

AMWA NEWS

FROM THE PRESIDENT
A Season of Wins

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



I can hardly believe that the fall season is here. This past year has flown by and much was accomplished. As the year heads to its close, I think it is important to reflect on the milestones achieved and lessons learned.

When I took on the presidency in the fall of 2021, AMWA had just completed the second successful virtual conference. As we look forward to November, I am so excited that we will be gathering in Denver this year to elevate health and well-being through medical communication. This year’s Annual Conference Committee, led by Kimberly Korwek, has built a conference program that will meet the diverse needs of the AMWA membership. The committee has planned relevant and timely workshops and open sessions to ensure we all continue to grow in our field. If you haven’t registered for the 2022 Medical Writing & Communication Conference, I encourage you to review the program and consider joining us in Denver.

As part of the conference program, I have the honor of presenting the AMWA President’s Award to J. Kelly Byram, a member of the Southwest Chapter. Byram has been a devoted AMWA volunteer for several years, and AMWA has generously benefited from her time and generosity. Be sure to read my article about her achievements in the next issue of the *AMWA Journal*.

I also look forward to recognizing this year’s John P. McGovern Award winner, and I am excited to join our members in saluting other winners of prestigious AMWA awards at this year’s conference.

Speaking of members, AMWA membership continues to grow. Our membership is now over 4,600 and growing, and I believe our growth is due to the incredible congeniality of our membership base. We are excited to see such an amazing number of members with diverse experiences and individual talents; and additionally, we appreciate those members who devote their time and expertise to the organization.

An important initiative from the past year was the development and establishment of the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Assessment Task Force. The task force, led by Dr Gail V. Flores, is working on identifying how AMWA can foster a more diverse and inclusive environment within the organization.

I am proud to share that the D&I Assessment Task Force crafted a survey to help gather member perspective on this important topic. The AMWA 2022 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Survey was recently shared with the entire membership. We hope you are able to participate in this very important survey, as your feedback is important.

In addition to the work of the D&I Assessment Task Force, the AMWA Board of Directors (BOD) recently approved the organization’s first comprehensive statement on DEI. The crafted statement was shared with the D&I Assessment Task Force, the Chapter Advisory Council, and the BOD for feedback before the final statement went to the BOD for a vote. Be sure to read the new statement that is now posted online and in this issue of the *Journal*. Special thanks to the staff and members that worked together to make this statement a reality.

As I think about AMWA’s mission and priorities, I am immensely proud of the work that is happening on the many committees that supports the core values and priorities of the organization. I am looking forward to the new educational programming in the pipeline and other amazing work underway. Further, AMWA is dedicated to providing top-tier education and networking opportunities for members. Even before she became the Director of Education for AMWA, Lori L. Alexander was a true leader at AMWA and was strongly dedicated to the improvement and advancement of education initiatives. I hope as she looks down, she sees what an impact she made on so many lives, and I look forward to the upcoming announcement regarding a legacy tribute to her work.

As I close this article, I am reminded of how our journal continues to feed and enrich our membership. Interesting and informative articles are published in the *AMWA Journal*, and I am looking forward to the preservation of that information in the new online journal system. The hard work and dedication of our new editor-in-chief, Michael G. Baker, and the AMWA staff liaison, Shari Rager, has resulted in a smooth platform transition that now allows for more modernization. The *Journal* and our organization continue to improve and grow. It is a season in which AMWA continues to win, and I appreciate being a part of the journey.