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Thank You, Program Planners

So much of what we do in academic life is behind the scenes and goes unrecognized and certainly unrewarded. Having been an NCA program planner, myself, on numerous occasions, I know how hard unit program planners work and that their work often goes unrecognized and unrewarded. This modest note is an effort to thank all unit program planners for their work on behalf of NCA and its members. Without them, our Annual Convention in Baltimore would not happen. From attending webinars and convention planner sessions, to recruiting reviewers to review submissions, to reading submissions, to answering messages (sometimes voluminous), to providing information about their units and to their unit members, to making the hard decisions to say yes or no, they have done most important work. Program planners have, through multiple and sometimes complex efforts, helped make it possible for all of us to have a high-quality and exciting convention. I want to take this opportunity to thank all unit program planners. If you are so moved I hope you will take time out of your day to do the same.

--Kent A. Ono, NCA First Vice President, University of Utah

105th Annual Convention Program Available Online

The 105th Annual Convention program is now live on [NCA Convention Central](#). The online program is searchable by session or paper title, sponsor, keyword, and participant, and is viewable in a daily grid format. A printable version of the program will be posted online in October. All attendees are encouraged to download the NCA program app, Eventsential, in advance of the Annual Convention.

Convention Registration and Hotel Reservations Now Open

Registration for the Annual Convention is now open online. Discounted Early Bird registration rates are available until September 13, 2019, and offer significant savings to all attendees who register before that date. Please visit the [Registration Information](#) webpage for more information and deadlines.

The group room blocks at the Hilton Baltimore, Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor, Sheraton Inner Harbor, and Holiday Inn Inner Harbor also open. For information on how to reserve a room, please visit the [Hotel and Travel Information](#) webpage. Please note that NCA is working with the housing bureau associated with Visit Baltimore. Hotel reservations cannot be made by calling the hotel directly. All reservations must be made by using the provided reservation URL on the Hotel and Travel Information webpage, or by calling the Visit Baltimore housing bureau.

Enhance Your Convention Experience with a Preconference

I am excited to provide important updates about this year's Preconferences line-up. Preconferences are intended as an opportunity for scholars to take a "deep dive" into a particular topic of significance to a community of scholars within and across interest groups, offering an enhanced exploration of a topic that may not otherwise garner significant attention during the main convention.

There are exciting new changes in this year's Preconferences series:

- The preconferences and seminars series have been combined, so there is no longer a seminars series, and preconferences will be the only Wednesday series.
- Preconferences will all be free of charge this year.

The 2019 Preconferences Program will spotlight panels and events that focus on communication and survival in the following contexts: crisis communication, environmental communication, family communication, communication science, online pedagogy, and public address, among others. We encourage all convention attendees to peruse the Preconferences program and participate in a preconference with fellow scholars. Several preconferences have issued a call for participants, which can be viewed on the [Preconferences webpage](#). For more information, please visit [NCA Convention Central](#).

--[Leandra H. Hernandez](#), Preconferences Program Planner, Utah Valley University

Communication for Survival Spotlight Series: Communication and Surviving Environmental Racism

South Baltimore is no stranger to air pollution causing respiratory health problems and death. Sometimes, however, it's time to say "enough." Curtis Bay resident Destiny Watford was 20 years old when she did just that and organized her community to shut down a proposed trash incinerator in 2016. Today, she is a Goldman Environmental Prize award winner and named one of *TIME Magazine's* Next Generation Leaders. As a local organizer with United Workers and Free Your Voice, Destiny knows that how one communicates matters to achieving environmental justice.

"Communication and Surviving Environmental Racism" will kick off with Watford sharing her story. Then, three cutting-edge, engaged Communication scholars who work on environmental justice in their own backyards—Prof. Armond Towns, Prof. LeiLani Nishime, and Prof. Rahul Mitra—will share their research on related themes of voice and social movements, racial ecologies, and urban organizing. Join us for what undoubtedly will be a timely and meaningful discussion about how to make Baltimore and, ideally, this country a healthier and happier place for all. For more information, please visit [NCA Convention Central](#).

--[Phaedra Pezzullo](#), Communication for Survival Spotlight Series Co-planner, University of Colorado, Boulder

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