

NCA 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Call for Participation  
“Freedom”  
November 16 – 19, 2023  
National Harbor, Maryland



The NCA 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention will be held in National Harbor, Maryland, located in the Washington, DC area, where historical representations of freedom don the nation’s capital. Washington, DC is home to the White House, Washington Monument, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, Statue of Freedom atop the U.S. Capitol, 17 Smithsonian museums, and numerous other sites, attracting millions of visitors from around the world each year. These historic buildings juxtapose the neighborhoods and people of the DC, Maryland, and Virginia area (DMV), many of whom face inequities that directly contrast the symbols of freedom just miles away. For some, the DMV is a clear representation of freedom. For others, this same area highlights an intense lack of freedom. It is from these divergent places and perspectives that we invite Communication scholars to examine both the meaning and praxis of freedom during the NCA 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention.

Human communication plays a critical role in our understanding of what it means to be free. Through Communication, we determine if we ourselves are free and create our personal and collective journeys to become or remain free. While the idea of freedom has been discussed for centuries and across cultures, central questions remain: What does it mean to be free? Is freedom, simply, the state of not being imprisoned or enslaved? Where do we find freedom and how do we get there? Are we free now? Has freedom been reached in the past? Is freedom a goal of the future? Who is free? The NCA 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention theme challenges participants to interrogate these types of questions through scholarship that represents the diversity of our discipline.

The artwork for the convention was created by Washington, DC native and artist, Kristen Hayes-Campbell. This piece, titled, “Days Well Spent Series #2,” overlaps space, movement, and color to demonstrate the freedom of giving life. The artist used acrylic, hand painted collage, and oil pastel to create this work during a time of self-restoration and transformation. Through an array of colors, she represents the hope of what freedom can be. It was important to me to use a piece like this for the Annual Convention, as it allowed me to really envision, in distinct hues, what the 2023 convention could look like.

I invite NCA members and friends to submit papers, panel discussions, posters, and other submissions on the concept of freedom. As Communication scholars, our voices must continue to address and parse out the nuances of what freedom was, is, and can be. Engaging with the concept of freedom allows us to challenge assumptions of what freedom means and offer solutions for individuals, groups, organizations, and societies to attain freedom. I am thrilled to serve as your Second Vice President and plan the NCA 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, and I look forward to your submissions with great anticipation as you interpret *Freedom*. See you in National Harbor, Maryland in 2023!

Marnel Niles Goins  
NCA Second Vice President  
Marymount University