

From the Board of Directors

As some people like to point out at this time of year, the month of January is named for the ancient Roman deity Janus, the god of beginnings and endings (plus doorways, gates, passageways, and whatever else gets you from one side of a wall to the other). Janus famously has two faces, one looking forward and the other looking backward.

So, in this, my final letter from the President, I'd like to first look backward and thank you all for your support and activity as BELS members during the 2 years of my presidency.

Now, looking forward, I am pleased to introduce our new BELS president, Erica Goodoff, ELS(D). Erica has been a BELS member and certified ELS since 2010, and she earned Diplomate (now Distinguished Editor) status in 2020.



Erica Goodoff, ELS(D)

**2026-2027
President
of BELS**

Erica works as a Senior Scientific Editor in the Research Medical Library at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, where she edits medical research manuscripts and grant proposals, mentors junior editors, and teaches workshops on biomedical writing. She has also served as managing editor of 4 scientific research journals.

In addition, Erica was president of the Southwest Chapter of the American Medical Writers Association in 2023-2024, and she served the chapter in several other capacities before that. She began her term as president-elect of BELS at the start of 2025.

I have known Erica as a friend and colleague for many years, and I know that, with her at the helm, the future of BELS will be bright.

—Steve Palmer, PhD, ELS
Immediate Past President

Return of the Newsletter!

For those of you who have been BELS members for a while, you may have noticed that The BELS Letter took quite the sabbatical—this is our first issue since November 2024! You also may notice that we are back with a new email format rather than a PDF format. Our newsletter is still evolving, so you may see additional changes to its look and feel over the coming months. One thing that will not change is the newsletter's availability on the [BELS website](#) as a PDF.

The goal for The BELS Letter going forward is to provide you with the key information you need each month: updates from the Board of Directors, upcoming events, engagement opportunities, a list of newly certified editors, and timely features. We welcome your feedback and ideas for features going forward. You'll find the Board's contact information at the bottom of each newsletter if you'd like to reach out. We look forward to hearing from you!

Congratulations to Our Newly Certified BELS Editors!



In 2025, fifty-five editors passed the BELS exam to earn their Editor in the Life Sciences (ELS) certification. One editor received their ELS Distinguished (ELS[D]) certification. Congratulations to this esteemed group of editors!

Lauren Albritton, ELS	Kristen Hirter, ELS	Kelly O'Callaghan, ELS
Joe Barber, ELS	Emily Hunter, ELS	Sharon Paul, ELS
Nieves Manuela Barbo, ELS	Michelle Janowitz, ELS	Benjamin Phillis, ELS
Victoria Bell, ELS	Kyle Johnson Moore, ELS	Sydney Post, ELS
Scott Bergfeld, ELS	Vandana KB, ELS	Leigh Precopio, ELS
Mary Boylan, ELS	Valerie Klema, ELS	Matias Rey Carrizo, ELS
Katrin Brown, ELS	Marianna Kulka, ELS	Stacy Roudabush, ELS
Sudha Chandrasekar, ELS	Barbara Lawler, ELS	S. Daniel Siepert, ELS
Stephanie Chang, ELS	Robert Lawrence, ELS	Lynne Snyder, ELS
Bethany Collins, ELS	Adrienne Loggins, ELS	Shreya Sonal, ELS
Nakaba Cosley, ELS	Jessica Lunsford, ELS	Srividya Sundaresan, ELS
Danny D'Amore, ELS	Caitlyn Matuska, ELS	Amy Van Deusen, ELS
Tara de Queiroz, ELS	Thegna Mavroconstant, ELS	Neha Venkatesh, ELS
Rebekah Doerfler, ELS	Amanda Mays, ELS	Justin Wesolowski, ELS
Amanda Doering, ELS	Stephanie Mowat, ELS	Emily Williams, ELS
Hailey Foglio, ELS	Naumi N, ELS	Joshua Williams, ELS
Tiana Garrett, ELS	Ayca Nezir, ELS	Sara Wilson, ELS
Melinda Gray, ELS	Polina Novichenok, ELS	Judene Wright, ELS
Crystal Herron, ELS(D)		

BELS Officers

Erica Goodoff, ELS(D)

President

Michelle Sauer Gehring, PhD, ELS

Secretary

Christine Wogan, MS, ELS

Treasurer

Stephen N. Palmer, PhD, ELS

Immediate Past President

Board of Directors

Stephen Bublitz, ELS

The Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) was founded in 1991 to evaluate the proficiency of manuscript editors in the life sciences and to award credentials similar to those obtainable in other professions.

Potential employers and clients of manuscript editors usually have no objective way to assess the proficiency of editors. For their part, editors are frustrated by the difficulty of demonstrating their ability. That is why both employers and editors so often resort to personal references or

Chair, Professional Development

Wim DHaeze, PhD, ELS

Board Member at Large

Yateendra Joshi, ELS(D)

Chair, Distinguished Editor Exam Development

Lisa Kisner, ELS, CAE

Chair, Certification Maintenance

Kim Mankiewicz, PhD, ELS

Chair, Marketing

Margaret Mathes, ELS

Newsletter Editor

Leslie Neistadt, ELS

Registrar

Naomi Ruff, PhD, ELS

Chair, Certification Exam Development

Sheryle Hazard, CAE

Executive Director (nonvoting member)

ad hoc tests, not always with satisfactory results.

The need for an objective test of editorial skill has long been recognized.

To meet that need, BELS developed a process for testing and evaluating proficiency in editing in the life sciences. The Board administers two examinations—one for certification and one for Distinguished status. The examinations, written by senior life-science editors assisted by testing experts, focus on the principles and practices of scientific editing in English.

