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# **BUILDING AN ONLINE COMMUNITY FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING STUDENTS**



# Overview

- Who we are
- Rationale for the project
- Review of model components
- Academic community activities
- Recruiting strategies
- Monitoring community usage
- Future activities
- Q & A



# Who We Are

- Deaf STEM Community Alliance
  - Only Alliance specifically for D/HH students
- Supported by the National Science Foundation, HRD #1127955
- 3-5 year project (Sept 2011- Aug 2016)
  - Now in our 3<sup>rd</sup> year





# Campus Partners



RIT is the lead institution for this project, with Camden County College and Cornell University as partners.



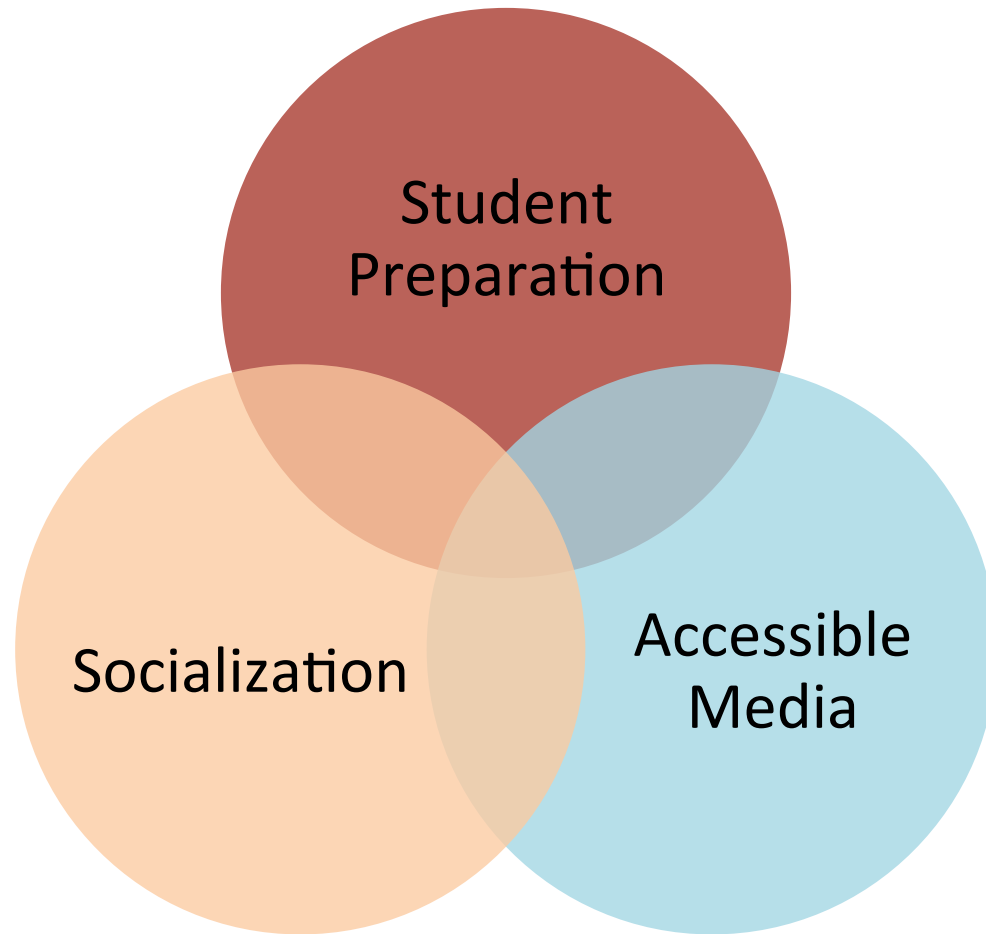


# Project Rationale

- Participation gap in STEM exists for students who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH). This gap negatively impacts:
  - Bachelor's degree graduation rates
  - Advanced degrees
    - Between 1997-2006, 420 out of 265,790 (~.2%) of new STEM PhDs were D/HH
  - Employment opportunities in STEM:
    - Hearing 17.9% v 15.5% D/HH
    - Hearing in higher-earning STEM sectors than D/HH



# Barriers to Success in STEM





# Project Rationale

- Solution: Deaf STEM Community Alliance
  - Student preparation
    - Remote tutoring
    - Remote captioning
    - Remote interpreting
  - Socialization
    - Remote mentoring
    - Peer interaction
  - Accessible media
    - Curated collection of STEM resources



# Goal and Objectives

- Goal:

Create a *model* virtual academic community to increase the graduation rates of postsecondary D/HH STEM majors in the long term

- Iterative and incremental (Cockburn, 2008)

- Iterative – testing what works and revising what doesn't
- Incremental – building model in stages instead of all at once





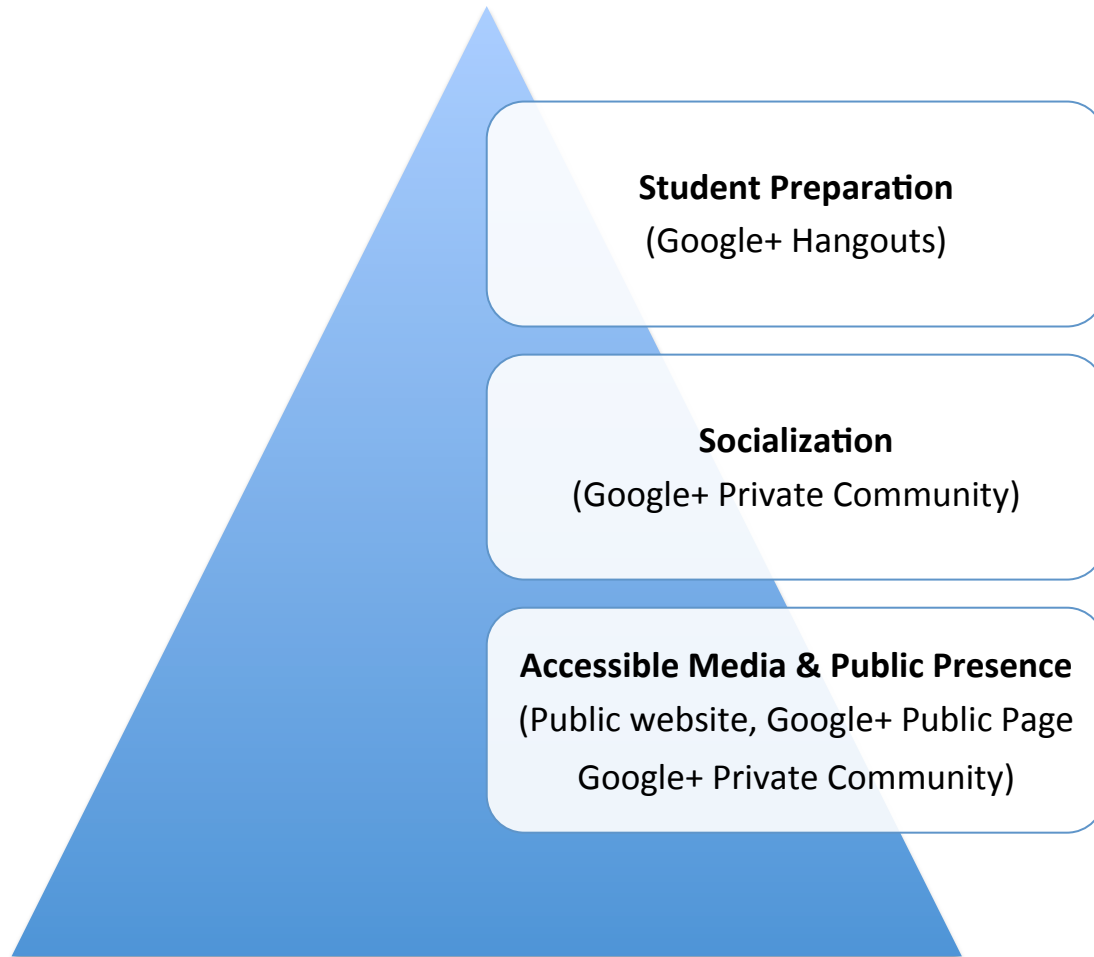
# Goal and Objectives

- Objectives
  - 1) Document and disseminate a description of the process of creating a model VAC for replication
  - 2) Increase the GPAs and retention rates of D/HH students in STEM majors



# DHHVAC Model

## Components & Applications





# Student Preparation Elements

- Remote Tutoring (Years 1-5)
- Remote Captioning (Years 4-5)
- Remote Interpreting (Years 4-5)