



American Collegiate Retailing Association

Dear ACRA Members,

We, your ACRA Executive Board, hope this communication finds each of you well, safe, and productive. We find ourselves at a unique moment in history. ACRA for the first time in memory cancelled its annual conference, our research has been interrupted, and many of us, had to convert our courses for online delivery in the middle of the spring semester. However, despite these challenges, we look forward to teaching our students face to face again, continuing our research and fulfilling our obligations for service to our stakeholders.

However, for far too many Americans, our academic challenges are minor by comparison. As we have seen in our recent news, racial inequality and marginalization of members of our society perceived as different, are all too real and a day-to-day challenge for many Americans. ACRA is opposed to persons of color and other minorities living in constant fear of oppression globally. The horrifying images from cities all over this great country and from countries of our international partners make it all too clear, that when differences that should be celebrated by all people, place other's lives in jeopardy, we are all diminished.

ACRA is constitutionally established as a developmental organization. ACRA is dedicated to enhancing the skills and careers and potential of both our student and faculty members regardless of the length of their careers in academia. We have long supported a culture of nurturing and support of our stakeholders and provide an outlet for career growth without discrimination. Given our organizational mandate, we strongly condemn the subjugation and abuse of our global citizens for petty divisive issues such as the color of their skin along with many other moral atrocities. As a committed resource for the enhancement of education and research:

**We strongly encourage our members:**

- to be leaders in their classrooms helping those who may have suffered from injustice to rise to their full academic potential
- to be leaders on their campuses working to ensure that all faculty, staff, and students can work, research, and study in an environment which champions inclusion and an appreciation for diversity
- to help bring an end to racial, political, and social injustice through supporting open dialogue with students and peers
- to advance research into practices within the rapidly changing retail industry which help to prevent injustices ranging from micro-aggression to blatant discrimination based on intolerance and ignorance while we work to find solutions to eliminate these problems

To help our members strive to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion, in their classrooms and campuses, please find these resources below:

- ☆ Common Sense
- ☆ Resilient Educator
- ☆ Racial Equity Tools
- ☆ Association of American Colleges & Universities
- ☆ College and University Profession Association for Human Resources

Please, as always, reach out to any of our board members to let us know how we can support you.

Sincerely, on behalf of your ACRA Executive Board,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Paul Jones", with a large, sweeping flourish that loops back over the signature.

Robert Paul Jones, PhD, ACRA Executive Board President

Department Chairperson, Hospitality and Retail Management, Texas Tech University