

AMWA NEWS



FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's Summer!

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

As I write this column, I'm reminded of "In Summer"—the quintessential ballad of an adorable snowman singing about the joys of a season that is, in fact, deadly to him. My children love to watch *Frozen*, and I can't help but hum along as Olaf identifies all of the wonderful elements of the season. I live in southern Texas; thus, my summers are scorching. As soon as I saw May on the calendar, I remembered that summer is NOT my favorite season.

However, I find myself looking for *glimmers* as the thermostat is rising. Although *triggers* are events that bring negative feelings, *glimmers* are events that bring hope, joy, or contentment. One glimmer is that registration for the [2024 Medical Writing & Communication Conference](#) will be opening soon. As I reviewed the initial lineup of open sessions, I was energized and hopeful. Once again, the Annual Conference Committee had the tough job of selecting content from a wealth of strong session applications. The breadth of the medical communication field continues to grow, but as you look at the program, I know you will find content that is not only vital to your career but is also timely. Technology sessions were a huge hit last year, and we listened to member feedback. We made sure those sessions had minimal conflicts, and I cannot wait to see the new advancements and learn alongside you this year.

Another glimmer appears as I see the new [diversity, equity, and inclusion \(DEI\) page](#) on the AMWA website. The Board of Directors (BOD) has dedicated time and resources to ensure that AMWA works in a proactive fashion to deliver resources to our members. In April, the BOD approved a strategic plan for DEI initiatives that builds upon previous work. For this plan to succeed, AMWA will need your help. Please continue to let us know how we improve. We had a robust response to the membership survey that was sent in early 2024, and we are currently using that data to build our future plans and our budget. The BOD also approved the formation of a DEI Committee. I look forward to overseeing the formation of this new committee and the work that will be done to ensure that AMWA becomes an even more welcoming environment and fosters a sense of belonging for all medical communication professionals at the national and chapter levels.

Speaking of local chapters, I thoroughly enjoyed my local Southwest Chapter's Regional Conference this past April. I am so grateful for the time and effort of all of our local chapter leaders. Your dedication and generosity enable wonderful regional events that provide networking opportunities, timely education, and laughter. For those who can, I highly encourage you to get involved in your [local chapters](#). There is always a need for someone to aid in the organization of a local or regional event or to assist with administrative tasks. Chapters provide such value, but they do require work. By working together, great things can happen. Many of the great ideas brought to the national level are inspired and fostered by the chapter "laboratories." I am so grateful to and inspired by all of the chapter leaders of our organization. As I have met with you and read your chapter reports, I continue to learn and can't wait to see what is next.

While progress and work are important, so is rest. It is summertime, so I hope you have some fun planned, too. I am looking forward to my week in August when I leave my cell phone and computer behind. It's a week of disconnection, and it truly helps me reset. I will be with the ones I love and enjoying some sand and sea. The first time I did a week without technology enabled a learning curve. The second time I escaped, I had better backup plans to reduce any "emergency interruptions." And, having done this twice before, I am assured that the world will indeed keep spinning even if I am not working. I will return with great memories, a tan, and a mindset that will prepare me for the next challenges, whatever they may be.

So in closing, I hope you have had a wonderful spring and find your glimmers outnumber your triggers this summer. Please be sure to reach out to me with any concerns or ideas, as I want to be available and responsive (except for one week in August). Together, we make AMWA stronger.

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

Author contact: michelle@rnaeditingllc.com