

A Smart Duty

CIOs should look for ways to help organizations that train young adults to become systems professionals.

WITH ALL OF the media attention on offshoring, there is a growing — but false — sense that technical people won't be needed in the United States sometime in the not-too-distant future. But sourcing must be based on who can do the best job for the least amount of money, which is a strategy that will continue because of the value it brings to a business.

Yet even if overseas outsourcing grows, there will remain a need for knowledge within businesses and the local area around any specific business. We have untapped resources here at home that we shouldn't forget.

It's clear that the universities that train technical professionals are critically important to the long-term viability of technical services in the United States. But that's not enough. We also must support any and all organizations that train technical professionals to ensure that we can fulfill this long-term need.

managing day-to-day challenges in a tech field from someone who'd already made it. And mentoring is clearly a way we can give back and help others grow professionally.

Stop to Help

It's equally important for us to stop and help those who are either underserved or need training and direction. That means thinking outside the box and finding ways to partner with academic institutions and other training organizations.

Take i.c. stars, for example. This Chicago organization (www.icstars.org) not only offers training to young people interested in developing careers as technology professionals but also works with disadvantaged



Ellen Barry
CIO, Metropolitan Pier
and Exposition Authority

a day, five days a week. The training is vast and focuses on relationship skills, project management, designing deliverables, planning and implementation — in addition to high-tech skills. These skills count no matter where the sourcing takes place.

Upon graduation, i.c. stars interns receive help finding IT jobs. Almost all start out at salaries double what they earned before the program. Many be-

come homeowners and more go on to college. Graduates give back by mentoring other interns in the program. So it really builds a community and is not just a training program.

But these types of initiatives can't exist without a commitment from senior technology veterans to help people on the brink of their careers or who may not yet realize they have the potential for a career in IT.

We should encourage our organizations to support training and mentor programs both from a professional and a financial standpoint. We should all be looking to try to help because in the end we also will help our businesses and ourselves. **[BT]**

Ellen Barry is CIO of Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority in Chicago and serves as secretary and event chairwoman for i.c. stars.

ROBERT RANDALL

“All of us who have found our niche in IT need to think about offering our expertise, sharing our commitment to quality and fostering leadership development.”

Mentoring is a critical component. Most of us who have achieved high levels in information technology did not do so alone. We were lucky enough to have help making professional decisions and

individuals to help those who are not so lucky find a way to become technology leaders. From hundreds of inner-city applicants, i.c. stars selects 12 interns who undergo four months of rigorous training, 12 hours



Prepare to make an impact.



NEC NP40



The NP40 projector does everything for you automatically, including startup, focus, keystone correction and more. With the footprint smaller than a day planner and weighing 3.5 lbs., the bright, powerful projector is perfect for when you're on the road.

- 2200 ANSI lumens XGA projector
- Automatic focus and square shot technology provide optimum image quality
- Easy to transport — only 3.5 lbs.
- Quick start and instant shutdown
- Three-year parts, one-year labor and one-year lamp warranty

\$999.00 CDW 1074830

