Society for Technical Communication

Harnessing Student Power to Jet-Propel Your Community

Part I: Back to Basics

May 5, 2013: Leadership Day
60th Annual STC International Conference, Atlanta, GA

Bethany Bowles, Sally Henschel, Anna Lerew-Phillips, Dan Voss

Community Affairs Committee

Agenda

- Objective
- Background on CAC
- Background on STC Student Outreach Initiative
- Approach
- Tapping Student Power: Back to Basics: Steps 1–7
- Preview of Afternoon Session (Part II of "Jet Propel")
- Summary
- Contact Information
- Q&A's, Discussion

STC

Student Outreach by Your Community: Overarching Objective

Tap a new and amazing resource …

… Students are dam-powerful!

What is the CAC?

- It is STC's Community Affairs Committee
- Established by the Board in 2009 to provide assistance to STC communities and to improve communication between the communities the Board, and the STC staff
- Serves as a direct pipeline from the communities to STC leadership to ensure communities' needs/concerns are addressed and their ideas heard
- Led by Board member Tricia Spayer and Board member-elect Ben Woelk
- Staffed by dozens of volunteer leaders from STC communities across the country (professional chapters, SIGs, and student communities)
- Sponsors Leadership Day at the annual Summit
- Come meet us at "STC Central" … bring your earplugs in case we attempt to reprise last year's unforgettable Irish drinking song

STC's Student Outreach: 2010-2011

- Student Outreach Team formed as a subset of the CAC
- Led by Dan Voss, STC-Orlando chapter, and Sarah Baca, STC-Orlando chapter and the University of Central Florida (UCF)
- Included STC leaders from the Board, the STC staff, and STC geographic communities and SIGs
- Received outstanding support from STC leadership
- Overarching objectives were (and remain):
  - Build STC's student membership base
  - Increase communication and establish partnerships between student chapters and other STC communities
  - Increase retention of student members upon graduation
- Accomplishments
  - Active role in Leadership Day at 58th Summit in Sacramento and at the annual business meeting
  - Board voted to enfranchise student members
  - Board established discounted "NTC" membership rate for students for 1st 3 years after graduation

STC

STC's Student Outreach: 2011-2012

- Led by Dan Voss and Bethany Bowles, STC-Orlando chapter and UCF (Sarah Baca assumed another leadership role on the CAC)
- Accomplishments
  - Board established special STC Task Force for Student Outreach
  - STC staff resolved IRS tax exemption issue with student chapters
  - Established new student chapter at Missouri Institute of Science and Technology (1st new STC community in years)
  - Conducted "health survey" of student communities and assigned CAC reps to maintain communication with and assist them
  - STC treasurer and CFO (both on Task Force) adjusted student chapter budget cycle to fit the academic year and ensured funding
  - Outreach Team focused on establishing student mentoring programs between STC geographic communities and tech com students at nearby universities
  - Major role in Leadership "Day" at 59th Summit in Chicago, sparking broad interest in student mentoring programs and providing tools

STC

STC's Student Outreach: 2012-2013

- Voss and Bowles continued their "reign of terror," joined by Sally Henschel, who has spearheaded a new initiative on virtual mentoring

- Two disappointments
  - CAC Student Outreach Team reps have had difficulty establishing and maintaining communication with some student communities: the Team will be changing its approach next year
  - It has proven easier to spark genuine interest in establishing student mentoring programs than to actually get them going

- Notable accomplishments
  - Established new student mentoring program between Rochester chapter and RIT (thank you, Ben Woelk!)
  - Several more such programs remain on the launchpad, fueled and ready
  - Successfully established pilot program pairing students with virtual mentor SMEs to work on BoK-related research/writing projects
  - Academic SIG and STC staff paved way for expansion into general virtual mentoring in 2013-2014 (new MentorBoard software) → high potential for actively engaging more student members
  - Established alliance with Sigma Tau Delta with 2 presentations at its international conference, focusing on careers in tech com for English majors → recruiting new STC student members
  - Active role in 60th Summit

Now … "Back to Basics"

Tap a new and amazing resource …

… Safe student power prevents melt-down!

Student Outreach by Your Community: Overall Approach

- Build your community's student membership base
  - Find and contact student members you already have
  - Recruit at nearby universities
- *Actively* engage your student members
  - Never underestimate them
  - Listen to their ideas!
  - Entrust them with leadership roles, right from the start
- Turbo-charge your volunteer pool
- Establish a pipeline of future chapter leaders
- Grow your students … Give them recognition, credit, professional growth, and networking opportunities
  - Mentor them
  - Partner on community projects
  - Help them get jobs
- Retain your students as STC New Technical Communicators (NTC) members when they graduate
- Strengthen your community; ensure your Society's future!

Student Outreach by Your Community: Step-by-Step Approach

- Step 1: *Find* your student members!

- Step 2: Recruit new student members from nearby student chapters.

- Step 3: Check for tech com programs at local universities.

- Step 4: Synergize with Sigma Tau Delta!

- Step 5: Use STC's materials from the Sigma Tau Delta conference.

- Step 6: Sign up student members from *all* sources, including Sigma Tau Delta.

- Step 7: *Engage* your student members!

Step 1: *Find* Your Student Members!

- Check your membership roster; find your students!

- Establish direct personal contact with all your students.

- Invite them to chapter meetings or online community forums and activities.

- Engage them … involve them … give them responsibilities … listen to them … support them, mentor them … and benefit from all they have to offer your community … and STC!

STC

Step 2: Recruit New Student Members from Nearby Student Chapters

- Look for the STC student chapter nearest you*

- Establish a partnership
  - F2F if feasible
  - Virtual if not

- Invite students to chapter meetings or online community forums and activities.

- If you have the resources, launch a formal student mentoring program. If not, start "small."

- Grow together … empower your students and jet-power your community … it's a sure "WIN-WIN"!

* http://www.stc.org/about-stc/communities/student-chapters

STC

Step 3: Check for Tech Com Programs at Local Universities

- Contact English Department chairs
- Contact tech com faculty
- Conduct classroom visits
- Review student portfolios
- Provide SME expertise in classroom presentations and by conducting special workshops for students
- Ask faculty to encourage STC student memberships, attendance at chapter meetings, and active involvement with STC.
- · Where possible, get a faculty member to join STC and sponsor a student chapter on campus (5 students + 1 advisor = chapter)
- With or without a student chapter, as resources allow, establish a formal mentoring program with your student members

Step 4: Synergize with Sigma Tau Delta!

Better …
…Together!

The Society for Technical Communication

International Collegiate English Honor Society

- Check for ΣΤΔ chapters at nearby universities
- ΣΤΔ has 8,000 members; is on most major campuses
- Visit ΣΤΔ chapter meetings
- Give STC presentations "Careers in Technical Communication for English Majors" and "Student Mentoring Programs"
- Recruit new STC student members for your chapter

Step 5: Use STC's Materials from the Sigma Tau Delta Conference

- At this afternoon's "Jet-Propelled II" session, take a peek at STC's 2 slam-dunk presentations at the Sigma Tau Delta international conference in Portland, OR, March 20-23, 2013 … with a big thank you to Rachel Houghton and Bethany Bowles!

- Both presentations are "off-the-shelf-ready," with the original .ppt files on our turnkey toolkit DVD, including fully scripted speaker's notes that can be used as is or readily adapted to your on-campus visits.

Bethany … Orlando chapter and UCF, Sigma Tau Chi, CAC, Distinguished STC Student Service Award

Rachel … Willamette Valley chapter, former Society secretary, new STC Associate Fellow, being inducted Tuesday!

Step 6: Sign Up Student Members from *All* Sources, Including Sigma Tau Delta

- Tap STC student chapters.
- Tap tech com programs at campuses without STC student chapters.
- Where a faculty member will serve as sponsor, form a new STC student chapter.
- Tap Sigma Tau Delta chapters.
- Explain the benefits of STC student membership, particularly active involvement in your STC community (job search, networking, publications, conferences, mentoring … F2F or virtual, formal or informal).
- Subsidize STC student memberships from your community budget and, where possible, the university.

Step 7: *Engage* Your Student Members!

- Work on STC projects together (for academic credit where possible).
- Co-present at chapter meetings, in webinars, and at conferences.

- Begin with a "mini" mentoring program, even if it's just 1, 2, or 3 students.
- Establish a "WIN-WIN" relationship with high mutual return on the time investment on both sides.
  - Your community gets an invaluable infusion of fresh talent, energy, and leadership
  - Your students grow professionally, network, build their portfolios, and improve their job prospects

---

This is a Transition Slide ... ☺

- 2012-2013 CAC Student Outreach Team focused on formal programs
  - F2F mentoring programs pairing geographic chapters and tech com students at universities
  - Virtual mentoring program tied to the BoK initiative
  - A promising new alliance with Sigma Tau Delta
- Focus of "Jet-Propelled, Part I" was "Back to Basics," which we've done in Steps 1-7
- Focus of "Jet Propelled, Part II," this afternoon, is "Building on Basics," where we will provide guidance and tools to help STC communities establish and tap into formal programs

Don't Miss Part II of "Jet-Propelled": "Building on Basics" this Afternoon!

- *Student Mentoring Programs*: Everything you ever wanted to know about establishing and sustaining face-to-face student mentoring programs and were afraid to ask … plus a turnkey-ready toolkit … no need to "re-invent wheels"!
- *Academic SIG Special*
  - Details on this year's successful BoK-specific virtual mentoring program and plans to expand it next year
  - Plans for allying the Academic SIG with STC's student population next year, including virtual mentoring partnerships
- *STC/Sigma Tau Delta Alliance*
  - A terrific way for STC geographic communities to expand their student membership at nearby universities!
  - Turnkey-ready presentations on "Careers in Technical Communication for English Majors" and "Student Mentoring Programs" … already in use at the Northeast Ohio chapter!
- *A Practical, Interactive, "Hands-on" Workshop:* We will take this afternoon's session wherever our audience wants us to go!

Agenda to ΣΤΔ "Careers" Presentation

- Technical communication
  - Skills
  - Disciplines
  - Career opportunities
  - Paths to careers in tech com
- Society for Technical Communication
  - Values
  - Benefits of membership

.

Agenda to ΣΤΔ "Mentoring" Presentation

- Adapting this STC presentation for mentoring programs within the English curriculum
- What is mentoring?
- Types of mentoring
- Face-to-face mentoring

.

- Virtual mentoring
- Why is it a good thing?

Summary … and Q&A's

- As you work to sustain, build, or rebuild your STC community, make student outreach an integral part of the process.
- The CAC Student Outreach Team and the Academic SIG have paved the way for you and will assist you in any way that we can.
- Let's start right now! … What would you like to know?

Thank you!

- Dan Voss
  - daniel.w.voss@lmco.com
- Bethany Bowles
  - bethanybowles@gmail.com
- Sally Henschel
  - sally.henschel@mwsu.edu
- Anna Lerew-Phillips
  - anna.lerew-phillips@mwsu.edu

Society for Technical Communication