I am delighted to introduce myself to the SWIU membership as the 2023-2024 SWIU President. My name is Akanksha Mehta, and I am an Associate Professor of Urology at Emory University School of Medicine. I completed my Urology residency at Brown, followed by fellowship in Male Reproductive and Sexual Medicine at Cornell, before starting my academic career at Emory. I also serve as the Residency Program Director for Emory Urology, a role that is near and dear to my heart.

I have served on the SWIU Board since 2016 and have observed this dynamic organization grow and mature in a remarkable way over these past few years. SWIU is unlike any other organization I have ever been a part of; it is absolutely committed to the professional growth and success of every woman in Urology, through mentorship, support, advocacy, and career development. Serving on the SWIU Board is a constant reminder of the talent and the strength of our community.

SWIU membership is growing exponentially and is a testament to the value that this organization brings to all women in Urology, whether they be trainees or practicing urologists or urologic researchers. There are so many benefits to a SWIU membership – the ability to be listed in the SWIU speaker database, eligibility to conduct survey-based research of the SWIU membership, and access to UROLOGY, the official journal of SWIU – to name a few. In my mind, however, the most valuable benefit is the ability to participate in advancing the mission of SWIU. I am in awe of SWIU members who have passionately served on SWIU Taskforces, addressing a myriad of topics that are important to our membership, ranging from the recruitment of women in Urology to salary equity and fostering industry partnerships. Their efforts have resulted in tangible, meaningful change at a variety of levels.

SWIU is an organization that has always celebrated diversity within our ranks and has advocated for other organizations to follow suit. We are passionate about leading the discussion about the unique needs and challenges pertaining to women urologists. We are focused on improving representation of women in the leadership of all urologic organizations. And we are committed to furthering strategies that help recruit and retain women in the field of Urology. Over the past couple of years, SWIU has been joined by tremendous, vocal allies from the urologic community, which has been wonderful to see.

If you are already a member of SWIU, thank you; your support of this organization is invaluable. If you are not an active member of SWIU, I encourage you to join; you will not be disappointed. Either way, I look forward to hearing about the issues that are important to you, and how SWIU can help you succeed.

It is an honor and a privilege to serve as President of the Society for Women in Urology. I look forward to another productive year.
Recently, SWIU partnered with the Urology Gold Journal with a new dedicated section in the publication entitled Women in Urology. This new section is an active extension of SWIU’s mission to support the professional development and career advancement of women and gender diverse urologists/urologic researchers through education, advocacy, and mentorship. Despite being under-represented in urology, this is a bold step towards increasing academic scholarly representation.

With our new editorial home, we have seen a boost in publications pertaining to gender equity in the workforce, gender related healthcare disparities, and constructive pathways towards accelerating inclusive practices. Additionally, we have seen an equally exciting trend of engagement with SWIU members becoming journal authors and reviewers by attending our winter conference session on “Writing and Reviewing for Academic Journals,” a special webinar hosted by the Women in Gold taskforce “How to be a good scientific writer” and signing up to be a reviewer through our website. Through these efforts, we are hopeful that we are making an impact on trends towards gender equity in authorship, editorial board representation, h-index, promotion, national awards and recognition.

This work will help amplify the voices of women in urology at every stage in their career, as well as advance the care of our patients. This is a great platform to submit your research pertaining to all things gender equity and inclusion, and gender related healthcare disparities. We look forward to helping you achieve your professional goals through academic engagement!

For more information, check out the SWIU website, which includes a short video on why having a Women in Urology section is so important and the form to sign-up to be a reviewer.

**“Advancing Women in Urology” — SWIU’s New Webinar Series**

SWIU has started a monthly webinar series to provide new relevant content and expand on topics discussed at the 12th Clinical Mentoring Conference in January. We hope to offer added benefit to members and increase member participation in developing content.

Recordings from previous webinars are posted on the SWIU website.

Upcoming webinars include:

- Part 2: Life Happens...
  July 20, 2023 at 8:00 p.m. (ET): Register Today
  Moderator: Suzette E. Sutherland, MD, MS, FPMRS
  Guests: Meredith Moore - Founder/CEO
  Heather Wright - Attorney

Reach out to Danielle at danielle@wjweiser.com if you want to participate in a webinar or have ideas for topics.
Background
In the summer of 2021, the SWIU Board of Directors elected to charge 4 task forces to advance our mission by sponsoring women for national leadership opportunities to contribute and gain experience as urologists along the spectrum of career development, while addressing four topics of meaningful importance to women in urology. Each task force was issued a proposed charge to create resources and initiatives for women urologists, each addressing one key issue area identified by the SWIU Board of Directors. Each was led by a Chair of the Task Force with an identified SWIU Board of Director member to serve as a mentor and point of connection to the BOD. In order to offer an inclusive approach to women self-selecting themselves for national appointments, SWIU held an open membership-wide call for volunteers and around 40 women responded interested in amplifying the mission of SWIU.

The SWIU task forces were designed to be short term, goal-oriented working groups, which were optimized for efficiency that connect SWIU members who share a common interest around task force topics. The goal was for members to participate in a fast-paced, professional development opportunity that would contribute to the mission of SWIU. We aimed to sponsor women urologists to a national task force appointment for their CV and provide potential national speakership opportunities in order to meet our mission of supporting the advancement and success of women in urology. We anticipated peer mentoring and community building would be a natural byproduct of the work and that the work efforts would benefit the membership at large, increasing our presence in the urologic community and advancing equity within our subspeciality.

Strategy
Each task force developed and discussed their charge, refined it based on volunteer task force member input, and carried out a structured process of organization change and project management with the following tactics to meet their charge:

Discovery:
- Initial task force meeting to introduce members, understand individual motivations, and discuss and refine charge
- Identify key stakeholders on the topic
- Identify and organize resources related to the charge

Strategy:
- Outline the ecosystem of the issue in order to decide which point of leverage will be addressed by the task force (what aspect of the issue do you most want to address or impact? how?)
- Determine appropriate work product (recorded presentation? website content? PowerPoint toolkit? other?)
- Define timeline and process

Execution:
- Carry out tactics as the task force prioritizes as appropriate or relevant
- Submit a written executive summary to the SWIU BOD on the task forces assessment of the project
- Narrow and define and provide the agreed upon deliverable
SWIU Task Forces 2022-2023

In 2022, SWIU **elected to continue** the Engagement of Women Urologists with Industry and The Role of Women Urologists in Advancing DEI in Urology Residency Recruitment task forces for a 2nd cycle and **charged 2 new Task Forces**: SWIU at the AUA Sections and SWIU – Gold Urology Advancing Women Urologists in Publishing. Each task force has a Chair and assigned mentor from the SWIU BOD. (Figure 1)

1.) Engagement of Women Urologists with Industry:

The goal of this task force was to renew the efforts undertaken in 2021 with the development of an industry 101 “how to” toolkit. The task force pivoted towards developing virtual programing to increase the knowledge of women urologists about industry opportunity or process. They developed an industry database subgroup to develop within SWIU organizational structure methods of connecting those members interested in industry to self-identify through our speakership database. In addition, a Webinar/manuscript subgroup has developed a summer 2023 webinar intended to disseminate to members the rich qualitative data and expertise the 2021 task force developed.

2.) The Role of Women Urologists in Advancing DEI in Urology Residency Recruitment:

The goal of this task force was to renew the efforts undertaken in 2021 when the members developed a medical student personal statement mentoring program as well as a reference guide for holistic review disseminated to members and the SAU. The task force continued with a personal statement mentoring program this year, pairing students applying to urology with resident and faculty mentors. They also updated the “just in time” faculty development guide and disseminated it to SAU for programs to access bias reduction best practices.

3.) SWIU at the AUA Sections:

The goal of this task force was increasing the presence of SWIU at the AUA Sections and connect more women urologists to SWIU during annual sectional meetings. With industry sponsor, Boston Scientific (BS), at this time events have been held in both the Southeastern Section as well as the New York Section for women to network and engage in professional development. Utilizing task force leads as core ambassadors to liaise with AUA Section leadership, professional society management, and Section meeting chairs, SWIU members have increased their visibility and are working to ensure AUA Sections are supporting women urologists. Further section events are being planned.

4.) SWIU – Gold Urology: Advancing women urologists in publishing:

SWIU has finalized a relationship with Gold Urology Journal which is now the official Journal of SWIU. SWIU has appointed Dr. Casey Seideman and Dr. Gina Badalato as Senior and Junior Editors who curate a recurring monthly SWIU section in the Gold Journal. The goal of this task force was to support the newly identified Editors in networking, outreach, and strategic planning in order to successfully increase women in urology in publishing. Members developed a webinar for “How to be a Good Scientific Write and Reviewer” to increase women’s competency and knowledge in academic publishing.
Conclusion
SWIU would like to thank the Chairs, Drs. Kaufman, Taylor, Amin, and Lee for their leadership, vision, and accountability, the SWIU BOD mentors Drs. Hartigan, Thompson, Seideman, and Suskind for their direction and dedication, and all of the volunteer task force members for their time and effort in advancing the mission of SWIU through this process and their work products (Figure 2). We appreciate the innovation and effort of this 2022 cohort in amplifying women in urology in countless ways. We encourage membership to access the resources that we have included on the SWIU website for wide dissemination. We anticipate releasing an open call for 2023-2024 task forces this summer for volunteers ready to execute on the mission of SWIU in their own way!

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<tr>
<th>Task Force</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Mentor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement of Women Urologists with Industry</td>
<td>Dr Melissa Kaufman</td>
<td>Dr Siobhan Hartigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Role of Women Urologists in Advancing DEI in Urology Residency Recruitment</td>
<td>Dr Jennifer Taylor</td>
<td>Dr Casey Seideman</td>
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<td>SWIU at the AUA Sections</td>
<td>Dr Kate Amin</td>
<td>Dr Anne Suskind</td>
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<td>SWIU – Gold Urology: Advancing women urologists in publishing</td>
<td>Dr Una Lee</td>
<td>Dr Jannah Thompson</td>
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Figure 1.) SWIU Task Force Leadership 2022-2023

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<tr>
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<td>Jennifer M. Taylor (Chair)</td>
<td>Kate Amin (Chair)</td>
<td>Una Lee (Chair)</td>
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<td>Kate Kraft</td>
<td>Mary Soyster</td>
<td>Lindsey Hartsell</td>
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<td>Anjali Kapur</td>
<td>Gjange Smith</td>
<td>Susanne Quallich</td>
<td>Jyoti Chouhan</td>
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<td>Ramzy Burns</td>
<td>Gillian Sterns</td>
<td>Cara Cimmino</td>
<td>Raveen Syan</td>
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<td>Priya Kohli</td>
<td>Paige De Rosa</td>
<td>Gina Badalato</td>
<td>Nora Haney</td>
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<td>Smita De</td>
<td>Lori Dyer</td>
<td>Teresa Danforth</td>
<td>Hannah Thomas</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Ellis</td>
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<td>Stephanie Hanchuk</td>
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In addition to promoting the programming of SWIU, highlighting opportunities that may be of interest to our membership, and ongoing collaboration with Gold journal of urology on social media, the resident social media has also had a social media campaign highlighting male allies in the spirit of Dr. Todd Morgan's talk at SWIU AUA Breakfast titled "Male Allyship in Urology: Power, Privilege, and Purpose." To do so, we've highlighted some of the male allies who have donated to the SWIU resident and student travel awards. Every week, we highlighted a male ally and shared quotes from the recipients of the SWIU resident and student travel awards to highlight the significant impact attending the SWIU mentorship conference has had during a formative time. This initiative was in line to engage the male urologists in our specialty to help further the mission of SWIU of supporting and advocating for women in urology. We hope to continue to work with male allies within our specialty to further our mission in the future.

**Highlighting Male Allyship in Social Media**

*By Catherine Nam, MD*

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**Job Board**

SWIU maintains a [Job Board](#) for open urological positions. You can send open positions that you would like posted to info@swiu.org.

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**SWIU Mentor Program**

SWIU offers a [Mentor Database](#) for SWIU Members seeking a mentor. Select the [Mentor Search](#) option on the Mentor program page. SWIU also welcomes urologists who would like to complete a short application and volunteer to be part of the Mentor Database.

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**SAVE THE DATE**

**SWIU 13th Annual Clinical Mentoring Conference**

January 26 - 28, 2024
The Westin New Orleans
New Orleans, LA

Register Today
[https://swiu.org/register](https://swiu.org/register)
2023 SWIUdents

Gina DeMeo
SWIUdents Co-founder and Co-chair

It was the winter of 2022 at the SWIU annual meeting in New Orleans, where I found myself standing alone, quietly observing the various groups of women engaged in conversation. I was contemplating how to approach and engage, when I made eye contact with another solitary figure. I struggled to read her name badge from a distance. “Are you a student too?” We instantly had a connection.

Until that moment, I hadn't encountered any other students who shared an interest in urology. The journey through medical school can be lonely. With approximately 600 students applying into urology each year, it is not uncommon for schools to have only one or two, or even none, in a given class. The AUA match process sets us on a distinct path from our peers navigating the NRMP. This sense of isolation is further pronounced for women, who constitute only a fraction of urology applicants. As just the second urology match from my medical school, I didn't know where to seek mentorship, guidance, or camaraderie. While SWIU offered valuable resources for residents and early-career urologists, there was a lack of structured support for medical students. This sparked our initial idea: to create a formal medical student section of SWIU, soon to be known as SWIUdents.

After meeting in New Orleans, we continued to collaborate via zoom. Our objective was to cultivate an environment that would inspire women medical students to pursue urology, fostering an inclusive community of peers and mentors, and offering resources and opportunities for professional development and personal growth. We met with the SWIU leadership board and began to spread the word on Twitter. Within a span of two months, we successfully established our inaugural board of medical students. By September, we had conducted two virtual panel discussions, featuring women representing various urologic subspecialties. Attendance and membership flourished through the year, culminating in our recent fifth panel discussion and an impressive membership count of almost 200 students. We met in person again last January, at the SWIU annual meeting in Scottsdale, this time with a group of almost 20 medical students.

This spring, we celebrate the success of our first year while preparing to transition leadership to the incoming group of student board members. I am excited to witness the organization’s expansion under these emerging leaders. Through SWIUdents, I found inspiration, mentorship, and, most significantly, friendship. I look forward to keeping in touch with these remarkable women as we progress into residency and beyond.

If you are a medical student interested in joining SWIUdents, please submit the following form and/or contact swiudents@swiu.org.

SWIU Research Surveys
SWIU will consider requests for distribution of research surveys to its members on a quarterly basis. Only surveys that support the mission of SWIU will be considered.

Applications and all follow-up communication can be sent to info@swiu.org. The SWIU executive office will follow-up with the designated contact about application and presentation/publication status.

Application cycle due dates:
Jan 31, Apr 30, July 31, and Oct 31

Applicants will be informed of committee decisions within 4 weeks of the respective due date.

SWIU Speaker Database

Interest in the speaker database continues to grow. SWIU has received almost 30 requests for the database so far including requests for national and international meetings as well as institutional needs.

To support SWIU’s mission of professional advancement of women urologists by encouraging diversity and discouraging “manels”, SWIU has created a new member benefit – the SWIU Speaker Database. The database is available upon request for anyone searching for a speaker. All requests are reviewed by a SWIU committee before speaker information is shared. SWIU also provides the AUA with a copy of the database to assist with its speaker searches. SWIU is happy to report that the database already has over 40 speakers listed, and several organizations have already requested the database to assist with speaker selection. Consider submitting a speaker application. Please note, individuals must be SWIU members to be included. We also welcome requests for speakers to assist in your program development and event planning. Contact info@swiu.org if you have questions or need more information.
Christina Manthos Mentoring Award
By Anne Cameron, MD

The Christina Manthos mentoring award is given annually to an individual who has been an exceptional mentor to female urologists. Christina Manthos was an extraordinary young urologist whose life and career were sadly curtailed by breast cancer. As a means of perpetuating the flame of her inspiration and honoring her memory, SWIU established this annual award to recognize those women and men who demonstrate extraordinary mentoring skills in supporting the careers of female urologists. This year SWIU is tremendously honored to present this distinguished award to Dr. Angela (Angie) Smith MD. Dr. Smith is Professor of Urology and the Director of Urologic Oncology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has also served as the Assistant Secretary for the AUA in Latin America and is currently the Treasurer for SWIU.

She has mentored dozens of medical students, residents and junior faculty over the years as well as women urologists internationally. This award is chosen based on letters of recommendation from mentees, for which we received many. To quote one of her letters: Dr. Smith’s “enthusiasm for urology, her patients, and her research has been infectious. We have witnessed first-hand the trust and adoration her patients have for her while working alongside her in clinic. In addition to her fastidious care for patients, she is also dedicated to helping medical students and residents improve throughout their careers. She always sets time aside to provide concrete, constructive feedback after each clinical and surgical encounter and encourages open and constructive feedback in return. She truly is an exceptional clinician to emulate as we advance in our careers.” On a personal note Angie is an intensely motivated person, but despite her incredible success with awards such as the 2022 Golden cystoscope award from the AUA, its most prestigious research award, she is incredibly generous with her time and advice and is a truly authentic person.

She is a role model clinician and surgeon, a compassionate and trusted mentor and advisor, and a genuinely wonderful person. I am truly very fortunate, as are so many of us, to know and be able to work alongside Dr Smith. SWIU is extremely honored to recognize Dr. Angela Smith as the distinguished winner of the 2023 Christina Manthos Mentoring Award.

Elisabeth Pickett Research Award
By Anne Cameron, MD

The Elisabeth Pickett Research Award recognizes research achievements of trainees working in urologic research. It serves to highlight the contributions of these young trainees in their academic pursuit to advance the field of urology, while commemorating the lifetime achievements of Dr. Pickett. Elisabeth Pauline Pickett, MD was the first female surgeon who completed a fellowship in urologic oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital in 1955 and she subsequently became the first female board-certified urologist in 1962. Her long, distinguished and enthusiastic career is honored by this award, which is supported by a generous contribution by Dr. Pickett’s estate, as well as donations by friends and colleagues. We are tremendously excited to announce that this year’s annual Elisabeth Pickett Research Awardee is Dr. Ilaha Isali who is the Translational Fellow at Case Western Reserve University in the Tissue Fabrication and Mechanobiology Laboratory. Her research proposal on a highly novel approach to treating urethral stricture disease with injections of antifibrotic eluting microparticles was presented at our annual SWIU meeting at the AUA. Her project, “Local Delivery of Novel Nintedanib Eluting Microparticles for the Treatment of Urethral Stricture Disease” in a rat model, is a fascinating approach to male stricture disease using a drug that is FDA approved for pulmonary fibrosis when given systemically. She is delivering the drug using injectable microparticles to achieve a local controlled effect on strictures and this technique can deliver the drug with a constant prolonged dosing. This new method has many other potential applications in the genitourinary tract such as ureteral strictures or UPJ obstruction. The clinical value of this approach beyond the genitourinary tract in other areas of regenerative medicine for stenosis makes this work even more impactful.

Dr. Ilaha is well positioned to carry out this research project given her extensive research experience and support at Case Western Reserve University. SWIU is very proud to support Dr. Ilaha’s research endeavors and looks forward to her future successes.
SWIU Outstanding Resident Award
By Amy Luckenbaugh, MD

The Society of Women in Urology established the Outstanding Resident Award to honor women residents who fulfill the mission of SWIU: advancing career development and professional success of women urologists; and for those who have been mentors, teachers, sponsors or coaches to co-residents and students. It is with extreme pride that SWIU bestows this honor in 2023 to Jane Kurtzman, MD. Dr. Kurtzman is completing residency at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. She is described by her faculty and peers as a “natural leader” and a “thinker and innovator.” Through her leadership and advocacy, the Graduate Medical Education leadership at Columbia developed an oocyte cryopreservation benefit for their trainees, undoubtedly impacting all future trainees at Columbia. SWIU applauds and congratulates Dr. Kurtzman and is eager to follow Dr. Kurtzman’s future successes in our field.

SWIU/SBUR (Society of Women in Urology and Society for Basic Urologic Research) Award for Excellence in Urologic Research
By Amy Luckenbaugh, MD

The annual SWIU/SBUR (Society of Women in Urology and Society for Basic Urologic Research) Award for Excellence in Urologic Research is proudly awarded to Amina Zoubeidi, PhD. She is a senior research scientist at Vancouver Prostate Centre, a Professor in the Department of Urologic Sciences at the University of British Columbia, and a Canada Research Chair in Cancer Therapy Resistance. Dr. Zoubeidi’s research program focuses on the etiology behind treatment resistance as a result of targeting the androgen receptor in prostate cancer therapy. Her work focuses on androgen receptor signaling pathways, and their unique properties for each individual and disease. She has been awarded many scientific grants for her work including multiple international and national grants. She holds multiple patents. In addition, she has been awarded many awards, including the Prostate Cancer Foundation Young Investigator Award. In recognition of these many achievements and for her significant contributions to urologic research, the Society of Women in Urology and Society for Basic Urologic Research are honored to award Amina Zoubeidi, PhD with the 2023 Award for Excellence in Urologic Research.

AUA Guideline: Surgical & Medical Management of Kidney Stones

The AUA is currently putting together a guideline on Surgical and Medical Management of Kidney Stones and recently posted instructions to apply for panel positions. If you have any interest you can find more information online. The deadline to apply is July 17th, 2023.
AUA: Applications are Being Accepted for 2024-2025 Committee Appointments

Application Deadline: September 15, 2023

The AUA has over 500 volunteers that serve on various committees and contribute to the work of the association. By working together, members ensure the AUA maintains the highest standards of urologic care through education, research, and in the formulation of health care policy.

Explore committees with open positions. Please review the member qualifications on the committee profiles prior to submitting a volunteer application and uploading your CV.

Commitees Accepting Applications (# of member positions):
- Advanced Practice Provider (1 AP or PA)
- Education Council (Positions open for urologists with expertise in pediatric urology or endourology)
- History (3)
- JU Editorial (these positions start Jan 1, 2024 and applications are accepted only from Sections with openings this cycle:
  - Mid-Atlantic - 1, South Central - 1 and Western - 1)
- Medical Student Education Committee (Positions open for residents and medical students only)
- New Technologies & Imaging Committee (Positions open for urologists with expertise in urologic imaging)
- Practice Guidelines (1)
- Public Media (3)
- Quality Improvement and Patient Safety (1)
- Research Appropriations (1)
- Research Education, Conferences & Communications (2)
- Research Grants & Investigative Support (2)
- Update Series (Position open for urologist with expertise in female urology/incontinence)
- Urologic Video Education (3)
- UCF Bladder Health (1)
- UCF Kidney & Adrenal Health (1)
- UCF Pediatric Health (1)
- UCF Prostate Health (1)
- UCF Reproductive & Sexual Health (1)
- UCF Technology & Publication (1)

For general questions, contact AUA Committee & Society Affairs Office by email at CommAff@auanet.org or by phone at 410-689-3926. The application deadline is September 15, 2023. Late applications will not be accepted.