



*the* BEST OF ALL WORLDS...

# Parent News

Spring 2000



Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz

## From the Dean

At NTID, our top priority is the success of our students, a goal I'm sure you as parents share with us. We've determined that a critical component of a successful college career for many students is the quality of life on campus. We are committed to improving the quality of our students' lives at RIT, and this year we have implemented a number of initiatives to accomplish this goal.

The most apparent initiative is the renovation of the Ellingson, Peterson, and Bell residence hall complex, beginning in December 2000. In addition, students now have another choice for apartment living on campus. You can read more about both in this newsletter.

Last year we established two task forces, one to address quality of life and the other to address academic support for high-risk students. The quality of life task force will be assessing student satisfaction with the current quality of life on campus and providing suggestions for appropriate improvements that can be implemented at the Institute.

At this time, we have already done a few things to improve the quality of campus life. We've converted the use of the entire first floor of the Shumway Dining Commons for student activities. The NTID Student Congress and associated organizations, including the NTID student newspaper, *THE VIEW*, are housed in the Commons along with a computer lab available for students. In addition, we are providing wellness and social programming for extracurricular student activities. These programs have been welcomed by students interested in healthy

living alternatives on campus. The NTID Student Life Team continues to offer leadership development, multicultural student programming, and other activities to students interested in exploring their personal growth.

We also want to assure student safety, which we increase by providing an information desk in the first-floor lobby of Ellingson Hall. Our Campus Safety Department plays a key role in this effort as well, which you can read more about in this newsletter.

A small task force of faculty and staff members from throughout NTID now is developing a list of recommendations to guide NTID in planning support services for deaf students who are struggling to succeed within NTID academic programs. The task force will also analyze how NTID students at academic risk are able to utilize campus services to help them assess their own learning needs and how the results of those assessments are incorporated within the students' own practice as learners and within their teachers' work in the classroom. In addition, the task force will make suggestions for how resources within NTID can be best organized to support this process so that more and more of our students succeed in college.

Our work is far from done. We have much more to do, and we are enthusiastic about doing the right things to support the success of all of our deaf and hard-of-hearing students at RIT. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at (716) 475-6443 (TTY), (716) 475-5978 (FAX), [alan\\_hurwitz@rit.edu](mailto:alan_hurwitz@rit.edu).

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Lee Twyman

## “What ifs?” answered by Lee Twyman

Lee Twyman, chairperson of the NTID Counseling Services Department, answers questions commonly asked about student and parental issues in college. Counselors in the NTID Counseling Services Department provide comprehensive personal and career counseling as well as academic advising to deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Every NTID-supported student is assigned to a professional counselor upon entry to NTID. If your son/daughter does not know his/her assigned counselor, he/she can check: <http://www.rit.edu/~489www/>.

### What if my child has personal problems?

The first step is to encourage your child to see his/her counselor. The counselor will work with the student to help resolve the personal problem. If the parent wants to be involved with the counseling, we will ask the student for permission to allow the counselor to communicate with the parent. If we feel the student's situation requires additional assistance, we will collaborate with various resources on and off campus, including the RIT Counseling Center.

### What if I want to know how my child is doing in school?

You should try to have regular communication with your son/daughter as often as you can. If this approach does not work, you can contact your child's academic department head to request information about your son/daughter's academic progress. If you are still having difficulty, you can contact the counselor who can reach out to the student to encourage

a three-way conversation among the parent, student, and counselor.

### What if my child has a learning disability, and I want him/her to get support?

College is different from high school because services do not come automatically. At RIT, the student must fill out an application and provide special documentation to request support from the RIT Disability Services office. If your child would like an application, contact Pamela Lloyd at [palldc@rit.edu](mailto:palldc@rit.edu). Be sure to apply for disability services as early as possible. If you suspect your child has a learning disability or secondary disability other than deafness, contact your child's counselor.

### What if my child decides he/she wants to change his/her major or is uncertain if the current major is a good match?

Changing majors and uncertainty about career choices in college is very common and normal. When a student is in doubt about his/her major, we encourage the student to keep an open mind and explore all possibilities for prospective careers. The student can meet with his/her counselor to receive support in the process of exploring career options. We often refer students to NTID's Career Resource and Testing Center, which is a comprehensive resource offering educational programs and career information. The student also has the option of taking the class, "Career Decision Making," to help facilitate his/her search for the best possible career match.



## Dorm renovations update

Renovations for Ellingson Hall are slated to begin December 2000 and end August 2001. The entire renovation of residence halls at RIT will be completed upon conclusion of all work on Peterson and Bell Halls. RIT's Center for Residence Life developed a mock-up room in Ellingson Hall to test the new features of the renovated rooms, including paint, lighting, carpet, furniture, and other amenities. Shortly before renovations, a test group of students will live in these mock-up rooms and work with Residence Life staff to improve the quality of the rooms.

Residence Life guarantees that all incoming freshmen will receive a room assignment.

Any returning student wishing to remain in the Residence Halls can improve his or her chances of retaining that opportunity by applying for residence hall rooms during spring sign up. Returning residence hall students will live in Ellingson Hall for the fall quarter of 2000, then move to their new rooms in neighboring Sol Heumann Hall before the start of the winter quarter 2000.

For more information about renovations, contact Wendy Hagele, Area Coordinator of Ellingson/Peterson/Bell Quad, at (716) 475-2961 or [WMHSAR@rit.edu](mailto:WMHSAR@rit.edu).

# Using the Internet to keep in touch

Today, students are increasingly keeping in touch with their parents through the Internet. The Internet is a means for parents and students to access a quicker, cheaper, and more accessible communication mode than the traditional methods of phone calls or postal mail. With the resources and skills of the new generation of students entering college, the Internet has become a very important, if not primary, mode of communication among most students and parents. Many college students are glued to their computers while engaging in online chat room conversations, responding to e-mail, and doing other tasks simultaneously. This offers parents an excellent opportunity to participate in the virtual everyday lives of their students.



Vicki Hurwitz

"I communicate with my mother almost every day! I also set up a time every weekend to engage in live conversations with my parents through America Online (AOL) and America Online Instant Messenger (AIM)," says Sarah Jerger, a third-year psychology student from Knoxville, Tenn. Sarah's mother, Mary Jerger, says, "...it has been a godsend to have this method of communication available."

Diane Cinney, a fourth-year multidisciplinary studies student from Saratoga, N.Y., also uses AOL e-mail and AIM to touch base with her family members at least once a week. Her mother, Ellie Cinney, says, "E-mail has been a godsend for us because it enables us to share everyday experiences, family news, joys, and sorrows at a fraction of the cost of my monthly telephone bill."

E-mail communication is very effective for communicating with students while they are away from their computers. All NTID students can send an unlimited number of e-mails using their RIT e-mail and Internet system on campus. For parents, there are many free e-mail systems offered on the Internet. The two most common free e-mail systems are Hotmail and Yahoo mail. To obtain free

e-mail, go to the websites <http://hotmail.com> and <http://yahoo.com>.

Two popular free chat programs offered on the web, America Online Instant Messenger (AIM) and ICQ, offer the opportunity to replicate everyday conversations as if using a TTY on the computer. To obtain ICQ, go to [http://](http://www.icq.com)

[www.icq.com](http://www.icq.com).

For AIM, go to <http://www.aol.com/aim>. Once you have created your own username and password, contact your student and obtain his or her ICQ numbers or AIM username



Stephanie Hurwitz

so you can add him or her and provide your own username.

"Communicating with my family on the Internet has greatly enriched my life and helped me to stay close with my family throughout my college years," said Cinney. "I don't know how we would have done it without the Internet!"

## NTID's Academic Leaders

The following individuals are responsible for directing academic and student-support programs:

Associate Dean for Student Affairs:

Dr. Gerard Buckley  
(716) 475-6906 (voice/TTY)  
[gjbcfo@rit.edu](mailto:gjbcfo@rit.edu)

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs:

Dr. Christine Licata  
(716) 475-2953 (voice/TTY)  
[cmlnbt@rit.edu](mailto:cmlnbt@rit.edu)

Director, Center for Arts and Sciences:

Dr. Laurie Brewer  
(716) 475-6692 (voice/TTY)  
[lcbnla@rit.edu](mailto:lcbnla@rit.edu)

Director, Center for Baccalaureate and Graduate Studies:

Dr. Peter Lalley  
(716) 475-5481 (voice/TTY)  
[palbgs@rit.edu](mailto:palbgs@rit.edu)

Director, Center for Technical Studies:

Dr. Thomas Raco  
(716) 475-6485 (voice/TTY)  
[tgrnvc@rit.edu](mailto:tgrnvc@rit.edu)

## Student financial information



Sue Austin

It is imperative for NTID students to begin the financial aid process for the next academic year **now**. During the December break, two financial aid forms were sent to the home addresses of all registered students who are U.S. citizens or legal aliens. The first form is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Some students may have received the renewal version of the FAFSA. **Fill out one or the other; do not fill out both.** Please keep a copy of the FAFSA for your records. The second form is the RIT 2000-2001 Financial Aid Application for Undergraduate Students. If this form is not filled out, continuing students will not receive financial aid on time. RIT's Financial Aid Office will not complete a student's application until both forms have arrived.

Social Security Income (SSI) can be provided for deaf individuals who meet the SSI criteria for deafness and meet the income and resource limits set by the state SSI agency. If your student is eligible for SSI, he or she will receive SSI as a resident in the state that is your student's permanent home. The Rochester office can take your application claim for benefits regardless of the state of

residence. Once your student turns 18, he or she is highly encouraged to apply for SSI. If your student's application for SSI is turned down, the next step is to appeal to the decision. According to Sue Austin, coordinator of student financial services department at NTID, there is a good chance your student could qualify for SSI the second time around, depending on the state of residence and family income. If your student currently receives SSI, it is important that he or she report any income to the SSI office. Serious consequences and penalties can result from the failure to report income to the SSI office.

If your permanent residence has changed during your student's studies at NTID/RIT, it is very important that your student register the address change on RIT's Student Information System (SIS). Failure to notify SIS of your new address will result in the mailing of bills to the wrong address, thus preventing your student from registering for classes if bills are unpaid.

If you or your student have any questions about filling out either financial form, SSI, or address changes, contact Austin at (716) 475-6863 (voice/TTY) or [SEANOD@rit.edu](mailto:SEANOD@rit.edu)



## Campus Safety works to protect NTID

The safety of the NTID/RIT community is the mission of RIT's Campus Safety Department. The department consists of 29 full-time uniformed, registered, New York State security guards. Campus Safety officers are trained in emergency medical procedures, CPR, first aid, crisis intervention, and, important to the NTID community, sign language. All Campus Safety officers are required to take signing classes to improve their communication with deaf members of the NTID/RIT community. Four Campus Safety officers are fluent in sign language.

Two Campus Safety officers patrol the Ellingson/Peterson/Bell dorms five nights a week doing various duties such as safety checks, setting up programs, communicating with students, addressing dormitory or resident concerns, and investigating reports of suspicious people or activities. One officer is assigned to each apartment complex five nights a week doing similar tasks. In addition, Campus Safety hires a NTID student each year for a double block (two-quarter) co-op job, enabling the department to include an active member of the NTID community in Campus Safety activities.

Campus Safety recently installed 28 blue-light call boxes throughout campus. The call boxes provide people in need of help with an easy-to-access emergency contact where a voice phone will directly contact the Campus Safety office and indicate the caller's exact location. Once contacted, officers know which blue-light call box was used, and they report immediately to that box. According to Chris Denninger, Associate Director for the Campus Safety Department, 25 more blue-light call boxes will be installed with bigger lights to make them more visible at long distances.

Denninger proudly reports that since the increased patrols and presence of Campus Safety officers, crime and vandalism on campus have decreased. Campus Safety continues to make the safety of RIT/NTID students their first and foremost goal. If you have any questions or concerns about the above information, please contact Denninger at (716) 475-6620 (V/TTY) or [cgdcps@rit.edu](mailto:cgdcps@rit.edu).

# Parental notification policy at RIT

You should be aware of the parental notification policies at RIT. According to the RIT Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook, "Universities no longer operate with an *in loco parentis* relationship between the institution and its students where administrators determined the students' best interests while students relied on the administration to protect them from the consequences of their actions. Today the University is expected by students, their families, and an increasingly litigious and regulated society to provide for the reasonable security and well-being of its students as well as expected to hold its students accountable for their actions as adults."

The Buckley Amendment and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects students' privacy and access to and disclosure of student records. This act allows colleges to contact parents of dependent students under the age of 21. Those parents are also permitted to inspect their student's records. Dawn Soufleris, Director of RIT's Office of Student Conduct and Mediation Services, says that for parents whose students are under 21, "We will tell those parents what they want to know if they call." Students under the age of 21 who file their own taxes are considered emancipated, and, unless they sign a waiver, RIT cannot release their information to parents.

Recently, the government created new amendments to the Higher Education Acts. In this legislation, Congress did not mandate that colleges and universities be required to contact

parents of dependent students regarding behavior, but it did permit such contact, under the auspices of FERPA. According to Soufleris, RIT has chosen to contact parents of students under 21 years old in cases of alcohol or drug incidents when students obtain a sanction of Deferred Suspension or higher, when students are suspended from RIT, or there is concern for the health or welfare of the student.

If a dependent student receives a disciplinary action of Deferred Suspension or higher, the student will be required to notify his/her parents or legal guardians about the decision and have the parents/legal guardians contact the Office of Student Conduct and Mediation Services for verification.

All visits to and medical records from the RIT Student Health Center are confidential. Parental notification is the responsibility of students. Parents will only be notified if the student's condition is serious and the student is unable to assume the responsibility of informing others. Soufleris explains that if a parent is contacted because of a behavioral incident, RIT will not tell the parents the names of the other students involved, only what their son/daughter did and the outcome of the judicial hearing.

If you have any questions regarding parental notification, FERPA or the Buckley Amendment, or student records, contact Dawn Soufleris at (716) 475-5662 (v/TTY) or [dmsrhs@rit.edu](mailto:dmsrhs@rit.edu).

## NTID E-News

If you would like to know what's going on at NTID on a regular basis, please subscribe to NTID E-News. This electronic newsletter is sent out once or twice a month and provides timely news about NTID and its community members.

To subscribe, send an email to: [NTIDMC@rit.edu](mailto:NTIDMC@rit.edu) with SUBSCRIBE NTID E-News [e-mail address] in the subject of the message. Please indicate whether you are a parent or an RIT alumnus. To remove yourself from this list, type UNSUBSCRIBE NTID E-News [e-mail address] in the subject of the message.

You can find past newsworthy items on the World Wide Web at <http://www.rit.edu/~418www/whatsnew.shtml> if you prefer to check the news at your leisure.

# University Commons apartments

NTID/RIT students now have another choice of on-campus housing accommodations. The new apartment complexes nestled in the academic corner of the RIT campus, called the University Commons (UC) apartments, offer convenient and luxurious living accommodations. These apartments are a short walk to academic buildings, food service areas, and computer labs. A newly constructed adjacent food service area will provide UC residents with the best variety of food choices on campus.

Each apartment consists of four bedrooms, a living room, two full bathrooms, and a kitchen with an island counter. The kitchen includes a full-size refrigerator with icemakers, microwave, and dishwasher. The interiors of the apartments are fully furnished and carpeted. UC residents

have their own private bedrooms with telephone, cable, TV, and Ethernet ports. All rooms are air-conditioned. Full-size washers and dryers are provided.

Numerous safety features ensure the well being of each resident. Electronic alarm systems, dead-bolt locks, peepholes in the front doors, fire extinguishers, and well-lighted grounds constitute the safety package designed to protect and accommodate UC residents. Surrounding each apartment are ample parking spaces and walkways. In addition, picnic areas with grills are available for apartment residents to use.

Each resident has an individual lease. The rent was \$407 for one resident at UC for the academic year 1999-2000.

# Dates to Remember

## Spring Quarter

March 6 Daytime Classes Begin  
 March 6 Evening Classes Begin  
 March 11 Saturday Classes Begin  
 March 13 Last Date to Drop/Add Courses  
 April 28 Last Date to Withdraw with a Grade of "W"  
 May 12 Last Daytime Class  
 May 13 Last Saturday Class  
 May 15-18 Final Exams - Day Classes  
 May 19 Last Evening Class  
 May 20 COMMENCEMENT  
 May 21 - June 4 Spring/Summer Break

## Summer Quarter

June 5 Daytime Classes Begin  
 June 5 Evening Classes Begin  
 June 10 Saturday Classes Begin  
 June 12 Last Date to Add/Drop for Summer Quarter Courses  
 July 4 Holiday (No Classes)  
 July 28 Last Date to Withdraw with a Grade of "W"  
 August 12 Last Saturday Class  
 August 14 July 4th Make Up Day  
 August 15-17 Final Exams - Day Classes  
 August 18 Last Evening Class

## Who to contact



These resources are available to help students and their parents answer questions and assure a successful college experience at RIT.

NTID Student Affairs  
 Dr. Gerard Buckley,  
 Associate Dean  
 gjbcfo@rit.edu  
 (716) 475-7496 (v/TTY)

NTID Counseling Services  
 Lee Twyman, Chairperson  
 lhtnbu@rit.edu  
 (716) 475-2876 (v/TTY)

Ellingson Hall Information  
 Desk  
 (716) 475-6149 (v),  
 (716) 475-2894 (TTY)

Substance and Alcohol  
 Intervention Services for  
 the Deaf (SAISD)  
 (716) 475-4978 (v/TTY)

NTID Student Life Team  
 Karey Pine, Manager,  
 ktprla@rit.edu  
 (716) 475-6230 (v/TTY)

NTID Financial Services  
 Sue Austin, Coordinator  
 seanod@rit.edu  
 (716) 475-6863 (v/TTY)

NTID First-Year Experiences  
 Ellie Rosenfield, Coordinator  
 edrdhd@rit.edu  
 (716) 475-6202 (v/TTY)

RIT Residence Life  
 Wendy Hagele,  
 Residence Director  
 Ellingson, Peterson &  
 Bell Halls  
 wmhsar@rit.edu  
 (716) 475-5518 (v/TTY)

Student Health Center  
 (716) 475-2255 (v/TTY),  
 (716) 475-5515 (TTY)

Campus Safety  
 (716) 475-2853 (v)  
 (716) 475-6654 (TTY)

Thanks to Shane Feldman, a fourth-year NTID supported professional and technical communication student from Rockville, Md., who did his cooperative work experience in NTID's Marketing Communications Department during winter quarter, for his hard work on this issue of *ParentNews*.

**Office of the Dean**  
 (716) 475-6643/TTY; (716) 475-5978/FAX;  
 alan\_hurwitz@rit.edu (E-mail).  
<http://www.rit.edu/NTID/> (World Wide Web)

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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# R · I · T

## Rochester Institute of Technology

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