

SPRING 2019

CONNECTIONS

VOL. 37, NO. 1

SOUTHERN STATES COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION



Panorama from atop the old Montgomery Feed and Seed by Josh Whitman/CC BY-SA 3.0

SSCA Readies for Montgomery



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The Montgomery conference has shaped up in ways beyond what I could imagine thanks to the work of our division and interest group planners and all those sub-

mitting papers and panels. Add to that our Montgomery location, current conflict and protests, and we have the opportunity to examine the relevance of communication at the crossroads of change in so many walks of life.

The program, I suspect, is going to provide some challenges in terms of choosing which one panel to attend during a particular session. Jason Munsell has programmed two presidential panels—one pedagogical and one providing a pictorial tour and discussion of the “spirit of

Selma.” Vice Presidential Panels will have audience members considering:

- Deliberative communication in a collaborative civic engagement project to address community conflict
- Tuskegee University and its contemporary attention to “public health inequities rooted in medical racism”
- Pedagogical strategies for addressing conflict, Civic Rights violations in the classroom and through class projects
- Vietnam protest music and the reverberations still heard today

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with SSCA.**



Vote Early and Often

The SSCA Nominating Committee, Chaired by Immediate Past President Victoria Gallagher, has put together a strong slate of candidates for 2nd Vice President and 4 Year College Representative to the NCA Legislative Assembly. Candidate profiles and short CVs are posted in the members section of the SSCA website.

Most of our members would probably be shocked to learn how few members vote in our annual elections. I encourage the old adage, attributed to any of three notorious Chicagoans (Al Capone, Richard J. Daley, and William Hale Thompson) "*Vote Early and Often.*"

By vote "often" I do not mean that individual members should vote more than once. Rather I hope our collective membership will embrace our electoral process and take the opportunity to vote. I hope we will have a tremendous voter turnout.

For an interesting bit of voting history related to the South, you may enjoy President Jimmy Carter's 1993 book "*Turning Point: A Candidate, A State, and a Nation Come of Age,*" about his first run for State of-



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fice and resulting court battles to overturn the county unit system which largely gave powerful, white, rural Georgians disproportionate power in Georgia elections. After it was overturned, the State briefly had a law allowing a spouse to vote for a deceased husband or wife. If my memory is correct a husband or wife could vote for their deceased spouse for a three year period. The reasoning was that the living spouse would know how her/his deceased loved one would have voted, but only for a while.

There will be no voting on behalf of others, though I hope you will cast your own ballot for our worthy slate of candidates. I hope you will vote early and our membership will vote often.

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A Clean Bill of Financial Health but Some Changes to Come

SSCA received another clean financial bill of health during our annual review conducted by Harvard and Associates, the accounting firm from Tallahassee, Florida that has been working with us for several years. The documents from the review are posted in the Members area of the SSCA website.

There are two changes to which I want to alert our members. First, Angelyn Bagwell, the CPA also located in Tallahassee, had been filing the Association's tax documents with the IRS for several years. Ms. Bagwell has retired and her retirement came without much notice. Harvard and Associates has agreed to take on this role for SSCA at least for the current year. They have all of the necessary documents and will file them on our behalf.

Second, there is a change that will adversely affect one of our members every year. The IRS has begun considering awards as taxable income. Most of our award recipients receive a lunch, a plaque, and a well-deserved hearty round of applause. A few of our members also receive modest cash awards, as per our constitution

and/or gift agreements establishing the awards. The award winners are considered to be independent contractors and if the honorarium is \$600 or more they must be sent a Form 1099 which also is sent to the IRS. It also necessitates receiving a W9 form from the award recipient.

The Janice Hocker Rushing Award is the only SSCA award with an honorarium of \$600 or more. Since this is the first year the award was considered as income, we were unaware that the honorarium would be considered taxable income. In January 2019 I wrote a check for \$250 to the 2018 recipient to cover the amount of the tax. I wrote the check because she would have otherwise been blindsided with a tax bill months after the Nashville convention. Moving forward we will ask all award recipients whose honoraria exceed \$600 to complete a W9 form for us at the convention.

As unpleasant as the practice will be, I will tell you the same thing I tell parents who call me regarding FERPA and student grades: I don't make Federal laws, but I try really hard to follow them.

Honors Conference Update

As the organizer of the 29th Annual Theodore Clevenger Undergraduate Honors Conference, I am pleased with the quality and quantity of undergraduate papers that we received this year and the outstanding faculty and advanced graduate students who volunteered to serve as paper reviewers.

The timing of the paper submissions and the “gentle” leaning on colleagues to review papers and projects is tricky. The submission and evaluation process takes place over a one month period; during the precious and much deserved holiday break. The reviewers, however, quickly turned around their assigned papers and/or projects in the short window of time. I am eternally grateful for the outstanding and nuanced feedback the reviewers provided to the students. The tone and guidance provided to each student is quite impressive. Our students are very lucky

to have such conscientious professors on their respective campuses and we are indeed fortunate to call these scholars our disciplinary colleagues.

This year we received a total of 110 papers and projects with 60 volunteer reviewers. I will post the reviewers names and affiliation in the conference program, but wanted to give a collective thank you in advance to our tireless and supportive colleagues.

At the time of this writing, I am putting the UHC panels together and sending out notifications to the students. We will continue Vice-President Pam Bourland-Davis’ initiative of having a social media presence to keep the students updated on conference activities and to build a community of scholars before the conference. Another new feature of the UHC this year will be a panel showcasing four or five state championship



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forensics students from across the south-east region to perform Rhetorical Criticism, Communication Analysis, Persuasive speaking, Impromptu speaking, and Extemporaneous speaking. Big thanks to Kevin Bryant, Tennessee Tech, for recommending this idea and securing travel grants for these students to travel to the conference.

Overall, I am excited about the upcoming SSCA and Undergraduate Honors Conference. Stay tuned for the final UHC program, which will post in early February.

See you in Montgomery!

Gratitude for the Past, Present and Future



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As we look forward to our 89th Convention in Montgomery, I am struck by how the location of our conference speaks to the past, present and future of our nation and of our civic life.

The city advertises itself both as the birthplace of the confederacy and the birthplace of the modern civil rights movement in the U.S. Today it is also the home of the National Memorial to Peace and Justice, the first significant site to be devoted to the history of lynching in our country.

As we convene in this city and seek to honor our association’s past (particularly the members and scholars who have influenced us and given so much to this community), our present (the excellent scholarship we and our students are presenting and the fellowship we will engage in during the conference) and our future (the plans for marketing and membership we will enact in the coming years), I am filled with gratitude.

First, I am grateful for the colleagues who indicated they were willing to stand for election as 2nd VP and NCA Legislative Assembly Reps for our association this year. Drs. Michael Waltman, Wendy Atkins-Sayre, Andrew Pyle and Melody Lehn are among our most talented and collegial colleagues. Our association is in good hands no matter what the results of the election and I thank each of them for that certainty in regard to SSCA’s future!

Second, I am grateful for the remarkable efforts of our association’s leadership team and executive council members. I so enjoyed my tenure in the ranks of these esteemed groups and I look forward to supporting the association going forward as an active member. Please join me in doing the same to ensure the present of SSCA by casting your ballots, encouraging your students and colleagues to attend the conference and attending yourself.

Finally, I am grateful for my home department and the support my colleagues have provided me during my time in the leadership rotation for SSCA. They showed up in so many ways and that has made all the difference in the past four years and I know will continue to positively impact SSCA in the present and future.

Convention

Continued from page 1

• The work of the Equal Justice Initiative
Additional spotlights will feature work of scholars, including:

- Michael Osborn, Master of the Metaphor
- Ersula J. Ore, Lynching: Violence, Rhetoric, and American Identity
- Timothy Levine, Truth-Default Theory

As you plan for the conference, I encourage you to consider attending the awards luncheon featuring the keynote speaker Hank Klibanoff, a Pulitzer prize winner in history for his 2007 co-authored work, *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggles, and the Awakening of a Nation*. He manages the Georgia Civil Rights Cold Cases Project at Emory University, and his work has found a new voice and audience in the podcast series, Buried Truths.

If you can build in some extra time in Montgomery, you'll find many museums and sites easily accessible from our lovely Renaissance host hotel. Many of these museums, of course, will take you through the need for Civil Rights, addressing conflict and crisis at the crossroads of change. You will find the information poignant and heart wrenching, yet vital for understanding the times—then and now. Very close to the conference hotel are the Rosa Parks Library



The Rosa Parks Library and Museum by Spyder Monkey/CC BY-SA 3.0

and Museum, the Legacy Museum, the Hank Williams Museum (note that we have a panel for that, too) and the Riverwalk. Within one half to one mile are the Freedom Rides Museum/Historic Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station, Civil Rights Memorial, Old Alabama Town, Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, the Alabama State Capitol, and the First White House of the Confederacy. In other words, don't forget to pack some walking shoes for exploring.

For more information or trip planning, here are some articles that may give you some ideas for building your time—and meals—in Montgomery at SSCA or a later visit.

36 hours in Montgomery, Alabama:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/03/travel/what-to-do-36-hours-in-montgomery-alabama.html>

Vintage Year Named one of Open Table's top 100 Most Romantic Restaurants for 2018

<https://www.opentable.com/m/100-most-romantic-restaurants-2018/>

CBS included Montgomery in a round-up of the "Top 5 Destinations to Visit for African American History and Culture"

<http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2018/02/07/black-history-month-5-destinations-for-african-american-culture-history/>



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Meet Me In Montgomery!

ence. Thanks go to lots of folks working hard to make a great conference experience for our awesome members (Jerry, Jason, Katie, Christine, Janet, Pam, Shawn, Dave Nelson, and more). In preparation for the upcoming conference, these folks have been helping me finalize program ads on behalf of departments, chat with sponsors

As parts of the region see a bit of snow while others find gray skies and lots of rain, February finds marketing gearing up for the conference.

to prepare for their support of the UHC breakfast, edit the next podcast, and continue work on implementing some of the recommendations made by our Ad-Hoc marketing committee and membership last year. You might have noticed a website refresh, for example, and there's more to see in the coming months, including a fresh, fun t-shirt to celebrate our time in Montgomery. A heartfelt thanks to all of our supporting institutions, and if your department still wants to take out an ad, sponsor the UHC breakfast, or become an institutional member before the meeting, there's still time. Contact Ashli at AQSTOKES@uncc.edu. Enjoy the start of the spring semester, and I look forward to hearing all of your marketing ideas when you *Meet Me in Montgomery!*

Build the Wall!—The SSCA Wall of Fame!

As of this writing our federal government is partially shut down. SSCA never shuts down! Our Executive Director and officers work pretty tireless the entire year. And I can only speak for myself, but I don't golf. I haven't golfed since I accidentally hit that one person that one time. She was fine—I wasn't! So, if SSCA needed to build a wall it would be some sort of Wall of Fame since our members are truly remarkable and deserve to be celebrated.

I offer my sincere gratitude to my co-officers in the association. Our First Vice President, Pam Bourland-Davis, has been extraordinarily busy planning our 2019 annual convention. Conferences don't just plan themselves. There is so much behind the scenes work, so much minutia, so much stress. Pam and all the division and interest group planners have done brilliant work and I very much look forward to seeing everyone in Montgomery this April. Our Second Vice President, Shawn Long, is planning our UHC conference as well as preparing for our 2020 convention which will be held in Frisco, Texas. Big thanks to Shawn and the UHC reviewers. I contend that our Theodore Undergraduate Honors Conference is the premier communication undergraduate conference in the country due in large part to the excellent faculty we have in our region. Jennifer Samp, our SJC Editor, has continued her great work with our journal. I just got the newest edition in the mail last week and it looks like really great stuff. Ashli Stokes, our Marketing Director, has been very hard at work getting our convention sponsors together for Montgomery, getting those program ads together, etc. Additionally, there are lots of potential changes ahead for how we approach marketing our organization and I look forward to those conversations. And have you seen the website? Those pictures! Of our members!



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No more stock photos. Those stock photos were driving a lot of us crazy and I think they had been up on our website since the Carter administration (not really). Ashli has also been working with Jerry and his staff (Christine Ragusa and Katie Monk) to alter a few more things on our website to make it a bit friendlier looking, more readily informative, and to celebrate our members. We also have a new podcast coming out soon. Dave Nelson, again, has put together a gem. I listened to the rough cut last week. In my humble opinion, it's so much better than Dr. Phil's "Phil in the Blanks" podcast. In short, we've seen a lot of cool changes in marketing type stuff mostly thanks to Ashli. Further, our immediate past president, Vicki Gallagher, chairs our Nominating Committee and that committee has done amazing work finding candidates. Our candidates for the next SSCA Second Vice President are Wendy Atkins-Sayre of Southern Miss and Michael Waltman from UNC Chapel Hill. I have a great deal of respect for both of these candidates and either of them will serve SSCA astonishingly well. We also have Andrew Pyle and Melody Lehn as candidates for NCA Legislative Assembly reps. They, too, are excellent candidates and either will represent us with skill and vigor. And I can't forget our ED, Jerry Hale. I have no idea how he does it all. The SSCA Executive Director is practically a full time job with no pay; sort of like working for the federal government during a shutdown. And then Jerry has

to run around being a dean. He and his staff at the College of Charleston are incredible to work with. Jerry is just amazing. In sum, I'm delighted with the work our ED and officers have been doing on behalf of our membership.

The full Executive Council has also been hard at work. We had our mid-year meeting during NCA in Salt Lake City. During that committee, the sub-committee to search for our next Executive Director, chaired by Roseann Mandziuk, recommended John Haas of the University of Tennessee. I could not be more pleased with the thorough work of this committee and this nomination. At this point I am only offering information. We will need to ratify (or not) this nomination at our convention in Montgomery. Additionally, during this mid-year meeting the chairs of the various divisions and interest groups shared reports and I really appreciate all the chairs and I'm thankful for their service to the organization. Even more, during NCA, Jerry and I also meet with NCA leadership and I'm really pleased with the strong relationship we seem to have with our national organization. In fact, Star Muir, NCA's current president, will join us in Montgomery and lead a song circle. I'm going to offer some Tears for Fears since SSCA rules the world. Finally, I want to congratulate all of our SSCA members who won various awards at Salt Lake City; their names are listed on our website. And I know our SSCA awards committees are currently making their selections and I look forward to celebrating those selections in Montgomery.

So, SSCA never shuts down. We have so many people who have done, are doing, and will do so much work for this organization. We have amazing teachers and scholars, and just plain good people. I look forward to Montgomery. Let's build the SSCA Wall of Fame. Build the Wall! Build the Wall!

Don't forget to visit the SSCA website at www.sscanet.net!

SSCA DIVISIONS AND INTEREST GROUPS

SSCA DIVISIONS

- Applied Communication
- Communication Theory
- Community College
- Freedom of Speech
- Gender Studies
- Instructional Development
- Intercultural Communication
- Interpersonal Communication
- Language and Social Interaction
- Mass Communication
- Performance Studies
- Political Communication
- Popular Communication
- Public Relations
- Rhetoric and Public Address
- Southern Argumentation and Forensics

INTEREST GROUPS

- Association for Communication Administrators (ACA)
- American Society for the History of Rhetoric
- Ethnography
- Kenneth Burke Society
- Philosophy & Ethics of Communication

Don't forget to visit the SSCA website at www.ssca.net!

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