

Byline



Bi-Monthly Newsletter for STC Chicago Members and Supporters

A Message from the Administrative Council

Dear STC Chicago members and supporters:

We are aware that this is a trying time for everyone. Social distancing has forced us to reschedule the annual Volunteer Recognition and Awards Banquet and we have canceled our in-person April meeting. We have planned for a streamed Webinar for April (see the website for details). We will plan for May once we know the status of the world situation.

Please do know that we will continue to support you in any way you need. Please keep watching our website and our Facebook page for the most current updates.

We know you are not all used to working from home on a full-time basis. Please see the link later in this newsletter to the STC blog article with tips for WFH from those who do it on a regular basis. If you find yourself without work during this time, please follow our LinkedIn group as that is where we post job openings that come our way.

All in all, please do take care of yourselves during this stressful time and make sure to take the time to enjoy friends and family – even if you have to do so virtually for now.



April Meeting

Due to the current Shelter in Place orders, there will be no in-person meeting in April. We will likely hold off on in-person meetings until the banquet in June. Please watch the website for any announcements.

Chapter Officer Elections Open in April

Our annual election of officers will open in mid-April and run for three weeks after the opening date. All registered chapter members will receive an election email. If you are a registered member and do not receive the election email, please reach out to secretary@stc-chicago.com

April Webinar Series

Become a Content Hero: Promote Your Organization Using Assets You Already Have

Newsflash: There's no easy way to do anything in this world, including creating content. But once that's out of the way, there's no easier way to promote your brand than by repurposing content. Join Matt Sullivan as he shows you how to turn existing content (like a best-selling FrameMaker book) into a community of users by slicing content up into eBooks, blog posts, webinars, courseware, online training, and more. Sprinkle in the most basic of advertising (perhaps \$5/day in Facebook advertising) to turn your tech comm into a marketing juggernaut that increases your exposure, expands your reach, and even turns a profit!

NOTE: This is a pre-recorded webinar originally presented at an STC Summit. This webinar is free of charge, regardless of your membership status. Chances are you're working from home during this time, so join us for an hour!

REGISTRATION

LINK: <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=erucd7bab&oeidk=a07egzxo1u23ff371ff>

Wednesday, Apr 8
12:00 - 1:00 pm CST
FREE for everyone

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LavaCon 2020

Enhance your skills. Find your tribe. Make a Difference.

Celebrating their 25th Anniversary**STC Chicago Earns Platinum Community Achievement Award**

We are very excited to share the news that we have earned Platinum level for the 2020 STC CAA. This award recognizes our chapter's activities for the 2019 calendar year.

Our certificate citation reads:

"For your creative ways of engaging your chapter members and the TechComm community. Highlights include content-rich newsletters, student writing contest, design contest, Get Real Program, and all your engaging social media activity."

STC News: Summit Update

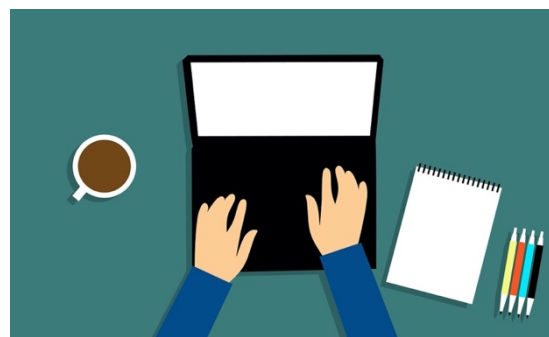
Due to recent events, STC's 2020 [Technical Communication Summit & Expo](#) is going virtual on 17-20 May. Don't miss the opportunity to explore 100+ educational sessions and networking events.

Under this year's theme Career Vision 20/20, the Summit's content is focused on information to help you stay in control of your career and your professional goals.

**Tips for Working from Home**

If you have suddenly switched from an office setting to working at home, everything will be alright. This pandemic is temporary and we will return to our workplaces to socialize with coworkers and conduct meetings like before.

In the meantime, [click here](#) to read STC Fellow Mollye Barrett's recent Notebook blog post featuring tips for working from home.



Student Article Writing Contest

Some of our STC Chicago members recently paid a visit to York High School in Elmhurst to sit on a Tech Comm Panel. We thought you'd like to hear about it from the students, so we had a contest for the best summary article. The winning article is below. Congratulations to the student authors, Regan Toole and Greta Roy. They are High School Seniors who are taking an honors class in technical communication, with dual credit at College of DuPage.

STC Chicago Members Offer York High School Students Career Advice

By Regan Toole and Greta Roy



On February 11, 2020, five members of The Chicago chapter of the *Society for Technical Communication* met with York Community High School students participating in the Technical Writing Honors class. The members worked as a panel to share their educational backgrounds, career life, workplace environment, and writing background. The panelists met with the students in small groups in order to further discuss their work and to answer questions.

Technical communication is important because it allows writers to communicate complex ideas to non-expert readers. The main goals of technical communication are to be accurate, brief, and concise. The *Society for Technical Communication* is a professional group with the mission of advancing the technical communication field, with more than 4,500 members worldwide.

The students that met with the STC panelists were able to gain insight about what a career in technical

communication would look like. According to one of the students, "It was interesting to hear an in-depth account of what these writers do day to day. You don't really get to hear that."

Each of the students meet with three of the five panelists to further learn about their career. The panelists included: MaryKay Grueneberg (Senior User Assistance Developer at SAP), Lynne Williamson (Technical Writing Manager at SAP Fieldglass), Linda Kelley (Senior Information Developer at Synergex), Adam Evans (Technical Documentation Manager at Strata Decision Technology), and Linda Buchalo (Technical Writer at Strata Decision Technology).

Many of the questions asked had to do with the day to day life as a Technical Writer. Linda Kelley answered, "Since I work from home and my company is located in California, I usually start later in the day and end later. I am also always checking my email, meeting with the marketing teams, and going over blockers in the system." She also mentioned how she is one of three other technical writers for the company and that it is vital that she has good communication with the other employees.

Another thing that the panelists brought up was that technical communication is a part of almost every aspect in life and it is vital for companies to be successful. They also brought up that since they work in a software-related field, they didn't need to be experts about the technology. Lynne Williamson answered, "No a software background is not required because I am always communicating with the developers to understand from where they are coming from to see what I need to do to create a successful end result for the customers."

After the panelists finished meeting with the students, one student discussed her key takeaways from hearing from the panelists: "I really enjoyed it because it was Informative and helped me see the different careers in Technical Writing. It also gave me a better view of the writing workload and to learn about all of the different people you will get to work with."

Students and other people interested in writing can learn more about technical communication on the [STC website](#).

On the Horizon This Summer: 2020 eLearning Showcase

Mark your calendar for August 11, 2020! As of this writing, the 2020 Chicago eLearning & Technology Showcase will be held on Tuesday, August 11 at the Northern Illinois University Naperville Conference Center. Follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) for announcements about registration rates and other news in the coming months.

2020 Showcase Speakers Wanted

Do you have expertise on using technology to create, enhance, or manage elearning? Perhaps you'd like to share lessons learned from a successful—or challenging—project. Or maybe you have great tips for using a toolset for learning, training, or education initiatives.

Apply to be a speaker for a 50-minute session or a 5-minute Learning Spark presentation. To learn more, see the [Call for Speakers](#). Keep in mind that applications are due by **Friday, April 3**.

We Need You: Volunteer for the 2020 Showcase

Would you like to help shape this year's Chicago eLearning & Technology Showcase? Then, join one of our planning committee teams.

The Showcase is run by volunteers, and we have a wide range of positions. You could recruit sponsors and exhibitors, spread the word as part of the marketing team, or provide support with registration, finance, or general management. For more information, see the [Volunteer Roles & Responsibilities \(PDF\)](#) and then complete the [volunteer interest form](#)

Sponsor the 2020 Showcase

The Chicago eLearning & Technology Showcase has provided a diverse educational and networking experience for the elearning community since 2008. Our annual, one-day conference attracts 325+ elearning professionals, with a wide range of experience and roles. If you are interested in supporting the elearning community, consider becoming a sponsor in 2020.

As a sponsor or exhibitor, you will communicate a message of support to our diverse group of attendees, which typically includes Chief Learning Officers, Facilitators, Trainers, Instructors, Training Managers, Learning and Development Managers, Instructional Designers, Technical Communicators, eLearning Specialists, Managers, Directors of Training, Education Coordinators and Non-profit Administrators.

To learn more about this opportunity, contact sponsorship@chicagoelearningshowcase.com



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Byline is a bi-monthly publication of the STC Chicago chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC), a non-profit membership organization serving the needs of technical communication professionals.

STC mission statement: Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication.

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Subscriptions: The current issue of *Byline* and all archived editions are available on the [STC Chicago Website](#).



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