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Contributed by Wendy DiMatteo 2006

SAISD (Substance and Alcohol Intervention Services for the Deaf) is a restricted grant funded program which is regulated by the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. SAISD provides alcohol and other drugs information, referral, prevention, education, professional consultation and training as well as support to treatment services to the deaf and hard of hearing population. The operating budget is funded by New York State and RIT (the majority of the RIT funds are contributed directly by the National Technical Institute for the Deaf).

SAISD was established in 1979 and was founded by Art Berman of the Social Work Department, Mort Issacs of the RIT Psychology Department and Tom Haschmann from OASAS (Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services). The first Director of SAISD was Karen Steitler, who served in that capacity from 1979-1999. At that time the agency was housed on the 6th floor at the corner of W. Main St. and Fitzhugh St. in downtown Rochester, NY. Jeffrey L. Rubin assumed the position for Director of SAISD in the year 2000, and is currently Director of the program.

SAISD was initially under the Division of Substance Abuse Services which later became OASAS in 1992. As of 1984, SAISD has received pay-for-service through an RIT approved contract with the John L. Norris Addiction Treatment Center.

The SAISD office was located in the Human Development Center at NTID from 1980 - 1992 under Student Affairs as part of the Counseling Center. At that time the department counselors taught a 2 credit course on substance abuse. The reporting structure changed from the Social Work Department to Government and Community Relations at RIT.

In the year 2000, SAISD was transferred to the supervision of Gerard Buckley (at that time his position was that of NTID Associate Dean). SAISD currently reports to Ellie Rosenfield, Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services at NTID.

SAISD activities include service to the RIT/NTID campus and the John L. Norris, ATC, as well as the Rochester School for the Deaf, St. Mary's School for the Deaf in Buffalo, NY, and any other school, agency, clinic or system site for deaf and hard of hearing individuals requesting our services. SAISD staff is mobile, providing program services outside our region as well.



SAISD office was located on the 6th floor of 50 West Main St. from 1979 - 1992



SAISD office located at RIT campus from 1992 - present