

# Byline



Newsletter for STC Chicago Members

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At its August 2007 meeting, the STC Board of Directors voted to change the dues structure. The STC office has put together the following Q&A to help explain the changes. If you have questions, please contact Lloyd Tucker at [lloyd@stc.org](mailto:lloyd@stc.org).

### **How much are my dues increasing?**

It depends on where you're located and what membership category you choose. About 75% of STC members will see an increase of \$25. Others will see more or less, depending on their circumstances.

For U.S. members, the following categories are available:

- **Classic Membership** includes both printed and online publications, and a choice of either one chapter and one Special Interest Group (SIG) or up to three SIGs, for \$175.
- **E-Membership** includes online publications, and a choice of either one chapter and one SIG or up to three SIGs, for \$165.
- **Student or Retired Membership** includes online publications, one student chapter, one regular chapter, and up to three SIGs for \$75.

Don't forget that if 2007 was your first year as an STC member and you joined mid-year,

you will receive credit toward your 2008 dues. Look for details when the STC office sends out renewal notices.

### **Can I join extra chapters and SIGs?**

Extra chapters are \$25 each. Extra SIGs are \$10 each. This is the same regardless of your membership category or tier.

### **Why are my dues increasing?**

Two reasons: The rising costs of running a non-profit organization, and the new services and benefits STC is creating for its members.

The costs of operating a non-profit organization have gone up. The reasons include the effects of inflation, rising health care costs, rising costs of printing, and many other factors. Even if STC were standing still, doing the same thing year after year, we would have to raise dues to continue operating.

However, STC is not standing still. The past year has been one of laying the groundwork for new and innovative services and benefits of the type that our members demand.

- STC has improved financial support for chapters. Under the new chapter funding model approved by the Board in August, STC chapters will get more money per



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member than before. This empowers local STC leaders to provide improved programs and services.

- STC has improved staff support for communities. Chapters and SIGs look to the Leadership Community Resource (LCR) for help and guidance. Recently, the STC office added a staff position to provide support to communities both by assisting the LCR in its work and by working directly with community leaders.
- The STC office recently relaunched its e-mail newsletter, News & Notes, expanding it to include industry newsbriefs on topics of interest to technical communicators.
- STC has hired economist Rick O'Sullivan to produce a comprehensive salary database for technical writers based on data gathered by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). More wide ranging and statistically valid than STC's old salary survey (1.25 million business establishments are surveyed), the new salary database will, for the first time, provide STC members with salary data according to industry as well as geography.
- STC is working to influence the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to replace the outdated definition of "technical writer" in the Standard Occupational Classification System (SOC) with a new definition for technical communicator. The SOC definitions are used in the BLS salary survey that is sent to 1.25 million business establishments. The BLS also governs what is published in the Occupational Handbook, the prime reference source for career counselors, educators, and guidance counselors nationwide. If the SOC definition changes, so will the labor market measures and the advice that the DOL gives job seekers. If successful, STC's efforts will raise the stature of the profession significantly.
- STC has invested in upgrades to the technology that supports the day-to-day work of running a

non-profit association. While not a direct new benefit to members, these upgrades will allow the STC office staff to provide improved services that will result in increased member satisfaction. In short, we've given the STC office staff the tools they need to do their jobs more effectively.

#### **What does STC do with member dues?**

STC works to deliver the best possible services and benefits to its members. Therefore, it spends the money it receives on things that are necessary to reach this goal. Publications require editing, design, and printing. Conferences require advertising and meeting room rentals. Live Web seminars require an IT infrastructure. Just keeping a non-profit organization running requires a staff, which means salaries and office space rental. For more information, please see the article "Where Do My STC Dues Go?" at

[www.stc.org/membership/duesStructure03.asp](http://www.stc.org/membership/duesStructure03.asp).

#### **Can't you lower my dues instead of raising them?**

Unfortunately, no. Even if STC were not creating new services and benefits for its members, the increased costs of doing business would require a dues increase. The fact is that STC dues have not kept up with the increase in costs.

Currently, STC spends about \$300 per member. If STC was 100% dues dependent, each member would need to pay \$300 in dues. However, STC has other sources of revenues: conference registration, exhibits, sponsorships, advertising, royalties, and interest from investments. These other sources bring the costs down to about \$150 per member; therefore, STC needs \$150 to cover the rest of the costs. The new dues structure packages membership in STC with membership in STC communities, bringing the prices to what you see above.

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### Where can I express my opinions about this?

If you would like to discuss the dues and funding changes with other members of STC, including STC Board members, please visit the Member Forum at <http://stcforum.org/viewtopic.php?pid=4182>. When you use the discussion topic on the forum, it gives STC leaders a chance to see and respond to all comments.Ω



### Volunteering - What's in it for You?

By Mary Whalen (Sojoodi)

A couple years ago, I met someone who I really enjoyed working with as STC volunteers. At one point, I needed a resource for a project I was managing. He was the first person who came to mind, and I brought him on. A couple months after our project ended, he offered me some work in return!Ω

### Student Outreach Efforts

By Mary Whalen (Sojoodi)

The school year has begun, and it's time to start working with our colleges and universities. STC Chicago would like to help students learn about the field of technical communication and provide students support in starting their careers.

There are many ways that you can help:

- Speaking to groups about technical communications
- Talking to students at a career fair
- Making connections with academic contacts
- Mentoring students

If you would like to participate in these or any other student outreach activities, please contact Mary Whalen at [msojoodi@yahoo.com](mailto:msojoodi@yahoo.com) or 847-797-1779.Ω

### STC Chicago Membership at a Glance

As of October, 2007:

Total Members: 359

Associate Fellows: 6

Fellows: 6

Senior Members: 214

Members: 124

Student Members: 9Ω

### STC Membership at a Glance

As of September 05, 2007:

Total members: 14,548

Members residing in the U.S.: 12,237

Members residing in Canada: 1,381

Members residing elsewhere: 930

Total communities\*: 155Ω

\*Includes 104 professional chapters, 30 student chapters, and 21 SIGs.

### Call for Competition Entries

STC Chicago has opened its Call for Entries for the 36th Annual Technical Publications, Art, and Online Competitions. This call for entries is your invitation to participate in the following Society for Technical Communication (STC) Chicago competitions:

- Online Communication Competition
- Technical Art Competition
- Technical Publications Competition

Please visit [www.stc-chicago.org](http://www.stc-chicago.org) for the complete 2007 Call for Entries document, the 2007 Entry Form, and the 2007 Payment Form.

Contact [competition@stc-chicago.org](mailto:competition@stc-chicago.org) if you have any questions or would like to volunteer as a judge.Ω



## President's Message

By Linda Jansak

Kudos to Beth Lisberg-Najberg and all who helped to coordinate the Alliance event on September 18!

As our Alliance Liaison, Beth worked tirelessly to organize the evening. John Hartigan, Dan Dornbrook, Mike Tillmans, Ellen Smatlak, and Chris Hester all contributed to the effort. Other STC Chicago members supported the event by participating in roundtable discussions. It was all quite a success! We've already received some great feedback from those who attended. We also received high marks from *Tech Venue's* David Flint, who reviews local tech events. See David's column at the *Sun-Times* for more:

[www.suntimes.com/technology/560248,CST-FIN-tech17.article](http://www.suntimes.com/technology/560248,CST-FIN-tech17.article).

Chris Hester's presentation was excellent. She spoke about Tools and Technologies for Collaborating and Building Community. This is just the type of information many of the attendees wanted to hear! As we collaborate with others in this way, in alliances like the one we are fortunate to be a part of here in Chicago, we'll get the STC name out there, make new and valuable connections for our community, and attract new members to our group.

I hope we'll have many more opportunities to collaborate with Alliance members this year. Stay tuned for more!Ω

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## Scholarship Program Now Accepting Applications

By Chris Hester

Each year, STC Chicago awards a \$500 scholarship to two students who are pursuing degrees in or related to the field of technical communication. This year, students (both full-time and part-time) from the following programs are invited to apply for the scholarships:

**College of DuPage:** Technical Communication Certificate

**College of Lake County:** Technical Communication Program

**DePaul University:** Master of Arts in Writing

**Illinois Institute of Technology:** Technical Communication (PhD, MS, certificate, BS), Information Architecture (MS), Instructional Design (certificate), International Technical Communication (certificate), Internet Communication (BS)

**Northern Illinois University:** Graduate Certificate in Technical Writing, M.A. in English with a Concentration in Professional Writing, English (BA)

The application information packet is available at [www.stc-chicago.org](http://www.stc-chicago.org). The deadline to apply is November 30, 2007, and the recipients will be announced in March 2008.Ω

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## Members Voting on STC Bylaws

*By Mary Wise - STC Bylaws Committee Chair*

STC's Bylaws referendum is under way. Please vote and make your voice heard on this important matter. As you know, over the past eight months the Bylaws Committee has been rewriting the Society Bylaws. We needed to make the different sections and articles of the Bylaws consistent, streamline the Bylaws so that they have only the necessary information, and—most important—bring the Bylaws into compliance with New York state law.

On several occasions, including the Bylaws Forum at the Technical Communication Summit in Minneapolis, members have had the opportunity to provide comments and feedback on the proposed Bylaws. The committee has listened to all member suggestions and thanks everyone who contributed to improving the document.

For the referendum to pass, the proposed Bylaws must be approved by two-thirds of the votes cast. The Bylaws Committee and STC's Board of Directors urge you to approve the proposed Bylaws for the following reasons:

The proposed Bylaws comply with New York state law. Because the Society is incorporated in New York, their nonprofit association law takes precedence, and our Bylaws should reflect that compliance. If the referendum passes, STC can avoid the need for frequent and costly legal interpretation of the current Bylaws.

The proposed Bylaws expand the power of the membership to propose amendments to any article of the Bylaws. The proposed Bylaws also protect the membership from the costs in time and money of allowing small groups of members to present frivolous amendments at any time of the year by giving the Board of

Directors the discretionary power to determine whether all amendments should be proposed once a year. The overall plan is to present all proposed amendments once a year with the general Society election.

Copies of the proposed Bylaws, current Bylaws, and a rationale document listing the differences between the two sets of bylaws can be downloaded from [www.stc.org/stcmembers/bylaws01.asp](http://www.stc.org/stcmembers/bylaws01.asp).

To vote online, go to <http://eballot3.votenet.com/stc/login.cfm> and log in with your STC member number and password to access the ballot. Members who have indicated a preference for voting by paper ballot will receive their ballots and copies of the proposed Bylaws, current Bylaws, and the rationale document in the mail. If you have questions, please contact me at [maryrwise@gmail.com](mailto:maryrwise@gmail.com).

### Group Rate Offered at Carleton

For STC Chicago meetings at the Carleton Hotel in Oak Park, groups of up to six people (from the same organization or from different organizations) who wish to sit together may reserve a table online for \$120.

The table rate is available only with advance online registration (via PayPal). Individual rates are the same as for other meetings at the Carleton. For more information or to register, please go to [www.stc-chicago.org](http://www.stc-chicago.org).

After the online registration deadlines, everyone must register at the door and pay by cash or check. Rates at the door for both members and non-members are higher than the online rates.

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## Upcoming Meetings and Events

### Thursday, October 18: Cyber Law and You

Chris Juillet of Southeast Michigan STC will discuss what technical communicators need to know about laws governing intellectual property and electronic commerce.

**When:** 6 p.m. (presentation at 7). A deli buffet and soft drinks (hot and cold) are included.

**Where:** Carleton Hotel, 1110 Pleasant St., Oak Park.

**Register at:** [www.stc-chicago.org](http://www.stc-chicago.org) (click on "Meetings" then "Meeting Registration").

**For directions:** Call 708-848-5000 or visit the hotel web site: [www.carletonhotel.com/directions.asp](http://www.carletonhotel.com/directions.asp).

### Thursday, November 1: Thursdays @ STC Chicago

Meet your colleagues at various locations for lunch, dinner, or drinks after work. See [www.stc-chicago.org](http://www.stc-chicago.org) for details or to RSVP (click on "Thursdays @ STC Chicago").

### Thursday, November 8: Brand Yourself Without Getting Burned

Glory Borgeson of Borgeson Consulting will discuss how to find the right brand for your business and your career.

**When:** 6 p.m. (presentation at 7). A buffet and soft drinks (hot and cold) are included.

**Where:** DePaul University at Meadows Corporate Center, 2550 W. Golf Rd. Suite 255, Rolling Meadows.

**Register at:** [www.stc-chicago.org](http://www.stc-chicago.org) (click on "Meetings" then "Meeting Registration").

**For directions:** Call 847-437-9522 or visit the campus web site: <http://suburbancampuses.depaul.edu>

### Saturday, November 10: Intro to FrameMaker Workshop

Betsy Maaks will teach her Introduction to FrameMaker Class

**When:** 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Where:** Knowledge Systems Institute, Skokie, IL.

**Register at:** [www.stc-chicago.org](http://www.stc-chicago.org) (click on "Meetings" then "Meeting Registration").

**For directions:** Contact the Education Committee at [education@stc-chicago.org](mailto:education@stc-chicago.org) or go to [www.ksi.edu](http://www.ksi.edu).

### Saturday, November 17: Joint Workshops with STC Wisconsin Chapter

Choose from among three workshops sponsored by STC Wisconsin ([www.stc-wi.org](http://www.stc-wi.org)) and STC Chicago Communities ([www.stc-chicago.org](http://www.stc-chicago.org)).

**When:** November 17, 2007 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. CST

**Where:** College of Lake County, 19351 W. Washington, Grayslake, Illinois 60030

**Register at:** [www.stc-chicago.org](http://www.stc-chicago.org) (click on "Meetings" then "Meeting Registration").

**For Directions:** Go to [www.clcillinois.edu](http://www.clcillinois.edu).

#### Cost per Workshop:

Speaker	Title	Cost
Dr. Klaus Hofer	Applied Psychology for Technical Communicators	\$89 (members) / \$99 (non-members) Full day (9:00 – 3:00)
Jack Molisani	Career Makeover	\$29 (members) / \$39 (non-members) Half day
Becky Hall	Business Proposal Writing	\$29 (members) / \$39 (non-members) Half day

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## STC Seeks New Members

Watch for the big kickoff of STC's upcoming "member-get-a-member" campaign, also known as Communicate and Replicate, begins in October. As an STC member, you will get the chance to help create a stronger society and shape the future of technical communicators.

The campaign's success depends on you! Here's a chance to open your contact list and contact your business partners and colleagues who are not members of STC. There have been huge changes in STC in the past year, and it is time for all of us to "tell our powerful story."

Unlike other years, this campaign will offer recognition and fantastic prizes to the top recruiters -- both chapters and individuals. The more you recruit, the bigger the prizes, and the more powerful STC will become. For example, how would you like a free registration to

the Technical Communication Summit, to be held June 1-4, 2008, in Philadelphia? It's a win-win-win situation!

For more information about recruiting new STC members or the Communicate and Replicate campaign, please contact Stacey O'Donnell, Membership Development Manager, at 571-366-1915, or e-mail [stacey.odonnell@stc.org](mailto:stacey.odonnell@stc.org)

### Congratulations Senior Members!

STC Chicago is pleased to announce that the following chapter members have attained the rank of senior member:

Gary G. Hernandez  
Chris P. Michalek  
Neil F. Pierson Ω

### Ericka Loynes Awarded 2007-2008 STC Scholarship

STC NIU student chapter president Ericka Loynes was one of four recipients of this year's STC scholarship granted for exhibiting "potential in the field of technical communication, strong academic records, and high recommendations from instructors." Congratulations, Ericka! Ω

### Welcome New Members!

Members who joined STC Chicago in 2007:

Elaine Baxa  
Helen Chang  
Susan Cothorn  
Thomas Croak  
Jori Curry  
Lucas Ecklund-Baker  
Scott Fagan  
William Fekrat  
William Gatewood  
Paul Gilman  
Adam Grabowski  
John Harris  
Joyce Heflin  
Willis Johnson  
Stephen Krusoe  
Julia Lee-Kim  
Patricia Leone-Thiel  
Ericka Loynes  
Scott Melnick  
Alton Norris  
Nickolas H. Potter  
Dence Roberge  
Mitchell D. Romanowski  
Tracee Scott-Otis  
Alison Somilleda  
John W. Thornton  
Barb B. Thurston  
Mark Tupy  
Barbara Valentin  
Joel Wells  
Kathryn WozniakΩ

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## Volunteering Builds Value and Experience

By Francis Bao

If you are a member of a professional organization like STC, you may ask yourself a question such as what can I do for this organization to show my personal role as a member? What my organization will be able to provide me to make my membership become more meaningful? For many years, a great number of members of STC Chicago Chapter has volunteered their time and talents to support this one of the largest chapters in the STC community. In return, our chapter has also provided significant values to those volunteers who have contributed through their dedicated work. Volunteering for STC Chicago Chapter will build your professional values and experience.

Volunteering will let members see their personal values in our chapter. This year, the Chicago Chapter received Community of Distinction Award and the Community of Excellence Award at the 2007 Technical Communication Summit in Minneapolis. Our chapter newsletter, *Byline*, received the APEX Award of Excellence. These accomplishments are achieved through the hard work of volunteers of our chapter. Many chapter members have made outstanding services by managing committees, judging entries for chapter competitions, publishing newsletters, organizing workshops, and establishing academic outreach programs. Finally their hard work has paid off, and the volunteers feel proud to be the members of such a great

professional Society. The most important thing is that they will find their own values in the field of technical communication through their creativities.

Volunteering for the chapter will become part of a personal experience of our members. Many members in our chapter work as project managers, writers, trainers, mentors, and instructional designers. Volunteering for chapter activities will be very beneficial in sharpening their professional skills; and those include leadership skills, writing and editing skills, management ability, and creative ability. STC Chicago Chapter always provides opportunities to its members to gain professional experience through volunteering duties.

Our chapter's Online, Technical Art, Technical Publication competition is around the corner. In order to make this year's competition to be successful, we need your help as judges. You will use your talents to upgrade your job skills to meet new challenges in your professions. Remember, volunteering with STC Chicago will let you get a closer look at how your professional Society really works. When you volunteer with Chicago Chapter, you will also better appreciate all of the effort that goes into keeping our chapter strong.Ω



## Byline

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**News guidelines:** Send articles, news, and kudos to Byline at [byline@stc-chicago.org](mailto:byline@stc-chicago.org). Preferred format is a Word for Windows document file via e-mail. We reserve the right to edit for style and space.

**Advertising:** We encourage advertising that follows STC guidelines and promotes services to STC Chicago members.  
Half page (7.5"x4.5"): \$300 (1 issue)  
Whole page (7.5"x9"): \$500 (1 issue). Discounts for multiple printings.

Electronic copy only in .TIF, .GIF, or .JPG format. Send ads to [byline@stc-chicago.org](mailto:byline@stc-chicago.org). Checks should be made payable to STC Chicago and sent to P.O. Box 1745, Palatine, IL 60078-1745. For more information, e-mail [byline@stc-chicago.org](mailto:byline@stc-chicago.org).

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## STC Chicago Chapter Leaders 2007 - 2008

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# Byline

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