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Dear ACA Community:

The American Counseling Association (ACA) strives to be inclusive and welcoming to all our members and conference attendees. We rely on your feedback to continually improve our Annual Conference & Expo experience for attendees each year, and we take it seriously.

Following our 2024 Conference & Expo in New Orleans, we were made aware of two incidents where attendees were prohibited from having their children enter or be with them in the Expo Hall. We also learned of attendees who encountered accessibility issues on site in New Orleans, which hindered their ability to fully participate in the conference.

We understand that these incidents were hurtful and upsetting for the conference attendees who were affected and to their families. We acknowledge that individuals from minoritized communities had negative experiences, and we deeply regret that we failed to live up to the inclusive and anti-racist practices that we espouse. We apologize for the stress it caused.

On behalf of the ACA Governing Council, I thank everyone who took the time to meet with ACA staff and leaders, share your story, fill out a post-conference survey, provide constructive feedback, and advocate for change. Your input led to positive outcomes.

For the 2025 conference in Orlando, we instituted multiple measures to address these specific complaints. Just two examples: We instituted a system that allowed attendees with children to experience the Expo Hall by registering them and obtaining a badge, which seemed to work well. And we trained staff, volunteers and local temporary workers on addressing accessibility concerns, in addition to working closely with the hotel to ensure a carefully considered experience that allowed all attendees to fully engage.

Currently, we are reviewing the 2025 conference feedback with the goal of continuing to make our conference a positive experience for all attendees. We value your input as we work towards greater inclusivity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Suniti Bhat', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Dr. Christine Suniti Bhat, ACA President (2024-2025)
on behalf of the American Counseling Association Governing Council