

Dear AMWA Mid-America Chapter,

We hope your 2026 is off to a great start! Check out our recent and upcoming events and other chapter updates below.

Recent Events

Chapter event: Breakthroughs & Fresh Starts (24 attendees)

On April 1, the Mid-America chapter held its first chapter-wide event for 2026. Chapter members Frank Siraguso and Sunali Wadehra each shared about their career journey in medical writing and how they have worked in different capacities within our diverse field. Frank discussed his freelance experience for different clients, including an academic institution and a freelance group, and Sunali described her freelance work and recent transition to CME medical writing at a company. Each presentation was followed by engaging Q&A with attendees.

TechWriteSTL March luncheon (8 attendees, including 5 AMWA members)

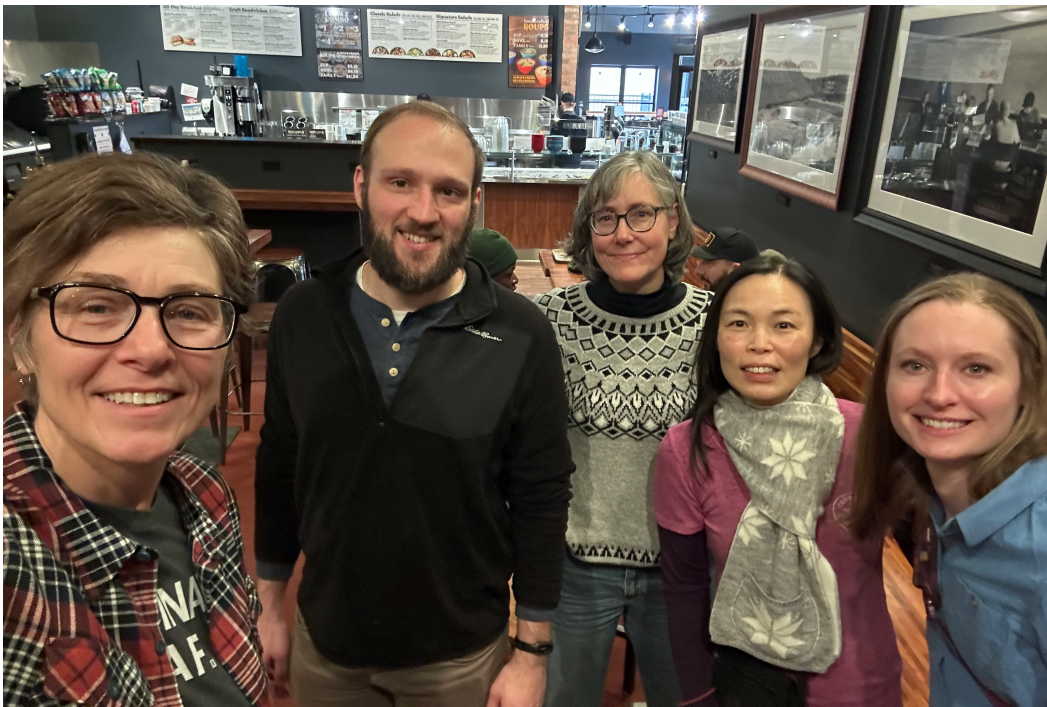
The topic for this event was “Put Your eBook on Amazon”, and member Patrick Dorsey explained all the steps involved in self-publishing. Step 1 is the hard one, writing the book. Step 2, making it available for printing and purchasing, is the easier step. Patrick covered this step, including specific recommendations on which options are most beneficial for authors. He talked about eBooks, paperback and hardback, ISBNs, digital rights, file formats, and much more. He also included many anecdotes from his own vast experience, and fielded questions from the attendees. At the end of the presentation, the attendees were ready to self-publish! The slides are available on the History tab of the AMWA Mid-America web site.

TechWrite STL January luncheon (12 attendees, including 8 AMWA members)

Attorney David S. Kim, practice manager at Armstrong Teasdale LLP and volunteer with St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts, led a discussion regarding “Reading the Fine Print: Key Contract Clauses Every Medical/Technical Writer Should Know”. He highlighted the importance of contracts and why it’s important to review them carefully prior to signing. In addition, he listed several of the main reasons to have a written contract, and explained when oral contracts are valid. He reviewed key clauses in typical contracts, including Scope of Work & Deliverables; Payment terms; Intellectual Property & Ownership; Confidentiality & Publication Restrictions; Non-Compete terms; Indemnification & Liability; and Termination. Attendees asked many questions and provided examples from their own problematic contracts, and David made recommendations as to best practices. He concluded the session with some useful tips about the contract negotiation process, and specific advice for local members who would like to have contracts reviewed. The handout from this meeting is posted on the Mid-America chapter website, on the History tab.

Iowa coffee chat (5 attendees)

On January 17, the Iowa regional group met at a coffee shop in Iowa City for informal discussion. Everyone enjoyed catching up over tasty beverages!



Omaha meet-ups

The Omaha regional group had 2 recent meet-ups: 4 people attended a luncheon on February 6, and 7 attended a dinner on March 31.

Upcoming Events

TechWrite STL:

May 13, 11:30am-1:00pm CT: Sales and Billing Advice/Etiquette presented by Veronika Redmann.

This event will be held at Sunny Street Cafe in Des Peres, MO.

July 8, 11:30am-1:00pm CT: AI-related Issues for Editors presented by Núria Waddington Negrão, Medical Writer and AI Consultant.

This event is virtual and will be available for all chapter members to attend.

2026 Chapter Officers

The chapter had officer elections in late 2025, with the following results:

- President: Heather Widmayer, MS, MBA
- President Elect: Sunali Wadehra, MD
- Secretary: Diane Morton, MS
- Treasurer: Leslie Neistadt, ELS

Non-elected chapter leaders for 2026 include:

- Immediate Past President: Matt Sandbulte, PhD
- Webmaster: Lisa M. Balbes, PhD
- Communications Chair: Terra White, PhD
- Membership Chair: Joanne McAndrews, PhD
- Chapter Advisory Council Representative: Anna Boyum, PhD
- Event Coordinators:

- St. Louis: Joanne McAndrews, PhD and Lisa M. Balbes PhD
- Central Kansas: Matt Sandbulte, PhD
- Kansas City: Alysia Drummond
- Omaha/Council Bluffs: Rebecca Bigelow, PhD
- Iowa: Julia Moffitt, PhD

Important Links

Chapter LinkedIn group: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12517224/>

Chapter website: <https://www.amwa-midamerica.org/index.html>

Thanks to everyone's participation so far this year! Looking forward to your continued engagement.

Sincerely,

Terra White

2026 Communications Chair, AMWA Mid-America Chapter