

Harold Swanberg Distinguished Service Award

Elise Eller / 2020–2021 Director–At–Large and Chair and Board Liaison, Member Awards Committee

The Harold Swanberg Distinguished Service Award, named in honor of one of the founders of AMWA, is presented to an active AMWA member who has made distinguished contributions to medical communication or rendered unusual and distinguished services to the medical profession.

This year's Swanberg recipient is **Lori L. Alexander, MTPW, ELS, MWC**. Lori has made distinguished contributions to the medical communication profession for more than 30 years, most recently in the area of education of medical communicators.

Lori is an advocate for professional development and lifelong learning. Lori's work history in medical communication has spanned a variety of settings, providing experience in different types of medical communication. Her work has involved editing, writing, project management, and development of educational resources for health care professionals and the lay public.

Lori's contributions to the field of medical communication span service both within and outside of AMWA. Highlights of Lori's service to AMWA include serving as editor of the *AMWA Journal*, chairing the Annual Conference Programming Committee (twice) and the Education Committee, serving on several working groups and task forces, serving as AMWA President and on the AMWA Board of Directors, and, most recently, serving as AMWA Director of Education. In these roles, Lori has explored and determined members' educational needs and preferences, helped AMWA create educational activities and resources to fit those needs, developed processes that ensure the consistent high quality of AMWA's educational products, and thought and acted strategically to help AMWA achieve its goals. It is because of Lori that AMWA has a content strategy for developing educational offerings online and at the annual Medical Writing & Communication Conference. It is also because of Lori that AMWA is now offering new workshops and the new Knowledge Builders in the AMWA catalog.

Lori also helped establish and develop a Medical Writing and Editing Certificate Program, which focuses on regulatory writing, journal publications, continuing education, and grant writing, for the University of California San Diego Extension. Until her retirement, Lori continued to serve as the consulting director and lead faculty to provide strategic direction for the program.

Lori's long-standing service demonstrates her passion for promoting excellence in medical communication. AMWA is proud to recognize Lori as the recipient of the 2021 Harold Swanberg Distinguished Service Award.

Sadly for the AMWA community and all who knew her, Lori passed away on June 4, 2021. We will miss Lori's energy and sense of humor, and our thoughts go out to Lori's wife, Deb Whippen, and to her family and friends.



2021 John P. McGovern Award Recipient: Stacy L. Christiansen, MA

Gail V. Flores, PhD / 2020–2021 AMWA President

The John P. McGovern Award is named in honor of John P. McGovern and is presented to a member or nonmember of the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) to recognize a preeminent contribution to any of the various modes of medical communication. The McGovern Award is presented during the annual AMWA Medical Writing & Communication Conference.

I am pleased to announce this year's John P. McGovern Award recipient: **Stacy L. Christiansen, MA**. Ms Christiansen's contribution to the field of medical communication is crystal clear to so many members of AMWA, as she is the managing editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* and chair of the *American Medical Association (AMA) Manual of Style* committee. In the words of her colleagues who nominated her, "Ms Christiansen's numerous, important contributions to multiple modes of medical communication embody all that the John P. McGovern Award represents—leadership, excellence in medical writing and editing, and benevolent mentoring of editors, manuscript editors, authors, and writers."

Ms Christiansen received a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in English language and literature from Northern Illinois University. She has worked for *JAMA* since 1998 and has worked as the managing editor since 2013. Many AMWA members also know her through her active membership and engagement in the Council of Science Editors (CSE); Ms Christiansen serves as a faculty member for the CSE Short Course for Manuscript Editors. She has taught in the University of Chicago Medical Writing and Editing Program.

As Managing Editor of *JAMA*, Ms Christiansen regularly communicates with *JAMA* authors and representatives of international professional societies and agencies from around the world to provide advice about communicating research results and medical information and often resolves complicated editorial and policy issues with authors. Her colleagues cite her recent challenge of navigating more than 10,000 coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)-related submissions to the journal, for which she subsequently led efficient

and excellent editing and publication of more than 300 COVID-19-related articles to inform clinicians, policy makers, and the public.

The *AMA Manual of Style* was first published in 1962.¹ As Chair of the *AMA Manual of Style* committee, Ms

Christiansen was responsible for leading the major revision and publication of the 11th edition, published in 2020. She continues to guide the committee to address ongoing issues in medical writing and editing, as well as changes in usage that parallel the constantly changing ways we communicate. For example, during 2020, she led efforts to modify guidance for the reporting of race and ethnicity in medical publications and developed usage nomenclature for terms related to the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and COVID-19.

The McGovern Award recipient is not required to be a member of AMWA. However, not only is Ms Christiansen an active member, but she has also presented at many conferences, written articles for *AMWA Journal*, and regularly connects with AMWA members on Twitter—as the resident tweeter for the *AMA Manual of Style*. On behalf of our entire organization, it is a joy to congratulate Ms Christiansen on this prestigious award!

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

Author contact: conference@amwa.org

Reference

1. American Medical Association. *AMA Manual of Style: a guide for authors and editors*. Brief history of the *AMA Manual of Style*. Accessed April 25, 2021. <https://www.amamanualofstyle.com/page/AMAhistory>



2021 Walter C. Alvarez Award Recipient: Harriet Washington

Sarah Dobney, MPH / AMWA Annual Conference Chair, Galion, OH

The Walter C. Alvarez Award, named in honor of an early medical communicator, is presented to an individual who is the epitome of excellence in communicating health care developments and concepts to the public. This year's Alvarez Award winner is Ms Harriet Washington.

Harriet A. Washington is a science writer, editor, and ethicist who is the author of *Carte Blanche: The Erosion of Informed Consent in Medical Research* (2021, Columbia Global Reports) and *A Terrible Thing to Waste: Environmental Racism and Its Assault on the American Mind*. She has been Writing Fellow in Bioethics at Harvard Medical School, the 2015-2016 Miriam Shearing Fellow at the University of Nevada's Black Mountain Institute, a Research Fellow in Medical Ethics at Harvard Medical School, Visiting Fellow at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health, a visiting scholar at DePaul University College of Law, and a senior research scholar at the National Center for Bioethics at Tuskegee University. She has also held fellowships at Stanford University and teaches bioethics at Columbia University, where she delivered the 2020 commencement speech to Columbia's School of Public Health graduates, and won the 2020 Mailman School of Public Health's Public Health Leadership Award, as well as the 2020-2021 Kenneth and Mamie Clark Distinguished Lecture Award. In 2016, she was elected a Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine.

Her work helped provide the basis for the AMA apology to the nation's black physicians in 2008 and led to the banishment of the James Marion Sims statue from Central Park in 2018.

Ms Washington has written widely for popular and science publications and has been published in referenced books and journals such as *Nature*, *JAMA*, *The American Journal of Public Health*, *The New England Journal of Medicine*, the *Harvard Public Health Review*, *Isis*, and *The Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics*. She has been Editor of the *Harvard Journal of Minority Public Health*, has been a guest Editor of the *Journal of Law, Medicine and Ethics*, and is a reviewer for the *Journal of the American Association of Bioethics and the Humanities*. Her other books include *Infectious Madness: The Surprising Science of How We "Catch" Mental Illness*, *Deadly Monopolies: The Shocking Corporate Takeover of Life Itself*, and *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Experimentation from Colonial Times to the Present*, which won a National Book Critics Circle Award, the PEN/Oakland Award, and the American Library Association Black Caucus Nonfiction Award.

A film buff and lover of baroque music, Ms Washington has also worked as manager of a poison-control center and as a classical-music announcer for public radio station WXXI-FM in Rochester, New York, and she curates a medical-film series.

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

Author contact: conference@amwa.org

