Meet the Board for ’02-’03

Each year at the close of the Annual Conference, ACUTA welcomes a new Board of Directors.

On July 18, 2002, President-Elect Jeanne Jansenius, University of the South, steps into the presidency for the coming year.

As a result of last month’s election, Walter Czerniak of Northern Illinois University will assume the position of President-Elect. He will serve on the board for the following two years as President and Immediate Past President.

John Bradley of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute was reelected as Secretary/Treasurer.

President Maureen Trimm, Stanford University, will continue to serve on the Board as Immediate Past President.

Dave Barta, University of Oregon, was reelected, and Mary L. Pretz-Lawson, Carnegie-Mellon University, was elected to serve as Director-at-Large.

Bill Brichta, DeSales University, and Tamara Closs of Georgetown University will serve the second of their two-year terms as Directors-at-Large.

The Board-appointed Director-at-Large will be Patricia Todus, Northwestern University, who will serve a one-year term.

Serving on the Board requires a serious commitment of time and energy. Those who are willing to serve are to be commended. If this kind of leadership role is of interest to you, contact any Board member or Executive Director Jeri Semer about how you can get involved.
Looking Back

From the President

Maureen Trimm
Stanford University

July is a time of change for ACUTA. Following the annual conference, new Board members and new committee chairs assume their responsibilities for the coming year. For that to happen, some others leave their current positions. As I get ready to move on from being President of our association, I have mixed feelings. And as I reread past issues of the ACUTA News, I see that every other president has said the same thing at this time of year.

One of the tasks an ACUTA president has is to write a short column for each newsletter and for each journal. Thank goodness that Pat Scott, ACUTA's Publications Manager, is a gracious taskmaster. I appreciate her skills and patience in keeping me on deadline. Coming up with something to say in print 16 times during a year is a more onerous task than I ever expected. My respect for Jeri Semer, whose Executive Director column is fresh and interesting each month, abounds!

I hope that my musings this year have given you a look at what the ACUTA Board has been up to as we have diligently worked on strategic thinking about ACUTA's future. We have spent time moving the volunteer leadership into a more strategic and less operational mode. None of this could occur without dedicated committee chairs and members, and without an excellent professional staff. ACUTA has both. I will be honored to be able to thank all these people later this month in Reno, but wanted also to take the time now to say that their contributions to ACUTA are what keeps the programs and services vital and interesting to us all.

The upheavals last fall, created by the September 11 terrorist attacks and by the subsequent redirection of many priorities onto security, and examination of core values have affected us in so many ways. This year has been an interesting challenge to our professional association. It has been a time when ACUTA has dipped into reserves to pay for current expenses. Like many good planners, putting away for the rainy day is a good principle, but having to dip into those savings is uncomfortable. ACUTA is fortunate to be in a strong financial position, to have reserves, and to be flexible in its governance and operational structures in a way that has let us respond to unexpected conditions this year. If you come to the annual business meeting at the ACUTA conference in Reno, on Thursday, July 18, from 8:15 to 9:15, you will hear the details of how ACUTA has charted through the waters this past year. It will also be my last time to stand up as your President and talk about your association's health and direction.

In retrospect, the focus of "strategic thinking" for this past year could not have been better timed. ACUTA has set a path of what we hope will be winning strategies to keep it not only an important resource for all its members, but also a growing and changing force that reflects the breadth of communications technologies in higher education.

Hope to see you in Reno. And if you can't make it to the annual conference, let me now say thanks for giving me the opportunity to work with you on our association. I have enjoyed it, learned from it, grown both personally and professionally. And your friendships have been the best of it!

The ACUTA Board of Directors met via conference call, June 6, 2002. Following are highlights of that meeting:

The Board approved the minutes of the last meeting, the fiscal 2002-03 budget, and several committee reports.

Election results: Wally Czerniak is President-elect, John Bradley is secretary/treasurer, Dave Barta and Mary L. Pretz-Lawson have been elected as directors.

The following vendor representatives were approved as members of the vendor liaison committee: Rick Day, President of Daycom Systems; Rick Cunningham, VP of Strategic Markets at Paetec; and Jerry Barnes, President of Falls Earth Station.

Reports from the various committee chairs were submitted and approved. Respectfully submitted,

John Bradley
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
ACUTA Secretary/Treasurer
One of the most stressful duties a supervisor has is firing an employee. When one of your workers is not pulling his or her weight around the office, something must be done.

Why is this aspect of your job so tough? In The Training Letter newsletter, recruitment and management consultant Terri Petra described some key reasons why supervisors avoid this task.

**Confrontation.** It's only human to want to be liked and accepted by others. Supervisors are no exception. When a manager has to let an employee go, he or she may dread the negative reaction from that employee.

**No History of Feedback.** Many supervisors may find it uncomfortable to confront a negligent employee about the aspects of their job performance that need improvement. Because of this, the employee never receives any feedback and may not realize that his or her job performance is unsatisfactory. As time passes, it becomes even harder for the supervisor to address the problem.

**Fear of Retribution.** The most common reason why supervisors avoid firing someone, according to Petra, is the fear of accusations of wrongful terminations. If there is no documentation of what is expected of the employee, such as a job description or annual performance review, the manager may feel that the employee may use that against them.

"It's never easy," states Anne Apicella, Senior Telecom Specialist at Sun Healthcare Group, Inc., "but if you have taken the steps and followed the process of warnings and opportunities that most universities require, it shouldn't be a shock to the employee when it comes time for termination. The employee knows if he or she has corrected their performance or not."

To handle the difficulty, there are a few steps that can be taken to make the deed as pleasant as possible.

1. There's no need to spread the word. The only people who should know about the decision to end an employee's time with the company before the termination meeting should be the direct supervisors of the employee as well as any people that will be present at the meeting.
2. Don't beat around the bush. There's no need to for small talk in the termination meeting. Explain to the employee why he or she is being fired; be sure to give explicit reasons and list the warnings that had been issued in the past. Offer a check for monies due, and let the employee clean out his or her desk at that time or offer to have their belongings sent to them. (If you take this measure, be sure to have a few witnesses around to observe you cleaning out the desk.)
3. Don't wait. Once upon a time, it was felt that Friday afternoon was the best time to fire an employee. Lately, it is considered suitable to do this earlier in the week, and even earlier in the day. You may—or may not—offer to let the employee finish the workday or even the rest of the week.
4. Be available. Make sure that you answer any questions that the employee may have. This can be a very emotional time, and you should understand that you may have to repeat yourself several times.

Most importantly, keep your own emotions in check. If the employee happens to lose their temper and become verbally abusive, don't get upset. Regardless of your feelings toward the employee, that person's employment is being terminated. He or she is leaving, not you.

Another tip that Apicella suggests is meeting with the remaining employees after the termination has taken place. Take this opportunity to let these employees talk about any discomfort with the situation, and explain to them that the termination was not done in a malicious manner—all employers have expectations of their workers and when those expectations are not met, something must be done for the good of the company as well as the rest of the employees. "It's important to address the needs of the remaining employees," says Apicella. "Let them express their 'will this happen to me' worries."
Thanks to Randy Hayes, Chair of ACUTA's Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Committee, for the information provided for DC Update this month in Whitney Johnson's continued absence. Whitney says he is feeling better every day and will be back at his desk very soon.

**FCC Resolves Issue of What to Do with Unused Funds from Universal Service Program**

Interestingly, while the current annual funding for the e-rate program is $2.25 billion and the current annual requests for e-rate funding exceeds $5.5 billion, some e-rate funds go unused due to administrative issues or schools and libraries not actually spending as much as they've been awarded. The FCC has been working to determine what to do with the unspent funds.

Due to the problems regarding the amounts submitted by the carriers to the USF program as well as the highly marked-up USF fees assessed by the carriers to their customers, the FCC has ruled that for the next three quarters, the unused e-rate funds will be used to stabilize the overall USF, which is fueled by carrier contributions. The FCC believes this should ensure that carriers would not increase USF surcharges assessed against customers during this time. After March 2003, any unused funds will be placed into the USF pool, effectively increasing the practical distribution of pool funds beyond the $2.25 billion annually (via carryovers from previous years).

**FCC Wants More $$$ for Investigating Potential Fraud and Waste in E-rate Program**

According to Telecom Reports-Daily, the FCC’s Office of Inspector General has indicated that a program as large as the e-rate program tends to tempt those who might wish to utilize it fraudulently, and the lack of proper oversight could at least prompt waste of the funds. The OIG’s report, citing its audit of 22 entities receiving e-rate funding, stated there may be findings at all locations, including several millions of dollars in inappropriate disbursements and unsupported costs. The report also said, however, there are not enough resources to provide proper oversight, given 30,000 program applicants annually.

**FCC Reviewing Expansion of LNP Rules**

In March, the FCC began the process of reviewing the potential for changing LNP rules, particularly for carriers in the 100 largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), and possibly beyond, into rural environments.

Current LNP rules call for implementation in the top 100 MSAs as a part of a schedule, and also only if they have received a request from another carrier to provide the service. Outside of the 100 MSAs, LNP is required to be implemented only after receipt of the request from another carrier, with appropriate implementation time allowed.

**AT&T Lowers USF Fee by 0.5%**

In response to the FCC’s decision to temporarily stabilize the Universal Service Fund by applying unused dollars to shore-up the fund (see above), AT&T announced that it would cut its USF fee to its residential customers by 0.5%.

As we all know, most carriers have marked-up the USF surcharge beyond the rate they are charged (currently 7.28%), to, they explain, address the current FCC methodology for calculating and assessing USF charges to carriers. However, the carriers were marking up USF fees long before the calculation methodology became a problem, claiming high overhead in administering the USF accounting. More recently, some even proclaimed the increased mark-ups were to bolster their revenues (rather than applying a pass-through and overhead fee).

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The calculation problem relates to the fact that the percentage of USF fees assessed against carriers is calculated based on current traffic, but is then assessed into the future. When interstate/international long distance traffic and revenues were increasing, this was not a problem.

However, while this LD traffic is still increasing, the revenue is decreasing. Thus, the calculation percentage actually takes a bigger bite out of the revenues, and the carriers want to make up for that—hence the increases in USF surcharges to the customers.

However, as FCC Commissioner Kevin Martin pointed out recently, while AT&T is now at 11% and WorldCom and Sprint are just below that, a number of other providers, particularly the newer entrants in the long distance arena, are charging a simple pass-through of the FCC’s 7.28% USF fee or sometimes negotiating it out of agreements. The FCC has recognized the two market trends in addition to the declining interstate revenues (which occurred for the first time in 2001) and new entrants, which are indeed having an impact on the current revenue base supporting the USF: wireless sector growth/technology migration and bundled services.

**AT&T Wins Appeal in CLEC Access Charge Issue**

A federal appeals court overturned an FCC ruling that said AT&T had to carry traffic destined for them but provided by CLECs, even if the CLECs were charging outrageous originating or terminating access charges in doing so.

In essence, since CLECs have not been bound to access charge regulations set by the FCC, many of them have assessed excessive originating or terminating access charge fees against interexchange carriers when either handing-off IXC-bound traffic or when terminating it for them at the far-end destination. (Some access charges were 9 times the normal access charges.) The carriers got nowhere asking the CLECs to lower their access charges, so AT&T said it would have to reject calls destined for its network from CLECs whose access charges were too high. The issue was brought before the FCC, which ruled that carriers could not reject traffic on this basis, but the FCC also ruled to limit CLEC access charges to either $.025/minute or whatever the dominant LEC in the area charged.

AT&T challenged the FCC decision, and the Federal Appeals Court vacated the FCC’s declaratory ruling on procedural grounds. The court stated the FCC misinterpreted and misapplied parts of section 201 (a) of the Telecom Act of 1934. The FCC had stated when a customer requests IXC service and calls are processed by the CLEC to the IXC, there is a reasonable request for service from the customer, and the IXC cannot reject this request. However, the court ruled the request for service at that point is actually from the CLEC, and the FCC’s own ruling that the access charges in question were excessive would render the request for service unreasonable. Thus, the FCC could not force the IXC to accept and process such traffic.

This issue is important to ACUTA members for two reasons: 1) overall long distance rates are affected by access charges, and those essentially abusing the access charge assessments cause LD rates to be higher than they need to be; and 2) services such as AT&T TSAA, MCI/WorldCom Direct Connect, McLeodUSA FX/800 service and others which provide revenue/commissions can be affected (most often negatively but sometimes positively) by changes in access charges.

**E911/PBX Issue Being Discussed Again**

Since the FCC released Report and Order 94-102 in 1994, the issue of E911 location information available behind PBX systems has been discussed and shifted to the back burner several times, but the issue has never been resolved.

More recently and in part due to the 9/11 tragedy, efforts have been made to resurrect the issue. After an inquiry from an ACUTA member regarding state E911 legislation and efforts to coordinate an E911 update for that organization, I contacted industry representatives regarding E911. At about the same time, *The Telecom Manager’s Voice Report* also ran an article updating the E911/PBX issue. At this point, several groups, including the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) and the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO), are issuing position papers, meeting with vendors, and lobbying the FCC to institute formal E911 policies.

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E-Learning Book Available from Element K

If you're involved in an e-learning program at your site or it's being considered, you might want to pick up a free copy of a book from Element K. Entitled *Beyond the Podium: Delivering Training and Performance to a Digital World*, the book provides a unique trainer's eye view that will bring you up-to-speed on the new directions in professional development and help you get the most from e-learning.

To receive the book, call 800-434-3466 or go online at http://216.42.31.92/program/Program.asp?program=273859&type=contact.

FCC Revisits Rules on Thousands-Block Number Pooling Requirements

According to *Telecom Reports*, the FCC is asking whether all carriers in the 100 top MSAs should be required to participate in thousands-block number pooling, including those who have not yet implemented LNP, because they have received no request from another carrier to do so.

Of those commenting, it appeared most were against expansion of thousands-block number pooling in the 100 top MSAs, over what is expected under current rules. They particularly indicated it would make little sense to mandate number pooling in an area that has not implemented LNP, i.e., has no local competition. Doing so, they said, would do nothing to promote the goal of number pooling, i.e., conserving numbers in the North American Numbering Plan (NANP).

FCC and Industry Canada Agree on 37.5-42.5 GHz band

*Washington D.C.* The FCC has entered into an arrangement with Industry Canada to enhance delivery of V-band spectrum services to consumers. A positive development for cross border wireless services between the United States and Canada, the arrangement establishes principles to govern use of the 37.5-42.5 GHz band.

Both the United States and Canada have licensed fixed terrestrial wireless systems in the 38.8-40 GHz band on an area basis intended to facilitate deployment of high-density broadband wireless applications. The purpose of the FCC-Industry Canada Arrangement is to ensure protection of these systems by limiting the power flux-density levels of satellite systems currently being designed to operate in the V-band. The arrangement is an outgrowth of the World Radiocommunication Conference-2000 (WRC-2000), where because not all issues related to this band were resolved, the United States and other countries in the Americas agreed in that they could resolve satellite power flux-density values on a country-to-country basis.

The arrangement reaffirms the band segmentation approach proposed by the Commission after WRC-2000 that identifies spectrum between 40 and 42 GHz primarily for high density fixed-satellite service applications.
In early June, President-Elect Jeanne Jansenius and I had the opportunity to attend the spring meeting of CHEMA—the Council of Higher Education Management Associations.

This is a group of elected leaders and executives of 30 higher education associations, representing various administrative professionals on campus. CHEMA meetings are a great opportunity to exchange information and learn about the key concerns of business officers, physical plan officers, purchasing directors, campus police and security, auxiliary services directors, and numerous other managers with whom ACUTA members work on a daily basis. We exchange information on association programs, and often develop cooperative educational programs and publications.

This meeting focused on distance education and serving international members, among other issues. Many of the participating associations are seeking ways to deliver educational programs to members via distance education technologies. We shared information about ACUTA’s successful experiences with audio seminars, "Webinars," and our CD-ROM course. We learned about other associations’ efforts to provide education through satellite video conferencing—generally very expensive to produce and not often financially viable. Only two associations have thus far offered instructor-led online courses via the Internet. Three associations, including ACUTA, have offered “Webinars,” but there is a great deal of interest in this technology. This was a most educational discussion!

One outcome of this discussion was that the associations agreed to investigate how we might develop a joint arrangement with a vendor, to enable us to offer Web-based courses at a lower cost.

The meeting also included an interesting presentation about the current state of higher education in Canada, presented by a representative of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. The presentation was wide-ranging, but the most memorable point for me was that Canadian institutions are facing a major faculty shortage due to a college-age population boom that will occur in the next decade. According to the presenter, Canadian institutions will need 30-40,000 new faculty (not including community colleges) in order to serve their student population by 2011.

Following the presentations, a panel of CHEMA members discussed their current efforts and ideas for effectively serving international members. As always, this discussion was most beneficial and yielded many good ideas that we will consider further.

These CHEMA meetings are a good opportunity to exchange information and maintain lines of communication with other higher education associations, and we plan to continue ACUTA’s involvement with the ultimate goal of enhancing the value of ACUTA membership and services.
Welcome New Members

Institutional Members

Bowdoin College, Brunswick, ME
Charles Banks, 207/725-3785. T1 ......................... www.bowdoin.edu

Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA
David Moylan, 253/535-7525. T2 ........................ www.plu.edu

West Virginia Northern Community College, Wheeling, WV
Dr. John Jones, 304/233-5900. T1 ..................... www.northern.wvnet.edu

Corporate Affiliate Members

COPPER MEMBERS

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Dana Fisk, 800/814-3922 ................................. www.desi.com

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Infrastructure Design Concepts, Inc., Liverpool, NY
Dennis Punch, 315/652-8843
Infrastructure Design Concepts, Inc., specializes in telecommunications cable infrastructure design and specification development. Based in the Northeast, IDC is available for projects coast to coast. Also provided by IDC are Infrastructure Audits and Project Management.

Shorecliff Communications, San Juan Capistrano, CA
Tim Downs, 949/443-3735 ............................... www.shorecliffcommunications.com
Shorecliff Communications Inc., is the leading media company serving the broadband wireless and independent tower/owner management industries, providing trade shows, executive conferences, and publications.

Technical Design Services, Inc., Naperville, IL
Frank Cerchio, 630/983-9906 ............................. www.tdsinc.biz

TDI is an independent national consulting firm providing design, engineering, and information technology consulting services for higher educations clients with needs in the areas of structured cabling system design, network design, and telecommunications system design.

Telecommunications Export Company, Ltd., Danvers, MA
Ann Murphy, 978/739-4488 ............................. www.telecomex.com

Telecommunications Export Company is dedicated to selling quality refurbished and unused Siemens/Rolm, Nortel, and Avaya phone systems and components. We also carry Plantronics, Polycom, UPSs, CSUs, and call accounting software.

WISOR, Gaithersburg, MD
Kenneth Oliver, 201/819-1898 ............................ www.wisor.com

Wisor provides innovative software solutions that manage and control the telecommunications procurement process for voice, data, and video services. The companies' offering includes service order creation/administration, work flow management, telecommunications cost containment, and an electronic gateway that provides automated information exchange with telecommunications carriers and suppliers.

ACUTA EVENTS

Fall Seminars
Oct. 20-23, 2002
Denver, CO
Marriott City Center

Winter Seminars
January 12-15, 2003
Tempe, AZ
Wyndham Buttes Resort

Spring Seminars
April 27-30, 2003
Norfolk, VA
Sheraton Norfolk Waterside

32nd Annual Conference & Exhibition
Hollywood, Florida
Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa