MEMO TO MEMBERS

"Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication."

Reminder to Student Members of the AccessAbility SIG!

Don't forget to bring your A-SIG lapel pin coupons to the April 27th chapter meeting and claim your beautiful butterfly lapel pin! If you misplaced your coupon, contact Dan Voss (daniel.w.voss@lmco.com) to validate your membership.

From the President's Desk

Orlando Chapter Members Support STC's Annual Conference

By Mike Murray, Orlando Chapter President

This year more than ever, attendees at STC's 51st Annual Conference in Baltimore are likely to be attending a session that includes one or more expert guest speakers from the Orlando chapter. While some chapters typically don't have attendees at the Conference, Orlando will be represented by a contingent of 17 members, 8 of whom will be presenting to the international audience of technical communicators, with a dozen taking part in Leadership Day sessions. These numbers are an all-time high for our chapter.

ORLANDO PRESENTERS
Orlando presenters in Baltimore include Alicia Fellure, Christina Hammock, Dan Jones, Karen Lane, Mike Murray, Bonnie Spivey, Dan Voss, and W.C. Wiese. Cindy Hauptner and Bob Stultz will also be published in the conference *Proceedings*, but Dan Jones will be presenting on their behalf since they cannot attend.

ORLANDO PRESENTATIONS IN DATE AND TIME SEQUENCE
Sunday, 10:30-11:45 a.m. (Room: TBD)
   Title: "Innovative Chapter Development Ideas" (**LS 2**)
   Format: Panel Discussion
   Topic: Jaffe Award Presentation
   Presenters: Alicia Fellure, Mike Murray, and W.C. Wiese

   Topic: Turnkey Packages on Mentoring, Fund-Raising, and H.S. Outreach, at end of the above session
   Presenters: Bonnie Spivey and Dan Voss

Monday, 2-3:30 p.m. (Ballroom II)
   Title: "Indexing Progression" (**WE 3A**)
   Format: Progression
   Topic: "Does your Web Site Need an Index?"
   Presenter: Karen Lane

Tuesday, 8:30-10:00 a.m. (Room 325)
   Title: "Index Evaluation Workshop" (**WE 5D**)

   Format: Progression
   Topic: One-on one index evaluation
   Presenter: Karen Lane

NAVIGATING THE FUTURE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Tuesday, 8:30-10:00 a.m. (Ballroom I)
   Title: "Willing and Able: How Technical Communicators with Disabilities Succeed in Their Profession" (**UID 5U**)
   Format: Progression (several tables and presenters)

   Topic: "Airport Security for People with Disabilities"
   Presenter: Mike Murray

   Topic: "Secondary Disabilities: The Vicious Circle (How One Impairment Can Cause Another)"
   Presenters: Ria Voss, Dan Voss, and Lori Gillen

Tuesday, 11-12 Noon (Room 328)
   Title: "What Generation Gap? In Orlando, STC and UCF Are a Winning Combination!" (**PD 6U**)
   Format: Papers (presentation and demonstration)
   First Presentation: " 'Operation Butterfly' and Other Adventures in Cooperation Between Industry and Academe: When Rip Van Winkle and Shirley Temple Join Forces, the Sky's

Memo to Members

Orlando Chapter Members, continued

the Limit!"
Presenters: Bonnie Spivey and Dan Voss

Second Presentation: "Meet Shanna the Cool and Dan the Nerd: A Behind-the-Scenes Peek at an Exciting STC Grant Project that Has Extended STC's Educational Outreach to the High School Audience"
Presenter: Dan Jones

Tuesday, 2-3:30 p.m. (Room 336)
  Title: "Marketing Yourself" (**PD7Q**)
  Format: Panel Discussion
  Presenter: Christina Hammock

Tuesday, 2-3:30 p.m. (Ballroom II)
  Title: "Section 508 for Dummies" (**UID 7B**)
  Format: Progression (several tables and presenters)
  Topic: "How Section 508 Improved my Work Environment"
  Presenter: Mike Murray

Wednesday, 2-3:30 p.m. (Room 326)
  Title: "Using Humor to Diffuse Volatile Situations" (**MG 11X**)
  Format: Workshop
  Presenter: Dan Voss

OTHER CONFERENCE ATTENDEES
In addition to the eight Orlando presenters, the following nine members have also recognized the conference's value and are planning to attend: Rose Benedicks, Alex Garcia, Robin Horn, Laurel Moll, Christina Payne, Rose Petralia, Jennifer Selix, Lisa Siegel, and Greg White.

LEADERSHIP DAY PARTICIPANTS
Special Leadership Day activities focus on subjects of interest to STC leaders at the chapter, SIG, and Society levels. According to

The theme of this year's conference meshes with Baltimore's legacy as a center of commerce and trade. The event will be headquartered in the spectacular Hyatt Regency Hotel.

the pre-conference program, "If you're an STC leader, or if you're interested in becoming one, consider attending these activities." One of the things you'll immediately notice in the following list of Leadership Day attendees is that all six of our student members will be taking part in these activities! They want to be the very best they can be in their profession, so they see themselves as leaders in their minds and "act as if" they *are* leaders – two proven techniques for achieving your goals. And if you've "been around for awhile," just remember that "It is never too late to be what you might have been!" (George Eliot)

The Orlando Chapter's Leadership Day participants are Alicia Fellure, Alex Garcia, Robin Horn, Laurel Moll, Mike Murray, Rose Petralia, Jen Selix, Bonnie Spivey, Dan Voss, W.C. Wiese, and Greg White. (Story, page 6).

Follow the leaders, folks! Start planning right now to attend the Annual Conference next year in Seattle, Washington! *MtM*

Gloria Jaffe Awards Presented at March Chapter Meeting
By Alicia Fellure, Jaffe Awards Manager

GLORIA JAFFE ON-HAND TO PRESENT
In 2003, the Orlando Chapter established The Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Award to honor the founder of the Orlando Chapter. Gloria Jaffe. She is an Associate Fellow of the Society and has mentored hundreds of technical communicators during her professorship at the University of Central Florida. The Chapter was honored to have Jaffe on-hand this year to present the Second Annual Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Award on March 24, 2004 at the Winter Park Civic Center.

KELLI PHARO
The 2004 Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Award is being presented to Kelli Pharo. Kelli is a technical communicator who contributes to her employer, the community, and the Society. Kelli's employer, PBS&J also received the company award for outstanding technical communication.

Leadership: As an Orlando STC member, Kelli provides outreach regarding the profession. She promotes the profession and its virtues within the community and the corporation where she is employed. The judging team is impressed with Kelli's outreach to students, both as an employee mentor and STC mentor. Kelli attends chapter meetings, the annual conferences, and volunteers as the Assistant Editor for the STC Policies and Procedures SIG newsletter committee.

Business: Kelli communicates within her organization and within the community the importance of her profession. Kelli completely revised the Aviation Services Department Standard Operating Procedures Manual and gained national recognition within the corporation where she works. Kelli created the style guide for PBS&J, and this documentation was published on the corporation's website. Kelli is also responsible for QCAP (quality control and assurance for projects) at PBS&J, and the style guide is one way that she has contributed to quality technical communications.

Kelli was selected to participate in a group at PBS&J that provided employee mentoring. During this mentorship, Kelli provided management with research about how technical communicators can provide benefits to the corporation. The Board of Directors is considering many of her ideas, including Kelli's suggestion that PBS&J create a technical documentation department. The judging team was impressed with Kelli's ability to get the management to "listen" based on her input in other areas of the corporation.

Education: Kelli completed her BA degree in English at UCF. Kelli mentors many students through community outreach

projects and the STC - UCF mentoring program.

AL LEBOEUF
Al Leboeuf was recognized with the runner-up trophy for his technical expertise and contributions to his employer.

Leadership: Al demonstrates work-related leadership; he often "sees" opportunities to communicate information through advanced image capture techniques. Al is leader within the field of high-speed technical photography, videography, and cinematography. He is considered an imaging industry leader by many teams at Lockheed Martin and many of Lockheed's government counterparts.

Al is a member of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE) for over 35 years, and he has provided leadership within this organization and the local Florida chapter. Al has been a chairperson for several SMPTE committees and helped in hosting two international conferences in Orlando.

Business: Al is an extremely strong technical communicator within his company. He uses his specialized expertise to add value to information, and provides the Marketing and Engineering departments with critical video needed to support their business needs. Al finds off-the-shelf solutions to help engineers visually demonstrate proprietary and non-standard-imaging products. He guides the engineers in acquiring that imagery in a way that they can use it to communicate the product's quality.

Al devises image capture strategies that support key communication objectives. Al provides a proactive approach in working with clients in the technical, management, and business development communities, as well as with editorial and graphic colleagues within the Communications Department. Al understands the combined power of words and pictures (still and moving) to inform and to persuade buyers and educate end-users.

Education: Al graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology with a BS in photography in 1967. Al has completed advanced electronics and motion picture schools while he worked in the U.S. Navy.

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE JUDGES
The 2004 judging team included Richard Phipps and Barbara Odom.

Single Sourcing: What's All the Hype About?
By Greg White, Chapter Vice President

UML, RDF, OMG, OWL, XML? Do you know what these acronyms stand for? Well, if you are like me and only know what one or two of these acronyms stand for, you had better join me on April 27 for our next meeting.

"Instituting Single Sourcing" is our next meeting topic, and our very own Alan Gaynor will present it! Alan is going to explain all of the acronyms associated with this new buzz phrase and provide us with the historical, present, and future impact of Single Sourcing.

The "Instituting Single Sourcing" meeting topic ranked very high on our program survey. You asked for it, and you got it! Join us for an extremely informative evening. *MtM*

Student Leaders Prove They Are Tomorrow's *Chapter* Leaders
By Mike Murray, Chapter President

I've stood before attendees at our chapters on more than one occasion explaining the personal benefits of:
- Attending meetings and other chapter functions
- Participating in chapter activities
- Attending the annual conference
- Presenting at the annual conference

Only by attending regulary, participating, and taking advantage of opportunities to learn and develop as a person and a leader will you realize the benefits of the full STC experience.

STUDENTS *GET IT!*
Not only will the Orlando chapter be represented by a large contingent of members (17) in Baltimore this year, but many of those members will be UCF students (7)! Most will be attending Leadership Day training sessions, and one will actually be *presenting*! Think of it, a young member, at her first-ever annual conference, and *presenting* to the international audience!

IT WASN'T EASY.
Anyone who has ever been a student knows the challenge of studying, working part-time to help pay the bills, and whatever else it takes to get that degree. As such, students normally don't have a lot of discretionary income left for extras. Well, that didn't deter our group, because they could see the importance of the annual conference, and they were determined to find a way to attend.

Led by Bonnie Spivey, our group of future leaders approached the Student Government Association at UCF to obtain a portion of the activity fees that other organizations were enjoying. Because they were past the cut-off for submitting requests for the year's budget, the group had to

work for several months with their senator, Brian Margolis. Once Senator Margolis had created a Bill in support of their request, the students had to attend several SGA meetings to convince the council to vote in favor of it. To pave the way for upcoming Future Technical Communicators club members, the group has already submitted a budget that includes funding for a conference in the 2004-2005 fiscal year.

Eventually, the students were granted the funds to pay for two rooms at a conference hotel and six conference registrations. In spite of still being responsible for their own transportation and meals, the students will be in Baltimore meeting technical communicators from around the world and learning more than they could have ever imagined possible in a short period of time!

THEY'RE THE CREAM OF THE CROP!
The following students have taken control of their own destiny. They have the guts to make it happen! In addition, everyone will be attending Leadership Day sessions for STC leaders or those who are interested in becoming one.
- Alex Garcia
- Robin Horn
- Laurel Moll
- Rose Petralia
- Jennifer Selix
- Bonnie Spivey

Bonnie is also presenting!

Folks, our buttons are popping with pride over what you've accomplished. You are role models not only for UCF students and Orlando chapter STC members, but for students and members throughout the entire world of STC! Have a well-deserved, wonderful time in Baltimore! *MtM*

Gloria Jaffe Awards, continued

Richard Phipps is the consulting services manager for CIBER, Inc., a global information technology consultancy. In his seven years with CIBER, he has served as a national recruiter, a regional recruiter, and as the recruiting manager for CIBER's Orlando area operation. Richard is a founding member of the Sanlando United Methodist Church's Nehemiah Job Networking and Career Counseling Group, and he serves the Orlando STC as the chapter's employment manager. He has been a volunteer judge for the Orange County Science Fair, the Future Business Leaders of America's state and national competitions, and returns for his second year as a judge for the Gloria Jaffe Outstanding Technical Communicator Award, where he has served as a judge since the award's inception.

Barbara Odom is a Senior member of the Society and works as an independent contractor. She has served many Chapter offices, including manager of the Nominating Committee. Barbara is a Distinguished Chapter Service Award winner. *MtM*

If You Missed Our Last Meeting . . .
By David Coverston, Chapter Secretary

If you missed our last meeting you missed a major brain dump. The amount of information presented was amazing. Presenters manned seven tables to give us tips on a variety of topics.

The night was also a night to recognize some outstanding technical communicators in our area. Karen Lane received the Distinguished Chapter Service Award. As the Society explains, "The Distinguished Chapter Service Awards acknowledge the work of chapter members who provide exemplary service to the Society through their dedication to the chapter and its activities."

Dan Voss was recognized for recently receiving the Distinguished SIG Service Award for his work with the AccessAbility SIG.

Our newest Associate Fellow, W. C. Wiese was recognized for his receiving this high honor, which will be presented to him at the annual conference in Baltimore.

Alicia Fellure and Alan Gaynor were presented with their Senior member pins, which means they have completed five years of membership.

Alicia Fellure, as Jaffe Awards competition manager, presented the Jaffe Award to Kelli Pharo, of PBS&J in Orlando. Al LeBoeuf, of Lockheed Martin Missiles & Fire Control, was runner-up.

Gloria Jaffe attended the meeting to present the awards she inspired, and then anchored a progression table that discussed the origins of the chapter. We learned we owed much to Mrs. Jaffe being laid off by a local corporation and then being given the opportunity to launch the technical writing program at the University of Central Florida. She then set out to start a supporting STC chapter and hired Dr. Dan Jones away from Embry-Riddle.

This was our chapter's seventh year for presenting the Melissa Pellegrin award to an outstanding student. Melanie Trickey received this award. The chapter was honored to have Melissa's

mother with us for the presentation of the award.

The seven topics presented at this meeting were:
- Resume and Cover Letters
- Portfolios - Do's and Don'ts
- Top Ten Job Segments Central Florida
- Future of Staffing
- Job Search Skills
- History of the Orlando Chapter (with Gloria Jaffe)
- What It Takes to Succeed (presented by the Jaffe winners).

Unfortunately, we only had time to attend three of the sessions, so you had to pick which ones were the most appropriate for yourself.

Some tips from Portfolios - Do's and Don'ts: You are hired from the interview,; the resume gets you that far. Keep both a hard and soft copy of your resume with you. Have a Table of Contents for your portfolio.

Some tips from the Resume and Cover Letters: Tell the truth on your resume; you don't want to have to explain something later. Tailor your resume for each employer. Be prepared to discuss any claim you make.

And from the Job Search Skills: Show your prospective employer something you have done for a previous employer to solve a problem for them. Use job agents to search for you. Use a free E-mail address such as HotMail for your resume. You can get to it from anywhere and if you change your ISP you can keep this address.

Of course there were handouts and much more, but you really had to be there. Don't miss our next meeting on Tuesday, April 27, on Instituting Single Sourcing. *MtM*

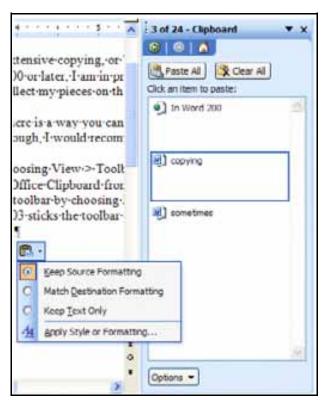# Tool Tips: Using the Clipboard Toolbar
By David Coverston, Chapter Secretary

Occasionally I have to work on a document that requires extensive copying material from another document or set of documents, sometimes called a "cut and paste job." Often the pieces I need to copy are not contiguous in a document, so I can't select a section to copy and paste it. If I am using Word 2000 or later, I am in pretty good shape, because I can use the Office Clipboard toolbar to collect the pieces I need and paste them in as I need them. Office 97 and earlier versions don't have this toolbar, but there is a way you can collect and paste multiple items programmatically. If you are using a version that old, though, I would recommend that you consider purchasing a newer version.

In Word 2000, display the Clipboard toolbar by choosing View > Toolbars > Clipboard from the menu bar. In Word XP, choose Edit > Office Clipboard from the menu bar. In Word 2003, you also view the Clipboard toolbar by choosing Edit > Office Clipboard from the menu bar.

Actually, Word 20003 sticks the toolbar on a Task Pane, which is more like a task pain if you ask me. But the Paste options that it and XP automatically give you are nice, as you can see in the screenshot.

The Office 2003 Clipboard toolbar.

In all versions of the Office toolbar, an icon displays information about the source of the item on the clipboard, whether from a web page, another Word document, a graphic file, or a text file.

To paste an item from the clipboard, click the clipboard icon for the text you want to paste. Word 2000 shows you the first line of the text in a yellow pop-up window when you place your mouse pointer over the icon. XP and 2003 display the text in the toolbar.

To paste all the items you have at once, click the Paste All button on the toolbar. If you have a particular order you want your items to be pasted into your target document, make sure you collect the items in that order. To clear the items, click the Clear Clipboard button (2000) or the Clear All button (XP and 2003).

The Word 2000 Clipboard toolbar.

Office XP and 2003 both let you keep your last 24 items on your clipboard, whereas 2000 limits you to 12. Office XP and 2003 have an additional feature that lets you delete individual clipboard items by right-clicking their icon and choosing Delete.

Unfortunately, none of the versions allow you to rearrange the paste order on the toolbar, so if you haven't collected them in the right order, you will have to paste each item individually into your target document.

If you have never used this toolbar before, try it the next time you have a lot of copying and pasting to do. The ability to copy formatted text from any office application into another, including Outlook in a very nice feature of the Office suite. *MtM*

Students Capture 3 of 6 Top Places

High-School Students Win Awards in Int'l Technical Writing Competition

By Dan Voss, Education Committee Manager

Three Winter Springs High School students captured awards in the Society for Technical Communication's annual international high school technical writing competition, the STC Orlando Chapter has reported, continuing Central Florida's strong history in the event.

Topping the list was sophomore Andrew First, who won an Excellence Award and $500 for his essay "Artificial Muscles: Revolutionary Motors and Power Generators." Andrew's brother Eric and Andrew Lai, both 11th graders, each earned Honorable Mentions for "CAPTCHA: Read This!" and "Telomerase: The Miracle Elixir for Cancer?", respectively.

In last year's international competition, Eric First and Andrew Lai won Excellence and Merit awards to earn $500 and $300, respectively. The two captured the first two places in this year's STC Orlando Chapter's 8th Annual Central Florida High School Technical Writing Competition, each winning Excellence Awards and $150, while Andrew First and sophomore Robyn Tapley each earned Merit Awards and $75.

In addition, 10th grader Jennifer Lai, Andrew's sister, was one of seven Achievement Award winners (earning $25 apiece) in

the Central Florida competition—meaning that both families will be returning next year for what they hope will be a "three-peat."

First place, and $1,000, in this year's international competition went to a Houston high schooler, as it did last year. Central Florida brought that home in 2001.

Historically, Central Florida students have shown well in the international competition, including a 1-3-5 finish in 2001. Over an 8-year period, they have earned 105 awards and $6,250 in cash prizes from STC for their writing prowess.

A complete listing of the award winners, including the titles of their essays, is available at http://www.stc-orlando.org/ education/highsch/allhsawards.asp. *MtM*

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Society News

**STC RECEIVES DIANA AWARD
The Society for Technical Communication (STC) has been chosen as the 2004 recipient of the prestigious Diana Award given by the Association for Computing Machinery Special Interest Group on Computer Documentation (ACM SIGDOC). The ACM SIGDOC gives the Diana Award to organizations that have made an outstanding lifetime contribution to the field of user documentation.

Criteria for the award include an organization's historical influence on the field of user documentation; its ongoing influence on academics and practitioners in the field; and its potential for future innovation. Past recipients of the Diana Award include MIT Press, the World Wide Web Consortium, and IBM. The Diana Award is named for Diana Patterson, past chair of ACM SIGDOC for three terms. (Please visit www. acm.org/sigdoc/awards.html to see details.)

"We're delighted to receive the Diana Award," says Peter Herbst, executive director of STC. "This is an honor for STC at every level--our board of directors, chapter leaders, membership, and everyone in the STC office."

**STC ANNUAL SALARY SURVEY
With its comprehensive breakdown of salary and benefit

information for STC members in the United States and Canada, STC's Annual Salary Survey has provided a valuable resource for technical communicators since 1990. This year, we're asking all of our qualifying members* to participate--including those outside of the U.S. and Canada. We've made a few changes to make the survey easier to complete: The survey is shorter, its online, and its confidential!.

This summer, look for the survey results in the Members Only section of our Web site. The deadline to return the survey is April 30, 2004, but why wait? Visit the survey Web page today at https://www.stc.org/salarysurvey/ss04-03.asp.

*To qualify for the survey, you must be currently employed full-time as a technical communicator. You do not qualify if you are a consultant/independent contractor, unemployed, retired, or working fewer than 35 hours per week.

**SCHOLARSHIP FOR HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS
Applicants must be accepted as an entering or continuing, full-time undergraduate student at a college or university in the U.S. during the upcoming school year from the application period deadline. Deadline - May 1st. For more information visit: http://www.sertoma.org/General/ Scholarships.htm *MtM*

Word Mint XV: The Bizarre World of Resistentialism

Did Y'Ever Think Machines Were Out to GET You? Well, They Are . . .

By Dan Voss

Ultraresistentialistic (adj). Of the firm and unalterable belief that inanimate objects possess the preternatural presience to recognize an opportunity to defeat the purpose of their human users via well-timed, self-actuating malfunctions, and, given such an opportunity, will invariably exercise it. See also *Murphy's Law as it Pertains to Inanimate Objects*. From *resistentialism* (n), the theory that inanimate objects demonstrate hostile behavior against human beings. Resistentialism has been well documented through history. The earliest known case was a cuneiform tablet in the shape of the Mesopotamian letter "I" that fell off a high ledge to knock unconscious a Babylonian scribe who was late for an audience with King Hammurabi, an event which led to the scribe's subsequent execution (under the "I" for an "I" clause of the Hammurabic Code). Modern-day examples include (1) the photo-copy machine which can sense tension in a user who is facing a critical deadline and is self-programmed to jam at that time; (2) the stapler which will run out of staples precisely when the user has 15 seconds to staple a final handout and rush to a make-it, break-it business meeting, or, if it has been freshly reloaded with staples, will adjust by getting a staple caught in its throat and jam; (3) the chain saw which senses that a hurricane is coming, making it critical for the owner to take down a dead tree, and responds by having its chain slip off and become hopelessly tangled; (4) the automobile which knows to have a flat tire when the driver is rushing to a job interview for a position that carries a 500% salary increase; (5) the pen that runs out of ink at a ceremonial contract signing attended by hundreds of dignitaries; and (6) the computer which can sense when the user has failed to save a critical file after working on it for several hours and will lock up 5 seconds before the job is complete and the user would remember to hit Save. There are even cases, as yet unconfirmed, of collusional resistentialism among multiple inanimate objects (e.g., a reported case in a northeastern Iowa community college where the copy machine that jammed at a critical time appeared to actually communicate with a nearby work-group laser jet printer, which exhausted its toner cartridge at the very same moment, so as to thwart an attempted end-around by the human user the copy machine was attempting to defeat). This is just a representative sample; case histories abound. *Example, technical.* (1) When a piece of toast covered with peanut butter and grape jelly is dropped from a table which sits on a priceless Persian carpet, the laws of resistential physics overrule the standard laws of statistical probability; contrary to conventional probabilistic law, 100 times out of 100, the rotating piece of toast will land peanut butter-and-jelly side down, ruining the carpet. *Example, business.* (2) When Morris said, "We have all the data we need to win this contract right here in my laptop," he triggered an immediate resistentialistic reaction which wiped out the hard drive of the laptop; the IT professionals never did isolate the cause of the failure, but *we know*. *Example, personal.* (3) As Harry tried to sneak into the house late after going to Hooters with his bowling team, if he had understood resistential theory, he would have known his key was going to jam in the back door, awakening Martha and bringing down her unbridled wrath upon him—and he would have left a window open in the guest room to crawl through. *MtM*

UCF Tech Writing Student Receives STC Pellegrin Scholarship

By Dan Voss, Education Committee Manager

Melanie Trickey has received a $500 undergraduate scholarship award from the Society for Technical Communication (STC) for excellence in technical communication.

The scholarship, from the Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarship Fund, was presented to the UCF senior at a meeting of the sponsoring STC Orlando Chapter at the Winter Park Civic Center on March 23.

The scholarship fund honors the memory of a 1994 UCF graduate and Orlando STC chapter member. A plaque bearing the scholarship recipients' names is on permanent display in the UCF English Department.

A senior in the technical writing program at UCF with a perfect 4.0 GPA in her major, Melanie Trickey is a student member of the Orlando chapter of STC as well as a member of the chapter's Education Committee. She co-coordinated a successful STC fund-raiser earlier this year in support of the chapter's educational outreach initiative to Central Florida high schools as well as to UCF.

Melanie is also a member of UCF's technical writing club, Future Technical Communicators.

After she graduates this spring, Melanie plans to "continue working as a technical writer and try to develop my skills and education. After a few years of working I plan on going back to school for my masters." *MtM*

Guest Article
Transitioning From Student to Employee
By Sally Landa, STC Phoenix Chapter Member

My article is written in response to the Ask Faye column, "Making the Transition from Student to Employee," in the December 2003 issue of STC's *Intercom* magazine. Ask Faye is an advice column for new technical communicators or anyone else who wants to learn more about our profession.

A student asked Faye, "I will be graduating from a technical writing program soon. What should I be doing to get ready to leap into the job market?"

I am writing this article because I am a graduate of Dr. Barry Maid's Multimedia Writing and Technical Communication (MWTC) program at Arizona State University. I graduated with my Bachelor of Science degree in May 2003. I am living proof that Faye's suggestions work. As soon as I began the program I was advised to start preparing for the job market, as you will see below.

Legend:
FA - Faye's advice   *SE* - Sally's experience
Faye suggested the following tips to upcoming graduates:

INTERNSHIPS
FA: Get an internship at the company you want to work for, or in the topic area you want to specialize in.

SE: I began searching for an internship in May 2002, one year before I was going to graduate. Because the job market was so limited at the time, I was not picky about finding a company I wanted to work for or a specific topic area. I chose an internship from the ASU career website based on the fact that the job involved technical writing and it came with pay. I was also given the option of counting my internship as a course, so if you find one that is unpaid you should take it and understand that experience is more valuable than taking a class. Employers want to see real-world examples of work completed.

In December 2002, five months before I graduated, I stood up at an STC meeting and announced I was looking to volunteer my time to gain experience in technical writing. Dr. Barry Maid nudged Sherry Michaels, the principal owner of Michaels & Associates, LLC, to take me upon my offer. I received the opportunity to volunteer 10 hours of my time per week to work on a project for Sherry's business and her consultants. The volunteering led me to working as a technical writer for her in April 2003 in a contract position.

I worked part-time until mid-September, then went on a graduation trip to Prague. When I returned, I had a message from Sherry that she had another contract project for me to start the following Monday. I worked full-time for another four weeks on that project and later put in a fifth week on it.

SOFTWARE FAMILIARITY

FA: Employers typically require that you have both writing ability and the appropriate tool experience for the position. Know some of the most frequently used software packages, become an experienced user in at least one word processing program, and have working knowledge of a graphics program.

SE: I took a junior college course in Web design, which taught me not only how to code HTML but also how to use a low-end editor (Arachnophilia). I thought I was taking the class for fun, but it ended up expanding my professional "tool belt." When I started my program at ASU, I had to create a Website in every core course. I was able to adapt and begin using Macromedia's Dreamweaver® HTML editor because it was more robust than the free editor I had been using. Because I knew HTML code, I could work in native HTML or in the WYSIWYG editor.

The MWTC program at ASU does not support teaching tools. Either I already knew the software, or I learned it on my own while taking a course. The smartest choice I made academically was to take courses from the Graphics Information Technology (GIT) department as my electives. Sometimes technical writers are responsible for graphics, layout, and organization of a document in addition to text. In my GIT courses I learned visual communication and graphics while learning and using Adobe Illustrator®, Adobe Photoshop®, and QuarkXpress®. Taking GIT courses helped me add to my tool belt. The ability to use these programs also helped me to improve my skill at completing assignments for my technical writing course. Later, I also found out that learning QuarkXpress and the Adobe products made it easier for me to learn FrameMaker® and RoboHelp®.

RESUME
FA: Make sure your résumé is up to date and includes all writing jobs you've had, including volunteer positions.

SE: You can format your résumé in several ways. As a student graduating with a new degree and looking for a career change, I emphasized my academics, courses taken as well as projects completed, and the software tools I knew. Then I listed my internships and volunteer projects along with all jobs ever held where I did some form of writing.

To read the rest of this article, visit: http://stc-phoenix.com/Rough%20Draft_Current/FebMar04_files/student_febmar04.htm

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Once again, the Orlando Chapter STC has a lot to be proud of. We are practically busting at the seams with awards and accolades! Good going and keep up the great work!

Hopefully, many of you will be able to attend this year's annual conference in Baltimore so you can brag about being part of one of the best chapters in the Society. If not, start planning now to attend next year's conference, which is being held in the beautiful city of Seattle.

As always, I welcome your feedback and opinions, so feel free to email me at ecoto72@yahoo.com.

Thanks for reading,
Erika

YOUR OPINION COUNTS

Thanks to everyone who filled out a meeting survey at the March meeting: "Technical Communication Employment Progression/ Portfolio and Resume Review." Check out the results.

✓ **Topic Quality**
Excellent – 17
Satisfactory – 0
Not Satisfactory – 0

✓ **Speaker Quality**
Excellent – 17
Satisfactory – 0
Not Satisfactory – 0

✓ **Comments:**

- "Mr. Dan Voss was amazing!"
- "Excellent information. This event was truly helpful."
- "This was my first STC meeting and I enjoyed it thoroughly."

Remember to fill out a comment card at every chapter meeting you attend. We value and listen to your comments; they guide our efforts towards making each monthly program worthwhile. *MtM*

THE ORLANDO CHAPTER OF STC WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBER!

Rosalie Petralia (transfer from another chapter)

Mark Your Calendars!

✓ **April 27th: Chapter Meeting - Single Sourcing**

✓ **May 9 - 12th: STC 51st Annual International Conference in Baltimore, MD.**

✓ **May 25th: Chapter Meeting**