A program to educate those people with hearing problems

Ms. Shirley Allen - Taylor develops curriculum and teaches a class in "Introduction to College Life" for first - year deaf students at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT).

She is one of the 14 million people who have hearing problems in the United States.

Ms. Allen - Taylor, who became deaf at the age of 20 because of a bout with typhoid and the medication administered in the form of a drug, streptomycin, feels that NTID at RIT is a good place for minority students, and staff and faculty.

"Our minority students and staff are fortunate to have this opportunity where there are so many people with diverse and interesting backgrounds.

This is a very good arrangement for persons seeking growth and minorities need those kinds of opportunities," said Ms. Allen - Taylor.

The National Technical Institute for the Deaf was created because the deaf population has been underemployed or unemployed historically.

It was clear that educational opportunities for the deaf were needed in technical fields; and many people felt that, if given specialized training, deaf people could succeed in many technical careers.

NTID is an integral part of Rochester (N.Y.) Institute of Technology and one of 10 RIT colleges. Although it serves a special segment of the student body, approximately 20 percent of deaf RIT students also attend regular RIT classes.

It is a one - of - a - kind program that educates large numbers of deaf students in a hearing environment.

Dedicated in October of 1974, NTID at RIT consists of an academic building, residence hall, and dining commons — all developed specifically to meet the learning and living needs of deaf students.

NTID at RIT is also a national institue in its own right, receiving annual federal appropriations as a Special Institute, (along with Gallaudet College, Howard University and the American Printing House for the Blind) regulated by the Congress, U.S. Department of Education, and by the National Advisory Group.

Since the original 71 deaf students enrolled in 1968, more than 2,300 deaf students have chosen to expand their education and career opportunities at RIT.

COUNSELING — Getting oriented are two prospective students at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute.

Any deaf student can be admitted if he or she has successfully completed a program of secondary education, has achieved eighth grade level skills, and has the potential for completing a program of study through NTID or RIT's other nine colleges.

In 1980 - 81, nearly 1,000 students from most states will be enrolled full - time, meeting the projected enrollment capacity goals.

NTID at RIT has many characteristics which make it unlike any other institue in the United States. Some of the reasons for this uniqueness lies in the history of the Institute, and also in events that took place before the law creating NTID was signed in 1965.

Forty - five years ago a deaf vocational teacher from Minnesota, Peter N. Peterson, wrote an article in Vocational Teacher, published in 1933 that described a national technical institute for the deaf.

Peterson's motivation was largely a possible donation for a technical education project from Henry Ford.

In Peterson's words, "A national technical institute for the deaf, located at the center of population in a large manufacturing city, is what deaf young America needs more than anything else.

"It would be a complement to Gallaudet College, and on a par with it in usefulness and influence. It would give all the deaf who wanted it a practical education that would lead to bread with butter spread thick on it.

"A dream you say. A wild, fantastic dream! Perhaps so. But more fantastic dreams than this one have come true, and this dream is not so impossible of realization as it looks at first sight."

Although the times were not right for creation of the institue envisioned by Peterson, the idea persisted.

It was apparent that opportunities for vocational and technical training needed by deaf persons for employment in our country were extremely limited.

In the 1960s more than twice as many students were applying to Gallaudet College than could be admitted.

By 1964, several groups, including the Conference of Executives of American Schools for the Deaf, the Alexander Graham Bell Association, American Instructors of the Deaf, and the Council for Exceptional Children had publicly expressed concern over the situation and urged Congress to provide for the establishment of vocational and technical training facilities for the deaf.

A study committee from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare found " . . . a need for more sophisticated occupational education for the deaf, realistically geared to the more complex demands of the future."

The following year, NTID was created by Public Law 89 - 36 (the National Technical Institute for the Deaf Act) which passed in both Houses of Congress with strong bi - partisan support.

President Lyndon Johnson signed the law on June 6, 1965, at a special White House ceremony.

The development of NTID began within the framework of its original mission;

— to provide semi - professional and professional technical programs for post-secondary deaf students;

— to provide special support services to encourage personal, social, and cultural development among deaf students;

— to encourage qualified deaf students to pursue graduate studies;

— to conduct research into the occupational and employment related aspects of deafness;

— to develop and evaluate new, imaginative instructional technology;

— to conduct training programs, seminars and short courses relating to deafness for RIT personnel and for graduate students preparing to work professionally with the deaf, and other special groups.

— to disseminate information regarding NTID curriculum courses of study, special services, and research findings to those offering services to deaf children, and to the RIT educational community.

The National Advisory Group was established to set guidelines for the founding of NTID. Every college offering a bachelor's degree in the U.S. was invited to submit an application.

The National Advisory Group reviewed proposals and made recommendations on the more than 40 institutions of higher education that expressed interest in becoming sponsor of NTID.

The list was narrowed to four finalists; the University of Tennessee, the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the Rochester Institute of Technology.

In 1966, after on - site visits to all finalists, the Group unanimously chose RIT to operate the new NTID as one of its nine colleges.

RIT offered several advantages. It already had a technical institute and work - study program with a well - established reputation. The new Henrietta campus proposed a site in an environment conducive to education and to the personal development of deaf students.

RIT's excellent name and reputation for service, and its good relationship with local industry, could lend strength to NTID as well as help foster inter - institutional cooperation.

The educational philosophy and approach to applied research, and the enthusiasm of RIT faculty were favorable factors.

RIT had also had some previous success in training a small number of deaf students. Most important, RIT proposed to make the training of deaf students an integral part of its program, rather than send deaf students to other institutions.

NTID's parinciple of job placement for all means that faculty and staff focus major efforts in placing every graduate of every program in jobs in the areas for which they're educated.

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American colleges to train African environmentalists

American colleges and universities will help 13 African countries undertake an ambitious program to protect their environments.

The 32 institutions of the Southeast Consortium for International Development, including 17 black schools, will participate in the program.

About 1,500 African government officials and technicians will attend a series of workshops at which U.S. experts will advise them how to detect early signs of drought, control soil erosion and safeguard water supplies.

The $11 million, five-year project will be funded by a grant from the Agency for International Development and by contributions from the participating African countries.

The project will train more environmentalists for Africa and enable U.S. researchers to undertake needed environmental research and training in Africa.

Nearly all of the training will take place in Africa.

Many of Africa's food production problems are related to the environment. Drought especially has contributed to large food deficits in such countries as Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia, Sudan, Zambia and the 8 western Sahel countries.

"Present trends in Africa are clear enough," said Dennis Conroy, director of AID's Africa Regional Affairs Office.

"In many countries, soil productivity is down, soil erosion up, food production levels down, deforestation up and urban pollution up.

Failure to approach these issues on a broad base will almost certainly result in a continuation of adverse environmental and economic impact."

The consortium, which has offices in Washington, D.C. and Chapel Hill, N.C. will coordinate the training and supply technical experts from its member institutions for the regional seminars, workshops and short-term training exercises.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Clark University of Worcester, Mass., Alabama A&M of Normal, Ala. and the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta will organize the sessions, but other consortium institutions will participate at various stages of the project.

In central Kenya, where district monitoring systems are needed to check on drought and soil erosion, Clark University specialists will soon begin organizing seminars with the University of Nairobi.

Also, Clark University and the University of Khartoum have joined forces in western Sudan to study desert encroachment, which threatens farmers and herders.

Alabama A&M and Georgia Tech are identifying interested faculty members from the consortium for participation in other countries.

Other member institutions are:

Alabama — Auburn University, Tuskegee Institute.

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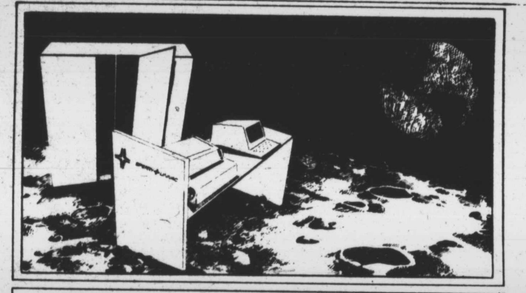

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