

The Alabama Communicator

Newsletter of The Alabama Communication Association

Spring 2024

Submissions Sought for 2024 ACA Convention

We are in the final three weeks of the paper, panel and program submission process for the our upcoming 2024 ACA Annual Convention.

The deadline for papers, research-in-progress abstracts, Great Ideas for Teaching (GIFTS) and panel proposals is **Wednesday, May 1 at 11:59 p.m. CDT.**

See the full Call for Papers on page 3 of *The Alabama Communicator*.

Plan now to join us in the Shoals as The University of North Alabama hosts our 14th Annual Convention. ACA Vice President Tiffany R. Wang is soliciting volunteers to serve as reviewers, chairs and respondents.

MTSU Vice Provost To Give Keynote Address

A past president of the Central States Communication Association and current vice provost at Middle Tennessee State University will give the keynote address at the 2024 ACA Convention on July 27.

In addition to serving as vice provost for academic programs, Dr. Amy Aldridge Sanford is a professor of communication, a discipline she has loved since her first speech contest at the age of 14.

Her address, "Assisting Students on their Journeys to Social Justice Activism: Ideas for Educators" builds on her book *From Thought to Action: Developing a Social Justice Orientation*, which is now in its 2nd edition.

Sanford has published dozens of book chapters, journal manuscripts, newspaper editorials, and newsletter articles. A TEDx speaker and curator, she frequently presents to confer-



Amy Aldridge Sanford

ence, university, and community audiences. Sanford is a recipient of the Central States Communication Association's Jack Kay Award for Community

Engagement and Applied Communication Scholarship.

She was awarded Communication University Educator of the Year in both Texas and Oklahoma, and Outstanding Administrator from the National States Advisory Council of the National Communication Association.

In her book "From Thought to Action: Developing a Social Justice Orientation, she identified three stages that budding activists must experience to fully realize their potentials: (a) Self Reflection; (b) Education; and (c) Direct Action.

In the July 27 keynote, Sanford will share how educators can assist and support students through each of the stages.

Her address will be part of the day of events hosted by The University of North Alabama in Florence.

Graduate Program Opportunities Focus of ACA Spring Virtual Forum

By **Jefferson Walker**
ACA Executive Director

On March 6, 2024, the Alabama Communication Association hosted a virtual panel on graduate education in communication. The panel featured graduate faculty from various programs in the state and was aimed towards undergraduates interested in exploring graduate degrees.

Panelists represented diverse perspectives and experiences and provided valuable insight for aspiring scholars and professionals. Dr. Bridgette Colaco, Graduate Studies Coordinator for Troy University's Hall School of Journalism and Communication, discussed professional and online graduate programs.

The University of Alabama's Dr. Josh Pederson and Auburn University's Dr. Ed Youngblood discussed more traditional graduate programs, while current University of Alabama Ph.D. student Joseph Honeycutt offered a graduate student's perspective.

Among the topics discussed were funding opportunities, tips for applications, and advice for selecting the right program. Panelists agreed that students should conduct research on programs before applying and put in the effort to tailor their applications to specific programs.

Overall, the virtual panel provided valuable insight into the opportunities for graduate



Panelists for the virtual forum included Josh Pederson from University of Alabama (top left), Bridgette Colaco, Troy University (top right), Ed Youngblood, Auburn University (bottom left), and Joseph Honeycutt, a Ph.D. student at The University of Alabama.

education in communication.

The ACA looks forward to continuing to provide career-focused programming for curious and motivated undergraduate students.

Sherrill Moves Up the ACA Leadership Ladder

After serving two years as ACA secretary, Lindsey Sherrill was elected Vice-President-Elect at our most recent ACA Convention in Birmingham.



Sherrill

Dr. Sherrill is an assistant professor of business communication in the Sanders College of Business and Technology at The University of North Alabama.

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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear ACA Colleagues,

In the diverse tapestry of Alabama's college and university communication-themed programs, one of the challenges for the Alabama Communication Association lies in cultivating a meaningful community amidst diversity.

I believe the key to success is recognizing our interconnectedness rather than fostering thinking about the organization as a sub-scholarly organization or its membership as representations of regions around the state (ex, departments in the south, north, and centrally located). Instead, let us recognize that scholarly and professional communication associations, like ACA, play a pivotal role in uniting these programs.

By holding space for the fundamentals of communication and promoting collaboration, ACA can pave the way for a stronger, more cohesive

scholarly and professional sphere in the fields related to communication. Embracing this interconnected perspective ensures that our disciplines evolve with culture and foster an environment where the exchange of ideas flourishes among students at every level, faculty, and professionals.

Regarding our interconnectedness, please allow your summer plans to include attending our 14th Annual Convention at the University of North Alabama. Details about the conference will be shared in this issue of the *Alabama Communicator*. Think of how you can encourage and support attendance among your students and colleagues. Our conference is a great opportunity for networking and brainstorming. Moreover,



Dr. Niya Pickett Miller

consider how you might contribute as a conference presenter, panelist, reviewer, panel chair and/or respondent. We need you, and your talent is sure to make this the best conference yet.

Lastly, please consider submitting a nomination for our two awards. It is our honor to highlight the great work happening across the state of Alabama.



Nominations Sought for Next ACA Leaders

The ACA Nominations Committee is seeking candidates for the position of **vice president-elect** and **executive director-elect**. As per the ACA constitution, executive director-elect will serve one year alongside the current executive director (ED) before assuming the role of ACA executive director in 2025-2026. He/she will serve as ED for three years.

The vice president-elect will ascend to the office of vice president in 2025-2026 and become ACA President in 2026-2027. Those interested in serving, please contact George Daniels, immediate past president, who serves as the nominations committee chair. A slate of officers will be presented for a vote by ACA members at the ACA Convention on July 27. Contact Dr. Daniels at gdaniels@ua.edu



Alabama Communication Association 2023-2024 Executive Board

- President - Niya Pickett Miller, Samford University
- Vice President- Tiffany R. Wang, University of Montevallo
- Vice President-Elect- Lindsey Sherrill, University of North Alabama
- Secretary - Joseph Honeycutt, University of Alabama
- Immediate Past President- George L. Daniels, University of Alabama
- Executive Director- Jeff Walker, University of Montevallo

Alabama Communication Association

CALL FOR PAPERS**14th Annual Convention****July 27, 2024**

The Alabama Communication Association invites submissions of scholarly papers, practitioner and student projects, and panel presentations for its 14th Annual Convention, which will be hosted by the Department of Communication at the University of North Alabama in Florence, Alabama on Saturday, July 27, 2024.

We especially welcome original research by undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty/professional members and practitioners from Alabama and the surrounding area. We invite individuals to submit a variety of projects from Communication centered disciplines such as communication studies, journalism, media studies, advertising, public relations, mass communication, etc. Disciplines intersecting with Communication (such as sociology, marketing, English, etc.) are also welcome.

Submission deadline: **May 1, 2024 (midnight CDT)**

This conference is committed to focusing on the following submission types:

Completed Papers: Research papers (no more than 25 pages including tables, figures, and other material, but not including references) will be competitively evaluated. Papers that exceed this page limit will not be reviewed. We will recognize the top faculty/professional paper, top graduate student paper, and two top undergraduate papers.

Research-in-Progress: Faculty and student authors are encouraged to submit 500 to 700-word abstracts of research that will not be completed before the conference. Participants in Research-in-Progress panels will not give a paper presentation, but an overview of the work in progress and receive feedback from attendees. Research-in-Progress abstracts should include a clear purpose statement, an overview of the literature driving the research and the method or approach being taken. Research-in-Progress submissions are not eligible for ACA Awards.

Great Ideas for Teaching Students (G.I.F.T.S): Instructors may submit teacher and student tested ideas for effectively teaching a wide variety of communication concepts and contexts (e.g., health communication, research methods, theory, gender, organizational communication, PR). We encourage presenters to bring handouts of the activity for the audience.

Project Panels: Creative panel ideas that explore applied and scholarly experiences are encouraged from multiple perspectives. Topical roundtable discussions from scholars and/or practitioners who have collaborated and applied communication practices in communities or the classroom are ideal. Individuals from a variety of institutions and backgrounds may submit ideas. We also encourage students to submit capstone course work and other class projects.

Submission Guidelines: Papers and panel submissions should be prepared for anonymous review; please remove all identifying information with only the title on the title page. Put title, name, and complete contact information in the body of the email. Please indicate whether you are FACULTY, GRADUATE STUDENT, or UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT on the title page. Panel submissions should include a brief abstract of the activity and up to two pages of supporting materials that articulate the goal, rationale, directions, and explanation of how the activity connects to/with communication concepts, theories, and/or various skills. Please limit paper submissions to two per individual. Send all submissions to twang@montevallo.edu by May 1, 2024.

Call for Respondents, Chairs, and Reviewers: We invite faculty members who would like to serve as respondents and graduate students who would like to serve as chairs to contact Dr. Tiffany R. Wang, ACA vice president and 2024 conference planner with their areas of interest and expertise. Faculty who are willing to serve as paper reviewers should also contact the conference planner at twang@montevallo.edu no later than May 1, 2024.

2024 Award Nominees Sought



John H. Saunders Service Award

Named for ACA Founder John H. Saunders, the John H. Saunders Service Award recognizes those who have actively created opportunities for others to use their voice. This could include those who have made a significant contribution to growing the ACA, faculty who have encouraged their students to present, faculty who have driven their students to conferences, faculty who create assignments meant for students to engage people beyond their classroom, and those who have created opportunities for faculty, students, and professionals to engage others outside of their own environments.

Nominations, including self nominations, require the following materials:

- 1) a single letter of nomination,
- 2) the nominee's curriculum vitae, and
- 3) a statement outlining specific activities related to service such as supporting the growth of ACA, supporting students or creating opportunities for students to engage with those outside of their own environment. The statement should not exceed 500 words.

Other materials, including supporting letters, may be submitted but are not required.

Nominations should be submitted via email to ACA President Niya Pickett Miller at nmiller@samford.edu NO LATER THAN June 1, 2024.

Alabama Communication Association Award for Outstanding Teaching

The ACA Award for Outstanding Teaching recognizes individuals who demonstrate excellence in teaching communication in Alabama. Eligible nominees must be employed full-time teaching courses in communication within the state of Alabama.

Eligible nominees may teach at any level (e.g., K-12, community college, university). In order to encourage nominations and recognize excellence in teaching at all types of institutions, the award committee may present awards to individuals at different academic levels.

Nominations, including self-nominations, require the following materials: 1) a single letter of nomination, 2) the nominee's current curriculum vitae, and 3) a teaching philosophy statement not to exceed 500 words. Other materials, including evidence of teaching effectiveness and supporting letters, may be submitted but are not required.

Nominations should be submitted via email to ACA President Niya Pickett Miller at nmiller@samford.edu NO LATER THAN June 1, 2024.

A Conversation with Joseph Honeycutt

ACA Past President George L. Daniels spoke with Joseph Honeycutt following his election as the new ACA Secretary at the 2023 ACA Convention in Birmingham. Honeycutt is a Ph.D. student in the College of Communication at The University of Alabama.

Daniels: Tell us where you're from (hometown) And how you came to study communication (include info. about your undergraduate institution).

Honeycutt: I grew up in Columbiana for the first half of my childhood, but my mother and I lived in various cities around central Alabama. I didn't graduate high school. I received a GED shortly after dropping out. There weren't many great options for employment.

For several years, I managed restaurants, taught canine obedience classes, and judged conformation show events. I wanted more opportunities in life, so I returned to school. I started Jefferson State Community College (JSCC) to pursue veterinary technology; however, I fell in love with communication after being recommended by an instructor for an executive position with the college's Sigma Chi Eta (communication honors society) chapter.

This instructor also recruited me onto the speech and debate team. These experiences started connecting the dots between research and instruction to help me realize my future is in academia.

I enjoyed the problem-solving that came with business management and working with dogs, then finding ways to take complex things and communicate them to others. After finishing my A.A. at JSCC, I completed my B.S. in Communication Studies at the University of Montevallo (UM). I fell in love with communication theory at UM and knew that all roads led to teaching and research.

Daniels: Now, share more about what you're doing in the master's program at The University of Alabama

Honeycutt: I enrolled in the expedited Ph.D. program at the University of Alabama (UA) and graduated with my master's degree last fall. This spring is my first semester as a doctoral student, and I couldn't be more excited. I am incredibly fortunate to have received outstanding instruction from the undergraduate institutions I attended, especial-



“The Alabama Communication Association (ACA) means community to me, one that welcomes and supports everyone involved.”

ly UM, to prepare me for graduate school. The UA graduate faculty has encouraged me to pursue my ideas. I currently have two studies in data collection; one is experimental, and the other is an interview design. Some of my previous research (undergraduate and graduate) has earned awards from various conferences and the institutions I have attended.

Daniels: What does the Alabama Communication Association mean to you?

Honeycutt: The Alabama Communication Association (ACA) means community to me, one that welcomes and supports everyone involved. That said, ACA also means progress. ACA hosted the first academic conference I attended.

ACA PROFILE

My first conference presentation was at the next year's ACA conference. Dr. Ray Ozley (UM) suggested I submit a class assignment for consideration. I was hesitant to share my idea, but we worked together to refine the paper for submission. The paper was accepted, which gave me a much-needed confidence boost. I was awarded ACA's Bradley-Bryant Top Undergraduate Paper at the following year's conference, my first (but not last) top paper award.

Daniels: What prompted you to be a candidate for secretary of our organization?

Honeycutt: Wanting to serve ACA felt right to me because it has been such a significant contributor to my journey as a student and researcher, and I see serving the association as a chance to help do that for others: to be a part of someone else's *firsts*.

Daniels: What advice do you have for other graduate students who are wondering if and when they should be in leadership in organizations such as ACA?

Honeycutt: I think graduate students should become more involved with associations representing their disciplines beyond submitting papers by taking advantage of networking and learning op-



Joseph Honeycutt presented a paper at the 2022 ACA Convention hosted by The University of Mobile.

ACA @ MCA



Several members of the Alabama Communication Association participated in the Mississippi Communication Association 2024 Annual Convention held Feb. 9 at Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi

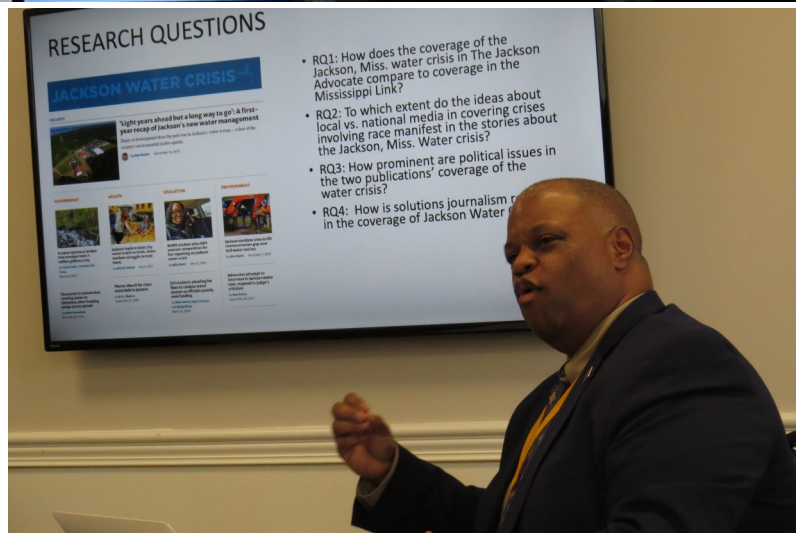
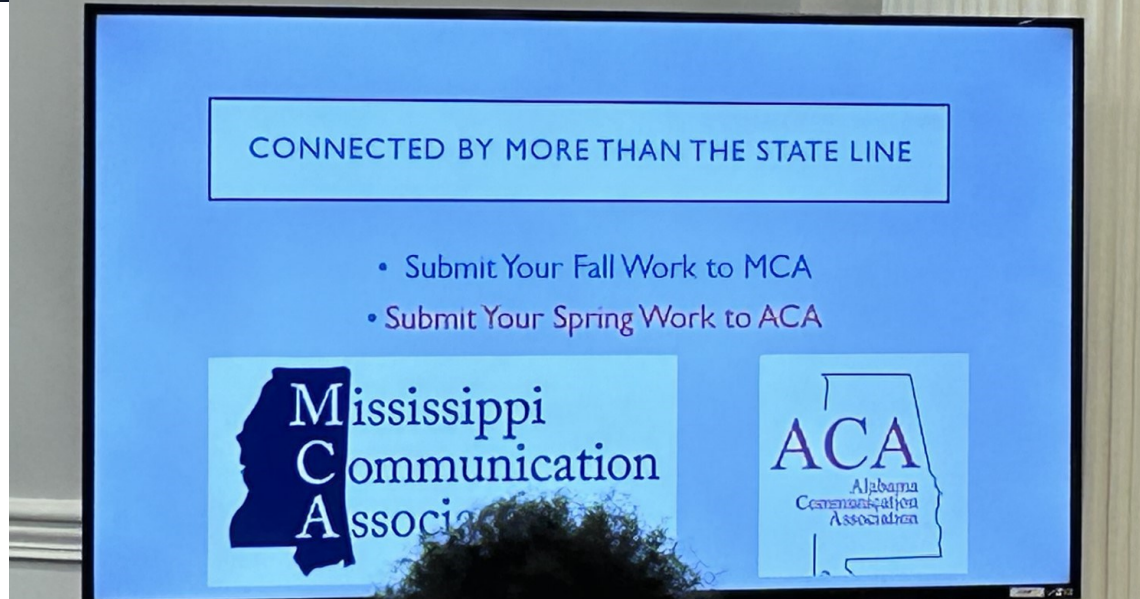


Photo: Courtesy of the Delta Devils' Gazette

Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric

A Peer Reviewed Journal of Current Event Analysis

FROM THE EDITOR

Having finished my first year as editor of JCR, I can tell you that I have learned a lot! My first few months, there were just a couple submissions. But then I ran into Jim Kuypers at SSCA, and a special issue on presidential hopefuls came into fruition in November.

I am currently putting an issue of regular submissions together to come out this spring, and two special issues are in the works to come out this summer. I am also refreshing the editorial board because some people have served on the board since the journal's inception.

While there is going to be a good bit of activity with the journal this year, I am always on the

lookout for articles to publish. So if you have a rhetorical critique of a text that was delivered within the past eighteen months, please consider submitting it to our journal. Or if you have an idea for a special issue of JCR, I can help you plan the entire project from idea to publication.

JCR is a state journal because it is run through the ACA. But we have always acted like a national journal and have had a few articles win awards from the National States Advisory Council at NCA. Check out all of our issues at <http://contemporaryrhetoric.com/>, and email with any questions or ideas at editor@contemporaryrhetoric.com.

-John H. Saunders

Latest Issue

Volume 13, Issue 1

[Rhetorical Strategies of 2024 Presidential Hopefuls](#)

Jim A. Kuypers

Introduction to special issue.

[You Can't Beat Trump by Saying You are Like Trump: The Mike Pompeo Presidential Campaign That Never Was](#)

William F. Harlow

[Strong and Proud, Not Weak and Woke: Enemies and Issues in Nikki Haley's 2024 Presidential Campaign Rhetoric](#)

Patrick G. Wheaton

[Politics and the Future: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez As Rhetorical Educator](#)

Carson S. Kay

[Ron DeSantis as Mainstream Radical](#)

Jim A. Kuypers

[Challenges for the Second-in-Command: Kamala Harris as a Presidential Candidate](#)

Ann E. Burnette

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