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SAGE NEWS

USENIX & SAGE

The Advanced Computing Systems Association &
The System Administrators Guild

Two Big Steps Forward for SAGE

by David Parter

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Executive Committee



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This month I am pleased to announce two big steps forward for SAGE: the hiring of our first full-time Executive Director and the launching of SAGE Certification.

Late last year, the USENIX Board of Directors allocated two additional staff positions for SAGE, as part of our transition from a mostly-volunteer organization to one with more staff support so that we can offer stronger programs and reach a wider community with more consistency. The two positions are Executive Director and Web Editor.

Rob Kolstad has been selected as the SAGE Executive Director. Rob is well-known in SAGE, having served in many

roles over the years. Rob brings to SAGE his experience and enthusiasm, and we are looking forward to working with him. A short biographical statement follows. You can reach Rob at kolstad@sage.org.

The other big step forward has already been reported, but deserves mention again. This spring we launched the first SAGE Certification – “cSAGE” – aimed at junior-level system administrators. Information on SAGE Certification – including study guides and information for sysadmins, employers, teachers and others – is online at www.sagecert.org. Certification is one of the key building blocks for system administration to progress to the level of professional recognition we think it deserves, and serves the needs of employers in helping to assure that they have a well-trained and knowledgeable professional system administration staff. If you are a junior system administrator check out the study guide and sample questions, and become cSAGE certified. If you aren't sure you are ready – or are a more senior system administrator – check it out anyway. It will give you a roadmap for new things to learn, or you can help some junior sysadmins to get their certification (and the Certification Board is currently laying the groundwork for the

next level of certification – for more senior sysadmins).

Two big steps in only a few months? These steps are the result of several years work by many dedicated volunteers. I encourage you to get involved in our next big steps. Check out the web site, and you will find many projects in need of volunteers.

All About Rob

Rob's history with USENIX and system administration is a long one. Besides editing the *login* magazine for ten years, he has chaired three USENIX technical conferences, served six years on the USENIX Board of Directors, chaired workshops, and was co-founder of the LISA conference. SAGE awarded him its inaugural Outstanding Achievement award in 1993.

Previously, Rob was program director for the SANS Institute, an educational foundation that specialized in system administration, networking, and security, though it concentrates mostly on security these days.

Rob was with Berkeley Software Design, Inc. from 1992 to 1998, serving as its president for several years. Before that he was lead engineer on Sun's Backup CoPilot project and a VP at Prisma

SAGE, the System Administrators Guild, is a Special Technical Group within USENIX. It is organized to advance the status of computer system administration as a profession, establish standards of professional excellence and recognize those who attain them, develop guidelines for improving the technical and managerial capabilities of members of the profession, and promote activities that advance the state of the art or the community.

All system administrators benefit from the advancement and growing credibility of the profession. Joining SAGE allows individuals and organizations to contribute to the community of system administrators and the profession as a whole.

SAGE membership includes USENIX membership. SAGE members receive all USENIX member benefits plus others exclusive to SAGE.

SAGE members save when registering for USENIX conferences and conferences co-sponsored by SAGE.

SAGE publishes a series of practical booklets. SAGE members receive a free copy of each booklet published during their membership term.

SAGE sponsors an annual survey of sysadmin salaries collated with job responsibilities. Results are available to members online.

The SAGE Web site offers a members-only Jobs-Offered and Positions-Sought Job Center.

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Technica, a gallium-arsenide SPARC-compatible supercomputer startup. Rob was a member of the original engineering team of Convex Computers and is co-holder of the patent on the Convex C-1 minisupercomputer.

Rob is the head coach of the USA Computing Olympiad, the organization that chooses the set of four pre-college computer programmers to represent the USA in international competitions. He is also the head judge at the Pikes Peak Regional Science Fair.

Rob earned his Ph.D. in high level language constructs for distributed computing from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign after completing an M.S.E.E. at Notre Dame. His undergraduate B.A.Sc. degree from Southern Methodist University was among the first computer science bachelor's degrees offered in the United States.

SAGE Mentoring Program Update

by **Strata R. Chalup**

Program Chair

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The SAGE Mentoring program is ramping up from a long period of inactivity, in which many applications for mentors and apprentices were received. We have had a great deal of feedback regarding folks' interest in senior-to-senior mentoring as well, and are currently considering the best way to implement "mentor matching" so that SAGE members can get in touch with each other directly via the soon-to-be-revamped Mentoring area on the SAGE Web.

If you have submitted an application, and have not heard from us, please accept my personal apologies. I have quite a backlog of applications, including a large tarball of applications from 2000 and 2001, prior to my involvement with the program. I am reviewing those applications, trying to establish good email addresses for people who contacted us in prior years, and refreshing

the mailing lists so that they are current. Please feel free to contact me personally if you are in a jam and really, really need to make a mentor connection! And, as always, the sage-members@usenix.org list is a terrific resource.

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