making," she said. "You are going back home to your communities and jobs and will help deaf and hard-of-hearing people in your home states. You are the pioneers. You are the spirit of NTID."

Friday, July 9
Awards luncheon

During the alumni awards luncheon held in the festival tent, Robert Panara, professor emeritus, talked at familiar length about NTID's origins and progress. He referred to Frisina's comment to the original class of students that they would be "living in a fish bowl and the nation [would be] watching" them closely. According to Panara,

They came from as near as Rochester and from as far away as California. Nearly 1,200 graduates returned to campus July 7–11 for NTID's 25th Anniversary Alumni Reunion celebration.

During their hectic and hot stay in Rochester (temperatures climbed to the mid-90s all week), FOCUS caught up with a sprinkling of graduates and asked them to share their thoughts about what NTID and RIT have meant to them. A sampling of their interesting and sometimes surprising answers follow.

About why they chose to attend NTID...

"Dr. Frisina came to my high school and spoke about NTID. That got me interested. I had two classmates who were coming, so I knew I wouldn't be alone. I also wanted to make new friends from other states."
Terry DeBoer, SVP '68
Lombard, Illinois

"The technical nature of the programs is what attracted me as well as the opportunity to communicate with other people using sign language."
Larry Blout, SVP '73
Rochester, New York

"I was accepted at Gallaudet, too, but I decided to come to NTID because I was interested in media production and the deaf and hearing cultural interaction."
Vivian Warfield, SVP '74
Aurora, Illinois

"NTID offered the business, marketing, and finance courses that interested me. Also, I was impressed with the co-op opportunities, and I had heard that students from NTID had a high placement rate."
Thomas Balzano, SVP '80
Brooklyn, New York

About their accomplishments as students...

"I got a scholarship award in 1981 for the cross-registered student with the highest grade point average. When I won that, I knew that I was a good student."
Robert Cagle Jr., SVP '75
Rochester, New York

"I didn't want to go to college, but my parents asked me to give it a try. NTID took someone who was shy and made me a very confident individual."
Marc Roer, SVP '76
Chicago, Illinois

"I worked as a certified emergency medical technician with the RIT ambulance crew. The hearing crew members didn't know sign language, so I put in a lot of extra hours to serve deaf students. I really enjoyed that experience."
Kathleen Blout, SVP '77
Rochester, New York

About their funniest memories...

"I was umpiring behind the plate during a softball game between SVP students and faculty members, and I called Bob Frisina out for stepping on the plate after he hit a grand slam home run. He argued with me, and I gave him a second chance. He got out again."
Robert Liese, SVP '73
Massapequa Park, New York

"One day, I went to class early and since no one was there, I fell asleep at my desk. When the other students came in, they really teased me about it. They changed my sign name to 'E' up by the eyes like sleeping."
Ellitre Ashley, SVP '83
Jacksonville, Florida

the first Vestibule Program (now called Summer Vestibule Program [SVP]) class of 200 in 1969 spawned more and more "fish," which required a bigger "tank," and that's why the NTID complex was built.

Matthew Moore, 1983 social work graduate and publisher of *Deaf Life* magazine, was named Outstanding Alumnus for his contribution to the betterment of the deaf community and NTID. David Pierce, 1988 media technologies graduate and a vice president at America's Disability Channel Inc., was named Distinguished Alumnus for his leadership, prowess in his career, and contribution to the advancement of education for deaf people in his community.

SVP Trivia Bowl and entertainment

Barbara Ray Holcomb, 1974 medical record technology graduate, and Sam Holcomb, 1977 ophthalmic optical finishing technology graduate, now both sign communication specialists in the Center for Sign Language and Interpreting Education, kicked off Friday evening's entertainment with a special presentation of illustrations of the name signs for each class from 1968–92, drawing tremendous cheers and hand waves from members of each class.

An SVP Trivia Bowl generated fierce but friendly competition. And numerous alumni performed short dances, skits, and stories, relying on skills they had developed during their days in NTID theater productions.

Saturday, July 10
Closing ceremonies

Saturday evening's closing ceremonies featured a special one-hour performance by Rochester's LIGHTS ON! Deaf Theatre of *Sign Off*, a comedic play-within-a-play inspired by *A Chorus Line* and written by Patricia Durr, assistant professor in the department of human development.

Robert Sidansky, 1977 social work graduate and chairperson of the NTID Interim Alumni Association (which was responsible for establishing NTID's formal alumni association), then presented alumni with a matching grant challenge from Jane Pulver, member of The NTID Foundation and RIT's Board of Trustees. Pulver will match every dollar that alumni contribute to NTID's endowed scholarships before July 1, 1994.

In closing, Staehle thanked the more than 40 other alumni and faculty and staff members on the reunion committee who had worked so hard to ensure the success of the reunion.

Staehle confided to the audience that when he began work at NTID in 1991, he predicted that 600 graduates and guests would return for the reunion. He raised the ante to 1,500 after traveling around the country to encourage alumni to attend. The final tally of more than 1,800 registered participants exceeded his expectations.

"I hope to see more than 2,000 people here in 1998 for the next reunion," he said. "This reunion has been very successful and special, and I want to see a repeat performance."

About their favorite teachers...

"Alice Beardsley. When I came to campus, I didn't know any sign language. I couldn't understand the interpreters. Alice was my interpreter for most of my four years at RIT. She taught me sign language."
Terry DeBoer, SVP '68
Lombard, Illinois

"I can't really think of one. But I *do* remember Jack Clarcq motivating me to beat the other team when I was playing football for RIT!"
Albert Rozman, SVP '69
Detroit, Michigan

"Bob Panara. I always thought his sign name [the letter 'P' doing the sign for going on and on and on...] was so funny! He made me feel comfortable and motivated me to do things."
Vivian Warfield, SVP '74
Aurora, Illinois

"Dominic Bozelli. He became a father figure to me, and he encouraged me and helped me remain positive. He was the first person I met, and his motivation, enthusiasm, and confidence in me remain a big part of my life today."
Marc Roer, SVP '76
Chicago, Illinois

"Peter Haggerty. He was my first English teacher. I had such a crush on him! He was so Irish looking with those expressive blue eyes and that curly hair...."
Rebecca Conley-Hartman, SVP '81
Baltimore, Maryland

About changes on campus...

"The campus has become so beautiful. When I was a student, we had to walk everywhere...there were no buses going around campus. And we had to eat off campus on Sundays because Grace Watson was closed. I can remember piling eight people into a car, sitting on laps, to go out to eat."
Cindy Mann, SVP '68
Rochester, New York

"RIT is different now because of the new technology available. In my time, everything [in the art field] was done by hand. I hope the new technology allows students to learn how to use their minds in more creative ways."
Joseph Viscardi Jr., SVP '73
Baldwin, New York

About what they would do if they were director of NTID...

"I'd create more challenges for students to prepare them for what's happening in the outside world."
Donna Platt, SVP '76
Seattle, Washington

"I would see that all the professors and top administrators were deaf because they know best what deaf people need. I'd like to see more ASL used. The programs are good, but I'd like to see more about how to survive in the real world...courses about how to get a mortgage, how to organize your finances or plan a wedding, etc."
Rebecca Conley-Hartman, SVP '81
Baltimore, Maryland

"I would encourage more faculty members to learn ASL. Communication is the key. I'd probably revamp some programs, add some environmental programs. I'd also encourage more women to go into technical careers; that really hasn't improved since I was a student. We need to network for women."
Cinda Lautenschlegar, SVP '81
Mt. Tremper, New York

"I would move the Lyndon Baines Johnson Building, [NTID's main academic facility] across campus. That would help with better interaction between deaf and hearing people...I want one world."
Amy Scheir, SVP '87
Pasadena, California

Walking the Beat

RIT's first deaf campus cop

by Kathleen S. Smith

Cathy Noble

Cathy Noble always has been strong-willed.

"When she was a baby, if I hollered at her about something, she'd just close her eyes and ignore me," laments her mother, Marge.

When she had problems with a junior high school teacher, Noble threatened to deliberately fail the class so that she could take it again—with a different teacher.

And when she joined RIT's campus safety department earlier this year, apparently as the first deaf professional to work as a full-time campus safety officer in the country, Noble quickly made sure that deafness and Deaf culture became more than simply buzzwords around the department.

Noble has a knack for making things happen. Says partner Nate Sullivan, "Cathy's *very* smart and *very* assertive."

The Fairlawn, New Jersey, native, who left her campus safety job in July to pursue graduate studies, knew when she was hired that her successes and failures would be closely scrutinized by the Institute community.

And although she is only 23, Noble, who received a bachelor's degree in social work from RIT in 1992, was ever mindful of the power of her uniform.

"I had to be careful how I acted when I was on duty and saw old friends or classmates," she says. "I had to be professional."

Noble applied for the campus safety job in early 1993 "on a whim." The 20-week co-op position had been created after NTID students staged a "Campaign for Accessibility Now" protest during which they expressed concern about communication between deaf and hearing people on campus.

Campus safety, which created the job specifically to enhance communication between officers and deaf students,

Fast friends Whether patrolling on foot or in their car, partners Nate Sullivan and Noble always enjoyed working together.

intended to hire a student to fill the slot. But along came Noble, recently graduated and looking for a challenge.

Sullivan was paired with Noble because of his advanced sign language skills. Typically, they conversed with each other using both voice and sign. But when the occasion warranted, "We turned off our voices or our hands," laughs Noble.

"When I first started working with Nate, I was nervous not to do or say the wrong thing," Noble recalls. "After about a week, though, I felt very comfortable and knew that I could be myself."

Noble and Sullivan worked the "B" shift (3–11 p.m.), driving or walking around campus. They monitored traffic and parking situations, responded to fire alarms and emergency calls, and checked that buildings were locked.

Everywhere they went, people—especially deaf people—liked to talk to them. Sometimes, Noble admits, she wasn't talked to, but hollered at.

"Every once in a while when I ticketed deaf students' cars, they'd say, 'How can you do that? You're one of us!' But I knew that ultimately I was a role model for the deaf students. And I took that responsibility seriously."

Noble says that occasionally deaf students were reticent to interact with Sullivan, and she had to remind them to make the effort to communicate with both officers.

Likewise, Sullivan sometimes steered hearing students to Noble for help resolving their problems.

"I wasn't going to let them stand there and ignore her," he says. "They had to deal with both of us."

Director of campus safety Richard Sterling notes that, "Communication between our officers and the deaf community improved tenfold when Cathy joined us."

Noble made strides toward improving campus safety's internal workings by personalizing Deaf culture for officers, says Sterling.

Among other things, Noble suggested that department meetings be professionally interpreted and that the department meeting room be rearranged into a circle of tables and chairs for easier visibility and interaction.

These changes and others helped Noble cope with the distinction of being the only deaf officer on a 25-member force.

"I was frustrated when I first joined the department," Noble admits. "I felt that people thought they knew about Deaf culture, but they weren't ready for the reality. But it didn't scare me off."

Noble never has shied away from making a point, thanks to the independent streak that she inherited from her mother.

"I often wondered when Cathy was growing up how she would do as she tried different things," the elder Noble says, "but I always encouraged her. She made people realize that deaf people don't have to be on the sidelines."

"My mother constantly inspired me—and pushed me—to be independent," says Noble, the youngest and only deaf member in a family of five children.

After graduating from Fairlawn's Midland Park High School in 1987, Noble chose RIT for its academic reputation as well as the opportunity to learn more about Deaf culture.

"Coming to RIT helped me clear up the confusion of where I fit," she says. "I found that I fit into both worlds: deaf and hearing. And if people can't accept me for that, it's their loss."

She shined in the social work program, a career chosen in part because of her upbringing.

"My family always did a lot of volunteering through church, etc.," she recalls. "I was raised helping others."

As part of her student work and community service, Noble taught sign language to area medical personnel, completed an 18-week rape crisis training program, worked at an alcoholism treatment center, and volunteered in RIT's Substance and Alcohol Intervention Services for the Deaf program.

Despite all that experience, Noble decided that she wanted more, so she enrolled this fall in the master's degree program in social work at the University of Denver.

"I'm very sad that Cathy left," says partner Sullivan, "but at the same time I'm happy for her. Graduate school will teach her even more about how to be a professional. She's going to be really sharp."

"I want to be a strong advocate for the deaf community," Noble says. "I want to set up programs to educate hearing people about deafness. Maybe someday I will run a drug and alcohol awareness program in a police department...maybe even here at RIT." ■

Between Two Worlds

Postlingually deaf people search for a cultural identity

by Kathryn Schmitz

Despite losing his hearing 18 years ago, Richard Skyer, 38, still sings every day, hourly at times, at work and at home.

"Singing is completely natural for me," says Skyer, who graduated from RIT's biology program in 1979. "My children think I'm the best singer they've heard."

Although Skyer's deafness, which resulted from surgery to remove a brain tumor, may have taken away his ability to hear, it didn't take away his positive outlook.

"My life is positive," says Skyer, who works as an analytical chromatography technician for Eastman Kodak Company in Rochester, New York, and is president of the Rochester chapter of the Association of Late-Deafened Adults (ALDA). ALDA members work to increase awareness of the needs of late-deafened adults and advocate for communication access.

"I cannot change what's happened. I don't say that I've accepted my deafness," Skyer adds. "I've simply learned to manage it, not control it. One needs to accommodate to the turn of events, because if not, one suffers."

Losing their hearing poses particular

Richard Skyer

"I cannot change what's happened. I don't say that I've accepted my deafness. I've simply learned to manage it, not control it. One needs to accommodate to the turn of events, because if not, one suffers."

challenges to people who already had come to rely on their auditory sense and learned to speak. Several NTID students and graduates consider themselves "late-deafened" because they were formerly hearing and now are deaf.

Each individual experiences deafness differently; for Skyer and Loriann Laczo, it is not the world of silence that many people assume it is. Skyer continues to hear in his mind, especially the songs from 1964–75 that he learned so well and continues to sing. Laczo's experience is similar.

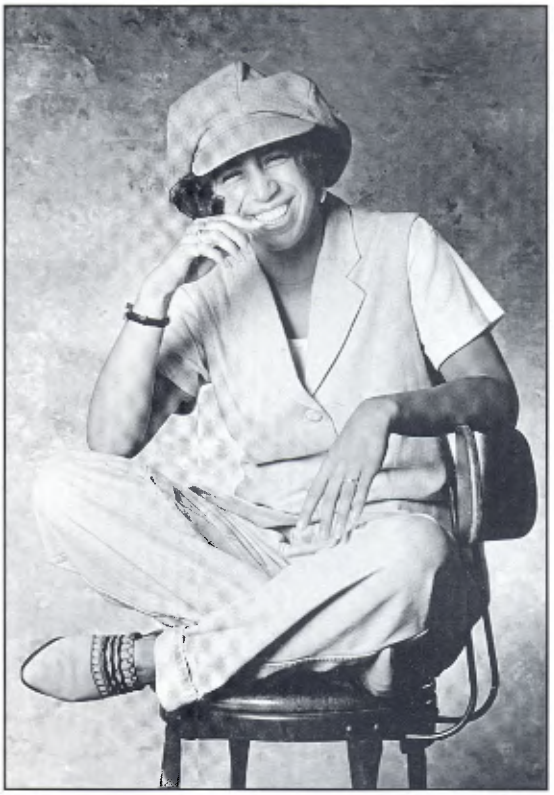
"If I see the thing or the event, I can hear it," says Laczo, a 23-year-old second-year social work student from Poland, Ohio. She lost her hearing overnight at age 9 due to a bout of spinal meningitis. "My mind hears the sound. Sometimes that bothers me because it's distracting, but it's not all negative. I think it's a wonderful, weird part of my hearing loss.

"I miss hearing," she adds. "Sometimes I'm angry that people who can hear don't use their hearing; they take it for granted. For example, if I ask someone what I missed on a television show we're watching, they'll say, 'Oh, I wasn't paying attention.'"

Sonia Latoison, second-year computer technology student from Philadelphia, pays attention with her residual hearing during classes.

"I like having teachers who sign and voice," she says. "Their voices helped me when I was learning sign language. I still can hear teachers who don't sign for themselves, too."

Latoison, 20, was born mildly hard of hearing and lost a great deal more of her hearing at age 14 as a result of hereditary progressive deafness. The nature of Latoison's hearing loss compelled her to make a series of adjustments; initially she was able to rely on her hearing, but later she had to depend more on speechreading.



Loriann Laczo

After a year at NTID, Latoison now includes sign language as another tool in her kit of communication techniques.

"I've lived in a hearing world all my life, which makes me more oral," she says. "I learned sign language when I arrived at NTID, where I have deaf friends for the first time. I'm proud to say that I know a second language."

Late-deafened members of the NTID community often experience not just the transition from being hearing to becoming deaf, but also the

Sonia Latoison

Melissa Adamo

transition from a predominantly hearing environment to an environment with greater emphasis on deafness and Deaf culture.

"There are times when I feel hearing and times when I feel deaf," explains Latoison. "Sometimes I don't like being categorized as deaf or hearing because I feel I'm in the middle, and neither category suits me. I used to think that I had to be in one or the other group, but as I explored both, I realized that what goes for others may not be the same for me."

Melissa Adamo, second-year business management student from Buffalo, New York, lost her hearing at age 5 from spinal meningitis and experienced a bit of an identity crisis even at that young age.

"I found it hard to accept that I was deaf, that I couldn't hear anymore," says Adamo, 19. "I felt different from other people. They treated me differently, as if I had a disease. So I had to learn to cope.

"But my family made me feel that I could be whatever I wanted, no matter whether I heard or not, and that's one of the reasons I'm so confident about my future. I feel comfortable communicating with everyone, deaf and hearing."

While growing up, Adamo attended public schools with hearing students. She learned some sign language at the age of 8 from her small circle of deaf classmates, which helped ease her transition to NTID.

"Most of my deaf friends at home were oral like me," Adamo explains. "At NTID, there's a greater mix of oral and culturally deaf people, and I had to get used to that. I also like communicating with deaf people; it's so much easier to be able to see everything they're talking about."

Easily adjusting to different communication styles is not the same, however, as adjusting to different cultural identities, as Adamo already knows and as Laczo found out only after a year at NTID. Some late-deafened students feel disenfranchised from both hearing and deaf people even though they communicate easily with both groups.

For individuals like Laczo, the double adjustment of being excluded from one world and not feeling included in another is a constant challenge.

Laczo explains that she was so busy working to communicate as the only deaf student in her mainstream public school classes that she didn't confront the issue of where she "belonged" until she arrived at NTID.

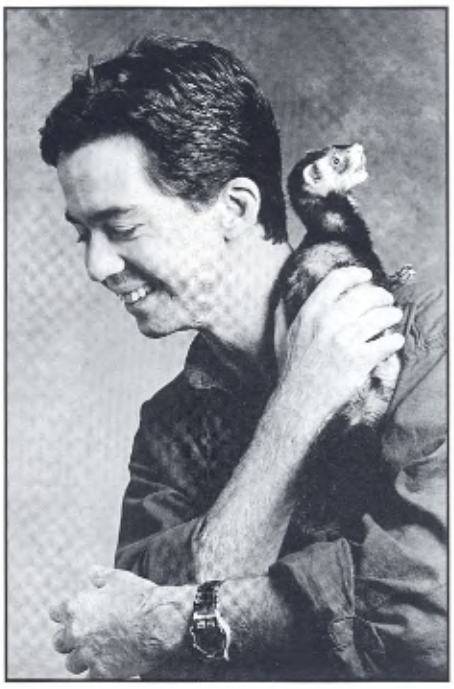
"In my second year here, I realized I really was deaf," says Laczo. "I went through a period of feeling awkward because I'd grown up in hearing culture. Then I came to NTID, and I felt that I didn't belong in Deaf culture either. I haven't found my place yet, but I'm on my way there, and I'm satisfied with where I am now."

Mark Gardner, 38, who lost his hearing at age 20 as a result of toxoplasmosis, refused to learn sign language during his first year at NTID.

"Before I learned sign language, I was rejected by other deaf students," says Gardner, who graduated from NTID's ophthalmic optical finishing technology program in 1981 and RIT's packaging engineering program in 1992. "Finally I saw that I needed to learn sign language to be able to communicate with my deaf peers. It took me a year to gain acceptance.

"I went through a period of mourning after I lost my hearing," he says. "I want people to accept me for who I am, but people who don't share my late deafness don't know what it's like to hear and then not hear."

Gardner found that learning sign language greatly helped him make the most of RIT's interpreting services as well as make friends.



Alex Brin

Alex Brin, a 25-year-old third-year computer science student from Miami, is not looking to fit into Deaf culture.

"I'm a loner," he says. "I avoid interaction."

Brin gradually lost his hearing between the ages of 9 and 10 as a result of an accidental overdose of antibiotics.

He has developed his own communication strategies at NTID with his friends, most of whom are deaf. He participates in computer bulletin boards, using his keyboard as a way to initiate social discourse at times. Typing is not his only means of communicating, however.

"I picked up lipreading on my own," he says. "Some people I can read easily, others I can't. Many NTID students want me to learn sign language, but I can't picture myself changing my mode of communication."

After attending Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for one year, during which time he "never bothered to point out the fact that I had a hearing problem," says Brin, he lost his scholarship due to an inadequate grade point average and dropped out of college. He spent the next five years in Miami working as a computer technician troubleshooting networks.

Convinced to return to college at RIT by a client who was a former professor at the Institute, Brin has found that he still does best in independent learning situations.

"I have to work things out in the books and during labs," he says. "Class notes [provided by notetakers] are useless by themselves without the background that comes with the lecture, which I can't follow completely. I also can't understand the interpreters because my sign skills are minimal."

Speech recognition, the computerized conversion of spoken language to type, Brin believes, would provide educational access for him in the classroom in a way that other support services do not. This technology, however, is not yet sophisticated or affordable enough for widespread use at RIT.

For other late-deafened students, such as Adamo and Laczo, educational access services (interpreters, notetakers, tutors) are greatly helpful, particularly in facilitating communication.

Communication presents challenges at work as well as at school, but each situation is unique, Gardner notes.

"I've worked with people who were ignorant of my needs," says Gardner. "I've also worked with others who were respectful.

"We deaf people are a minority," he elaborates. "We have to learn to get along; we have to be able to function in the world. I think that my experience as a hearing person helped me manage my communication needs at work because I remember what it's like to hear."

Late-deafened people share the experience of hearing and deafness in one lifetime, as Skyer points out.

"I can see everything from both perspectives," says Skyer. "A man of two languages is worth two men." ▬

Mark Gardner

Accept Yourself!

by Susan Cergol

Deaf gays and lesbians learn the power of being true to themselves

Chad Miller

Last fall, while rummaging through the long-neglected treasures of his self-image, Chad Miller caught a glimpse of himself in a well-worn mirror. At that moment, he decided to toss out the old fear and denial, dust off his true identity, and accept himself as a gay man.

"I've always been gay," says Miller, second-year social work student. "When I was growing up, I tried to deny it because I wanted society to accept me. But last year, I started learning about gay issues, and I started to see some people's attitudes changing. I felt it was the right time for me to come out."

Once he made that decision, Miller called his mother right away to tell her. After he assured her that no, she hadn't done anything wrong to make him gay ("I was born this way," he insists), Miller says that she accepted him immediately and shared the news with the rest of the family.

Although Miller, 20, is aware that not everyone is so accepting of gay people, he jokes that he's not bothered by negative comments because he can't hear them. But being both deaf and gay poses serious challenges to Miller and other deaf gays and lesbians at RIT.

Two of the biggest challenges are lack of information and scarcity of role models. Most young people find it hard to discuss sexuality, a difficulty that can be intensified when there are communication barriers between a deaf youth and hearing parents. And almost all gay role models are hearing.

What are young deaf gays and lesbians to do?

Enter Philip Rubin, former director of the Deaf Gay and Lesbian Center in San Francisco and past president of the Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf, an international organization for deaf gays and lesbians. As Mr. Deaf International Leather 1992, Rubin has traveled around the country speaking to diverse audiences about the need to respect one

Philip Rubin

another and foster a sense of self-acceptance in a world that sometimes can be intolerant of differences.

"Deaf people and gay people struggle with similar issues of self-acceptance," notes Rubin, 41. As an example, he relates a story about a man in St. Louis who attended one of his presentations about oppression and empowerment.

"He told me that he felt so much better after my talk because he realized that his life isn't over just because he's losing his hearing," says Rubin. "He realized that by accepting himself, he could move on and take control of his life."

David Anderson

A single drop starts the "ripple effect"

Because of his reputation as an outspoken advocate, Rubin was invited to bring his message of empowerment and acceptance to NTID in January and lead a weeklong conference that addressed issues facing deaf gays and lesbians.

The "Deaf Gay and Lesbian Conference," sponsored by NTID's departments of human development and liberal arts support as well as RIT's department of residence life, attempted to fill the void of information through a series of workshops, panel discussions, and presentations that explored the diversity of gay life from a deaf perspective.

"It's important for RIT to address gay issues and homophobia," says David Anderson, assistant area coordinator in the department of residence life, who helped organize the conference.

Although not an everyday occurrence, Anderson says that a number of threatening incidents directed toward gays and lesbians have occurred at RIT, and he believes that education is the best way to change such intolerant attitudes and behaviors.

A gay man himself, Anderson says he has a lot of informal contact with deaf gay and lesbian students, who often seek his counsel. But he's hearing, and he says that he recognizes deaf students' need for a deaf gay role model.

"Last year, we invited well-known gay speaker Brian McNaught to talk to students about gay issues," he says. "This year, we wanted to find a deaf speaker equally impressive to come and give a presentation at NTID, and Philip Rubin was the perfect choice."

One point that McNaught stressed during his visit was the need to involve the entire campus community in discussions about gay and lesbian issues. So when Rubin came to the Institute, conference organizers arranged for him to meet with NTID Director William Castle and Dean James DeCaro.

"We have to invite all people—including those who traditionally haven't been welcomed—to sit at the Institute's 'table' when discussing cultural diversity on campus," says DeCaro. "Gays and lesbians should be allowed to express their views just as other minorities are encouraged to do. The world is full of differences, and what better place than a college campus to initiate such discussions."

Anderson says he was delighted that NTID administrators were so welcoming to Rubin and supportive of the conference goals.

"It was very significant for deaf students to see their college administrators willing to say that this is an important issue," he says. "Not only did those meetings lend validity to the entire conference, they emphasized the fact that NTID is here to serve the needs of all students."

Mindy Hopper, cross-cultural educator in the human development department, who worked with Anderson and three others to organize Rubin's visit, says that she has seen many positive results from the conference—something that both she and Rubin refer to as the "ripple effect."

"Philip planted a seed of understanding and gave us an opportunity to talk about gay issues on campus," she says. "Now, more straight people are asking questions, and more gay students are being open about and proud of their sexual identities. They have learned that there are other students like themselves on campus, and they have started to recognize and identify with the particular characteristics of gay culture.

"A similar thing happens when some students arrive on campus and discover their deaf identities through interaction with other deaf people," she adds. "All people need to find their sense of community."

"Educating students about gay issues is so important. They need to learn that they can be whoever they are."

Come out, come out, whoever you are

Although Roseann Sirianni grew up in a residential school for deaf students and discovered her deaf identity at a young age, it wasn't until she was in her mid-20s that she connected with the lesbian community.

Sirianni, secretary in the psychological services department, says that she first recognized her feelings for women while still a teenager, but she denied them because of the negative messages about gays and lesbians that she had received at school. Succumbing to peer pressure, she started dating boys and eventually married.

But it didn't take long for her to realize that heterosexual marriage didn't fit with her true nature.

"I came out after I went to a women's bar," she says. "Then I was in heaven."

Since then, Sirianni has tried to correct what she sees as misconceptions about gay life by being honest with herself and open with others.

Once, in a previous job, amidst rumors that there was a lesbian working in the office, she noticed her colleagues gossiping about another woman they all assumed to be gay.

"That woman looked very 'butch,' so everyone assumed that she was the lesbian," recalls Sirianni. "I laughed and said, 'No, it's not her—it's me!' They were so surprised, saying, 'But you're so pretty...' because they believed the stereotype that all lesbians look masculine."

Sirianni, 36, who graduated from NTID's office practice and procedures program in 1979, notes a big difference between attitudes on campus today and when she was a student.

"At that time, everything was very secretive," she says. "Today people are curious, and gay and lesbian students are being more open about themselves.

"Educating students about gay issues is so important," she adds. "They need to learn that they can be whoever they are."

Like Anderson, Sirianni believes that an important part of the educational process is providing role models for young deaf students who are beginning to identify themselves as gay. As an open lesbian, Sirianni says that she often is approached by students who need someone to talk to.

Providing students with positive and healthy images of gays and lesbians as diverse individuals is one of the goals of the newly established support network of gay, lesbian, and bisexual faculty and staff members at RIT. Formed after NTID's successful January conference, the group also aims to meet the social, political, and scholarly needs of gay RIT employees.

"The network serves an important function for the Institute community because gays and lesbians always have been invisible at RIT," says Anderson, who helped get the network started. "Whenever we talk about multiculturalism and pluralism on campus, it's usually in relation to racial diversity and deafness. It's rare that we include gay and lesbian culture in those discussions."

In addition, as advisor to the student gay/lesbian/bisexual group Bi-Gala, Anderson is well aware of the need for gay people to join together for support.

"Bi-Gala often has low membership and difficulty finding a faculty or staff advisor because people are afraid," he says. "That's why we need to keep having presentations and discussing the issue on campus. Once you start such programming, you've got to continue it to keep awareness at a high level."

Roseann Sirianni

With dignity and integrity Deaf gays and lesbians challenge the anti-gay teachings of some religious groups—demonstrated by these protesters at last spring's March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Equal Rights—in their struggle for self-acceptance.

Afraid of the light

Fear, confirm many gays and lesbians, is the number one motivator for hiding their sexual orientation: fear of rejection by family and friends, fear of losing one's job or apartment, fear of physical assault. For many deaf gays and lesbians, says Anderson, that fear is compounded by the fact that the deaf community is so small.

"I've seen many deaf gay students hide their identities because they are afraid of being ostracized by their community—which is very, very tight," he says. "They fear that if they are ousted, they will have no one to turn to."

One NTID graduate in particular lives with that fear daily. Because both his parents are deaf and well-known in the deaf community, he feels unable to be open about his sexual orientation and has never told them that he is gay. Ironically, his sister, also deaf, is a lesbian.

"The deaf community is very small, and it isn't accepting of gay people," he believes. "Everyone knows our parents, so we can't be openly gay because it would be too embarrassing for them."

In addition, a single negative encounter with other people's intolerance can have a lasting effect on a young deaf gay or lesbian psyche, as demonstrated by another graduate's experience.

While serving a three-year stint with a volunteer organization, she was ostracized by fellow group members, and, although she never publicly discussed her sexual identity, she was shocked to discover that her medical record indicated she was "a self-proclaimed lesbian."

"It took me nine years to recover from that experience," she says. "During that time, I had limited trust for people. I felt so paranoid, and I was afraid of what would happen to me in the future."

Today she is more comfortable living openly as a lesbian largely because of the support system she has developed, although she still is cautious about sharing her identity.

Yet another graduate who feels that she has to hide her identity explains it this way: "My parents are very religious. How can I tell them that I'm a lesbian?"

The conflict between religious conviction and sexual orientation is one with which Tommy Curley, second-year information technology student, also has struggled. As a Pentecostal Christian (a faith that denounces homosexuality) and a gay man, Curley often has felt at odds with himself.

"There are two parts of me," says Curley, 19. "One wants to be in the church, the other wants be openly gay."

Curley has suffered severe bouts of depression throughout his life because of this conflict. He says he's known he is gay since he was 5 years old, but always hid his feelings. When he was 9, he tried to commit suicide—the first of several such attempts before he accepted himself.

Throughout his teen years, Curley continued to fight his true orientation. ("I was hoping and praying that God would strike me straight," he recalls.) But when he was 17, he couldn't deny himself any longer, and he confided to his mother that he is gay.

"My church teaches that gays and lesbians are perverted and are going to hell, but inside I knew that I couldn't lie anymore," he says.

Curley says he's a lot happier since coming out to fellow NTID students last November and discovering a Pentecostal church that welcomes gays and lesbians, but he continues to grapple with the apparent dichotomy of his life. Curley—or "Brother Tommy" as he prefers to be called—is both vice president of Bi-Gala and a student minister of the National Gay Pentecostal Alliance.

"Some people feel uncomfortable with me because I'm Christian, others because I'm gay," he says. "Many people think you can't be both, but I disagree. Being a Christian is a choice; being gay isn't."

'We're here, we're queer, we're proud of it...'

Curley says that he found the courage to more fully accept himself last fall partly because of fellow student Miller's openness.

For his part, Miller apparently acted on the saying "Do it big or stay home." Invited to participate in a class presentation on homophobia last fall, Miller showed up for the occasion dressed in drag.

"I was a little nervous," he admits. "I didn't know what would happen."

What happened was that the Ellingson Hall lounge, where the presentation was held, overflowed with a capacity crowd of curious students. And after the presentation was over, the fascinated students trailed Miller to the dining commons to continue asking questions.

"Some of them applauded me for my courage while others complained," Miller says. "I just ignored the negative comments and tried to approach it with a positive attitude."

Rubin believes that having such a positive attitude is the best way to challenge stereotypes and to educate others.

"Gay people need to be themselves and to come out," he says. "That's the only way we can set an example for other people, both gay and straight. Accepting your sexual identity improves your emotional health and self-esteem and being open and positive in turn affects everyone around you—that's the ripple effect."

Rubin recalls coming out almost immediately upon his arrival at NTID as a student in 1970. (After studying architecture for two years, he transferred to Cornell University to complete his degree.)

"For many years, I knew there was a missing piece to myself," he says. "When I realized that I'm gay, my life suddenly fit together. Once I found that missing piece, I didn't want to hide anymore.

"Some people come out overnight; others take five, 10, or sometimes 20 years to accept themselves," he adds. "But if it takes that long, that's 20 years wasted not being 100 percent yourself. You can do so much more if you are free."

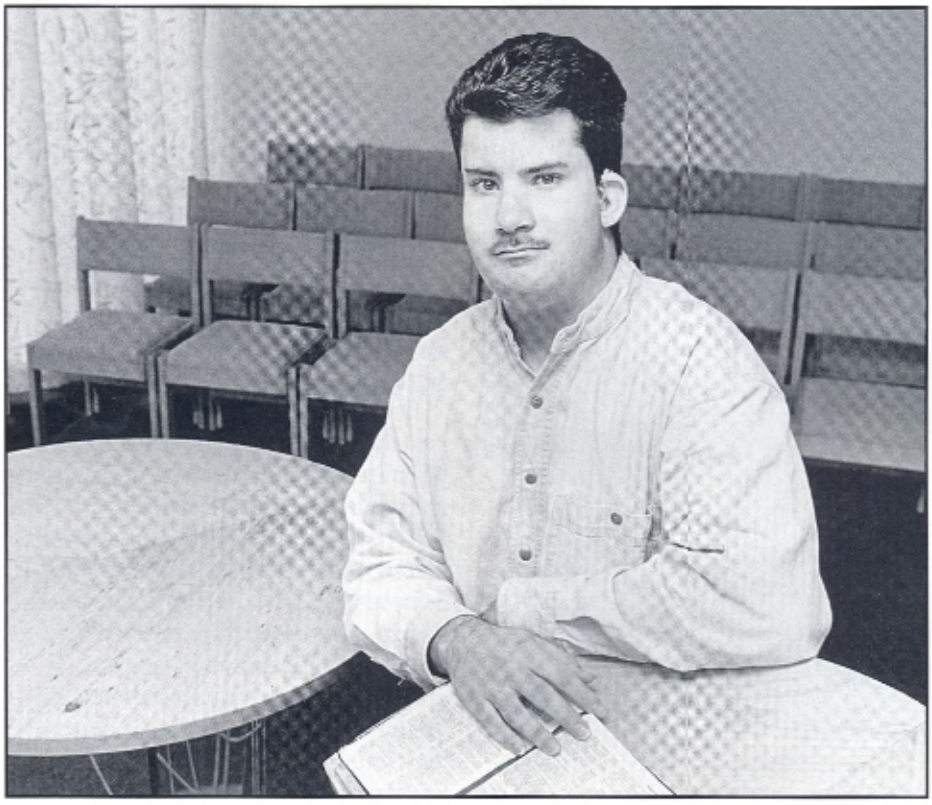
For more information about services for deaf gays and lesbians, contact:

Nationally:
Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf:
(514) 521-3899 (TTY)

In Rochester:
Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley
Peer facilitators hotline:
(716) 244-8640 (V/TTY) weekday evenings
Lesbian and Gay Youth of Rochester:
(716) 251-9604 (V)

Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays:
(716) 865-0120 (V)

At RIT:
Bi-Gala (c/o RIT's Student Government office): (716) 475-2203 (V/TTY)

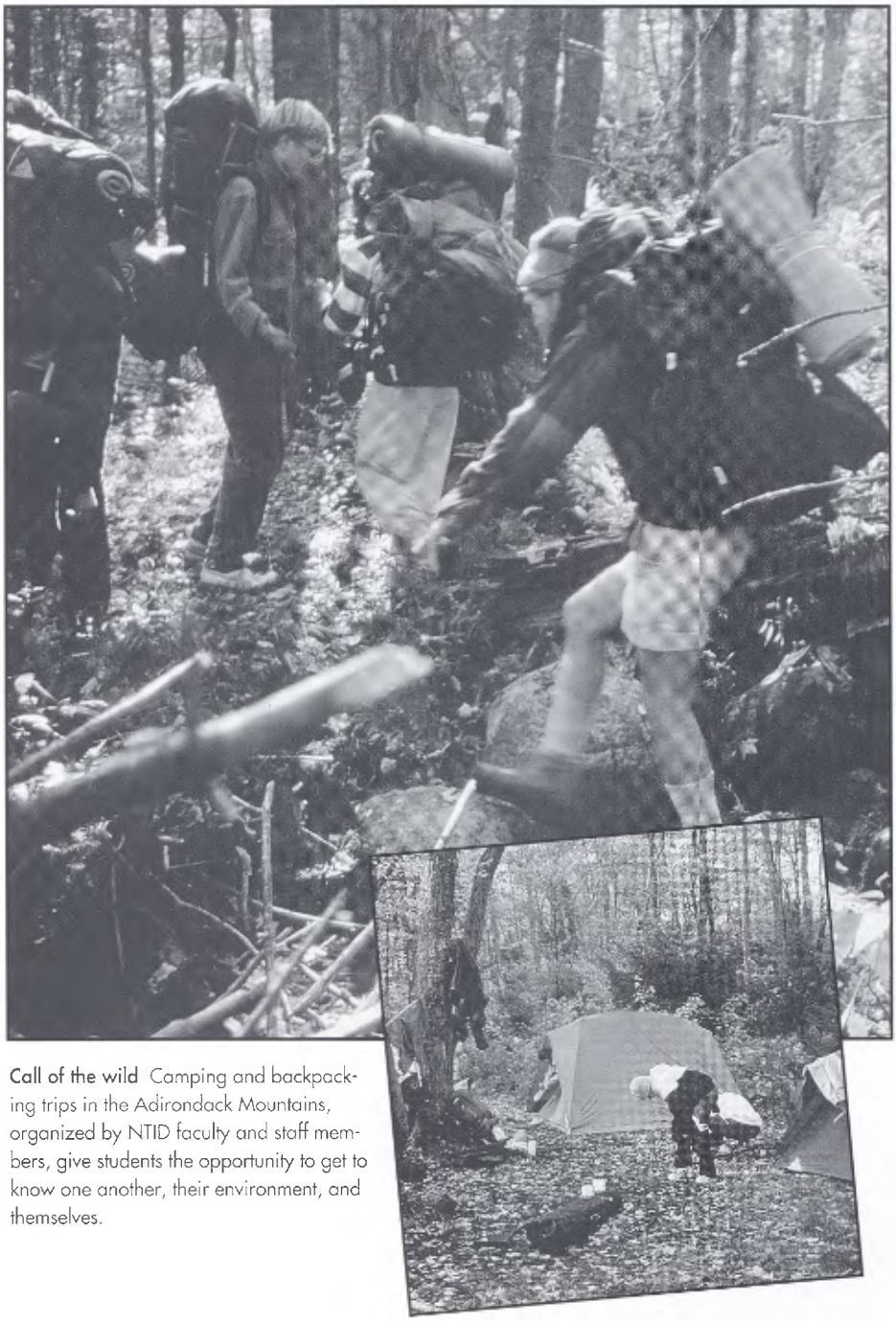


Tommy Curley

Learning on Location

Students learn about the world and themselves through experiential education

by Pamela Seabon



Call of the wild Camping and backpacking trips in the Adirondack Mountains, organized by NTID faculty and staff members, give students the opportunity to get to know one another, their environment, and themselves.

When Samuel Riggs, third-year ophthalmic optical finishing technology student, went on a four-day camping trip to the Adirondack Mountains last fall, he learned a lot more than how to read a compass and identify trail markers. Riggs learned a great deal about himself.

"One thing I learned about myself," he says, "is that I can't always expect people to approach me for friendship. Sometimes I have to take the initiative to get to know others.

"I am a shy person and usually do things alone," Riggs adds. "During the camping trip, students were paired and did most things with one another. There was a lot of group interaction and support."

For more than 20 years, NTID faculty and staff members have offered Outdoor Experiential Education (OEE) programs and activities to help students become more aware and appreciative of their environment and themselves.

In addition to providing students with outside-of-class academic learning opportunities, OEE programs encourage interaction, development of leadership skills, and personal growth.

James Kersting and William Yust envisioned such benefits when they began taking students on trips to the Adirondacks 15 years ago.

"We try to interest students who are having a difficult time adjusting to campus life," says Kersting, career development counselor in the department of applied art and computer graphics. "Being away from home for the first time and becoming independent and self-reliant can often be a challenge for new students."

Hanging in there Outdoor experiential education activities offer students an avenue to self-discovery. Here, Trever Brown learns to rappel down the side of a campus building.

Last October, Kersting and Yust, mental health counselor in the department of psychological services, took eight first- and second-year students to the High Falls and Cat Mountain areas of the Adirondacks to learn, as Riggs did, more about the world around them and themselves.

Geared with backpacks, tents, wool clothing, freeze-dried foods, a few toiletries, and a lot of anticipation and excitement, the 10 trekkers set off for the mountainous outdoors four hours northeast of the RIT campus.

Upon arrival, students were paired as co-leaders. After being taught how to set up and maintain campsites, prepare food, and read a map and compass, each pair of co-leaders took over for a day, guiding the others as they hiked through the mountains.

"We expected the assigned co-leaders to take responsibility for their followers by making sure that everyone kept with the pace of the hike and by handling any problems that surfaced.

"Our idea," he continues, "was to put students in charge of one another in order to promote a cooperative group effort. We wanted students to build their self-confidence and to identify and use skills that they possessed but might not have been apparent to them."

The students learned that being a leader requires an ability to listen to and address the concerns of others in addition to providing guidance.

"I was a co-leader the first day," says Suzanne Trosclair, first-year applied art and computer graphics student. "It was tough keeping everyone together during hikes. When some students got tired, we stopped the entire group for a break. It was challenging dealing with the different attitudes and personalities. But it is an experience I will not forget."

By the fourth and final day, everyone was exhausted and irritable.

"Things can get pretty intense on a busy outing like this," says Kersting. "We hiked four hours the first day and by the last day were up to hiking eight hours.

"It is a physically and emotionally challenging experience for students," he continues. "We encouraged the students to work out issues with one another without Bill's or my assistance. We expected them to cooperate with one another."

In addition to being tired at the end of the outing, students also were pleased with their accomplishments.

"By the last day of the trip," Kersting notes, "the students were proud of themselves, giving pats on the back and support to one another."

Teamwork and cooperation are key elements to the success of OEE programs, as 20-year NTID veteran Kent Winchester, who helped establish many of these programs, can attest.

"Learning by doing is one of the best ways for students to gather and retain information," says Winchester, developmental educational specialist in the department of human development. "Through experiential education programs, students must commit themselves to a project and be willing to adapt to personal and social requirements of a group in order to succeed."

Along with promoting group interaction, many OEE exercises, such as rappelling from rooftops and negotiating an obstacle course of ropes, cables, and wooden beams set up in the Red Barn located on the west side of the RIT campus, are designed to help students overcome inhibitions and fears.

"I always have been afraid of heights," says Toni Williams, second-year applied computer technology student who last fall attempted to rappel from the three-story rooftop of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Building. Although she received adequate coaching by Winchester, she simply could not bring herself to do the exercise.

"I kept looking over the edge of the building and realized that I was much too fearful to jump," says Williams. "I just couldn't do it."

Williams, like other students who do not complete the exercise, was not penalized for her apprehension.

"If some students feel that the exercise is too demanding or challenging," says Winchester, "they are not forced to go through with it.

"We're not looking to take advantage of people's differing abilities. We're more interested in having them try new things and then share what they have learned with others."

Mindy Hopper, cross-cultural educator in the department of human development, finds that outside-of-class academic activities also offer good opportunities for students to learn about different cultures. For the last six years, she has helped bridge communication between hearing and deaf students by

Withstanding the cold NTID students, faculty, and friends made the best of the elements in -20 degree weather during a winter outing last season in Italy, New York, organized in part by faculty members James Mallory and Ted Lord.

offering a three-day retreat of silence during fall or winter quarter.

The Silent Retreat, held at a campsite 45 minutes west of campus, brings together both deaf and hearing students (most of whom have taken sign language courses) to interact, learn about one another's cultures, and grow together.

Organized by Hopper and student development assistants who are deaf, activities throughout the weekend focus on cultural and individual differences and allow for the discussion of stereotypes and misconceptions.

"There is too much prejudice and discrimination in the world due to ignorance," says Richard Postl, third-year social work student and student development assistant, who led several activities related to cultural sensitivity during last fall's retreat. "Through activities that promote physical contact and communication among group members, we can accomplish our goal of increasing awareness of and appreciation for one another's differences."

One of 15 hearing participants last fall, Dierdra Barber, fourth-year illustration student, agrees and adds that programs like the Silent Retreat awaken the campus community to problems that should not go unaddressed.

"Hearing and deaf students both have the attitude that they think it is up to the other person to initiate communication," says Barber. "The reality is that we have to cooperate in order to understand one another."

During the retreat, students are not allowed to communicate using their voice, which means that signed discussions often leave hearing students feeling isolated and frustrated—feelings similar to those commonly experienced by many deaf people.

"We want students to see how deaf people feel in a world that is not always sensitive to their needs," says Hopper.

"The retreats not only give deaf and hearing students an opportunity to interact with one another," she adds, "they also give them a chance to develop and nurture friendships."

Omobowale Ayorinde, assistant professor in the department of photo/media technologies, also has organized an OEE program that encourages students to become familiar with another culture.

For the last 10 years during a long weekend each spring, Ayorinde has taken six to eight visual communications students to Ottawa, Canada, to photograph and experience an international culture.

"The trip allows students to step outside and explore a culture other than their own," says Ayorinde, who sometimes is accompanied by Paula Grcevic, associate professor in the department of applied art and computer graphics. "Ottawa offers a variety of experiences through its visual wonders and rich cultural presence."

Ayorinde believes that Canada's capital is the perfect place to spark students' creativity. He cites the magnificence of the Parliament Building and the Museum of Civilization as well as the works of renowned artists housed in the Canadian Museum for Contemporary Photography as attractions for the young visitors.

Isias Eaton and Heather Kanady-Humphrey, two of eight students who traveled north in March, certainly were impressed.

"I was fascinated by the variety of illustrations and photographs at the Canadian Museum," says Eaton, first-year photographic illustration student. "Artists with differing experiences and various cultural backgrounds were on exhibit. I was really impressed by the works."

"I learned and grew a lot from the trip," says Kanady-Humphrey, second-year photo/media technologies student. "We were allowed to wander throughout the museums and take photographs of anything we wanted."

While learning in the classroom familiarizes students with theory and basic skills needed for technical careers, Ayorinde believes that education is enhanced through experiential learning opportunities.

"An academic education acquaints students with options and materials," says Ayorinde. "Experiential opportunities help prepare them for situations in and outside of the workplace."

25 years of publishing

FOCUS On FOCUS

by Lynne Bohlman DeWilde

Each and every year of the last score plus five, *FOCUS* magazine has accompanied NTID on its journey through maturity.

That journey has taken the Institute and *FOCUS* from a nerve-wracking but exhilarating beginning, through all the firsts, through the growing pains and the rubella bulge of the mid-1980s, through the awkward times and the highlights, to today as the Institute in its 25th year stands poised at the door of new beginnings once again.

To experience a capsulized version of that journey, you're now invited to flip through the pages of time and the approximately 100 issues of *FOCUS* magazine that have been published since 1968.

A modest beginning

"NTID Welcomes First Freshman Class Early in September" reads the banner headline on the front page of the first issue of *FOCUS*, a four-page black-and-white newsletter printed in November 1968 and edited by Ray Ellis.

The article describes how Dr. Robert Frisina, NTID's first director, welcomed the Institute's premier class of 71 students.

"We will be living in a glass bowl, and the entire nation will be watching us very closely," Frisina assured the NTID pioneers.

The article goes on to say: "In closing, Dr. Frisina told the class that they were good guys and good gals. 'You're all cool cats, and—in your vernacular—keep your cool. Good luck to all of you.'"

The April 1969 issue of *FOCUS*, edited by Dr. John Cox, currently chairperson of NTID's applied art and computer graphics department, reports on educational costs for NTID's second year. For the entire academic year, tuition, room, board, and fees cost students $1,341. Today, those expenses are more than $10,000 per year.

Throughout the next several issues, *FOCUS* reports on the doubling of NTID's staff, construction of temporary facilities near the College of Science, new programs, Dr. Paul Miller's ascent as RIT's new president, and deaf athletes at RIT.

As he looks back on the *FOCUS* issues produced under his watch, Cox finds the publications raw by today's standards. Still, he says, he fondly recalls "the excitement associated with the whole NTID enterprise taking off. The Institute and *FOCUS* were fresh. There was a lot of excitement and experimentation."

Metamorphosis of a magazine

The first magazine-style *FOCUS*, printed in January 1971 and edited by Jack Smith, currently RIT vice president for communications, signals a dramatic change in the publication's look. The cover consists of a single image—either a photograph or illustration—printed using different colors for the image and background. The nameplate, redesigned for the October-November 1971 issue, is anchored in the upper lefthand corner and also is printed in color.

Smith's nearly five-year tenure as editor, until the November-December 1975 issue, marks a period of evolution and subtle changes that lead to a more sophisticated look for the publication.

"While we initiated a more sophisticated design," Smith says, "it doesn't compare to the level that *FOCUS* has achieved today. Now you wouldn't be afraid to compare the magazine—in terms of both writing and design—with publications produced by any other college or university."

Under Smith's leadership, the content of *FOCUS* changes as well.

"We began to focus on outcomes, on the job placement of students," he notes. "We felt that was what Congress was interested in knowing—what was our final product?

"The placement of graduates in good jobs gave us a boost," he adds, "a sense that what we were doing was worthwhile."

In addition to stories on placements of graduates and the enthusiasm of faculty and staff members, the 16–20 pages of each issue feature stories about many firsts at the growing Institute: "NTID Students Are Pioneers in Co-op Educational Program," "Deaf Student Earns Printing Management Degree: 1st in Nation," "NTID Construction Underway," "Summer Program Helps Ease Transition for New Students," "Students Establish Government," "NTID Grad Ann Daltry 1st to Pass State Medical Technician Exam," "First NTID Alumni Club Established."

Other stories focus on campus happenings, such as graduation, the establishment of new programs, the progress of deaf athletes, appointments of Institute administrators, and student awards.

Publication of the article "Prejudice on NTID Campus—Deaf Faculty, Staff Outstanding" in the December 1972 issue marks what appears to be *FOCUS*' first foray into the arena of controversial topics. Upon further reading, however, it becomes obvious that the story isn't controversial at all.

The article acknowledges that a positive kind of "prejudice" exists on campus—a belief that NTID's deaf faculty and staff members are important contributors to the success of students. The story ends with a quote from Alice Beardsley, NTID's first interpreter: "'I may be prejudiced,' Alice said, 'but the deaf at NTID are making great contributions to the school and to students. But then it seems to be a prejudice strongly felt throughout NTID.'"

"We began to focus on outcomes, on the job placement of students. We felt that was what Congress was interested in knowing—what was our final product?"

Ever evolving

With the last issue of 1975, Eileen Biser, currently assistant professor in the liberal arts support department, becomes editor of *FOCUS*. The magazine, which continues to be published approximately every other month, still reports on campus news, though less so, and begins to include more feature-length articles.

Four-page articles, such as "Chicago's Stars" about graduates living in the Windy City and "Typically Untypical Faculty" about the industrial backgrounds of many NTID teachers, begin to appear throughout the magazine, which by this time has grown to 24–28 pages.

With the Fall 1979 issue, *FOCUS*, briefly under the leadership of Joan Cooley, makes further design changes.

Under the editorship of Susan J. Watson, *FOCUS* begins with the Spring 1980 edition to publish theme issues. That is, the majority of stories in each issue revolve around a particular topic, including communication, the arts, placement, teaching and learning, research, technical and professional education programs, alumni, and parents.

It is the Spring/Summer 1983 parents issue that marks a dramatic design change for *FOCUS*, edited since the Winter 1980 edition by Marcia B. Dugan, currently special assistant to the director for public information.

A single color is used as a design

Because of the dedication and creativity of . . . talented writers, designers, editors, and photographers . . . *FOCUS* remains an ever-evolving entity as does the Institute it represents.

element throughout the inside of the magazine; previously the magazine's "guts" had with few exceptions been printed entirely in black and white.

"When I inherited *FOCUS*," says Dugan, "everything written indicated that NTID was the best, the most avant garde. *FOCUS* only accentuated the positive. My staff and I felt that we wanted to portray how the Institute was unique and the good things, but also that the Institute was not perfect and had learned and changed as a result of its mistakes."

Despite this significant shift, Dugan's *FOCUS* issues continue to downplay controversy.

"Today the magazine's even better," she says, "because we've begun to present different points of view. We can allow people to draw their own conclusions without telling them what to think."

Throughout Dugan's and Kathleen Sullivan Smith's (Spring 1985–Summer 1988) tenures as *FOCUS* editor, the magazine, by this time printed quarterly, makes a clear shift from events and programs to people.

Under Smith, currently senior editor in the marketing communications department, *FOCUS*' emphasis is on interesting individuals who are in some way connected to NTID. Through the people featured, NTID is portrayed as a vital, thriving, well-connected institution of higher learning.

Samples of story topics from the era include visits to NTID by the likes of Mikhail Baryshnikov, Louise Fletcher, Peter Jennings, and Marlee Matlin; a student who wins an international mime competition; a variety of successful graduates, including one who runs his own cookie business; a staff member who is a skilled juggler; a graduate with Peace Corps experience in Ecuador; the travels of NTID's performing arts groups; and a faculty member who spent his sabbatical in England.

With the Winter/Spring 1989 issue, on whose cover an NTID faculty member can be found standing on his head, Vincent Dollard becomes *FOCUS* editor.

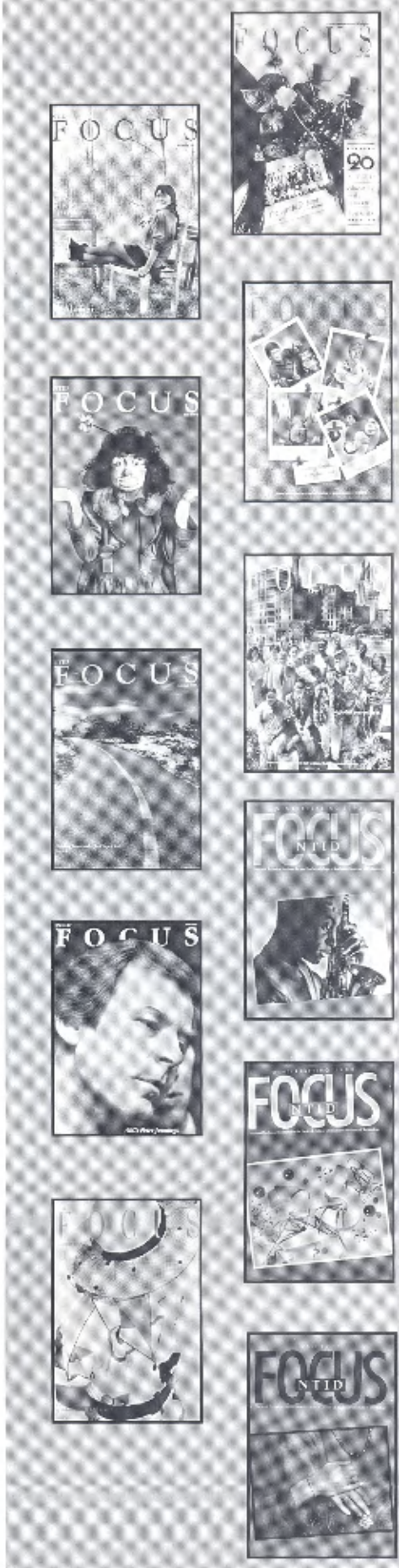
Past is prologue

As the last decade of the century begins, *FOCUS*, edited since the Winter/Spring 1990 issue by Lynne Bohlman DeWilde, clearly remains a public relations tool for NTID, yet the content of stories reflects a more mature Institute that is willing to admit that it grapples with tough issues.

Among some of the more sensitive topics recently covered by *FOCUS*, which now is 32–36 pages each issue and printed three times a year, are the Institute's efforts to develop a fair yet effective communication policy, the difficulties related to achieving social mainstreaming on campus, AIDS in the deaf community, drug and alcohol abuse on campus, and the hazards of cumulative trauma disorder injuries among RIT interpreters.

Responding to a readers' survey (the second in the magazine's history; the first appeared in the Spring 1982 issue), *FOCUS* undergoes an extensive face-lift beginning with the Winter/Spring 1992 issue. The nameplate goes through yet another redesign, the cover photo is shrunk slightly and placed lower on the cover, and the contents of the magazine are separated into brief departmental stories that generally focus on people or programs and longer feature, ensemble stories generally about issues or events.

Because of the dedication and creativity of the talented writers, designers, editors, and photographers who have contributed to the magazine over the past 25 years, *FOCUS* remains an ever-evolving entity as does the Institute it represents.



Instructional inventory

by Deborah R. Waltzer

On September 5, 1991, opening day of the 1991-92 RIT school year, Dr. William Rudnicki's 1984 red Saab 900 didn't follow its usual path.

Instead of taking him to the familiar RIT campus, Rudnicki's dependable wheels veered west toward the State University of New York at Buffalo's library for the first leg of a 10-week professional development leave to research employment trends in business and industry.

Although he says he felt "guilty" about missing the school year's first few hectic days, Rudnicki, chairperson of NTID's department of business occupations, knew that his study would provide personal and professional stimulation as well as long-term benefits for his department's 190 students and 18 faculty members.

"Creative use of professional development leaves like Bill's is a productive way of maintaining our responsiveness to the needs of business and industry," says Dr. James DeCaro, NTID dean. "Our colleagues in the private sector are eager to offer sound advice, and we should take advantage of their counsel."

Prepared to seek that advice after researching employment projections, Rudnicki flew to Atlanta, Boston, and New York City to meet with human resource specialists at six large companies and organizations, including Morgan Stanley & Company Inc., a New York-based financial services firm; and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Adequate training and job preparation were priority issues for most of Rudnicki's contacts.

"We're looking for new hires who bring to the job a broad base of skills that can be built upon," says Daniel Schnabel, college relations manager for Morgan Stanley's finance administration operations division, with whom Rudnicki conferred.

While Morgan Stanley continues its focus on firm-wide training and staff development, other firms, Rudnicki discovered, are scaling back.

"I learned that because of our nation's recession and corporate downsizing, many companies' training resources have been compressed," says Rudnicki. "With a reduction in middle management, clerical and administrative staff members are expected to perform a greater variety of tasks and are losing their jobs more quickly if they are not adequately trained to assume additional responsibilities.

"But our business occupations graduates *are* prepared, and they excel on the job because they receive comprehensive classroom training in the latest technical equipment and software," he continues. "We teach students about non-technical aspects of the workplace as well, including principles of authority, the importance of appraisals, consensus building and teamwork, and the politics of a hierarchical organization."

Dr. William Rudnicki

As a result of his study as well as reports from cooperative work experience employers and graduates, Rudnicki concluded that his department's curriculum is appropriate and would continue to provide adequate training. ■

RIT a perfect setting for this gem

by Pamela Seabon

It's gems like Jane Pulver that help keep the sparkle in RIT's crown of academic leadership and commitment.

The only deaf woman on RIT's Board of Trustees, Pulver ensures that the particular concerns of deaf people and women at RIT are addressed. As a member of NTID's National Advisory Group, this former teacher of deaf students brings special insight to the task of informing the policies that govern the operation of the Institute. Pulver also is a member of the Board of Directors of The NTID Foundation, through which she helps garner private support for Institute programs and students.

"Jane is a professional and a warm human being," says RIT President Albert Simone. "She strongly supports RIT and is dedicated to its endeavors."

An example of Pulver's commitment to the Institute is exhibited through a strategy she and her husband, Donald, have initiated with graduates in an effort to increase alumni support of NTID's endowment, a principle source from which the Institute provides scholarships to students and supports other ongoing priorities.

In celebration of NTID's 25th anniversary, the Pulvers have offered to match all contributions to the endowment made by alumni between July 1, 1993 and June 30, 1994.

"The idea for the challenge came about following two alumni get-togethers I hosted in Philadelphia during the last two years," says Pulver. "I noticed how comfortable and happy the former classmates seemed with one another. They discussed their lives, experiences, and jobs."

It was from those conversations that Pulver realized the significance of NTID in the lives of its graduates as well as the importance of alumni remaining in contact with one another and the Institute.

"Making a contribution to the endowment," says Pulver, "allows graduates to give back a little to the Institute that gave them so much and at the same time enhance educational opportunities for today's deaf students."

Pulver, who used to teach at Central New York School for the Deaf in Rome, Rochester (New York) School for the Deaf, and Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, currently is an active board member of several schools and organizations dedicated to the needs of deaf individuals. Pulver also is an enthusiastic advocate of adult literacy.

"I've been tutoring deaf adults in a literacy program in Philadelphia for four years," says Pulver. "It's my way of sharing what I've learned and helping others to feel good about themselves.

Jane Pulver

"When other people are happy," she adds, "so am I."

Pulver, says Michael Catillaz, director of development for The NTID Foundation, is indeed a valued resource for the college as well as a good example for students.

"Jane is a wonderful role model for young people who are deaf," says Catillaz. "She graduated with a baccalaureate degree during a time when the needs of deaf students were not addressed. She committed herself and persevered because she appreciates the importance of a good education."

"When I attended Skidmore College, there were no educational access services such as interpreters and notetakers for deaf students," says Pulver. "RIT today is a national model for providing deaf students with a competitive technical education in a mainstream environment."

Pfeasting with Pfuntner

by Deborah R. Waltzer

As Mark Pfuntner, banquet manager at the Hyatt Regency Rochester, sails through a ballroom being dressed for a corporate luncheon, he notices that one of the scheduled banquet servers is missing. He asks about her whereabouts.

"Out with a fever," bounces back the answer from across the room. Pfuntner nods sympathetically, noting with satisfaction that the burning banquet server has been replaced by another able employee.

In the hotel business, in which attention to detail is critical, Pfuntner "pushes himself to be extra perceptive," says Norman Canfield Jr., Hyatt general manager.

"Mark has a sixth sense about whether arrangements are happening as planned. He rarely misses a thing," he adds.

Attention to detail includes taking extensive notes before, during, and after functions. Pfuntner and fellow food and beverage managers prepare for major events by asking themselves such questions as: "Will the bar get 'hit' heavily when the business meeting ends?" or "Will room service be flooded with calls tonight?" or "This group loved iced tea when they met here last year—do we have enough on hand?"

To help him manage such details and banquet services for

Pformulating a game plan Mark Pfuntner, banquet manager, reviews an event contract with Peggy Hourihan, banquet captain and fellow RIT alumnus.

It's all part of the job Taste-testing executive chef Michael Koenig's culinary delights is one of Pfuntner's most palatable duties.

the two-year-old downtown property's 250 annual corporate and private functions, Pfuntner, 1989 graduate of RIT's hotel and resort management program and currently the hotel's only deaf manager, relies on his staff of two assistant managers, two banquet captains, seven set-up personnel, four bartenders, and 30 waiters and waitresses.

As a team, Pfuntner and his supervisors and employees have made a pact that their varying abilities to perceive sound will function merely as a distinction—not a barrier—among them.

Hired as assistant banquet manager in February 1992, Pfuntner, 27, was promoted to banquet manager exactly one year later. His miniscule kitchen-side office belies the expansive scope of his job responsibilities during 50- to 60-hour work weeks, which include client interaction as well as staff training and supervision.

"We're really pleased with Mark as a manager, an employee, and an individual," says Canfield, noting that Pfuntner was selected by the hotel's eight-member executive committee last winter as "Manager of the Quarter."

"Mark is respected by his employees, who enjoy working with and for him," he adds.

Although today he sails through his many responsibilities, Pfuntner's performance was not always so polished in his early days at RIT, recalls a favorite teacher and academic advisor. Warren Sackler, associate professor in RIT's School of Food, Hotel, and Travel Management, remembers Pfuntner as "pretty naive."

"When it came time for Mark to go out on his first co-op [cooperative work experience], he was uncomfortable about relocating far from his family in Rochester," recalls Sackler. "I finally convinced him to go on a six-month co-op at the former Marriott Crown Plaza Resort in Hilton Head, South Carolina."

The result?

"Mark had one heck of a good time at Hilton Head and made a lot of new friends," says Sackler. "He returned to campus a new person, recharged and refocused."

Following this work experience, Pfuntner knew in his heart that hotel management was his calling. A second six-month co-op at the Rochester Thruway Marriott to fulfill bachelor's degree requirements followed by a 19-month position at the Hyatt Regency in Columbus, Ohio, led to his current job.

With a short-term goal of entering hotel corporate sales and long-term goal of general management, possibly at a golf resort to satisfy his craving for the sport, Pfuntner is learning and applying various management techniques.

"I encourage my staff to look at every possible solution to a dilemma," says Pfuntner. "I'm here for our guests, but I also want to make my employees happy.

"My management style is hands-on," he explains. "If we're in a time bind during an event, I'll jump in to help."

Although usually most appreciated, Pfuntner's participative style got him into a bit of trouble recently, chuckles Len Mattison, coffee break captain.

At the last minute, a client decided to switch his group's coffee break from the hallway to inside the meeting room.

In typical fashion, Pfuntner jumped in to help Mattison make the switch, but while hurriedly stacking 100 coffee cups in pyramid formation, the entire sculpture crashed to the floor. Pfuntner turned crimson, recalls Mattison sympathetically, who gently suggested to his boss that he retreat to the kitchen to bring out condiments instead.

"Mark is the best boss I've ever had," says Mattison. "He's easy to get along with, listens well, and is open to suggestions. Most important, not only is he my boss, he's also my friend."

Canfield concurs about Pfuntner's skills. "I'm excited about Mark's accomplishments to date," he says. "We're pleased to have him on our team. He has a bright future ahead of him." ▬

JONATHAN HOPKINS

by Kathleen S. Smith

The pungent smell of wrapped cedar and sage wafted down the hallway as the pulsating beat of a Native-American tribal dance played on a tape recorder.

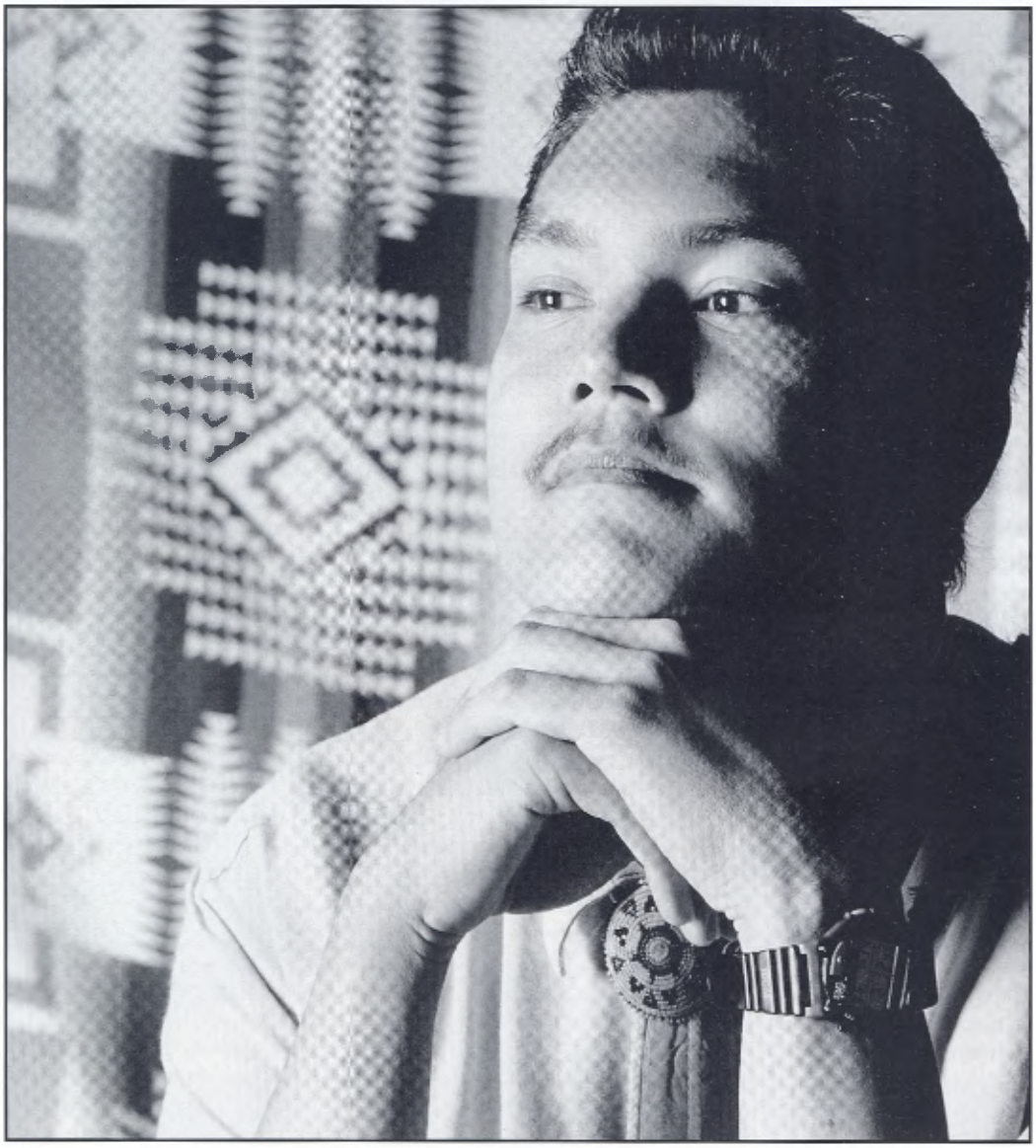
For two hours in early May, Jonathan Peter Hopkins transformed NTID's spacious visitors center into an intimate, ritual-filled room as he presented the workshop "A Personalized Alaskan Native-American Ethnic History."

For Hopkins, associate interpreter in RIT's interpreting services department, conducting a workshop for fellow faculty and staff members was quite a role reversal. As an interpreter, he is accustomed to facilitating, not originating, conversation. But encouraged by co-workers and friends, Hopkins decided to share a bit of his fascinating life story.

Hopkins was born to Tlingit parents in southern Alaska 29 years ago. When he was an infant, for reasons that aren't clear to him, he was sent to a Boston adoption agency and subsequently adopted by a family in rural Maine.

"Ayuh," he says, affecting a Down Eastern drawl. "I grew up on a sheep farm."

That farm was the first of many places in which he would live as the child of an Episcopal minister given to frequent relocations.



His childhood was less than idyllic, marred by strained relations with his adoptive family (who are Caucasian) and the nagging feeling that he was "different" from his siblings and friends.

That feeling was confirmed in the summer of Hopkins' 12th year, when he met a young Passamaquoddy Native-American boy who befriended Hopkins through a community summer exchange program and awakened in him a desire to find his own Native-American roots.

That same summer, Hopkins also met a 6-year-old deaf girl, one of several deaf children at a church-sponsored summer camp. She taught Hopkins the manual alphabet and assimilated him into the group of deaf campers.

That friendship would later provide a career direction as Hopkins, in his early 20s, pondered what to do after leaving the University of North Dakota.

Rekindling his interest in deafness, and perhaps inspired in part by his adoptive sister who worked at the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, Hopkins enrolled in NTID's interpreter training program. He became a full-time RIT interpreter soon afterward.

"Jonathan is a dedicated individual," says his friend and manager, Doni LaRock. "He is on campus several nights a week volunteering his talents to ensure access for deaf students to clubs and activities."

In addition to interpreting for myriad student events, Hopkins offers his unique cultural perspective to a number of campus organizations, including RIT's Commission for Promoting Pluralism, the NTID Affirmative Action Advisory Committee, RIT's Native-American Student Association, and RIT's Martin Luther King Day Committee as well as the Rochester Urban League's "Reducing Racial Polarization" program. He is a former advisor to the NTID Ebony Club, which voted him outstanding advisor in 1989.

"On a superficial level, I suppose Jonathan gets asked to join so many committees because he is one of a kind," says LaRock. "On the other hand, he works very hard and contributes greatly to each of those groups."

Hopkins acknowledges that he is "very committed" to the idea of cultural diversity.

"I have a low tolerance for disrespect and injustice," he says, remembering some of the insensitivities that he suffered as a child.

"Each time I changed schools there was always a lot of talk about the 'Indian boy,'" Hopkins recalls. "I remember being asked whether I was born in an igloo or in a tepee. I replied that I was born in a hospital, just like everyone else."

Today, Hopkins is intensely proud of his heritage. He attends local and regional Native-American events in addition to participating in workshops and activities on campus that promote cultural diversity.

"I was impressed with Jonathan's willingness to share his story on such a personal level," says workshop participant Dr. Ruth Verlinde, coordinator of captioning in NTID's instructional television and media services department.

Verlinde, who has served with Hopkins on NTID's Affirmative Action Advisory Committee for three years, says, "Jonathan has tried hard to remain true to himself."

Hopkins knows that some call him "militant" for his outspoken views on issues related to the treatment and depiction of Native Americans in popular culture (as mascots in professional sports, for example), but he firmly believes that, "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem."

He is deeply spiritual, practicing daily rituals on a small kneeling rug with "no room to move around, so I'll focus."

"I give credence to the sun, the moon, Mother Earth, and the stars," he says. "I ask for strength and guidance, and I give thanks. There's always something to be thankful for."

As for returning someday to his Tlingit birthplace, Hopkins says, "Perhaps. When the spirit moves me, I will go."

In the meantime, he is creating a strong identity on campus.

"I try to be honest, inclusive, and nonjudgmental in how I live my life," he says. "I truly believe in equality."

Favorite foods: Anything Native American . . . fried bread, corn soup, Indian tacos. I also love Mexican food . . . enchiladas, salsa. And popcorn!

Best advice I ever received: "Great Spirit, grant that I may not criticize my neighbor until I have walked a mile in his moccasins."

Favorite vacation/relaxation spot: Anywhere with my creator—preferably outdoors with Mother Earth and nature.

Where I'd like to be 10 years from now: Alaska, with my people, the Tlingits, during a powwow or pot luck.

Why I work at NTID: Because I enjoy the college atmosphere, the diversity of the population, and my profession.

"Each time I changed schools there was always a lot of talk about the 'Indian boy.' I remember being asked whether I was born in an igloo or in a tepee. I replied that I was born in a hospital, just like everyone else."

A singular collection

Reviewed by Dr. Karen Christie

No Walls of Stone: An Anthology of Literature by Deaf and Hard of Hearing Writers

Edited by Jill Jepson

Gallaudet University Press, 1992

The expectations that readers might have when picking up a copy of *No Walls of Stone: An Anthology of Literature by Deaf and Hard of Hearing Writers* would indicate a great deal about their world view and their view of deaf people. Since the creation of any anthology presents a challenging process of making choices, the responsibility of being sensitive to audience expectations and guiding a perspective of the works as a whole rests in the hands of the editor.

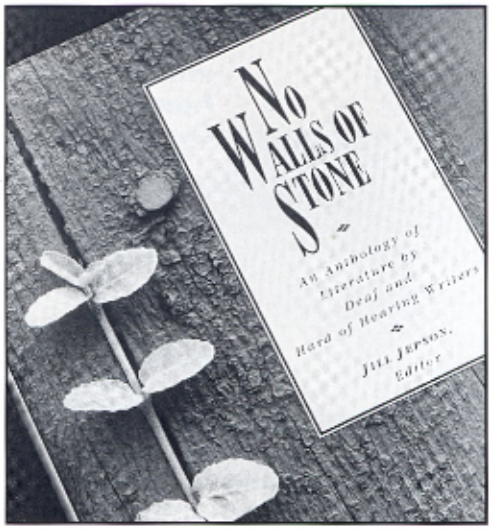
This collection of poetry, short stories, and essays, edited by anthropologist and linguist Jill Jepson, features the work of 23 contemporary deaf and hard-of-hearing writers and is the first published collection of its kind. Only David Wright, Frances M. Parsons, and NTID Professor Emeritus Robert F. Panara (whose clever "Lip Service" appears here) have been widely published previously.

Unique and impressive inclusions among the tremendous variety of poetry in the anthology are the works of Joseph Castronovo and RIT alumni Peter Cook and Eddie Swayze. These bilingual poets have created poetry in ASL (American Sign Language) and translated their poems into English for publication. Castronovo's poetry inspires a responsibility to and pride in the Deaf cultural heritage.

RIT alumnus Willy Conley's many talents as photographer, poet, short story writer, and dramatist are all impressively exhibited. His one-act play, "The Hearing Test," is one of the more powerful pieces in the anthology. This play, in which a young boy goes for his annual hearing evaluation, focuses on the deaf boy's views of the oppressive responses of his mother and audiologist.

"The Finer Things," a short story by Raymond Luczak, explores the choice a deaf gay man feels he must make between lovers and cultures. One of Luczak's poems, "Learning to Speak I," celebrates his ASL initiation. This poem is actually about finding his voice, which gives birth to "hands howling in volumes."

Hearing readers curious about what "not hearing" is like and people who have become deaf later in life will find most of the works in this anthology appealing. Writers Claire Blatchford, Mary Holmes, Karin Mango, Hannah Merker, Edna Shipley-Conner, and



David Wright all eloquently address the experience of hearing loss. These writers clearly compose from a different world view than the previously mentioned bilingual writers.

The anthology consists of a general introduction, and each author's work is prefaced by brief biographical notes. The introduction clarifies the editor's goal to break down walls between deaf and hearing people, but unfortunately the descriptions of identity, language, community, and culture are rife with errors, oversimplicity, and a strong (hearing) cultural bias.

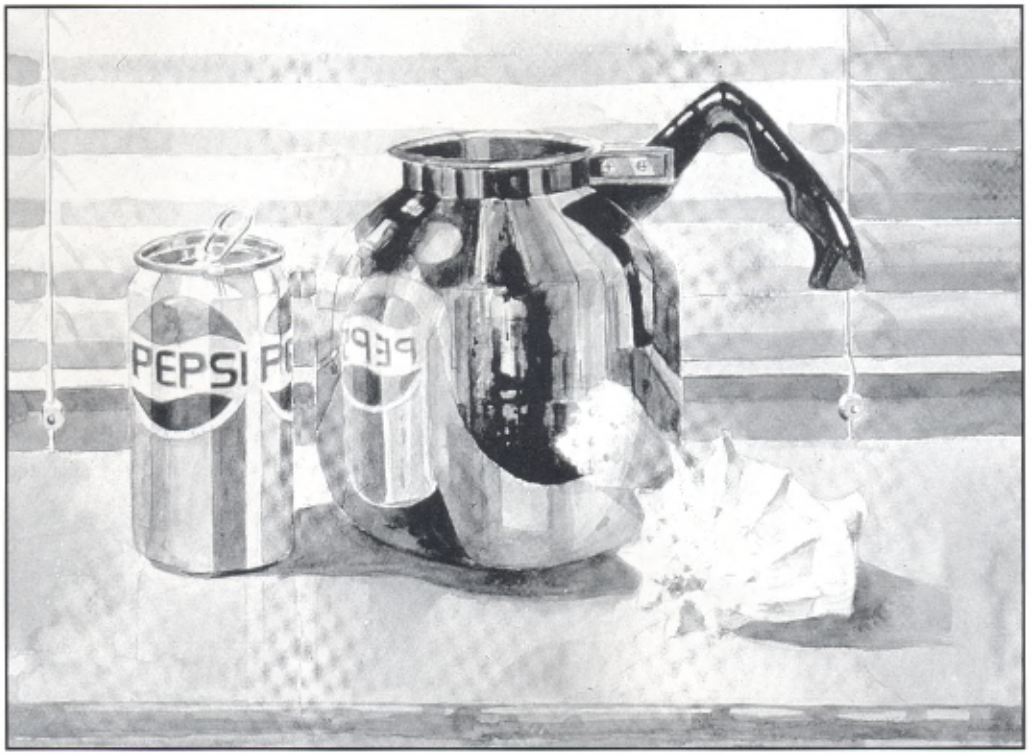
In general, the biographical sketches lack information vital to understanding the writers from a Deaf cultural perspective and tend to promote a pathological description with the inclusion of the writers' etiology and degree of hearing loss. This is surprising coming from an editor who is both an anthropologist and linguist.

The selection of these writers for a volume representing the "deaf experience" emphasizes a traditional view—that of "not hearing." When one writer asks, "How can I tell you about something that is not there?" many readers will wonder why so many works address just that.

Literature created by writers Conley and Cook, among others, testifies that indeed there is a literary tradition of Deaf culture in written English, and that literature that affirms Deaf cultural values can be shared and appreciated by all people.

The artistry of the works presented in this volume clearly indicates that these individuals are gifted writers; writers who—though they may share a common physical trait—are infinitely more divided by their cultural differences. ■

Dr. Karen Christie is assistant professor in NTID's English department. She was one of four co-coordinators of the first National ASL Literature Conference, held at NTID in fall 1991, and teaches the course "An Introduction to Deaf Literature," which she co-developed.



An exchange of art and culture In October, NTID faculty members and students visited Moscow while members of the All-Russian Federation of the Deaf traveled to Rochester as part of an international art exchange and exhibit. This watercolor, titled "Pepsi With Seashell," by third-year industrial design student Hee-Kwon Chon, was one of the works displayed in Moscow. Full details from *FOCUS'* Moscow correspondent will appear in the Winter/Spring 1994 issue.

Photography by Mark Benjamin

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

James Kersting

Field trips to self-discovery, p. 24

A. Sue Weisler

Authentically American, p. 34

Herbie Quinones

American Sign Language Cereal

On the funny side, p. 6