MID-AMERICA CHAPTER NEWS
American Medical Writers Association

Fall 2020

Breathe Calmly and Deeply, 2020
Matteo Sica, Italy, CoronaColors (acrylic) on canvas
Chapter Officers:

President: Rebecca Bigelow, PhD
Treasurer: Leslie Neistadt, ELS
Secretary: Raeesa Gupte, PhD
Membership Chair: Heather McNeill, MA
President Elect: Natalie DeWitt, PhD
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Webmaster: Lisa M. Balbes, PhD

St. Louis Luncheon Coordinators: Lisa M. Balbes, PhD, Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD
Nebraska Event Coordinator: Rebecca Bigelow, PhD
Kansas City Event Coordinators: Raeesa Gupte, PhD, Crystal Austin, PhD
Iowa Event Coordinator: Natalie DeWitt, PhD
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The Mid-America Chapter officers have been working hard to provide networking and continuing education opportunities. We hope you have had an opportunity to attend one of our recent events. If not, you can find recordings and handouts from our meetings on our website (http://amwa-midamerica.org/history.html). We also hope that you take this opportunity to find out all AMWA has to offer at the 2020 virtual conference! The meeting will include live plenary sessions, education sessions, and live roundtables and networking groups. You can improve your medical writing career, all from the comfort of your home! Please register for the conference at:

- https://www.amwa.org/event/2020annualconf

In addition, our chapter will be having a virtual breakfast networking event and business meeting on October 20 at 8:00 am (see registration details below). We hope to virtually see you there!

If you have specific questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out (rebecca@epionmedcom.com).
On July 22, the discussion took place via Zoom, and centered on the anti-freelancing legislation being passed in several states. Ruth E. Thaler-Carter provided background information on what the legislation was, and how it affects freelancers in Missouri. She then introduced John Goffstein, Esq, an attorney whose practice focuses on litigation. Mr. Goffstein provided some historical background on labor practices over the years, and answered questions from participants on how they could protect themselves and their businesses. Fourteen people attended, including 7 AMWA members.

The annual “dinner” was held on September 22 via Zoom. Thirteen members participated in the session (including 9 AMWA members) and got to know one another, discussing their work, personal challenges, and successes for 2020, as well as their goals for 2021. Attendees shared their favorite and most meaningful projects from 2020, which included helping female and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) principal investigators with grant proposals, mental health documentation for both medical and military personnel, and poetry. The conversation covered the entire spectrum, from how to get started as a freelancer to how to transition into retirement.

2020 events will finish off with a November session highlighting the best and worst books of the year as read by our members, moderated by Leslie Neistadt.

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.
Kansas City Event: LinkedIn for Medical Writers

On September 15, Raeesa Gupte, PhD, Freelance Medical Writer and Secretary for the AMWA Mid-America Chapter, presented the webinar “LinkedIn for Medical Writers.” Many of us use this platform to showcase our skills, network with other professionals, and attract new clients. The objectives of the presentation were to:

- Craft an effective LinkedIn profile.
- Use LinkedIn for networking.
- Use LinkedIn to build authority.

Raeesa gave the following tips for creating a stellar profile:

- Make a Headline that is attractive using searchable keywords;
- craft an About section that is organic and tells a story; and
- select appropriate materials (eg, writing samples, blog page) to showcase in the Featured section.

She recommended the use of the STAR method (skill, task, action, and result) for describing your experience, education, certifications, volunteer work, skills, and accomplishments. Additionally, Raeesa emphasized the importance of sending personalized connection requests and how the power of giving back can help you to build authority and to attract clients.

Over 100 people registered for the webinar and about 60 people were in attendance during the live event. This was a very relevant topic and an engaging presentation!

Presentation slides can be found at: [http://www.amwa-midamerica.org/history.html](http://www.amwa-midamerica.org/history.html) and requests for a link to the recording can be sent to Rebecca Bigelow at rebecca@epionmedcom.com.

— Crystal Austin
Mini Tutorials are resources for medical communication professionals made available exclusively to AMWA members.

Topics:

- Best Practices for Writing CME Needs Assessments
- Conversance with Fundamentals of Health Economics
- Editing and Organizing References in EndNote
- Mind Your Own Business with a Year-End Review
- Telling It Like It Is: Informed Consent in Plain Language

Find AMWA Mini Tutorials now in AMWA Online Learning.

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I pictured myself as a virus or a cancer cell and tried to sense what it would be like.

— Jonas Salk