



Looking Forward to the Road Ahead

Greetings,

Welcome to our inaugural issue of CRCC | News Briefs. I hope you and your organization are thriving in these changing times. In the nearly four years since I assumed the Executive Director role at CRCC, I have been reiterating that we should take on new challenges. By continuing to do things in the same way, we are not only standing still, but actually losing ground as others around us move forward. I have had the privilege to engage in many conversations with you, our stakeholders, community partners, and industry leaders. I also represent CRCC on various coalitions and committees. It is essential to understand the issues facing the field to take on new challenges. Not all new challenges we take on will succeed, but that's no reason to sit on the sidelines and do nothing for fear of failing. It is important to lay the foundations for the future today in order to elevate the CRC certification and the field of rehabilitation counseling, even if it takes time for results to appear. I am proud of the work we are doing to overcome those challenges and to find the opportunities within those challenges, so we can continue to deliver on our mission and vision.

Since 2020, we've been tested and have drawn strength from our resilience. While the pandemic affected and continues to affect people from all socioeconomic backgrounds, the disparity is even more evident for those who were already struggling. At the same time, we grapple with continual systemic inequality in our country. The events of the last two years serve as an important reminder how important this organization and you, our professionals, are in building a more equitable future for individuals with disabilities.

CRCC's history, stretching back more than 48 years, combined with the field's rich history dating back more than 100 years, needs to be preserved. We recognize the need for a change of action within the field of rehabilitation counseling. CRCC acknowledges if **ACTION** does not occur, the field will be in jeopardy. We continue to face some fundamental weaknesses that have persisted over the past decades. The challenges today include the value and benefits of the certification; public awareness and recognition of the profession; professional identity; CRC licensure parity; employer value and requirements; and recognition by third party payers and other service delivery systems. All of these will determine the profession's future survival and viability.

I thank those of you who have shared your candid insights with me and to the many who have participated in our recent CRCC's salary and strategic planning surveys. Our strategic plan will be completed later this summer. In the meantime, I want to share a few key strategies and accomplishments that reflect how CRCC is aligning its own growth strategies to advance the rehabilitation counseling community we serve.

CRCC welcomes our colleagues at IARP, NCRE, ARCA, NRCA, NRA, and other organizations to join our efforts on these important initiatives.

I am optimistic about the future and the exciting journey ahead. We will continue to work with a sense of urgency to accelerate our strategic goals and create sustainable short- and long-term growth for the rehabilitation counseling community. As always, thank you for your ongoing commitment to those you serve and engagement in CRCC.

2022 - On the Current Pathway and on the Horizon

We are determined to mobilize the means required to strengthen the field of rehabilitation counseling. Each new day offers a chance for us to work together, pursue new opportunities, and improve upon the past. We establish in-depth relationships with our certificants and many wonderful partners by learning about their environments and the challenges they face. In doing so, we are better equipped to offer tangible solutions. We continue to manage our business around the evolving needs of our community— and that puts us as leaders of change. Some of our priorities for today and the near future include:

- **Outreach:**
 - **Demonstrating the Value and Benefits of the CRC.** CRCC will be engaging with a national Public Relations firm to elevate the field of rehabilitation counseling and the CRC. These campaigns will target employers, educators, the public, clients, and their families.
 - CRCC will continue to lead the charge to ensure our graduate rehabilitation counseling programs are vibrant and viable.
 - **“Inside Rehabilitation Counseling.”** This summer, CRCC will launch our monthly podcast, exploring the field with conversations with employers, practitioners, educators, and more.
- **Certification:**
 - **Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC).** We continue to work on initiatives to support and strengthen the accredited Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Examination (CRCE) and ensuring students are prepared to work with individuals with disabilities. One initiative is the recently completed the CRCC 2021 Job Task Analysis (JTA) (previously referred to as the CRCC Role-and-Function Study). The purpose of the research study is to update and validate the examination specifications for the CRC Exam. JTAs are used to validate certification examinations and provide a basis for defending the appropriateness of the examination’s content. This JTA ensures that the content specifications for the CRC Exam are current and relevant by assessing what Certified Rehabilitation Counselors do in their practice. Content validity in a certification examination provides evidence that the roles and functions addressed in the CRC Exam reflect the practices that are necessary for successful performance.
 - **Certified Vocational Evaluation Specialists (CVE).** We continue to welcome newly certified CVEs. The credentialing cohorts repeatedly sell out quickly. CRCC recognizes the important role these specialists play in in workforce development and rehabilitation services.

- **Certified Rehabilitation Leader (CRL).** In partnership with the University of Massachusetts-Boston Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) and the University of Wisconsin-Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI), we developed this nationally recognized credential for leaders. The goal of this program is to “transform” the leaders of vocational rehabilitation.
- **Diversity and Inclusive Leadership Certificate (DILC)** In partnership with University of Arkansas Currents (UA Currents), we are offering the DILC. This training empowers participants with the leadership skills needed to support sustainable action that can lead to organizational transformation.
- **Advocacy:**
 - **Requiring Master’s Level and/or Certified Rehabilitation Counselors.** CRCC is working with federal and state agencies to revise WIOA. We believe that the requirement of master’s-level qualified rehabilitation counselors and/or Certified Rehabilitation Counselors will improve quality employment outcomes.
 - **Exam Parity.** CRCC is also focusing efforts on gaining further acceptance of the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Examination (CRCE) by state licensure boards as a recognized examination for counselor licensure
- **Education:**
 - **Using the Job Task Analysis as the Educational Foundation** Using the knowledge, skills, and tasks identified in the JTA, in conjunction with CACREP Rehabilitation Counseling standards, is vital to the preparation of students to sit for the CRC exam and, more importantly, work with individuals with disabilities.
 - **Additional educational resources.** CRCC’s Educator and Student webinar series are queued up for late summer of 2022.
 - **CRCC eUNIVERSITY.** Our online courses and educational resources continue to support the renewal process for CRCs and CVEs. The courses represent a wide range of topics relevant to practitioners across all work settings. During the first half of this year, we have released 6 new courses and with more on the horizon. We also provide educational resources for students. Currently our best-seller is the newest educational resource, CRC Exam Prep: Flashcards. This educational resource offers over 400 digital flashcards based on the 2021 Knowledge Domain Overview.

Warm Regards,

Pam Shlemon
Executive Director