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## Thank You, Submitters

The First Vice President traditionally extends a note of thanks to submitters in the convention newsletter immediately following the submission deadline. My feelings of gratitude are especially profound this year. In spite of the unprecedented and difficult circumstances in which we find ourselves, thousands of Communication scholars submitted materials for the convention. Especially meaningful is that these submissions came from scholars from all types of institutions (e.g., K-12, community college, bachelors, masters, and doctoral) and at all stages and types of careers (e.g., student, tenure-track, tenured, and contingent faculty). They came from scholars across the United States and scholars from multiple other countries. The number and quality of submissions was absolutely remarkable.

Of course, I also recognize that there are a number of scholars who were unable to submit materials, even though they fully intended and desired to do so. The abrupt transition to online instruction, health and wellness concerns, relational obligations, and other issues ultimately proved insurmountable. Though attendance at conventions is predominantly and historically based on presenting—especially when many schools base funding on such—I am hoping and working to make sure that this year is different. There will be a host of opportunities to engage in this year's convention regardless of whether or not one is presenting.

This year, gathering together in November will be particularly meaningful. The author of *The Art of Gathering*, Priya Parker, identifies as a great paradox of gathering that “there are so many good reasons for coming together that we often don't know precisely why we are doing so.” Parker notes: “We gather to solve problems we can't solve on our own. We gather to celebrate, to mourn, and to mark transitions. We gather to make decisions. We gather because we need one another. We gather to show strength. We gather to honor and acknowledge. ... We gather to welcome, and we gather to say goodbye.” This year, those reasons will be more apparent and more appreciated than ever before.

I truly look forward to gathering with you all in Indianapolis!

--[David T. McMahan](#), NCA First Vice President, Missouri Western State University

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