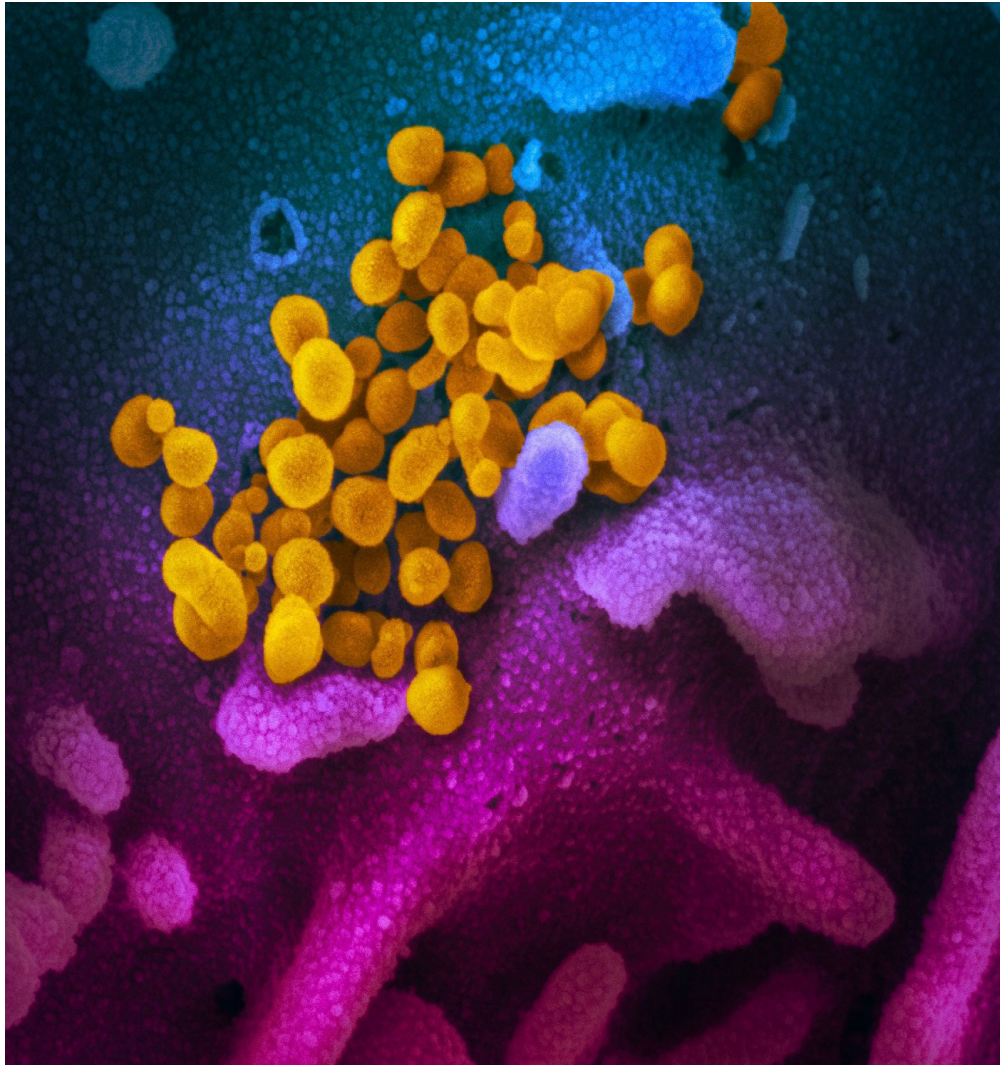


# MID-AMERICA CHAPTER NEWS

## American Medical Writers Association

Spring 2020



### *COVID-19*

*National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases' Rocky Mountains Laboratories*

*A scanning electron microscope image showing SARS-CoV-2 (yellow)—also known as 2019-nCoV, the virus that causes COVID-19—isolated from a patient in the US, emerging from the surface of cells (blue/pink) cultured in the lab.*

## *Chapter Officers:*

**President:** Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

**Treasurer:** Leslie Neistadt, ELS

**Secretary:** Raeesa Gupta, PhD

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**Nebraska Event Coordinator:** Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

**Kansas City Event Coordinator:** Raeesa Gupta, PhD

**Iowa Event Coordinator:** Natalie DeWitt, PhD

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## President's Letter

Rebecca Bigelow, PhD

We have all entered a difficult time, full of uncertainty and change with the onset of the COVID-19 virus pandemic. Despite the challenges we are facing right now, the Mid-America AMWA chapter is continuing to provide resources and events for our members. There are several chapter-wide webinars planned, as well as specific opportunities in the St. Louis area. Please be on the look-out for email announcements regarding these events. We also encourage you to use resources provided by the national group. Participation in ENGAGE is a great opportunity to share concerns, resources, and information with the entire community of AMWA members. If you do not currently subscribe to ENGAGE, I encourage you to do so on your profile page. Additionally, national AMWA continues to support e-learning events and host webinars.

If you have specific questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out ([rebecca@epionmedcom.com](mailto:rebecca@epionmedcom.com)). We hope that you remain healthy and safe and find resilience during these difficult times.

## 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 lunch at a local restaurant.*

Ruth Thaler-Carter gave an informative presentation, “IT Security for Your Home Office”, on January 10th. The many threats of online life including spam, scams, phishing schemes, hacking, and ransomware were discussed by attendees. Ruth also detailed the different ways that attendees could identify legitimate job offers versus those that are scams. She presented a list of warning signs regarding email communications, social media friend requests, and threats given via telephone. Ruth concluded her presentation with a list of tips and tools that attendees could use to protect themselves, their computing environments, and their businesses. Fourteen people attended the lively luncheon, including six AMWA members.

Upcoming 2020 events include a primer on freelancing (“Find Customers—Do Work—Get Paid”) by Betsy Frick on March 31st to be held virtually; a panel discussion (“Medical Ghostwriting: Ethical and Practical Controversies”) led by Pranali Pathare and Dana Delibovi on May 4th, which may be moved to a virtual event pending Stay at Home orders; a networking event in July organized by Lisa Balbes; a dinner with a guest speaker in September; and in November the 4th annual session highlighting the our members’ choices for best and worst books of the year, 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.

# *A Tale of Two Contemplations: Impostor Syndrome and Medical Writing Dreams*

## *Webinar*

Wednesday, April 30th, 2020

12:00 PM -1:00 PM

Webinar speaker, Anand Devasthanam, PhD

Medical Writer, Parexel

This webinar is aimed at overcoming impostor syndrome to present yourself as a strong candidate for an industry position in medical writing. Discussion points will include:

- Where does impostor syndrome come from?
- How recognizing and overcoming impostor syndrome are critical to becoming a medical writer.
- Navigating and using AMWA resources.
- How to add value through volunteering and subcontracting/partnering initiatives.
- Gaining visibility in the medical writing community and putting yourself in the picture.

Please join us!

For details on how to participate, contact Raeesa Gupta [raeesagupte@gmail.com](mailto:raeesagupte@gmail.com)

## *AMWA Notes*

### *Overview of the New AMA Manual of Style, 11th Edition*

At last, the 11th edition of the *AMA Manual of Style* has arrived! On February 26, AMWA held a webinar presented by Stacy L. Christiansen, MA, co-chair of the *AMA Manual of Style* committee and managing editor, *JAMA*, highlighting policy changes, updates large and small, and new entries. Topics included new reference entries, updates to nomenclature in a variety of disciplines, new standards for ethical and legal issues in scholarly publishing, updated usage guidance, expanded coverage of statistical terms, and refreshed examples of data presentation, as well as updates on grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and abbreviations. Some of the most commonly asked questions were also covered and time was left for questions from attendees.

- The webinar is still available at \$55 for members/\$95 for nonmembers at: <http://amwa.mycrowdwisdom.com/diweb/catalog?q=%22AMA+manual+of+style%22&f2=1>
- AMWA members can also receive a 20% discount on all formats of the new edition. Find the entire list of affiliate partner discounts on the AMWA website under [Member Benefits](#) or via [this link](#).

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*Always look on the bright side of life.*

— Eric Idle