



## Parent News

Fall/Winter 2005



From the  
Vice  
President  
and Dean

Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz

As strange as it may seem, only two generations ago, a really good job or a great career for a deaf person was working a linotype machine. For most, college was an unfulfilled dream, and very few deaf or hard-of-hearing people entered technical careers.

Fast forward to 2005 and NTID's 37<sup>th</sup> class of students. One-twelfth of the students at RIT are deaf or hard-of-hearing, and historically, 92% of those students who seek employment after graduation will find work commensurate with their degrees and training. And not just on a linotype machine. They will be information technologists, software engineers, mechanical engineers, laboratory workers, artists, scientists, business people, and the list goes on.

As a student's journey toward academic success begins here, he or she is supported by experienced faculty and staff, and excellent support services. But, there are still challenges and we all need to encourage students to focus on the successful end of this journey—graduation.

It's a fact that more jobs are more available to people with college degrees. And it's important that your student sees graduation as a goal. Nationwide, retention is an issue for many colleges as students arrive with different attitudes, abilities, and needs.

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## Student Life

### NTID Student Congress Leaders

Last spring, Elizabeth "Lizzie" Sorkin and Jon LeJeune were elected president and vice president, respectively, of the NTID Student Congress (NSC), a student government organization that provides programs and encourages student activities and opportunities for deaf and hard-of-hearing students to interact with their peers socially and academically.



NSC President Lizzie Sorkin, and Vice President Jon LeJeune.

Lizzie's and Jon's platform of "Pulse" reflects their desire to encourage fellow students to take student leadership seriously and get involved in the pulse of the campus community, whether it means being an officer in a club, hosting a community service event, or attending a campus-wide program.

Lizzie, from Denton, Md., a third-year student majoring in Film and Animation, plays intramural soccer and participates in other events on campus to keep her finger on the pulse of the action. Future goals? She wants to see her name in film credits someday.

Jon, a third-year student from Louisiana, majoring in Social Work, enjoys sharing his experiences and the benefits he's gotten by being involved here at RIT. After college, he'd like to travel in Europe, then get a job in social work and eventually build his own home.

But for right now, they both are committed to helping fellow students feel the "Pulse" of exciting opportunities and experiences available to them at RIT/NTID.

### A Web Site Especially for You!

At [www.NTID.rit.edu/Parents](http://www.NTID.rit.edu/Parents), you'll find frequently asked questions, and information about almost everything associated with your student's daily life here. There are links to financial aid, housing, counseling—you name it. In fact, if you think of something we should add, let our Web developer know at [mxdnpa@rit.edu](mailto:mxdnpa@rit.edu).

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To go from the familiar to the unfamiliar is difficult for all of us. There are many adjustments that need to be made and quickly. We know this, and we have mechanisms in place to combat the first year adjustment difficulties that some students experience. Read on Page 3 about our First Year Experience program and the many ways we support your student through a successful first year and beyond.

Once your son or daughter returns for the second year, he or she can focus on graduation with more confidence and a little help from advisors and counselors along the way. The day you arrive for the commencement ceremony will be a proud one for you and your student and for all of us here at RIT/NTID.

## NTID's Applefest!

Music, a sunny day with a light breeze, and the fragrance of apples—candied apples, apple crisp, apple beignets, apple cider—what could be better than that? At NTID's annual Applefest in September, students got to know each other and faculty and staff as they forged ahead into fall quarter.



## Encouraging Your Student

by Dr. Robb Adams, Chairperson  
NTID Counseling Services Department



**A**round campus it's obvious that students are using their cell phones, pagers, and yes, even their Blackberry™ or Sidekick™ to make a lot of calls. If statistics don't lie, I have to believe that a few of those calls are asking for your support, either overtly or surreptitiously. Here are some ideas for encouraging your students when they call you with concerns, or for helping them proactively before they make that call.

### **If they seem overwhelmed by their workload...**

Procrastinating causes stress. Suggest that they buy a calendar and use it! Writing down due dates will help them organize their work—and their fun.

### **If they are having trouble studying...**

Studying during the day is best. Tell them that studies show that natural light should help keep them motivated.

### **If they are having trouble with coursework...**

Our quarter system may make academic work seem more intense. Suggest that they use the academic support systems that we have in place for them and get help immediately. There are teachers, tutors, and peers that can help them before they fall too far behind.

### **If they are having trouble with roommates...**

Talking about differences and needs goes a long way. But, it's hard to do. Resident advisors are a good place for your students to go for advice.

### **If they seem to be having more fun than studying...**

There's nothing wrong with a gentle reminder that getting involved and having fun are important, but the priority here is to get ready for life in the world outside of college. And, that while they are here, their education is number one.

### **And finally, if they just don't know where to turn...**

Every NTID student has an assigned counselor who can help with counseling, advice, or referral for specialized help. Encourage your student to seek help when needed. It's a sign of strength.

As always, if you have questions or concerns about your student's experience here at RIT/NTID, call me at 585-475-6597 (voice/TTY) or e-mail me at [reanse@rit.edu](mailto:reanse@rit.edu) for information, advice or resources that might help.

# First Year Experience

by **Linda Bryant, Coordinator**  
*First Year Experiences and  
Career Exploration Services*



**T**here's no question that the first year of college can be the toughest. Making the transition to college and all the responsibilities that go with it is challenging. Will I pass? Will I make friends? Can I make it on my own? These are common fears of first-year college students. We know this from experience, and we also know that if your student successfully completes his or her first year,

chances for graduating increase dramatically. That's why, at RIT/NTID, we offer all first-year students the First Year Experience (FYE) program to help them make the transition to college life.

Think of FYE programs as an invisible umbrella protecting your student as he or she gets some important experience and makes some important decisions. Without even knowing it, first-year students participate in an array of courses and programs designed to help them successfully complete this first year.

All students are enrolled in a Freshman Seminar course during their first quarter at NTID, where they have opportunities to develop and enhance personal awareness, academic skills, and campus community involvement, as well as develop relationships with faculty, staff, and peers. These are all important milestones to a successful college career.

First-year students work with an assigned counselor who assists them

with academic and personal issues. During this first year, students also take introductory technical courses to help them choose or confirm a course of study that will help them select a major if they haven't already done so. Students work closely with academic advisors and department chairs as they move through this decision-making process. Finally, all first-year students participate in what we call co-curricular programs. Some of these programs are educational and some are purely social, and all are sponsored by the Student Life Team, Student Health Services, Women's Center, RIT Campus Life and other campus organizations.

We take pride in giving your student the strongest foundation possible—one that he or she can build on beyond the first year and into the second, and third, to graduation and beyond.

If you have any questions about FYE, please contact me at 585-475-6554 (voice/TTY) or at [LindaBryant@mail.rit.edu](mailto:LindaBryant@mail.rit.edu).

## Spotlight on Parents....

### Margie and Larry Burns *Englishtown, New Jersey*

Margie and Larry Burns from Englishtown, N.J., came to an RIT/NTID presentation last year with their son, James, now a third-year student majoring in the Applied Computer Technology program. There, they learned that each student has to complete two cooperative education program experiences (co-op). Designed to help students gain valuable real-world work experience before they graduate, co-ops are similar to internships, where students use their skills working for a business or organization.

When the Burnses learned that the co-op program always needs new employer connections, they thought their siblings who work for large corporations might be able to help.

"We know that every parent worries about their children's futures, but with a child who has a disability the worry is compounded," says Mrs. Burns. "You know you've given them every opportunity, but in order to make it in the business world, someone else has to give them a chance."

They contacted James' aunt, who works at Citigroup in New York City, and asked her to look into the possibility of hiring NTID students. James' aunt contacted Mary Ellen Tait, assistant director of the

NTID Center on Employment, and the pair arranged co-ops for a number of students last year. The experience went so well that this past summer, 12 RIT/NTID students worked co-ops at Citigroup, and one student was hired for a permanent position.

"If every parent of an RIT/NTID student asks at least one or two people if they could get an internship or co-op started, there would be an unbelievable network," says Mrs. Burns. "My husband and I would encourage every parent to think of who they know who could be a connection for RIT/NTID. It took very little effort to mention the program to several people. If an employer sees that it isn't difficult to hire someone with a disability, maybe it would get easier for each of our kids to get good permanent jobs."



## Ready to Learn

by Dr. Ellie Rosenfield, Associate Dean,  
Student and Academic Services



**Y**our sons and daughters have accomplished a lot. If they're first year students, they've successfully completed the application process, been accepted, made it through orientation and have completed their first quarter. If they are continuing students, they are

accustomed to the environment and requirements of college, and are here, ready to learn. You might think you can take a back seat now, but wait! "Ready to learn" means more than just being academically ready. It means that all of the obstacles to learning are taken care of. It means the students have money for their books. It means that their bills are paid on time so they can register and get the courses they need. You can help make sure they are financially ready to learn.

If you have questions about finances or scholarships, or VR funding or anything you think might be in the way of your student's success, contact Denise Hampton, coordinator, NTID Student Financial Services at 585-475-6863 (voice/TTY) or at [dchnod@rit.edu](mailto:dchnod@rit.edu) or e-mail us at [NTIDAID@rit.edu](mailto:NTIDAID@rit.edu).

## Developing Employer Relationships

by John Macko, Associate Director  
NTID Center on Employment



**W**hile your students are working hard to develop skills that will prepare them for actual **jobs**, employment advisors at the NTID Center on Employment (NCE) are networking and connecting with employers to create the climate for successful **job-hunting**.

NCE staff fan out across the nation, following up with contacts we've made through conferences and presentations or leads from other employers.

Sometimes we visit employers who may not know about NTID, but who need employees with the types of skills our students are developing. For example, Karen Downs, an assistant director at NCE, recently went to a manufacturing conference in Chicago, and Dr. Sid McQuay, associate professor in Computer Integrated Machining Technology (CIMT), and I went to the Army Depot in Corpus Christi, Texas, where we talked about our NTID Engineering programs and encouraged employers to hire our students. We also inquired about the need for students in other related disciplines.

You all know the importance of getting your foot in the door, and you can help us network. Some of our most successful co-op relationships started with a phone call from one of our parents to someone that they know. (See Spotlight on Parents, Page 3.) If your company might hire students for the summer or for co-ops, or graduates for permanent employment, or if you know of a company in your area that we could visit, contact me at 585-475-6726 (voice/TTY) or via e-mail at [jrmned@rit.edu](mailto:jrmned@rit.edu).

R · I · T  
women's  
center



The RIT Women's Center, part of the Division of Student Affairs at RIT, addresses a wide variety of issues affecting the lives of our students. These issues include academic concerns, social and socializing concerns, self-esteem, sexuality, healthy relationships, personal safety, and eating issues, to name just a few. The Center's mission is to provide an educational environment in which women can be personally and academically successful.

Some people are surprised that the center provides programs, services, and workshops for male students as well. Center staff work closely with fraternities and sororities to provide workshops to meet their needs.

Students can drop in at the center, located on the lower level of the SAU, to attend one of the center's many program offerings, or set up an appointment to meet with one of the staff members.

If a student needs additional assistance, the center is well-connected to other campus and community resources. For more information, contact Donna Rubin, interim director, at [donna.rubin@rit.edu](mailto:donna.rubin@rit.edu) or call 585-475-6587 (voice/TTY).

# Financial Aid: Important Things You Should Know

by Denise Hampton,  
Coordinator,  
Student Financial Services



## Vocational Rehabilitation

If your student receives support from **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)**, remind him or her to give his or her VR counselor copies of fall grades and winter registration schedules so that VR payment authorizations (this means payments!) are not delayed for winter quarter. If you have questions about VR, contact me at 585-475-6863 or by e-mail at [dchnod@rit.edu](mailto:dchnod@rit.edu).

## Electronic Billing (eBill)

RIT has an electronic billing (eBill) program for students, and eBills have replaced paper billing statements. Each quarter, your student receives an e-mail notification to his or her official university e-mail account stating that his or her eBill is available. Your student has the option of selecting three additional e-mail addresses to allow for you, the parent, guardian, or sponsor, or other authorized users such as VR, to receive the eBill notifications as well.

## Cost and Payment Procedures

Your student's RIT bill may be paid by cash, check or electronic check (e-check). We do not accept credit card payments for tuition, fees, and room and board charges that appear on the student billing statement. However, we do have an arrangement for a third party vendor to accept MasterCard and Discover Card if you make payment online. The vendor does charge a percent service fee for each credit card transaction. You may

send your billing-related payments (check) to: Rochester Institute of Technology, Student Financial Services, P.O. Box 92878-200, Rochester, NY 14692-9878. Your student also can pay in person at the Office of Student Financial Services on the first floor of the George Eastman Building. You can make credit card and e-check payments at <https://ipay.rit.edu>. If you have questions about eBilling, please contact Student Financial Services at 585-475-5489 (voice/TTY).



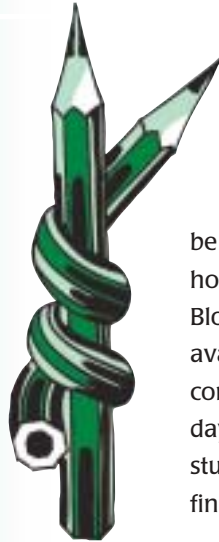
## Re-Opening of the Commons!



The first step in construction of the Student Development Center was the remodeling of the Hettie Shumway Dining Commons, "The Commons," for short. Out went the cafeteria-line look of the 70s and 80s, and in came the super cool coffee-house look of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A fireplace in an out-of-the-way corner is cozy, and couches and overstuffed chairs welcome conversation and study. As for the food, there are healthy subs and salads, wood-fired pizzas, a salad station, and, of course, for those who can't give up burgers and fries, a grilling station. Come and visit. You won't want to leave.

## RIT Institute Calendar

When is Christmas vacation? Wondering about Spring Break? Go to the 2005-2006 institute calendar online at [www.rit.edu/NTID/Calendar](http://www.rit.edu/NTID/Calendar). If you don't have access online, it's printed in the inside cover of the 2005-2006 Undergraduate Bulletin.



## New at RIT/NTID... Student Blogs

The thought processes of college students don't have to be a mystery anymore. Go online to the new NTID homepage at [www.rit.edu/NTID](http://www.rit.edu/NTID) and click on "Student Blogs." A "blog" is short for Web log and is like a journal available on the Web. It's updated frequently and often contains philosophical reflection or opinions—or just the day-to-day experiences of college students! Join our student bloggers at [www.ntid.rit.edu/current/blogs](http://www.ntid.rit.edu/current/blogs) and find out what's on their minds!

## Who to contact

These resources are available to help answer questions you and your student may have to assure a successful college experience at RIT.

NTID Student and Academic Services  
Dr. Ellie Rosenfield, Associate Dean  
[edrhd@rit.edu](mailto:edrhd@rit.edu)  
585-475-6202 (v/TTY)

NTID Student Life Team  
Karey Pine, Manager  
[ktprla@rit.edu](mailto:ktprla@rit.edu)  
585-475-6230 (v/TTY)

Student Health Center  
585-475-2255 (v/TTY)  
585-475-5515 (TTY)

NTID Counseling Services  
Dr. Robb Adams, Chairperson  
[reanse@rit.edu](mailto:reanse@rit.edu)  
585-475-6597 (v/TTY)

NTID Student Financial Services  
Denise Hampton, Coordinator  
[dchnod@rit.edu](mailto:dchnod@rit.edu)  
585-475-6863 (v/TTY)

RIT/NTID Financial Aid Counseling Services  
Gail Brown, Coordinator  
[gabsfa@rit.edu](mailto:gabsfa@rit.edu)  
585-475-2186 (v)  
585-475-6909 (TTY)

First Year Experiences and Career Exploration Services  
Linda Bryant, Coordinator  
[lbmca@rit.edu](mailto:lbmca@rit.edu)  
585-475-6554 (v/TTY)

RIT Residence Life  
Wendy Hagele-Stapf, Residence Director  
Ellingson, Peterson & Bell Halls  
[wmhsar@rit.edu](mailto:wmhsar@rit.edu)  
585-475-5518 (v/TTY)

Substance and Alcohol Intervention Services for the Deaf (SAISD)  
Wendy DiMatteo, Staff Specialist  
[wmdgrl@rit.edu](mailto:wmdgrl@rit.edu)  
585-475-4978 (v/TTY)

Campus Safety  
585-475-2853 (v)  
585-475-6654 (TTY)

**Office of the Vice President and Dean**  
585-475-6317 (v/TTY); 585-475-5978 (FAX)  
[alan\\_hurwitz@rit.edu](mailto:alan_hurwitz@rit.edu) (e-mail)  
[www.rit.edu/NTID](http://www.rit.edu/NTID)

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

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