

Lines & Letters

Northeast Ohio STC Newsletter



September 2011 Issue

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President's Corner: September 2011

Fall is upon us, and as usual, Northeast Ohio can expect to see all sorts of weather patterns – from 90 degrees and sunny one day to 60 degrees and raining the next. As Ohioans, we have grown accustomed to this change, and are ready for anything that Mother Nature throws at us! This new STC calendar also brings changes, and though they may not be as drastic as the weather, they are definitely something to look forward to.

As the new STC term opens, we have a new theme this year guiding our chapter, "We are here for you." This year, your executive board and committee members are committed to finding out how you, as an NEO STC member, can get the most out of your membership. We already have many plans in the works, including mentorship from the Academic Relations board, and the highly anticipated return of the Competitions committee. We'll also be wanting to hear directly from you, our devoted members. As this year's president, I am making it my priority to contact as many members as I can on a one-on-one basis to find out how the chapter can best serve your needs. Keep a look out in your email these upcoming months for a personal letter from me!

Finally, I wanted to say just how excited I am to be your president this year. We have so many plans and programs already in place. This month's speaker, John Ettore, is already being anticipated as a lively speech on freelance writing. We look forward to his, as well as many other great speakers this year! Keep yourself updated on the monthly activities by actively checking our calendar!

Sharon Jendrisak

In the Spotlight: Joshua Palmer

Joshua Palmer won the recent 2011 All-Ohio Scholarship in Technical Communication and wrote a scholarship application letter that very much impressed the scholarship judging committee.

About his interest in studying technical communication, Josh wrote "Although I have worked as a writer, editor and writing instructor since completing my undergraduate degree in 1998, it is only in the past several years that I came to realize how my work fit into this wide-ranging and interesting field of other professionals, and that I could connect with these new peers through associations like STC."

Concerning his current master's thesis work, Josh explains that his thesis project is "to develop a model for

communication needs assessment geared specifically toward nonprofits and small businesses. I am working on the project in collaboration with a number of northeast Ohio nonprofit groups, most of them focused on antipoverty initiatives and community revitalization efforts. I plan to make my needs assessment platform available for free online when my thesis is finished. Although I will pursue a professional career as a technical writer when I finish my degree, I also feel strongly about continuing to share the insights and methods I am learning with groups in the nonprofit sector."

Josh further explains that this past spring he won a research assistant fellowship that allowed him "to work with MSU professor Dr. Jennifer Veltsos on the Technical Communication Genealogy Project. This is an online database that will collect and map all of the scholarship (graduate theses and dissertations) completed to date on technical communication-related topics. Dr. Veltsos and I had some mind-bending but very fun conversations about what it means to influence another person intellectually, and how those networks of influence might be visualized." Dr. Veltsos presented the work on the project at the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) conference this May.



With interests ranging from documentation and proposal writing to usability and needs assessment, Josh is also interested in visual design. "Perhaps what I enjoy most about technical communication as a career choice is the variety of activities and tools it encompasses. The technology ensures that there are always

new possibilities for learning, which matches well with my personality."

Josh recently accepted a position at Quadax as a technical writer. We look forward to his continuing impressive contributions to our field.

Thank you to Judy Grove for providing the picture above, showing Josh during a presentation in training.

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Competitions are back!

NEO STC is proud to announce that, after a one-year hiatus, we are again hosting a regional technical communication competition.

Important Deadlines

- ◆ October 7, 2011: Judges applications must be received by this date
- ◆ October 14, 2011: Entries must be received by this date

This year, the competition is divided into four distinct categories:

- ◆ Informational Materials
- ◆ Instructional Materials
- ◆ Promotional Materials
- ◆ User Support Materials

There are three award levels:

- ◆ Distinguished Technical Communication
- ◆ Excellence
- ◆ Merit

When you submit an entry in the competition, you receive detailed evaluation and feedback from your peers and recognition for your work. In addition, submissions that receive Distinguished Technical Communication or Excellence awards are automatically entered in the international competition, where your submission will receive additional evaluation.

Full competition rules are available on the STC website. See General Information and Competition Rules on the Competitions page for details.

Be on the lookout for application forms and more details in the coming weeks.