

Jerry Savage and the Essence of Service

By Kirk St. Amant for the Jerry Savage Service Award Presentation at the 2009 CPTSC Conference

The essence of service is selflessness – the idea of undertaking a task not to obtain personal glory, but because doing something to benefit others is the right thing to do. Those individuals who exemplify this spirit of service are characterized by a particular dedication, integrity, and humility they bring to every task they perform. Jerry Savage is one such person.

Over the years, I've come to know Jerry in a variety of contexts – as a mentor, as a colleague, and as a collaborator. In all of these situations, Jerry has exemplified what it means to serve CPTSC and to serve the greater field as one who helps others succeed in a way that contributes to the development of technical and scientific communication programs.

Jerry's dedication to his students has allowed him to train several talented scholars and educators who now actively participate in program and curriculum development. Jerry's dedication has also led to the development of more than one successful CPTSC conference program that explored technical and scientific communication curricula from new and interesting perspectives.

Jerry's integrity has been a guiding factor in exploring the idea of diversity as it relates to CPTSC and to the greater field. It was his integrity and his interest in diversity that led to Jerry's founding and then chairing of the CPTSC Diversity Committee and his work to develop CPTSC's new Diversity Scholarship.

Finally, but perhaps most importantly, Jerry's humility has allowed him to excel as a mentor of junior and established faculty alike. In so doing, he has aided numerous new academics with their contributions to programs, curricula, and course development in technical and scientific communication. He has also guided junior and established faculty through the hurdles of tenure and promotion in a way that allowed them to strengthen their own programs while also improving the field.

As someone who has benefitted from Jerry's dedication, his integrity, and his humility over the years, I wish to say – "Thank you, Jerry, for providing a model of service we can all follow to contribute successfully to the discipline. "