

# NETAC networks

Providing technical assistance to professionals working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing in postsecondary settings

Winter 2001



## NETAC to co-sponsor Technology Symposium: Instructional Technology and Education of the Deaf

Supporting Learners, K-College • An International Symposium

June 25-27, 2001 – Symposium • June 28-29, 2001 – Workshops

National Technical Institute for the Deaf • Rochester Institute of Technology • <http://www.rit.edu/~techsym>

**GOAL OF SYMPOSIUM** – The Symposium will disseminate information relative to current innovation and future developments in the use of instructional technology and educational media to support the teaching/learning process. It will provide a forum for the presentation of current state-of-the-art practice and research for educators of the deaf, in K-12 and postsecondary settings.

**SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM** – The program will feature plenary speakers, concurrent formal presentation sessions, poster sessions, and participant discussion groups to help formulate recommendations on future directions of instructional technology and deaf education. Four topic strands include Using Technology to Support Learning; Measuring the Impact of Technology in the Teaching/Learning Process; Using Technology to Support Student Transition to the Workplace; and Online and Distance Learning. A complete program will be available on the Web site after April 15, 2001.

### REGISTRATION

**Materials:** Symposium registration forms (for the Symposium, workshops, and housing) are posted on the Symposium Web site. Registration for the Symposium is \$125 (\$100 before May 11), and the student fee is \$50.

**Procedure:** To register you will need to obtain the registration forms, either by contacting the Symposium office or by downloading them from the Symposium Web site. You must complete the forms and return them to the Symposium office. There will be no online registration. You must mail, fax, or send, via regular mail, your registration materials.

**HOUSING** – The Symposium will occur on the campus of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (<http://www.rit.edu/ntid>), a college of Rochester Institute of Technology (<http://www.rit.edu>). The Radisson Hotel Rochester Airport, adjacent to campus, will be the official Symposium hotel. The cost for single occupancy is \$99/night; double occupancy is \$109/night.

### ONLINE OPPORTUNITIES AT THE SYMPOSIUM

**Exploring online possibilities:** Depending on the availability of funding, the Symposium will make videoconferencing and video streaming of Symposium events available. More information will soon be posted on the Web site.

**Contribute to the Symposium Recommendations Report:** One of the primary goals of the Symposium is to generate a Recommendations Report that will detail specific recommendations to governmental, educational, commercial, and non-profit organizations serving deaf students regarding

instructional technology. The Report will contain the collective recommendations contributed by Symposium participants. Those who use the WWW may offer suggestions remotely.

**PROGRAM** – The complete Symposium program, along with all abstracts, will be posted on the Web site by April 23, 2001.

### POST-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Post-conference workshops will provide participants with sophisticated, hands-on training on the use of instructional technology in deaf education. These workshops will be offered June 28 and 29 and will be taught by NTID faculty and professional staff or by K-12 partners from co-sponsoring schools and supported by NTID faculty and professional staff.

Each workshop will cost \$100. All workshop descriptions, including specific objectives and outcomes, will be posted on the Web site with Symposium registration materials.

**PROCEEDINGS** – Papers presented at the Symposium will be posted on the Symposium Web site and made available immediately at the conclusion of the conference.

**SYMPOSIUM WEB SITE** – Complete information about the Symposium can be found at <http://www.rit.edu/~techsym>. People can add their name to an e-mail distribution list to receive the latest information. This Web site is updated regularly.

**CO-SPONSORS** – Co-sponsors for this Symposium include the American School for the Deaf, NETAC, and the Rochester School for the Deaf

### STIPENDS

NETAC is offering \$500 conference stipends, two per state in our region. It is hoped that one recipient will come from a postsecondary institution and the other from the secondary level. In many cases, this stipend will not cover all expenses—perhaps applicants can approach their home institutions and ask them to share some of the costs.

NETAC site coordinators have copies of the Conference Stipend Request Form, which is due to the NETAC central office by April 9. Selections will be completed and applicants notified by email by April 13. For more information about stipends, contact your NETAC site coordinator or the NETAC central office.

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### *NETAC Networks*

is produced three times a year. Articles should be submitted to

Sherlea Dony, editor, NETAC, 52 Lomb Memorial Drive, Rochester, NY 14623-5604, through email to [SADDHD@rit.edu](mailto:SADDHD@rit.edu), or by fax to 716-475-7660.

All articles are subject to editing. Comments and suggestions are always welcome!

## The Director's column

by Karen Hopkins

Spring is a time for new beginnings, including here at NETAC central office. Effective January 29, I became NTID's Acting Director of College Advancement, overseeing the areas of Marketing Communications, Alumni Relations, and Development. I accepted this assignment at the request of NTID Vice President Robert Davila and am pleased to do so. But it goes without saying that I will miss the many dedicated, talented, and resourceful colleagues with whom I have interacted these past five years.

I am most pleased when I look at where NETAC has been, where it is today, and where it may go in the future under the capable leadership of my successor, Dianne Brooks. Dianne most recently was director of NTID's Center for Outreach and has two decades of academic experience at NTID to draw upon in her new post. I know you will join me in welcoming Dianne to the NETAC team.

I would also like to welcome Kathleen Moran Duskos to NETAC. Kathleen joins NETAC as the new site coordinator for the State of Connecticut (see pg. 6).



Dianne and Kathleen assume their positions at an exciting juncture for NETAC. We have applied to continue as the Northeast Technical Assistance Center for five more years and should know the decision from the Department of Education by late March. If NETAC is funded for another five years, our pledge is to continue to offer the highest quality service to our constituents. More workshops, new publications, increased training opportunities, and innovative uses of technology are planned for 2001-2006.

One of those workshops will take place in Rochester in just a few short months. NTID will host the International Symposium on Instructional Technology and Education of the Deaf June 25-29. This meeting will provide a forum for educators supporting deaf and hard-of-hearing learners about current and future innovations and developments using educational media and technology. If you'd like more information about the symposium, go to the Web site <http://www.rit.edu/~techsym>.

Best wishes to NETAC for a strong future!

## Introducing NETAC's new Director

Dianne Brooks is Associate Dean for Outreach and Technical Assistance at NTID. She has held a number of positions since joining NTID in 1980. Most recently she was Director of the Center for Outreach with responsibilities for enrollment management services, employer outreach, employer training, co-op and job placement services, and administering educational outreach and technical assistance to high school students, school personnel, and other service providers.

As Associate Dean she is responsible for administering various educational outreach projects, technical assistance services, and career awareness and transition programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing high school students, including Explore Your Future (EYF) and the Career Awareness Program ("Voyage to the Future"), as well as NETAC.

Ms. Brooks has held adjunct teaching positions at the University of Rochester

and is currently an adjunct assistant professor in the RIT College of Liberal Arts, where she teaches a graduate course in the Advanced Certificate in School Psychology and Deafness program. She was a member of the first White House Conference on Education of Disabled Children and a past member of the Advisory Board for the Rochester School for the Deaf. Ms. Brooks has also served as a trainer and educational specialist for the U.S. Peace Corps (Manila, Philippines). She has been a member of the Review Panel for discretionary grant programs in the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, and the National Institute of Disability Research and Rehabilitation (NIDRR).



## Upcoming events by state\*

### Connecticut

- C-Print Training, March 19-23, Northwestern Connecticut Community College, Winsted.
- The CT NETAC Site Coordinator, Kathleen Moran Doskos, will be making onsite visits at postsecondary institutions, including proprietary schools. For a site visit to your program, contact the CT NETAC office at 860-738-6373 (voice), 860-738-6382 (TTY), or via email at NW\_NETAC@commnet.edu.
- To have your name added to the “CT NETAC News” mailing list, please contact Cherri Calverley at the CT NETAC office.

### Maine

The Maine NETAC site coordinator is making site visits at postsecondary institutions, including proprietary schools. To coordinate a site visit for your program, please contact Barbara Keefe at 207-781-6209 (voice/TTY) or via email at keefe@fc.baxter.pvt.k12.me.us.

- Contact Barbara Keefe at the number above to receive additional information, brochures, newsletters, and upcoming statewide events.

### Maryland

Unless otherwise indicated, the contact person for the following events is Florence Cooney, Catonsville Campus of the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC Catonsville), 410-455-4369 (voice), 410-455-4553 (TTY), or via email at fcooney@ccbc.cc.md.us.

- “Services for the Hard-of-Hearing Student in Postsecondary Education,” live teleconference, March 15, 2-4 p.m., Towson University, Towson, MD. Other locations TBA.
- “Voyage to the Future,” a career awareness program for deaf and hard-of-hearing high school students and their parents, March 30-31, CCBC Catonsville.
- The NETAC/Maryland Site Coordinator will be happy to visit your campus to discuss the ways in which NETAC can work with you to benefit your program. Contact Florence Cooney to schedule a visit or to be added to our mailing list for NETAC publications and events.
- CCBC C-Print Referral Service provides C-Print services off site for businesses and organizations.

### Massachusetts

For more information regarding the events listed below, contact the Massachusetts site for NETAC at 978-556-3341 (voice/TTY) or via email at netac@necc.mass.edu.

- The Mentorship Program (Interpreter Training): “Team Interpreting,” February, date and Location TBA. For more information, contact 617-254-4041 (voice/TTY) or via email at kahle@mediaone.net.
- SPG #4, Service Providers’ Group meeting, March 15, noon-2 p.m., location TBA. Lunch provided to registered attendees. Limited seating. Please call the number listed above or send email to register.
- “Services for the Hard-of-Hearing Student in Postsecondary Education,” live teleconference, March 15, 2-4 p.m., NECC and North Shore Community College. Advanced registration required. Please call the number listed above or send email to register.
- “Voyage to the Future” transition workshop, Spring 2001. Location TBA.

- To request a free on-site consultation regarding service options for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, contact us at the number above for an appointment.

### New York

- New York State NETAC Consortium meeting, including a discussion of the “Working Together” package and the “Connections” training package, presented by Charley L. Tiggs and Desiree Duda, March 15-16, Albany, NY. For more information, contact Desiree Duda, NETAC New York downstate coordinator, at 203-854-5371 (voice/TTY), 801-760-6240 (fax), or via email at NYCnetac@aol.com.
- “Addressing Literacy at Home and School: Improving Instruction for Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing Youth and Adults,” a conference presented by Desiree Duda and a SHHH organization representative, April 6, Queens College. Sponsored by the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) and NETAC.
- The NY NETAC site coordinators will be making on-site visits at postsecondary institutions, including proprietary schools. For a site visit to your program, please contact Desiree Duda at 203-854-5371 (voice/TTY) or via email at NYCnetac@aol.com, or Charley L. Tiggs at 716-475-7675 (TTY) or via email at CLTNOD@rit.edu.
- Upcoming training workshops will include technical assistance on topics such as C-Print demonstrations and accommodating deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Exact dates and locations TBA. For more information, contact Desiree Duda or Charley L. Tiggs.
- The Multicultural Manual, which reflects guidelines at the City University of New York-LaGuardia Community College’s Program for Deaf Adults, is available through the PEPNet Resource Center. For more information, contact Desiree Duda.

### Pennsylvania

Unless otherwise indicated, the contact person for the following events is Lori Hutchison, PA NETAC site coordinator, Hiram G. Andrews Center, 814-255-8275 (voice), 814-255-5873 (TTY), or via email at lhutchison@dli.state.pa.us.

- C-Print training, February 23-25 and March 10-11, Pittsburgh.
- “Services for the Hard-of-Hearing Student in Postsecondary Education,” live teleconference, March 15, 2-4 p.m., locations TBA.
- “Connections–Vocational Rehabilitation and Higher Education Jointly Serving Consumers Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing,” April 10, Reading Area Community College.
- PA/NETAC Consortium meeting, April 10 immediately after the “Connections” program.
- C-print training, April 23-27, in the Allentown area at Lehigh Carbon Community College.
- Fifth Annual Statewide Conference, September 18-19, State College.

\* Updated information will be posted on the NETAC Web site as it becomes available (<http://netac.rit.edu>).



## The C-Print™ captionist training process



The NETAC central office and the C-Print™ central office receive many calls about the processes and responsibilities for participants in C-Print captionist training. If you are interested in participating in C-Print training, this article will give you a better understanding of your involvement and the overall process. Participants include the C-Print central office, trainee, trainer, sponsor institution, and host institution.

### Training

#### Phase I:

C-Print training involves two phases. Phase I of training occurs on an independent basis.

Recruited, screened, and approved trainees complete a four-week lesson plan (approximately 50-60 hours) utilizing the Captionist Training Manual and its accompanying audiotapes. The training period is generally overseen by the sponsor institution, and proof of completion of weekly work is furnished to the C-Print trainer via email, fax, or other arrangement for verification.

Additionally, trainees must complete the PEPNet Online Orientation to Deafness ([www.PEPNet.org](http://www.PEPNet.org)) and furnish a copy of their certificate to the trainer.

All deadlines and responsibilities of phase I training must be met before phase II training is provided.

#### Phase I *sample* training schedule:

- Week 1 Lessons 1-3 (6 tapes)
- Week 2 Lessons 4-6, practice tapes A-C (6 tapes)
- Week 3 Lessons 7-9, practice tapes D-F (6 tapes)
- Week 4 Extra practice tapes G-L (6 tapes)  
PEPNet Online Orientation to Deafness

*Note: Completion of the extra practice tapes M-Q is highly recommended.*

#### Phase II:

Upon successful completion of phase I training and its adherent deadlines and responsibilities, phase II training begins.

Phase II involves a five-day, on-site workshop at the host institution under the direction of the assigned C-Print trainer.

If a trainee is unable to fulfill any of the requirements of phase I, the C-Print central office and the assigned trainer reserve the right to cancel phase II training for the trainee. The sponsor institution will need to reschedule phase II training.

### Responsibilities

#### C-Print central office:

- Respond to contacts from host and sponsor institutions and assign a trainer to work as a facilitator/liason.
- Review and approve submitted workshop proposal forms.
- Furnish phase I training materials for each trainee including the Captionist Training Manual, audiotapes, and various literature.

#### Trainer:

- If contacted directly by the host institution, the trainer is responsible for facilitating the process upon approval of the workshop proposal. If the C-Print central office is contacted directly, a trainer will be assigned to work with the host institution.
- Assist the sponsor institution with recruiting, screening, scoring, and phase I requirements.

- Assist host institution with phase II workshop arrangements, outline a phase I and phase II training agenda with the host institution, and confirm distribution of phase I training materials with C-Print central office 4-6 weeks prior to workshop date.
- Perform weekly verification of phase I trainee work materials and verify trainee completion of the PEPNet Online Orientation to Deafness.

#### Trainee:

Complete phase I and II requirements including:

- Complete the materials in the Captionist Training Manual through Lesson 9 (approximately 50-60 hours). Transcribed records of weekly work must be furnished to the trainer via email, fax, or other arrangement for verification and record keeping.
- Complete the PEPNet Online Orientation to Deafness at some time during the four-week phase I training interval. A copy of the certificate of completion must be furnished to the trainer.
- Attend phase II onsite training when phase I requirements have been met.

#### Sponsor Institution:

*The sponsor institution supports candidates participating in the captionist training process.*

- Recruit and screen candidates using the C-Print candidate pretest a minimum of six weeks before the phase II training workshop date.
- Provide hardware (laptop) and software necessary to complete phase I and phase II training.
- Ensure completion of all work contained in the Captionist Training Manual through Lesson 9 **jointly, with trainee(s)**. Transcribed records of the weekly work assignments will be furnished to the trainer via email, fax, or other arrangement for verification and record keeping.
- Provide access to the PEPNet Online Orientation to Deafness Web site. A copy of the trainee's completed certificate must be furnished to the trainer for verification and record keeping.

#### Host Institution:

*The host institution provides the site and facilities for the phase II training workshop.*

- Contact and submit the workshop proposal form to C-Print central office for approval **3-6 months prior** to the phase II training workshop.
- Make phase II workshop arrangements with assistance from the trainer.
- Guarantee a minimum number of four trainees for phase II training workshop (maximum 10-15 trainees).
- Arrange a Deaf culture/ADA panel or presentation for the onsite phase II workshop with assistance from the trainer.

*Notes (1) In some situations an institution will function as both the sponsor and the host institution.*

*(2) C-Print captionist training occurs in formats additional to the one-week structure outlined in this document.*

*Pam Francis is the C-Print training coordinator and Anne Alepoudakis is the C-Print project staff assistant. If you have any questions, please contact either your NETAC state site coordinator or the C-Print central office at 716-475-2809 (voice/TTY).*

### Extended time as an accommodation for deaf and hard-of-hearing students

by Jane Jarrow

Recently, I was asked to look over some proposed guidelines for determining whether a student who was deaf would be provided with extended time in testing. The disability services folks were concerned about how to determine objectively whether or not extended time was necessary. They knew it was inappropriate to assign ANY accommodation solely on the basis of a label (“he’s deaf — give him 1, 2, and 5 off the list of accommodations”), but they weren’t quite sure on what basis they should be assessing documentation of deaf and hard-of-hearing students to determine the potential need for extra time.

The proposal called for requiring deaf and hard-of-hearing students to submit the results of the same kind of psychoeducational testing that is used in determining the need for extra time for LD students. In fact, for the most part, it called for using the very same tests used in assessing LD students. My response to their proposal was very clear — “YOU DON’T WANT TO GO THERE!!!”

It is not uncommon for deaf students to request extra time in testing. Is it a legitimate accommodation from a postsecondary perspective? Yes... it is something provided regularly to students with disabilities who demonstrate a disability-related need. Is it a legitimate request from a deaf student? Maybe. It depends on the student and on the test. *Not all deaf students need or should have extended time.*

Extended time may be a logical and appropriate accommodation for tests that are heavily language based if the student, because of his/her deafness, is not a native user of English (that is, a student who uses ASL as his/her primary language). Then, too, there are some deaf students whose reading/decoding skills lag behind those of their college level peers. Without going into the educational theory/practice that explains the why’s and wherefore’s, it is important to understand that these depressed skill levels in language usage and reading are *not* a function of limited educational experience or success, so much as they can be traced to the impact of their deafness on learning in areas generally acquired through audition and speech. *Not all deaf students who need extended time will need it on all tests.*

If the test is a practical examination (auto repair, chemistry lab experiment, and so on), it is unlikely that extended time is necessary or appropriate unless there are concomitant disabilities. On pencil and paper tests, the impact of language/reading issues may yield some unexpected considerations. A short answer/fill-in-the-blank test may pose little challenge requiring extended time. On the other hand, a 50-question multiple-choice exam, in which the correct answer depends on distinguishing subtle differences among choices or pulling apart story problems to determine what is being asked, may present a MAJOR problem for someone who has difficulty with language/reading issues.

Alright, then, if it MAY be appropriate, but isn’t ALWAYS appropriate, then why isn’t it logical to use some kind of objective testing criteria to determine who gets the extra time and who doesn’t? The short answer is, “Because there are no tests/objective criteria that will give you THAT information for THIS population.” Existing assessment instruments provide (hopefully) reliable information

about the performance of students with processing problems. Deaf students do NOT experience difficulties in these areas because of processing problems. They experience difficulties because of the impact of their deafness. Using a test that works well in such decision making for an LD student (for example, subtests from the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery) to assess the performance of a deaf student would be a little like using a meat thermometer to determine if your little boy has a fever. You want to know how hot he is, so you put a thermometer in his mouth. But this thermometer isn’t sensitive enough to the minimal temperatures or the subtle variations in temperature of a child—it was created to measure temperature in an entirely different setting.

While the kind of testing that allows service providers to be prescriptive in assigning this accommodation for LD students is a routine part of the diagnosis and assessment of their disability, it is neither routine nor necessary in determining whether a student is really deaf! Moreover, the number of diagnosticians qualified to administer such tests who are also fluent in sign language are few and far between, and the number of deaf services providers who know sign language and are also qualified to administer such tests is likely to be even more limited. (And before you ask, you cannot

rely on an audiogram to give you such answers either. Language proficiency and the impact of the hearing loss is not solely a function of the degree or severity of the hearing loss. I have seen students with congenital, profound losses who have excellent speech and language, while I have also seen students with moderate losses, diagnosed at a later age, who have much more significant problems with language.)

You cannot base your decisions regarding extended time for deaf students on existing objective, comparative testing. Then how should you decide? Use your good judgment. TALK to the student. Determine through interview and observation whether there are language-based issues as a result of deafness for THIS student. Determine whether such language issues could significantly impact on the kind of testing done in THIS class. (You may have to contact the faculty member to discuss how he/she tests.) And then make a decision based on available evidence and a good faith effort to assure equal access to opportunity. That is all any of us ever do in this field, anyhow!!!

*Jane Jarrow, Ph.D., is president of Disability Access Information and Support (DAIS). An expert in disability services, she has been providing technical assistance and training to service providers on access and support services for persons with disabilities in higher education and has co-authored or authored numerous books and articles in the field of disabilities in higher education over the past 18 years.*

On pencil and paper tests, the impact of language/reading issues may yield some unexpected considerations.



## March 15 teleconference, "Services for the Hard-of-Hearing Student in Postsecondary Education"

On March 15, from 2-4 p.m. EST, PEPNet presents, "Services for the Hard of Hearing Student in Postsecondary Education." This program will cover some of the issues facing people who are hard of hearing and late deafened.

Featured topics will include degrees and causes of hearing loss, common myths and misconceptions about people with hearing loss, and psychological ramifications. Viewers will better understand the unique adjustment factors related to the disability and how to provide appropriate educational accommodations.

The program will be moderated by Sharaine Rawlinson, Associate Director of the Midwest Center for Postsecondary Outreach (MCPO), President of the NTID Alumni Association, Co-Chairperson of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Special Interest Group of the Association of Higher Education and Disability, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Chapter of the Association of Higher Education and Disability.

The schedule includes time for questions from viewers and comments to the presenters.

### How to register

Contact [www.pepnet.org](http://www.pepnet.org) to complete a registration form online or contact Patty Brill, MCPO, at 651-221-1338 (voice/TTY), 651-221-1339 (fax), or via email at [patty.brill@sptc.mnscu.edu](mailto:patty.brill@sptc.mnscu.edu).

The cost is \$100 for each downlink location.

You are encouraged to register as a downlink site host at least 21 days prior to the scheduled uplink. Site coordinators will be provided with downlink materials including satellite coordinates (C and KU Band) to be used during the live teleconference.

Registrations received less than 21 days prior to the program date will not be guaranteed the arrival of materials by the conference date.

Approximately two weeks prior to the teleconference, you will receive a license agreement letter listing the host site rights and responsibilities.

### Teleconference sponsors

PEPNet is a collaborative effort among four Regional Postsecondary Centers for Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

The four PEPNet centers sponsoring this event are: Midwest Center for Postsecondary Outreach, St. Paul MN; Northeast Technical Assistance Center, Rochester NY; Postsecondary Education Consortium, Knoxville TN; and Western Region Outreach Center and Consortia, Northridge CA.

This teleconference is funded through an agreement with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.



## Announcing a new site coordinator for Connecticut

NETAC welcomes Kathleen Moran Doskos, who became the NETAC site coordinator for Connecticut in November 2000. Kathleen worked briefly with NETAC in 1998 as assistant to Elaine Taylor, former NETAC CT coordinator. More recently she was an employment specialist for the deaf and hard of hearing with Transitional Employment Unlimited, Inc., in Connecticut, and a vocational rehabilitation counselor with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. Kathleen can be reached at 860-738-6373 (voice), 860-738-6380 (TTY), 860-379-3886 (fax), or via email at [NW\\_NETAC@commnet.edu](mailto:NW_NETAC@commnet.edu).



## 2000 C-Print™ Training Workshop Schedule (as of 2/12/01)

March 19–23, 2001

Northwestern Connecticut Community College, Winsted, CT  
*Registration closed February 9, 2001*

April 23–27, 2001

Lehigh Carbon Community College, Schnecksville, PA  
*Registration closes March 16, 2001*

April 30–May 4, 2001

Columbus State Community College, Columbus, OH  
*Registration closes March 16, 2001*

May 14–18, 2001

Pikes Peak Community College, Colorado Springs, CO  
*Registration closes March 30, 2001*

June 4–7, 2001

Train the Trainer  
Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY  
*Invitation Only*

June 11–15, 2001

Camden County College, Camden, NJ  
*Registration closes May 4, 2001*

June 18–22, 2001

St. Paul Technical College, St. Paul, MN  
*Registration closes May 4, 2001*

July 16–21, 2001

Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY  
*Registration closes June 8, 2001*



## Thirty students take a Voyage to the Future

by Cate Weir

On December 1 and 2, 30 high school students from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont met at the New Hampshire Technical Institute in Concord to look at the options available to them after high school. Supported by NETAC, the students and their parents were treated to workshops to look at their future, learn about planning for college, and put together a “map” of their future to follow.

The two-day workshop was presented by career counselors from NTID and coordinated by Barbara Keefe of NETAC/ME, Cate Weir of NETAC/NH, and Joe Panko of NETAC/VT. This regional collaboration proved to be very successful, and participants stated that they enjoyed the opportunity to meet students who are deaf or hard of hearing from other states.

Although the students and their parents spent much of the time in the serious pursuit of planning for their future, they took a break to join with other community members on Friday night to be entertained by renowned deaf magician, Matthew “Magic” Morgan. Matthew delighted the high school students as well as many younger children who attended the performance, and the many adults in the audience were thrilled with the magic as well.

“Voyage to the Future” proved to be a great success, with parents and students alike reporting that they gained valuable information about life after high school, with some fun along the way!

*Cate Weir is the NETAC site coordinator for New Hampshire.*



*J.T. Reid leads a group discussion.*



*Deaf professional John Howland and interpreter at roundtable discussion.*



*A student works on her life map.*

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## Literacy skills and the deaf or hard-of-hearing postsecondary student

by Desiree Duda

On January 10, 2001, the NETAC downstate office sponsored a thought-provoking presentation by Dr. Sue Livingston, professor of Communication Skills at LaGuardia Community College and author of *Rethinking the Education of Deaf Students: Theory and Practice from a Teacher's Perspective*. The presentation was made before members of the City University of New York (CUNY) Committee on Student Disability Issues.

The presentation began by having the audience imagine what it might be like to be raised in a family as a deaf child where no one used a linguistically accessible language. Ninety percent of deaf children are raised in non-deaf homes, and while some parents and family members do learn American Sign Language, the majority does not.

Dr. Livingston further pointed out that without access to linguistic constructs (the building blocks needed to acquire literacy) at an early age, the ability to read and write is delayed. Unfortunately, many deaf students are not offered a rich and accessible language program

during their elementary and secondary school years. The question then remains—what can be done at a postsecondary level?

Immersing these students in a rich language such as ASL and having them read and write intensively and extensively in English is the key. Using materials that are familiar, interesting, and engaging is important, as is the ASL skill level of the instructor. Dr. Livingston believes that in order to build literacy skills, students need to see written text and its interpreted meaning in ASL simultaneously. In a classroom, this is accomplished through the use of an overhead projector.

Fortunately, there are many successful immersion programs, workshops, and intensive courses at LaGuardia Community College and other CUNY campuses serving the needs of this special student population.

If you would like further information about Dr. Livingston's presentation or related topics, please contact Desiree Duda, NY Downstate NETAC Coordinator at NYCnetac@aol.com.

*Desiree Duda is the NETAC site coordinator for downstate New York.*

## Deaf access on the Internet

by Charley L. Tiggs

Standards for making Web pages accessible to people who are blind or have low vision have been well published. In fact, these standards have received a lot of attention over the last two years as more and more people join the "information highway." But what about deaf and hard-of-hearing people?

There is a site I visit regularly and enjoy very much. It has all kinds of neat things there for people to read, do, and participate in. Well, in the last several weeks, they have switched to a site that is driven by Flash, a type of graphic medium that can be animated and include sounds. One of the features of the site now requires that you listen to the output and make a decision based on what was said. Deaf friendly? NOT!

So, maybe it is time to think about making Web sites deaf friendly. What needs to be done besides making sounds accessible? The answers may surprise you:

1) Use plain speech. Many deaf and some hard-of-hearing individuals don't necessarily have the language to understand "fancy" words. Use everyday language to make it simple.

- 2) Don't make the navigation of the site dependent on sound. If you must include sound, make sure the sound or sounds are captioned in some way.
- 3) Give text feedback for errors. You would be surprised by the number of sites that give auditory feedback when an error has occurred.
- 4) Above all else, keep it simple! Now, keeping a site simple does not mean you must sacrifice design. It simply means to make sure navigation and labels are relatively clear, and site structure is as clear as possible as well.

When you view the above four guidelines, what do you see? Guidelines that help EVERYONE, not just people who are deaf or hard of hearing! That is the heart of making a site accessible. Everyone benefits, not just one group.

Happy surfing!



# R·I·T

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This publication was developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) and produced through a cooperative agreement between RIT and OSER-S (HO78A60004). The contents herein do not necessarily represent the Department of Education's policy nor endorsement by the Federal Government.