

International Society Honors Garret H. Romaine

The Society for Technical Communication honored Aloha resident Garret H. Romaine at its annual conference in Atlanta, GA on May 5, 2009. Romaine, a senior member and Associate Fellow of the Society, was named a Fellow, the highest rank that the Society confers upon a member. Candidates for this honor are nominated by members and must have at least 15 years of experience in technical communication and have been a member for at least 10 years. Recipients of the Fellow designation have attained eminence in the field of technical communication through achievements and contributions to the profession and Society.

Fellows must first have served as Associate Fellows for at least two years and continued their contributions to the field, conducted original work that advances technical communication, or made significant contributions to the Society at multiple levels.

Romaine earned an MBA in Business Administration from Portland State University in 1992, an MA in Geography from the University of Washington in 1983, and a BS in Geology from the University of Oregon in 1980.

Romaine served as Technical Communications Manager at Kentrox (Hillsboro, OR) from 2005 to 2008 after beginning work there as a senior technical writer in 2003. As manager he oversaw a three-person staff in two locations. In this role Romaine was cited for bringing “professionalism and strong organizational skills” to the department, creating high quality technical publications, and in 2007 completing each project on or before schedule.

As Technical Support Manager at Pixelworks (Tualatin, OR) from 2000 to 2003, Romaine used metrics to measure quality, and to warrant staff levels and budget requests. Under Romaine’s direction, Technical Support grew from a two-person writing team to a 17-person support team of trainers, call-center support, and application engineers.

From 1997 to 2000 Romaine worked at Tektronix (Beaverton, OR) as Publications Manager for 16 writers. At Tektronix Romaine was credited for his “honest, straightforward style,” and for overseeing a project that brought XML tools and a content management system to his department.

Romaine began working at RadiSys (Hillsboro, OR) in 1992 as the sole technical writer. Over time he increased the number of technical writers in the group and assumed the role of Technical Publications Manager.

As a senior technical writer at II Morrow (Salem, OR) from 1990 to 1992, Romaine wrote speeches, user documentation, marketing information, and a company newsletter. He is credited with adding “zest” and “excellent writing” to the company newsletter.

Romaine began his technical writing career at Automatic Data Processing (Portland, OR) in 1985. Here he documented inventory control software for automobile dealerships, and created award-winning documentation for cabling and user guides.

Romaine became involved in the Willamette Valley Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication almost 20 years ago, taking on several leadership positions over time. In 1993 he was a judge in the annual STC publications competition, and has served as judge almost every year since then. In 1995 he took on the Employment Information Manager position and created the first WVC jobs email list. Romaine served as First Vice President of the chapter in 1996-1997, and as President of the chapter in 1997-1998.

As Education Manager of the Willamette Valley Chapter from 2003 to 2007, Romaine organized a "Getting Started in Technical Communication" program to recruit a new generation of technical communicators. This program is usually offered every other year to people considering a career in technical communication. In these half-day programs, attendees are given information on tools of the trade, new technologies, and educational, training, and networking opportunities. Since 2006 Romaine has served as the Mentoring Program Manager. In this capacity he meets one-on-one with up to 12 individuals a year to provide counseling, coaching, resume reviews, and education and skill assessments.

Romaine became involved in the Society for Technical Communication at the international level while maintaining his involvement at the local level. Romaine was the program manager for the 2000 Pan-Pacific Region 7/8 Conference and for the 2001 Region 7 Conference. Romaine participated in the Leadership Tips SIG (special interest group) with Suzanna Laurent, a former STC President.

In 2006 Romaine became more active at the national level of the Society. Romaine joined George Slaughter's Public Relations committee and worked with him on PR guidelines for the local chapters, which were published in *TieLine*, STC's newsletter for chapter, SIG, and Society leaders. For the last two years Romaine was a judge for the PR competition, and also served as an international competition judge. In 2006 he served on the Fresh Eyes team, which examined STC communications with its members and brought an outside perspective to the messaging.

In addition to the many volunteer commitments Romaine has taken on over the years in the technical communications community, he has also been an instructor at Portland State University. He has taught Introduction to Technical Communication, Documentation Project Planning, and Computer Hardware and Software Documentation courses. He also teaches courses that he created, such as One-Page Documentation and Computer Gaming Documentation.

In his career as a technical writer, Romaine has earned Awards of Achievement, Excellence, and Merit in STC competitions for publications as varied as a newsletter, a quick reference guide, an annual report, a database user guide, promotional materials, installation instructions, and software and hardware reference manuals.

A long-time journalist who once wrote for *Willamette Week* newspaper in Portland, Romaine has combined his writing skills with his education and interest in geology by writing three books on rocks and gems: *Rockhounding Idaho*; *Gem Trails of Oregon*; and *Gem Trails of Washington*. He has been a regular contributor for 12 years to the Gold Prospectors Association of America magazine.

Romaine has had several articles published in STC's *TieLine*. He has also given presentations at STC conferences on the topics "Building Bridges to High School Students," "Getting a Count: Recording Metrics in Documentation Plans," "Surviving Change with Minimalism," "Win-Win with Interns," and "Implementing Embedded Help." At the International Association of Business Communicators Regional Conference in 1999, Romaine gave a presentation on "Measuring Quality in Interns."

The accomplishments and contributions of Garret Romaine have greatly benefitted the technical communications profession as well as the community he lives in.