
New STC Senior Members

By Jeff Cox
Past President

Spring brings with it graduations, but these are not limited to only those from educational institutions. Three members of our Huntsville-North Alabama (HNA) community have recently graduated to STC senior member status.

Senior Member Status

A technical communicator must be a member of STC for five years to attain senior status. The trio receiving the honor this year have not only been members, but also served in important positions on the HNA council.

Jon Simmons

Former webmaster Jon Simmons became a technical communicator because his education was communication-related. He said he initially became involved in STC because it was encouraged at his workplace and provided a resource for technical writers. He spent some time as a non-member, then joined again several years ago because he missed being in contact with other technical communication professionals.

"The greatest benefit of STC for me has been the networking opportunities and the chance

to support the chapter as webmaster," Jon said.

He has also performed data analysis of our community's STC salary survey.

Kathryn Smith

It would have been difficult for new STC senior member and former HATS (Huntsville Association of Technical Societies) liaison Katie Smith not to gravitate toward working as a writer. Her father edited and published a magazine and her mother is currently working in the writing profession.

Her educational background includes sociology, psychology, adult education and distance learning. She has over twenty years of technical writing experience that ranges from copy editor (her first job, which she started a week after graduating high school) to robotic vehicle documentation to her current position writing custom public safety software documentation at Intergraph Corporation.

Katie said one reason she joined STC was so that she could network with other writers. She is also a member of the Lone Writer SIG (Special Interest Group).

Sherry Anderson

Our third new senior member, co-president Sherry Anderson, is a spring graduate of UAH's English master's program and has a belief in lifelong learning. She began her master's in 2001 and received it 37 years after attaining her bachelor's degree in secondary education.

"I suspected I was the only student receiving a degree while her grandchildren cheered, 'Yea, Mawmaw!,'" Sherry said.

She said she has enjoyed her 22-year career as a technical writer because it combines education (her previous career) and computers (her hobby). At one of her jobs, she wrote the training documentation, programmed the simulations and taught the class. She currently works at Northrop Grumman as a technical editor.

Sherry discovered STC while searching for master's programs.

"I often recommend that people participate in the organization if they are serious about their work and want to get acquainted with others who are, too," Sherry said. "Believe me, there are a lot of interesting, helpful people there."

Congratulations, Jon, Katie and Sherry!

Worth Considering...

Don't read health books. You could die of a misprint.--Mark Twain

Writing is not like painting where you add. It is not what you put on the canvas that the reader sees. Writing is more like a sculpture where you remove, you eliminate in order to make the work visible. Even those pages you remove somehow remain.--Elie Wiesel