

MEMBER profiles

Amy Spath

A Model of Educational Technology Integration

Time is essential to ISTE member Amy Spath. As a technology integration specialist for the Oswego County Board of Cooperative Educational Services in New York, she sees that the biggest obstacle to effective education is “time for professional development for teachers to become better integrators of technology.”

Spath is a trainer in Oswego’s Model Schools program, part of the state of New York’s program to enhance technology integration in its schools through increased professional development and help with planning and assessment. She offers sessions on such topics as creating classroom Web pages, using Microsoft Office with

elementary students, and using Internet resources to enhance classroom teaching. And she ported her Office 2000: The Best-Kept Secret for the Primary Classroom training session to NECC as a workshop. She earned a Best of NECC distinction for this offering in 2004.

Spath joined ISTE in 2001 to “gain more information about technology use in education, keep current in what other districts are using, and become involved and meet other educators with similar interests.”



Spath’s favorite moment professionally came after working on a pilot project with fourth graders using Learning.com’s EasyTech. The students believed the program would continue to be useful to them, so they “used the skills they learned from EasyTech” to write a letter to the technology director to persuade him to purchase

the program.

Spath believes this is a great example of the power of technology in the classroom.

ISTE SIG

Multimedia SIG Meets Its Members’ Needs

From the beginning, ISTE’s SIG for Hypermedia and Multimedia has focused on its members’ needs. It began as a petition circulated at the 1989 National Educational Computing Conference (NECC) that garnered the attention of ISTE’s then SIG Coordinator



Mark Horney, who helped form the SIG. Early activities included a journal (*HyperNexus*) to allow its members to publish their work and sponsored programs at NECC. In 1998, the group highlighted exemplary multimedia projects created by members’ students through the Multimedia Mania Award Program. According to Vice President Jane Steelman, the SIG is working to

bring back Multimedia Mania after a one-year hiatus. As part of ISTE’s continuing focus on the international community, Steelman says, “We will

work to expand the [Multimedia Mania] program throughout the world by providing the program information in other languages, beginning with Spanish.” Members can help with translating the site or get involved with the contest by submitting their students’ work or helping colleagues with their own submissions.

HyperSIG has another main focus in the coming academic year: to increase its online presence. This marks yet another way members can become

involved. Steelman says the SIG will elect a Webmaster to oversee the development of the Web site, with nominations open to all members in February or March 2006. The main goal for the site, she says, is to begin an “interesting dialogue around topics associated with multimedia.” Steelman asks members to help grow the burgeoning online community by volunteering to lead discussions and by suggesting other types of content for the site.

President: Paul Skiera, ps@asu.edu
Vice President: Jane Steelman, jane_steelman@ncsu.edu
Secretary Treasurer: Daniel Himes, dhimes@uwm.edu
Award Co-chairs: Anne Akers, anne_akers@ncsu.edu; Molly Kamper, mollykamper@yahoo.com

Cisco Systems: Making Ed Tech Connections

Founded in 1984 by a group of Stanford University computer scientists, Cisco Systems is a global leader in computer networking products and one of the founding members of the ISTE 100 corporate partners program (<http://www.iste.org/iste100>). Charles Fadel, global lead manager for education at Cisco, said that until recently, the company mainly addressed administrative efficiencies, which are less visible to the education market.

However, Cisco has recently introduced a number of successful products with higher-profile implications for education, including content delivery networks and standardizations that allow a state agency or educational district network to rapidly distribute large files using dial-up speeds, and new and upgraded suites of videoconferencing and Webcasting products.

Technologies related to videoconferencing offer the most promising future for educational technology, Fadel said. "We're allowing teachers to do what they used to do with discrete means, and giving them access to vast libraries of information, in real time and with much higher quality. This is where we'll have had the most impact. The ability to deliver any educational materials you wish, irrespective of where it's coming from, and not worrying about whether the network can handle it."

Cisco was a Tier Three sponsor of NECC 2005 in Philadelphia and, according to Fadel, is eager to increase its participation in the educational technology field. "In my opinion, we're not participating enough with ISTE," Fadel said. He added that one

of Cisco's goals is to unite educational network administrators and audiovisual specialists. "There is an IT front and an AV front," Fadel said. "It's a fragmented community, and everyone is afraid of breaking the other guy's network. We need to bridge the gap between the AV and IT people, and explain how these technologies can improve their classroom time."

The main thing Fadel wants ISTE members to know about Cisco is that the company cares about education. "We have a chairman and CEO who are fanatical about education," he said. "We have an entire team devoted to it. This goes way beyond dollars and cents. We grew up with the Internet. Education has always been part of our genes."

CISCO SYSTEMS



Tasmanian Group Supports Varied Membership

TASITE, the Tasmanian Society for Information Technology in Education, is an association for teachers and allied professionals using computers in education. Established in 1991 (originally known as CESIGT) from an amalgamation of long-standing regional groups, TASITE is a special interest group of the Australian Computer Society (ACS) and a member of the Australian Council for Computers in Education (ACCE). It became an ISTE affiliate organization in 2003.

The society's objectives are to promote knowledge of the applications

of information technology in teaching and learning and to play a role in teachers' professional development.

In support of those goals, TASITE organizes workshops, talks by guest speakers, and site visits to educational and support establishments. It promotes

professional communication through an online discussion list, a contact database of interested members' skills, and links to kindred state and national associations.

According to its Web site, membership ranges in disciplines across the curriculum, from Early Childhood to

the Tertiary sector, and includes librarians, technical, and other support personnel. Members receive the monthly newsletter of the ACS and the journal of the ACCE and are eligible to apply for individual membership to the ACCE (subject to criteria).

Ken Price is president of TASITE, as well as the editor of the group newsletter, which is available on the group's Web site and as an addition to the ACCE print journal. The active group holds monthly meetings.

In addition to TASITE's own Web presence, more information about the Tasmanian group and ISTE's other affiliates can be found at <http://www.iste.org/affiliates/>.



<http://www.tasite.tas.edu.au>