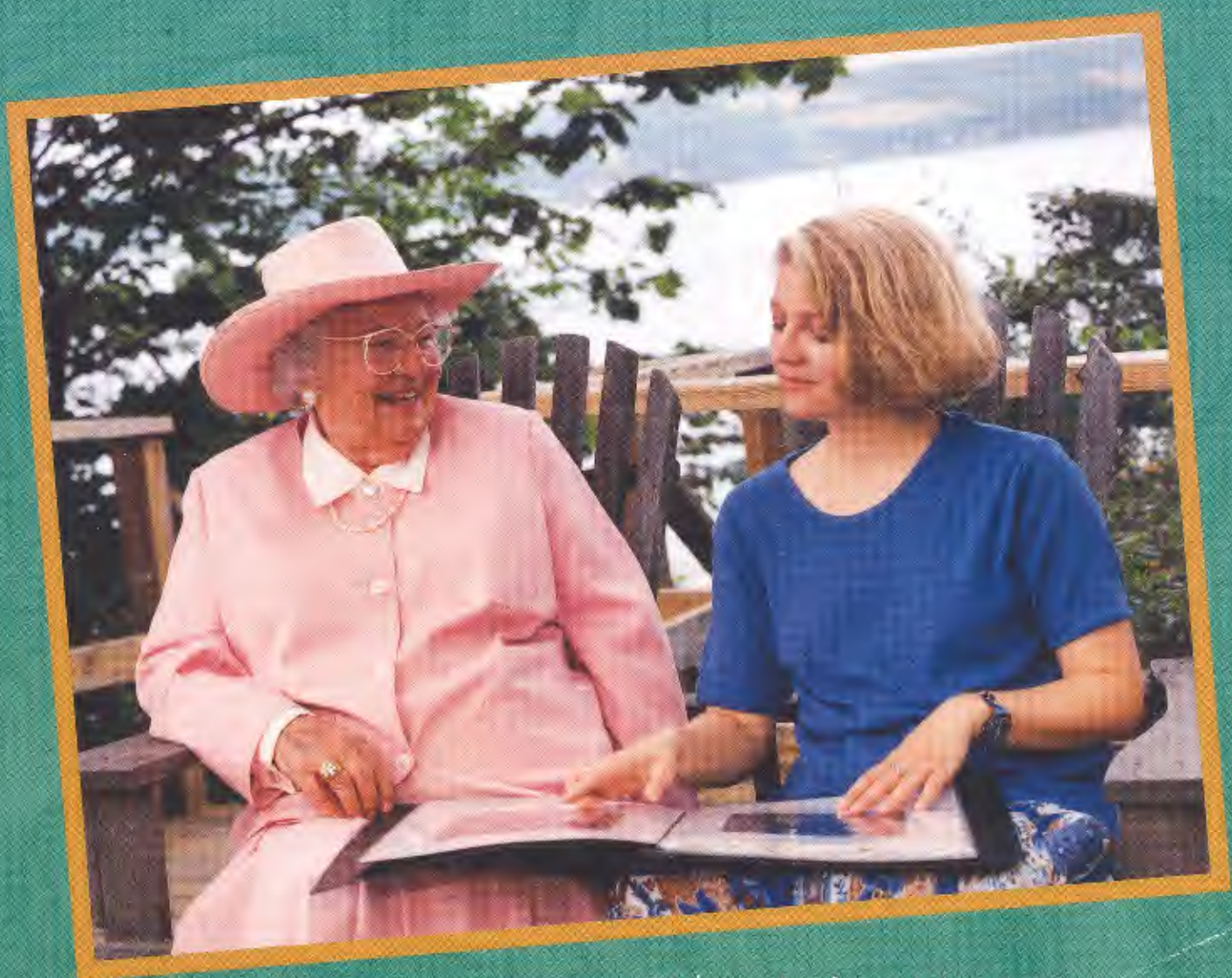


FALL 1995

FOCUS

NTID

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



Helping Students Achieve Their Dreams

WELCOME



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New beginnings

Amidst suitcases and nervous excitement, entering students arrive on campus for NTID's summer orientation program eager to start their first chapter of college life.

Photography by A. Sue Weisler

FALL 1995

FOCUS

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ABOUT THE COVER

Brought together by a common love of art, Institute benefactor Frances Carlberg King and photography student Lael White share a commitment to scholarship and opportunity. Learn how King and others are helping deaf students realize their educational goals in "A Worthy Investment" on page 10.

Cover photography by
Mark Benjamin

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FOCUS

NTID

Editor

Susan Cergol

Coordinator

Kathleen S. Smith

Writers

James Graves

Wendy Levin

Beth M. Pessin

Kathryn Schmitz

Debbie Waltzer

Art Director

Colleen Clarke, RIT Communications

Photography

A. Sue Weisler—pp. 3, 6, 11, 12, 14
(top left), 22, 24, 27

Mark Benjamin—pp. 4, 5

Courtesy Ethan Sinnott—p. 7

Kim Hurdelbrink—p. 9

Courtesy The NTID Foundation—p. 13

Michael Spencer—p. 14 (bottom left)

Courtesy NTID Performing Arts

Department—pp. 14 (top right), 17, 19

Rodman Reilly—pp. 14 (bottom right), 18

Courtesy Janis Cole—p. 16

Courtesy Jere Rentzel—pp. 20, 21, 23

James Cheng—p. 25

James Graves—p. 26

Isias Eaton—p. 28

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. The views expressed in guest columns do not necessarily reflect the position of NTID or *FOCUS* magazine.

RIT will admit and hire men and women, veterans, and persons with disabilities of any race, creed, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, or marital status, in compliance with all appropriate legislation.

This material was produced through an agreement between Rochester Institute of Technology and the U.S. Department of Education.

Marketing Communications

(716) 475-6853 (voice or TTY)

(716) 475-6500 (fax)

Recruitment and Admissions

(716) 475-6700 (voice or TTY)

(716) 475-2696 (fax)

The NTID Foundation

(716) 475-6836 (voice or TTY)

(716) 475-5949 (fax)

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

In today's fast-paced consumer marketplace, the word "investment" brings to mind a literal definition of pledging money in order to earn a financial return.

To those of us in higher education, however, the concept takes on a broader meaning in its reference to laying the groundwork for the future of today's students and tomorrow's professionals.

For more than a quarter century, NTID has invested in young deaf men and women through quality educational programs supported by superior faculty members and cooperative learning experiences that give students hands-on opportunities to apply their skills in the workplace.

The most obvious return on this investment is the success of our graduates in society and the workplace. At a time in our country's history when we are concerned about economic and technological competitiveness, deaf people are graduating from NTID and competing on a par with their hearing peers to enter high-technology careers.

NTID's average 95 percent employment rate of graduates who enter the work force attests to their success and to the success of our academic programs. I am proud of the accomplishments of our graduates, who go on to contribute to our country's economic well-being by pursuing productive careers in business and industry.

There also are more subtle and enduring returns on the investment NTID makes in the education of deaf students.

Students who take advantage of NTID's performing arts programs and extracurricular leadership opportunities gain invaluable insight into their own talents and capabilities.

Faculty members who already have distinguished themselves in the classroom also gain a reputation as experts in their academic areas and often are tapped to share their expertise with others throughout the country and around the world.

And finally, NTID continues to gain world renown as a leader in the field of education of deaf students, demonstrating that it is indeed a college worthy of the investment we make.

To invest, according to Webster's dictionary, is "to make use of for future benefits or advantages." Through our ongoing investment in education, NTID will continue to offer future generations of deaf people the benefits of an exceptional education that leads to rewarding careers and enriching lives.



James J. DeCaro

AROUND THE QUAD

RIT hosts Deaf Women's Awareness Week



A collaborative effort by several student and professional groups from RIT and the local community resulted in the second annual Deaf Women's Awareness Week, which took place at RIT this spring. Activities included a keynote speech by Susan Sien, executive director of the Austin School for the Deaf in Vermont; a panel discussion about opportunities for local deaf women; a student debate about gender roles; and a reception hosted by Deaf Women of Rochester.

"I felt that momentum was high during the week," says Vicki Hurwitz, student development educator in NTID's department of student life and one of the event organizers. "I

learned many new things by attending some of the programs intended for students."

The event was co-sponsored by Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority; NTID's Student Life Team, Student Congress, and Center for Outreach; RIT's Women's Resource Center, Women's Network, Department of Residence Life, and Commission for Promoting Pluralism; and Deaf Women of Rochester.

"The week was challenging for me," says Angela Miller, who co-chaired the event with fellow student and Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority member Becky Zartman, "but it was a great experience. Next year we hope to have even more support from RIT's women employees, and we'd like to include alumni, too."



Tomorrow begins today More than 350 prospective students and their parents as well as school and vocational rehabilitation counselors attended NTID's second annual open house, which took place in April. Participants of this year's event, titled "Tomorrow Begins Today," had opportunities to investigate NTID's programs, talk with current students and faculty members, and attend workshops on such topics as college life, financial aid, and women in technology. NTID's third annual open house was held October 6.

Grant to fund outreach project

A grant of \$280,000 from the National Science Foundation (NSF) will assist NTID researchers Dr. Harry Lang and Dr. John Albertini in developing their AESOP (Access to English and Science Outreach Project) proposal.

AESOP's goal is to develop a comprehensive program to "fuse the best teaching practices from the areas of science and English to allow deaf students access to both the content and language of science."

The NSF grant allows Lang and Albertini, both in NTID's Center for Research, Teaching and Learning, to offer teachers, through regional workshops, a variety of instructional strategies and materials that integrate visual and interactive presentations of scientific principles. The regional workshops will begin in winter 1996.

NEWSMAKERS

Faculty and Staff

Dr. Shirley Allen, associate professor in the general education instruction department, was among 11 alumni and former students of Jarvis Christian College to be inducted in the college's Pioneer Hall of Fame last fall in Hawkins, Texas.

Joan Carr, associate professor in the department of physics and technical mathematics, was one of four RIT faculty members to receive a 1995 RIT Eisenhart Award for Outstanding Teaching.

Dr. Norman Coombs, professor in RIT's department of history, will fill the first visiting scholar position in NTID's Center for Research, Teaching and Learning (CRTL) during the 1995-96 academic year. Coombs will work on research related to computer-mediated communication and distance learning for students and professionals who are deaf or hard of hearing. He also will help foster collaboration between CRTL and RIT's Office of Distance Learning.

Samuel Holcomb, sign communication specialist in NTID's Center on Sign Language and Interpreting Education, co-wrote *Deaf Culture, Our Way: Anecdotes from the Deaf Community* (DawnSignPress) with his father, Roy Holcomb, and brother, Dr. Thomas Holcomb, a former NTID faculty member. The 1995 book is the third revision of the original *Hazards of Deafness* and includes anecdotes of deaf life and selected examples of classic "deaf jokes."

Dr. Harry Lang, professor in NTID's educational research and development department, was appointed to the board of the Foundation for Science and Disability and to the Special Education Committee of the National Science Teachers Association.

Edward "Ted" Lord, assistant professor in the business occupations department and 1973 NTID data processing graduate, is president of the World Recreation of the Deaf and membership director of the World Recreation Association of the Deaf International.

Last fall, Andrew Mayer, visiting assistant professor in the imaging arts and sciences support department, was the first deaf alumnus to teach a graphic design course in RIT's School of Art and Design. Mayer received a bachelor of fine arts degree from RIT in 1975 and a master of fine arts degree from RIT's College of Fine and Applied Art in 1986.

Robert Menchel, assistant professor in the physics and technical mathematics department, obtained a doctorate in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in June.

Dr. William Newell, associate professor in the communication research department, published articles in the Spring, Summer, and Fall 1995 issues of *Sign Language Studies* based on research conducted at NTID during the 1993-94 academic year.

Dr. Reginald Redding, director of NTID's Center for Student Resources, received the Ph.D. in special education administration from Gallaudet University last spring.

Dr. Gail Rothman, chairperson of NTID's counseling services department, was listed in the 19th edition of *Who's Who of American Women*, a biographical listing that recognizes achievements and positions of significant value to society.

NTID symposium nominated for Computerworld Smithsonian Award

An NTID-hosted symposium, titled "National Symposium: Educational

Applications of Technology for Persons with Sensory Disabilities," was among 268 worldwide nominees for a 1995 Computerworld Smithsonian Award.

The awards, initiated in 1989, honor corporations, organizations, and individuals who are creating positive change in society through technology. Achievements of all nominees are recorded in a permanent research collection at the Smithsonian's



National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

MCI Telecommunications Corporation, one of the symposium's sponsors, nominated NTID in the education and academia category. The three-day "National Symposium," which took place in June 1994, featured applications of technologies to improve accessibility and provide increased learning opportunities to the nation's children, youth, and adults who have hearing or vision loss.

Awards recognize achievements, outstanding service

More than 40 students and faculty and staff members were recognized during various awards presentations in May at NTID.

NTID Pluralism Award

M. Timothy Albert, fourth-year student in NTID's photo/media technologies program, and Dr. Keith Jenkins, associate professor in the department of professional and technical communications in RIT's College of Liberal Arts, received the second annual NTID Pluralism Award. The award recognizes the contributions of students, faculty and staff members, departments, and student organizations whose actions promote pluralism within the college.

National Advisory Group Outstanding Service Award

NTID's Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI)

team, whose 22 members have provided service to the Institute for more than three years, received this year's National Advisory Group (NAG) Outstanding Service Award, which recognizes faculty and staff members who have made consistent and exceptional contributions to the goals of NTID and to the quality of life for students and colleagues.

Deaf Professional Group Award of Excellence

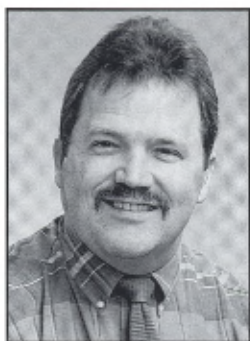
NTID's Deaf Professional Group (DPG) presented Dr. Laurie Brewer, director of NTID's Center for Arts and Sciences, with this year's DPG Award of Excellence.

The DPG selected Brewer as this year's award recipient because "she always works to communicate fully with students and colleagues, supports professional growth opportunities for DPG members, and serves as both a teacher and role model for deaf students."

Northcutt receives Distinguished Alumnus Award

James Northcutt, 1981 graduate of NTID's architectural technology program, received the 1995 NTID Distinguished Alumnus Award. The annual award honors a graduate of the college who has shown professional excellence, community leadership, and contributions to the quality of life for deaf citizens.

"I am very honored to receive this award," says Northcutt. "I believe that my job [as president of the NTID Alumni Chapter of Greater Houston] is to educate people about NTID and to encourage graduates to get involved in serving their alma mater."



Northcutt is project manager at the Castles Design Group in Houston, Texas. He established the NTID Alumni Chapter of Greater Houston in 1984 and has been the group's president since its inception.

Master's degree program approved

The New York State Education Department in May approved NTID's Master of Science in Secondary Education of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (MSSE) program. Ten graduate students began the two-year program this fall.

"This is a very exciting, challenging, and solid academic program," says Dr. Peter Lalley, director of NTID's Center for Baccalaureate and Graduate Studies. "The program will have a major impact on education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing."

Graduates will receive a master of science degree, provisional certification from the Council on the Education of the Deaf (CED), provisional certification to teach students in grades K-12 who are deaf or hard of hearing, and provisional certification in one of the following academic subjects at the secondary level (grades 7-12): biology, chemistry, earth science, English, mathematics, physics, or social studies.

The U.S. Department of Education has approved a grant to provide partial tuition assistance to full-time students.

Making a dramatic difference

NTID's video production *Making a Dramatic Difference* received a Telly Award for overall excellence in the fund-raising category in April. The Telly Awards program, founded in 1980, recognizes excellence in non-network and cable TV commercials as well as film and video productions and non-network TV programming.

Developed earlier this year by NTID's instructional television and media services department in collaboration with The NTID Foundation, the 15-minute video highlights the Institute's performing arts programs. ■

NEWSMAKERS

Students and Graduates

Congratulations to the following students and recent graduates who received 1994-95 academic awards from NTID during a luncheon in May: **Paul A. Biddle** of Scottsville, New York; **Jennifer Blatto** of Rochester, New York; **Kim L. Brown** of Rochester, New York; **Nanette J. Comella** of Glendale Heights, Illinois; **Steve A. Dobson** of Rochester, New York; **Ryan M. Giske** of Hicksville, New York; **Jason Klinger** of Roscoe, New York; **Aditi S. Master** of Rochester, New York; **Sarah B. Tregay** of Snyder, New York; **Heather Uhlman** of Rochester, New York; and **William E. Yuknis** of Taunton, Massachusetts.

Sean Dee, who earned a bachelor's degree in business management in 1988, and **Michael Pilson**, who earned a bachelor's degree in manufacturing engineering technology in 1990, helped capture the gold for the 1995 USA National Deaf Hockey Team in March during the XVI World Winter Games for the Deaf in Rovaniemi, Finland.

Thirty-five members of NTID's Delta Sigma Phi fraternity raced up 22 flights of stairs at Rochester's Marine Midland Bank in February and raised \$2,300 for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in memory of fraternity brother William "Leggo" Laudick, who died from the disease in January.

Raymond Conrad, 1981 RIT business administration alumnus and office technology consultant for the Hewlett-Packard Company in Rockville, Maryland, delivered NTID's 1994-95 Edmund Lyon Memorial Lecture in March.

Third-year applied computer technology student **Victoria Durzieh**, a native of Syria, recently received a scholarship from the Rochester Women's Club.

Heather Kanady-Humphrey, a Papillion, Nebraska, native who received an associate degree in photo/media technologies in May, was selected to serve as NTID's student delegate during this year's commencement ceremony.

Eduardo Palabrica, second-year applied art and computer graphics student, recently won one of two second-place awards in a national poster design competition sponsored by Anheuser-Busch.

Kathleen M. Rozanski, 1995 photojournalism graduate, headed to Europe this past summer for a yearlong project to document through photography the lives of deaf people. Rozanski received a \$12,000 fellowship from the Mortimer Hays-Brandeis Traveling Fellowship Program.

Munir Salem of New York Mills, New York, a May 1995 graduate of NTID's applied art and computer graphics program, received NTID's Charles R. McDougal Memorial Award in May.

Thomas P. Spence, who received a diploma in applied computer technology in 1993 and is employed as a Pentagon systems administrator, recently was named a recipient of a Defense Department Outstanding Employees with a Disability Award.

NTID's Student Congress celebrated its 25th anniversary March 25 with a banquet that also featured the Miss NTID Pageant '95, which was won by **Jonelle Deja**, second-year pre-baccalaureate business/computer science student.

A STUDENT STUDY

Ethan M. Sinnott

by Beth M. Pessin

Ethan Sinnott's expressive hands fly as he describes his passion for the theater, especially Shakespearean works. Youthful enthusiasm and high-voltage energy fuel 20-year-old Sinnott's performances and, more recently, directing.

Sinnott, third-year student in RIT's illustration program, likens his work in the theater to his illustrations, which reflect a tension and energy that is "ready to explode." NTID performing arts department members characterize him as a bright, self-motivated student who is willing to take risks.

"Ethan is an intelligent and talented young man," says Kelly Morgan, performing arts department chairperson. "His thirst for knowledge is unquenchable; he's a true student of the world."

Jerome Cushman, associate professor in NTID's performing arts department and Sinnott's mentor, agrees. "His potential is huge. He is the most enthusiastic, diligent student I've worked with in quite awhile."

Those characteristics helped Sinnott, from Brighton, New York, a Rochester suburb, earn NTID's performing arts scholarship in 1993, which recognizes potential and leadership ability. He is the only student ever to have received the award in his first year of study.



A director is born Ethan Sinnott, center, who made his solo directorial debut last January with the NTID production of *Romeo and Juliet*, rehearses a scene with student actors Jerald Creer (Romeo), left, and Billy Guffen (Tybalt).

Since finding his creative center and a niche for his talent in high school, Sinnott has continued to grow artistically. As a high school senior, he competed with 43 other students and won a second-place award for his portrayal of Richard III in the prestigious

national English-Speaking Union Shakespearean competition in New York City. The only deaf person ever to participate in the event, Sinnott performed using American Sign Language while an interpreter spoke the lines.

"That was the most fulfilling

experience in my life," he says. "I knew that I would stay in theater...it's in my blood...it's my running passion."

Later that year, Sinnott auditioned and won the part of Winfield Joad in NTID's production of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

"We knew then that he had potential," says Cushman. "He was motivated and also had keen awareness of all the characters."

Since his first acting experience at NTID, Sinnott has continued to add to his acting credits. He performed in NTID's productions of *The Miser* and *Thornwood* as well as in the Rochester Shakespeare Players' productions of *Twelfth Night* and *The Tempest*.

Sinnott believes theater provides lessons in and interpretations on life and that NTID's performing arts department has helped him to realize his talent and creative thrust.

"Something in me has been awakened after a long sleep," he says.

"Theater is a way for people to think about themes, their lives, and people around them," he adds. "Performances can challenge audiences to think about the situation as it applies to their lives... then they will discover something within themselves that they never knew was there."

Although his interest in acting didn't surface until high school, Sinnott says the theater had an impact on him at a young age. Living in the Rochester community, which has an estimated 70,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing people, provided Sinnott with opportunities to experience deaf theater at an early age. When he was 7 years old, his parents took him to see an NTID production of *A Christmas Carol*.

"I saw Patrick Graybill [former NTID visiting artist] performing, and I fell in love with the stage. I'll never forget that performance; it was like a 'Brave New World' opening up to me," he says.

Sinnott made his solo directorial debut in January 1995 with *Romeo and Juliet*, a production dubbed "Shakespeare in the Street" because it took place in the "street" area of NTID's Lyndon Baines Johnson building.

Sinnott proposed use of the space, a long open corridor outside the theater, as a creative way to present the production. It was the first time that location had been used for a theatrical performance—a fitting way to help NTID celebrate 20 years of innovative performing arts work with students who are deaf. It also was the first time that an NTID production was entirely run by students.

"It was a learning experience," says Sinnott, who one day hopes to establish a theater company that performs the classics using deaf/hearing overtones. "I like the idea of having creative control."

Because he enjoys adapting classic works to present-day issues, Sinnott originally had hoped to present the feuding Montague and Capulet families in *Romeo and Juliet* as deaf and hearing. He was forced to change that goal when only two hearing actors auditioned for the play.

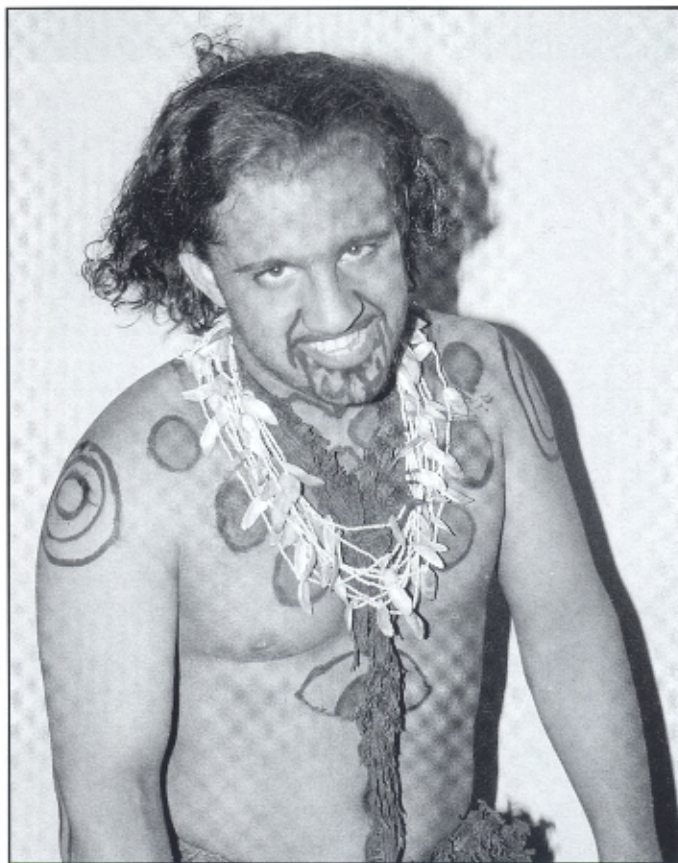
His interest in directing stems from his desire to find new ways of creative expression and intellectual challenge.

Under Cushman's tutelage, Sinnott gained directing experience with NTID's spring 1994 production of *Thornwood*, an experimental theater production. Sinnott was assistant director of that production, in which he also acted. He also assisted in the translation of the Shakespearean lines into sign language.

That experience motivated Sinnott to approach Morgan with the idea for "Shakespeare in the Street."

"Kelly was open to the idea and helped me develop a proposal and think about how I wanted to structure the experience," says Sinnott.

"Ethan continuously strives to apply the techniques and concepts that he has learned," says Morgan, who encourages students to challenge themselves. "He is always conceiving new ways to develop his artistic goals."



Acting the part Sinnott portrayed the savage slave Caliban in the Rochester Shakespeare Players' spring 1995 production of *The Tempest*.

"The performing arts department has given me an opportunity to grow," says Sinnott. In addition to the artistic growth he has experienced, Sinnott has learned about managing people and time, working under a deadline, and solving problems.

To promote his production of *Romeo and Juliet*, Sinnott used his illustration skills—which he continues to develop through his course work at RIT—to create a promotional poster. Because of the tenuous nature of acting jobs, Sinnott says a degree in illustration will be his "safety net" and a foundation through which he can create set designs and promotional materials for theater groups.

"My art is another way to prepare for my future in theater," he says. "I've enjoyed art my whole life, but theater is my true love."

Although the production of *Romeo and Juliet* was challenging, particularly because of unanticipated and frequent cast changes, Sinnott says he felt like the true underdog, victorious at last. He hopes that the first "Shakespeare in the Street" was not the last. Next year he hopes to present *Othello*.

"Rehearsals were sometimes difficult," he concedes, "but it was a sweet taste at the end. It gives me a thrill that people are seeing and enjoying what I have to offer." ■

Re-engineering a career

by Kathryn Schmitz

NTID graduate Marc Roer and President Bill Clinton had opposite employment experiences on January 20, 1992: Roer lost his job as a result of corporate downsizing while Clinton was inaugurated as the country's 42nd president.

But like Clinton, Roer, 1981 electromechanical technology graduate, saw bright prospects that day. After eight productive years working for a large organization, Roer wanted the experience of working with a small company. In no time he found a job as a mechanical research technician for John Crane Inc., the largest manufacturer of mechanical seals in the United States, based in Chicago.

"At Crane, I've found that I can have an impact at different levels of the organization even though I don't yet have my bachelor's degree," says Roer, 37, a Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, native who hopes to return to school one day. "I'm in the right place at the right time."

Roer helps to run a new sophisticated testing facility where tests are performed on mechanical seals in equipment that uses highly volatile fluids, such as propane, to

assure that the seals meet American Petroleum Institute standards. His primary role is to maintain the process control equipment that enables those tests to be run.

"My job was like 'baptism by fire' at first," says Roer, who replaced a technician who had left the company. "Although I had little documentation and

or complex. He also brings a good working knowledge of computers and electronics that augments the mechanical skills of the other technicians."

The computer programming and engineering skills that Roer applies at Crane came from previous years working in Rochester, and his experience there was made possible in part

"I suppose I always had a knack for finding and fixing problems, but NTID's classes and labs formalized that process."

limited knowledge of the programmable logic controller, I learned quickly and was able to assist in improving the performance of the test facility."

Bob Karasek, Roer's supervisor and superintendent of the testing center, echoes Roer's perception of his role.

"Marc constantly looks for ways to improve the operations of the facility," says Karasek. "He has a positive 'can do' attitude and is eager to pitch in on any task, no matter how simple

by the knowledge he acquired while he was a student at NTID.

Roer's previous work responsibilities involved troubleshooting circuit boards used in various consumer products and designing test fixtures to help eliminate circuit board problems, skills that he learned in NTID's electromechanical technology program and through his cooperative work experience with IBM. Roer also spent a year involved in the assembly process, from beginning to end,

of one of the industry's major copiers as well as two years quality testing copiers and printers, which involved working with engineers on software testing and development.

Roer's career reflects many of the areas addressed by NTID's electromechanical technology program, which includes an academic balance of courses in electronics, mechanics, tool skills, drafting, computer hardware and software, and cooperative work experiences.

"I suppose I always had a knack for finding and fixing problems," says Roer, "but NTID's classes and labs formalized that process."

"Marc has exceeded our expectations of program graduates," says Anthony Spiecker, assistant professor in the electromechanical technology department. "With his academic background and industrial experience, he certainly has had an exciting career and is in a very interesting position."

Roer is the first to admit that school did not come easily to him. During his time at NTID, he overcame a few academic challenges at the beginning of his program, according to Spiecker and Dominic Bozzelli,



A self-starter at work NTID graduate Marc Roer applies his technical skills and "can do" attitude to his job as a mechanical research technician with John Crane Inc. in Chicago.

associate professor in the science and engineering support department.

"Marc typifies the best of the educational experience at NTID," says Bozzelli. "Although he faced some difficult situations during his time here,

he responded extremely well to the opportunities for learning and personal growth within the academic environment."

Roer's interest in learning, particularly on the job, made possible his opportunity to handle more responsibility

after his first six months at Crane than he had in any of his previous jobs. After proving himself so soon, he was assigned his current role in the new testing facility.

"I'm driven to learn," says Roer. "My huge curiosity is really what makes me the self-starter I am." ■

A Worthy Investment: Helping Students Achieve Their Dreams

by Kathryn Schmitz

NTID students can look to many people for support of all kinds: their parents, teachers, counselors, placement advisors, dean, and sometimes individuals or foundations who have established endowed funds that provide financial help, enabling them to continue their studies.

While ties to deaf people vary among those who have established endowed funds to benefit RIT's deaf students, Institute benefactors have demonstrated a special commitment to furthering NTID's goals of educating deaf people in technical fields and preparing them for the world of work. For them and the young deaf people they support, NTID is a good investment.

Keeping up the momentum

After rebuilding a Toyota sports utility vehicle in high school and confirming his interest and ability in working with mechanical things, Jeff Garlinghouse entered NTID's manufacturing processes technology program in 1988. He completed the program with an associate degree in 1992 and went on to achieve success in the workplace.

Inspired by NTID's strength as a college for deaf students, his parents, Roland and Gail, established the Garlinghouse Endowment Fund the same year to provide scholarships to other manufacturing processes technology students at NTID.

"We think Jeff got a wonderful education," says his father. "Now, out in the real world, he can feel competent and good about himself."

Garlinghouse now works as a computer numerical control (CNC) lathe operator and programmer for Eastman Kodak Company in Rochester, New York. According to his father, a self-employed mechanical engineer, "Jeff's current job is more challenging and fun" than any he could offer his son.

The elder Garlinghouse owns a company in Heber Springs, Arkansas, that designs and builds equipment for placing concrete in construction of buildings, bridges, dams, and other structures.

"When Jeff worked with me in the summers, I could tell that he was smart, but I had a tough time teaching him the finer points of the work, like operating a lathe or milling machine," says his father. "After I saw what he learned in NTID's manufacturing processes technology program, I was so impressed that I wanted to find a way to provide opportunities to other students like Jeff."

This year's recipient of the Garlinghouse Endowment Fund scholarship is Michael Nutter, 27, third-year student from Dexter, Maine.

"I was very surprised and honored to be awarded the scholarship," says Nutter. "I take my education seriously."

Nutter used his scholarship funds to pay his tuition as well as to buy specialized tools required by the profession.

Before enrolling in NTID's manufacturing processes technology program,

Nutter had planned to study architectural drafting, in which he already had a certificate from Eastern Maine Vocational Technical Institute. He worked for two years as an architectural drafter before being laid off, and when he returned to college at NTID, he decided to pursue a different career.

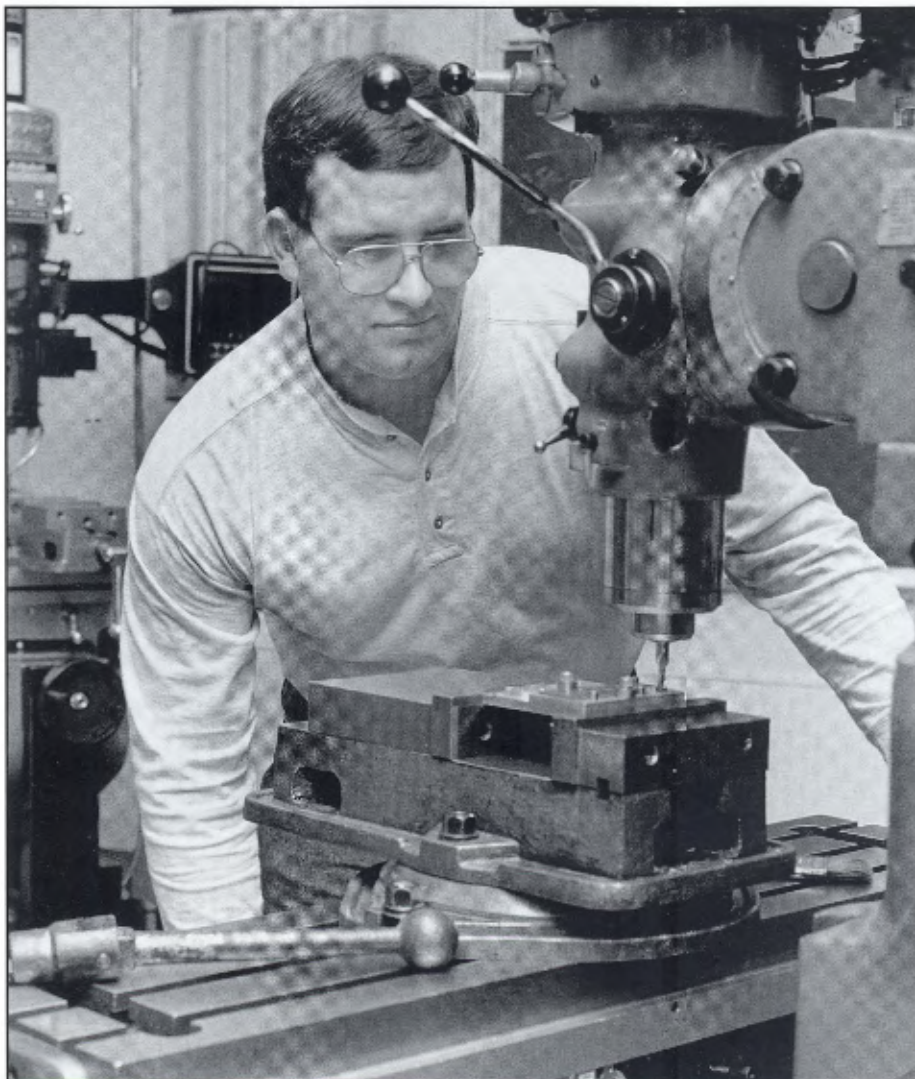
"I wanted to learn different skills," explains Nutter, who frequently helps his fellow students and has demonstrated various aspects of the manufacturing processes technology program to Institute visitors. After graduation, he intends to return to Maine and find employment as a CNC operator.

Investing in the future

When Stuart Gopen, former director of the Learning Center for Deaf Children in Framingham, Massachusetts, completed *Gopen's Guide to Closed Captioned Video*, a descriptive catalog of more than 5,000 captioned videotapes, in 1993, his parents—Allen and Gloria—decided to go one step further in the family's efforts to open up opportunities for deaf people.

They established the Allen and Gloria Gopen Endowment Fund with an initial gift and commitments to increase the endowment so that it can provide scholarships for deaf RIT students.

"Our entire family is devoted to helping deaf people in any way we can," says Allen Gopen. "I see that NTID must turn to those who best appreciate its contributions, especially families of deaf children."



Career in the making Michael Nutter, third-year manufacturing processes technology student, plans on a career as a lathe operator, a goal he can now reach thanks in part to support he received from a Garlinghouse scholarship.

The Gopens' personal motivation for establishing the scholarship fund was 16-year-old Justin Gopen, their grandson who is deaf and a sophomore at Newton North High School in Massachusetts.

Justin, according to his proud grandfather, is enrolled in advanced courses at his high school; works at a local movie theater in the pizza preparation department; periodically appears on national television requesting funds to support the Caption Center, WGBH-TV Boston, for more captioned films; and is becoming a master magician.

The Gopens have chosen to demonstrate their social awareness and responsibility by recognizing NTID as a preeminent college for deaf people.

Encouraging positive self-esteem for young deaf people at RIT has become an important goal for the Gopens with their commitment to their new endowment fund. The first Gopen scholarship will be awarded in 1996.

Sharing her avocation

Blending the subtle hues of watercolors with line drawings of her favorite seascapes, pastoral scenes, and fruit still lifes, Frances Carlberg King, 82, captures the tranquil moods she seeks in her travels throughout the United States and Mexico.

King's artistic talent emerged at a very young age soon after she became deaf from a bad fall. She learned to communicate with her parents by

drawing a picture of what she wanted or where she wanted to go, such as to the beach near her hometown of West Palm Beach, Florida.

As a young woman, King studied art at Bethany College in Lindborg, Kansas, as well as with several renowned art teachers in New York City in the 1930s. Just before marrying her husband, Drew, she was accepted for a national juried art competition in Newark, New Jersey. Over the years, King has continued to paint oil and watercolor landscapes from her extensive travels throughout the world.

Her friendship with Drs. William and Diane Castle, former director of NTID and professor of audiology at NTID, respectively, brought her to Rochester more than 25 years ago, when she was invited to show her watercolor paintings in NTID's Switzer Gallery.

"I was very impressed with the students and the staff members," says King. "I also enjoyed the feeling of camaraderie during my visits to NTID, and so I wanted to be a part of it."

Some years after Drew's death, Frances established the Drew and Frances King Endowment Fund to provide scholarships to deaf students in RIT's art programs.

Lael White of Pensacola, Florida, is one of two recipients of this year's scholarships from the fund. Like her benefactor, the 25-year-old fourth-year photography student has traveled around the world to capture images.

In October 1993, White participated in a historic cultural and artistic exchange between deaf Russian and American artists. She traveled with five



Sharing a dream Sara Kuhnert, left, who established a scholarship fund to support deaf women in RIT's technical programs, shows her pewter collection to engineering student Pamela McGuire, one of this year's Sara L. Kuhnert scholarship recipients.

other RIT students and faculty and staff members to Moscow and St. Petersburg while 40 deaf Russian artists showed their work in NTID's Switzer Gallery.

"I was very grateful to be given the opportunity to go to Russia," says White. "I really appreciated being able to take pictures, meet other deaf people, and share our ideas of art and photography and sign language."

White's scholarship enabled her to purchase photographic supplies, which are notoriously expensive, costing her at least \$800 per quarter. White transferred to RIT to study photography from Pensacola Junior College, where she earned an associate degree in graphic design.

"I wanted to do something in art that allowed me to meet people," explains White. "I like to explore and study cultures and look for people and catch their expressions and behavior. I can do all that with photography."

Encouraging nontraditional dreams

Doing her mathematics homework in the DuBois, Pennsylvania, office of the Buffalo-Rochester-Pittsburgh railroad under the supervision of her civil engineer father and learning to drive the first car in her hometown at age 8 in 1918 gave Sara Kuhnert a taste of working with technology.

After turning down a library job that paid only 25 cents per hour and then completely changing the filing system of an optical company where she worked for more than a decade, Kuhnert, now 85, enjoyed her finest hour during World War II when she worked for Graflex, a Rochester camera company. Her greatest achievement with Graflex, for which she received no special fanfare, was to completely document and write the operating instructions for the aerial camera that the company made specifically to photograph the Hiroshima atomic bomb explosion in 1945.

After the war, Kuhnert stopped working by choice. She had wanted to be an engineer herself, but no school in those days would accept her. Remembering that disappointment, in 1990 she established the Sara L. Kuhnert Scholarship Fund to benefit deaf women in RIT's technical degree programs.

"I set up the scholarship because I couldn't go to engineering school," she says. "It was unusual for women to go to college back then, and it would have been impossible for a deaf woman."

The fund provided scholarships this year to two students: Jamie Fisher, second-year telecommunication technology student from Steubenville, Ohio; and Pamela McGuire, fifth-year electrical engineering technology student from Pittsburgh.

Fisher, 32, attended four other colleges before arriving at RIT to study engineering. She holds an associate degree in laser technology from

All in the family Milton, left, and Ray Ohringer have enabled many deaf students to complete their college education at RIT through the Milton and Ray Ohringer Endowment Fund.



Pasadena Community College and a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology from California Polytechnic University. Because of a tight job market and a weak economy, Fisher decided to return to school at RIT after being laid off from her job in California.

"The field of engineering is a great opportunity for women in the work force," says Fisher, a top-ranked racquetball player who understands the nature of competition. "The scholarship helped me stay dedicated to my studies and take pride in being a deaf female engineer in a hearing male-dominated field.

"I think the scholarship sends a message to women that there is support in RIT's rigorous engineering programs," she adds.

McGuire, 30, earned an associate degree in accounting from NTID in 1988 and worked for two years for Citibank in Pittsford, New York. Wanting better career opportunities and realizing that she needed a bachelor's degree to achieve them, McGuire returned to RIT in 1990 to study electrical engineering.

She says she enjoys the requirements of the field: mathematics, computers, electronics, experiments, and troubleshooting.

"I like being a 'mastermind,'" explains McGuire. "I like taking an electronic problem and figuring it out. Most mechanical problems you can see, but electronic ones aren't visible. So you have to look for the problem, and I like that challenge.

"I want to show that deaf women can be good engineers out in the field," she adds.

Helping students stay in school

Recognizing the financial challenge that college poses for many young people, Milton and Ray Ohringer established an endowment fund at NTID to support deaf RIT students in financial need.

"Because we both are deaf," says Ray, "we wanted to support other deaf people who need financial help to go to college. My husband knows how hard it is for many deaf people to get through college financially."

Milton, who became deaf at age 11 from a high fever during a bout with German measles, graduated from New York University and Brooklyn Law School in 1930. He served as an executive accountant for 45 years for a chemical business in New York City.

Ray also became deaf from German measles-induced fever when she was 18 months old. She attended private schools for hearing students in New Orleans, her native city, and did well. Instead of continuing on to college, she moved to New York City, where she joined IBM as a keypunch operator. She worked for IBM for 34 years, training other keypunch operators during an era when computers became commonplace.

Now retired, the Ohringers live in New York City and spend their winters in Florida.

The Milton and Ray Ohringer Endowment Fund provided considerable financial support this year to Darcy Lazauskas, a 28-year-old fine arts graduate from Houston, and Andrea Sljva, a 25-year-old applied art and computer graphics graduate from Pittsburgh. Both women were able to complete their final year of college with the support of the Ohringer fund.

"The scholarship took the pressure off me," says Lazauskas, a 6-foot-tall athlete who competed in volleyball during the 1989 World Games for the Deaf and now plays basketball. "I was able to concentrate on my education and not worry about paying for school, and my GPA [grade point average] went up after I got the scholarship."

Like Lazauskas, Sljva is grateful that she was able to apply her energies toward completing her degree with the support of her scholarship.

"It motivated me to do well in school," says Sljva. "I can't thank the Ohringers enough for their support of my education."

Both women plan to seek employment in the computer graphic design field focusing on advertising.

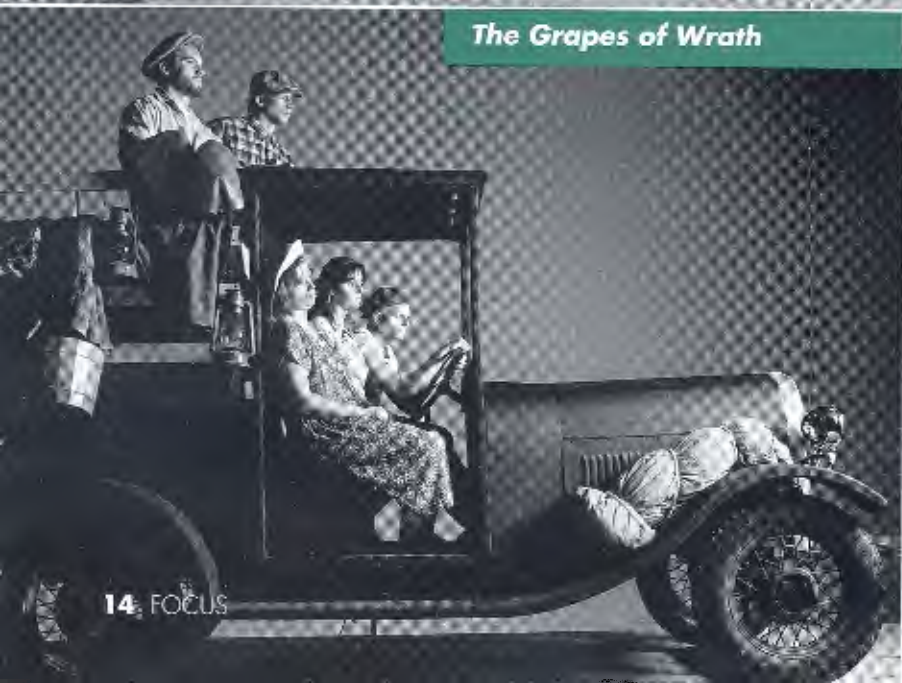
"I think setting up the scholarship is a way of supporting 'family,'" says Lazauskas of the Ohringers. "I'm glad to see deaf people help other deaf people." ■

The Tempest



Applause!

The Grapes of Wrath



Once Upon a Mattress



The Threepenny Opera

NTID's performing arts department celebrates 20 years of entertainment

by Kathleen S. Smith

*"It was like someone unzipped a body suit and I jumped out . . .
I was finally able to express myself. The performing arts department
became my second home."*

*—Camille Jeter, artistic director of the National Theatre of the Deaf,
recalling her days as an NTID performing arts student*

Camille Jeter has come a long way since she first peered into NTID's theater and tried to muster up the nerve to audition for a play. Her acting experience before enrolling at NTID in 1978 was limited to family performances under the kitchen table (with her brother as co-star) and an elementary school performance of *Romeo and Juliet*.

She went on to act in numerous NTID performing arts productions and later with a national touring company of the 1980 play *Children of a Lesser God*.

Like Jeter, NTID's performing arts program, which in 1994-95 celebrated its 20th season in the Robert F. Panara Theatre, has grown over the years.

Continuing a tradition begun by RIT Professor Emeritus Robert Panara, who formed the NTID Drama Club 25 years ago, NTID's performing arts program has established itself both as a strong training ground for aspiring actors and as a place where countless deaf students have blossomed into full adults. More than 7,000 students have participated in the program, whose goal is to offer students creative and social opportunities on a largely technological campus.

"When I think of the students—the shrinking violets—that I've seen over the years, I'm amazed," says department secretary and sometime stage manager Joanne DeRoller. "No matter how small the role, participating in theater makes these students feel important. They become part of a team... they learn what 'company spirit' is all about."

Nearly 100 students who have participated in the performing arts program at NTID have gone on to the National Theatre of the Deaf and other professional acting careers. And countless others have benefitted in more subtle ways. Their journeys all began, symbolically, with the creation of NTID's Drama Club.

The beginning

On a snowy winter's eve in 1970, a small group of students met in Webb Auditorium on the RIT campus brimming with enthusiasm at the idea of beginning a drama club for deaf students. Led by Panara, RIT's first deaf professor, more than 100 dues-paying student members eventually joined what Panara called "the center of social life" for NTID students.

"It was a wonderful adventure," remembers Panara. "The students were just marvelous. Shows then always were put together quickly, with only seven to 10 days of rehearsals. Short skits, mimes, dances, and songs were popular. What fun we had!"

The club offered two-hour shows each quarter and hosted an annual Drama Club Awards Night, with programs, sets, and performances conceived and executed by the students.

"That always was a wonderful event," Panara recalls. "Every day those students dressed like hippies, but once a year they dressed like Hollywood debutantes and leading men."

Panara brought artistic diversity to the fledgling program. Professor

Emeritus Loy Golladay taught students how to sign poetry. Actor Bernard Bragg, Panara's former student at the Fanwood (New York) School for the Deaf and Gallaudet University, held an acting workshop.

As more and more students got involved in the club, notes Panara, a sense of belonging and deaf pride emerged.

"Bob Panara really was the one who encouraged me to perform," remembers Chuck Baird, 1974 fine arts graduate.

"I did some silly skit," remembers Baird, "and after that, someone talked me into reciting poems and trying out for different plays. I remember that my academic advisor was not at all happy with me for getting involved. He thought I had been bitten by a big, bad [acting] bug."

A feast for the senses

When construction began on NTID's Lyndon Baines Johnson building in the early 1970s, Dr. Robert Frisina, then NTID's director, ensured that ample space was given to the growing performing arts program.

The new theater was designed specifically to give deaf students a chance to fully enjoy theatrical presentations, as participants either on stage, behind the scenes, or in the audience.

The architectural details included two-way television between stage and dressing rooms; a seating plan designed to offer a perfect view of the stage from anywhere in the theater; a lab theater adjacent to the main stage for rehearsals, tryouts, and classes; a costume

Making a Dramatic Difference

Friday is Janis Cole's favorite day of the week, for that's when she wraps up her other jobs and heads to Pah! Deaf Youth Theatre, a teenage theater group in suburban Boston that she co-founded in 1994.

There, she and artistic partner Jody Steiner offer creative drama opportunities for young deaf people, ages 12 to 16, "in a place where they can explore and experience the life of theater and with a passion for life of their own."

Cole's own passion for theater has not diminished since she graduated from RIT 16 years ago.

The very idea that she has found time to organize and run the youth theater while teaching courses in American Sign Language (ASL) as well as Deaf culture and literature at Boston University (BU), serving as a practicum supervisor for BU graduate students, interpreting for deaf/blind clients in the Boston community, and working as an ASL consultant for the Boston Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children is impressive.

She says that her commitment is grounded in the experiences that she had as an NTID performing arts student.

"The theater was a place for me to safely play with feelings through a creative process," Cole says.

In addition to learning how to translate from English to ASL, Cole developed confidence, a sense of self-worth, and the ability to "get

into a character's life during scriptwork, rehearsals, and performances."

After honing her talents in several productions, Cole left NTID in 1977—"in the middle of my college education"—to spend a year with the National Theatre of the Deaf. She returned the following

year and completed her social work degree requirements in 1979.

Cole admits that she hopes Pah! "someday will become a bigger endeavor that will allow me to work full time with the group."

"It's important for these kids, especially those who have grown up in a hearing

environment, to have the medium of theater to internalize what I believe is their natural language—ASL—and to express their thoughts and experiences about their lives... what they see about the world and what is important to them," Cole says.

And that, for Cole, is the essence of the theatrical experience.

"My own theater experiences weren't focused on my success as an actor," she says, "but success in terms of understanding who I am and realizing that I have something of value to offer."

"So it is with the kids involved in youth theater. Theater is a way to help them realize that their stories are their lives, and that they should do something with those stories," she adds. "When they 'put it out there,' it's amazing what comes back to them."



Janis Cole

shop; an authentic greenroom in which performers could relax before and between appearances; and a scene shop.

The floors of both the lab theater and the stage were constructed of special soft pine wood to transmit vibrations. The theater's curtain was made of cotton velvet in deep purple (a background conducive to interpreting) with gold appliquéd stripes.

The first production staged in the new theater, in the fall of 1974, was Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*.

"The whole process was incredible," recalls 1979 social work graduate Janis Cole, who played the part of Bianca.

"The best part was the rehearsals because the group of actors and directors all helped one another to discover ourselves."

Staging a musical... kind of

In 1975 NTID got permission from representatives of [lyricist and composer] Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber to perform their musical cantata *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at NTID.

"We originally only had rights to perform it as a concert," recalls Dr. Gerald Argetsinger, then head of the theater department, "but we convinced them that we needed to add movement because it was for deaf audiences."

Joseph, which sold out four performances in the new 500-seat theater, heralded a new chapter in the department's history, for it truly was a community event, involving actors and audience members from beyond RIT.

Such outreach endeavors continued through the early 1970s with traveling performances of NTID productions. Baird particularly recalls one trip to

Stages of Development

Montreal: "It created a sense of crystallization among the student performers...that pulled me into the theater world. Being able to travel and communicate about the world around us was wonderful."

One important outgrowth of those performances was the creation in 1980 of Sunshine Too, a national touring theater group of three deaf and three hearing performers. For the past 15 years, Sunshine Too has educated and entertained audiences—65,000 people annually—with its innovative musical and theatrical performances.

But perhaps the most important strides have been made in NTID's own backyard.

"Sunshine Too was very important when it first began," notes former theater chairperson Dr. Bruce Halverson, "because NTID was a new commodity in the city of Rochester. Our goal was to make people aware of the talents of deaf artists. Sunshine Too helped to make deaf people an accepted—and appreciated—part of the Rochester community."

Says James Orr, who books performances for the group: "Sunshine Too, over the years, has had a significant impact on thousands of young deaf people."

Former student Beth Ann Bull remembers fondly the two years she spent as a member of Sunshine Too.

After gaining experience in various NTID performing arts productions, Bull traveled with the troupe from 1987–88 and again from 1989–90.

"I loved it," she says. "Traveling to different places, meeting so many different people...I recommend it to anyone interested in trying something new."

Dennis Webster is an NTID performing arts success story—a student turned graduate turned professional actor whose life changed dramatically when he enrolled at NTID in 1980.

Webster, a graduate of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf, came to NTID with "far-fetched" dreams of being a theater director.

But he believed that he couldn't because, as he says, "This is a hearing world."

Today, Webster, visiting teacher/artist in NTID's performing arts department, has returned to his alma mater not only to

direct but also to teach sign mime, stage combat, and lighting to a new crop of deaf students with similar dreams. He also is the lighting designer for numerous NTID and community productions and is finishing a bachelor's degree program in theater from New York's Empire State College.

Webster's path to a career in theater began when he signed up for a technical theater class at NTID in 1980. Although he was enrolled in the electromechanical technology program, the theater department soon found that Webster possessed great carpentry skills, which he learned from a deaf professional carpenter at home in Rhode Island. He was hired as a student assistant and learned to build props and sets.

While working in the department, Webster says he gained valuable

insight into what the backstage of the theater is about. "That's when I decided that I really wanted to learn more about theater."

His "break" came in 1982 when he auditioned for NTID's traveling theater group, Sunshine Too.

"Working with Sunshine Too made me realize the importance of teamwork,"

Webster says.

"Each of us in the group [of six performers; three deaf and three hearing] had a responsibility, in addition to performing, as we traveled around the country. Since I'm a good mechanic, my job was to take care of our van as well as the sets and lighting."

"Sunshine Too

changed my life," he says. "It gave me a greater perspective of the real world."

After several seasons with Sunshine Too, and after receiving his diploma in manufacturing processes technology in 1987, Webster returned to the performing arts department as a visiting instructor. He continues to be involved, either onstage or backstage, in nearly every production.

Today, Webster is managing a life that revolves almost totally around the world of theater—and he wouldn't have it any other way.

"I'm anxious to finish my theater degree," he says, "so that the students will see me as a strong deaf role model with even more authority."



Dennis Webster



Spreading the sunshine Creative costumes—like these from the troupe's premiere season—are part of what makes Sunshine Too appealing to audiences of all ages.

The overwhelming popularity of Mark Medoff's saga of the pitfalls and potential of deaf/hearing relationships spawned numerous touring companies of *Children of a Lesser God*, and NTID became a clearinghouse for deaf actors and actresses interested in becoming involved.

"We sent countless students to New York City to audition for those touring companies," Halverson recalls.

Ultimately, more than 15 NTID students and graduates, including Vreeland and Cole, performed in various productions of that show.

Like Vreeland, 1981 biomedical photographic communications graduate Willy Conley has carved a niche for himself in the theater world and has wound up sharing his experiences with classes of college students.

Conley, who performed in numerous NTID performing arts productions as well as in *Sunshine Too*, works in the department of theater arts at Gallaudet University. He says that participating in the performing arts helped him to develop self-confidence and a better self-image, "which for me carried over into the world of work."

Like Conley, theater gave Mary Beth Barber a good sense of her identity as a deaf person, which she felt was missing when she arrived at NTID in 1977.

"I was planning to transfer to Syracuse University when I got involved in performing arts productions at NTID," recalls Barber, who attended a mainstream high school. "I decided I didn't want to lose what I had gained through my involvement, so I decided to stay."

Theater gave her "the opportunity to learn sign language well," says Barber,

Bull arrived at NTID in 1985, unsure of herself and far from home and family in California.

"I thought to myself, 'What's the best way for me to get comfortable and to find my identity as a deaf person?' For me, the answer was performing arts. I needed a bond... my own family was 3,000 miles away. So the performing arts department became my family."

Bull recently returned to NTID to teach sign language and has continued her involvement with the performing arts.

After finishing NTID's 1994 production of *Steel Magnolias*, a drama exploring the relationships of six women in a small Southern town, Bull "cried for days. It was hard to let go of what I had been through. It was amazing working with all women."

One of those women, from whom Bull says she learned volumes, is former

student Mary Vreeland, who directed *Steel Magnolias*.

Vreeland, who won the 1994 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress for her role in the Folger Shakespeare Theatre production of *Mother Courage and Her Children*, has been a visiting artist at NTID since 1993.

She attended NTID in the late 1970s and went to her first NTID audition "only to support some friends trying out" for *Romeo and Juliet*.

"I sat in the back and didn't even plan to audition," she says. "But I was encouraged to do a reading and was surprised to get a call back. Then something went off inside me...."

Vreeland had roles in several subsequent NTID productions and seized the opportunity presented in 1980 when the play *Children of a Lesser God* catapulted onto the national theater scene.

A fairy tale brought to life Cast members, from left, Dennis Webster, Chad Miller, Michael Thomas, Scotty Zwicker, and Aaron Brace rehearse a scene from NTID's 1995 production of *Cinderella*.

who didn't know any sign when she arrived at NTID. "[Director] Jerry Cushman always stressed the importance of signing clearly so that 'the little old lady sitting in the last row of the theater' could see."

Like Jeter, Barber toured with a company of *Children of a Lesser God*. She then returned to RIT to get her social work degree in 1985 and, after working for a time in theater and television, got her master's degree from Syracuse University.

Today, as a member of NTID's department of recruitment and admissions and coordinator of NTID's annual open house for prospective students, Barber finds herself still using the lessons she learned in performing arts, namely the importance of preparation and the conviction that "You've got to keep going when things get tough...the show goes on."

A time to take risks

In 1989, under the leadership of chairperson Dr. James Graves, NTID's performing arts program began using productions to look at contemporary social issues.

Adam and the Experts, a play about AIDS, "showed everyone that the deaf community wanted to deal with such topics," Graves says.

"James brought a new insight to the department," recalls Patrick Graybill, a nationally respected deaf actor who was part of NTID's performing arts department during Graves' tenure and one of the actors in *Adam and the Experts*.

One of Graves' personal highlights as chairperson was the expansion of the dance program under the direction of artist-in-residence Michael Thomas.



Both Graves and Thomas, former principal dancer with the San Francisco Ballet and a founder and director of the American Dance Theatre of the Deaf, saw dance as an opportunity for deaf and hearing students "to work equally."

"It's true 'baptism by fire,'" Thomas says of the spontaneous collaboration that occurs among students. "I have a way of being oblivious to who is deaf and who is hearing. I'm simply interested in seeing them dance well."

Thomas still finds his greatest pleasure "in seeing the dancers get positive feedback from their parents, friends, and teachers after performances."

One of Thomas' favorite stories is about a former student who was so shy when he joined the dance company that "he couldn't even look me in the face."

"I saw a drowning kid who in some ways was saved by participating in the performing arts," Thomas says.

The student went on to perform in several productions, and the reaction of his teachers who attended his performances always was the same.

"They couldn't believe it when they saw his name in the program," Thomas says, "and they were thrilled that he had developed the confidence to perform."

Where do we go from here?

Since 1994, the department of performing arts has been led by Kelly Morgan, founder of the Mint Theater in New York City.

Morgan is focusing his energies on two goals: to foster greater cooperation and collaboration among those interested in the creative arts within the RIT community and to prepare talented NTID graduates to become "leaders" in the theatrical world.

Morgan believes that NTID has the talents and resources to turn new ideas—such as the department's recent proposal for a certificate program in performance, play construction, design, and technical theater—into realities.

Such a program would "enable students to gain additional professional credibility for their participation in the performing arts," says Morgan.

And indeed, when one thinks that each year nearly 500 students participate in various aspects of NTID's performing arts program, it's clear that interest is high.

"Our students have so much to offer," says Vreeland. "Theater is the gateway to their potential." ■

Project Free Speech



NTID faculty members share their expertise in Poland

by Wendy Levin

W

hen several faculty members from NTID's

department of electronic publishing and printing technology visited Poland during summer 1992, they encountered a culture and an industry on the road to redefinition in the absence of Communist domination.

On a tour deep inside the workings of one printing plant, they filed past row upon row of old-fashioned line casting machines, hardly any in use now that newer technologies are beginning to take their place.

Halting beside one defunct machine, their guide explained that the parts required to fix it—ordered from Moscow seven years earlier—had just arrived and would be installed later that day.

"In our culture, if we needed a machine to run, we would have taken

parts off another machine to repair it. That gives you some sense of how differently our respective cultures approach a similar difficulty," says Michael Kleper, industry liaison to NTID's High Technology Center for Electronic Publishing and Imaging, who was part of the RIT delegation dispatched to assess Poland's newspaper production industry.

Today, Kleper and fellow NTID faculty members Ken Hoffmann and Jere Rentzel are supporting the country's transition to democracy by assuring the viability of its free press. Through an initiative called Project Free Speech: Poland, they are sharing their expertise with key players in the field there.

"The fact that NTID faculty members are participating in a project of this scope speaks not only to the command they hold of their field, but also to the quality of the education they're providing deaf

students on our campus," says Ken Nash, director of RIT's Center for East European Dialogue and Development and an NTID faculty member.

Hoffmann, who chairs the electronic publishing and printing technology department, adds, "Project Free Speech gives us the chance to bring the bigger world right into the classroom.

"When we come back to campus and share our experiences from abroad—inviting students to critique color images that we picked up during a visit to a Polish press, for example—they gain new understanding about the state of the industry in other cultures. This learning becomes a part of the knowledge base they'll use as they launch their own careers."

The project, which was initiated three years ago, is a joint effort between RIT, the Polish Association of Newspaper Publishers, and The Freedom Forum.

"RIT is a unique resource of technology and expertise as viewed from Eastern Europe, where the need for this information is great."

The latter, formerly known as the Gannett Foundation, is a financially independent nonpartisan international organization. Based in Arlington, Virginia, it is dedicated to promoting democratic ideals through initiatives like Project Free Speech.

At RIT's Center for East European Dialogue and Development, Nash facilitates the Institute's participation in this and other projects. Since the center's founding in 1990, faculty members from NTID and several of RIT's seven other colleges have participated in initiatives intended to improve industrial competitiveness in the region.

"RIT is a unique resource of technology and expertise as viewed from Eastern Europe, where the need for this information is great," explains Nash.

In Poland, for example, newspapers were owned and operated by the state until as recently as 1992, although, as Hoffmann points out, "Privatization of the industry began in 1988—slowly but surely." At that time, editorial content was influenced by the government and there was no advertising.

Today, ad space hovers between 33 and 55 percent of many Polish newspapers. (That's roughly equivalent to the amount of ad space in a typical daily newspaper in the United States.)

The know-how required to bring about this transformation has come in part from the guidance of NTID faculty members. Before they could supply the necessary direction, however, they needed to get a clear picture of the industry's needs.

For three weeks during summer 1992, a team of six RIT faculty members—Hoffmann, Kleper, and Rentzel among them—travelled throughout Poland to assess the country's newspaper production industry.

Funded by a portion of a \$153,700 Freedom Forum grant—the remainder of which financed similar explorations in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—they examined the entire Polish press from top to bottom.

The team visited 17 of 19 state-owned printing plants and interviewed more than 300 professionals, including managing directors, publishers, union leaders, government officials, and leaders of key professional organizations.

"What we saw on our first visit was basically former Communist printing plants and the publishers who dealt with them, using technology that we hadn't seen in the United States for almost 40 years," says Kleper.



On tour Michael Kleper, right, explores the inner workings of a Polish printing plant with a guide during an early visit to that country.

From Poland With Love

It's hard to believe that less than three years ago intern Magdalena Knaflewska knew nothing about electronic publishing.

"At that time I was barely aware that books don't grow on trees," she says, a hint of her Polish accent spicing up her otherwise perfect English.

That was before Knaflewska, then a professor of English at Poznan Technical University in Poland, spent a portion of her summer vacation as a translator and guide for the needs analysis team of Project Free Speech.

"While touring the printing and publishing houses with some of the team's members, I became fascinated by the possibility of creating printed materials with a piece of hardware," she says, pointing admiringly at one of the large computer screens in NTID's High Technology Center for Electronic Publishing and Imaging.

The prospect so intrigued Knaflewska that when the project's team invited her to study for a master's degree in graphic arts systems in RIT's School of Printing Management and Sciences, she gladly accepted the offer. Her tuition would be paid by the Freedom Forum in conjunction with Project Free Speech.

In addition, as an intern, she would act as translator and assistant to the editor for the quarterly bilingual professional journal *Today's Press and Publishing Technology*. Produced as an initiative of Project Free Speech and edited by NTID professor and High Technology Center industry liaison Michael Kleper, the publication is intended to promote the free press in her native country.

Knaflewska, 32, says that she's enthusiastic about the changes in the newspaper industry taking place back home, but having been in the United States for the past two years, she has yet to witness them firsthand.



Magdalena Knaflewska

"We have received many favorable letters thanking us for our input," she says, "but I will have to wait until I finish my work here before I have a chance to see how the industry has grown there."

For now, Knaflewska declares, the center is her home away from home. In fact, as an intern, she is provided with an apartment on campus. But considering that she routinely finds herself working at the center into the wee hours of the morning, the claim is not entirely inaccurate.

"The long hours have been necessary and worthwhile," says Knaflewska, who says she has learned an enormous amount about electronic publishing in a short period of time. So much so that Kleper appointed her electronic pre-press director for *Today's Press* just months after she had arrived at RIT.

"It's impressive that she was able to master it all so quickly," says Kleper about Knaflewska, who has also led professional development workshops in

the use of QuarkXPress—"on the sort of magic you can do with it"—for NTID faculty and staff members.

In addition, Knaflewska has co-produced (with Urszula Pawalowska, a colleague from Poznan Technical University), an English-Polish glossary of technical vocabulary that was published in the first issue of the journal.

"The glossary was considered a real contribution to the Polish printing industry because it simply did not exist before," says Kleper. "There was a real need to create a handbook of modern English-Polish printing and publishing terms, and Magda was critical in that process."

Although she concedes that creating the glossary was a laborious task, it was one that came easily to her. Knaflewska, who holds a master's degree in English and who knows some French and Russian, is a quick study in languages.

Almost as soon as she arrived at RIT, Knaflewska took up sign language. "It is quite a different concept from any other language I have studied, especially because I am not at all used to moving my hands or body while speaking," she acknowledges. "But I am always interested in learning something new, and it has been very useful for me to be able to communicate with co-workers and students who are deaf."

With the skills Knaflewska has acquired, she says that she looks forward to finding work in her new field when she returns to her country.

"It's very exciting to study this technology here at RIT. I can take my new skills back to Poland and put them to use in a growing industry."

For the moment, however, home is but a distant thought. When asked if she misses it, she quips, "I would, but I don't have time!"

Cross-cultural exchange Ken Hoffmann, right, and Jere Rentzel, below, present training seminars for their Polish colleagues on productivity and quality control issues.

"That's not to say that our Polish colleagues were ignorant of newer technologies," Hoffmann asserts. "Their biggest problem was—and continues to be—money for new equipment.

"In fact, we saw some very sophisticated Macintosh computer-based prepress newspaper publishing going on in Poland in 1992. But at that time it was the exception."

Yet another discovery for the experts from NTID was that Polish newspaper publishers, printers, and distributors had rarely discussed matters pertinent to their work with one another.

According to Hoffmann, under the Communist system they had been forced into separate professional organizations and had little incentive to collaborate on issues such as testing, productivity, or distribution. When American, French, and Italian investors started to become a presence in the Polish marketplace beginning in the late 1980s, however, a spirit of cooperation began to emerge. Project Free Speech provided yet another impetus for interaction among the industry's professionals.



"There was a definable level of friction in the room when they first came together," says Kleper. "You could feel years of frustration and misunderstanding bubbling below the surface. It was a positive experience, though, because it further opened essential lines of communication and made obvious the need to continue to improve the situation."

In response to such needs, which the RIT team identified during its initial visit to Poland, the Freedom Forum issued a second grant—this one for \$222,750—which paved the way for

the team to actually begin sharing their expertise with their peers there.

In the few short years that have passed since the initial needs assessment, the Polish press has changed considerably. "Privatization is largely responsible for the transformation because technologically sophisticated equipment is now more readily available," Hoffmann explains.

"People are thirsty for knowledge about how to be more productive using these new tools. That's where our expertise has come into play," he says.

In June 1994, Hoffmann and Rentzel presented a series of technical seminars in Warsaw and Krakow. The classes, which drew more than 100 participants, were attended by production managers and operators from the country's largest newspapers.

Organizers of the event effectively eliminated communication barriers between themselves and the English-speaking instructors by providing an elaborate and remarkably efficient system of translation, explains Rentzel. Participants and instructors alike wore headsets with microphones, which, in concert with translators seated in a booth at the back of the room, resulted in smooth communication.

Signs of a free press Privatization of the printing industry in Poland is steadily improving the quality of newspapers, magazines, and other publications for mass consumption.

Thus wired for a cross-cultural exchange, the NTID professors plunged into a meaty discussion of productivity and quality control issues in image reproduction. "Our goal was to show how certain measures can save time and money," says Rentzel.

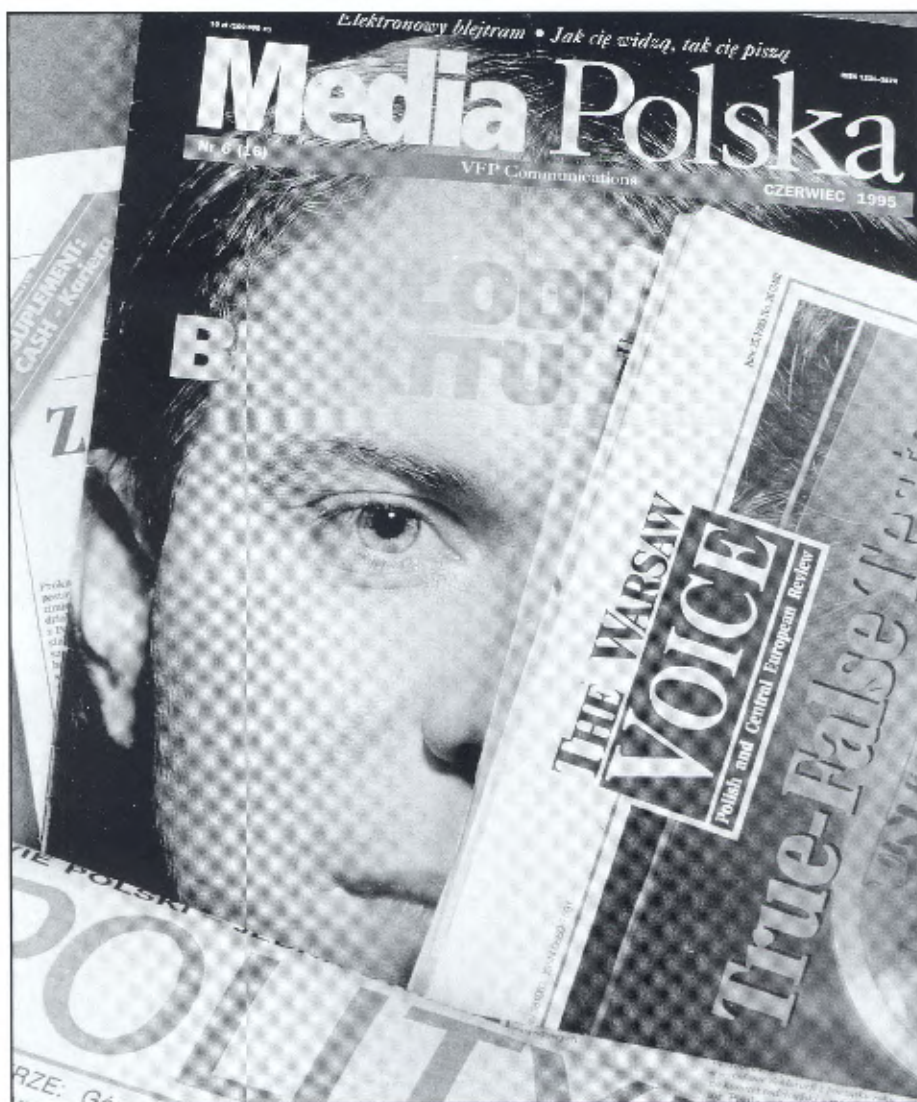
During the seminar they discussed a range of strategies, from designing a more efficient workspace (such as putting wheels on the bottom of a desk chair so that its occupant can slide swiftly from one nearby computer station to another) to instituting an industry-wide standardized system for color inks.

The latter is an important issue particularly for advertisements, Rentzel explains.

"For example, the Coca-Cola Company wants all the pictures that are published of its red and white logo to look alike, no matter which press prints them. The same is true for other organizations and the images they use to identify themselves.

"But none of this can happen unless there are industry standards, and defining them requires collaboration," he says. With that in mind, Rentzel addressed the audience on the importance of professional organizations in improving quality control.

In addition to providing face-to-face training through seminars, Project Free Speech is dedicated to filling the information void left by communism by publishing *Today's Press and Publishing Technology*, the first Western-oriented professional journal for Polish printers and publishers in more than 50 years.



Edited by Kleper, who has published several books in the field of electronic publishing and imaging, it includes articles, reviews, explanations of new technologies, and assessments of management strategies. With the help of intern Magdalena Knaflewska (see related story, "From Poland With Love"), each issue is published in both Polish and English. *Today's Press* is written and produced at RIT and sent to Poland on film, where 7,500 copies are printed and distributed.

According to Anna Smolka, executive director of the Polish Association of

Newspaper Publishers, the journal has been a welcomed publication overseas.

"I've gotten positive comments from publishers who feel that this publication is a necessary and important element in the growth of free speech and technology in the Polish publishing industry," she says.

Back at NTID, Hoffmann reports, "Efforts to conduct similar programs in Latvia and Lithuania are now in the works. As a result of our involvement, NTID students will continue to take an enlarged perspective of the industry with them out into the world." ■

Learning Leadership on the Job

Today's student paraprofessionals are tomorrow's leaders

by James Graves

"As a paraprofessional, my personal tree grows," wrote Renee Limanek (Barnes) during her student years at RIT. "As it grows, the branches spread up in the air where I climb higher and choose any branch for richer opportunities in life."

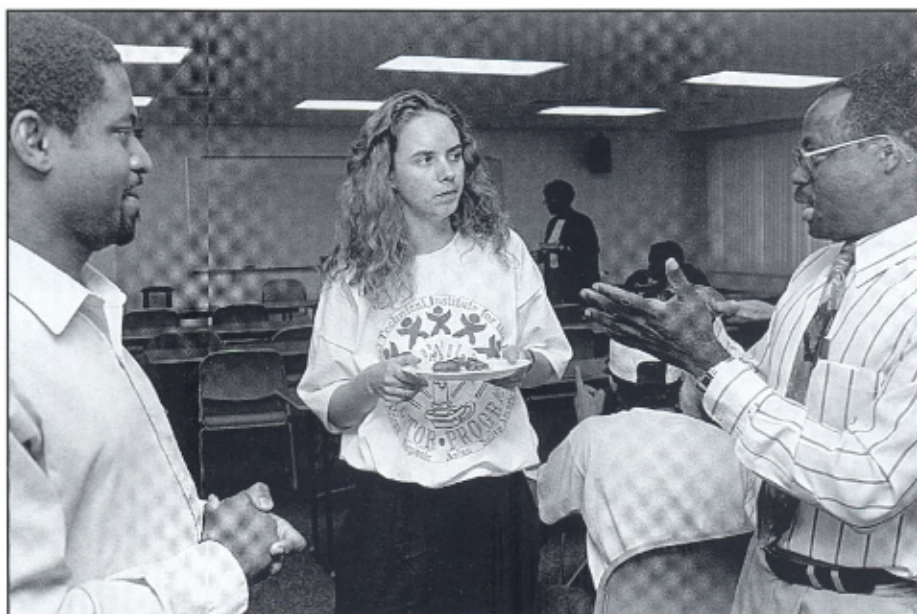
At the time of her February 1995 graduation (with a master of science degree in career and human resource development), Limanek looked back over her years at RIT and confirmed her earlier impression that her experience in student leadership positions changed her vision of the campus and the world.

"I saw that teaching goes on everywhere," she says, "and I found that even as a student, I was able to communicate with both deaf and hearing people at all levels: faculty, staff, and other students. Finding I could do that made my self-esteem grow by leaps and bounds."

Essentially every college and university across the country offers students some paraprofessional opportunities, most often positions related to residence life advising and assisting instructors, according to Ellie Rosenfield, chairperson of NTID's human development department.

"It's a national movement," says Rosenfield, "but some of the programs at NTID are unique."

Indeed, at RIT there is a veritable smorgasbord of salaried leadership positions available for students. Within NTID as well as in RIT's other seven colleges, deaf students serve their peers in such capacities as sign language



Getting started Members of the NTID community gathered in April to kick off the new AHANA mentorship program: from left, Jubril Rabiu, visiting instructional faculty member in business occupations; Michele Scheib, intern in the department of human development; and William Olubodun, coordinator of the multicultural student program.

instructors in the RITSign program (sign language instruction for hearing students) and as resident hall advisors, both during the academic year and for NTID's Explore Your Future program and Summer Vestibule Program.

Others work as student development educators, planning a variety of extra-curricular educational programs for students; as cultural peer educators in the cultural support educators program; as student development assistants facilitating communication among deaf and hearing athletes on intramural and varsity athletic teams; as peer educators on personal and social issues; and as teaching assistants in freshman seminars.

For Limanek, the paraprofessional positions provided a way to hone leadership skills she discovered she had during her freshman year. From student development assistant, she moved on to work as a resident hall advisor, then as a resident hall director—with supervisory responsibilities for more than 10 resident advisors, both deaf and hearing.

In addition, she completed an internship in community advocacy for the Monroe County Association for Hearing Impaired People as well as a position as coordinator of RIT's Women's Resource Center.

Limanek believes that the combination of a strong academic background and a variety of paraprofessional experiences contributed significantly to her successful job search. Just a week after graduation, she began working as a deaf services specialist in the division of deaf and hard-of-hearing services in North Carolina's department of human resources.

Other deaf RIT alumni tell similar stories.

Mitchell Levy, 1990 RIT information systems graduate, who recently was promoted from outreach manager to marketing manager in AT&T's accessible communication services unit in Bridgewater, New Jersey, credits his two years as student development educator coordinator—and the skills he learned from supervising other student educators—with enabling him to manage professionals in a reporting relationship to him.

NTID's human development department, through the paraprofessional opportunities administered by its faculty and staff members, "was the perfect place for me to grow," says Levy.

"Through the programs there I was able to expand my interpersonal skills and skills related to communication, presentation, and organization," he says. "I became better prepared for the working world."

Scot Atkins, who completed a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1989 and a master's degree in career and human resource development in 1992, both from RIT, held a variety of leadership positions as an undergraduate and worked in NTID's recruitment and admissions department while he pursued his graduate degree.



Filling a critical need Responding to the bombing of Oklahoma City's federal building last spring, student development educators organized a blood drive to aid victims. From left, Colleen Kent and Michele Scheib sign up donors Ed Cornett and David Rink.

Atkins joined Sprint Relay Texas in Austin in early 1992 as a human resources administrator. He was promoted in 1993 to training supervisor and is responsible for initial new employee training and ongoing training and development for a 290-employee work force.

"I was an emerging leader when I applied for leadership positions at RIT," says Atkins. "I was basically good with people, articulate, and studious. But I was terrified of making presentations to groups of people."

After holding positions as a resident advisor, RITSign instructor, peer sexuality educator, and student development assistant, Atkins says he began to realize his potential.

"From these experiences," he says, "I gained self-confidence, and I overcame my fear of failure and of presenting in front of people."

Indeed, Atkins goes so far as to say, "I firmly believe that 90 percent of who I am and my skills were developed through the leadership activities and positions I held during college. Each leadership position I held served as a

building block for the next position, and they prepared me for the jobs I have had since graduation."

Current students also hold these positions in high regard and find great satisfaction in being hired, according to Rosenfield.

"For example, the student development educator positions are seen as top jobs," says Rosenfield. "One needs lots of experience, and there is a rigorous interview process that includes a presentation by the candidate."

Rosenfield, an 18-year NTID veteran, knows personally the value of such experiences. "As a junior at Ohio State University, I became a resident advisor," she recalls. "Frankly, that positive experience contributed a great deal to my career choice, and that's the same thing that happens to our students."

Rosenfield believes that students take their responsibilities in these positions seriously, and their success has been striking.

"It becomes a source of pride," says Vicki Hurwitz, developmental educational specialist who supervises the student teaching assistant program. "If

**"I never knew what skills I had
before I got involved with this program.
Now I don't want to waste anything
I have to give."**

someone gets a position and is successful at it, others hear about it."

"Students attracted to our positions are usually sports fans or athletes themselves," says Dugan Davies, education specialist in physical education and athletics who supervises student development assistants in her area.

"But they really seek out the jobs because they know that one of the goals of the program is to develop leadership and job skills," Davies notes.

Mindy Hopper, cross-cultural educator in the human development department and supervisor of the student development educator program as well as the RITSign program, gives her perspective: "These jobs give our students the opportunity to enhance their leadership, public speaking, and decision-making skills. They learn quickly and apply their experiences to their future endeavors."

Adds Hopper, "Our students believe that if they give 100 percent, they'll get 100 percent back."

Renee Camerlengo, RIT's associate director for student development, speaks of the "great stories of students who blossom through this kind of work, who begin to see things beyond themselves."

"It's satisfying when students come back and thank staff members for what they've experienced in this area," she says. "That makes the work worthwhile."

Students served by their fellow students who staff these programs benefit from enhanced communication, interesting and informative programs, advice and counsel, up-to-date facts on health and fitness, and sign language skills, among other things. But those students in the leadership positions marvel at the richness of what they get back.



A day at the fair From left, human development department staff members Vicki Hurwitz and Mindy Hopper compare notes with student Erin Esposito after a day of introducing various student leadership positions to prospective applicants at NTID's annual paraprofessionals fair.

Kalpana Murthy, fourth-year science student from Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, became a cultural peer educator after tiring of her self-imposed isolation. As she began to plan programs with and for other AHANA—African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, and Native American—students, Murthy herself began to blossom.

"I began to socialize more," she says, "to enjoy myself, and to value my own Indian roots while learning more about others.

"I never knew what skills I had before I got involved with this program," she

adds. "Now I don't want to waste anything I have to give."

Other paraprofessional students' stories echo Murthy's experiences. Erin Esposito, fourth-year professional and technical communications student from Manlius, New York, was "passive and quiet" when she came to NTID. She changed majors a number of times until she found what, for her, has been a "perfect match."

The paraprofessional experiences have made a tremendous difference for her, she says. "I've learned diplomacy, effective public speaking, networking,



Leading the way Resident hall advisor Luis Reyes, center, led participants of NTID's summer 1995 Explore Your Future program through a week of activities designed to demonstrate career options for college-bound students.

and interpersonal communication and listening skills—all kinds of things that complement my major," she says.

After serving in various positions, Esposito was elected vice president of the NTID Student Congress (NSC) for 1994-95. Her biggest lesson learned?

"Success doesn't always go to the fastest or the strongest; sooner or later the victory goes to those who *think* they can," she says, reminiscent of a famous "little engine."

Strongly supportive of and grateful for RIT's strengths as a provider of excellent technical education for deaf students, Esposito reflects, "Amazing how people can blossom, once they find the proper resources and take advantage of them by utilizing them to the fullest."

When asked what his paraprofessional experiences mean to him, Ricky Postl, a Chicago native who completed his bachelor's degree in social work last spring, says, "I see doors flying open!"

Postl says he knew when he entered NTID that he had potential, but he wasn't sure of himself or his skills. "What I found was consistency in myself," he says. "I realized that if I could do well at one job, I could probably do well at the next one."

Finding paraprofessional positions that were "a perfect fit with my skills and needs" was in itself a positive experience for Leah Simmons, a Madison, Wisconsin, native and 1995 professional and technical communications graduate. But the peak experience for her as a student development educator was planning and executing a two-day educational event on deaf women's issues.

"Working with Patti Durr [developmental educational specialist on the student life team] and the students who

"I've learned *diplomacy, effective public speaking, networking, and interpersonal communication and listening skills—all kinds of things that complement my major.*"

shared their stories really changed me," says Simmons.

Nothing short of his own identity was Luis Reyes' discovery.

"I was lost for a long time," the LaPorte, Texas, student explains. "But the experiences I've had at RIT have shown me who I am."

Now, through his work as a teaching assistant and a resident hall advisor in NTID's Explore Your Future program and Summer Vestibule Program as well as in other student leadership positions, Reyes, third-year applied computer technology student, shares his self-actualizing experiences with his fellow students.

The future is bright for Reyes and other deaf students at RIT who, as they move toward graduation, look back at hard work in their chosen technical fields merged with abundant energy given to the education of their peers through a variety of paraprofessional programs.

"Life-changing benefits" is what comes from being a paraprofessional at RIT, says Esposito. Asked about her career goals, she says, "Public relations professional, technical writer, teacher, lawyer, administrator. I believe I can do many different things."

Graduates now in the work force acknowledge the profound benefits gained from a combination of a strong technical education and experience in student leadership positions.

"I look at myself and those people who took advantage of the chance to develop leadership skill as students," says Atkins, "and I see amazing self-confidence and skill levels all paying off in careers in business and industry." ■



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National Technical Institute for the Deaf
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