

Dear ABAI Members,

Thank you for your commitment to our discipline, your dedication to ABAI's mission, and your membership in this association. We are proud to be the home of the science and practice of behavior analysis.

At the recent conference of the California Association for Behavior Analysis, a chapter of ABAI, Dr. Richard Malott used gender-based and race-based derogatory language in his keynote address. This behavior is inconsistent with ABAI's diversity policy and our standards of professional behavior. Dr. Malott had been scheduled to receive the SABA Distinguished Contributions to Behavior Analysis award at the upcoming ABAI annual convention, and to deliver an address at the award ceremony. In light of feedback received regarding his remarks at CalABA, [Dr. Malott has declined to accept this award.](#) The SABA Board of Directors and the ABAI Executive Council agree with this course of action.

Our discipline is dedicated to continual improvement. One critical area where we can improve as an organization is providing a professional environment that celebrates diversity and is free of discrimination and harassment in all forms. We are living in a time of rapid social change, with several recent social movements calling attention to patterns of behavior that have been too-long tolerated in other sciences and in areas such as entertainment, sports, business. Behavior analysis, too, has been affected by discrimination and harassment.

In the days following the CalABA conference, conversations in the worldwide behavior analysis community have expanded beyond this specific event to include discussion of many different forms of discrimination and harassment experienced by behavior analysts, some of which have occurred at ABAI events. The ABAI Executive Council wants you to know that we are listening and we will continue listening. These conversations represent an opportunity for ABAI to grow as an organization towards better representation of our values. We are announcing three immediate actions toward that end:

1. We reaffirm ABAI's commitments to diversity and ethics. We are establishing a task force with the goal of developing clear inclusion and anti-harassment policies and procedures.

Diversity Policy: The Association for Behavior Analysis International seeks to be an organization comprised of people of different ages, races, nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual orientations, genders, classes, religions, abilities, and educational levels. ABAI opposes unfair discrimination.

Code of Ethics: The Association for Behavior Analysis International expects its members to uphold the highest standards of personal and professional behavior in the conduct of their work and the advancement of behavior analysis. ABAI embraces the diversity of professions within its membership; thus, each ABAI member should adhere to the ethical standards that have been defined for his or her profession. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- The American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct
- The Association for Clinical Researchers' Code of Ethics

- The Association for Institutional Research's Code of Ethics
- The Behavior Analyst Certification Board's Professional and Ethical Compliance Code
- The National Association of School Psychologists' Professional Conduct Manual
- The National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics
- The National Education Association's Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

2. We are developing an agreement to be signed by all presenters at ABAI events, indicating their understanding that discriminatory and derogatory language will not be tolerated in presentations at ABAI.
3. We are taking steps to begin an organization-wide conversation about how we can facilitate positive change and work together toward an environment that supports professional and respectful behavior. As a first step, we are planning a special dialogue session at the upcoming ABAI annual convention. We encourage you to attend this session to share your experiences and ideas with ABAI leaders.

Behavior analysts have a proud history of working to understand and change behavior in positive and meaningful ways. We look forward to working alongside you as we continually improve our professional practices and support each other in achieving excellence.

The SABA Board of Directors
The ABAI Executive Council