

AMWA NEWS



FROM THE PRESIDENT
Inaugural Address: Say Yes

Elise Eller, PhD / 2022–2023 AMWA President

When I learned about the field of medical writing and attended my first AMWA conference, I knew I had found my people. However, I had no idea at the time that I'd someday be president of AMWA. I am humbled to follow in the footsteps of so many other AMWA presidents, people I have worked with and admire. And I am grateful for the people who will work with me and offer their expertise this year: my fellow officers and the rest of the AMWA Board of Directors; committee chairs and members; Susan Krug, our Executive Director; and the amazing AMWA staff.

I first heard about AMWA when I talked to a freelancer in my area, Julie Gelderloos, about medical writing. Julie convinced me to join AMWA and attend my first conference in 2009 in Dallas. I've attended the AMWA annual conference ever since. When the then-president of the Rocky Mountain Chapter, Barb

Zimmerman, asked me to organize the next chapter conference, I said yes. And that's how I got sucked in. I later served as chapter president and got involved at the national level, including chairing a chapter handbook committee. After serving at the chapter level, I joined the AMWA Board of Directors and served in various roles.

I say this not to establish my credentials but to point out a common theme: each time, someone asked me to do something, and I said yes.

With the guidance of our Executive Director, Susan Krug, and the hard work of AMWA staff and volunteers, we have weathered the pandemic surprisingly well. As we come out of the pandemic, we are revitalizing our volunteer opportunities. AMWA's call for volunteers opened in late September.

Without our volunteers, our organization would not accomplish as much as we do. You, our members, are AMWA. We need our members to help us accomplish our goals and build upon what we've already achieved.

Volunteer opportunities include but are not limited to selecting content for the annual conference, developing and evaluating educational content for our workshops and online learning, working for the *AMWA Journal*, participating in committees and task forces, and volunteering at the chapter or local level. Opportunities range from microvolunteering to year-long commitments.

We also want every member to feel welcome in AMWA. Recently, we launched a diversity, equity, and inclusion

initiative to determine how we can make sure a diversity of voices is heard within our organization. Everyone has their own experiences, both personal and professional. Everyone has their own story. We value our welcoming and collaborative environment in AMWA, but there is always room for improvement. Our mission

remains promoting excellence in medical communication. To pursue this mission, we need volunteers with a variety of backgrounds and areas of expertise.

I am excited about the upcoming year and am looking forward to seeing what we accomplish. We have a conference in Baltimore to plan and new and refreshed educational content to put out. We are constantly reviewing our educational offerings to determine what is of value to our members. The *AMWA Journal* is now using a new digital publishing platform and is updating its processes to improve efficiency and enhance the reader experience. We have important initiatives in the works, including the value of medical writing initiative and our diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative. In short, there's lots to do.

To all of those people along the way who asked me to volunteer for various roles, thank you. I said yes, and I have never regretted it. And to my readers I say: say yes. You have a place in AMWA.

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