



# CEO Shares

**By: Alison E. Heron, MBA, CAE**

Dear ACLP Community,

As we embrace this season of gratitude, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt appreciation for your unwavering commitment to supporting children and families with compassion and expertise. The specialized training and knowledge you bring to psychosocial care truly set you apart in our field, and I am genuinely thankful for your dedication to equipping families with the tools they need to navigate life's toughest challenges.

I am proud to share that our continued pursuit of clinical excellence has been recognized by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The Child Life Certification Commission's (CLCC) Child Life Specialist credential program earned accreditation in September. This achievement highlights the rigorous standards met by the CLCC, reinforcing the professional caliber of Certified Child Life Specialists (CCLSs) worldwide —over 6,000 individuals proudly hold this certification.

In October, child life leaders gathered for the

22nd annual Child Life Leader Networking Retreat & Conference in Scottsdale, AZ. This event provided an invaluable opportunity to enhance leadership skills, build supportive networks, and discuss initiatives to further our profession. I am grateful to all who participated and engaged in meaningful discussions; your involvement will undoubtedly have a positive impact on your teams.

Thanks to the generosity of our partnership with Disney, we have launched several successful initiatives this year, including the new Child Life Program Needs-Based Grant. With 64 members applying, we are excited by the creativity of the proposals and look forward to announcing the winners in late 2024-early 2025.

As we transition into 2025, we will unveil our 2025-2027 ACLP Strategic Plan to guide the Board of Directors, committees, and staff for the next three years. This plan prioritizes strengthening our identity and belonging, partnerships and collaborations, and excellence in professional practice and training. Through these efforts, we aim to elevate our profession and enhance support for children and families. We look forward to sharing this strategic plan, goals, and objectives with you at the start of the new year.

Registration for the 2025 Child Life Conference will open in early January, and I hope you will join us from May 22-25, 2025, in Los Angeles, CA. Our annual conference is a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with peers, earn PDUs, and stay updated on the latest in our field—mark your calendars now!

Thank you for walking alongside us this past year. Our achievements are made possible by dedicated volunteers, engaged members, and individuals like you. Let us enter 2025 with purpose and ambition, committed to excellence in every aspect of our profession.

Alison E. Heron, MBA, CAE, CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison E. Heron". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.