



SMPTE Spotlight:

Veronica Pineda

From Coordinator to Emerging Technologist: How a Coffee Meeting and a Discovery Call Changed Everything

BY RUSSELL POOLE

CURRENT POSITION:

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PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

SMPTE, 27C Technology Committee, Cinema; RISE, Women in Broadcast and Technology Mentorship, Mentee; InterSociety Digital Cinema Forum (ISDCF); HPA, member

DEGREES:

Master's in Applied Behavior Analysis, National University
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I want to acknowledge the incredible mentors and colleagues who have shaped my path, especially the women who continue to drive technological innovation. My idols, Kari Grubin, the first woman president to lead the Hollywood Professional Association (HPA), and Annie Chang, VP of Creative Technologies at Universal Pictures, have set standards I aspire to follow. Kari's leadership and insight into mentorship inspire my growth, while Annie's work designing next-generation media workflows shapes the future of our industry. I hope to one day follow in their footsteps and impact media technology. Now, let's begin with my story.

On 5 February 2025, I returned from a long day in the Deluxe Burbank office after reviewing video content with Eric King, SVP of Media Engineering at Deluxe. As we wrapped up, I reflected on the journey that led here. A few years ago, I never imagined working in post-production, cinema standards, and emerging technology. I'm a title manager at Deluxe Media, overseeing content for streaming and platforms, spanning mastering, localization, and fulfillment. I am also an active member of InterSociety Digital Cinema Forum (ISDCF) and SMPTE 27C, contributing to industry standards and testing demo content.

I started as a coordinator at Deluxe Media, navigating Digital Intermediate (DI) workflows for video and audio mastering and distribution. Initially, these areas felt disconnected, but over time, I saw how they all revolved around media pipelines, the backbone of content creation and delivery. That realization became the foundation for everything that followed.

A Conversation That Shifted Everything

In February 2024, while exploring the RISE Women in Broadcast and Technology mentorship program, I came across the RISE Awards and recognized a familiar name: Richard Welsh, Chairman & Co-Founder of Volustor and SVP of Innovation at Deluxe. We both worked for the same company, so I added him on LinkedIn. While in town from the U.K. for the HPA Tech Retreat, Rich and I met for coffee at Priscilla's. During our conversation, he casually called me a "technologist at heart." That remark made me pause—what did it truly mean to be a technologist?



Then, he mentioned The Sphere in Las Vegas, its cutting-edge LED resolutions, spatial audio, and immersive technologies. Before I knew it, I was taking notes, eager to research every spec. That talk ignited something in me. I didn't just want to understand workflows; I wanted to understand the future of media technology. That same week, I became a student member of SMPTE.

Building a Foundation Through Mentorship

In May 2024, I was part of the RISE program, working to develop my skills, refine my direction, and gain clarity on where I wanted to go. During my research and development phase, I found myself deep in conversation with Chris Reynolds, Executive Vice President, Fulfillment at Deluxe. What started as passing chats about emerging technologies turned into an hour-long discussion, diving into media pipelines and workflow challenges. Chris, always willing to share insight, casually mentioned, "You should talk to Eric King."

Eric became a key part of my journey in Research and Development. Whether it was sit-downs in his office, asking, "What are you working on?" or "What did you learn today?" Eric always provided space for curiosity. We explored content creation, cloud-based pipelines, and beyond. These weren't just conversations—they sparked new ways of thinking. As much as technical training is important, my lead, Audrey Béliveau, title manager lead at Deluxe, taught me how to be the right kind of leader, which is just as crucial. Her mentorship has helped me navigate challenges, balance my passion for technology, and become a confident professional, ready to take on new opportunities. Thank you.

Where the Journey Becomes More Than Just Learning

In October 2024, I became involved in the SMPTE Standards Community. Being a part of ISDCF and SMPTE 27C is, and always will be, my favorite part of this journey. It's where I confirmed, without a doubt, that I am a technologist.

Steve LLamb, SMPTE Standards Director and President of Inter-Society emphasized the importance of curiosity: "Ask the question—because it's very likely the person next to you has the same question." That mindset reshaped how I approached learning. Through Steve, I joined ISDCF, began testing demo content, and actively contributed to industry standards. I was no longer just working on mastering and fulfillment. I was now helping shape the technologies behind them.

Leaders like Rich Welsh and Steve LLamb played critical roles in shaping my journey. Their unique perspectives challenged me to think differently, broaden my understanding of technology, and step outside my comfort zone. They supported me through pivotal career moves, provided invaluable teaching moments, and, most importantly, showed me the power of asking the right questions.

Defining My Role as a Technologist

What does it mean to be a technologist, especially in an industry that thrives on diversity of thought? For me, it means bridging the gap between technology and people. My background in Applied Behavior Analysis has given me a unique perspective on how humans should interact with technology. As a title manager, I see firsthand how workflows integrate with evolving technology. Understanding workflows and recognizing how people adapt to and leverage new tools is crucial. This dual perspective helps drive innovation and ensures that technology effectively serves content creators and audiences. It means bridging the gap between those who develop technology and those who use it, ensuring that tools are built to serve real-world needs effectively.

My Favorite Part of SMPTE

This past fall, I attended my first SMPTE Summit, an experience that solidified my passion for standards, innovation, and collaboration. Learning remotely was one thing, but being in a room full of people shaping the future of motion imaging changed everything. I'll have the opportunity to join my Deluxe SMPTE team at the 2025 HPA Tech Retreat.

At this phase of my SMPTE journey, I'm revising ST 2067-200 with Raymond Yeung and exploring the new HTML Standard workflow. One of my favorite aspects is the Technical Committee (TC) meetings, where ideas shaping the industry unfold in real-time.

When I'm not in TC meetings, I'm testing demo content in ISDCF. Recently, I spent time testing 7.1 Audio configuration with LED for exhibition in ISDCF, exploring how it's transforming immersive audio for cinema while writing up the recommended practice draft. It's also been a good chance to support early-career professionals. I've met incredible friends along the way, like Marcelle Rutherford, SF SMPTE Student President, and Irene Muñoz López, SMPTE Student Paper Award Recipient, who reminded me that innovation thrives when we listen, engage, and recognize ideas from all around us.

Looking Ahead: The Impact I Want to Leave

From my perspective, leadership isn't about titles—it's about driving change, inspiring innovation, and making a lasting impact. One day, a student or early-career professional may be shaped by the risks they took and the questions they asked by reading journals like this or listening to Kari Grubin on the "2 Amigas in Hollywood" podcast. Embracing curiosity, taking bold steps, and believing in one's ability to contribute are what shape the future of this industry. It's about becoming the leader who doesn't just navigate change but creates it. Stay tuned because I am just getting started.


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