

SPRING / SUMMER 2017

# FOCUS

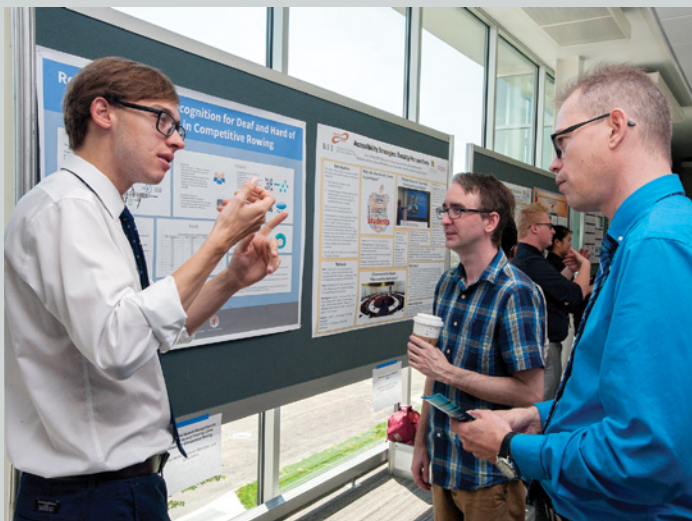
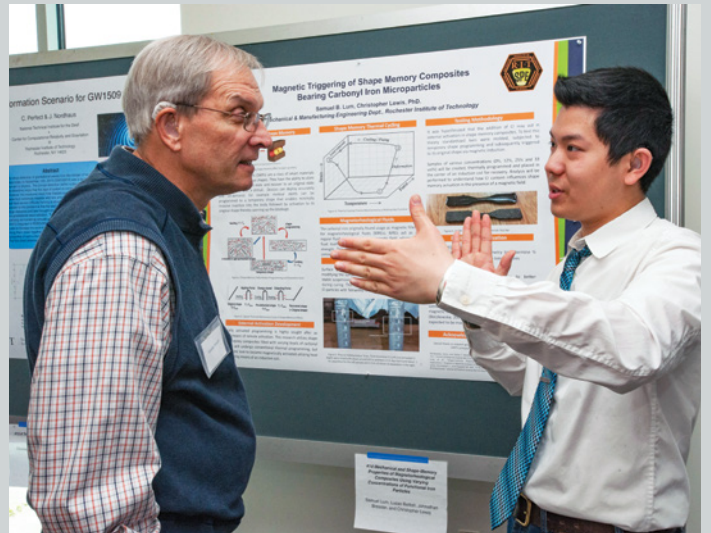
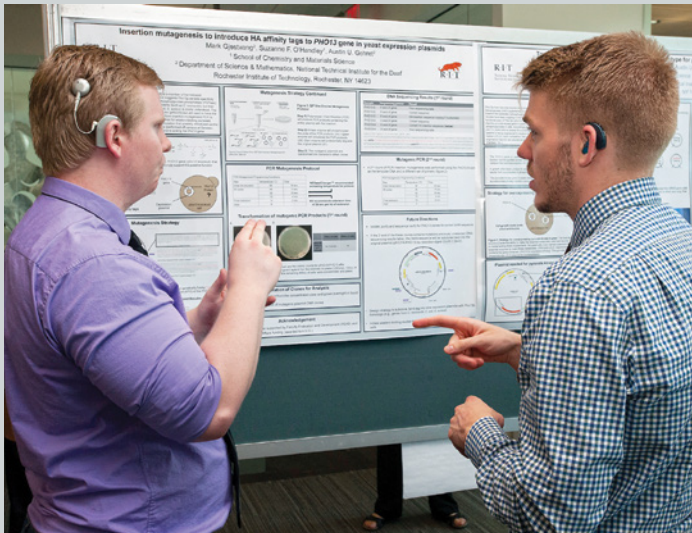
## NTID

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • Rochester Institute of Technology



16<sup>th</sup> Annual NTID Job Fair

# Second Annual Student Research Fair



**Sharing Knowledge** RIT/NTID's second annual Student Research Fair was held on April 28, 2017, in Rosica Hall on campus. More than 30 RIT/NTID student researchers presented posters highlighting their research in the areas of access technology, health science, astrophysics, biochemistry, education, communication studies, the environment and more.

# FOCUS

## NTID

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • Rochester Institute of Technology



MARK BENJAMIN

### ABOUT THE COVER

The 16<sup>th</sup> annual NTID Job Fair was held October 19, 2016, with more than 40 companies, federal agencies and nonprofit organizations on campus to meet with students and graduates. Among the employer representatives on campus for the fair were 33 RIT/NTID alumni from 26 companies. Pictured here are student Nicole Baldwin (right) meeting George Peterson and Lauren Cook (center) of Texas Instruments.

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# FOCUS

NTID

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MARK BENJAMIN

## Ever onward

There is a certain rhythm to life on a college campus. Each fall brings a sense of anticipation and excitement for all that lies ahead, and each spring brings a sense of pride and satisfaction for everything achieved during the year. The anticipation, excitement, pride and satisfaction coalesce at commencement as our students look back at all they have accomplished during their academic careers and look forward to all that lies ahead as they graduate and go out into the world to begin their careers.

NTID has a strong history of successful employment outcomes for our graduates. Of the students from the Class of 2016 who sought employment, 94% found jobs within one year. This year's graduates are off to a good start as well. A number of them already have jobs lined up, and others are planning to attend graduate school (see p. 9). We congratulate these students, our college delegates (see inside back cover), and the entire Class of 2017!

The programs and opportunities that RIT/NTID provides for students are significant factors in the success our graduates enjoy. The NTID Job Fair is one such opportunity. In October, we hosted the 16<sup>th</sup> annual job fair with more than 40 companies, federal agencies and nonprofit organizations on campus to meet with students and graduates (see front cover of this issue). Among the employer representatives on campus for the fair were 33 RIT/NTID alumni. It is fantastic

to see so many of our graduates come back to campus to help recruit students for permanent positions as well as co-ops.

Co-op continues to be a hallmark of an RIT/NTID education. Each year, nearly 300 RIT/NTID students complete co-op work assignments with employers across the country (see p. 7). These jobs provide real-world experience for our students before they graduate and often lead to offers of permanent employment following graduation.

Research experience also is increasingly becoming an integral part of our students' education, and this, too, can lead to employment opportunities as well as graduate study. In April, we held the second annual NTID Student Research Fair (see inside front cover). The research fair featured more than 30 poster presentations, highlighting research by students from a variety of disciplines, including access technology, astrophysics, health science, biochemistry, education, communication studies, environmental research and more.

As we bade farewell to our graduating class this spring, we also prepared to bid farewell to RIT President Bill Destler, who has been a strong supporter of NTID and our students for the past 10 years. All of us at RIT/NTID will miss Dr. Destler and his wife, Dr. Rebecca Johnson. We are grateful for their leadership and years of service.

Every ending heralds a new beginning, though, and we are excited to welcome RIT's 10<sup>th</sup> president, Dr. David C. Munson (see p. 3). When he was introduced to the campus community at an event in the Gordon Field House in January, Dr. Munson signed, "Good morning, RIT Tigers!" and said that he and his wife, Nancy, are eager to take sign language classes. We applaud his commitment to accessible communication and look forward to working with him in the years ahead.

So continues the ebb and flow of campus life, with pride and satisfaction, anticipation and excitement. Endings that herald new beginnings. And always, ever onward!

Dr. Gerard J. Buckley  
NTID President  
RIT Vice President and Dean

# New RIT President Dr. David C. Munson

BY PAMELA L. CARMICHAEL

**O**n January 25, 2017, RIT announced Dr. David C. Munson Jr. as the 10<sup>th</sup> president of RIT, effective July 1, 2017. Munson, who has nearly 40 years of experience in the field of higher education, comes to RIT from the University of Michigan where he served as dean of engineering from 2006 to 2016. He also was a professor of electrical engineering and computer science at the university and from 2003 to 2006, served as chair of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.

Prior to the University of Michigan, Munson was at the University of Illinois for 24 years. While there, he was the Robert C. MacClinchie Distinguished Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, a research professor in the Coordinated Science Laboratory and a faculty member in the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology.

Munson is a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), a past president of the IEEE Signal Processing Society, founding editor-in-chief of the IEEE Transactions on Image Processing, and co-founder of the IEEE International Conference on Image Processing. He received the Society Award of the IEEE Signal Processing Society, served as a Distinguished Lecturer of the IEEE Signal Processing Society, received an IEEE Third Millennium Medal, and was the Texas Instruments Distinguished Visiting Professor at Rice



JOSEPH XU

**A New Leader** RIT welcomes Dr. David C. Munson as the university's 10<sup>th</sup> president.

University, among other honors. In 2016, Munson earned the Benjamin Garver Lamme Medal from the American Society of Engineering Education, the highest award for an engineering administrator.

Munson holds a B.S. degree in electrical engineering from the University of Delaware. He also holds M.S., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering, all from Princeton University. His teaching and research interests are in the area of signal and image processing, including radar imaging and computer tomography. He is co-founder of InstaRecon Inc., a start-up firm to commercialize fast algorithms for image formation in computer tomography. He also is affiliated with the Infinity Project, a non-profit organization created to encourage more students to pursue careers in engineering. As part of his work in that area, he coauthored a textbook that has been used to introduce students to engineering at hundreds of high schools nationwide.

At his January introduction to the RIT community, Munson said, "In the coming

years, I look forward to maintaining RIT's traditions and simultaneously building on the 2025 Strategic Plan, 'Greatness through Difference.' To be sure, there is still much work to be done at RIT in program development, recruitment of top-notch faculty and students, planning of facilities and fundraising. But I believe that RIT is positioned to continue its upward trajectory, elevating its distinctive programs to best in class and generating new ideas and programs for the future, with the promise of making an ever-larger difference in the world."

Munson, who was selected following a nationwide search, replaces Dr. Bill Destler, who retires June 30, 2017, after more than 40 years in higher education, including 10 years as RIT president.

## VIDEO EXTRA:

Learn more about Dr. Munson:  
[bit.ly/MunsonVideo](http://bit.ly/MunsonVideo).



JOSEPH XU

**Dr. David C. Munson**

# Exploring health care careers

BY KATHY A. JOHNCOX

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, health care occupations will add more jobs than any other occupational group over the next 10 years.\* RIT/NTID's Health Care Careers Exploration Camp (HCCEC) for deaf and hard-of-hearing students is following that national trend. Since the camp was established in 2015 to create awareness and excitement among deaf and hard-of-hearing high school students about potential health care career options, there has been steady growth in attendance by students who want to get a jump start in a fast-growing industry.

"NTID is able to take advantage of RIT's College of Health Science and Technology and, in collaboration with the University of Rochester Medical Center, to provide our campers with exposure to diverse career options within the health care industry," says Dr. Scott Smith, chair of NTID's Health Care Careers Implementation Committee and camp medical director. "RIT's College of Health Sciences and Technology offers various health care-related training programs, including physician assistant, diagnostic medical sonography, exercise science, nutrition and more."

The collaboration among NTID, RIT's College of Health Science and Technology and the University of Rochester Medical



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**Lab Collaboration** Campers get a feel for teamwork and the satisfaction of a shared success and result.

Center is a natural outgrowth of RIT's health-related training programs and sets the stage for a dynamic partnership that benefits 10<sup>th</sup>-, 11<sup>th</sup>- and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade deaf and hard-of-hearing students with interests in this field. At camp, students attend medical demonstrations, enjoy field trips to area medical facilities—some of the finest in the country—and learn about important issues in health care. Under the

guidance of RIT/NTID faculty, students participate in hands-on demonstrations in biology, exercise science, medical laboratory science, microbiology, nursing, nutrition and more. They also become certified in CPR and first-aid.

While statistics show that deaf and hard-of-hearing people are underrepresented in health care professions, this camp is giving hope to young people who want to be part of breaking that barrier. Dr. Douglas Merrill, professor of biomedical sciences and director of RIT's Premedical and Health Professions Advisory Program, and an instructor for the camp, introduces students to diseases of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems by using preserved human organs. He also teaches them how to suture.

"I have worked with several deaf students in the past who are now either doctors or in medical school," says Merrill, "so I know what is possible with hard work and dedication. My goal is to encourage the gifted young scholars who attend this camp to believe in themselves and to understand that fulfilling careers in health care are open to them, too."

Cameron Capie, a high school student from Danville, California, was wondering



ANNI MOCCHINSKI

**Fun After a Day of Learning** Young people from all over the country gain knowledge and experience in the medical field as well as enjoy camaraderie and make new friendships outside of class.

whether medicine was the career path he should choose, so he came to RIT/NTID's Explore Your Future program last summer to help him make his decision, then attended the health care camp as well.

"EYF was very broad in terms of career paths, which I loved because I could feel more confident about my decision. The HCCEC was a more in-depth camp that focused primarily on career choices in the medical field. I was a little bit nervous to figure out what I can actually do because of my deafness, but this camp helped me realize that no path is limited to me."

Adetayo Adeyami, a high school student from Lawrenceville, Georgia, who also came to the camp last summer says, "I attended the HCCEC to gain more knowledge and experiences in the medical field. My campmates and I learned the mixtures of chemicals that are best to test urine, parts of the heart and so much more. During the lessons, we gained access to an abundance of medical job opportunities.

"I have always wanted to work in

medicine, but I was always indecisive about what field of medicine I wanted to study," Adeyami continues. "The experience I gained at camp, such as suturing, has cleared away my indecision, allowing me to make the decision to be a surgeon. I am continuing to take courses and experience more things in medicine to help me guide my career goal."

The first camp in 2015 was attended by nine deaf and hard-of-hearing high school students from around the country, in 2016, 14 students attended and in 2017, due to the high level of interest, the college hopes to expand the camp to accommodate 24 students.

"This camp has a big and important goal," says Smith. "The positive experiences provided by the HCCEC are especially important in the deaf community because many deaf and hard-of-hearing students might not consider such options due to the inherent and prevalent diminished expectation of career options for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in general.



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**Going Solo** Campers also work individually on projects with a health care topic.

Ultimately, recruiting more deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals into the health care system will help us meet our overarching goal of reducing and eliminating health disparities seen in the deaf community and improving the health of all deaf and hard-of-hearing people."

\*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook, [www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare)

## Health Care Careers Lab Experiences



MARK BENJAMIN

In one of the HCCEC lab experiences, instructional/support faculty members and scientists Sarah Sarchet and Camille Ouellette started their workshop teaching students about lab safety, illustrating how to apply appropriate lab techniques and explaining how to analyze results. In their lab, students:

- learned about human blood typing and tried it on simulated blood to determine which of three mock suspects was guilty of a crime;
- performed an experiment on the microbial flora in the environment at NTID by taking bacteria samples from areas of their choosing and then culturing them on agar plates;
- performed a karyotype analysis on four individuals to determine the genetic origin of some diseases; and
- analyzed simulated urine to diagnose diseases such as diabetes and kidney failure in four mock patients.

# The power of peer tutoring

BY ILENE J. AVALLONE

**N**TID has a rich history of providing peer tutoring services in associate degree programs across a variety of curriculum in English and math subject areas. Patricia Kenney and Patricia Spiecker are the coordinators of NTID's English and math peer tutoring programs, respectively, and manage the peer tutoring services for the 800-1,200 deaf and hard-of-hearing students who take advantage of this service every year.

"Peer tutors at NTID are a powerful academic resource," says Kenney.

Peer tutors are students themselves, who, with proven skills in specific subject areas, work directly with other RIT/NTID students in both small group tutoring sessions and on a one-on-one basis. Peer tutoring services are offered free of charge during day and evening hours, six days a week, through the NTID Learning Center. Beginning last year, online tutoring also was offered, featuring both written chat and video chat options.

For this article, "FOCUS" interviewed several of NTID's peer tutors and some of the students who use the service.

## **FOCUS: Describe your experience as an NTID peer tutor.**

**Caitlin Diffenderfer:** I decided to become a peer tutor two years ago, because of the satisfaction I get from helping others learn. Sometimes, students are afraid to ask faculty for help, but when working one-on-one with a peer tutor who is deaf, students are more comfortable reaching out. They see us as role models, and that encourages them to also want to succeed.

**Quintina (Quinny) Frink:** I have enjoyed tutoring the past three semesters. Students have different learning styles, so I make sure to adapt my tutoring to fit their needs. I enjoy helping students master foundations in math and build their confidence. Seeing them smile when they finally understand a concept and receiving a "thank you" is extremely gratifying.

**Alison Cawley:** Meeting new students and providing help are reasons why



MARK BENJAMIN

**Students Helping Students** JayShaud Potter, a recent graduate of NTID's laboratory science technology program and current student in RIT's biomedical sciences program, benefits from peer tutoring at RIT/NTID. Here he meets with Quinny Frink, a math tutor, for help in his introduction to statistics course.

I decided to become a tutor. The hours are great, and the fact that I can tutor remotely from my home is convenient.

## **FOCUS: What do you like most about using peer tutoring services?**

**Abraham Mathew:** I get tutored in English, and what I like the most is interacting with the tutors because they inspire me and push me to do my best. They make it easy to learn the content, and they take their time with explanations and answers to my questions, and use lots of examples. My grammar and writing skills have improved.

**Dalia Oregel:** I get tutored in math every week, and my peer tutors have helped me so much. They are patient and encouraging, and easy to work with. Because of the time I have spent in the NLC, I have greater confidence, and I have been more successful as a student. I also made some great friends in the process.

**Anya Soberano:** I utilized remote tutoring last semester for my English course. I liked using the video chat instead of meeting in person because it gave me flexibility with my schedule. Also, I could save notes into the files, so that I could refer back to them at any time if I forgot something.

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Peer tutoring is a collaborative learning experience in which both parties fully benefit. Peer tutors get paid work experience, gain enhanced communication and leadership skills, and acquire other interpersonal and organizational skills that employers seek. Students receiving tutoring get more time for individualized learning, improved understanding, better performance in the subject area and greater self-confidence. And both parties are rewarded with friendships that remain after the tutoring has ended.



RIT's co-op program may be a requirement, but it's also a big draw for savvy students who know that getting real-world work experience while in college can confirm their choice of major and their future career. Co-op Corner introduces a number of students for each issue of "FOCUS" to give a snapshot of their co-op success.

BY KATHY A. JOHNCOX



MARK BENJAMIN

### Hussein Mohammad Chahine

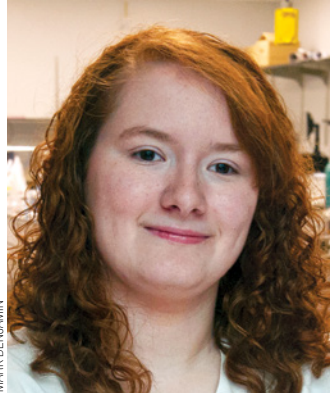
**Hometown:** Astoria, New York

**Degree program:** A.A.S., Administrative Support Technology

**Employer:** LaGuardia Community College, Long Island City, New York

**Job duties:** As an administrative assistant in the college's Program for Deaf Adults, I used Microsoft Word, Excel and Desktop Publisher skills. I also organized books in the library and kept inventory of office supplies, provided reception coverage, greeted visitors and provided assistance for the Student Affairs Office.

**Benefits of co-op:** Being at RIT/NTID has helped me be more open to communication with people who are not deaf and taught me not to shy away from conversation. Taking courses like the essentials of business communication helped me improve my communication and be more professional. I have a good base of knowledge now, and I realize I need to manage my career like I would manage my business. I intend to pursue a bachelor's degree in business management, and I look forward to learning more business skills.



MARK BENJAMIN

### Michelle Mailhot

**Hometown:** West Newfield, Maine

**Degree program:** A.A.S., Laboratory Science Technology

**Employer:** Merck High-Throughput Screening Facility, North Wales, Pennsylvania

**Job duties:** In my position as a lab technician, I assisted in the programming, setup and operation of a very sophisticated high-throughput screening system. For another project, I wrote a computer program to help analyze and present a robotic system's processing data. This program allows the user to be able to validate if the automated experiments ran as designed.

**Benefits of co-op:** Lab experiences in my Lab Science Technology major helped me at my co-op because I already had experience using reagent bottles and handling cell cultures and media. In addition, all of the safety procedures and practices I learned in the LST lab were part of my daily work at Merck. I plan to continue my education and earn a bachelor's degree in biotechnology. The LST program is a good foundation that will help me prepare for my classes in RIT's College of Science.



MARK BENJAMIN

### Marianne Morillo

**Hometown:** Pennsauken, New Jersey

**Degree program:** B.S., International Hospitality and Service Management

**Employer:** Defense Finance and Accounting Service, Rome, New York

**Job duties:** As a student-trainee financial clerk, I was responsible for receiving and analyzing financial and contractual documents and identifying missing or invalid information, making sure there were no duplicate documents and forwarding files on for processing and payment.

**Benefits of co-op:** I was able to use my Microsoft Access skills, my business communication training and my speed-typing. The training and skills I brought to the job helped me learn how to do the job and be a productive employee very quickly. My co-op experience has encouraged me to continue my education in hospitality management and pursue my goal of working in human resources someday.



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### Connor Fitzgerald

**Hometown:** Lennon, Michigan

**Degree program:** A.O.S., Computer Integrated Machine Technology

**Employer:** Gleason Works, Rochester, New York

**Job duties:** As a machine operator, I built a program that creates measurements and sets up grinders to work on machine parts. The equipment must be flat and parallel to do this job correctly. The part has to be precisely the right size, so I have to make sure the measurements are correct, and if some parts of the piece get rough, I need to finish them and provide stress relief with a heat treatment, so that the part can perform better.

**Benefits of co-op:** I learned all the basics before I was hired for a co-op, so my employer did not need to spend time teaching me how to do the job. It is easier to train a person who has the basics, and I was up and running in a few weeks instead of a few months. Also, my employer saw the quality of my work while I was there on co-op and recently hired me for a full-time job.

# New research center at NTID

BY KATHY A. JOHNCOX



MARK BENJAMIN

**Peter Hauser**

The newest addition to NTID's Rosica Hall is the NTID Center on Cognition and Language (NCCL) under the direction of Dr. Peter C. Hauser.

This center was created with two separate goals: in research, to produce new scientific discoveries in social and behavioral sciences; and in training, to provide a science mentoring program for NTID students who desire to become social, behavioral or biomedical scientists.

In the research mission, diverse teams of faculty and students conduct research that will improve deaf education, expose students to research practices and prepare a future generation of educational researchers and scholars. The training mission seeks to provide state-of-the-art research mentorship programs for deaf scholars and increase the number of deaf scientists in social, behavioral and biomedical research disciplines.

"The research aspect of this center is a new focus," says Hauser. "It looks at how the deaf experience shapes cognition. While other centers in the United States and abroad also focus on cognition and language, this center is unique in that it is the only center that is led by a deaf

scientist, where most of the scientists are themselves deaf and where day-to-day communication is primarily in American Sign Language."

The center currently has funding from the National Science Foundation and from the National Institutes of Health. Hauser would like to see the center produce deaf scientists who can establish their own similar centers and produce transformative research that will have a positive impact on the lives of deaf people globally.

Second-year student, Kat Orłowski, is a research assistant in the NCCL, and carries a double major in ASL-English Interpretation and psychology.

"Under Dr. Hauser's guidance and instruction, I have been able to take on responsibilities in the lab, and currently I am running two studies," Orłowski says. "Working in the lab has sparked my interest in both pursuing graduate-level research and getting my Ph.D."

# Welcoming Robert Pollard

BY KATHY A. JOHNCOX

Collaboration is a goal for Robert Pollard, Ph.D., who was hired in August 2016 as associate dean of research for NTID. Pollard is a clinical psychologist and retains an appointment as Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Rochester School of Medicine where he founded the Deaf Wellness Center, a service, research and training program that he has led for 26 years.

Growing up in Rochester, New York, Pollard says he has always been aware of the local deaf population. He became interested in deaf mental health during graduate school through his work with DePaul Clinic's newly planned group home for deaf adults with mental illness. Pollard has broad expertise in deaf mental health, sign-language interpreting and matters of public health in the deaf

population. He has been a principal investigator on dozens of federal, state and foundation grants; has authored or co-authored more than 100 publications; and received numerous awards for his work.

As for his vision for research at NTID, Pollard says he's still in "listening-and-learning mode." He wants to continue to support both center- and discipline-based research.

"At this point, I have no 'Bob Pollard' agenda," he says. "I tend to be interested in collaborating with people who have smart ideas and assisting them with their research. With the ideas generated by RIT/NTID faculty and staff and the creativity that abounds here in the area of advancing science careers for deaf and hard-of-hearing people, I feel I'm in just the right place at the right time."



MARK BENJAMIN

**Robert Pollard**

# What's next for members of RIT/NTID's Class of 2017?

BY PAMELA L. CARMICHAEL

**N**TID has a strong history of successful employment outcomes for our graduates. For the past several years, 94% of RIT/NTID graduates who have sought employment have found a job within

a year. This year's graduates are off to a good start—a number of them already have jobs lined up, and others are planning to attend graduate school. We congratulate these students and the entire Class of 2017!

## VIDEO EXTRA:

Learn more about these RIT/NTID graduates:  
[www.ntid.rit.edu/whats-next-2017](http://www.ntid.rit.edu/whats-next-2017)



**Anna Krauss**  
Manorville, New York  
Biotechnology and Molecular Bioscience  
Headed to: Ph.D. program in Clinical and Translational Sciences



**Amie Sankoh**  
Dallas, Georgia  
Laboratory Science Technology  
Biotechnology  
Headed to: Ph.D. program in Biochemistry



**Arturo DeSantiago**  
El Paso, Texas  
Computer Integrated Machining Technology  
Headed to: B.S. in Mechanical Engineering Technology



**Kyle Adams**  
Chicago, Illinois  
Finance  
Headed to: Career in finance at Starbucks headquarters



**Mary Rose Weber**  
Apple Valley, Minnesota  
Applied Computer Technology  
Information Technology  
Headed to: Career at Target headquarters



**Sara Blick**  
Schenectady, New York  
Biology Concepts and Research  
Bioinformatics and Ethics  
Headed to: Ph.D. program in pathways of human disease

PHOTOS BY MARK BENJAMIN

# Breathing new life into the Dyer Arts Center

BY SUSAN L. MURAD



MARK BENJAMIN

**Painting With Light** Once an open courtyard, the Dyer Arts Center was designed to make use of natural light with clear sight lines throughout the first and second floor gallery spaces.

For most of RIT/NTID's existence, the center of Lyndon Baines Johnson Hall was an empty courtyard, frequented mostly by faculty, staff and students out for a 'smoke break.' That all changed in early 2000 when Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer, deaf college graduates and long-time supporters of RIT/NTID from Del Ray Beach, Florida, pledged

\$2.5 million to fund construction and development of the Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer Arts Center at NTID.

"NTID is of great importance to the Deaf community," said Joseph Dyer, in an interview prior to his death in 2007. "Helen and I wanted to help support NTID, which has made significant contributions to deaf education, technology and the arts."

"We believe the arts are a large component of a well-rounded college education," the late Helen Dyer, an avid artist who enjoyed oil painting, said in an interview in 1999. "Expression through art for deaf people is especially meaningful and beneficial."

Since it opened in 2001, the Dyer Arts Center has grown in importance for the preservation, collection

and exhibiting of works by deaf artists, and it continues to showcase talented deaf artists working in a variety of mediums and subject areas. In addition, the space plays host to various receptions and social gatherings, making it truly the 'center' of the college.

"There wasn't a specific location anywhere in the United States that actively collected and displayed artworks by deaf artists," says Tabitha Jacques, director of the Dyer Arts Center. "The Dyer Arts Center is fortunate to be in a good place with a number of resources that support this goal. The first generation of deaf artists associated with a collective art movement (De'VIA) is getting older, and most of their concerns center around where they could donate their art pieces for preservation and exhibition. Future generations may wonder the same thing, and I'm encouraged that people think about the Dyer Arts Center as a place to donate."



ARCHIVAL PHOTO

Joseph F. and Helen C. Dyer

Jacques sees her role in directing the center as an intersection of the past, present and future of works by deaf artists.

“I’m working towards expanding our storage systems, managing our collections, documenting the provenance of each art piece, and re-housing all of our art pieces, so they have a permanent place at a specific location in the storage system,” she says. “We recently purchased a new collections management database that is comprehensive and allows us to track donors, loans and all exhibits we do. It’s really a wonderful way to oversee a large collection, and get all the information from just one click on the screen.”

Given the depth and breadth of the permanent collection, it now is among the largest—if not the largest—collection of works by deaf artists in the world. And Jacques sees continued growth in the future.

“We are seeing an increase in requests for loans from our collection for other arts centers, buildings and temporary exhibits,” Jacques says. “I’m looking forward to being able to set up a loan

system that allows our collection to be displayed anywhere in the United States. As soon as we complete our database, we’ll be able to set up a loan program, so people who cannot come to Rochester can see our artworks anywhere in the country.”

Recent exhibits include a collaboration with the John F. Kennedy Center, bringing works by artists with disabilities to the Dyer, RIT/NTID’s Visual Communications Studies biennial faculty show, a “Shakespeare in American Deaf History” exhibit and a much-anticipated retrospective by deaf artist Ann Silver as well as workshops with deaf artists and students from Rochester School for the Deaf. This fall, the center will feature the “Arte del Corazon Exhibition,” focusing on submissions by deaf Latinx artists.

“I’m also interested in seeing certain parts of our database become accessible to the public,” says Jacques. “People are interested in learning more about our deaf and hard-of-hearing artists, and the works we have. I would love for us to become a research center



MARK BENJAMIN

**Tabitha Jacques**

and expand our community outreach. The Dyer Arts Center is a great place to visit, and there is so much to learn from our collections.”



MARK BENJAMIN

**A Movable Feast for the Eyes** Large artwork panels can be moved and arranged in a variety of ways to maximize the impact of each exhibit.

# New program supports deaf and hard-of-hearing athletes

BY SEAN "SKIP" FLANAGAN



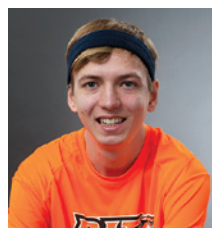
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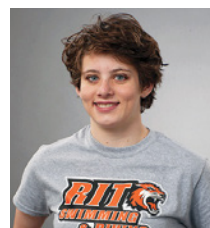
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Myles Garner



Otto Kingstedt



Emily Lederman



Bradley Morissette



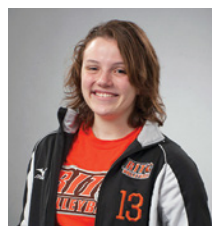
Dominic Ricchio



Ernesto Rodriguez



Cullen Shade



Alana Smith



Joshua Strom



Serena Tatge



Justin Ward



Andre Webster



Mia White

PHOTOS BY MARK BENJAMIN

The RIT/NTID Athlete Development Program is a support service program for deaf and hard-of-hearing RIT student-athletes competing at the varsity level. The program provides a wide range of services, covering academic support, educational workshops, personal mentoring, leadership development and more.

The program currently supports 18 student-athletes across 10 different sports, working with their coaches to ensure the student-athletes are getting the proper accommodations and support necessary to succeed in every aspect of their lives. As the program coordinator, I stop by practice sessions and check in with the student-athletes as well as their coaches and interpreters.

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The program currently supports 18 student-athletes across 10 different sports.

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In the area of academic support, the program works with student-athletes to ensure they are aware of all the various academic resources available on campus. I provide guidance and encourage student-

athletes to take advantage of campus tutoring centers, see their department chairpersons, academic advisors and seek necessary help for a specific course or track. As they progress in their academic career and are ready to begin seeking a co-op opportunity, the NTID Center on Employment assists in the student-athletes' job search.

The RIT/NTID Athlete Development Program offers educational workshops to a variety of groups within the RIT athletic department. For example, the program worked with the RIT ASL and Deaf Studies Community Center to present a workshop to the RIT Sports Medicine Office to help athletic trainers develop communication skills to effectively work with deaf and hard-of-hearing student-athletes in the trainers' room. We have also presented workshops for coaches and captains on how to improve team dynamics with a deaf athlete involved.

When prospective student-athletes are on campus for a visit, oftentimes I show them around the athletic facilities and arrange a meeting with the coaches. The

program also facilitates communication between the NTID Admissions Office and the RIT athletic department. Once student-athletes enroll at RIT/NTID, we develop a relationship with each of them and offer mentoring. I use my personal experience as a former RIT/NTID student-athlete to help guide them in their journey through the most exciting chapter of their lives.

In addition to mentoring, we soon will be offering a leadership development program called Relentless Tiger Leadership. The goal of this four-year program is to form our student-athletes into better athletes, better people and better leaders. We will be launching some social media initiatives during the 2017-2018 academic year, and we have a website that we continue to update and expand: [www.ntid.rit.edu/athletes](http://www.ntid.rit.edu/athletes). We are a unique family within the NTID community, and we continue to explore new ways of supporting student-athlete success.

# Pam Christopher

BY ILENE J. AVALLONE



hearing students in NTID's Business Studies program and in RIT's College of Liberal Arts to find co-ops or permanent jobs. She travels around the country to educate employers about deafness and how to work with deaf employees, and she assists with teaching in an NTID Business Communications course.

motivated and moving forward in their journey to employment."

An RIT/NTID alumna, Christopher received an associate degree in accounting, a bachelor's degree in social work and a master's degree in human resources development, all from RIT/NTID.

Prior to joining NCE in 2016, she worked in other positions at RIT, including NTID Admissions, RIT Human Resources, Student Financial Services and the Pre-College Education Network (P-CEN).

"RIT is a great place to work," she says. "My coworkers have been an extension of my family in every department in which I have worked."

Among Christopher's interests are shopping, cooking, decorating and "dancing like no one is watching."

"I know tomorrow is not a given, so I try to live each day to the fullest," says Christopher. "I am in charge of my happiness, and I choose to laugh and be happy most days."

"Seeing students grow and making a difference in their lives brings me joy," says Pamela Christopher, an employment advisor in the NTID Center on Employment.

Christopher assists deaf and hard-of-

"What I cherish most about my job is the relationships I build with my students," she says. "As a hard-of-hearing person, I understand the challenges that deaf students sometimes can face, and I work diligently to keep students

# Dino Laury

BY JAMES MCCARTHY

When Dino Laury, chair of NTID's Engineering Studies Department, was born, he was premature and weighed two pounds.

"The name I was given was, 'this boy needs a name if he survives for more than seven days,'" recalls Laury.

On day eight, he received his name, Dino, which means "little sword."

Today, Laury spends his days working to ignite the light in his students' eyes.

"The two happiest days of my life are when a student comes into my classroom for the first time, and when that student graduates," he says.

His teaching approach is a mixture of hands-on and visual learning styles. He encourages activity in his classroom, with plenty of support.

"Student-faculty interaction is very important to me," he says.

Because of that, NTID has fielded several teams in the annual Extreme Redesign Challenge hosted by Stratasys

"Student-faculty interaction is very important to me."

over the past decade. The Extreme Redesign Challenge focuses on improving how current products work or inventing new ones that fulfill unmet needs.

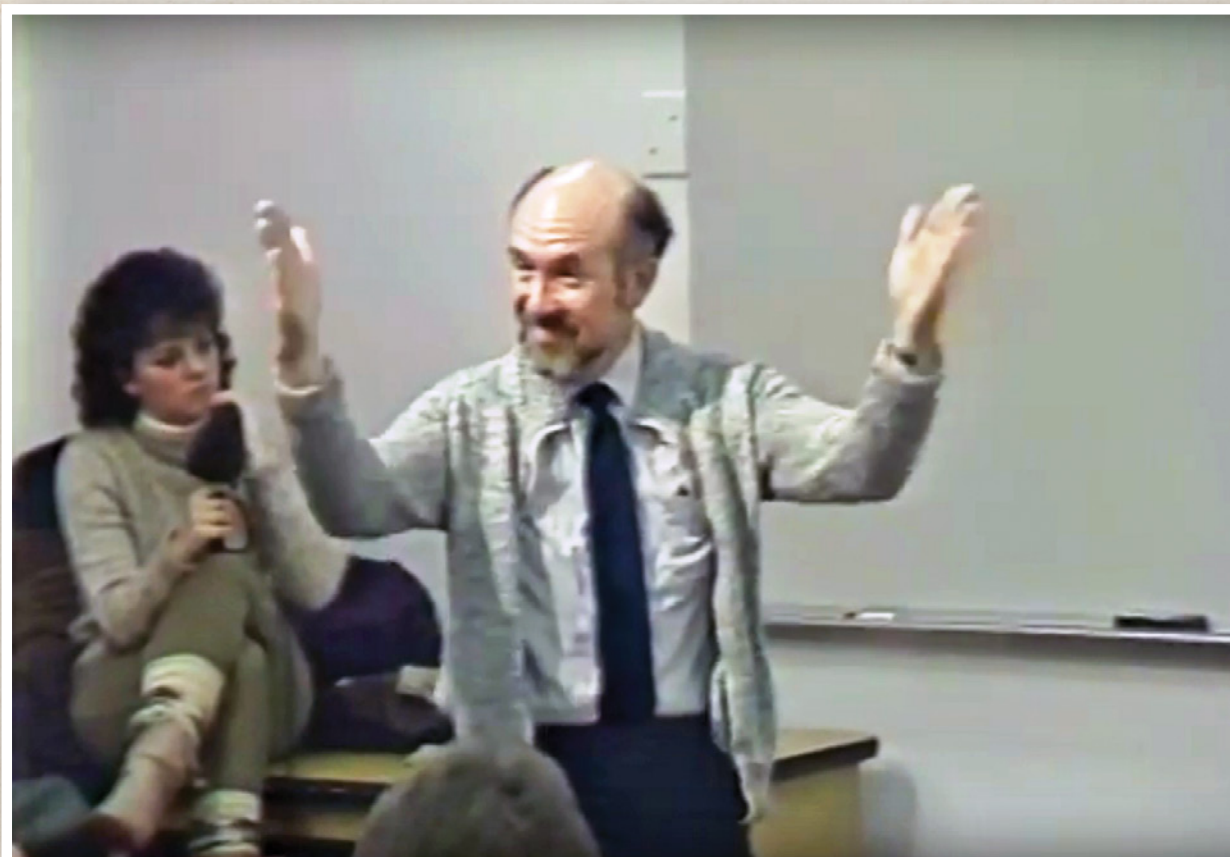
This competition makes sense to Laury; he earned an associate degree in industrial drafting technology in 1987, a bachelor's in mechanical engineering technology in 1991, a master's in information technology in 2000, all from RIT/NTID, and a doctorate in education leadership from the University of Rochester in 2016.

"Technological disciplines are converging," says Laury. "So my priorities are to prepare students to work, and to support faculty professional development. That way, the faculty can teach students what they need to know to succeed in today's workplace."



NTID's history is rich in milestones and achievements that have fueled the success of thousands of students and graduates. This "FOCUS" feature provides a look at some of the people and events that have been significant in the history of our college community.

BY JAMES MCCARTHY



VIDEO STILL

**Poetry in Motion** A still from Miriam Lerner and Donald Feigel's film, "Heart of the Hydrogen Jukebox," showing Patrick Graybill attempting to sign "hydrogen jukebox."

## Trivia Tidbit BY SAM HOLCOMB

### Q: Are there any deaf athletes in RIT's Hall of Fame?

**A:** Yes, there are eleven deaf and hard-of-hearing athletes and one interpreter in RIT's Hall of Fame, and more have been recognized for their success in intramural sports.



MARK BENJAMIN

Sam Holcomb is a retired faculty member from NTID's American Sign Language and Interpreting Education Department.

### Allen Ginsberg visits NTID, 1984

The famed Beat poet Allen Ginsberg, author of such classic works as "Howl," visited RIT in 1984 to learn more about Deaf culture and discuss how poetry could translate into sign language.

Dr. Robert Panara, then an English and drama professor at NTID, served with Ginsberg as a co-presenter in a workshop hosted for NTID students. Attendees recall discussing how a new international style of poetry came to rely more strongly on language that expressed imagery as a means of getting around traditional communication barriers.

This particular event is famous for Patrick Graybill's interpretation of a line from "Howl," in which the poem describes "listening to the hydrogen jukebox." The similarly named video, "The Heart of the Hydrogen Jukebox," produced by Miriam Lerner and Donald Feigel, both employees of NTID, documents this event.

Ginsberg's visit also sparked a renewed—and continuing—interest in signed poetry, led by workshop attendees and future performers such as Peter Cook, current chair of the American Sign Language Department at Columbia College Chicago.



# Kalexin Baoerjiin

BY ALLISON POLK

**B**orn in China, Kalexin Baoerjiin and his family relocated to Arizona and then California, while Baoerjiin attended mainstream classes along the way. He is trilingual and speaks Mandarin in addition to English and ASL.

He came to RIT to obtain his master's degree in computer science after graduating from the University of California at Berkeley with a bachelor's degree in cognitive science, focusing on computational modeling.

**"The challenge companies face is that they have too much data, but not enough information."**

While the co-op experience at RIT was a major draw for Baoerjiin, it was his first time among a larger deaf

community. He says he enjoyed his time with RIT/NTID's Asian Deaf Club, and maintains contact with many of the friends he made on campus.

After graduating from RIT in 2008, he worked as a software engineer for several years at IBM, where he had previously completed a co-op. He currently works for Workday Inc. in San Mateo, California.

"I develop software for companies that want to better analyze big data," says Baoerjiin. "Sometimes the challenge companies face is that they have too much data, but not enough information, so we help them make sense of what they have."

He and his wife have two young sons. The family enjoys hiking and camping in their spare time.

"I look forward to seeing them grow up," he says of his children. "I hope to instill in them a holistic view of the world, one in which they get to be creative and well-rounded."



PROVIDED PHOTO

# Megan Burgess

BY JAMES MCCARTHY

**M**egan Burgess (SVP '08, '13, '14, '16) is no stranger to the classroom. With a bachelor of fine arts degree, two back-to-back master's degrees in teaching, and a career as an art teacher at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf in Washington, D.C., Burgess feels at home at the head of the class.

"I adore my job," says Burgess. "It gives me the opportunity to do what I feel is best for my students."

A native of the Atlantic island nation of Bermuda, Burgess first decided to attend RIT/NTID when she attended NTID's Explore Your Future (EYF) summer program for rising seniors in 2007.

"I really enjoyed the environment that RIT/NTID provided," says Burgess. "I enjoyed my time at EYF so much that it helped me make the decision in my senior year to apply and enroll at RIT."

While a student, Burgess became a sister of Alpha Sigma Theta and joined the Deaf Basketball and Deaf Volleyball Associations, taking on leadership roles in each.

"I was able to grow as a person and as a leader," says Burgess.

She also worked for EYF twice, adding that, as a result of that experience, "I was able to develop myself as a team player and learn how to work with other people."

**"I enjoyed my time at EYF so much that it helped me make the decision in my senior year to apply and enroll at RIT."**

Her volunteerism has continued with a monthly ASL tour at the National Gallery of Art in Washington.

Burgess also values RIT/NTID for giving her the skills she needs to succeed.

"RIT/NTID has taught me different things," she says. "Those qualities are what an employer seeks in an employee—time management, being a team player and being open-minded."



PROVIDED PHOTO

# Martin family builds a lasting legacy

BY SUSAN L. MURAD

**A**lthough newly retired, Kathleen and Bruce Martin still can relate to the struggles that some students experience in order to finance their educations.

“We both are first generation college students and have a deep appreciation for the importance of a college education,” says Kathleen. “Neither of us came from wealth, and we can relate to students who are struggling.”

This was the motivation behind creating The Martin Family Endowed Scholarship that provides funds to students who are in financial need and are in jeopardy of not completing college.

“As a development professional, I have seen students come here, and through no fault of their own, exhaust their financial resources as a result of outside funding, family situations, illness, etc.,” says Kathleen. “That affected me and is at the core of what we want to do with

this scholarship.”

The Martins hope the fund will be a valuable tool in improving the retention and graduation rates of deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Beginning her career in leadership positions in NTID’s Center on Employment and Office of Development, Kathleen moved to RIT Human Resources as associate director, and retired in 2015 as director of University Policy. Bruce, a mechanical engineer and entrepreneur, retired in 2012 as owner and president of Shrier-Martin Process Equipment. One of the Martins’ two daughters received her bachelor’s and MBA degrees from RIT, and their son-in-law received his bachelor’s degree from RIT.

“RIT has been a part of our lives for nearly 40 years, through Kathleen and our daughters,” says Bruce. “Simply put, it was the right thing to do and the right time to do it.”

The Martins’ philanthropic association with RIT and NTID has been ongoing since 1988 and includes gifts to capital campaigns, and most recently, to the development of RIT/NTID’s Rosica Hall.



MARK BENJAMIN

**Kathleen and Bruce Martin**

“I thought I’d stay at RIT/NTID a couple of years and move on,” Kathleen says. “Instead, RIT/NTID provided a rewarding career, intertwined in our lives for 40 years and is coming full circle in this scholarship. Philanthropy—investing in something that is a legacy—is something our daughters have embraced with enthusiasm, and will keep them connected to RIT/NTID long after we’re gone.”

# 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion roadshow kicks off

BY JAMES MCCARTHY

**I**n 1968, NTID opened its doors, and in 2018, the college observes its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, complete with an alumni reunion weekend June 28-July 1. But the celebration will begin long before then.

This September, a nationwide roadshow will kick off in Boston, move to Rochester for October’s Brick City Homecoming, and then move on to other major cities in the United States.

Christopher, SVP ’86, ’94, and Staci Wagner, ’92, are leading the planning process in addition to headlining the roadshow.

“We want to use the roadshow to reach out to not just alumni, but also family and friends of NTID,” Christopher Wagner says. “We want to give people the opportunity to reconnect with their fellow alumni and with NTID, even if they can’t make it to the reunion weekend. If they can’t come to NTID, we’ll bring NTID to them.”

The roadshow will include events



MARK BENJAMIN

**NTID at 45** Alumni gather in the SDC during NTID’s 45<sup>th</sup> Reunion in 2013.

showcasing local deaf talent as well as NTID’s traveling troupe, Sunshine 2.0.

“The events for the roadshow will vary from city to city,” says Loriann Macko, director of Alumni and Constituent Relations. “Some may include ASL poetry, while others might have local deaf comedians. Each event will be unique.”

For more information about the roadshow—and the reunion weekend—visit [www.ntid.rit.edu/50reunion](http://www.ntid.rit.edu/50reunion).

## Roadshow stops

- **September 24, 2017:** Boston, MA
- **October 12, 2017:** Rochester, NY
- **October 28, 2017:** Philadelphia, PA
- **November 2017:** New York City, NY
- **December 2017:** Austin, TX
- **January 2018:** St. Louis, MO
- **February 2018:** Tampa, FL
- **March 24, 2018:** San Francisco, CA
- **March 2018:** Los Angeles, CA
- **April 2018:** Chicago, IL
- **May 2018:** Washington, DC

Specific dates will be announced as they become available on [www.ntid.rit.edu/50reunion](http://www.ntid.rit.edu/50reunion).

# Congratulations to the Class of 2017!



**Cody Cummings**

**Lisa Meyer**

Cody Cummings and Lisa Meyer were selected as the 2017 NTID college delegates. Delegates are selected based on their academic standing and give a speech at NTID's commencement.

Cummings, from Austin, Texas, is NTID's undergraduate delegate. He graduated in May with an AAS in laboratory science technology. He completed a co-op at Dow Chemical Company, working as a laboratory technician in the Department of Home, Institutional and Personal Care Solutions where he conducted research on liquid detergents. At RIT, Cummings served as

a research assistant in NTID's Department of Science and Mathematics where he contributed to the research on e-cigarette emissions, studied the balance of nitrogen and protein in the diets of migrating birds and analyzed archeological samples from Turkey. He presented his research at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society. He plans to continue his education in the bachelor's degree program in chemistry at RIT.

Meyer, from Queens, New York, is NTID's graduate delegate. She completed her MS in secondary education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Her professional experience includes

serving as an instructional assistant and substitute teacher at the Lexington School for the Deaf and as a camp counselor at the Aspen Camp of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She completed student teaching assignments as a mathematics teacher at the Texas School for the Deaf and Washington School for the Deaf. At RIT, Meyer served as a research assistant for the NTID Collaboration Research Project, focusing on facilitating efficient communication between deaf and hearing students on campus. She plans to pursue a career using her skills in deaf education or research.

# R·I·T

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PHOTO BY MARK BENJAMIN, DESIGN BY ETHEL KESSLER

**Honoring a Distinguished American** The United States Postal Service honored Robert Panara, the first deaf NTID faculty member, with a Forever Stamp on April 11, 2017. The 16<sup>th</sup> stamp in the Distinguished Americans series features Panara, an influential professor and pioneer in the field of deaf studies and one of the founders of the National Theatre of the Deaf. The dedication ceremony took place in NTID's Panara Theatre, which was named for him. The stamp features a photograph of Panara signing the word "respect" taken by RIT/NTID photographer Mark Benjamin and was designed by USPS art director Ethel Kessler.



A. SUE WESLER

**The Big Reveal** The Panara stamp was unveiled by, left to right, NTID photographer Mark Benjamin; retired NTID faculty member Harry Lang; David Williams, U.S. Postal Service chief operating officer; retired NTID faculty member and Robert Panara's son John Panara; NTID President Gerry Buckley; and Steve Monteith, vice president of marketing for the U.S. Postal Service.