

postComm

The annual magazine for alumni and friends of the University of Washington's
Department of Technical Communication

Summer 2007

Jan Spyridakis Hits the "Trifecta"

Changes in Technical Communication

BSTC Students Abroad

MSTC Student Interns for NASA

LUTE Collaboration Technology

Alumni In the Real World





Judy Ramey, UWTC Chair, May 2007

The team of TC students who produced this issue of posTComm chose *change* and *collaboration* as the two themes of the newsletter, a good choice given our activities this year in UWTC!

We have passed three major landmarks since we last put this newsletter in your hands. First, our doctoral program, launched in 2002, has produced its first graduate! Carolyn Wei, PhD, completed her degree in Winter Quarter and has gone on to an excellent position with Google. Second, UWTC has gone through its **ten-year UW departmental review**, a process that occupied us for over a year, and has received a strong, positive report. And third, we welcomed a new dean of the College of Engineering, Matt O'Donnell, who came to UW last summer from the University of Michigan's Department of Bioengineering. In fact, our ten-year-re-

view process was a great introduction to TC for Matt! We look forward to working with him to build an even better department in the future.

This has been a fantastic year for recognition of the excellence of our program and its faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Highlights include three major awards from the Society for Technical Communication (STC): **Dave Farkas** was honored with the Jay R. Gould Award for excellence in teaching and **Jan Spyridakis** was honored with both the newly established Ken Rainey Award for excellence in research and, fittingly, the Frank Smith Award for Best Journal Article. Also, the department's Laboratory for Usability Testing and Evaluation (LUTE) was honored with the Diana Award from the Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Design of Communication (ACM SIGDOC) for its **impact on research and teaching**. Look for details about these and more awards in the following pages.

TC also took part in a cross-campus collaborative effort to launch an **interdisciplinary initiative** in human-computer interaction (HCI) at the UW. In addition to TC, participating faculty came from Computer Science and Engineering, the Information School, the Division of Design in the School of Art, and several other departments.

These are only a few highlights from a very active year! I hope that you will read this newsletter from cover to cover to learn more. Also, be sure to explore the "In The Real World" section to catch up with your classmates and to see the kinds of careers our students are pursuing.

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UWTC's First PhD Graduate

by Athena Epilepsia

UWTC founded its PhD program five years ago with only a handful of hopeful candidates. The fledgling program has since grown, attracting more students and recognition from the research community. Its inaugural graduate, Carolyn Wei, celebrated her accomplishments during the Spring 2007 commencement ceremony.

Wei began her academic career on the east coast, graduating with a B.A. in History from Bryn Mawr College. She expressed interest in writing, reading, and critical thinking early on, and discovered technical communication as a field while exploring her post-graduation career choices. "I tried to do some more programming, you know, the hardcore programming, and that was also fine, but I didn't enjoy it as much. What I really liked was explaining technology to people, so that's what led me to technical writing," she reflected. Wei went on to join the Certificate in Technical Writing program at UWTC.

Her experience in the certificate program helped her decide to continue her education with a Master's degree and a PhD degree after that. "I found that I was really interested in computer-mediated communication and the opportunity [to get a PhD] came at a good time for me...because I wouldn't have to quit a job or try to transition myself." Wei entered the PhD program shortly after its inception in 2002.

As a doctoral student, Wei has been most affiliated with two research groups in UWTC: the Central Asia + Information and Communication Technologies project, directed by Beth Kolko, and the Internet-Based Research group, directed by Jan Spyridakis. She incorporated the studies and principles from the two research groups into her dissertation.

Wei's dissertation is about how people use mobile phones to support romantic relationships. When asked what inspired her research, Wei replied that it was "quite an interesting serendipitous moment." While

in Uzbekistan studying the language, she began collecting stories on how technology supported secret and long-distance relationships.

"One of the stories I collected was about how a young man was in Tashkent, the



Wei in Arizona, fall 2005

capital city, and had a girlfriend there, and then back home in the village his parents had found him a nice girl to [marry]." The young man went on to break up with his girlfriend and returned home to marry the other girl, thus follow-

ing arranged marriage customs. "From there I identified a theme of hybridity, where people, young people especially, are coming up

against multiple spaces, like home versus personal life, the city versus the village, modern versus traditional, global versus local ... where cultural values are changing rapidly along with technology."

Invigorated by noticing this theme, Wei went on to carry out the main part of her dissertation in Bangalore, India, with the support of an internship from Microsoft Research India. One of her findings is about how traditional etiquette has been translated into mobile relationships: a man may ignore or hang up on his girlfriend's incoming calls so that he may call her back and pick up the phone bill. Her research has attracted widespread attention, from the UW research community, to Indian newspapers, to Newsweek.

Wei defended her dissertation, graduated in winter 2007, and has worked as a user experience researcher at Google since April.

Emotions Improving Technology

The connection between technology and society is not often scrutinized, even in this era when almost everyone has a computer or cell phone. Technology is transforming with each leap in innovation, and we sometimes do not consider how human behavior is affected by interacting with devices—or how devices can be made more intuitive by considering human behavior.

Affective computing is an interdisciplinary study, first introduced in 1997 by MIT professor Rosalind Picard, based on the improvement of technology design. The study's supporters believe that computers should be designed to influence and recognize emotion from its users. Graduate and doctoral students at UWTC are among those applying affective computing to their research, some with a broad outlook and others with focuses on specific devices.

Matt Eliot, PhD student, is researching how interacting with technology can change how products are used. "I'm investigating how technology can support individuals to find more meaning in their day-to-day lives," he said. "My research is looking at how the product use situation, one user interacting with a handheld digital device, affects such product usage."

Carolyn Wei's research takes into consideration the emotional aspects of using mobile phones over other types of devices. In part of her dissertation, she wrote: "Capturing [the] qualities of the mobile phone can help enhance design so that mobile devices can be more compelling and satisfying to use in general besides for supporting romantic relationships."

Understanding how human behavior is influenced by computer interaction is the first step to developing new affective technology. With the help of research like Eliot and Wei's, we may see devices that respond to our emotional states in the near future.

Haida May Malcolm Awarded Walter L. Cook Scholarship

by Athena Epilepsia

Haida May Malcolm, a BSTC student, was selected as one of the two recipients for this year's Walter L. Cook Scholarship Fund. The scholarship fund is offered to financially-challenged students in the UW's College of Engineering.

Walter L. Cook, who graduated from high school in 1934, was forced to drop out of the UW because of financial troubles. Although he was able to secure employment without a college degree, he wanted to give other students the



May Malcolm & daughters, 2006

opportunity to receive the best education available. "It is my intent to create a fund that truly makes a difference to deserving students," he wrote to the

College of Engineering.

May Malcolm was accepted into the department at the beginning of Fall 2006 quarter; when she completed a transfer degree from Shoreline Community College. "I was not even aware of the TC major [while I was at Shoreline], but my interest was piqued" by a departmental scholarship flyer, she reflected. As a TC major, she has enjoyed the combination of her interests in design, science, and writing.

Each of the nine engineering departments could nominate two students for the scholarship. Applicants had to submit a transcript, FAFSA information, and a letter of interest. From there, a council consisting of one faculty member from each department voted on which applicants deserved the scholarship based on financial need and motivation to succeed in engineering.

May Malcolm was unanimously chosen as the council's top candidate, receiving more votes than any of the other

18 candidates. According to Karen Kasonic, UWTC Undergraduate Adviser, May Malcolm's letter of interest impressed the council "because it was well-written, concise, organized logically, and had an appropriate tone." The renewable scholarship will cover May Malcolm's tuition for up to three years as long as she maintains satisfactory grades in an engineering major.

When asked if the scholarship has allowed her to commit time to other pursuits, May Malcolm said that she has been able to spend more time with her two small daughters and hopes to look for an internship and participate in on-campus research.

"This scholarship has also given me more motivation and incentive to continue on, even when things get difficult for me as a full-time parent and student," she said. "I feel so fortunate to have this opportunity—to be able to complete my Bachelor's degree almost 20 years after graduating from high school."

Quan Zhou admitted to the STC Sigma Tau Chi

edited by Rosalinda Rosales

What does it take to become a "frat boy?" Well, UWTC PhD student Quan "Joe" Zhou can answer that question. Zhou, the department's first international doctoral student, was awarded the STC's honorary membership in the Sigma Tau Chi (STX) fraternity for 2007.

"You really have to be cool and tough in your study," says Zhou. The STX fraternity is one of the STC's two honorary societies that recognize excellent students in the field of technical communication. "You have to possess a GPA of 3.5 or higher and demonstrate significant contribution to the profession," said Zhou.

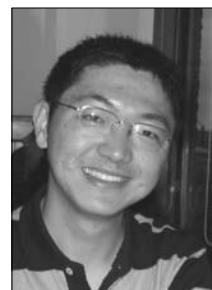
Attending the UW on an Alfred & Geraldine Cohn Fellowship, Zhou has been a compelling participant in departmental research. He has worked in various research groups, including digital games, usability, and ICT in Central Asia. Zhou recently passed his general

exam and is now working on his dissertation with Professor David Farkas. His doctoral research focuses on creating and examining a document format called QuikScan, which facilitates reading comprehension and information-seeking. His other research interests include the interaction between communication technologies and civil society, user experience, international communication, and digital rhetoric.

Zhou has published and presented in various national and international conferences and scholarly journals, including multiple STC conferences and the 2005 International Professional Communication Conference. He serves as a referee for academic journals and conferences in technical communication, mass communication, and internet studies. He has given several guest presentations to both undergraduate- and graduate-level courses.

Zhou, who came to UWTC more than three years ago, is most impressed by the

faculty here. "It has been an awesome experience working with every member of our faculty. The department has been incredibly supportive." Zhou would like to thank Farkas, Judy Ramey, and Beth Kolko for



Zhou, spring 2005

referring him to STX. He'd especially like to thank Farkas, his advisor, for always standing behind him during his gain and pain. "It is amazing to work with Dave. The passion that shines through his personality is an absolutely invaluable gift for me. He is one of the best professors I have ever known."

Zhou was honored at the STC's 54th Annual Conference in Minneapolis, MN, this past May. Looking ahead, Zhou is planning to pursue an academic career in technical communication.

Spyridakis Hits the “Trifecta”

by Christine Oon

Jan Spyridakis has garnered numerous accolades in her career, but in 2006 she hit what she calls, a little tongue-in-cheek, “the trifecta.” The UWTC professor collected three awards this year: one for a journal article, one for teaching, and, most notably, one for her lifelong research contributions to the field.

The STC chose Spyridakis as the recipient of its inaugural Ken Rainey Award for excellence in research, honoring work that has made “positive, significant contributions to technical communication practice and teaching.” Spyridakis also received the Frank R. Smith Outstanding Journal Article Award, which is Technical Communication’s award for best article of the year. To cap it off, she won the Faculty Award for Distinguished Contributions to Lifelong Learning from the University of Washington Educational Outreach program.

“I had been invited to give a plenary talk last fall in Holland, a special honor, and then the three awards just came out of nowhere,” Spyridakis said. She took the stage at the opening session of the STC’s 54th Annual Conference in Minneapolis, MN, for the Frank R. Smith Award, and again at the closing banquet to accept the Ken Rainey Award.

Spyridakis described receiving the Ken Rainey Award as “a huge honor... It’s the first time they’ve ever given this award. It looks at your research career, not just your last year, and to be honored by a society of that size—that’s a really high honor,” she said.

A chemistry buff in high school at a time when counselors told her girls didn’t go into chemistry, Spyridakis went on to obtain two degrees in English and a PhD in Education (Curriculum and Instruction). But her scientific bent remained; her doctoral focus was on empirical research in adult reading comprehension, a thread that has run through her work ever since.

“I had been teaching here for five or six years at the time I entered the PhD program. What drove me toward reading comprehension was that I sat there thinking about all the stuff I had been teaching successfully for six years and said to myself, where does this stuff come from that we’re teaching? These textbooks say it’s so—does that make it so?” Spyridakis recounted.

So she started chipping away at aspects of document design and web design to see what really influenced comprehension and how it did so. “Even though the variables I keep assessing change—whether it’s syntax, semantics, organization, or layout on the web—it still, with my greater interest, keeps coming back to what kinds of design variables affect comprehension,” she said.

Her winning paper, co-written with MSTC alumna Laura Schultz and current PhD student Sandy Bartell, was on “The Effect of Heading Frequency on Comprehension of Print versus Online Information.” It’s not Spyridakis’s first Frank R. Smith award (she won it back-to-back in 2000 and 2001) but she said this one was exciting because it was a chance to combine Schultz’s thesis work on heading frequencies in online linear documents with her own research on print headings. “It was fun to take the work of an alum Master’s student, bring in a new PhD student, and continue the research process,” she said.

Their comparative study found that the high frequency headings impede the comprehension of online readers more than they do print readers. “It was a really interesting

finding and really spoke to being careful as to where you get your design guidelines from. If you lean on print guidelines for web design, you could be misled,” Spyridakis said.

Her research may have won her national acclaim, but Spyridakis places equal importance on teaching. To her, the two

are part of one spectrum: “You can’t be a good teacher without doing good research. I think it’s impossible.” Spyridakis says she accepts the lifelong learning award “with great honor.”

She values her contributions to the university and considers herself a “lifer” here. “In a climate where faculty salaries are so lean, it’s nice that your work is still recognized in other ways,” she said.

Her involvement in lifelong learning began when she helped design the Technical Writing and Editing Certificate Program. She continues to teach Intro to Style in Technical Communication (TC 422) to evening students because she strongly believes strongly that there should be some regular faculty in such programs. Furthermore, she finds the students highly motivated and “a really fun group to teach.”

In June 2007, Spyridakis returned from a six-month sabbatical spent “writing up a lot of research.” She plans to continue her current focus on remote web-based empirical research; she and her students have been developing a software toolkit (WebLab UX) to facilitate such studies. “I’m very hung up on the idea. I want to assess people in their own times and spaces doing what they do naturally with the internet,” she said. The research marries her abiding interest in comprehension with methodology refinement, for which she is also renowned.

While many questions remain to be answered, Spyridakis reflects on her accomplishments to date with some degree of pride. “I am pleased that I have led a charge—not the charge but a charge—for conducting and understanding empirical research in TC. I believe that has helped put TC on the map as a player in the research world.”



Spyridakis accepting award at the conference.



Spyridakis standing in front of the Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam.

Webbys Honor UCD Site

by Anthony Shelley

UWTC's Emma Rose, a PhD student and part-time instructor, and affiliate assistant professor Suzanne Boyd, were elated when the Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL) website was named as Official Honoree in the 11th Annual Webby Awards. Rose and Boyd of Anthro-Tech were contracted by the DOL to lead the user-centered redesign of the agency's website.

"The feedback we're getting from the site's users, and now this recognition from the Webby Awards, really affirms how powerful the user-centered design process can be when embraced by an organization," said Boyd. "This project was very much a collaborative effort with executive-level support, which was crucial to its success."

"The UCD process was a great fit for the DOL. With [a website that gets] over 25,000 visitors per day, we really felt we had the opportunity to make some important improvements here," Rose added. "We're looking forward to carrying this momentum forward as we work to improve the agency's web applications."

The 11th Annual Webby Awards received a record 8,000 entries from over 60 countries and all 50 states. Out of more than 8,000 entries submitted, fewer than 15% received this honor and were deemed an Official Honoree.

Zhiwei Guan Honored

by Judy Ramey

Zhiwei Guan, PhD student, has won Honorable Mention in the "Best of CHI" Awards competition for Best Paper at CHI 2007—a first-ever distinction for the TC department! The paper, "What Are You Looking For? An Eye-Tracking Study of Information Usage in Web Search," was co-authored by Guan and Ed Cuttrell of Microsoft Corp. (the lead author on the paper and the supervisor of Guan's 2006 summer internship at Microsoft). Based on the same experimental work, Guan also wrote a CHI Note entitled "An Eye Tracking Study on How People Search When the Target is Not Shown on Top of The List." The two papers were presented back-to-back in a single panel presentation. Both papers were based on a detailed study of people's behavior with the list of "hits" resulting from a web search.

Nomination for Best Paper puts Guan's paper in the top 5% of CHI papers this year, and earning an Honorable Mention places her in an even more selective group.



Guan presenting at CHI2007.

The Highest Award for Teaching

by Elliot Yamaguchi



Farkas accepting the Gould award at the annual STC conference.

Professor David Farkas received the highest honor for teachers in our field at the STC's 54th Annual Conference in Minneapolis, MN. The Jay R. Gould Award is awarded to nominees for excellence in teaching technical communication. After asking how Farkas felt about the award he said, "It is a big deal. I'm very pleased to be recognized. Also, the TC department has always asked its faculty to work hard at teaching, and this award

helps to make that point."

The Jay R. Gould Award is awarded annually to no more than three educators. Supervisors, colleagues, or students may nominate potential award recipients. Nominees are required to have taught in post-secondary education for at least fifteen years and to have been a member of the STC for ten years.

As many will attest, Farkas is a teacher who carries with him an aura of joy and enthusiasm. To anyone attending his classes, it's obvious that he genuinely loves what he does. He commented, "I can honestly say I've never walked into class without being fully energized and determined to make [the class] successful." He takes notes after each class to document what worked and what didn't. It is no surprise, then, that Farkas has earned strong course evaluations for the past thirty years.

Outside of class, Farkas has also been a notable mentor to many students. He has helped students prepare resumes, strategize about job interviews, and publish their research. Many have become good friends.

After finishing his PhD at the University of Minnesota in 1976, Farkas started teaching technical communication full-time at Texas Tech University. Two years later, he moved to West Virginia University, and five years later he came to the UW.

In winning the Jay R. Gould Award, Farkas joins familiar company. Past winners from UWTC include Professors Jan Spyridakis, Carolyn Plumb, and Judy Ramey. Congratulations Dave!

UWTC LUTE Wins the Diana Award

by Judy Ramey

The UWTC Laboratory for Usability Testing and Evaluation (LUTE) has received the 2007 Diana Award from the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) Special Interest Group on Design of Communication (SIGDOC). This award, presented every two years, recognizes an organization, institution, or business for its long-term contribution to the field of communication design. Recent recipients include the British Computer Society, the Society for Technical Communication, and IBM Corp.

According to Dr. Clay Spinuzzi of the University of Texas, who announced the award on behalf of the organization, the board of ACM SIGDOC was impressed with many things about LUTE, including the balancing of its research, educational, and corporate partnership missions; its publication history; and its history of producing graduate-level TC research as well as faculty research. LUTE director Judy Ramey will accept the award at SIGDOC

2007 (October 22-24) in El Paso, TX, and will give a keynote address at the conference's banquet.

"We started LUTE in either 1989 or 1990, depending on how you count projects," says Ramey. "From the beginning, we wanted the lab to be an incubator of real-world professional experiences for our students. But very soon, we also realized that we could also contribute to the research in usability and communication design. It

has been a great ride and we have had the privilege of seeing our graduates go on to become leaders in the field."



(L to R) Alucid usability testing suite, Tobii eye-tracker

UWTC Honors Joe Welinske with the "Mikey" Award

by Rosalinda Rosales

Most people know Joe Welinske as the president of WritersUA (formerly WinWriters). Here at UWTC, we regard him as a special friend. This year the department honored this friendship by giving Welinske the Myron L. White Award of Achievement, also known as the "Mikey Award." For the past four years the award has been given to leaders in the field of technical communication and dedicated friends of the department.

Dave Farkas, UWTC Professor, presented the award to his good friend at the research and design showcase this past May. "He is probably the most influential person in computer documentation...in the world," commented Farkas, "He has the urge to drive people around him toward excellence." Accepting the award, Welinske affectionately recalled the first time he came to Seattle: he called the UW directory service and asked for someone in technical communication; luckily for him and for the

department, he was connected with Farkas, who invited Welinske to drop by the office. From there, a friendship blossomed.



Farkas presenting the "Mikey" to Welinske.

Welinske was given the award for his many contributions to the department: sponsoring student internships, presenting as a guest lecturer in courses on several occasions, and recognizing the work of

UWTC faculty and students by inviting them to speak at WritersUA conferences. He has worked extensively with UWTC faculty and even co-authored an online help book with Farkas and Scott Boggan. "We are honored that somebody of Joe's caliber and international reputation has contributed his time and attention to the well-being of our department," said Judy Ramey, UWTC Chair.

His contributions to the field stem from his involvement with and dedication to WritersUA conferences. Each year he manages to bring the forerunners of software user assistance together to keep everyone informed and up-to-date with the latest in documentation.

"I love words and linking them together into useful descriptions. I believe technical writing is a core aspect of our profession and I will never diminish its importance." – Joe Welinske

UWTC Benefits from Visiting Instructors

by Chad Driesbach

When UWTC faced the challenge of having both Jan Spyridakis and Beth Kolko on sabbatical at the same time, the department turned to the expertise of other instructors at the UW: the highly praised Maria Garrido and Taso Lagos. This past spring quarter, the graduate program hosted Garrido, from the Center for Internet Studies (CIS), to teach Computer-Assisted Communication (TC 505), and Lagos, from Communications, to teach Research Theory and Application in TC (TC 516).

Garrido took a handful of graduate TC classes while in graduate school. She received her PhD in Communications at the UW last year and has been working as a research associate for the CIS ever since. Garrido's main research focuses on the social impacts of technology, primarily in developing countries, but she also emphasizes the importance of design. Her dissertation examined how social movements use CMC to build networks of collaboration and coordination towards social change in Latin America. One aspect she would like to explore further is the ease of use of these networks in third world communities. To that end, Garrido hopes she can continue to collaborate with the TC department in the future.

Lagos earned his PhD in 2004, also in Communications at the UW. Lagos' research focus is on how people adopt communication technologies and how these technologies affect people and the communities they live in, particularly in smaller communi-

ties. In that vein, he was drawn to the work of UWTC's Central Asia Information and Communications Technology (CAICT) research project. The CAICT project tracks technology adoption and use in Central Asia, a project which dovetails well with his own research. Lagos, who teaches a course for Communications similar to TC's

research course, was eager to explore the rich collaborative possibilities between the TC and Communications departments. This opportunity allowed him to teach with us in another of his areas of expertise, research. Although the subject matter is often different, Lagos feels the methodologies of both fields can be quite similar. One of the things Lagos would like to see is further collaboration between students and professors in research, not only as an educational tool but also to advance knowledge.

This successful exchange of faculty from other departments is evidence of how multi-disciplinary TC is. Not only do our students gain from the expertise of these excellent faculty, Garrido and Lagos are able to expand their own research into the realm of TC. Because TC is such a diverse field, our program can only benefit from inter-departmental exchanges such as these.



Garrido and Lagos, May 2007

UWTC's Ten-Year Review

by Athena Epilepsia

UWTC Administrator Jeff Babauta says:

"I got the impression that UWTC is viewed as a leader in the field regarding sponsored projects and empirical research. This type of research is the norm in the CoE so it's easy to forget that many TC departments do not place such a high emphasis on that type of research."

BSTC Student Rukaya Mehter says:

"I attended the 10-year review ... and I think that the fact that it was two quarters ago, and I still remember how it was and what was discussed, shows its significance. Knowing what the plans for the TC department are and what it's up to ... [was] pretty interesting and thought-provoking."

PhD Student Quan Zhou says:

"I hope that the 10-year review will be a milestone for our department to play

Every 10 years, departments at the UW are reviewed to determine strengths and weaknesses in their programs. The department submits to the UW information on departmental employees, courses, and research. A committee of academic and industry leaders then writes a recommendation based on their observations of the department.

This past autumn quarter, the committee reviewing the department interviewed UWTC students, staff, and faculty. A few people who took part in the review process expressed what they learned and what they hope the review will do for the department.

a more important role in teaching and research at the UW. This review should be a chance for the committee to know how much we can contribute to the community."

Associate Professor Jennifer Turns says:

"In one meeting, each faculty member gave a presentation about their research and how it fits in the overall theme of the department. Even though I generally know about everyone's research, I was still impressed to see the breadth of topics we address and the energy of the faculty around their research."

Professor Dave Farkas says:

"The review process was a huge success for TC. The review document is lengthy and complex, but the key finding was that TC is an "undiscovered gem." The review also helped raise the standing of UWTC within the COE—very important for us."

Fostering a Supportive Environment for Diversity

by Rosalinda Rosales

UWTC believes in diversity, but how do they show it? The TC department's desire for a diversity program coincided with former TC adviser Jesse Knappenberger's Master's internship in 2005. Collaborating with Judy Ramey, UWTC Chair, the two developed a diversity mission statement and a "roadmap" to help direct UWTC's diversity efforts. The goal was two-fold: to develop a statement that would convey how the TC department strives to have a diverse community, and to set milestones in the roadmap to keep progress moving forward.

Knowing the importance of drawing on the wisdom of our alumni from diverse backgrounds, Knappenberger invited TC students and alumni to a meeting in summer 2006. Knappenberger and Ramey were pleased to find that more than a dozen students and alumni were dedicated and interested in helping the department meet the goals in the roadmap. This group was dubbed the UWTC Diversity Board.

Moving forward, the UWTC Diversity Board has advised the department on the selection process for the first Sakson Scholarship. Donna Sakson and her husband's gift of \$100,000 launched UWTC's first diversity scholarship to be awarded in Autumn 2007 to two students. The purpose of this fund is to bring more under-represented minority students into the UWTC program and thus into the profession.

The Diversity Board is just a stepping stone to the role that the department wants to play in years to come. By embracing and encouraging diversity, the TC department is fostering a supportive environment for students, faculty, and staff. For more information about the Diversity Board, or for questions regarding the next meeting, please contact Gian Bruno at gbruno@u.washington.edu.

Mission Statement:

UWTC is committed to fostering a supportive environment for diverse students, faculty, and staff. We recognize that it is essential to identify and educate diverse students in order to achieve our goal of remaining an elite, nationally recognized leader in the field of Technical Communication. At the heart of Technical Communication research, theory, and practice lies a shared understanding of the importance of people as users and consumers of information and technology. To ensure that our research, theory, and practice are always on the forefront of the user experience, we must reflect the diversity of our society. To that end UWTC is committed to identifying, recruiting, and retaining diverse faculty, staff, and students with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual and gender identity/orientation, disability, religion, culture, socio-economic status, and geography.

In Memoriam

by Kate Long

UWTC said goodbye to two close friends this year: Denice D. Denton, former Dean of the College of Engineering (COE), and Bill Winn, an adjunct faculty member. Both are sorely missed.

Denton was COE dean from 1996 to 2005. She was known for her commitment to diversity, excellence, and innovation. From February 2005 until her death in San Francisco on June 24, 2006, Denton was Chancellor of the University of California, Santa Cruz. Memories, tributes, and memorials are online at:

<http://www.engr.washington.edu/denton/>

http://www.ucsc.edu/administration/denice_denton/

Winn was a professor in Curriculum and Instruction in the UW College of Education. He became adjunct in TC in 1993, in the Music department in 1997, and also held an appointment in Educational Psychology. As Director of the Human Interface Technology Lab's Learning Center, Winn studied how people perceive, process, and learn from maps, charts, and diagrams, as well as ways in which cognitive theories help instructional designers make effective decisions about which teaching strategies to use.

The TC community will long remember the hard work and contribution both friends made to our faculty, staff, and students.

UWTC Staff Update

by Kate Long

Some new faces have joined old friends around the TC office this year! Here's a quick update on the UWTC staff:

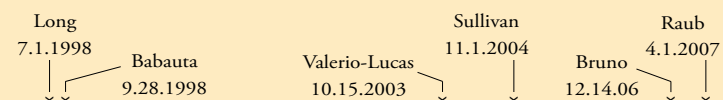
» Susan Raub is our newest staff member, joining the UWTC team in April 2007 as our fiscal specialist extraordinaire. She comes from the Washington Sea Grant Program at the UW with lots of experience and we are glad to be putting her expertise to use here. Welcome, Susan!

» Gian Bruno is our new academic adviser, taking over for Jesse Knappenberger, who moved to the Evans School of Public Affairs in October 2006. Gian is whipping up recruitment plans left and right and keeping our current students on track.

» Carolinda Valerio-Lucas continues to be the department backbone as our secretary. She even remembers everyone's birthday!

» Kyle Sullivan, our Program Coordinator, has been holding down the advising fort during our transition. We will be sad to see him leave at the end of the summer, but wish Kyle the best of luck at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC, as a graduate student himself.

» Jeff Babauta, UWTC Administrator, and Kate Long, Assistant to the Chair, continue to disagree about who has been with the department longer. The graph below puts the feud to rest once and for all.



A Dutch Tradition: The Doctoral Committee

by Elliot Yamaguchi

Since 1997, UWTC and the Technical and Professional Communication Department at the University of Twente, The Netherlands, have been partners in research and education. Both departments have hosted exchange students, and faculty members have collaborated on numerous projects as a result of this relationship.

Mark Melenhorst, a PhD candidate at Twente, conducted some of his doctoral research at LUTE during the 2004 academic year. Professor David Farkas mentored Melenhorst while he was visiting UWTC and was asked to participate as a member of Melenhorst's PhD examination committee in December 2006.

In the Dutch tradition, "promoters" are the candidate's doctoral supervisory committee. This committee has worked with the candidate for several years. In contrast, "opponents" are outsiders invited to challenge the candidate during the final dissertation defense. Acting as one

of the opponents, Farkas represented one final obstacle to Melenhorst receiving his degree.

Fortunately for Melenhorst, this tradition has become largely ceremonial. Farkas was not really there to oppose the candidate's degree. He instead asked challenging questions that enabled Melenhorst to demonstrate his expertise, all while Farkas wore the traditional robe and cap. In the end, Melenhorst successfully demonstrated his expertise and the PhD was awarded. The examination was followed by a cocktail party and, later, an elaborate dinner party hosted by the new PhD. When asked about the dinner party, Farkas grinned and said that we should have our students do that here, "[UWTC is] not going to adopt the Dutch tradition, but something along those lines would be great."

During Farkas' visit to Twente, he also planned some studies related to the QuikScan



Farkas at the ceremony at Twente, The Netherlands.

Professor David Farkas enjoyed participating in the medieval-style doctoral defense at the University of Twente. This Dutch tradition offers rich intellectual dialog, impressive ritual, and a fine opportunity for celebration.

project with Dutch professor Hans van der Meij. When his official duties at Twente were finished, Farkas and his wife Jean joined Twente Professor Thea van der Geest and her family for a Christmas holiday on the Wadden Islands in the North Sea.

For information about international projects, please visit:

<http://www.uwtc.washington.edu/international/projects.php>

A Humanitarian Movement

by Rosalinda Rosales

Mark Haselkorn, UWTC Professor and Co-Director of the Interdisciplinary Program in Humanitarian Relief (IPHR) at the UW, organized a National Science Foundation (NSF) International Workshop June 8-10, 2006, in Nairobi, Kenya. Participants in the workshop, including UWTC PhD students Sandy Bartell and Steve Lappenbusch, met "to envision the future of humanitarian action and to plan a long-term research and development agenda for moving towards that vision." Haselkorn and the workshop participants came out of the meeting with a clear path for re-envisioning humanitarian service. Their goal was to have activity and decision-making in disaster situations working even at the lowest possible levels: empowering people to take care of themselves whenever possible, and when they can't, having a

clear system in place for moving quickly and efficiently to the next level. But getting to that point requires research and collaboration with many governmental and non-governmental organizations, something Haselkorn has been doing for several years.

The Kenya workshop was followed by a meeting in Washington D.C. in January, when plans for a culminating October workshop were set in motion. "We are part of an emerging research frontier," said Haselkorn. In order to develop an efficient system for disaster relief, "[we have to] build on existing engineering models and make them socially, politically, culturally, economically, and behaviorally appropriate—integrating all of these relevant fields is critical... they're all essential to [disaster situations]." Fifty representatives from

(cont. on next page)

International Discourse

by Jen Becker

This past fall, Jan Spyridakis gave an invited plenary talk at the international conference on Discourse, Cognition, and Communication in Utrecht, The Netherlands. In addition to this conference, Spyridakis had the opportunity to give two other presentations while in The Netherlands, including a side trip to the University of Twente where she presented her research group's most recent findings.

At the Utrecht conference, Spyridakis was asked to speak about her research on the use of structural cues in web environments. Because she only had an hour to present her research, Spyridakis found it challenging to summarize her recent research in such a short time. The work she and her students have been doing started out with ninety-four Power Point slides, which Spyridakis finally wrangled down to about sixty. Her talk, titled "Using Structural Cues to Guide Readers," discussed the effect of different structural cues in online text on users' comprehension, perceptions, and navigation behavior.

Other talks at the conference included "Grammaticalisation and prosody" by Dr. Anne Wichmann from the University of Lancashire, "Discourse cohesion, processing,

and readability" by Dr. Art Graesser from the University of Memphis, and "Linguistic analysis of new media" from both Frank Jansen of the University of Utrecht and Fons Maes of the University of Tilburg. Spyridakis believes that her talk concerned one of the broader, more TC-related topics at the conference but she was enthralled by the linguistic focus of the conference. It gave her a chance to see that computational linguistics is making a big comeback and that our field should stay aware of this trend.

To simplify what this linguistic focus means, Spyridakis compared the overall theme of the conference to TC 401, Style in



Spyridakis giving a guest lecture in Utrecht.

Scientific and Technical Writing. Many of the workshops focused on issues such as semantics and syntax, and coherence and cohesion, including a close look at the word "because" and the nature of causal relationships in language. One of the reasons Spyridakis was given for the focus on causation concerned the order in which children learn about conceptual relationships, with causal relationships following additive ones.

While in Utrecht, Spyridakis gave a pre-conference workshop on the conduct of Internet-based experiments. To her amusement, on the morning of the pre-conference workshop, the conference organizer told Spyridakis that a Utrecht student would come by her hotel and "pick her up." The typical American idea of picking someone up is fairly specific: a car arrives and whisks you away. Not so in The Netherlands, or at least in Utrecht. The student met her at the hotel and they walked or rather jogged to the conference. How differently cultures interpret simple phrases! No amount of structural cues could have helped Spyridakis predict that first morning. But despite this surprise, Spyridakis attested that everyone was extremely hospitable both inside and outside the conference, and that the Dutch have a wonderful love of life and learning.

For more information about Internet-Based Research at UWTC, visit:

<http://depts.washington.edu/intres/>

(cont. from previous page)

these fields will gather in Seattle for the workshop to discuss what they are calling "Humanitarian Service Science and Engineering (HSSE)."

Information and communication systems are a critical component of HSSE. "Any TC student who wants to apply their TC skills to a practical problem can use this sector as a place to get some amazing experience. The other nice thing is that this is a feel-good activity because you are really helping people and making things better." —Mark Haselkorn

For more information about IPHR, visit:

<http://depts.washington.edu/iphr/homepage.shtml>

UWTC Students and Humanitarianism

Mercy Corps, an international relief and development organization, opens up their international operations to the department so students can study how information and communication technology and systems are used in the humanitarian sector. "[This is a] very unique collaboration between Mercy Corps and the department," commented Mark Haselkorn, UWTC Professor. Students enrolled in the past two iterations of Technical Communication Systems (TC 520) worked on projects with Mercy Corps, the second quarter students building on the work of the first. Students then presented their projects live in Portland and via video to Mercy Corps conference rooms around the world. Presenters included James Wachai and Rebecca Walton, UWTC graduate students. As a result of this course and the relationship between UWTC and Mercy Corps, Walton will be conducting a study during a 12-week summer internship with Mercy Corps in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in 2007.

Studying Abroad in The Netherlands

Classes, Culture, and Connections

by Myia Bloomfield

When I applied to UWTC, one of the academic goals I listed in my personal statement was to be able to study abroad at the University of Twente in The Netherlands. Before I knew it, I was finishing up my junior year at the UW and purchasing a ticket to Amsterdam. In the beginning of August, I taught myself some basic Dutch with the help of some language software and read up on Dutch culture and history, but the fact that I was about to study abroad in a foreign country for a quarter did not truly register until a week before I was scheduled to fly out.

Studying abroad was the greatest learning experience of my academic career. After recovering from the jet lag and slight culture shock, I immersed myself in the Dutch culture. My living situation could not have been better, as I was living with three Dutch students and one German student in a typical European house with no dishwasher, no clothes dryer, a water closet, and the steepest staircase I had ever seen. My room was 2x3 meters, which was extremely small and slightly shocking when I first moved in, but I quickly adjusted to the space and called it “cozy.”

I lived in the town of Enschede, where the University of Twente is located. Enschede is in the far eastern part of The Netherlands, about two hours by train



Myia Bloomfield standing above the Amstel canal in downtown Amsterdam.

I took a user support class, a short introductory Dutch course, and a class on multicultural communication in public health organizations. My multicultural communication class had lectures in Dutch which made me wonder whether I should take the class, even though the subject was highly interesting. I decided to take a risk and hoped that I would learn Dutch more quickly this way. Fortunately, the course pack readings were in English and, to my surprise, I understood a lot of the lectures, thanks to the help of friendly classmates and my professor's presentation slides. This was by far my favorite class and because

to other countries on the days I did not have class. Enschede is primarily a student town with lots of university activities and a great nightlife. In addition to taking several train rides around The Netherlands, I traveled with friends and ESN, the university's international student organization, to cities in Germany including Münster, Hanover, and Cologne. I went on a solo trip to Italy for a week and toured Florence, Pisa, Venice, and Perugia. To wrap up my study abroad experience, I took a bus down to Paris, the city of my dreams, and spent five days immersing myself in Parisian culture. Along with great travel memories, I made some special friendships, improved my study skills, and developed a better idea of what I want to do with my TC degree.

I encourage anyone thinking about studying abroad to do a bit of research, make the thought a reality, and prepare to have an amazing four months in The Netherlands.

For information about this program, visit: <http://uwtc.washington.edu/international/abroad.php>

“...I made some special friendships, improved my study skills, and developed a better idea of what I want to do with my TC degree.”

from Amsterdam. I rode around town on my bike, exploring the Centrum where all the shops, cafes, bars, and restaurants are located. I got lost several times, but after two weeks on my bike, I knew the Centrum very well. The University of Twente was a short 15-minute bike ride from my house and I only had to ride to the university on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, when I had class.

I took the risk, my Dutch improved as well. I completed the course wanting to incorporate this subject into my future TC career.

The learning style was primarily self-study with the opportunity to meet and discuss topics once a week with classmates and my professors. I preferred the self-study approach because I was able to study on my own, explore The Netherlands, and travel

User Technology in Central Asia

UWTC's First Undergraduate Researcher to Travel

by Mark Licata

After nearly 30 hours in airports and on planes, I started to wonder what I had gotten myself into. As we landed in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, I realized how far away from home I really was. I am working as an Undergraduate Research Assistant on the Central Asia Information and Communication Technology (CAICT) project for the University of Washington. The project looks at information technology in emerging markets, so Central Asia's history with the Soviet Union makes it an interesting part of the world to study. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan are all byproducts of the collapse of the Soviet Union. I traveled to Kyrgyzstan to help Beth Kolko, associate professor, and graduate students Erika Johnson and Emma Rose conduct a design ethnography—qualitative research based on social observation.

During this trip, we conducted several focus group sessions where we interviewed participants from urban and rural environments. We wanted to know what people did with cell phones and what they would do if different features were available. We asked numerous questions about mobile phone providers, plans, and personal contacts. Social networks are a key part of society in Central Asia. We used social networks for a lot of our research, including finding our translators and even our subjects.

I worked with three amazing translators who were all about 20-years-old and very excited to show the research team around the city. On our first day together, they took us to a nature park in the mountains, which was an amazing experience. We went up into the Tien Shen Mountains outside of Bishkek for a Kyrgyz-style picnic and prepared shashlik, a traditional Kyrgyz dish. The mountains were free of noise pollution and resembled the national parks around Seattle—yet another sign that the world is not all that different.

I really enjoyed the chance to see how an ethnography is run, but the best part of my trip was interacting with people my own age. Most people in the Central Asian region do not have a computer or an internet connection, so they frequently visit internet and gaming cafés. I often went to internet

cafés to check my email or call home, and the people there were very friendly. The employees could tell I was from out of town and were eager to help. The other customers were mostly my age and browsing the same sites as I was. Everyone seemed to be checking their email or seeing who had posted a new blog on MySpace. I thought this was remarkable because it shows how similar the world is. Even though I was more than 14,000 miles from home, teenagers [in

seen so many different groups interact together in such a friendly atmosphere.

Shortly after we left the restaurant, I headed to the airport and was on my way home. My research was over, but I can't wait for the chance to return to Central Asia. The CAICT project is now in the process of analyzing and writing about what we saw in Bishkek over the summer, and Emma Rose has already given a presentation on the findings. The



Mark Licata, Emma Rose, and Beth Kolko in Kyrgyzstan, summer 2006

“Even though I was more than 14,000 miles from home, teenagers [in Kyrgyzstan] were doing the same thing as their counterparts in the U.S.”

Kyrgyzstan] were doing the same thing as their counterparts in the U.S.

My best memory of the trip was my last night in the region, because my research team and our translators went out to dinner at a traditional Uyghur restaurant. While we were there we had a chance to experience numerous different cultures: there was a group from Germany, a group from Russia, and our group from the U.S. I had never

project will be conducting research again this summer, and I look forward to the chance to return.

For more information about the Central Asia Information and Communication Technology (CAICT) project, visit:
<http://depts.washington.edu/CAICT/index.php>

hello from the future

Carson
Reynolds
talks about
MIT, Japan,
and the
Future of
Robotics

by Amanda Ahn

Time zone-wise, the city of Tokyo is only sixteen hours ahead of Seattle. But when it comes to technology, the futuristic capital of Japan is more like a couple hundred megaseconds ahead of us. "In Japan there are more robots per capita than anywhere else in the world," said 1999 BSTC alumnus Carson Reynolds. "People are very seriously considering using robots to do things like shopping or delivering packages. So we need to think about how they will get through the busy streets of Tokyo."

Choosing academia after his time at the UW, Reynolds moved to MIT where he conducted research in the MIT Media lab. From there he moved to the University of Tokyo's Ishikawa Namiki Komuro Laboratory, where he is currently Project Assistant Professor in the Department of Creative Informatics. "This is a newer department that [focuses] on advanced topics in computer science and robotics," explained Reynolds. "I became interested in working abroad when I was a visiting fellow in Dublin, Ireland, during my PhD studies. I jumped at the opportunity to work in Japan because the environment for robotics and technological research here is very alive."

Working in this research lab, Reynolds always seems to have several "little projects cooking at once." But they are almost always things that involve the bond between humans and technology.

The desire to explore human computer interaction is what drew Reynolds to UWTC. Human factors still remains his main cluster of research and work interests, and technical communication plays an important role in the delivery of his ideas. "An enormous amount of what I do is [describe] and present the findings of experiments or designs of systems," said Carson. "Research is often constrained by how much and how clearly it can be communicated. I would deeply encourage the TC students to try their hand at research on their own. Don't wait for someone to give you permission to experiment on your own ideas."

Carson at the MIT Media Lab

"Some describe the Media Lab as a place that works on the interface between bits and atoms. There are a number of research groups, each of which has some expertise in areas like electrical engineering or computer science, as well as some humanistic influence like music or psychology. I studied in the Affective Computing group, which applies pattern recognition techniques to the problem of modeling emotion."

Robots Trek in Tokyo

"I am just starting [a project in designing] a robot that can move through a crowd of people. I look at this problem of ergonomics as applied to robotics; the robot has to be able to bump into people without hurting them."

The Influence of Language on Legislation

by Devor Barton

Cindy King, a UWTC alumna, found a fascinating opportunity to study how language affects public policy when two students asked her to be an advisor on their thesis. King is Assistant Professor of Management Communication in the Graduate School of Business and Public Policy at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), where she was approached by two graduate students to serve as the second advisor for their thesis. The students were working with their other advisor Douglas Brook, former acting director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and current Director of the Center for Defense Management Reform at NPS, to document OPM's involvement with the federal reform of civil service personnel management.

This reform, a substantial change in government management, affected federal civil service employees across the nation. The reforms had been attempted before, but failed due to strong opposition from labor interests. In 2002, however, legislation reforming civil service personnel management was enacted as part of the Homeland Security Act. King wondered how the language used to argue for civil service reform had changed, making it possible for the legislation to pass. King's insight gave the students a new, rhetorical approach to their study so they could study not only how the reform had been implemented, but why.

To answer this question, the team compared arguments regarding civil service reform both before and after September 11, 2001. King and the rest of the team also interviewed the people involved, including U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge. Initially, King felt a little intimidated about interviewing these high-profile figures, but as her training took over during the interview process, she found that she could relate to them as easily as she could to any other interviewee.

As a result of their study, King and her team discovered that the influential arguments on reform had changed from workers' rights to national security, which shifted the balance of power and enabled the reforms to pass into law. King was happy to find this opportunity to apply her

communication background to public policy. But most of all, she is proud that through this project she was able to bring rhetoric out of the academy and into a place where real people can benefit from it.



Cindy King



LaTasha Taylor, April 2007 in the UW Quad

Mars Research in Utah Desert

by Amanda Abn

It was mid-December of the year 2006. In the middle of a vast strange land, where snows lay abutting desert sandstone and the soil is red, lived a small team of young scientists and engineers working to complete their daily missions and solve problems as the next generation of space explorers. They faced temperatures that ranged from comfortable to freezing, with nights cold enough to gel the diesel oil fueling their habitat. LaTasha Taylor, a UWTC Master's student, was one of six crewmembers of The Mars Society's Mars Desert Research Station Crew 53—the second crew of NASA Spaceward Bound. She played a large role in the human factors and journalistic aspect of this simulated Martian excursion, but the situation and tasks obliged her to play several other roles as well.

"This type of experience forces you to become a geologist when you need to become a geologist. It's about learning because everyone has to contribute to the science," Taylor said. "What if my partner's rover were to just stop? All of the sudden I would have to become a mechanic and try to fix that!"

Taylor has a rich history with NASA; she undertook multiple summer internships with NASA in the past. Her background in astrobiology, aeronautical and industrial technology, biology, user interface design, and human computer interaction led her to the interdisciplinary route of "astrobiotechnology." This experience was perfectly suited for her as a major task was to work as if looking for life on Mars. The simulation was very real. The crew lived in a cylindrical, two-deck habitat ("Hab") that was only 8 meters in diameter. Because there was no electricity or water where they

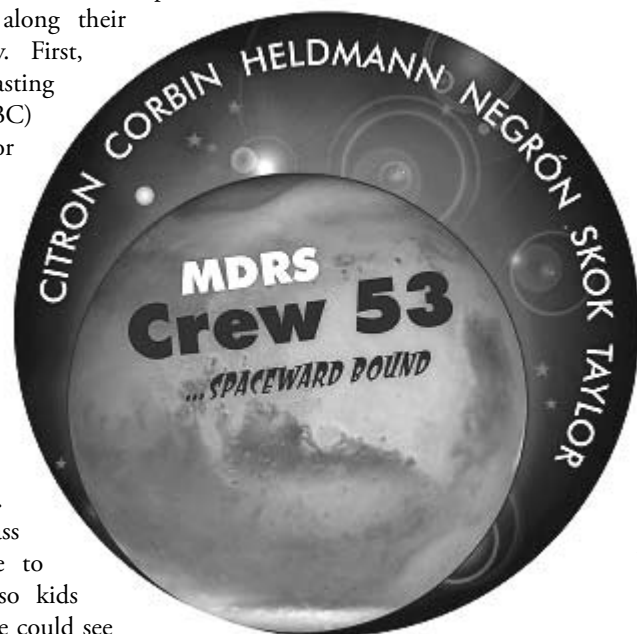
were in Hanksville, Utah, the crew had to rely on army surplus energy generators and water pumped as provided by the GreenHab (small greenhouse lab close to and even smaller than the Hab). In order to prepare for an EVA (extravehicular activity), the crew would suit up in the prep room—suit, helmet, gloves, oxygen tank and all. They would then proceed to the air lock before embarking on "Martian" soil.

"The whole thing about the suit; just being able to put it on, access your water from the little spout—radio in to somebody—being able to have everything I need on me as I traveled for miles and miles. We even had special boots," Taylor said. "The GPS was like your lifeline."

Crew 53 experienced a couple of nice surprises along their eleven-day journey. First, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) arrived onsite for a segment on the research project. Second, the team had an opportunity to do some outreach with NASA Quest for grade school and middle school students worldwide. "Kids were in class and we were able to do a live video, so kids could see us and we could see the kids and they were asking us questions—that was so rewarding," Taylor said.

Both despite and because of the difficulties encountered, this experience was incredible for Taylor and the rest of the crew. The experience showed that there were many things to be done with human factors before making the great leap to the real red planet. The awkward helmets, bulky gloves, and finicky energy supply were obstacles that helped Crew 53 learn to become more efficient.

"I think the unexpected was what was most challenging yet most rewarding. You accomplish what you were supposed to do for the day, you got through it—you may have had some problems but you get to say 'mission accomplished.'"



The patch worn by Taylor's team at NASA.

EDWARD GALORE

Wizard Behind the Curtain?

by Amy Pletcher

When I sat down to interview Edward Galore, a Day Master's student in the TC program, I asked him about the research management system he's working on as an intern at Microsoft. He grinned and answered with a familiar reference for a Kansas girl, "Right now, it's about one step above the wizard behind the curtain."

Galore is a familiar face around UW, having done his bachelor's work here in comparative religion and coming back now to get his master's degree. Since his return, Galore has been involved throughout UWTC, teaching TC 333, working with Jan Spyridakis' research group on remote usability studies, and focusing on user interfaces at an international level by taking classes in TC, business, and elsewhere. When the opportunity came up to intern at Microsoft, he saw it as a great way to extend his work at UW, increase practical experience, and make some great connections while contributing to the team at Microsoft.

Galore's internship was actually a research assistantship via UW's Information School where he worked on one main project: the redesign and migration of Microsoft's Corporate Marketing Research and Insights intranet from Sharepoint 2003 to Sharepoint 2007. Within that project, Galore had been focusing on three tasks. First and second were the migration of the Competitive Intelligence Knowledge Base (a research project database accessible by research managers in the company) and the migration of the intranet for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. The intranet as it stands has about 3,000 nodes and well over 10,000 individual pages and documents. Every page within each of the nodes had to be accessed and edited to make sure that the information was valid, up-to-date, and worth transferring—not a small undertaking.

The other major component of Galore's assistantship was improving the workflow and usability of the process used to upload documents and create new project workspaces. The way the site

was structured, Microsoft employees and Business Decision Makers (BDMs), who sponsor research about various market trends, initiatives, etc., had effectively no access to information gathered from research projects in other divisions, or to the various syndicated research projects that were also available. The search system was ineffective, and the best work-around was a list of "best bets" presented to the user in lieu of genuine search results. These hard coded search results resemble the not-so-magical effects of

the wizard behind the curtain. With a lack of keyword searches and other tools to access the information, research managers simply tended not to use the system. Research was then duplicated across the organization or ignored all together. The updated project will allow BDMs and other Microsoft employees better access to research via improved searchability and information design so they can make more-informed decisions and designs without having to duplicate the research.

Galore's internship continued right up to his graduation in June,

which means he graduated about the same time this, his pet project, did. The research management system was scheduled to have a big release in May or June, 2007. In the meantime, Galore used the same information design skills to continue his work with Spyridakis on a remote usability research toolkit and presented at the WritersUA 2007 conference on a paper and project in conjunction with Professor David Farkas. The presentation, entitled "The Future of Software User Assistance: Content-Centric Design," focused on the changing structure of help systems as they become more interactive, search tools become more prevalent and traditional information hierarchies are bypassed. Galore and his co-authors argue that by focusing more on user's needs, expectations and ways of accessing information, the results of help and search can become more appropriately contextualized for each user.

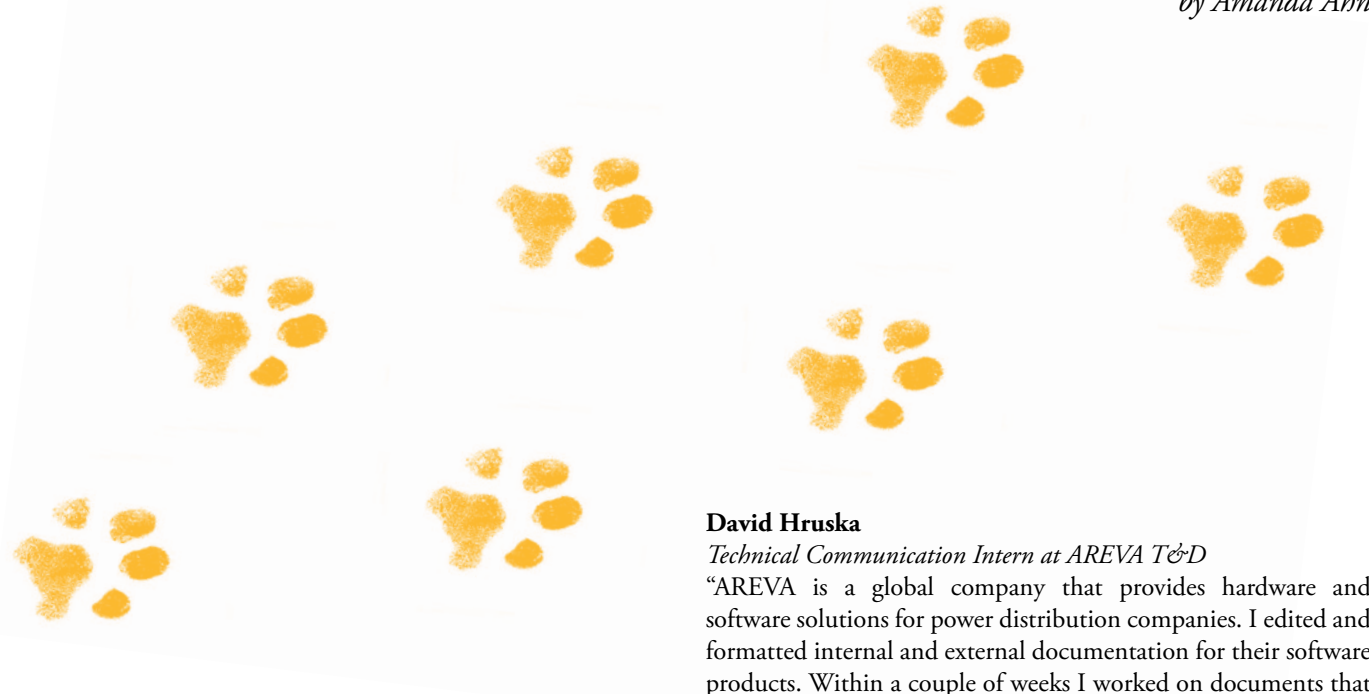


Galore, May 2007 in the UW HUB

WET FEET

TC Undergraduate Internships

by Amanda Ahn



Our undergraduates have been keeping busy this year putting their TC skills to work. Three credits of professional practice are all that is necessary to fulfill the internship requirement for a BSTC, but that's simply just a matter of getting one's feet wet; many students end up committing for a much longer term. In the end, it's all about experience and building a resume bonanza. Here is just a taste of what TC undergraduates have been engaged in this past year.

Sean Norsworthy

eBusiness Analyst for Weyerhaeuser IT

"I mostly gather web services requirements for customers across the company. My studies in document design allow me to write documentation that can be understood by customers and developers alike."

Best thing: "Narrowing my career focus."

Bare necessity: Coffee

Keisha McDew

Administrative Intern at the Central District Forum for Arts & Ideas

"I do some writing at my internship, so [what I learned from the technical writing and style classes was definitely] helpful." Keisha spends her time editing grants, writing thank you letters, and making phone calls to other companies.

Bare necessity: Water

David Hruska

Technical Communication Intern at AREVA T&D

"AREVA is a global company that provides hardware and software solutions for power distribution companies. I edited and formatted internal and external documentation for their software products. Within a couple of weeks I worked on documents that were shipped with the final release of a software package."

Best thing: "Being treated like a real employee and learning a lot about the field."

Bare necessity: Green tea

Amanda Ahn

Technical Writing Intern at Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)

"I rewrite and restructure forms, tools, and procedures for SPU's Engineering Division. I've encountered many things like rewriting work delegation tools, editing lawsuit briefings, and learning to use GIS."

Best thing: "Working with engineers and having very flexible hours."

Bare necessity: Soy latte

Rosalinda Rosales

Writer/Editor at Los Alamos National Laboratory in Los Alamos, NM

"When I was not working on starter websites, I edited research reports, the Environmental Surveillance Report, and wrote copy for a new student brochure."

Bare necessities: Coffee and a blanket

The classes students found most helpful to work successful internships were Style in TC, Visual Media in TC, and Introduction to Communication Design.

UW Becoming an HCI Hotspot

by Brandon Ray

“Human-computer interaction (HCI) is on the march at the University of Washington,” says UWTC Chair Judy Ramey, who collaborates closely with the DUB (Design, Use, Build) alliance in HCI at the UW.

Faculty and students from UWTC, Computer Science and Engineering (CSE), the Division of Design in the School of Art, and the Information School (iSchool) are all interested in shaping the future of HCI. “We want to be on the short list of schools that prospective HCI students apply to, whether TC, Art, iSchool, or Computer Science,” says Ramey. “We want students who want to do the best HCI work in the country.”

The goal of becoming a top HCI program both nationally and internationally is certainly ambitious, but a collaborative team environment is a big part of the puzzle, and it is one reason why HCI is already healthy and growing at the UW. The DUB alliance (on the web at <http://dub.washington.edu>) is a great example of HCI teamwork taking shape in the UW community. Regular meetings provide a forum for TC, CSE, the Division of Design, and iSchool members, as well as local industry partners like Microsoft Research, to share perspectives, discuss research, and create interdisciplinary connections. The result is a community with broad exposure to research interests outside of

their own academic circles. Ideally, the HCI community will continue to grow to include members of other research communities, such as medicine or education, who could benefit from applied HCI.

Collaboration in HCI will likely be a catalyst for great research that will in turn attract great researchers. This will have a direct impact on the UW’s reputation as an HCI hotspot. Ultimately, we are “hoping to produce this brand new kind of graduate student,” says Ramey. People who want to be leaders and innovators in HCI will want to be at the UW. Below are some key examples of how collaboration and reputation-building in HCI is already under way at the UW:

CHI2007

From April 28 to May 3 this past spring, more than 2,000 members of the HCI community from around the world convened in San Jose, CA, for the Computer/Human Interaction (CHI) 2007 Conference. The premiere gathering of its kind, CHI2007 gave researchers, students, and industry practitioners a forum for discussing the previous year’s accomplishments and giving a road map for their future work.

UWTC participated in three main visibility activities at this year’s CHI conference. Representatives from several UW departments, including TC, staffed a booth to field conference attendee questions, provide information about the range of programs and departments active in the field at the UW, and generate a buzz about HCI at the UW.

Volunteers also invited conference attendees to the UW’s hospitality reception. The reception provided an informal forum for conference attendees to discuss their current work and research interests.

Members of UWTC hosted a workshop titled “Beyond Current User Research: Designing Methods for New Users, Technologies, and Design Processes,” that explored novel approaches to collecting usability data.

Each year the CHI conference provides a forum for students and researchers to get together and discuss HCI, and this year UWTC was a pivotal member of the discussion.



CHI 2007, UWTC workshop attendees. UWTC members are Judy Ramey and Zhiwei Guan (back row, fourth and fifth from left), Elisabeth Cuddihy (middle row, right), and Emma Rose (front row, third from left).

IGERT

As a testament to the collaborative atmosphere in HCI at the UW, Judy Ramey (UWTC), James Landay (CSE), Axel Roesler (Division of Design, School of Art), and Batya Friedman (iSchool) are working together on a National Science Foundation (NSF) Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) proposal called “Analytical Design Studio: Advancing Long-Lived Everyday Human Activities.” This proposal also involves a number of other faculty members from the participating departments. With the goal of fostering collaborative research that transcends conventional disciplinary boundaries, the NSF IGERT program awards grants annually to researchers with interdisciplinary backgrounds.

The Analytical Design Studio approach aims to integrate the analytical tradition, typical of engineering, with the creative tradition typical of art school studios. The goal is to produce a creative, reflective, and analytical student who can generate highly creative design ideas and also collect data, analyze problems, and assess the success of designs. The IGERT proposal is a prime example of how collaboration among UWTC, CSE, the Division of Design, and the iSchool is already creating awareness, gathering resources, and producing results in HCI at the UW. The Analytical Design Studio proposal was selected as one of 4 proposals out of 14 from the UW to be submitted to the NSF’s IGERT program. Final proposals are due October 5, 2007.

For more information about the NSF IGERT program, visit: <http://www.igert.org/>

Tracking Lynne Cooke

by Rosalinda Rosales

For researcher Lynne Cooke, UWTC's eye tracking system is the only such equipment available to her in a TC setting. Cooke is an assistant professor of technical communication at the University of North Texas (UNT). She got her first glimpse of LUTE and its eye tracking facilities in February 2004, when she visited UWTC to do a guest talk for the department about eye tracking research methods for website design, sponsored by the NSF ADVANCE program. Over the next two years, she made three more trips to UWTC to take advantage of the department's equipment.

On her first visit in June 2004, she received a crash course on the eye tracking system from Elisabeth Cuddihy, UWTC PhD student. "I had never worked with eye tracking equipment before and I had little idea of the limitations of collecting and analyzing eye movement data," Cooke reflected. Together they studied the accuracy of the think-aloud protocol and wrote a

paper titled "Using Eye Tracking to Address Limitations in Think-Aloud Protocol," which was published in the *2005 IPCC Proceedings*. Cuddihy presented the paper at the conference. The UNT gave Cooke grants for both this project and the one she conducted in April 2006.

When she returned briefly to UWTC in April 2006, Cooke studied the usability of navigation menus on web home pages. She returned again later that year to conduct a follow-up study of web navigation menu usability. The follow-up study, titled "An Eye Tracking Study of Web Navigation Menu Placement and Organization," was supported by a \$10,000 research grant from the STC. She presented her findings at the STC's 54th Annual Conference in Minneapolis, MN, in May 2007.

"It is a pleasure to work with the people of the Department of Technical Communication at the University of Washington. I always look forward to my

research visits because the professors and students in the department are always exploring challenging research questions that are highly relevant to both the academic and practitioner communities. I also greatly appreciate the STC's support of my eye tracking research. The fact that the STC was willing to invest in exploratory research reflects, I believe, the progressive direction of the discipline and the organization."



(L to R) Zhiewi Guan, Elisabeth Cuddihy, Rich DeSantis, and Lynne Cooke in LUTE.

Collaboration Technology at LUTE

by Devor Barton

UWTC LUTE recently received the grant of a two-way videoconferencing system to facilitate one-on-one research. The equipment was given to the UW by kynamatrix Research Network, in association with LifeSize Communications and GBH Communications, as part of its ResearchHDiscovery project. This proof-of-concept study enables the UW to connect to researchers at five other universities that have similar technical communication interests: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Carnegie Mellon University, Stanford University, Harvard University, and Georgia Tech.

The system has been installed in LUTE and uses high-definition video and audio technology to replicate face-to-face interaction in long-distance communication situations. A widescreen plasma monitor and remote-controlled video camera are

combined with a conference phone to make communication over the internet easier, including the ability to easily and clearly share computer images or hand-written notes. In this way, the equipment opens a virtual window between universities, eliminating boundaries and creating a "you are there" feel. This technology is an advancement over other long-distance communication technologies like the telephone and email, but is still as easy to use as operating a television's remote control or dialing a phone.

Judy Ramey, UWTC Chair, notes that "this gift will make a very important difference in the development of collaborative research" at the UW. The ease of long-distance communication, combined with the elimination of travel costs, will enhance collaboration and the exchange of

ideas. Researchers at the UW can use the new equipment to communicate in a more personal and direct way with colleagues at other universities on the network. Meanwhile, faculty members at the participating institutions can use the same system to serve on UW thesis committees without having to leave their own campuses.

"We foresee the project adding value to academic research across the nation," said Alyce Hoggan, executive director and project founder at kynamatrix. Craig Malloy, CEO of LifeSize, adds that "the ability for people in different locations to communicate via high-definition video communications is testimony to how technology can have a positive impact on knowledge sharing." kynamatrix will base the project's success on how much the equipment is used, and hopes to expand the program to other institutions, which would further increase the UW's opportunities for collaboration.



Ramey at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The Future of TC

The posTComm 2007 team asked leaders in the TC field to make predictions about collaboration. Here is what a few of them had to say.

In the next decade, the ability to collaborate across the boundaries of disciplines and cultures will become a new literacy that is just assumed in the workplace.

Judy Ramey
UWTC Chair and Professor

Collaboration with customers will shape the future of technical communication as community interaction becomes an integral part of the information development process.

Lori Fisher
Program Director
Info Mgmt User Technology
IBM

We spent the twentieth century pulling our disciplines apart. We'll spend the twenty-first putting them together again!

Bob Boiko
Senior Lecturer
UW iSchool

As a User Experience professional with a TC background, it is clear to me that the existing collaboration between user experience designers, user experience researchers, and content publishing professionals is only the beginning of what will occur—and what end users need—in order to creating compelling end-to-end experiences in products and services.

Kent Sullivan
Microsoft

The TJP's Language Partner Comes Into Its Own

by Christopher Frederick

Ten years ago, development began on a software package for the Technical Japanese Program (TJP) that would allow students to rehearse dialogs taught in class by means of a pre-recorded digital "partner." This program, which is known as Language Partner, has played a key role in the TJP's curriculum for several years. All of the major dialogs that are taught in class today have already been recorded and loaded into Language Partner, thereby allowing students to practice the dialogs at their convenience. Since a Language Partner session is essentially a conversational exchange between the student and an onscreen partner, the transition from practice to real-life application is more intuitive than it is for other rote repetition models of language learning.

Despite its merits, Language Partner has not been widely utilized. However, this will soon change with

the publication of a new Japanese language textbook *Learning with Multimedia Content: Towards a High Level of Japanese Proficiency*, edited and co-authored by Michio Tsutsui, Director of the TJP and an Associate Professor in TC. This innovative textbook (to be published by Kuroshio-shuppan, Tokyo) is intended to address the conspicuous ab-

sence of standard texts for third-year Japanese language students and will be the first of its kind to integrate Language Partner into a standard Japanese language curriculum. In addition to Language Partner, the textbook will use online publications, videos, and other multimedia content to present the Japanese language and culture in a way that is relevant to the rapidly changing contexts of modern technological society.

The future of Language Partner, however, may not be limited to Japanese course curricula; not only is its paradigm of a conversational exchange between a language learner and a pre-recorded partner applicable to languages other than Japanese, but its use does not necessarily need to be restricted to the classroom. As more companies realize the benefits of globalization, they may turn to Language Partner to provide cross-lingual training to their employees.



TJP student using Language Partner.

Celebration of Information

by Rosalinda Rosales

The International Professional Communication Conference (IPCC) is coming to Seattle October 1–3, 2007. This conference is hosted by the IEEE Professional Communication Society, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary at this event. A number of UWTC members have been organizing IPCC 2007: Mark Haselkorn, Professor, is the Conference Chair; Dave Farkas, Professor, is the Program Chair; and Sandy Bartell, PhD student, is in charge of Local Arrangements.

Carolyn Wei, UWTC alumna, and Steve Lappenbusch, PhD student, are also at the forefront; they are organizing a Doctoral Workshop for the day before the conference. The success of this “pioneer” workshop could mean the beginning of new forum at future IPCC conferences for PhD students.

Panels, tutorials, and research paper presentations will focus on the theme “Engineering the Future of Human Communication.” Guest speakers include Chris Linnett, who has launched some of the most popular websites, and the legendary Ray Kurzweil, famed inventor and the “most optimistic futurist” according to Haselkorn.

The conference organizers just can’t help but get excited by the rapidly changing information and communication technology that will be discussed. The international conference website welcomes everyone to “join a distinguished group of researchers and industry practitioners.”

For more information about IPCC, visit:

<http://www.ieeepcs.org/ipcc2007/index.htm>

An Opened Door

by Amanda Ahn

This year’s STC-UW chapter president, Rosalinda Rosales, wanted to provide her cohorts with great things for the 2006–2007 year. “I attended several STC Puget Sound chapter (STC-PSC) meetings and volunteered at some of their events. I thought the best way to reach more students was to network.”

While at an autumn STC-PSC meeting, its chapter president, Joe Welinske, who is also the president of WritersUA, presented Rosales with the opportunity to volunteer at the 15th annual WritersUA conference. “I was really excited because one of my primary focuses is in software documentation.” She accepted Welinske’s offer and the TC department granted her travel to Long Beach, CA, where the conference was held.

Rosales attended sessions and workshops in structured authoring, XML, and DITA. “The Structured Authoring seminar by Tony Self was my favorite. He crammed so much information into three and a half hours and made it less overwhelming than it could have been.” The sessions provided her with leading-edge information not yet covered in the UWTC curriculum.

Rosales found this opportunity invaluable to her experience as a student. “The field is so broad and it is impossible to learn everything in just two years. When students discover their main focuses and interests, they should seek out networking and educational opportunities outside of the classroom to further their knowledge.”

UWTC at the ATTW Conference in NYC

by Amanda Ahn and Rosalinda Rosales

UWTC had a strong presence at the 10th Annual Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) conference. Judy Ramey, UWTC Chair and Professor, and Mark Zachry, Associate Professor and editor of *Technical Communication Quarterly* (TCQ), a research journal that UWTC hosts, attended the conference.

Ramey and Zachry both took part in panels. Ramey participated in a panel for program heads titled “Rebuild, Renew, Reimagine: Positioning Programs in Professional and Technical Communication for the 21st Century,” and Zachry participated in a panel for journal editors titled “(Re)Building Knowledge into Publications: Perspectives from Four Journal Editors.”

Rebecca Walton, UWTC PhD student, also attended the conference and presented her paper titled “How Can I Help You: Technical Communication and the Needs of Small Nonprofit Organizations.”

Zachry served a dual purpose in attending: as the editor of *TCQ*, he supported the writers of *TCQ*-published articles that were up for awards. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) presents awards to writers of four journal articles in Technical and Scientific Communication each year. This year NCTE awarded these articles published in *TCQ* in 2006: “Lost in the Translation: Shifting Claims in the Migration of a Research Technique” (*TCQ*, Autumn 2005) by Clay Spinuzzi, Associate Professor of rhetoric at the University of Texas in Austin; and “Building Context: Using Activity Theory to Teach About Genre in Multi-Major Professional Communication Courses” (*TCQ*, Spring 2005) by Donna Kain and Elizabeth Wardle, Assistant Professors for the Departments of English at the East Carolina University and University of Dayton, respectively.

“This is the second year in a row that *TCQ* authors have won two awards,” said

Zachry. “These are national awards that cover all technical and scientific communication articles nominated from the prior year.”

The journal’s recent success in publishing award-winning articles is something that Zachry hopes to maintain. By continuing to receive articles from key thinkers in the field, the journal keeps on top of what is new and interesting in technical communication—and this quality further attracts leading-edge researchers in the field.

For more information on ATTW, visit:
<http://cms.english.ttu.edu/attw>

Engineering Open House

photos by Amanda Ahn

Each year the College of Engineering opens its doors to the public in an effort to create awareness and excitement for engineering. UWTC students represented the TC department by presenting course projects, research projects, and other examples of the things TC'ers create.



(L to R) Mark Licata (BSTC), James Wachai (MSTC), and Jen Becker (BSTC) present to students.



Research & Design Showcase

photos by Amanda Ahn

This past May, students from UWTC gathered together at the Research and Design Showcase to present their research findings and design projects to the community. This event was sponsored by UWTC, the STC-UW student chapter, and the STC Puget Sound Chapter.

(L to R) Elisabeth Cuddihy, Zhiwei Guan, Roxane Neal; Ariel van Spronsen; Amy Pletcher



STC-UW Third-Annual Career Fair

by Rosalinda Rosales

The UW student chapter of the STC hosted its third-annual career fair on campus this past April. More than fifty students attended over the course of two hours and the room was continually buzzing. "It's great that so many companies are willing to come to a TC career fair," said Richie Escarez, a BSTC senior, as he watched students from UWTC, the iSchool, and the Communication department network with the ten potential employers.

Representatives from the following companies attended the career fair: Boeing, Cisco Systems, Content Master, Expeditors, Fluke, Google, MAQ Software, Marvell Semiconductor, The Mosaic Company, and Switchyard Media. This was the first year that companies sent representatives all the way from California to recruit UWTC students. This effort to recruit speaks to the caliber of students the department is producing.

"Our goal was to provide companies whose specialties spanned the field of TC. That way, students were exposed to internship and job opportunities beyond just technical writing," reflected Jen Becker, BSTC senior and STC-UW Vice President.

The large turnout of students inspired the officers to have more companies next year. "We hope to collaborate with the iSchool and possibly the Communication department to bring more companies to the career fair," said Becker. "The jobs are out there and we can serve the students better by bringing the employers to campus."



(L to R) Keisha McDew, Rukaya Mehter, Haida May Malcolm at the 2007 STC-UW Career Fair.



Incoming BSTC students discuss job opportunities with BSTC alumna.



BSTC senior David Hruska takes notes while discussing job opportunities.

Current Research Groups

compiled by Kate Long



Transformations: Technology, Theory, and Technical Communication

Mark Zachry and Mary Coney are leading a research group that examines how technological changes influence (and are influenced by) technical communication. *Group Members: Matt Carthum, Scott Gables, Seung Eun Lee, Amy Pletcher, Yasmeen Sands, Rebecca Walton, and Jerrod Larson.*

Curriculum Design and Engineering Writing

Karen Kasonic is leading a research group exploring ways to improve the Engineering Communication Program and its technical writing courses to more adequately address the needs of students, faculty, and future employers in all of the engineering disciplines. *Group Members: Jen Becker, James Njoroge, Amy Pletcher, Eva Snee, and Elliot Yamaguchi.*

Humanitarian Information and Communication Systems

Mark Haselkorn is leading a research group that is collaborating with NGOs, government agencies, academic institutions, and donor agencies to envision the future role of information and communication systems in international disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. *Group Members: Sandy Bartell, Steve Lappenbusch, Patty O'Hara, Montine Rummel, James Wachai, and Rebecca Walton.*

Visual Communications Directed Research

Tom Williams is leading a research group that is conducting an eye-tracking study to challenge the conclusions of studies sponsored by the Poynter Institute and the Nielsen/Norman Group, which concluded that pictures are of secondary importance to users when viewing content on the web. *Group Members: Kirsten Gantenbein, Ann Hoxsey, and Nancy Samuels.*

Internet-Based Research (IBR)

Jan Spyridakis led a research group that conducted two remote user studies on the web to assess the effect of several web design features. *Group Members: Elisabeth Cuddihy, Edward Galore, Steven Liu, and Kate Mobrand.*

Design for Digital Inclusion

Beth Kolko is leading the Design for Digital Inclusion research group, addressing issues of information and communications technologies in underserved and resource-constrained communities nationally and locally. *Group Members: Gülay Birand, Chris Govella, Cynthia Putnam, Carleigh Romeis, Emma Rose, and Vijay Venkatraman.*



QuikScan

David Farkas is leading a research group based on UWTC PhD student Quan "Joe" Zhou's dissertation on QuikScan, which is a collection of formatting techniques that emphasize key ideas in a document in order to increase reading retention, comprehension, and information access. *Group Members: Matt Carthum, Jessica Harrison, Kelly Lillis, Niklas Nordlof, and Quan Zhou.*

LUCEE: The Laboratory for User-Centered Engineering Education

LUCEE projects, sponsored by Jennifer Turns, focus on bringing user-centered design concepts and practices to the challenges of engineering education. Projects in the group focus on two key user groups in engineering education: students and educators. *Group Members: Kate Dunsmore, Matt Eliot, Zhiwei Guan, and Steve Lappenbusch.*



Mobile User Experience (UX)

Judy Ramey is leading a research group that examines the research areas and emerging technologies that are most likely to deliver a positive mobile user experience. *Group Members: Front row: Yaro Brock, David Hruska, Christine Oon, Carol Taylor (InfoSpace corporate sponsor). Back row: Ariel van Spronsen, Ninad Dalal, Daphne Lee, and Judy Ramey (faculty advisor). Not pictured: Rob MacDonald, Ireneo Richie Escarez III, Ned Olsen, Kelvin Andrews, and Montine Rummel.*

In the Real World



compiled by
Devor Barton

1977-1989

Randal L. Dinehart, '77

BS Inter-Engineering
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U.S. Geological Survey

"Averaged indicators of secondary flow...", Dinehart and Burau, Water Resources Research, September 2005

I took an engineering writing class just before the formal TC program was instituted in 1975. Because I was devising an Interdisciplinary Degree program to combine hydrologic engineering and technical writing, James Souther advised me to participate in the new curriculum. I finished in March 1977, and was soon writing reports for the U.S. Geological Survey on the rivers carrying remains of Mount St. Helens.

Since 1980, I have occasionally uncovered a new principle or facet of river behavior after long field investigations. The moment is soon clouded by the thought, "This means I have to write a paper." Following Souther's exhortation, "The writing begins when the project begins," I keep a running technical diary of analyses, plans, and possible bits for the eventual paper. When research gold appears, I start a scratch outline of topical sentences. The subjects that Souther and Myron White discussed in class still apply, such as choices of organization, simplicity of language, and the necessity to let drafts cool off before revision. The effort is worthwhile, because white papers, meeting abstracts, and PowerPoints soon evaporate, but good articles become lodged in the literary system, where your work might contribute at any time.

Jessie McDonald, '79

BSTC

Seattle, WA

jessiemac01@netscape.com

Seattle Community College District

After graduating, I worked as a subcontractor for a local land-use application consultant. In this capacity, I edited Environmental Impact Statements and conducted research for what is now Newcastle, WA. During this period, I edited Master's theses for fellow students and edited and co-authored a sewing book. After that, I became involved with a group of entrepreneurs trying to develop start-up companies. I bought out the most successful company and ran it for several years. I worked for a training organization doing cold calling. This led to a career where I teach technical writing and use my writing skills daily to generate classroom materials. I edited the Self Study Document for South Seattle Community College's Accreditation 2000. The campus received a commendation for the document and it became the standard for future accreditation documents for a number of years. I entered the Master's Program but family medical problems curtailed that effort. Today, I enjoy applying all that I learned at UW to real world situations, and I appreciate the opportunity to work with and help students who are in the midst of life changes. None of this would have been possible without my degree and the discipline I learned in the program.

Carol A. Taylor, '83, '06

BSTC, User-Centered Design Certificate
Woodinville, WA

ctaylor.next.ui@gmail.com

InfoSpace

My association with UWTC dates back to the early eighties when I received a BSTC through General Studies with James Souther and Myron White. Since then, the department has grown into one of the most respected programs of its kind in the country. The User-Centered Design Certificate program drew me back to study at the UW last year and I'm continuing in the evening master's program. After several decades in the user experience profession (T-Mobile, MAGI Interactive, S&T, UW), I'm still learning. TC provides the analytical framework to ask the right questions, to objectively probe context, and to assess the right methods for finding what users need and want.

Over the past several years my focus has shifted to mobile products, which I believe will have a significant role in the next generation of computing. One of the most interesting aspects of my position, managing the User Experience at InfoSpace Mobile, is having opportunities for research partnerships with other companies and departments. I enjoy working with new technologies as part of interdisciplinary teams designing, refining, and delivering products that people enjoy and value. This past winter, I started the TC Mobile UX research group, which enjoyed a successful first quarter.



William McCauley, '88

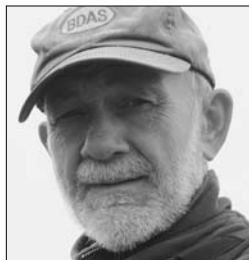
BSTC

Auburn, WA

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Self-employed

<http://www.williammccauley.com>



I left my career in geotechnical consulting to enter a career in tech writing because I love to write. I was in midlife when I entered the tech writing program, and went on to work for the next two decades in a rather typical sequence of writing jobs in Seattle's high-tech sector. It was a good decision. I've enjoyed every one of my writing jobs. Each has enabled me to put, and keep, writing in the center of my life. For me, technical writing was always more about the writing than it was about the technical. In fact, my day job was always an extension of my important job, which is writing fiction. It took a long time, but I have broken through the barriers to produce two novels (The Turning Over, 1998, and Good Art, forthcoming in 2008), two collections of short stories (Need, 2004, and Adulteries, Hot Tubs and Such Like Matters, forthcoming in October 2007), and co-authored Texas Hold'em: A Starting Hand Strategy for Internet & Live Play, 2007. I've also ghost-written numerous technical articles and one software technology book. Though I continue to enjoy contract work, much of my writing these days is on my own projects.

Maria Schneider (formerly Cordova), '89

BSTC

Austin, TX

Self-employed

<http://www.BearMountainBooks.com>

http://www.thetowndrunk.org/2007/schneider_clues.aspx

I grew up in rural New Mexico where the desolate desert environment required that I embellish the landscape with my imagination. After working in the computer industry for twelve years, I decided technology moved too slowly, and again put my imagination to work, creating messes and then inventing characters to handle all the clean up. I currently reside in Austin, Texas. Just recently, my short story, "Haunting Clues," was published at www.TheTownDrunk.org. The Town Drunk had this to say about the story: "In our first detective story, a private investigator is hired to expel a ghost from a mansion. To deal with the dead, though, he must disentangle the secret vices of the living."

1990-1994

Dyan Pfitzenmeier, '92

Certificate in Technical Writing and Editing

Seattle, WA

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Firefly, President

<http://www.djc.com/news/ae/11183491.html>

I use my imagination to craft messages that convey people's passion for their work. In 2001, I started Firefly, a consulting business, which specializes in communication, public relations, and marketing. Services include strategic messaging, writing and editing, graphic design, and art direction for electronic and print media. My UW certificate serves as a knowledge base

and fuels continuing education. I like to travel, read, write, visit artistic venues, and play outside where I occasionally catch fireflies.

Chuck Martin, '93

BSTC

twriter@sonic.net

chuck_martin@intuit.com

Senior Information Designer, QuickBooks

Accounting & Business Operations COE

Intuit

<http://www.writeforyou.com>

Presented "Using Dreamweaver As Your RoboHelp Editor" at the 2006 WritersUA Conference on Software User Assistance



After more than a decade of working in companies large and small in Silicon Valley, I began my dream job as a Senior Information Designer at Intuit in February, 2006. As a member of the QuickBooks Learning & Assistance team, I play an integral part in shaping both the interaction design and the user assistance of QuickBooks features in order to provide a great user experience for our customers. I'm one of the Tech Leads in our group, helping others in the group when they run into problems, and looking for ways to make everyone's work experience better. I really enjoy working here; it truly is a Great Place to Work.

On the personal side, I still enjoy living in the San Francisco Bay Area, definitely a Great Place to Live. I keep busy with evening classes, enjoy the shopping (there's really no place in the world like Fry's Electronics) and (occasionally) the culture, and play in several sports leagues (typically softball and basketball). I also trained (somewhat) last year with the San Francisco Track & Field Club for last summer's Gay Games VII in Chicago, where I won two silver medals, one in the 4 x 100 relay, one in discus.

1995-1999

Norman Ely, '95

MSTC

Nevada City, CA

norm@normely.com

Self-employed

<http://www.normely.com>

Hi TC folks! I'm still mostly doing website maintenance, though I recently did some information design consulting for www.aorafting.com (their maps and layout). I took my laptop out on my motorcycle last summer and kept my business going while I rode all around California. That was sweet. After a huge scare last year with colon cancer, I am happy to report that I am cancer-free! I recently became a grandpa, and also took up tennis. Enjoy life, everyone—it is temporary!

Tamara Adlin, '96

MSTC

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Adlin, Inc.

<http://www.adlininc.com>

The Persona Lifecycle: Keeping People in Mind Throughout Product Design, 2006

I'm happily running my own customer experience consulting company, Adlin, Inc. In the past year, I had several wonderful and fun clients, including Apple, Zillow, PetSmart, Diettelevision, and others. This year also looks to be a great year for user experience consulting. For all you recent and future grads: you've picked an awesome field. There are more jobs out there than there are people to fill them, especially for Information Architects, User Experience and Usability Specialists, and product/website designers. Go for it!

Mary Dulin, '96

Certificate in Technical Writing and Editing

Everett, WA

mary.dulin@medtronic.com

Principal Technical Writer

Medtronic/Physio-Control

I am currently a Principal Technical Writer at Medtronic/Physio-Control in Redmond, where I am challenged with reestablishing an in-house technical communications department. I am enjoying participating in all aspects of document production and creating a technical publications group.

I came to this career after earlier stints as a social worker and computer programmer. Working as a technical communicator fulfills my desire to help others and allows me to use the technical expertise I gained during my years as a programmer. The UW certificate program provided the basic skills I needed to be successful in my current career.

Gerald S. Ferry, '96

BSTC

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Minecode Corporation

<http://www.minecode.com>

Whether in product development or consulting services, it seems that the idea of technical communication is a valuable commodity. In my opinion, due primarily to the now-evident information age, the potential of proving the value added by skilled technical communicators is easier than ever. Putting the concept of Information Design in context is one of the most important things that UWTC did for me. The training and experiences from UWTC (the good, bad, and otherwise) have helped shape my future into the success it is today. I especially enjoy designing human to device interfaces: I get to apply my skills to real-world scenarios, the solutions of which have the potential to impact subsequent scenarios.

Dan Jones, '96

BSTC

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Cornell Law School

<http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu>

The TC program gave me the tools to articulate why I think some changes or additions to our web pages are useful to our audience, or sometimes are really bad ideas. I greatly enjoy the fact that every day brings different challenges—it's certainly not like being on a production line!

Michael Stivers, '97

MSTC

mhstivers@yahoo.com

QAD, Inc.

Being out in the "real world" certainly makes it easier to pay the bills, but one of the things I enjoyed about UWTC was the chance to explore new ideas. If it were not for the UWTC program, I probably would never have encountered reader response theory, semiotics, the "dialogical imagination," and critical theories of technology. I also learned a tremendous amount about writing style, interface design, and usability testing. At QAD, we are looking at XML-based content management systems and grappling with many "knowledge management" issues. I'm living in California these days but hope to visit Seattle again with my family.

Anita Salem, '97

MSTC

Rio del Mar, CA

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SalemSystems Inc.

<http://www.salemsystems.com>

So I'm three years in California now, absolutely love it here, and am actually having fun expanding my company. It seems that California, at least the Monterey Bay area, is very much into health and sustainability and I have found myself consulting with a variety of cool, early market, and praise-worthy organizations: Family Thrive (an online community for "doing good stuff"); and Playa Viva, an eco-friendly resort. Yes, I'm still doing user-centered design, just at a verrrry early stage and across the user experience. I'm also still working with my fellow TC buddies, Suzanne Boyd and Emma Rose, on some great projects. Being able to work with TC people has been a joy—it's great to be with the most interesting and most competent people on the team. If anybody finds themselves in the Bay Area, come visit!

Anne (Mikolajcik) de Ridder, '99

MSTC

Portland, OR

annederidder@mac.com

User Experience Designer

Tektronix

For the past 2-1/2 years, I have been working as a User Experience Designer in the video products group at Tektronix in Beaverton, OR. I am part of a team of two and work with the User Experience Design (UXD) Architect

for our group, who is responsible for the long term UXD strategy for the product line. What I enjoy most about the work I do is its diversity. I'm not just doing usability tests, but instead working a great deal of the time on customer and market definition and translating customer needs into a design and program strategy. I've also gotten to be involved in the creation and definition of various design toolkits, including a software widget set that will be used to drive a new visual design direction for the entire product line.

By getting to work so closely with the UXD Architect, I have learned a great deal about how important background knowledge in business and strategy is to creating the right design. I would say that 60% of the work we do is about the business of design: what the value proposition is to the purchaser and the end user; what the right market is and identifying its size; and how to create products that fit all of these and help both the end users and the company. I'm so excited by this topic that I used it to define the yearly lecture series for our local SIGCHI group (see www.chifoo.org for more info).

2000-2004

Susanna Malmgren-Grubb, '00

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I left Seattle in 2000 for France, where I consulted as a communications professional from Europe until my return to the U.S. (Florida) in 2003. After attempting to find a local usability position, I became a real estate agent in Jupiter, Florida. My degree from UWTC has given me confidence & skills that apply to all aspects of life.

Jamie Myxter, '00

MSTC

Redmond, WA

In the decade I've worked in technical publishing, two organizational phenomena fascinated me: what works, and what doesn't work. For example, why did doing "the right thing" for end users seem so difficult in some jobs and so easy in others? Why do some easy tasks feel so difficult, and vice versa? Success, or what works, often seems invisible. When things feel easy, we don't notice them. We only notice a process when a simple piece of work requires eight steps, three bugs, and vice president approval.

What influences what works and what doesn't? Structure, in part. According to Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline*, different people in similar roles often produce similar results—not because of individual performance, but due to the structure of an organization, team, office, or software. Computer programmer Melvin Conway, back in 1968, coined



Conway's Law: "Any piece of software reflects the organizational structure that produced it."

Aside from the influence of structure on software, what about the relationship between structure and human systems in organizations? My consulting practice helps leaders and teams identify what works and what doesn't, and from there helps them change their structures and thinking to achieve their goals.

Alex Thayer, '00, '04

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If there is one aspect of my work that I enjoy most, I think it must be the voyeuristic feeling I get when I watch research study participants from behind a one-way mirror. They never know I'm back there.

Karen E. Kasonic, '01

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University of Washington Department of Technical Communication

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I love working in the TC department and getting to know so many students. This academic department is constantly changing, doing cutting-edge work, and provides so many opportunities for collaboration. I've been teaching TC courses and directing the Engineering Communication Program (which includes all of the Teaching Assistants). In my personal life, things have been changing quite a bit, too! I bought a new house in Ravenna this year, and continue to spend time on Whidbey Island with Jackson and the new puppy, Penelope. I enjoy keeping up my friendships with UWTC alumni. If you're ever on campus, stop by the Engineering Annex and say hello!

Chris Kuperstein, '01

BSTC

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Business Process Manager

Teague



After three years at Teague, I'm now a Business Process Manager, continually trying to improve the internal workings of a rapidly growing Industrial Design firm. As I grow my group to support our management team, I have discovered ways to effectively communicate the same critical information to four different stakeholders in the language and visuals they receive best. The other element of my position is keeping management's focus only on the critical information required, removing all the fluff. Providing my company with retooled communication and information pathways has been extremely satisfying.

In the UWTC Program, we learned how to structure information in

such a way as to be received well. I try to teach my staff these principles daily, and the result has been astounding. One noted side benefit has been that the office politics has (almost) gone away. I attribute this result to clear, consistent, and effective communication.

In other news, after searching the world over, I married my High School sweetheart Laura Kuperstein on May 20, 2006.

Marita Graube, '01

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This last year has been busy but fun. I'm back at the UW, enrolled in the TC Day Master's program to learn more about the field and current research. It was the right choice and I'm enjoying the curriculum and class discussions. My boyfriend Dean and I also started our own business last summer. We provide documentation and marketing services, mainly in the form of web design, copy, brochures, and scientific posters. Our main client is still Rosetta Inpharmatics in Seattle, but we've landed a few other contracts as well. I love the flexibility of the business and the variety of projects. I've found many ways to apply my knowledge gained from the undergraduate TC classes to my everyday work and I'm learning even more great ideas in the Master's program.

Tristan Robinson, '01

MSTC

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Tektronix



In the years that I've been working at Tektronix (since even before my graduation from UW), I have gone through phases in which I use different skills that I learned in the TC program. Initially, I was surprised to see how often I was confronted with situations reflecting discourse communities, reader-response theory, positivism, and meaning-making. In school I thought these were purely theoretical concepts that would never come into play in the "real world." A surprise, for sure. Recently, I have been using the more tangible skills I learned in Judy Ramey's usability testing class: clearly defining usability goals and customer use cases.

When I first graduated from UWTC I valued my weekends. A lot. But this year I have started an MBA program at Portland State and have again surrendered my weekends to endless reading lists and homework. The skills I learned at UW are very useful in school as well. I find that I'm able to create much more usable and meaningful documents for my professors. Beautiful documents attract better grades. When I'm not working or doing homework, which is seldom, I spend my time renovating a "fixer" condo in St Johns with an amazing view of the river, downtown, and Mt. Hood.

Robert Frantzen, '02

BSTC

Bremerton, WA

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Field Engineer

Northrop Grumman Marine Systems



My current employment has me working at the Naval Submarine Base in Silverdale, WA, supporting the Trident II missile launcher program as a Field Engineer for Northrop Grumman Marine Systems. This position gives me the opportunity to use some of the skills I learned while in the TC program. My day to day work is focused on providing engineering support of Surface Support Equipment used for the offload and onload of both ballistic and cruise missiles onto Ohio Class submarines. I work with the supporting technical documentation by developing maintenance and repair procedures, reviewing and editing existing documentation, and training technicians on the use of these procedures. The TC program provided a very solid foundation for this type of work and I will continue to develop these skills over time. What I like most about being in the "real world" is actually working in the field I studied in college and putting my Navy background to good use. On a personal note, my second child (a son) will have been born by the time you read this. Hopefully, he and my year-old daughter will be Huskies just like mom and dad. Good luck with your careers and enjoy your time in school.

Nathan W. Moore, '02

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To celebrate the completion of my PhD in Chemical Engineering from UC Davis, this winter I migrated south to the Peruvian Andes for mountain recreation and language study. Living for two months at elevations over 10,000 feet above sea level ought to make just about anyone feel lightheaded, but I managed to keep up with my hiking partner both on the trail and in the day-long Spanish classes. Now I'm back in California, trekking along the start of my career as a postdoctoral researcher. One goal of research is to share knowledge, and it requires all the focused energy of mountain hiking: careful planning, interviewing experts, verifying information, developing a roadmap, and, ultimately, a bit of sweat to keep the words plodding on the right path. These are skills I learned from UWTC that I practice every day. It's rewarding when I can explain a difficult concept to a coworker, friend, or family member. My fiancée, who teaches first grade, agrees that the skills taught at UWTC are relevant to every career. We marry on June 2, 2007, in Davis, CA.

Sally Abolrous, '03

MSTC

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User Experience Manager

T-Mobile USA



I'm a User Experience (UX) Manager at T-Mobile. The UX team is responsible for the design and usability of T-Mobile services and products. The best thing about working at T-Mobile is that each day and each project is unique. Areas that I work on are mobile

2005-2006

interface design, web design, hardware/ergonomics evaluations, usability testing, planning and conducting research, and product strategy. I also write UI requirements and interact with device manufacturers to drive the implementation of T-Mobile requirements. Looking back, I think the most useful courses I've taken are Research Methods, Visual Design, Information Design, Usability Testing, User-interface Design, Human Memory, Human Factors, and of course all the writing and editing courses, which are invaluable. The most important thing I learned by being in the "real world" is how valuable communication skills (verbal and written) are for getting my job done and advancing in my career, and the TC program is a great way to achieve that! On a personal note, Craig and I had our first baby, Dylan, on August 6, 2006. Being a mom is great!

Kristopher Hicks-Green, '03

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Trina Jean Gorman, '04

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Technical Writer
Microsoft



I'm currently a technical writer for Windows Server at Microsoft. Technical writing never sounded appealing during school, but I ended up really enjoying the internship that I had my senior year. I guess you never know! The internship turned into a full-time position, and I feel very lucky to truly like what I do. For me, technical writing is a game: find the way to most efficiently and clearly convey the information, and you win! It is challenging and fun for me.

Anyway, I got married this past June, and I am enjoying every minute! I am also a mentor for two students at Rainier Beach High School, and I play soccer on a team with my husband. I feel lucky to have a good work/life balance, which has always been important to me.

Raina Richart, '04

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The Mosaic Company

I really appreciate all of my experience in UWTC, and I think that my time in the program helped me prepare for what I'm doing today. I'm working as a content developer/consultant with The Mosaic Company, based in Renton, WA. One thing I enjoy about what I'm doing in the "real world" is that it's always an adventure. I travel a lot for my work, and I see new places and meet new people all the time. My current project is in Detroit, MI, but I've spent time in Dallas, TX, and Tulsa, OK, as well. I always look forward to reading about what everyone is doing in the next issue of posTComm!

Craig Allen, '05

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Dresdner Kleinwort
<http://www-128.ibm.com/developerworks/edu/dm-dw-dm-0603allen-i.html>
<http://www.vard.org/jour/06/43/1/hatzakis.html>

I am currently working at Dresdner Kleinwort, a global investment bank, and I live in Tokyo, Japan. What I appreciate most about the MSTC program is that it gave me access to the full resources of the UW, including the Computer Science and Business departments, which helped me get my current job. And the TC program gave me access to IBM, which was my first employer after graduating. I also appreciated the personal attention that I was given by faculty. One thing I have learned since I started working in the "real world" is that connections and access matters just as much or more than knowledge and ability; I would highly recommend students be aware of this and actively try to meet people in relevant areas.

Erin Easter, '05

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After graduating, I began working as the Lead Technical Writer at Tableau Software in Fremont, WA. Tableau is database visualization software that helps business users see and understand data. I am responsible for the online and offline help, our online training and support center, a variety of quick start guides, and miscellaneous web development for the marketing department. I enjoy my varied responsibilities because I get to exercise both my creative and technical strengths. In addition, I really like being involved in a variety of projects because I get the opportunity to work closely with extremely talented people who are experts in their field. These interactions create a challenging and motivating environment where I am encouraged to constantly improve myself and the product.

In addition to Tableau, I am also the vice president and co-founder of Excition, Inc., a personalized commencement product company. Along with two partners, I have been involved with providing highly personalized announcements, commemorative jewelry, and other products to graduates at UW for the past three years. At Excition, I participate in all aspects of the business; however, I particularly enjoy writing, editing, and designing our marketing communication, including printed advertising, sales packets, and proposals.

Shirin Tabrizi, '05

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Developer Platform & Evangelism

Division Program Manager

Microsoft

PosTComm, 2005

Sound Transit - Shop, Dine & Ride

Guide



Hello everyone! I am busily working at Microsoft as a Program Manager in the Developer Platform & Evangelism Division. I manage content development and delivery for early adoption programs worldwide. I work with great people and really enjoy my job. Having a TC background has been very beneficial in many ways. I would encourage anyone to pursue TC and try as many different courses as you can—a diverse background will come in handy when you have no clue what career path you want to take.

Samantha Woogerd, '05

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Three months after earning my MSTC degree I changed roles at Microsoft to become a Program Manager for Office Live Meeting, a web conferencing application. My Master's degree is a major factor in where I find myself today, with opportunities to assist in the creation of technical communication tools used around the world and shaping the future of Unified Communications.

To stay involved with UWTC after graduation, I volunteered on the 2006 posTComm team. It was one of the most rewarding experiences I had with the department. In June, my husband Mike and I welcomed our first child together, Sydney. My days are filled even without attending graduate school, but my hope for the future is to stay involved with UWTC.

Christal Jenkins, '06

BSTC

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AOL/Tegic Communications



The best part of being in the "real world" is being able to directly apply my learning experience in the classroom and outside to my current job. It is rewarding to know my hard work was not in vain.

The TC program allows students to gain a real working environment perspective. The curriculum strategically prepares students for various career paths that take technology and other solutions to the next level, and the program encourages students to take responsibility for their learning environment and make the most of every opportunity. TC is about equipping students and developing leaders.

I strongly appreciated the sense of community amongst faculty and students. This communal environment allowed me to have dedicated resources and exposure to high-level work projects as I improved my skills inside and outside of the classroom. I left the program feeling

equipped and empowered to make the most of my career. Today my work serves as a reflection of what I learned from being a part of the community within our department. I have done numerous competitive analysis studies (not externally published) and worked on the T9 predictive text input device tutorial for Cingular Wireless for their HTC Star Trek cell phone.

Annie Liao Luk, '06

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Sakson & Taylor



The classes that I enjoyed most as a student in the UWTC Master's program were those related to user-centered design (UCD). I enjoyed the hands-on projects and the opportunities to work in teams. One of my most memorable UCD classes covered the entire process of how to redesign a website from beginning to end. By the end of the summer, my team and I had conducted a mini usability study, learned methods for analyzing data, and redesigned a website based on our findings.

User-centered website design has come in handy on the job in many ways. Whether I am writing a document or designing an application, I try to keep my audience or user in mind. In one of my most recent jobs, I learned how to write for an application that will never appear in English, thus learning to write clearly, globally, and in a concise manner. In addition to writing, I have also had the opportunity to lend advice on intranet and website design.

I believe a technical writer plays many roles. As I continue my journey as a technical writer, I hope to wear the hats of both writer and user-interface designer.

Scott A. Main, '06

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Google, Technical Writer

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Working as a Technical Writer is actually a lot like being in school, except it's nothing like school. As a Technical Writer, I learn a lot of new things and then write about them—a task that can be challenging, but is always satisfying. Plus I get paid, and that's pretty neat. And being a writer for Google means that I work with a lot of very smart and creative people, I am given a lot of freedom to choose the kind of projects I'd like to work on, and best of all, I work closely with (or at least witness) the development of products that the world doesn't even know about; so, in a sense, I work in the future.

Looking back on my experience in TC, though, I believe the experiences I gained working with others have been most valuable. Although I work alone for a majority of my hours, those hours that I do spend with others require efficiency and good communication. If you don't communicate and work well with people, then your level of contribution will be static. It's a dynamic industry, and so you must be dynamic, too.

Thank You to the UWTC Donors

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Thank you

Contributions to the department are used in many ways, including the student travel fund. Here are two accounts of the difference donations make to students.

I went to both IPCC 2006 and ASIST 2006 to talk about the work we've been doing on humanitarian communication systems. It was a good opportunity for me to talk to people from different schools and, in the case of ASIST, different disciplines. We were able to discuss how best to understand the challenges people and organizations face in designing and using systems for humanitarian users.

It was important for me to have these conversations because, while the UW is a large campus, these conferences give people a chance to step out of their silos of work and engage in dialogues that too rarely occur for graduate students during our normal workaday campus existence.

I could not have done this without departmental support, and for that I am grateful. A reasonable and highly fruitful goal of UWTC alumni donations should be eventually funding all travel expenses, especially for PhD students. For any PhD students even considering a faculty career, these conferences are critical. The department benefits by ensuring the academy and industry see the work we're doing and can connect a name and face with that work.

- Steve Lappenbush, PhD Student

Thanks to the student travel fund, I had the opportunity to network last fall with colleagues from around the country at the annual "Council on Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication" (CPTSC) conference held at San Francisco State University. CPTSC focuses on programmatic issues rather than individual research, providing a broad overview of TC programs and the opportunity to meet notables in the field.

I presented a short paper on peer learning among UWTC doctoral students, taking the stance that peer-learning facilitates professional socialization and skill building while maximizing the resources of small and emerging programs. All the presenters on my panel focused on cross-disciplinary and team connections, providing me valuable resources for my doctoral research. I also caught up with former doctoral students who last year at CPTSC were beginning the academic "job search" process. They are now happily employed faculty members, encouraging news to someone whose career plans include a faculty position.

A highlight of the conference was the field trip to the Stanford Linear Accelerator (SLAC), a 3-mile long "instrument" sited along the San Andreas fault (see <http://www.slac.stanford.edu/>). Here I discovered that my conception of the structure of the atom (neutron + proton + electrons) is dated, to the 1970s. After an overview of developments in the field of particle physics, we toured the facilities and met with staff from the publications department.

- Kathleen Gygi, PhD Student



The 2007 posTComm team recreated the above scene at the Suzzallo steps (1953, courtesy of the UW Libraries). In juxtaposition, the two images reflect the change in the diversity of the UW community. The articles within emphasize this change and further reflect the changes we have seen in the field of technical communication.

Front cover (L to R): Kate Long, posTComm Adviser; Rosalinda Rosales, Project Manager, Writer/Editor, and Layout; Athena Epilepsia, Writer/Editor; Eliot Yamaguchi, Writer; Christine Oon, Writer/Editor; Devor Barton, In the Real World Editor and Writer; and Jen Becker, Editor and Contributing Writer. Not pictured: Judy Ramey, posTComm Adviser; Amanda Ahn, Photographer and Writer/Editor; Myia Bloomfield, Chad Driesbach, Mark Licata, Amy Pletcher, Anthony Shelley, Contributing Writers; Brandon Ray, Writer; and Danielle Schechter, Layout.

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