

**AMWA NEWS**



**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

R. Michelle Sauer, PhD, ELS / 2023-2024 AMWA President

To the AMWA Membership, I want to begin my first article as president with thanks. Thank you to the membership and the nominating committee for their trust; it places me in a state of grace.

Shortly after being hired at UTHealth in 2009, I joined the American Medical Writing Association, and that is where I found “my people.” In this community, I have grown as a professional and as a human because of the amazing people who volunteer their time and expertise to this organization. I have been mentored by incredibly talented individuals, and I am honored to have served at the chapter and national level. I am now truly excited to begin my term as your president.

As I start my term, I am reminded of how diverse AMWA is. We are not one thing. We are editors, writers, and graphic artists. We are in regulatory, in academia, in education. We span the continent and the globe. In fact, even as individuals we are not one thing; often our work and experience allows us or forces us to be 5 things at once. This internal diversity is a strength, and it fosters the breath of education that AMWA is able to offer. As an organization, we aim to understand and harness our diversity to enable an inclusive and equitable environment. We want every member to feel welcomed by AMWA, and I am very thankful for the volunteers of the Diversity and Inclusion Assessment Task Force, led by Dr Gail V. Flores, who gathered and analyzed member data and survey results focused on this topic. I am also appreciative to the AMWA staff and board members who have dedicated considerable time this past year to see and define the AMWA way of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). To pursue our mission of promoting excellence in medical communication, we must be fearless. We will continue to recruit and retain members with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and expertise. In the year ahead, I hope to see the formation of a special DEI committee that will support the Board of Directors (BOD)’s initiatives to foster the organization’s strategic growth.

Education is the heart of AMWA, and as the work to ensure fantastic conferences and online learning continues, I am thankful for the members and leaders within the Education Committee who have been diligently working to ensure timely webinars, updated workshops, and new certificates. I am also excited to see the launch of the Health Communication Task Force; its work will bring honor to Lori L. Alexander’s legacy.

With the growth in the medical communication field, there has also been a greater need for medical communication education programs. AMWA has focused considerable time and effort into education offerings for the full spectrum of medical communicators, and these offerings will continue to expand and be refined.

REGULATORY	CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION	PUBLICATIONS
PATIENT EDUCATION	A	WRITING
MEDICAL GRAPHICS	M	EDITING
WEB CONTENT	W	GRANTS
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## New rules and guidance may need to be established and updated to meet the changes and opportunities brought about by AI.

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One of the growing needs of our membership is education and guidance regarding artificial intelligence (AI). Medical communicators will need to adapt, evolve, and find an ethical path forward. New rules and guidance may need to be established and updated to meet the changes and opportunities brought about by AI. Recent blogs on AI and authorship are available on the AMWA website, and many of the sessions at the annual conferences are excellent resources. I look forward to working with leaders to build upon these initial efforts. At the same time, criticism of our profession has once again surfaced in the peer-reviewed literature. Although some throw rocks at things that shine, it is our job to do more than shake it off. I look forward to working with the BOD and subject matter experts in AI and in medical communication ethics so that we continue to assess and meet the needs of our membership. We will protect our reputations and identify and build needed tools.

As we look to the future, I want to pause and think about how we got here. If you met me 20 years ago, you would meet a graduate student who was determined to make a contribution to this world. Within 5 years, I was a

postdoc with burnout. Fortunately, around that time, a grad school friend invited me to join their medical writing team, and that is when I found “my thing.” I left the bench and upgraded my laptop. Although I have held many different titles (assistant professor, senior research scientist, research liaison), my favorite professional title is medical communicator. Although many of you have similar stories of winding paths to find this unique career niche, some of you have graduated from programs specifically designed to train medical communicators. Although our field and our education continue to evolve, AMWA has consistently been there to lead medical communication professionals, and I hope we are all dedicated to continuing that mission.

The year ahead will be busy. We will add and refine educational content, we will grow in numbers and diversity, and we will overcome obstacles and increase equity with innovative solutions. The goals I’ve outlaid are possible because of the incredible board members, chairs, committees, staff, and volunteers. As a member, I ask each of you to find a way to connect with AMWA. Attend a local chapter event, offer to join a committee, or share your expertise on Engage or through a journal article. It is going to be a great year ahead. Are you ready for it?

**Author declaration and disclosures:** *The author notes no commercial associations that may pose a conflict of interest in relation to this article.*

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# General Principles of Word Usage

Choose the right word for accuracy and clarity.  
[www.amwa.org/online\\_learning](http://www.amwa.org/online_learning)



AMWA EDUCATION  
Write better. Write now.