

## **First Vice President Report November 2024**

My work as First Vice President has focused primarily on the NCA 2024 convention preparations and enhancements for our 110<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention with the theme, “Communication for Greater Regard.” Work also included preparing and facilitating the six-month series of Virtual Learning Opportunities (VLOs) leading up to the convention. Along with Executive Committee meetings, Officer Meetings, serving on the Leadership Development Committee, conducting the annual review of NCA’s Executive Director, and weekly convention meetings, I have interacted with convention planners, members, submitters, and VLO presenters on behalf of NCA. Also, in September 2024, I attended an American Council of Learned Societies seminar with NCA’s Executive Director, Justin Danowski.

Many thanks to LaShawn Duckett for her extraordinary efforts in facilitating our convention planning and assisting with VLOs. LaShawn is a phenomenal and fierce contributor and collaborator who listens, follows through, and does so with grace and professionalism—supporting the vision and enhancing it to fruition.

### **Convention Activities and Enhancements**

Several noteworthy activities and enhancements have been accomplished related to this year’s convention; these include:

- a new streamlined process for the First Vice President to review additional slot requests in the new convention platform
- enhancements to the convention website with a restructured convention home page and VLOs integrated and included on the site
- the largest number of NCA convention submissions since 2020 with registration tracking well ahead of most recent years and on pace with 2019 levels prior to the pandemic
- implemented a pilot project to address food insecurity among students through embedding the opportunity to sponsor a student meal into the convention registration process; more than 90 contributors sponsored more than \$1,800 in meals that will be provided as food vouchers to student volunteers
- a new Student Lounge was launched as a special space for students to connect, network, gather, or relax
- modified the convention programming schedule to create a common midday break for convention attendees to have lunch, interact, or visit the Exhibit Hall
- Early Morning Cafés with facilitated topics for attendees to connect and engage in conversation over a provided beverage
- 1<sup>st</sup> VP spotlight panels focused on Communication for Greater Regard in the four pivotal areas of Loss, Leadership, Legacy, and Leverage
- Dr. Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, a professor, past president of the World Communication Association, Kovener Fellow, and recipient of the 2023 Top 25 Outstanding Women Listeners in the World, will deliver the 2024 Carroll C. Arnold Distinguished Lecture; she

has selected the title, “Beyond Us Versus Them: Communication, Community, and Empathy as Imperatives for the Betterment of Human Society”

### **Virtual Learning Opportunities (VLOs)**

In fulfillment of the commitment made as a 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Candidate to enhance NCA member value through offering VLOs and conducting an Early Career Scholars Consortium, I spent a significant amount of my time coordinating and facilitating the six-month series of VLOs which were planned initially in November 2023 at last year’s convention.

The VLO conversations were enriching, invigorating, and thought-provoking. I extend my heartfelt appreciation and deep gratitude to each of the VLO presenters. Below are highlights of information related to VLOs as well as results based on surveys completed by VLO attendees; my hope is for the following information to inform future NCA VLOs:

- 7 virtual events were facilitated with more than 310 total attendees from May 2024 to October 2024 with 20 VLO presenters
- 1 VLO was a 4-hour Early Career Scholars Consortium event while the remaining 6 were 1-hour Masterclasses including one AI VLO coordinated by NCA’s Teaching and Learning Council, and one NCA Executive Committee-related event organized by a group of Palestinian scholars
- VLOs were well attended and continued to improve over time with varying levels of conversion from registration to attendance (e.g., ratios ranging from 51% to 61%); the final three VLOs had the highest level of attendance at 93, 57, and 41, respectively (with lower VLO attendance ranging from 22 to 38)
- Among those in attendance who completed the event surveys, VLOs were rated as satisfied or very satisfied among 97% of all respondents and 98% of attendees indicated they were very likely or somewhat likely to attend a future VLO.
- The highest VLO Net Promoter Scores (NPSs) were 75, 69, and 50, respectively (with lower NPSs ranging from 20 to 31); the NPS is a marketing measure that subtracts detractors from promoters to arrive at a standardized measure of likelihood to recommend a product or service.

I am honored to serve alongside you and thrilled to see this year’s convention theme of “Communication for Greater Regard” come to fruition. I look forward to continued service in the Presidential year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeanetta D. Sims, Ph.D., APR  
NCA First Vice President