

AMWA NEWS

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Building Leaders One Volunteer at a Time

Katrina R. Burton, BS / 2021–2022 AMWA President

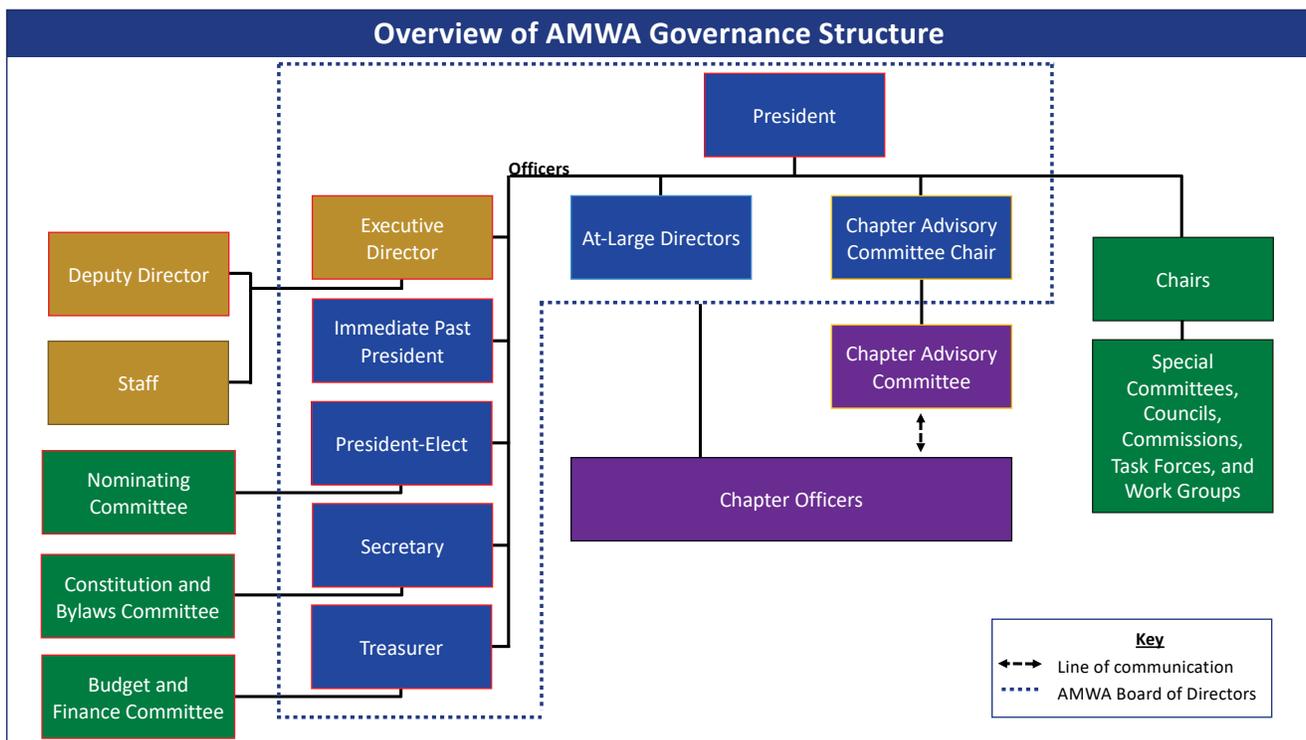


What an exciting time for the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) as we make the 2022 Spring issue of the *AMWA Journal* accessible on the new digital platform! My sincere appreciation goes to the *AMWA Journal* Editorial Team, AMWA Staff, and the volunteers who put in countless hours to help deliver such an outstanding publication. Congratulations on your efforts in helping the organization to continue to evolve.

As I think about volunteers and how they impact organizations like AMWA, I can't help but reflect on my own trajectory as a volunteer. Looking back on my life experiences, I've always had the desire to help others and to do good. Over the years I've volunteered for causes I was passionate about: children, education, health advocacy, communication, and so much more.

As I grew in my field and more career opportunities became available, AMWA seemed like the perfect fit to hone my leadership skills. It wasn't long after I started dedicating time at the chapter level that I recognized this to be true. My passion grew, and I knew that I needed to do my part in "promoting excellence in medical communication," and contributing to the development of educational resources. I soon began serving in various capacities throughout the organization, recruiting members to AMWA, and encouraging others to volunteer within the organization. The more I served, the more my leadership skills grew.

One key takeaway that has resonated with me over the years, is that leadership and volunteerism are connected. Many people develop leadership skills through volunteering, and good leaders recognize the value of volunteers.



AMWA's governance structure highlights the strategic alignment of AMWA volunteers and staff.

According to a 2016 study surveying the impact that volunteerism has on the success of individuals in the workplace, 80% of hiring managers and those who have influence over hiring managers, indicated that those with volunteer experience move more easily into leadership roles.

For the past 2 years, AMWA, similarly to other organizations and associations, had to pivot to ensure we continued to deliver on our mission, vision, and priorities. We held virtual conferences in 2020 and 2021, continued to provide excellent educational resources, supported chapters and the important work generated by our committees throughout the pandemic, and grew our membership. This would not have been possible without the positive and hard work of our volunteers.

Volunteers help deliver vital programs and services while supporting the overall functionality of the organization. AMWA volunteers are the heart and soul of this

organization, and we are always looking for great leaders to grow with AMWA.

I know you recognize the value that you bring to the field as a medical communicator. I also hope that you understand what you can bring to the organization as a volunteer. The chapter level is a great place to break ground and help build your leadership skills. It also can be a pathway to leadership at the national level. Whatever you do outside of your busy and productive schedules, I hope that you will consider becoming an AMWA volunteer. After all, we are meant to leave organizations such as AMWA better off than how we found them.

➤ If you are interested in becoming an AMWA volunteer, please contact your local chapter or the AMWA membership team at membership@amwa.org.

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