

# FABA | Observer

Florida Association for Behavior Analysis

*The official newsletter of The Florida Association for Behavior Analysis*

## FABA Public Policy Committee

*Advocating for Members Amid Managed Care Transition by Matt Potak and Missy Olive*

Since the conclusion of our annual FABA conference, the Public Policy Committee has been hard at work, reorganizing and refocusing efforts to tackle the challenges that lie ahead in the transition from Fee for Service to Managed Care—a change with significant implications for providers.

To address this, FABA has actively advocated for behavior analysis providers when meeting with AHCA. In every meeting, we have prioritized raising our members' concerns, including:

- Transparency in the managed care transition process
- Advocacy against rate cuts that negatively impact providers
- Education on indicators of quality behavior analytic services
- Education on the prevalence of fraud issues in Florida

Additionally, we emphasized the importance of fostering open communication, collaboration, and building long-term relationships with AHCA.

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The collaboration with AHCA led to the creation of a unique opportunity: a series of in-person events designed to connect FABA members and providers with AHCA representatives and the SMMC Health Plans. FABA offered two “Mix and Mingle” events: one on December 5th in Orlando and another on December 17th in Miami. These gatherings provided a valuable forum for FABA members to ask questions, build relationships, and gain clarity on the managed care transition, which begins on February 1, 2025.

FABA remains steadfast in its commitment to advocate for our members, ensure transparency, and support providers during this critical transition. We look forward to working together toward a successful future for providers and the children and families they serve.

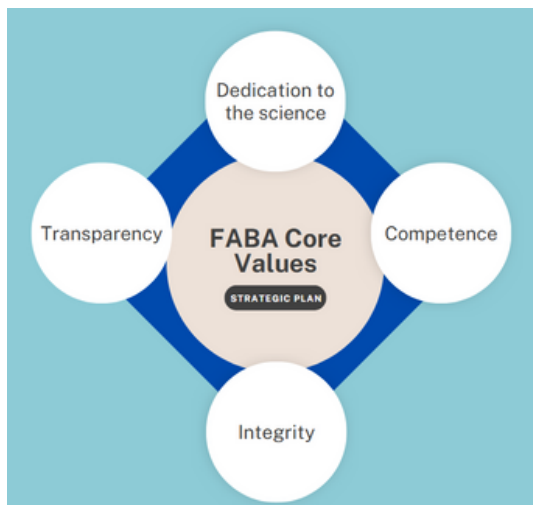
## Moving Forward With a Strategic Plan



**Kerri Peters, PhD**  
BCBA-D  
FABA President

Being active in FABA can take many different forms. We have a wide variety of committees, workgroups, and activities for which we rely on volunteers and passionate behavior analysts or behavior analysts in training to make happen. You probably see the familiar face of Nikki Dickens at the annual conference, or the face of Kim Lucker-Greene when interacting with a Local Chapter, or you get an email response from Kolton Sellers when you ask the FABA email help desk a question. What you might not see is that for each activity FABA is engaged in, there is a group of people, sometimes behind the scenes, volunteering their time to meet monthly, weekly, or even have a daily chat group to make it happen.

Our Social Media Committee has been informing you of upcoming events through multiple platforms, our Public Policy Committee has been meeting with agencies remotely or making trips to Tallahassee to help guide the decisions that affect our profession, our Membership Committee has been assessing the annual demographic data of our membership and developing plans to increase access and representation, and our Education Workgroup has worked to outline and disseminate guidelines for RBTs in the school system, to name a few.

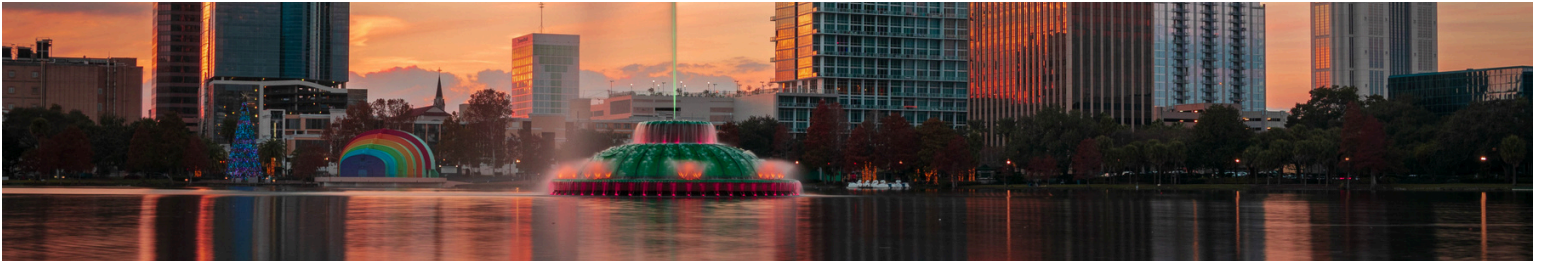


All these activities are guided by and in the direction of our larger Strategic Plan with the mission to protect, advance, and promote the profession and discipline of behavior analysis in Florida through advocacy for effective and ethical service delivery, education, and research across all applications.

I am thrilled to be serving as your FABA President this year. This will be a very active year for our profession in our state, and I am excited to be surrounded by a Board of Directors and volunteers that share the same values.

I would like to take some of this space to highlight the newest members of the BoD. Drs. Jimenez-Gomez and Harvey have already jumped into the activities of the Board and have been active participants on multiple committees including the Local Chapters Committee and the Public Policy Committee. They have brought expertise and perspective from their experience in the field. If you share the Mission and Values of FABA, I strongly encourage you to reach out to the Board to find a workgroup or committee to volunteer for and build upon your community while supporting the profession you love.





## Local Chapters Update

by Kim Lucker-Greene, PhD BCBA-D

The 9th annual CoFABA Conference is scheduled to take place on April 25, 2025, at the DoubleTree Hotel Orlando East-UCF. The theme for this year's hybrid event is *A Compass for Success: Leadership, Collaboration and Wellness*. All presentations will be centered around this theme and six CEUs will be offered as part of the professional registration fee.

The line up of presenters includes Ivy Chong, Paulie Gavoni, Chris McGinnis, Anika Costa, and Barbara Esch. There will also be a panel on Collaboration in Schools. The CoFABA conference will include a Thursday night Welcome Social (first drink free!) and a Friday afternoon Networking Social where we will raffle off FABA merchandise! Breakfast and a roundtable luncheon will also be included in the registration fee. Watch for registration to open in early February and get your seats fast as this event sells out every year! Sponsorships will open soon with some fun new options available for vendors this year.

*Let's look at what some of the local chapters have been up to!*

- The NOWFABA chapter (Northwest Florida) recently hosted a CEU event on November 9th on using ACT principles to enhance ABA goals with Jennifer Findley, LCSW, BCBA.
- The SOFABA chapter (South Florida) hosted their second annual SOFABA UNITED one-day hybrid conference in Miami on November 16th . The conference featured five presentations and a panel -- all in Spanish. The event was a huge success , offering 100+ attendees a wealth of useful information presented with compassion, humor and excitement.
- The FCABA (First Coast) chapter hosted a winter social on December 11th which included an opportunity to mingle with their new board members. All the local chapters hold elections for officer positions in December so now is a great time to join your local chapter and get involved !



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Kathleen Sams O'Neil  
MS, LBA

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# FABA 2024 Heats Up In Miami

by Nikki Dickens, EdD BCBA-D



Almost 2000 FABA members attended the 44th Annual Conference in September 2024 on the beautiful grounds of the JW Marriott Turnberry Resort. Both on-site members and the nearly 500 virtual attendees were able to enjoy both live-streamed and recorded events via Behavior Live numbering over 120. The highlight of these events included our Opening Invited Speaker, Dr. Nasiah Cirincione-Ulezi, our Keynote Speaker, Kaelynn Partlow, and our very own Matt Potak's smooth delivery of his Presidential Address. We also hosted a variety of invited speakers including Drs. Taka Soda, Claudia Dozier, and Bill Heward. FABA also celebrated its first Invited Speaker en Espanol, Dr. Varsovia Hernandez Eslava! We were also treated to Inside Behavior Analysis with Dr. Bill Heward where FABA members were able to ask questions and learn more about his life and work. All these events, along with many other presentations from FABA—over 100 CEUs worth of content—are available for six months post conference at [www.behaviorlive.com](http://www.behaviorlive.com)

During the annual Awards Ceremony, FABA honored several individuals including Toni Marie Ariza with the Cathy Lee Buchanan Behavior Change Success Award and Hanna Vance and her proposed research with the BF Skinner Foundation Scholarship for Graduate Student Research Award. FABA also bestowed two inaugural awards this year with Dr. Corina Jimenez-Gomez's efforts to advance value-based initiatives and the Jose Martinez-Diaz Memorial Award bestowed on Gabriela Salazar. Finally, FABA celebrated the efforts and work of Representative Robin Bartleman by honoring her with the Legislator of the Year Award.

Another special event held was the honoring of two former presidents and important trailblazers of the association: Dr. Brian Iwata and Dr. Henry (Hank) Pennypacker. On Thursday afternoon, family members, colleagues, and friends of these two wonderful individuals gathered to share pictures, stories, and honor their service to FABA, our state, and our profession. The tears and many laughs shared remind me just how much this association can feel like a large family. If you were in the audience, the strong theme of family resonated even further after listening to the memories shared by their former students and colleagues. It was easy to see how their dedication to our association over the years anchors them as important contributors to the legacy of FABA.



2024 was a year of firsts and renewed energy. As we turn to 2025, I want to personally say thank you to the multitude of individuals that make FABA happen every year. A special thank you to Kolton Sellers, our membership coordinator who assists the conference committee in our yearly planning. Kolton and his wife, Miranda had just welcomed their first baby so he was not in person this year, but even with a newborn, he was a constant presence online and helped meet the needs of members remotely. The FABA store success continues every year due to the dedication of Beth Dowding and Cary Merida and I am incredibly grateful for their comradery and never-ending energy. Both work very hard to design the store every year, show up, set up, and welcome our members wanting to take home some of the FABA magic. My job is made easier by the unwavering support received from the Board of Directors, and I appreciate all of them jumping in to assist with registration and troubleshooting.

In closing, I want to ask all FABA members to use the excitement we take home from FABA to continue the legacies we honored this year, to fuel the hunger for research and advancing the science, and to continue to do good in the world. See you soon, FABA Family. Safe travels this year to Ponte Vedra Beach as we return to Sawgrass!



## Enriching Lives | Maximizing Potential

Quest Kids Academy provides a supportive educational setting for children and teens with autism and other intellectual disabilities with instruction guided by the principles and procedures of ABA therapy



Reach Out Today!

Orlando Region: [407.218.4340](tel:407.218.4340)

[www.questinc.org](http://www.questinc.org)

### An Individualized Approach to Education

At Quest Kids Academy, our team works with families to carefully create a personalized education plan to meet the unique needs of every student. Evidence-based approaches are implemented in order to ensure that each child has an effective, enjoyable educational experience.

### Programs

Quest Kids Academy provides two distinct program offerings: Early Academics and Life/Employment Readiness. In the Early Academics program, emphasis is placed on building foundational core academics in

### Curriculum

The curriculum at Quest Kids Academy is designed to provide students with a wide range of academic, communication, social, leisure and practical skills to give them a well-rounded education that will lead them toward greater independence.

In Early Academics, students are grouped by similar academic levels. A variety of research-based curriculum tools are used depending on individual needs/levels of group program offerings to address academic deficits. In Life/Employment Readiness, student goals are aligned to their ultimate plan for transition to adulthood. A combination of established curriculum, assessment tools and other resources are utilized.

### ABA Therapy Services Available

Afterschool care and ABA therapy services are additionally available to enrolled Quest Kids Academy students.

## Treasurer's Report Q3 2024

By Baker Wright, PhD BCBA-D

As many of you may have seen at the conference in September, FABA has had a successful year in many ways, including financially. I am happy to report FABA's financial position going into the end of 2024 is as healthy as ever, which will allow us to continue to support the mission of FABA, the FABA Strategic Plan, and behavior analysis in Florida.

Our total holdings at the end of Q3 2024 showed a 10% increase over total holdings for Q3 2023. The total holdings of FABA at the end of August this year (pre-conference) was at an all-time high, a 42% increase from the previous high from 2023 (8/2023). Although we were able to secure many cost savings for the 2024 conference, there were additional expenses as we would expect simply due to the location. However, these additional expenses were outpaced by extra efforts not only in cost savings, but in revenue producing efforts by the FABA/BehaviorLive team.

We look forward to a successful end of the year and a year of continued growth in 2025.



## Current FABA Membership

**Total: 2730**

Admin - 10

Doctoral Student - 57

Organization--Employee - 2

Other Professional - 133

Paraprofessional (Behavior Technician) - 164

Parent - 21

Professional (Behavior Analyst, Assistant Analyst) -  
2,046

Student - 276

Sustaining Member - 21

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## THANK YOU FOR SUBSCRIBING!

AS WE BRING THIS EDITION OF THE OBSERVER TO A CLOSE, WE'RE THRILLED TO CONNECT WITH OUR MEMBERS IN THIS FRESH FORMAT WHILE STAYING TRUE TO THE ESSENCE OF OUR PUBLICATION. WE'RE COMMITTED TO CONTINUING OUR MISSION OF DISSEMINATING INVALUABLE ABA INSIGHTS. KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER! IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR ARTICLES OR WAYS TO ENHANCE THE OBSERVER, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO REACH OUT TO [SOCIALMEDIA@FABAWORLD.ORG](mailto:socialmedia@fabaworld.org).

THANKS FOR BEING A PART OF THE FABA FAMILY!

### Upcoming Events:



CoFABA 2025 - A Compass for Success: Leadership,  
Collaboration, and Wellness  
**4/25/25**



*Save the Date*

