

## ACCTA CONFERENCE FAQ's

### *Frequently Asked Questions for New Training Directors/Coordinators about the Conference*

#### **Are families and partners welcome at the conference?**

Families and friends are welcome at the conference, and each year we are happy to have the chance to meet a number of partners, kids, friends, siblings, etc. of ACCTA members. Do bear in mind, however, that the conference agenda is a very active one, including presentations, meetings, continuing education, opportunities to socialize in formal and informal ways, and so on. You may find that you are feeling pulled sometimes by conflicting demands when "family" (of whatever definition) joins you. We do encourage you to find your own personal balance of learning, sharing, growing, and connecting with ACCTA and with "family".

#### **What style of dress is appropriate?**

This is a very informal conference, and you will find that most people attend dressed in t-shirts, jeans or shorts, and running shoes. Bring clothes that make you feel good and allow you to be comfortable. There is opportunity for outside or inside physical activity for those so inclined, so bring appropriate clothes for your favorite activity.

#### **Can I earn Continuing Education credit at the conference?**

Absolutely. If you decide to attend every CE activity, you can typically earn about 10-12 CE credits during each conference. See the official schedule for exact offerings this year. One special event of great importance each year is the presentation of seminars by our two Diversity Mentorship Scholars. Nominated by ACCTA members, Diversity Mentorship Scholars are (hopefully) future Training Directors who offer special skills and commitment to the area of diversity training and action. Each guest Scholar offers a program to membership, and these presentations are always valued and important parts of the learning/sharing activities of the conference. Be sure not to miss them!

#### **Do people ever "miss" a session to play?**

Yes! Each of us comes to the conference for a range of reasons, and one quite valid one is to refresh, replenish, find our own inner and outer harmony - and that may mean doing something instead of a presentation or meeting.

#### **What is offered at ACCTA besides CE programs?**

There are many formal and informal ways to connect with ACCTA members during the conference. See below for details about some of the different options!

#### **Affinity groups**

Affinity groups are offered to provide space for Training Directors/Coordinators to meet and connect on a more personal level. These group discussions are informal and have traditionally had a more social justice/diversity theme to them. Affinity Groups were created at ACCTA from the desire to connect with others who share similar group membership regarding various aspects of identity. For example, connecting with other TDs / TCs who are parents, identify as a member of the LGBTQ community, or share a particular religious/spiritual orientation. Below is a list of past Affinity Groups. New groups are created every year and there will be a board at the conference for attendees to add a group they are interested in for this particular conference. As you can see, the list is diverse and some topics can be reflective of particular issues occurring during that certain year personally or professionally. Members have shared that these groups help them connect at a deeper level with other TD's who perhaps have similar struggles, joys and challenges in their personal/professional lives.

#### *Affinity Group examples*

*Racial/Ethnic minorities/BIPOC TDs / TCs ("BLACCTA")*

*Disability/Ability spectrum TDs / TCs*

*LGBTQ+ TDs / TCs ("QUACCTA")*

*Jewish-identified TDs / TCs*

*Christian-identified TDs / TCs*

*International TDs / TCs*

*TDs / TCs who are Parents*

*TDs / TCs experiencing difficulties with senior staff*

*TDs / TCs experiencing difficulties with Directors / Other Admin staff*

### **Culture Sharing**

This is a favorite ACCTA program organized by the Standing Committee on Diversity (SCD) during which volunteer ACCTA members choose to share something about their cultural identity with the membership. You'll see emails on the listserv inviting volunteers for this time.

### **Committee Meetings**

During a designated breakfast, members of ACCTA committees can have face-to-face time to meet with one another and plan their work together during the year (e.g. Training Resources Committee, Research Committee, Texas Training Directors / Coordinators, etc.). Being on an ACCTA committee is often a way to begin involvement in ACCTA toward more leadership roles.

### **Excursions**

The local hosts of the conference plan one or several outings in the host city. Usually an additional fee is required to attend these events. They are a wonderful way to join with ACCTA members to learn something about what the local community has to offer. And, you are more than welcome to set up your own excursion on your own or with ACCTA friends instead. You'll learn more about this in emails prior to the conference. Please check out our conference page for updates on excursion activities and how to sign up!

### **Dinner meal card**

The local hosts of the conference plan for small groups to use their meal card at one of several local restaurants. No worries if you don't sign up for one of these groups—often other members will organize a spontaneous dinner outing for those who haven't signed up in advance during the conference (you'll learn more about this in emails prior to the conference).

### **Connectors**

Connectors are members of ACCTA who have attended a conference in the past who volunteer to be assigned to and meet up with a new Training Director / Coordinator to ACCTA during the conference. This person is available by email for questions about the conference before it happens, meets their "connectee" (new TD / TC) during the opening Happy Hour and has dinner with them that evening. They also make plans to meet up with their "connectee" at one other time during the conference. It's one of ACCTA's ways of trying to have the conference feel "smaller" as we have been growing.

### **What is SCD (Standing Committee on Diversity)?**

The Standing Committee on Diversity is made up of elected ACCTA members who are passionate and committed to enhancing the multicultural awareness and competence of ACCTA as an organization. SCD members are elected each year by membership for a two-year term. They spend time together throughout the year considering issues of diversity in ACCTA, stimulating multicultural awareness on the ACCTA listserv, offering multicultural programming and events at the ACCTA Conference, and identifying two recipients of the Jay Zimmerman Diversity Scholarship Mentorship.

### **Should I attend the SCD Elections and the SCD Conversation Hour?**

YES! The meeting is for every ACCTA member! You are highly encouraged to attend this event which is designed as an opportunity for both the Standing Committee on Diversity and all of membership to uphold ACCTA's value of diversity and inclusion. The Elections are an important process, and we need participation from membership! Positions on the SCD are open to any ACCTA member interested in continuing multicultural efforts for ACCTA. The "Conversation hour" allows ACCTA members at large to exchange ideas and dialogue about diversity issues in their work and in their experience with ACCTA. Plan to participate in this hour to have a voice in how diversity and multicultural issues are addressed in ACCTA.

### **Social Events at the Conference**

There is often a game night during the conference planned by the ACCTA board, which some members attend. A white board is used for all of membership to use throughout the conference to plan meet-ups with others for meals, excursions, and discussion groups based on various topics of interest, along with other social activities at the hotel or in the community we are visiting.

### **Are there ways to connect with those who are in a similar stage of their career as a TD/TC during the conference?**

#### **Pre-Conference**

We encourage new and early Training Directors / Coordinators to register for the annual pre-conference. The pre-conference is designed to help orient new and early training directors to their emerging roles through group discussion and continuing education workshops by experienced training directors. Topics regularly covered include your identity as a Training Director/Coordinator, Managing the Selection Process, and Tips for new TD's/TC's.

#### **Passages CE Program**

Passages is an ACCTA traditional program offered at the annual conference. The program is based on a Training Director / Coordinator career model and is offered to provide TDs / TCs an opportunity to engage in small-group discussions related to professional development topics and career trajectories. Training Directors self-identify with one of six developmental stages: *Entry, Identity/Immersion, Doubt, Re-immersion, Continuously Evolving, or Exit*. Prompting questions are offered as examples of topics each group can discuss. The topics for Passages are intended to be work-related and reflect the professional development process of being a Training Director / Coordinator.

### **Are there ways to connect with ACCTA members following the Conference, formally and informally?**

Absolutely!

**Sign up to be an ACCTA Mentor or Mentee through our Formal Mentorship Program:** ACCTA mentors are available to new Training Directors/Training Coordinators and are matched with one another based on requests. Contact our Mentor Program board members to ask for a mentor following the conference.

**Informal Mentorship/Support:** Many ACCTA members form informal mentorship groups based on their shared experiences at the conference or through requests on the listserv. Examples include those who are working on a self-study at the same time, those who are trying to develop new programs, etc.

**For additional ACCTA insider information, visit [About ACCTA](#)**