

MID-AMERICA CHAPTER NEWS

American Medical Writers Association

Winter 2020—2021



The campaign was created by the Looma agency on behalf of the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture and Public Information. As its creators explain, they primarily wanted to make society aware of how to behave in times of epidemics. Despite almost ubiquitous messages, many people still don't know how to behave properly to avoid coronavirus infection. To make the message interesting and easy to remember, they decided to use famous works of art as models.

Chapter Officers:

President: Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

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St. Louis Luncheon Coordinators: Lisa M. Balbes, PhD, Joanne M. McAndrews, PhD

Nebraska Event Coordinator: Rebecca Bigelow, PhD, Matt Sandbulte, PhD

Kansas City Event Coordinators: Raeesa Gupte, PhD, Crystal Austin, PhD

Iowa Event Coordinator: Natalie DeWitt, PhD

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President's Letter

Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

2020 was quite a year to say the least. It was a year of dramatic changes and tremendous ups and downs. But looking at the past year from a medical and scientific perspective, it has been a historic year for its great scientific strides. In a single year, the scientific and medical community has sequenced the genome of a new virus, discovered epidemiological and mechanistic insights into its spread, and, amazingly, developed at the time of this writing, two new vaccines to aid in infection prevention. All of this was done in less than one year's time. Had anyone said in 2019 that this would happen, many would have said it was impossible. This is truly a testament to what scientific ingenuity and world-wide collaborative efforts can achieve.

So, we welcome 2021, both personally and professionally. We hope that the New Year brings with it many opportunities for growth and success in all that you do.

Welcome to Our New Volunteers

The Mid-America AMWA Chapter is always looking for new ways to reach our members and for ideas for educational and networking events. If you have any ideas or would like to become more involved in our chapter, we would love to have you join us! Speaking of new volunteers, we are excited to announce two new additions to our chapter board. Liz Leight will be serving as our new President-elect and Matt Sandbulte will be helping to organize events in the Nebraska area. We are excited about the new ideas they will be bringing to the group and the possibilities ahead!

If you have specific questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out (rebecca@epionmedcom.com).

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 a no-host lunch at a local restaurant. The group has been meeting virtually on Zoom since March 2020.

Our last event of 2020 was “Best and Worst Books of 2020” moderated by Leslie Neistadt on November 12th via Zoom. 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/2020Books.pdf>) was shared and discussed by attendees (8 people attended the luncheon; 5 of whom were AMWA members). Attendees shared their sources for book recommendations, and Leslie also presented a collection of t-shirts for book lovers with slogans such as “Dinosaurs Didn’t Read. Now They Are Extinct”; “It’s Not Hoarding If It’s Books”; and “I’m Reading. Go Away.”

For our first event of 2021, Dana Delibovi and Alice Fugate will lead a discussion on “The Science of Being Happy” on January 5th via Zoom.

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

Leveling Up: How Using Emotional

Intelligence Will Make You a Better Communicator

A roundtable webinar moderated by Gretchen Griffin, MS, MBA

Trilogy Writing & Consulting

Thursday, January 28, 11:00 AM-12:00 PM CDT

The world of medical communication changes as frequently as the styles, guidance, and standards that accompany it. The expectations of what a medical writer can and will do are evolving and growing. The perceived value of a medical writer is not based solely on the document quality, but on how well they partner with and support the team. This roundtable will include a brief background on emotional intelligence (EI), relevant EI skills, and the benefits of successful EI skill application.



AMWA Notes

Member Resource Library

AMWA's member resource library contains more than 200 resources of value to medical communicators in all settings. Most entries link directly to the source PDF, and others link to online databases, websites, and videos. The resources are categorized according to topic area. Some entries include a link to AMWA education for an opportunity to delve deeper into the topic.

The library will be updated periodically to ensure that resources and links are current and accessible. If you are unable to access a link, please email amwa@amwa.org.

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Scientific Publications | Visual Communication | Writing and Editing Mechanics*

Wherever the art of Medicine is loved, there is also a love of Humanity.

— Hippocrates

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