



October 17, 2011

Dear CORE Board,

Thank you for your leadership efforts to define and enhance the quality of Rehabilitation Counselor education and for your overall service to the field of Rehabilitation Counseling.

During this time of unprecedented economic hardship and health care reform, we believe that the field of Rehabilitation Counseling is facing a significant professional crisis. Fundamental to this crisis are rapidly changing policies where Rehabilitation Counselors graduating from CORE Accredited programs are disqualified from certain employment opportunities. Most notably is the recently enacted policy by US Army and Veterans Administration programs requiring a counselor applicant to hold CACREP Accredited Masters Degree. Like you, we find this policy baffling. We believe Rehabilitation Counselors are ideally qualified for counseling our warriors and veterans with disabilities. Another example of this professional crisis is occurring in Ohio. The Ohio Board has indeed voted to revise state law to require applicants for Licensure as a Professional Counselor to hold a CACREP Accredited Masters Degree. Thus, applications for licensure by Rehabilitation Counselors graduating from CORE Accredited programs based on equivalency provisions will no longer be qualified. We are concerned that these exclusionary policies seem to be building momentum nationally with similar decisions in New Jersey and consideration of CACREP only language in the states of New Mexico and Rhode Island. The outcome of these policies drastically reduces the employment opportunities of Rehabilitation Counselors, reduces access to professionally trained counselors by people with disabilities and forces Rehabilitation Counselors to practice outside the law. If Rehabilitation Counselors cannot get jobs, then our profession will cease to exist.

The mission of ARCA is to “continually improve the profession of rehabilitation counseling in its service to persons with disabilities.” From this mission, we wish to formally express our position in regard to this professional crisis.

1. ARCA believes that Rehabilitation Counselors graduating from CORE Accredited programs are ideally qualified to counsel military personnel and veterans with disabilities.
2. ARCA believes that Rehabilitation Counselors graduating from CORE Accredited programs should be eligible for Licensure as Professional Counselors in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.
3. ARCA supports CORE in taking swift and bold action to address this professional crisis.
4. ARCA supports such action to fundamentally secure the long term employment opportunities of Rehabilitation Counselors graduating from CORE Accredited programs, even if such action involves pursuing a merger with CACREP.

Again, we thank you for your service to the field of Rehabilitation Counseling. We are eager to collaborate with CORE on solutions to this crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph E. Keferl, RhD, CRC". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joseph E. Keferl, RhD, CRC
President-Elect of the American Rehabilitation Counseling Administration