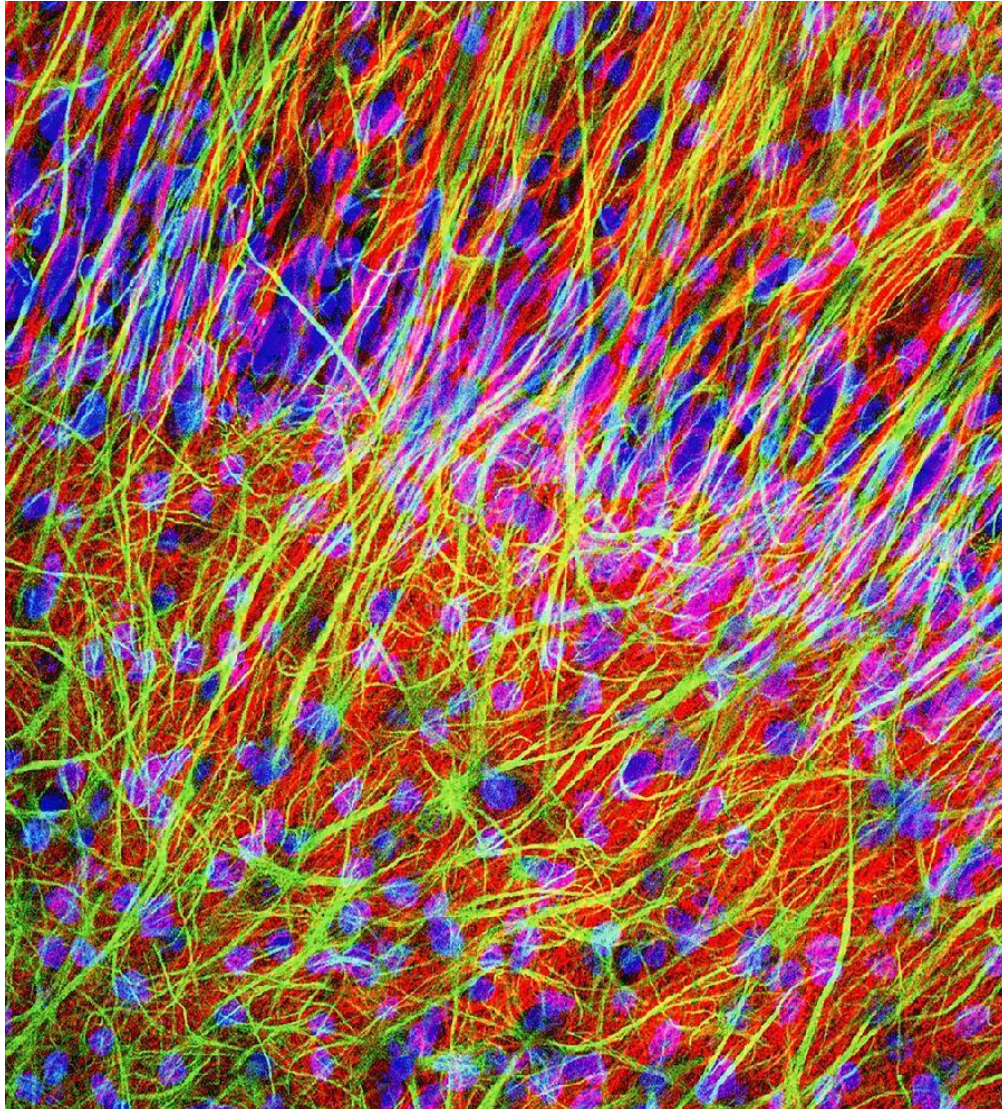


MID-AMERICA CHAPTER NEWS

American Medical Writers Association

Winter 2019



Brain Cells, Christopher Henstridge, PhD, Principal Investigator, University of Dundee UK

Fluorescence light micrograph of a section through brain tissue, showing numerous glial cells and neurons. <https://fineartamerica.com/>

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President: Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

Treasurer: Leslie Neistadt, ELS

Secretary: Raeesa Gupta, PhD

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Lisa M. Balbes, PhD, Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD

Nebraska Event Coordinator:

Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

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PhD

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In this issue:

President's Letter	3
St. Louis-area Freelance Luncheon Series	4
Webinar Announcement	5
AMWA Notes	6

President's Letter

Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

It's hard to believe that 2019 is coming to an end and we are about to start a new decade! The start of a new year is always a great time to assess how your career is going and develop goals for the upcoming year. The Mid-America AMWA chapter is offering several upcoming career development opportunities that we encourage you to participate in, including our first ever webinar Q&A on [Jump Starting Your Freelance Career in 2020](#). We hope that this webinar will be the first of many similar webinars for our chapter that will allow our members to share their experiences with others and provide career development.

We also encourage you to consider volunteering your time for our chapter. We are currently looking for someone to help develop local networking opportunities in the Kansas City area. If you or anyone you know may be interested, please email me at: rebecca@epionmedcom.com. We hope you have a wonderful holiday season, and we look forward to what 2020 will bring!



St. Louis-area Freelance Luncheon Series: TechWrite STL

Joanne McAndrews, PhD

Lisa Balbes, PhD



The TechWrite STL group continues to hold bi-monthly meetings. At most meetings, a topic of interest to freelance medical and technical writers is presented, usually over lunch at a local restaurant.

Our last event of 2019 was “Best and Worst Books of 2019” moderated by Leslie Neistadt at a local library on November 13th. Leslie collected information on books that members had read over the past year, including their recommendations and opinions. A categorized list (<http://www.amwa-midamerica.org/assets/data/2019Books.pdf>) was shared and discussed by attendees (11 people attended the luncheon; 7 of whom were AMWA members). Attendees shared their first memories of reading, and Leslie also presented a collection of creative holiday gift ideas for avid readers.

For our inaugural 2020 event, Ruth Thaler-Carter will lead a discussion on “IT Security for Your Home Office” on January 10th, and in March Betsy Frick will give a primer on freelancing (“Find Customers—Do Work—Get Paid”).

Lisa Balbes and Joanne McAndrews have been co-organizing the group since September 2006, when it was formed as a merger of the local AMWA and STC-CIC groups. A schedule of upcoming luncheons can be found on our chapter website (<http://www.amwa-midamerica.org/index.html>). A complete list of past topics, as well as handouts, is available on the History tab on that website.

Jump Starting Your Freelance Career in 2020: Q&A Session

Thursday, January 9, 2020

12:00 PM -1:00 PM

This is your chance to get all your questions about freelance medical writing answered by 3 talented writers with a combined 50+ years of freelance success!

Panelists:

Lisa M. Balbes, PhD

Natalie DeWitt, PhD

Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD

Moderator: Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/877592281>

Meeting ID: 877 592 281

Lisa M. Balbes, PhD

Dr. Lisa M. Balbes earned her Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and her undergraduate degrees in chemistry and psychology from Washington University in St Louis. She spent several years as a computational chemist at Research Triangle Institute, conducting protein and small molecule modeling experiments in support of drug discovery. For over 25 years, she has provided technical writing and editor services as Balbes Consultants, LLC, with clients including Washington University Medical School, Bausch and Lomb Surgical, SigmaAldrich, Stereotaxis, Pine Instrumentation, and the US FDA.

Natalie DeWitt, PhD

Natalie DeWitt has worked in scientific communications for two decades. She is a prolific writer of regulatory documents, grants, publications, whitepapers, and editorials. She has a PhD in cell and molecular biology from University of Wisconsin and five years of postdoctoral research experience at Yale and Princeton. In 1999, she began an eleven-year tenure as a Senior Editor at Nature, which established a strong foundation in scientific publishing and peer review. In 2006, Natalie launched Nature Reports Stem Cells, a website and blog that provided information to scientists and the general public on stem cell research. In 2012, Natalie founded her own medical writing business, Accendo Scientific, which offers a range of writing, editing, and publication strategy services to a broad range of international clients in academia and pharmaceuticals and biotechnology companies.

Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD

Joanne McAndrews received a PhD in neurobiology and physiology from Northwestern University and has worked as a freelance medical writer since 2000, specializing in the preparation of regulatory documents and manuscripts for her clients in the biotech, medical device, and pharmaceutical industries. An active member of the American Medical Writers Association's Mid-America chapter, she was named an AMWA Fellow in 2014 and received the AMWA President's Award in 2019.

AMWA Notes

Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD, received the President's Award at this year's AMWA Medical Writing & Communication Conference. Congratulations!

Mid-America Chapter Dinner at the 2019 AMWA Conference,
By Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD, and Leslie E. Neistadt, ELS

For the past fourteen years, Mid-America chapter members have gathered for dinner on Thursday evenings during the AMWA Medical Writing & Communication Conference. We always enjoy meeting each other and learning about members' different backgrounds and work environments. Our 2019 dinner was held at Pomodore Ristorante Italiano on November 7th in San Diego. Attendees Kelley Atherton, Natalie DeWitt, Jessica Kiser, Megan Lading, Meagan Lewis, Joanne McAndrews, Leslie Neistadt and Emma Underdown enjoyed visiting with each other and learning about members' different backgrounds and work environments while enjoying a delicious dinner.



It is astonishing with how little reading a doctor can practice medicine, but it is not astonishing how badly he may do it. —Sir William Osler

(Borrowed from "10 Osler-isms to Remember in Your Daily Practice," *Stanford Medicine*, November 25, 2014.)