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## Virtual Convention Information

We encourage all convention attendees to view a [Virtual Welcome from NCA First Vice President David T. McMahan](#) and the [NCA Virtual Welcome and Orientation](#) session. This session, normally titled the Newcomer's Welcome and Orientation, is not just for attendees attending the Annual Convention for the first time this year. This session provides an overview of the convention, discusses how to access live and on-demand content, and previews for the NCA 107<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention in Seattle.

More information for all virtual convention participants is available online. An [instructional video](#) on creating a schedule in NCA Convention Central and [a handout](#) on accessing on-demand content and Zoom links for live sessions have been added to the [virtual convention guide](#). Hundreds of video presentations are already available in NCA Convention Central, and additional videos will continue to be added regularly for viewing until December 31.

All live sessions will take place in Zoom. We recommend downloading Zoom in advance of attending your first live session. If you have not used Zoom before, [this information](#) will assist you in navigating the Zoom platform. Zoom links will only be available only in [NCA Convention Central](#); no Zoom session links will be e-mailed to you. All sessions are listed in Eastern Time.

**As a reminder, while registration is free for NCA members whose membership is current through December 1, [registration](#) is still required to access on-demand content and Zoom session links.**

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## Welcome from the First Vice President

I am looking forward to joining you for the 106<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the National Communication Association! This year's theme, Communication at the Crossroads, was selected to provide special opportunities to examine and discuss future directions for research, teaching, and the Communication discipline itself, with crossroads symbolizing the connection and convergence of scholarship, choice and direction for research and teaching, and choice and direction for the discipline.

In a year marked by isolation, concern, and the unknown, we now have an opportunity to gather as a community, virtually, but still together. We will gather to share, to learn, to create, to observe, and to question. We will gather to support one another and to initiate our future. This year, as we gather together, the value of doing so will be more significant than ever before.

This convention promises to be one like no other, due in large part to its having been planned and now taking place during a global pandemic. In spite of unprecedented and difficult circumstances, thousands of Communication scholars from all types of institutions and all stages and types of careers submitted materials for the convention earlier

this year. The number and quality of submissions was truly remarkable. Those efforts were subsequently met by the equally impressive efforts of program planners, who devoted extraordinary amounts of time and energy to developing programming while facing those same unprecedented and difficult circumstances.

The results of these efforts are the tremendous paper sessions, panel discussions, G.I.F.T.S sessions, Short Courses, Preconferences, and other sessions found in the program. These would be impressive in a normal year. They are beyond impressive given the events of this year.

The completely virtual format will likely enable you to take part in more sessions, meetings, and other events than normal. I encourage you to experience as much as possible. Take part in sessions pertaining to your areas of focus and also take part in sessions outside your areas of expertise. You will likely be amazed by the scope and strength of our discipline.

You can also take part in the special Communication at the Crossroads Series, which features sessions that are dedicated to exploring key issues within the discipline, focusing especially on where we have been as a discipline and where we might be heading.

You can also take part in the annual highlights and traditions of the convention. This year's [Opening Session](#) is titled "Mental Health at the Crossroads: Intersections in Health and Society" and will focus on issues of mental health and social justice. This year's [Carroll C. Arnold Distinguished Lecture](#) will be delivered by renowned scholar Dr. Thomas K. Nakayama, whose presentation is titled "The Challenge of Global Whiteness." The [NCA Presidential Address and Awards Presentation](#) will provide an opportunity to honor this year's winners following NCA President Dr. Kent A. Ono's Presidential Address, titled "Civic Activism and Social Justice: Leading NCA As/Through Change." Many additional events and special activities are scheduled for you to enjoy as well.

I am very excited about this year's convention and hope that you have an enjoyable experience, one that renews you, one that inspires you, one that transforms you, and ultimately one that highlights the benefits of gathering together and considering Communication at the Crossroads.

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

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## Communication at the Crossroads Series

The Communication at the Crossroads Series at this year's convention features special sessions focused on key issues within the discipline, focusing especially on where we have been and where we might be heading.

[Communication at the Crossroads Series: Administrators Discuss the Discipline and Its Future](#) (Thursday, November 19, 2:00 PM Eastern)

This session brings administrators together to share how the Communication discipline is generally understood and viewed by their counterparts. They will then discuss what changes to expect in higher education through the next decade, specifically focusing on how the discipline of Communication will be impacted and what can be done to ensure the discipline's advancement. Those in attendance will develop a greater understanding of how administrators at their own institutions might view their departments and an awareness of what they might do to secure and advance their departments in the coming years.

[Communication at the Crossroads Series: COVID-19 and Implications for the Instruction of Communication](#) (Friday, November 20, 9:30 AM Eastern)

This session will mark one of the first occasions when research pertaining to what instructors and students have experienced during the pandemic is presented. Those in attendance will be able to take part in this initial exploration and discussion and will be able to incorporate what is presented to inform and guide their own classrooms and home institutions.

[Communication at the Crossroads Series: Celebrating the Life and Career of James W. Chesebro](#) (Friday, November 20, 12:30 PM Eastern)

National Communication Association Past President James W. Chesebro was dedicated to making the discipline of Communication more diverse and inclusive. His passing earlier this year provides us with an opportunity to reflect on his tremendous influence. Those in attendance will be given the opportunity to reminisce about one of the discipline's true giants, discuss his legacy, and explore how we might continue and expand upon his vision for the discipline moving forward.

[Communication at the Crossroads Series: Difficult Decisions and the Future of Our Associations](#) (Saturday, November 21, 2:00 PM)

In this session, current and former presidents and executive directors of communication associations will discuss issues and challenges related to convention planning and decision making. They will also discuss the future of associations in regard to not only conventions but also academic life. Those in attendance will gain a greater understanding of the discipline, how associations function, and decision-making processes in academia.

Please join us for these very important sessions!

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

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## NCA Virtual Exhibit Hall

The NCA Exhibit Hall will be fully virtual this year, but there will still be an opportunity to speak and connect with exhibiting organizations. Exhibitors will provide a mix of live and on-demand sessions.

Live session schedule:

- Kendall Hunt Publishing Company: [Thursday, November 19, at 10:30 AM Eastern](#) and [Friday, November 20, at 10:30 AM Eastern](#)
- Macmillan Learning: [Thursday, November 19, at 1:30 PM Eastern](#) and [Friday, November 20, at 12:00 PM Eastern](#)
- Michigan State University Press: [Thursday, November 19, at 11:00 AM Eastern](#) and [Friday, November 20, at 11:00 AM Eastern](#)
- Media Education Foundation: [Friday, November 20, at 1:30 PM Eastern](#)
- Oxford University Press: [Friday, November 19, at 2:30 PM Eastern](#)
- Pearson: [Thursday, November 19, at 2:30 PM Eastern](#) and [Friday, November 20 at 11:30 AM Eastern](#)
- Power of Public Speaking: [Thursday, November 19, at 1:00 PM Eastern](#) and [Friday, November 20, at 12:30 PM Eastern](#)
- Routledge, Taylor & Francis: [Thursday, November 19, 11:30 AM Eastern](#) and [Friday, November 20, at 2:00 PM Eastern](#)
- Rowman & Littlefield and Lexington Books: [Thursday, November 19, at 12:00 PM Eastern](#) and [Friday, November 20, at 1:00 PM Eastern](#)
- University of Alabama Press: [Thursday, November 19, at 2:00 PM Eastern](#)

Exhibitors will also be hosting Chat Hours from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Eastern on Thursday, November 19 and Friday, November 20 on the [NCA Annual Convention Discord server](#). If you are not able to participate during the Chat Hours, you can still post your question in the appropriate exhibitor channel, and they will respond when they are able to do so.

Additional information is available in the [Virtual Exhibit Hall](#) on NCA Convention Central.

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## NCA Second Vice President Candidates

Each year, the convention provides an opportunity for attendees to hear from the NCA Second Vice President candidates. This year, the NCA Second Vice President candidates will be speaking on a special episode of NCA's podcast, [Communication Matters](#). The episode will be available November 12. The candidates are Walid Afifi, University of California, Santa Barbara and Bonnie J. Dow, Vanderbilt University.

The election for Second Vice President will be held in December 2020. The Second Vice President elected in 2020 will be responsible for planning the program of the 2022 Annual Convention and will serve as NCA President in 2023.

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## NCA Career Center and Graduate School Open House

The NCA Graduate School Open House is now live! Participating institutions have provided a brief video that highlights their program, campus, and faculty. We encourage anyone who is interested in a graduate program to visit the Open House today. Videos will be available until December 31. Some institutions will be hosting live information session, please visit the [Graduate School Open House](#) event webpage for more information.

The NCA Career Center will feature the Job Fair, three dynamic PrepTalks, and CV Consulting. The Career Center is open to all registered convention attendees and will feature events throughout the month of November. Search "Career Center" in the online program in NCA Convention Central for a full list of activities.

The PrepTalks this year include:

"[Navigating the Job Market during a Challenging Time](#)," was presented by Joseph Mazer, Clemson University, on November 2 and the recording of that presentation is now available. This talk provided an overview of best practices and how to market your skills and abilities during a turbulent time.

Today from 3:00 to 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time Kami J. Anderson, Kennesaw State University, will present "[DEI: The Call to Task BEFORE You Start the Job](#)." This presentation will address how to successfully navigate questions and concerns of diversity, equity and inclusion before you start the job.

On November 19, 2:00 - 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time "[Beyond the Ivory Tower: An exploration of Alt-Ac careers](#)," presented by Kimberly D. Osborne, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, will explore alternate career possibilities, how to explain relevant experience, and where to search for jobs.

At the [Job Fair](#), college and university departments with open positions have provided job descriptions and means to contact the organization with questions.

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## NCA Evening Playlist

A [Zumba NCA Fitness Dance Party](#) will take place on Thursday, November 19, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time. A Zumba class combines fast and slow rhythms that tone and sculpt the body using principles from aerobic and fitness training to achieve cardio and muscle-toning benefits. In this dance party, we will dance, burn calories, and have fun!

A [Contemplative Practice Circle](#) will take place on Friday, November 20, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Attendees will explore a range of contemplative practices, designed to cultivate presence and awareness, enhance self-exploration and creativity, improve listening, and encourage relaxation. Participants will be invited to engage in a discussion about their experience, and to discuss contemplative philosophies, pedagogies, and practices more broadly.

A [NCA Costume and Dance Zoom Party](#) will take place on Saturday, November 21, 9:00 – 11:00 p.m. Eastern Time. The party will feature varieties of music, plenty of spectacle, ample chat interaction, and the chance to dance away your stresses and fears with friends and perfect strangers. Everyone, of course, will have the thrill of participation... and there may be prizes for costume creativity and relevance to our troubled times.

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## NCA Welcome Reception

While we cannot gather in person this year, we invite all attendees to join us on the [NCA Annual Convention Discord server](#) on Thursday, November 19, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time for a reimagined Welcome Reception. Chat with other attendees, share memories of past conventions, and discuss what you are looking forward to this year.

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### David T. McMahan

Missouri Western State University  
NCA First Vice President  
Primary Program Planner  
mcmahan.nca@gmail.com

### Kristin Yednock

Assistant Director for Conventions and Meetings  
kyednock@natcom.org  
202-534-1113

### National Communication Association

1765 N Street NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-464-4622  
convention@natcom.org  
www.natcom.org