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Special Announcement

Recognizing the impact of COVID-19, the NCA Executive Committee, Primary Program Planner and First Vice President, David T. McMahan, divisional and special programmers, and the National Office have been working for the past several weeks and months developing plans for the upcoming Annual Convention in Indianapolis that are flexible enough to allow all members to participate safely and collaboratively in this significant event. We are very pleased to share this important announcement regarding the convention and membership.

This year's convention has been reimagined to allow presenters and other participants the opportunity to participate virtually if they cannot attend in person. Considerations of participant health, safety, and agency were at the top of our priority list in making this decision. Many are looking forward to attending and participating in person at the convention, but the impact of COVID-19 may prevent others from traveling to Indianapolis and participating in person. Specific information regarding both in person participation and virtual participation will be provided as the convention draws near. This year's convention will not be business as usual, but we are confident that it will provide opportunities to implement innovative and resilient strategies that will afford presenters and other participants the ability to do something new, something from which we can all learn and benefit.

In further recognition of the COVID-19 pandemic and its differential and varied effects on everyone, the NCA Executive Committee has also approved two financial initiatives. First, the association is eliminating all 2020 Convention registration fees for NCA members, regardless of whether a member attends in person or virtually. Second, 2020 membership costs will be reduced by half for all members who make less than \$100,000 annually (those members who have already joined or renewed since January 1, 2020, will receive a refund of 50% of their membership dues).

We are looking forward to the Convention in November. Full convention program information is now available on [NCA Convention Central](#). Hotel and travel information is available on the [Hotel and Travel Information](#) webpage. Registration information is now available for all participants (in person and virtual) on the [Registration Information](#) webpage.

Thank You, Program Planners

I would like to extend my gratitude to each of the 106th Annual Convention Program Planners for their amazing efforts in making the convention possible. Program Planners are asked to take part in multiple training sessions and then devote extraordinary amounts of time and energy to accomplish the extensive work required to develop the program. Their willingness to undertake these responsibilities and their ability to accomplish the many requirements of planning is impressive in a normal year. It is beyond impressive and especially significant given the events of this year. Their amazing efforts and their tremendous dedication are greatly appreciated.

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

Communication at the Crossroads Series: Administrators Discuss the Discipline and Its Future

The Communication at the Crossroads Series at the 106th Annual Convention will feature sessions dedicated to exploring key issues within the discipline of Communication, especially examining where we have been as a discipline and where we might be heading. One such panel is entitled, "[Communication at the Crossroads Series: Administrators Discuss the Discipline and Its Future.](#)"

As departments of Communication compete with those of other disciplines for scarce financial resources and influence within their respective institutions and as academic landscapes continue to change, gaining insight into how administrators view the Communication discipline can be particularly valuable.

This special 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 Communication discipline 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.

Presenters include:

Brooke Barnett, Dean, College of Communication, Butler University
Shawn D. Long, Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kennesaw State University
Janette Muir, Associate Provost, George Mason University
Jeanetta D. Sims, Dean, Jackson College of Graduate Studies, University of Central Oklahoma
Shawn T. Wahl, Dean, College of Arts and Letters, Missouri State University

Please join us for this very important session.

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

Online Program Now Available

The 106th 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. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NCA Executive Committee has developed plans to allow presenters to participate in person or virtually. The program will be updated with more information regarding online sessions in the coming months. A PDF version of the program will be posted online in October.

Call for Convention Volunteers

Volunteer registration for NCA's 106th Annual Convention will open August 3. To be eligible, volunteers must be student members of NCA, and membership must be current through December 1, 2020. In exchange for one complete volunteer shift, with shifts ranging from four to six hours, volunteers will receive an \$85 stipend and convention registration, which includes access to all convention sessions; access to the NCA Graduate School Open House; a chance to network with professionals in the field; and the opportunity to learn more about the Communication discipline.

Please note, volunteer positions do require direct contact with convention attendees and social distancing in these roles may not be feasible. We will be providing masks for all volunteers; however if you are considered high risk for COVID-19, please consider your personal health before registering for a volunteer position.

Prior to registering as a volunteer, please review your other convention commitments, such as sessions in which you are presenting or plan to attend. Volunteers are required to complete their shift in full to receive the stipend, and they will not be permitted to leave early or arrive late due to other commitments. Please note that convention registration does not include NCA membership dues. It is recommended that potential volunteers who need to renew their

membership do so at least three business days prior to registering as a volunteer to allow their membership to be processed. If you register as a volunteer, do NOT register separately for the convention. View more information on the [Volunteer Information](#) webpage.

Convention Registration

Online convention registration is now open. In recognition of the COVID-19 pandemic, the NCA Executive Committee has suspended all 2020 Annual Convention registration fees for NCA members. For more information please visit the [Registration Information](#) webpage. NCA is pleased to offer the following discounted/special registration rates again in 2020.

- **Guest Speaker Registration:** Attendees who were invited to participate in a session based on their expertise in an area outside of the discipline may receive a complimentary registration with no membership requirement. Guest speakers are people who would not normally attend the convention, and are not and never have been members of NCA. Guest Speakers must register in advance by completing and submitting the Guest Speaker Request Form before October 11, 2020.
- **Friends and Family:** Spouses, partners, family members, and friends are welcome at the convention and may register for a flat rate of \$50. The Friends and Family registration grants access to all areas, sessions, and events at the convention. This registration type does not apply to individuals who are in the discipline, who are or ever have been members of NCA, or who are on the convention program. Friends and family must register onsite at the NCA Registration Area.

Please contact the [Convention Team](#) for more information.

Hotel Reservations

Hotel reservations are now open. Hotel rooms will be available at the JW Marriott Indianapolis and Indianapolis Marriott Downtown. For information on how to reserve a room, please visit the [Hotel and Travel Information](#) webpage. **Please note that NCA is not working with any third parties or housing bureaus for convention housing, so please be cautious of anyone contacting you claiming to represent NCA.**

David T. McMahan

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