

IN ORDER TO HEAR THE WORLD

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Bauman University joins the international education network for the deaf

Bauman Moscow State Technical University (BMSTU) has signed an agreement by which Russia's oldest technical university will participate in an international education network for the deaf. Hard-of-hearing students of BMSTU will not only gain access to international educational technologies but Bauman will also share the experience acquired in Russia.

BMSTU and its Research and Methodological Center for Professional Rehabilitation of the Deaf (the Center), has a long history: for almost seventy years the University has been educating hearing impaired students. At present, the Center, using its unique experience and methodology, enrolls about two hundred students, who study along with regular students of BMSTU. Its computer class, lecture hall and other facilities have modern equipment suitable for educating the deaf. Experienced instructors and consultants are genuine veterans of the Center, who care a great deal about their students.

However, the number of deaf people in our country is about one and a half million. The Center's capacity is not sufficient to prepare all these people for an active professional life; it is necessary therefore to organize a network of higher educational institutions in various fields, where the hard-of-hearing can study. This is a very costly business and, as a result, it is desirable to acquire assistance from western partners to implement such a project in our country. For over ten years the Bauman Center has been cooperating with the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at Rochester Institute of Technology, USA, and now it is joining PEN-International, an international post-secondary educational network for the hard-of-hearing. This network, with its headquarters in the USA, was organized in 2001 as a result of efforts by NTID with financial support from The Nippon Foundation, the largest Japanese philanthropic organization. PEN-International will help raise education of the deaf to a new level. This will be accomplished by using modern information and educational technologies in teaching, by improving educational methodology and by developing new programs.

"We want this educational network for the deaf to spread all over the

world", said Professor James DeCaro of NTID, director of PEN-International. At present, the network partners include NTID (USA), Tsukuba College of Technology (Japan), and Tianjin Technical College of Tianjin University of Technology (china). Now, they are joined by Bauman University.

Alexander Stanevsky, director of the Bauman Center, who is engaged in the development of educational methodology for the deaf and also engaged in organizing the postsecondary education process, noted: "The All-Russian Society of the Deaf has helped us better understand problems of the hard-of-hearing. Today, we are sitting at this table with leaders of the 'movement of the deaf' from various countries, including Victor Petrovich Smaltser, president of the All-Russian Society of the Deaf. By their own example, they have demonstrated the great potential of hard-of-hearing people and they are searching for ways of tapping the educational and professional potential of deaf people. The hard-of-hearing must now decide what to do: to stretch out their hand for begging or for partnership. We can stretch a helping hand to such people, and provide them an opportunity to receive education and work side-by-side with us. This is the meaning of genuine. Therefore, the unification of centers in various countries on the basis of technical and technological achievements is a project that is destined to succeed."