

***Jennifer H. Waldeck (Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara)***  
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***Candidate Statement, Eastern Communication Association, Vice President Select Elect***

I am an Associate Professor of Communication in the School of Communication at Chapman University, where I serve on the faculty of our M.S. program in Health and Strategic Communication (and will serve on our forthcoming Ph.D. program faculty), and as Director of our GTA program and basic/core curriculum. I am the author or coauthor of five books, and have published and presented my work widely in our field's journals and at our conferences. I am honored to have been asked to run for this position and to have already received support from Past Presidents and longtime members. In reflecting on the request for this statement, the two primary things I decided ECA members should know about me are, first, my commitment to the association and to the field at large; and second, the personal characteristics that I would bring to this leadership opportunity.

### **Commitment to ECA and the Field of Communication**

My first publication was in an ECA journal! A study with Victoria Orrego, Tim Plax, and Pat Kearney appeared in *Communication Quarterly* in 1996. I remember being Plax and Kearney's MA student in California and hearing how important the people, traditions, and work of ECA were to them. My undergraduate friends and mentors, Judy Pearson and Paul Nelson, were fixtures at ECA. All of these people modeled the kind of professional citizenship that remains so important to me today. I quickly came to appreciate the legacy of this association, the strength of its journals, and the work presented at its annual conferences.

Having a professional focus on instructional and organizational communication, ECA is a natural comfort zone for me with its long history of excellence in both of these areas. So, since I joined the faculty at Chapman University in 2005, ECA has been a priority that I simply don't miss. The trip from Southern California to places as far east as Boston is a long one. But it's easily the most rewarding professional trip I make every year, thanks to the people I connect with and the ideas and projects discussed. I have served as interest group planner for the Instructional Communication division twice, and reviewer and respondent for several divisions, including the James C. McCroskey and Virginia P. Richmond Undergraduate Scholars Conference.

My goal in leading ECA would be to connect with all of you in ways that will enable us to attain our short term goals and, together, create a long-term foundation for the organization as we enter a new decade in 2020. We bear a great responsibility for nourishing the vitality of the oldest regional association in the field. Having the opportunity to be of service to all of you would be an honor to which I'd be fully committed. My vision is to pursue what is collectively important to the future of the association and our discipline rather than any particular personal interest. If elected, I look forward to having the conversations we need to have to chart that course.

In addition to having deep affection for ECA, I remain as passionate about the field of Communication as ever. I have a long history of service to NCA, having served in every major role in the Instructional Development Division, as a member of the Educational Policies Board and Committee on Committees, and on Steve Beebe's Basic Course Task Force. I love our field and will never lose sight of the foundation reasons why I entered it and continue to serve it. I view this opportunity as an occasion for stewardship of a field with strong traditions and intellectual roots. We are privileged to deepen those roots by investigating contexts and issues of contemporary relevance. As those topics of current interest and importance shift, we need the intellectual traditions of the field to ground and frame all that we do. Our associations should remain at the forefront of preserving the legacies of the field through programming and other initiatives.

## **Personal Leadership Characteristics**

One of my primary strengths is my ability to see complex issues as a series of logical, manageable tasks. For example, I am responsible for creating the first GTA training and development program on Chapman's campus, and was charged by my Dean with overseeing our lower division communication program. In these roles, I have succeeded in creating a flexible but standardized structure that enables graduate students and part time faculty to teach these courses in accordance with our standards, but simultaneously develop their teaching skills and style.

I'm a systems thinker and "doer" at my core, and as a result, am able to organize large events and approach meetings with a straightforward, commonsense approach. I am known by my colleagues for my attention to detail and ability to work with a wide variety of people. My organizing and planning skills have been central to my successes. In addition, I've always recognized the value of connecting with experienced veterans, and if elected, I look forward to working with these people and learning from the experiences of those who have done this work before me. I'm a healthy, fit person with an immense amount of energy to lead the important work of ECA. I am an extremely hard worker. I am genuinely excited about this opportunity and motivated by the fire of that excitement to get to work should you elect me.

If I am elected, the conference I'm responsible for will be held in Baltimore. A perfect venue for "harboring" the relationships, connections, and service I hope to build with all of you. Thank you for giving me the honor of considering me for ECA Vice President Select Elect.