

STC Student Mentoring Programs: Investing in the Future

By Dan Voss and Bethany Aguad

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is an update of a paper published in the *Proceedings* to the 59th STC international conference in Chicago, IL, May 19-23, 2012. It includes the latest information on STC's initiative on professional-student mentoring programs and provides links to a wealth of online information about such programs, including a "turnkey toolkit" of administrative forms to help STC communities establish and sustain such programs without having to "reinvent the wheel."

Mentoring programs pairing professionals in STC's geographic and virtual communities with student members grant benefits on all sides. Such programs provide valuable guidance and experience to future technical communicators as they enter our profession and are immensely gratifying to the mentors as well. Moreover, they encourage student members to become more active in the Society, which produces both short- and long-term benefits for the communities and the Society. From the very inception of such programs, the infusion of enthusiasm, new ideas, and new perspectives strengthens the sponsoring communities. And, over the years, mentoring programs maintain a pipeline of future leaders at both the community and the Society level. Mentoring programs strengthen the Society's student constituency and improve the membership retention rate upon graduation.

As she sat staring at her résumé, she thought to herself, "The formatting looks really great, and there is certainly a generous amount of white space." Aside from a smattering of academic awards and a brief stint working in customer service, her résumé was looking bare. Three years invested in a bachelor's degree, she was starting to wonder if she would even be able to get a job after graduation.

At the urging of a classmate, she joined STC as a student member, intending to use the membership as a bullet point to fill up some of that excessive white space on her résumé. At her first STC meeting, she found herself getting excited about involvement with the chapter. Joining the mentoring program seemed like an obvious way to make a solid connection to help in the future job-hunt. Through her mentor, she soon found herself caught in a whirlwind of activity: sending emails, writing newsletter articles, taking part in telecons. While participating with the chapter, she and her mentor also worked on a society-level committee.

Before she knew it, she had signed up to help run the mentoring program with her university. After just one face-to-face meeting with her mentor, they began an intense email correspondence to plan and execute a successful mentoring program. A few weeks of harrowing activity and many a shared obstacle later, the mentor and mentee were able to enjoy the fruits of their labors and see their

fellow mentors and mentees begin their partnerships.

Those of us who have had the special opportunity to participate in a professional or academic mentoring relationship, whether as mentor or mentee (in some cases, both) have many more inspirational stories like this one to share. In their efforts as members of STC's Community Affairs Committee (CAC) and on an STC Board of Directors-mandated special task force chartered to revitalize, sustain, and expand our student constituency, and as co-managers of a successful mentoring program pairing professionals in the STC Orlando Central Florida chapter with students at the University of Central Florida (UCF), the authors have worked to extend the many benefits gained by the individuals and communities involved in mentoring programs to other communities within the Society. One of the major emphases of both the CAC and the task force has been to encourage the formation of mentoring programs in which STC student communities partner with geographic and virtual communities. To drive to the heart of STC's initiative on student mentoring programs, four questions arise:

1. What exactly is a *mentoring program*?
2. For that matter, what, exactly, is *mentoring*?
3. Why would an individual STC member (student or professional) or community (geographic, student, or SIG) want to participate in a mentoring program?
and
4. If interested, how would they go about establishing and sustaining such a mentoring program?

It's logical to address questions #1 and 2 in reverse order. The word "mentoring," as well as the concept, dates to antiquity. Carlos Parada, author of *Genealogical Guide to Greek Mythology*, has traced the concept of mentoring back to Greek mythology, finding its roots in the tale of Odysseus (Figure 1).

Mentor Athena, Protégé Telemachus, Absentee-Dad Odysseus



Figure 1. Mentoring has its roots in antiquity.

Mentor was an old friend of Odysseus. To him Odysseus entrusted his household when he joined the coalition that

sailed against Troy. Athena, assuming several times the shape of Mentor, became the guide of Odysseus' son Telemachus, giving him prudent counsel. Since then, wise and trusted advisers have been called "mentors."¹

3 TYPES OF MENTORING

Fast forwarding from antiquity to today, mentoring relationships within the technical communication profession exist in three basic "configurations":

1. *Within industry*, pairing an experienced practitioner with an entry-level member of the profession;
2. *Within academe*, pairing a faculty member with a student (not in his/her class); and
3. *Bridging the two*, pairing a professional practitioner with a student.



GUIDELINES FOR MENTORING

Certain guidelines characterize mentoring relationships, differentiating them from other types of relationships within industry or academe.

The two key requirements for establishing a mentor-protégé [mentee] relationship are (1) to pair a skilled (senior) professional with a novice and (2) to make sure that the relationship is outside formal channels of supervision and evaluation. Cross-training among peers is not mentoring per se; mentoring implies a senior-junior relationship.

In industry, it's very important that the [mentee] not report to the mentor within the organization; a supervisor who is responsible for an employee's personnel appraisals and career advancement cannot also fulfill the role of confidante and advisor. A mentor-[mentee] relationship requires a special trust and candid communication; indeed, one of the subjects the [mentee] is likely to want to discuss is the relationship with the supervisor!

In academe, the mentor-[mentee] relationship needs to be outside the traditional professor-to-student framework. A professor certainly can be an effective mentor, but not if the student is—or will be—in his/her class during the period of mentorships. Issuing grades, just like giving personnel appraisals, is incompatible with a mentor-[mentee] relationship.²

Returning to the first question (what exactly is a mentoring program?), the type of mentoring program the CAC and the task force have encouraged falls primarily in the third configuration: pairing professional technical communicators with students (Figure 2), although as a subset of the present initiative, the Academic SIG proposes to expand its student member constituency and to encourage mentoring relationships between Academic SIG members (most of whom are faculty members) and students not in their classes (perhaps not even in their university), which would fall into the second configuration, mentoring relationships with academe. Mentoring relationships within industry (configuration #1) are not the focus of the current initiative, which certainly isn't to say encouraging such relationships within a geographic or virtual STC community would not be beneficial.



Figure 2. In Year 1 of the mentoring program in Orlando, mentors and mentees met via a "treasure hunt" routing them around campus to rendezvous points.

Within STC's student mentoring initiative, we see two basic types of mentoring programs developing between nearby and remote communities, respectively:

1. Pairing STC student communities with nearby geographic communities—an approach which typically, although not always and certainly not entirely, tends to focus on *face-to-face interaction* between mentors and mentees; and
2. Pairing unaffiliated student STC members or members of students that are not located near a geographic community with members of the Academic SIG, another SIG, or even professionals in a remote geographic chapter—and approach which, by definition, focuses entirely, or nearly entirely, on *virtual mentoring*.

A word about face-to-face versus virtual mentoring. Our experience with the STC Orlando Central Florida/UCF mentoring program has taught us the importance of regular face-to-face communication in developing a trusting and fruitful mentor-mentee ("M&M" for short) relationship. After establishing our M&M pairs, we introduce the partners face to face via an activity-oriented, get-to-know-you kickoff meeting (Figure 3), as did the STC France chapter in kicking off its mentoring program with the University of Paris–Diderot (Figure 4).



Figure 3. At one STC Orlando Central Florida/UCF mentoring kick-off event, mentors and mentees bonded over pottery painting.



Figure 4. The M&M pair-ups in the STC France/University of Paris program took place at a conference.

We encourage M&M's to meet regularly, typically once a month, whether it be over lunch, at a coffee shop, after a chapter meeting, or perhaps in a job shadowing activity. We have found that in almost every case, M&M's who communicate regularly face-to-face have productive and mutually satisfying mentoring relationships.

However, in all cases communication via other media, particularly email, has also helped nurture the mentoring relationships. Moreover, we've also had several cases where very successful mentoring relationships have developed even though face-to-face contact was limited and most of the communication came via email.

By leveraging email, telephone, and the social media, virtual mentoring relationships can be highly successful. This was the topic of a panel discussion at the Academic SIG-sponsored workshop preceding the 39th annual meeting of the Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC) in October 2011 at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA (Figure 5).



Figure 5. The social media have created new avenues of communication for virtual mentoring.

VIRTUAL MENTORING

The initial focus of the CAC and the task force was on pairing STC student communities with nearby geographic communities to form mutually beneficial partnerships and mentoring programs. However, during the 2013-2014 academic year, the Academic SIG, led by STC Student Outreach Task Force co-lead and Academic SIG student liaison Sally Henschel, is spearheading an effort to sponsor a virtual mentoring program for student STC members.

The STC Academic SIG is working to establish an international "sub-SIG" for student members of STC. The objective of the international Student SIG is to provide a community in which all STC student members can interact and participate, both those who are members of a student chapter and those who are not.

Expanding membership in the Academic SIG will also help facilitate communication between STC staff, geographic chapter members, and student members. In addition, bringing STC's student community within the infrastructure of the well-established Academic SIG will facilitate contact between students and practitioners through opportunities such as a virtual mentoring program.

--Sally Henschel, Midwestern State U.
Academic SIG Student Liaison

Without a doubt, it is possible to build and sustain a virtual mentoring relationship using media such as email, instant messenger, telephone, Skype, and the various social media. Examples of such successful partnerships abound (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Trans-Atlantic virtual mentoring works!

Having met face-to-face only once, at the STC conference in Atlanta in 2009, Clio Fouque and Dan Voss formed a successful and mutually enriching trans-Atlantic mentoring relationship via email; and Clio and Ray Gallon of the STC France chapter established a flourishing mentoring program with the University of Paris. Ray spoke to the importance of virtual mentoring when dealing with geographic remote stakeholders:

France covers a lot of territory. We have members in STC France all over the country. The students, although all from the same Paris university, alternate every two weeks between class and internship. When on internship, they can also be spread almost anywhere. It was obvious from the start for us, that some of the mentoring process would have to be virtual. As it turns out, we had one mentor in Germany, one in Holland, and another in the United States. All of these virtual relationships turned out to be fulfilling and successful for mentors and mentees, proving that distance is no hindrance to good mentoring.

--Ray Gallon President, STC France Chapter
and Board of Directors, STC

THE TCBoK INITIATIVE

To pilot its initiative on establishing virtual mentoring relationships between STC student members and practitioners, the Academic SIG manager, Pam Brewer of Appalachian State University, and the Academic SIG student liaison, Sally Henschel of Midwestern State University, paired students in their technical communication classes with subject matter experts within STC to work on research/writing projects for STC's reawakening Technical Communication Body of Knowledge (TCBoK) initiative in the spring semester of 2013 (Figure 7). The students and mentors who participated report the pilot to have been highly successful (Figure 8). The Academic SIG plans expand the TCBoK virtual mentoring initiative during the 2013-2014 academic year.

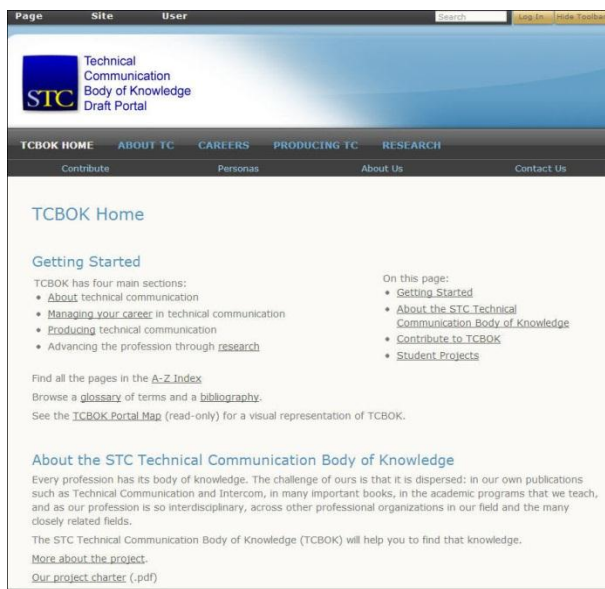


Figure 7. Students at Appalachian State and Midwestern State worked with SME mentors on research/writing projects for the Technical Communication Body of Knowledge (TCBoK).

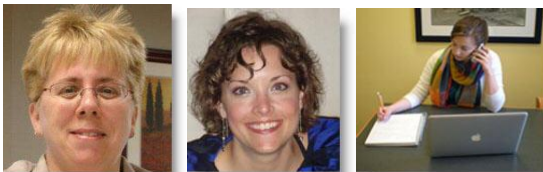


Figure 8. From left, participating in the Academic SIG's TCBoK virtual mentoring pilot project in 2013, were mentor Cindy Pao, Technical Documentation Specialist at Key Energy Services; mentee Anna Lerew-Phillips, a graduate student at Midwestern State University; and mentee Storm Stuart, an undergraduate at Appalachian State.

THE MENTOR BOARD

To extend its initiative on virtual mentoring from TCBoK-specific partnerships to general professional-student mentoring relationships, the Academic SIG will be working with the STC Office using a new software application called Mentor Board (Figure 9).



Figure 9. The Mentor Board will be the online hub of the Academic SIG's proposed virtual student mentoring program in 2013-2014.

Using Mentor Board, student STC members wishing to establish a mentoring relationship with an STC professional complete an online application identifying their areas of interest. Professionals willing to serve as mentors fill out an online application identifying their areas of subject matter expertise. From there, the Academic SIG will coordinate the process, aligning students' areas of interest with professionals' areas of expertise to make the mentor/mentee pairings.

A WIN-WIN-WIN SITUATION

Returning to the third question: why would an STC geographic community or SIG want to invest precious volunteer time to establish and sustain a mentoring program with a student community or individual students?

The answer is clear: there is an enormous return on such an investment in the form of manifold benefits to the sponsoring community, the student community, the Society, and—above all—the individual mentors and mentees. The precise nature of the benefits vary according to the type (primarily face-to-facer or primarily virtual) and unique characteristics of each mentoring program, but the benefits realized by the participating individuals and communities in the STC Orlando Central Florida chapter/UCF program are typical (Table 1).

Table 1. A mentoring program is a triple-win situation, benefitting mentors, mentees, and their organizations.

Mentee Benefits	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop networks, increase visibility • Receive career guidance and job search tips • Polish specialized skills • Prepare for the move from academe to industry • Enhance skills for career advancement 	
Mentor Benefits	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain personal satisfaction helping others reach their potential • Enhance coaching, feedback, leadership skills 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain exposure to new perspectives, new media • Expands professional networks • Get help on STC projects
Organizational Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen student communities by partnering with professionals • Strengthen professional communities with new ideas and leadership • Provide a boost in volunteer labor as mentors and mentees work together on projects to benefit both their communities and the Society • Increase retention rate of STC student memberships upon graduation • Increase attendance at chapter meetings and/or involvement in virtual activities (SIGs) • Leverage academe/industry partnerships • Groom STC's leaders of tomorrow

Having addressed the “why” of forming mentoring programs, the logical conclusion is to address the fourth question, the “how.” The Society’s initiative to help STC communities form win-win-win professional-student mentoring partnerships—the “how”—was an integral part of CAC-sponsored Leadership Day programs at the last two international conferences.

The logistics of forming mentoring programs was the subject of progression table presentations and follow-up workshops during these Leadership Day programs. The presenters—that’s us! ☺—came “armed” with a turnkey toolkit of guidelines and administrative forms we use to govern and implement the STC Orlando Central Florida/UCF mentoring program. The material was available both on CD and in hard copy at the conferences. It’s also available here on the [STC Orlando Central Florida chapter web site](#). We encourage our colleagues who are interested in forming a mentoring program to make use of these resources, which are summarized in Table 2, as well as the online resources listed at the end of this article.

Table 2. Don’t reinvent the wheel! These materials can readily be adapted to your mentoring program.

Take Your Choice ... a Web-Based Toolkit, a CD, or Good Old-Fashioned Paper!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STC guidelines for mentoring programs • Specific program guidelines and procedures • Specific program summary • History of a successful mentoring program • Mentee application form • Mentor application form • Mentee summary form (for making pairings) • Mentor summary form (for making pairings) • Mentor/mentee agreement form (goals, objectives, activities) • Suggested mentor/mentee (M&M) activities and projects • Mentor/mentee contact log • Link to a typical mentor/mentee Facebook page • Mentee pre-assessment form • Mentor pre-assessment form • Mentee post-assessment form

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor post-assessment form • Mentee program evaluation • Mentor program evaluation

We believe you’ll find these materials can be adapted to meet the unique requirements and circumstances of your program. By not “reinventing the wheel,” you’ll free up the professional and student coordinators of your program to focus on recruiting and pairing the mentors and mentees, kicking off, and monitoring the program, rather than creating forms.

The forms that STC Orlando Central Florida provided us from its mentoring program with University of Central Florida were easy to adapt for our needs. Clio Fouque and I simply had to tweak a few phrases here and there, add a few questions and remove a few others from the questionnaires, and we were ready to go. It took us less than a week to have all the documents up and running.

--Ray Gallon

Speaking of program coordinators, they are unquestionably the two essential ingredients in forming a successful mentoring program. Pair up a professional and a student who are motivated to create such a program and willing to put in a short burst (about 2 months) of initial effort followed by a much lower level of follow-up “maintenance,” and you will have a successful mentoring program. Absent either one of those two ingredients, and you *won’t*—it’s just that simple.

We’ve had a couple “lean” years in the otherwise robust STC Orlando Central Florida/UCF mentoring program, and both times that was because we lacked one of those two ingredients. In each case, we found the missing leader the following year and the program once again flourished.

OUR RECIPE FOR SUCCESS ...

Table 3 offers a capsule “recipe” for successfully baking a fruitful professional/student mentoring program from scratch. Try it! You’ll find this recipe brings enormous benefits both to the partnering organizations and to the partnering mentors and mentees.

Table 3. Establishing a mentoring program is a straightforward process. This pattern has worked for a number of communities.

On Your Mark, Get Set ... Go!!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional coordinator and student coordinator recruit mentors and mentees. • Mentors and mentees submit applications identifying their areas of SME and interest, respectively, plus some other information. • Coordinators compile information on the “M&M” applications onto the mentor/mentee summary forms. • Using the information on these two forms as well as their personal knowledge of the M&M’s, the coordinators make the pairings (note that the coordinators often, but not always, are an M&M pair

themselves). We've done it successfully both ways, but the former does have advantages.

- The coordinators plan a kickoff meeting to introduce the M&M's and give a brief overview on the mentoring process (note that we have only done this face-to-face, but Ray Gallon can explain how the STC France chapter kicked off some of the pairings virtually).
- Pre-kickoff orientation materials for the M&M's include the STC guidelines for mentoring programs, the guidelines for your specific program, a capsule summary of that program, and, if you wish, the article about how the STC-Orlando/UCF mentoring program was established and sustained.
- The M&M's work together at the kickoff meeting (or whatever process is used) to complete the mentor/mentee agreement, wherein they establish their objectives for a specified period (generally 2 semesters), the activities by which they plan to pursue those objectives, and sign a confidentiality agreement (the coordinators, of course, are also bound by confidentiality as they work with the M&M's thru the year).
- If you want "metrics" to help you improve and grow your program from year to year, have the M&M's submit a quick and simple pre-assessment form during the kickoff meeting.
- The coordinators track the activities between the M&M's either by asking for periodic submittals of the contact log, establishing and monitoring a Facebook group, or whatever works best. It's important to issue occasional reminders because busy people do sometimes tend to start enthusiastically and then get overcome by events. A mentoring relationships needs time and communication to develop.
- The coordinators encourage F2F contact where possible, although successful virtual mentoring has been demonstrated as well.
- They also encourage mutual projects such as the ones listed in the form "M&M Tasks." In the best of worlds, it is sometimes possible for such projects to satisfy both a task needed by the sponsoring geographic chapter and a course assignment for the student. Such projects also make terrific portfolio items for students. Working together on projects enhances the mentoring experience on both sides.
- If you want metrics, have the M&M's complete a quick and simple post-assessment and program evaluation at the end of the year.
- Occasionally, where the mentee is a junior, the M&M's opt to extend their relationship for a year. They should have that option. It's only happened maybe a half dozen times in Orlando, but each time it did, great things resulted.

"I got coffee for you, but I am going with Coke myself." Surrounded by stacks of files full of papers, the student reflected on how much her life had changed since starting the mentoring partnership. On top of working together on the Community Affairs Committee's Student Outreach task force, the mentor and mentee pair was starting the arduous task of co-authoring a chapter in a book under contract for commercial/academic publication.

While the student had first joined STC for purely mercenary reasons, she found that she was rewarded with more than a résumé bullet point: a variety of non-academic projects for her portfolio, a greater understanding how the world of industry functions, a

flourishing partnership and friendship with her mentor, and a firm dedication to STC.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to express our appreciation to our colleagues on the Student Outreach Task Force, the CAC, the STC Office, and the STC Board of Directors, without whose dedication and hard work the progress reported in this article would never have been possible.

REFERENCES

1. Parada, Carlos. "Telemachus," *Genealogical Guide to Greek Mythology*, <http://www.maicar.com/GML/>
2. Allen, Lori, and Voss, Dan. *Ethics in Technical Communication: Shades of Gray*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1997, pp. 293-4.

ONLINE RESOURCES ON STC STUDENT OUTREACH/MENTORING PROGRAMS

["Using Mentoring Programs to Collaborate with Industry."](#) Herb Smith, Southern Polytechnic State University. (*Notes from conference session*)

["Harnessing Student Power to Jet-Propel Your Community. Part I: Back to Basics."](#) progression presentation during Leadership Day, Dan Voss, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control; Bethany Bowles, University of Central Florida; and Sally Henschel, Midwestern State University. (*Full presentation*)

["Harnessing Student Power to Jet-Propel Your Community. Part II: Building on Basics."](#) progression presentation during Leadership Day, Dan Voss, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control; Bethany Bowles, University of Central Florida; and Sally Henschel, Midwestern State University. (*Full presentation*)

["Coaching Online: STC's Emerging Virtual Professional-to-Student Mentoring Program."](#) progression presentation during Leadership Day, Sally Henschel and Anna Lerew-Phillips, Midwestern State University. (*Full presentation*)

["Careers in Technical Communication for English Majors."](#) Dan Voss, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control; Bethany Bowles, University of Central Florida, and Rachel Houghton, STC Willamette Valley chapter, presented by Bowles and Houghton at the international conference of Sigma Tau Delta, the collegiate English Honor Society, in Portland, OR, March 20-23, 2013. (*Full .ppt presentation, with speaker's notes,*

turnkey-ready for college or high school classroom visits or visits to Sigma Tau Delta meetings on campus)

[“Student Mentoring Programs,”](#) Dan Voss, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control; Bethany Bowles, University of Central Florida, and Rachel Houghton, STC Willamette Valley chapter, presented by Bowles and Houghton at the international conference of Sigma Tau Delta, the collegiate English Honor Society, in Portland, OR, March 20-23, 2013. (*Full .ppt presentation, with speaker’s notes*)

[“STC Student Membership: Challenges, Opportunities, and Benefits,”](#) Sally Henschel, Midwestern State University, and Craig Baehr, Texas Tech University (members of STC’s Academic SIG), published in STC’s *intercom* magazine, January 2013, pp. 31-33. (*Complete article*)

[“Invest in the Future ... Sponsor an STC Student Mentoring Program \(Update\): Reference Guide and Turnkey Toolkit,”](#) Dan Voss, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control, and Bethany Bowles, University of Central Florida. Printed reference guidebook and accompanying CDs printed courtesy the Print and Publishing Center at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control, Orlando, FL, a sponsor of Leadership Day at the 60th Summit. (*Printable .pdf of entire 126-page reference guide*)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

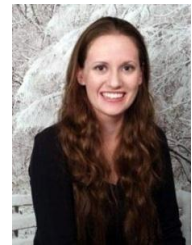


Dan Voss served for 3 years as co-lead for the Community Affairs Committee’s student outreach initiative and led the task force established by the STC Board of Directors to implement that initiative. He delivered the industry keynote at the Academic SIG-sponsored workshop preceding the 39th annual conference of the Council for Programs in Technical and

Scientific Communication (CPTSC) on the theme “Academy/Industry Relationships and Partnerships.” At the 60th annual STC international conference in Atlanta (May 5-8, 2013), STC president Alan Houser presented Dan with the STC President’s Award for his “tireless promotion of the Society’s student mentoring program and outreach to the next generation of Society members” (Figure 10). A 35-year aerospace veteran as a proposal content specialist for Lockheed Martin and an adjunct instructor for Webster University, Voss is an STC Fellow whose 24 years include leadership roles in the STC Orlando Central Florida Chapter, the Academic and AccessAbility SIGs, and the Ethics and Strategic Planning committees. In Orlando, he co-manages the successful mentoring program pairing chapter professionals with technical communication students at the University of Central Florida and has assisted other STC

communities in establishing similar programs. With Lori Allen, he co-authored the textbook *Ethics in Technical Communication: Shades of Gray* (John Wiley and Sons, 1997) and is the only non-engineer to win Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control’s coveted Author-of-the-Year Award. He has presented at more than 20 regional and international conferences for STC and other professional organizations and has published numerous articles in STC’s peer-reviewed *Technical Communication* quarterly journal, STC’s *intercom* magazine, conference *Proceedings*, and other professional publications.

Bethany Aguad is a graduate student at the University of Central Florida (UCF) and a third-year member of STC, where she is a Sigma Tau Chi honoree and winner of the Distinguished Student Service Award. At UCF, she has served as president of the student government-sponsored Future Technical



Communicators (FTC) organization—the equivalent of an STC student chapter—and also as president of the Sigma Tau Delta Zeta Xi chapter (International English Honor Society).. Bethany is a recipient of the prestigious STC/UCF Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarship for excellence in technical communication. She served 2 years on STC’s Community Affairs Committee as co-lead of the student outreach initiative, also served on the task force established by the STC Board of Directors to implement that initiative, and continues to serve on a new STC student outreach task force. She will be coordinating the student volunteers at the 61st international STC conference in Phoenix May 18-21, 2014. She and Rachel Houghton of STC’s Willamette Valley chapter were guest speakers at Sigma Tau Delta’s annual international conference in Portland, OR, March 20-23, 2013, presenting on “Careers in Technical Communication for English Majors” and “Student Mentoring Programs.” As a student member of the STC Orlando Central Florida Chapter, Bethany co-manages the chapter’s mentoring program pairing professionals with student STC members in the Future Technical Communicators, a UCF-sponsored organization. She and her erstwhile mentor—and still partner—Dan Voss, co-authored a chapter on the ethics of intercultural communication in a soon-to-be-published instructor’s guide for teaching intercultural communication to engineers, scientists, and students of engineering and science. A gifted writer, poised leader, and talented organizer on the threshold of her career as a technical communicator, Bethany is clearly one of STC’s rising stars.



Figure 10. At left, STC President Alan Houser presents Dan Voss with the President’s Award at the 2013 STC conference. At right are Dan and mentee Bethany Aguad. Dan said the award would not have been possible without the support of his two mentees from the University of Central Florida, Bethany and Sarah Baca.

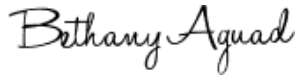
FROM THE AUTHORS TO THE STC-INDIA CHAPTER AND ATTENDEES AT THE 15TH STC-INDIA CONFERENCE

We would like to thank the STC-India Chapter for the opportunity to contribute this article to the newsletter for the 15th annual STC-India conference. Although we are far away from you physically, we feel as though you have made us part of your conference. ☺

We hope the information in this article proves useful to you in establishing and nurturing professional-to-student mentoring programs in technical communication. We also encourage you to access the online resources to which this article is linked.

Finally, we offer you our personal support, advice, resources, and encouragement if you do undertake a student mentoring initiative. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can assist you in such an important undertaking.

Sincerely,



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