

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER NEWS

January 2002

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Annual McGovern Award Banquet Wednesday, January 23, 2002 in Houston, Texas

The recipient of this year's McGovern Award is Paula L. Knudson, Executive Coordinator of the Office of Research Support Communities for The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. At this year's award banquet, Ms. Knudson will present a lecture titled "The Minefields Surrounding Informed Consent for Research." Her presentation will focus on the "incompleteness" of patient informed consent in the research setting. Specific questions that Ms. Knudson will address are:

- Is there such a thing as informed consent?
- Who, if anyone, is explaining to the patient what is being asked of him or her?
- Who implements informed consent?
- By signing a piece of paper, is a patient truly informed?

Ms. Knudson has made significant contributions to the field of biomedical ethics. For the past 24 years, her office has administratively supported a number of federally mandated committees for the university, including the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Her professional, as well as personal, interests focus on the ethical issues associated with both animal and human experimentation, specifically research conducted in vulnerable human populations where the competence to grant an informed choice is questionable or absent. Such groups include the frail elderly, children, neonates, psychiatric in-patients, and patients in emergency settings. In addition, she strives to advance research in women's health, break down the barriers to research participation frequently encountered by minority subjects, and provide a bridge between investigators in the social and behavioral sciences and institutional review board (IRB) members.

Ms. Knudson has helped to achieve some of these goals by conducting numerous national and international conferences and establishing at the university an outreach program that actively targets community organizations to speak about research and the IRB's role in protecting research subjects. In addition, she helped establish the Research Intermediary program,

which employs an intermediary to meet with research subjects *after* they have agreed to participate in a moderate- or high-risk research study, but *prior* to the study's initiation. The intermediary ascertains a subject's comprehension of the clinical study,

and may, in consultation with the IRB, have a subject removed from the study. Importantly, the intermediary has an ongoing relationship with research subjects to confirm that their consent continues throughout their participation.

Ms. Knudson has been a member of the Board of Directors of Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research since 1982 and is a certified IRB professional. She has helped establish several local IRBs and one IRB in Mexico, and has been Chair of the Montrose Clinic Houston IRB for the past 12 years.

Please join us in honoring Ms. Knudson as this year's recipient of the McGovern Award. The John P. McGovern Award was established in 1982 by the Southwest Chapter of the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) to recognize excellence in the field of medical communications. The award is named for John P. McGovern, MD, founder and director of the McGovern Allergy Clinic in Houston and a noted educator, author, and medical historian. Dr. McGovern is a past member of the Southwest Chapter of AMWA and has been an AMWA fellow since 1967.

Registration will begin at 6:00 p.m. A cash bar will be available and an extended social hour, with assorted cheeses and fruits, will last until 6:45 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6:45 p.m. A choice of two entrees comes with a Caesar salad, dinner rolls, iced tea/coffee, and dessert. The entree choices are Chicken Sonoma (sautéed chicken breast topped with wild mushrooms and artichokes in a white wine cream sauce) or Spinach Tagliatelle (spinach pasta tossed with sun-dried tomatoes, asparagus, and mushrooms in a lemon-thyme sauce). The McGovern Award recipient will speak at 7:45 p.m. Dessert and coffee only will be available for those unable to join us for dinner but who would like to come later for the speaker.

What: McGovern Award Banquet and Lecture
When: Wednesday, January 23; 6:00–8:30 p.m.
Where: Houston Plaza Hilton (see directions p. 2)
Dinner: Members \$27; Guests \$29
Coffee and Dessert Only: Members \$6; Guests \$8

RSVP using the registration form on this page or in upcoming e-mail reminders. **Please respond by January 18.**

For more information, contact Kate O Suilleabhain or Tom Gegeny (see contact information under "Chapter Officers" on this page).

AMERICAN
MEDICAL WRITERS
ASSOCIATION

AMWA Southwest Chapter News

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Directions to McGovern Award Banquet

The Houston Plaza Hilton hotel (713-313-4000) is located at 6633 Travis Street, which runs north to south, parallel to and one block west of Main Street in the Texas Medical Center. Coming from West Holcombe Boulevard, proceed north on Main to Dryden. Turn left on Dryden and left on Travis. The hotel is on the left. Parking is available in the building; complimentary parking passes will be available at the banquet.

Panel Discussion Focuses on Client Relationships

Wednesday, December 5, marked the AMWA Southwest Holiday Gala, held at Majors Book Store near the Texas Medical Center in Houston. After the attendees enjoyed hors d'oeuvres with champagne and cider, a panel of three local editors shared their expertise in a panel discussion entitled "Building Successful Relationships with Clients." Mariann Crapanzano, an editor at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, moderated the discussion.

Freelance editor Beth Allen presented the results of a survey of clients, who cited communication as the most important aspect of a good relationship. Ms. Allen pointed out that the survey respondents believed interpersonal skills such as tact, a willingness to communicate, and an ability to meet deadlines to be essential in an editor. In addition, she explained that obtaining the assistance of a third party (such as a lawyer or an accountant) can be helpful in handling many of the aspects of freelance business (such as negotiation of complicated contracts and collection of funds).

Jude Richard of the Texas Heart Institute spoke about setting up the editor-author relationship. He stated that upon receiving an assignment, an editor should find out what phase or stage a paper is in—an early draft may need broad revision or reorganization, whereas an advanced draft may require refinement at the sentence level. Mr. Richard also explained that setting realistic deadlines is important not only to give the editor adequate time to edit but also to give the author adequate time to implement the changes and to get the final draft approved by coauthors, the institution, or both.

Laurel Prokop, founder of Techstyle, spoke about her personal experience as a freelancer and described how she has obtained assignments by exploring unusual opportunities for work. She gave examples from her career that showed how respecting the unique needs of her clients was critical to ensuring the success of these projects and maintaining long-term clients. Ms. Prokop explained that the scope of work often "expands" from the project initially described, and she suggested that such changes can best be handled when the editor remains flexible and fair.

After their presentations, the panel members responded to questions from the moderator and from the audience. About 30 people attended the meeting.

Registration Form

Indicate your choice of fare x number:

- Chicken Sonoma x ____
- Spinach Tagliatelle x ____
- Dessert & coffee only x ____

Name: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Guest Name(s): _____

Please RSVP by January 18. Send check payable to AMWA Southwest and reservation form to:
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Don't forget: the next AMWA Southwest Chapter Newsletter will be ALL electronic. Look for an e-mail in February with a link to www.amwasouthwest.org!