"Job Market" Theme is Standing Room Only
by Mike Murray

The September 25 Orlando Chapter meeting was "standing room only" as the last chair was taken in anticipation of the evening's program. The 46 attendees were not disappointed.

In the packed room at the Winter Park Civic Center, five experts in the field enthusiastically shared their experiences in various aspects of the technical communications job market. Afterward, they extended themselves by staying beyond the normal meeting end time and providing one-on-one input to the attendees.

Dan Jones of the University of Central Florida got the group thinking about the characteristics that are most valued in technical communicators. He then gave us some idea of what the business community is asking of UCF in terms of preparing these professionals for the Central Florida job market.

As the Orlando Chapter Employment Manager, Diane Heald began the process of telling the crowd what employers are looking for by reviewing recent job posting trends. She also discussed ways in which networking can work to a job hunter's advantage. Diane particularly stressed going beyond attending meetings to participating in some official capacity in chapter activities.
The Executive Council took a few meetings to figure out where we were before determining where we wanted to go, but now has approved a budget at our September Council meeting. There are a few new messages in the budget: we want to increase our level of service to the membership, and we want to improve the quality and participation in general membership meetings. We hope that these will become distinguishing features of our chapter, building on already outstanding programs like the High School Writing Contest, our employment program, and our educational outreach.

The Board authorized an expenditure of $9,300, up from actuals last year of less than $6,000. This year's budget still preserves over $7,000 in reserves, not including the Melissa Pellegrin Scholarship Fund that is managed separately from our general fund.

### Income

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<th>Meetings</th>
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<th>Conferences</th>
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### What's New for 2001-2002?

- Our dues income is down from last year, at $4,236 for 142 members.
- Beginning November 27, meeting costs will rise from $5 to $6 for members ($8 non-members). Meetings were our largest expense last year and we have not kept up with increased cost for food for them. Discussion about cost increases led to a moderate increase, our first in over five years.

*Visit the Web Site at http://www.stc-southeast.org/orlando*
**Standing Room Only continued...**

Technical recruiter Din Bissoondial gave the attendees some extremely valuable, first-person insights into the mind of a recruiter. Din gave suggestions about resume content, how to enhance your chances of being hired, how to establish a relationship with multiple recruiters, and more.

Bob Shydo, managing partner of Intuitive Information, Inc., gave the crowd a very insightful view of real-world hiring considerations. Bob described a company's need to be aggressive and agile in marketing and pointed out the criticality of assessing the same qualities in potential employees. While he acknowledged that tool skills are important, he placed a much greater premium on traditional core skills such as rhetorical analysis, definition of communications goals and objectives, selection of media, etc. Bob stressed that success requires adaptability in each employee, along with a continued desire to remain a partner in the outcome.

Independent contractor, Barbara Odom, shared her experiences with the crowd and discussed the "myth versus reality" of independent contracting. Through Barbara's message, attendees learned about the considerations that must be taken into account before making a decision to enter this market.

The Orlando Chapter continues to schedule meeting topics that you have asked for. We hope you'll support your chapter by attending as many meetings as possible. It is only through your support and participation that we can continue to bring you this timely information. Check our Web site and watch for the "Memo to Members" for more information about upcoming dates (4th Tuesday, except 12/18) and topics.

**Budget Continued...**

- We increased the cost to publicize chapter events, yet we will primarily depend on e-mail distribution of our notifications.
- The Council chose not to re-implement the Trends conference at this time.
- We added funds for member education to the Education Committee budget. We hope this will take the form of matching funds grants to members, in exchange for the member sharing their learning experience with the chapter membership (much more to come on this program).
- We set aside funds to recognize distinguished contributions to our chapter.
- We identified funds for an active membership program, which remains undefined. This program will recognize those who are the most visible participants and proponents of the Orlando Chapter (much more to come on this program).
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