

# THE Counselor

Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification

www.crc certification.com

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*From the Chair...*

## CRCC Puts Five Strategic Goals in Action

By Mary Barros-Bailey, PhD, CRC, CDMS, CLCP, NCC, ABVE-D

**W**hat started as a strategic vision has become a multifaceted plan of action. It began with a revised mission statement, which was adopted one year ago by the CRCC during the tenure of Past Chair Jodi Saunders. The mission is two-fold: to promote quality rehabilitation counseling services to persons with disabilities through the certification of rehabilitation counselors, and to provide leadership in advocating for the rehabilitation counseling profession.

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## Code of Professional Ethics Revision Underway



**T**he CRCC's Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors is meant to be a living document. Expanded use of technology, issues raised in the field, Ethics Committee adjudication experiences, advisory opinions on ethical matters, research, and other input provide insights into necessary changes or enhancements to the Code.

Revision of the current Code (effective January 1, 2002) is currently underway. Working groups have already focused their revisions on sections of the Code: preamble; counseling relationships; confidentiality; advocacy and accessibility; professional responsibility; relationships with other professionals; evaluation, assessment, and interpretation; teaching, training, and supervision; research and publication; electronic communication and emerging applications; business practices; and resolving ethical issues.

"Members of the revision task force and the working groups were carefully selected to reflect different practice areas and individual areas of expertise, as well

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**From the Chair...**  
**Five Strategic Goals**  
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From that mission statement, five strategic goals were identified:

1. Improve visibility and acceptance of the CRC credential;
2. Advocate for universal acceptance of the CRC exam as a gateway to licensure;
3. Increase leadership capacity within CRCC;
4. Explore options for a global presence; and,
5. Engage in program enhancements.

As of 2007, all five goals are being acted upon in various stages. For example, strategic actions for Goal 5 of program enhancement were taken first, and currently many of its objectives are well underway, including the migration to computer-based testing, exploring application process redesign, and assembling a task force to update the *Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors*. At the same time, strategic actions to address Goal 3 of increasing leadership capacity within CRCC is being rolled out now. Actions are also being taken to further goals 1, 2, and 4.

The five strategic goals are ambitious, addressing issues and concerns that are vitally important to rehabilitation counseling. As broad as these goals may seem, they are also highly relevant to the individual practitioner and each Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. Taking each goal, let's reflect on what they mean to the profession.

**Goal 1** Improving the visibility and acceptance of the CRC credential shows the CRCC's commitment to take a more sophisticated approach, such as traditional and electronic

“push marketing” to help others to understand the unique knowledge and skills that CRCs possess. With Goal 1, practitioners can see that the CRCC is working on their behalf to promote legitimacy and acceptance of the CRC credential among other professionals and peers.

**Goal 2** The licensure issue speaks to protecting our clients and the public through the highest legal recognition of a profession. It enhances the working relationship between rehabilitation counselors and other professionals. In 2008, the CRCC is poised to proactively advance the CRC exam as part of counselor licensure through advocacy and partnership alliances.


**Goal 3** Increasing the leadership capacity within the CRCC is reflective of the responsibilities of all those who are at the table as appointees representing the profession. As the Commission addresses the best way to work together and utilize its human capital, practitioners know that the focus remains on elevating the credential and ensuring that the CRCC attracts, motivates, and supports the highest caliber Commissioners, volunteers, and staff.

**Goal 4** Exploring options for a global presence should be a source of pride for all CRCs. We recognize that we are the largest group of rehabilitation counselors in the world, that others engaged in our scope of practice beyond our borders recognize and springboard from our standards, and that our certificants come from across the U.S., Canada, and other parts of the globe. Our mission of advocacy and leadership clearly applies beyond the U.S. borders. This recognition implies a responsibility to give back to the global reha-

bilitation counseling community through our general advocacy for the profession.

**Goal 5** Program enhancements demonstrate a commitment toward increased customer service and that the Commission remains committed to certificants, providing them with quality services and greater responsiveness. Technological and programmatic initiatives such as redesigning the web site and the application process, as well as offering computer-based testing, also demonstrate the CRCC's drive to update our systems, with greater flexibility for current and potential certificants.

Looking at the goals we have set and the progress made thus far, we can be proud of what we have accomplished to date. At the same time, the strategic action plan continues to unfold with more challenges and tasks ahead. As we move forward, we will continue to measure the Commission's success in taking actions, reaching objectives, and responding to the needs of CRCs and the profession.

As we act on our strategic goals, our mission statement remains grounded in the core values of rehabilitation counseling and of the CRCC: to promote quality rehabilitation services for the people whom we serve, while providing leadership to advocate for rehabilitation counselors as they utilize their knowledge and skills to help others. 

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*Mary Barros-Bailey, Chair, is also former Chair of the CRCC Ethics Committee and member of the Exam & Research Committee and the Standards Committee. She leads the Commission's technology work group on the task force revising the CRCC Code of Professional Ethics.*

# Advisory Panel Convened to Explore Exam Equity for Candidates Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

**A**s a national standard in the field, recognized by many states in their licensure laws, and as a credential that influences the career paths of many rehabilitation counselors, the CRC certification examination is considered a “high stakes” certification examination.

This has heightened questions regarding test equity issues for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, especially those who have not had full access to spoken English and experienced the language’s many meanings and nuances. In recent years, the CRCC has intensified its study of accommodations offered for the CRC examination, including attention to potential language barriers within the examination.

To further explore issues regarding the CRC as a high stakes examination and test equity, particularly for those individuals whose primary language is American Sign Language, the CRCC convened an Advisory Panel of individuals with expertise and national recognition for their contributions in matters related to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

As a result of a half-day meeting attended by the Advisory Panel, CRCC Commissioners Patty Nunez and Christine Reid, as well as CRCC staff, a white paper was written and distributed. The white paper, entitled “Exploring Examination Equity Issues for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Candidates Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing,” included recommendations to be taken under advisement by the Commission’s Examination &

Research Committee. (To access a copy, see the CRCC web site at [www.crccertification.com](http://www.crccertification.com), and click on the “research” link.)

Explaining how the panel was convened, CRCC Commissioner Reid said, “Dr. Frank Bowe helped the CRCC to convene an Advisory Panel of professionals highly respected for their expertise and understanding of deafness, including representatives from Gallaudet University, the University of Arkansas’ Research and Training Center, ADARA, and CSAVR. This group gave the CRCC some excellent recommendations.”

The Examination & Research Committee has already implemented one of the panel’s recommendations, which is to offer accommodations more proactively. This includes making sure that applicants are informed of the types of accommodations that may be requested individually on a case-by-case basis, without penalty. Modifications to information provided to applicants about accommodations are currently in development.

In addition, Advisory Panel recommendations that have been put forth by the committee and approved by the full Commission include:

- Convening a “review panel” of rehabilitation counselors, including those who have never heard spoken English, to review more than 1,500 items in the CRC item pool used for test creation.
- Allowing the review panel to advise or educate presenters of the CRCC’s item writing workshops, which provide training to rehabilitation

counseling professionals who are tasked with writing items for the certification examination. Comments and recommendations would then be shared to educate presenters, incorporate in item writing materials, and educate the Examination & Research Committee members charged with reviewing and approving items for field testing.

- Adding a question on the standard exit survey for all applicants (which would include those who may identify themselves as deaf or hard of hearing) to solicit information about language on the examination that they found confusing or difficult to interpret.

“Through implementing these recommendations, the CRCC is setting a strong, positive example for other certifying organizations and licensure boards to follow in addressing exam equity for people who are deaf or

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## Administrative Update

### October 2006 examination:

Eligible candidates who took the examination	510
Candidates who achieved a passing score	392

### April 2007 examination:

Eligible candidates who took the examination	728
Candidates who achieved a passing score	538

## Code of Professional Ethics

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as to include specialists in applied ethics with experience in drafting professional codes,” said Ann Neulicht, Chair of the CRCC Ethics Committee.

Based on the input from the working groups, the goal now is to merge all revised sections in early January 2008 in order to compile a first draft of the revised Code. After another round of substantive discussions in February 2008 to review the Code draft in its entirety, further revisions are likely—whether only editorial in nature or possibly including additional changes to be considered by the working groups.

When the first draft is completed, it will be presented to the Commission’s Ethics Committee and then put out for public review through a series of “town hall” meetings through different constituent organizations, including as many of the CRCC’s appointing organizations as possible. The first will be the American Counseling Association, through its American Rehabilitation Counseling Association division, in late March 2008.

In addition to the town hall meetings, the CRCC will seek feedback via the Internet as the revised Code draft is posted on the Commission’s web site toward the end of March or early April 2008 with a mechanism for gathering online commentary. Feedback will be solicited through October 2008.

“We will be presenting the draft in a variety of venues to solicit as much feedback as possible,” said Vilia M. Tarvydas, Chair of the CRCC Code Revision Task Force. “We want to give practitioners in the field as much opportunity as possible to review the revised Code and to provide their feedback and input for consideration. The wider the involvement from the field in the commentary period, the better the Code will be in addressing practitioner concerns, and the more widely accepted it will be upon adoption.”

Based on the feedback received, additional revisions will be made to the Code draft later in 2008 and into early 2009, with a final draft to be presented to the Ethics Committee in March 2009. If all proceeds according to plan, the final draft of the revised Code will be presented for adoption by the full Commission at its June 2009

annual meeting, and will most likely go into effect in January 2010.

“The Code revision is an ongoing process to respond to a number of indicators of change in the field, including advisory opinions, complaints, and adjudication that come before the Ethics Committee, surveys of CRCs regarding current issues and what they expect in the future, as well as revisions and innovations in related Codes of other professional groups,” Tarvydas added. “This process helps the Code to truly become a living document, responsive to current practice in the field.”

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## Exam Equity

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hard of hearing,” Reid added, emphasizing the importance of this process.

The Examination & Research Committee will continue discussion of other issues related to test equity. One area to be considered is assessment of the reading level of the certification examination to see if it unintentionally presents a double cognitive challenge, testing applicants not only on their knowledge of the field but also their command of English. The committee will also continue its exploration of becoming involved in or collaborating in the production of study guides for applicants preparing for the CRC examination. Investigation of the study guide issue has been ongoing by a subset of the Examination Committee. That group will consider the Advisory Panel’s recommendations that if such a project were undertaken, materials should be developed in multiple modalities to reach as broad an audience as possible.

## CRC Email Addresses and Updates Needed

**T**he CRCC will post the draft of the revised Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors on its web site in late March or early April 2008 for review and comment. In order to receive an email notification when the revised Code is available online, along with other important updates, please be sure to provide the CRCC with your current email address. In addition, if your email address has changed, please update your contact information. You may do so by completing the address change link located on the Home page of CRCC’s web site at [www.crccertification.com](http://www.crccertification.com).

# CRC Certification Exam Moves to Computer-Based Testing



The CRC certification examination is migrating to a computer-based testing format starting with the fall 2008 test cycle, which will offer additional flexibility in scheduling as well as faster reporting of results. The Commission believes computer-based testing will make the certification examination more appealing to a broad cross-section of applicants, including students and recent graduates who are entering the field.

Starting with the fall 2008 examination, computer-based testing will allow the examination to be given over the course of three, eight-day periods a year, instead of the current offering of two days a year. The computer-based test will be three-and-a-half hours in length, shortened from the current six-hour format.

Results from computer-based testing will be available in as little as three weeks, compared with up to a two-month wait for results with the current paper-and-pencil examination format.

The CRCC has partnered with Prometric, to deliver the certification examination electronically from secure testing sites. There will be more than 300 testing locations available nationwide, compared to only 65 currently. Prometric has scientifically demonstrated that shortening the exam will not sacrifice validity or reliability.

“Computer-based testing is a best practice in examinations, which parallels the CRCC’s commitment to best practices in the field of rehabilitation counseling,” commented Patricia Nunez, MA, CRC, CDMS, CCM, Commissioner and Chair of the Examination & Research Committee.

Further, with computer-based testing, the CRC exam may be attractive to universities wishing to use it as their comprehensive exam in rehabilitation counseling. In the past, the CRC exam could not be considered for this purpose because the test was given only two days per year, which did not coincide with the exam timeframes of most universities. In addition, the delay in reporting results was problematic.

“The Commission believes computer-based testing will definitely be an incentive for universities to use the certification examination as a comprehensive exam,” Nunez added. “Even if the CRC examination is not used by universities, it is still beneficial for students to pursue certification as they move into practice. Computer-based testing will make certification more appealing to these new professionals, as well as to all applicants.”

## Support for CORE-Accredited Programs for Licensure in Virginia

Learning that the Virginia Board of Counseling was considering excluding Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) accredited programs for licensure in that state, the CRCC spearheaded a unified response to oppose that action.

In a swift move, the CRCC immediately contacted several professional organizations, including, in addition to CORE: the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA), International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals (IARP), National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE), National Rehabilitation Association (NRA), National Rehabilitation Counseling Association (NRCA), and Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association (RCEA).

At the same time, Virginia Commonwealth University, which offers a CORE-accredited program, mobilized a grassroots response among interested parties in the state to inform

them of the pending action and to rally their support.

The national organizations also sent out word via various listservs to notify their memberships of the pending action, which would have excluded CORE-accredited programs from automatic acceptance for licensure in Virginia. The CRCC contacted Certified Rehabilitation Counselors in Virginia as well as in other states, to encourage them to provide advocacy and outreach in support of the CORE-accredited programs.

As a result, the Regulatory Committee in Virginia decided to recommend to the full Virginia Board of Counseling that CORE-accredited programs remain in preferred status along with CACREP programs. This was an important first step in a process that culminated in a vote by the full Board in late October not to pursue the matter. Throughout the process, the CRCC and the nationally

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# CRCC Seeks Member-at-Large and Public Member

**T**he CRCC is seeking candidates to fill two Commissioner vacancies, starting with the 2008–2009 year that begins July 1, 2008.

**Member-at-Large**—Nominations are being accepted for Member-at-Large of the Commission. The Member-at-Large position is open to any CRC who has an interest in representing professionals certified by the CRCC.

**Public Member**—The Commission is also seeking a Public Member. This position is open to any individual who represents the direct and indirect users of the skills and services of Certified Rehabilitation Counselors. The Public Member may be a professional, but should *not* have credentials similar to a rehabilitation counselor. Other stipulations include a Public Member cannot derive more than 5% of his/her annual income from the profession.

CRCC gives strong preference to anyone who is or has at some point been a consumer of the services provided by rehabilitation counselors or who has a background in public advocacy.


Applications for the Member-at-Large or the Public Member are due by 2/1/08 and may be obtained by contacting the Commission at [info@crccertification.com](mailto:info@crccertification.com).

## Role of Commissioners

The primary role of each CRCC Commissioner is to set policies and establish guidelines for the Commission's professional staff to follow in administering the strategic and day-to-day operations of the organization.

Depending on the committees on which a Commissioner serves,

the typical time commitment will probably range from one to two days per month. Although the time required is a consideration, Commissioners typically find that it is more than offset by the benefits derived in terms of profes-

sional development, expanded knowledge of the various practice settings in the field, and involvement in strategic initiatives that enhance the value of the CRC credential and elevate the recognition of the field. 



## CCRC Credential Renewal Continues; CRC Eligibility for New Applicants Outlined


**T**he Commission continues to offer renewal of the Canadian Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CCRC) credential. CCRCs may renew their certification as long as they have met renewal requirements, including attaining 100 clock hours of continuing education every five years. (For more information on continuing education, see the CRCC web site at <http://www.crccertification.com> and click on the link for “CE and Renewal”.)

There has been some confusion among CCRCs regarding the credential after the Commission discontinued administering the Canadian certification examination as of April 2007. Although there are no new CCRC certifications being offered, those who hold this credential may continue to renew it on an ongoing basis.

“The CCRC standard is being maintained by the Commission. That’s a very important aspect for those who hold the CCRC credential,” explained Janine Mels-Dyer, MRC, CCRC, CCLCP, CCC, who is a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor in Canada and a CRCC Commissioner. “The Commission stands behind the CCRC as a recognized credential.”

In addition to those who wish to renew their CCRC, Canadian professionals can also pursue the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credential, provided that they meet the eligibility criteria of that certification. Those requirements include holding a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling or counseling. (For more information about degree requirements and other criteria, see the CRCC web site at [www.crccertification.com](http://www.crccertification.com), and click on the “Certification” link.)

For those CCRCs who qualify, no further testing will be required to obtain the CRC credential, since they have already passed the CCRC test, which was based on the same job analysis as the CRC certification. CCRCs will have to apply and provide documentation to establish eligibility.

“The CRC credential is not limited to professionals in the U.S. Any qualified applicant in Canada or elsewhere may sit for the exam—as long as that person meets the eligibility criteria,” Mels-Dyer added. 



# CRCC Research News

## Research Grant Program Awards \$40,000

The CRCC Research Grant Program has made its first award, a \$40,000 grant for 2007 to Michael P. Frain, Ph.D., and Malachy Bishop, Ph.D., for their project entitled, “An investigation of CRC’s role in the return to work of military reservists.”

“This was our first of what will be an annual award. We are very excited about the possibilities and research potential that this type of award can generate,” commented David Strauser, Ph.D., CRC, head of the Scientific Research Advisory Panel of the CRCC and a former Commissioner.

The CRCC Research Grant Program is accepting applications for the 2008 award. For more information or to obtain a copy of the Research Grant Program application, see the CRCC web site at <http://www.crcrcertification.com/pages/31research.html/>.

The CRCC Research Grant Program offers researchers a unique opportunity to obtain support for innovative research that addresses issues specific to the field of rehabili-

tation counseling. The CRCC is particularly interested in funding research that advances the field and addresses important issues such as professional practice, rehabilitation counselor certification, and counselor licensure. CRCC has identified the topic of “Outcome-based measures of the efficacy of CRCs” as a priority topic and would encourage research in this area. Although CRCC has identified this topic as a priority, submissions are not limited to this subject matter.


## Grant Writing Workshop Offered

The CRCC is also offering a grant writing workshop at the National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE) spring conference, to be held in February in San Antonio. (For information on the conference, see the NCRE web site at [www.rehabeducators.org/](http://www.rehabeducators.org/))

The purpose of the workshop is to teach participants how to respond to competitive RFPs. The workshop will not only address the CRCC Research Grant Program, but will also give insight and advice on pursuing research grants in general.

## CRCC Contributes to Research

The CRCC is committed to contributing to research and the body of knowledge in the rehabilitation counseling field. One way this is accomplished is through the authoring of articles published in peer-reviewed journals. Among the recent articles written by CRCC Commissioners and/or supported by the CRCC are:

- “Ethical Complaints and Violations in Rehabilitation Counseling: An Analysis of Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification Data,” published in *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, Volume 51, Number 1, Fall 2007. Authors are Jodi L. Saunders, Mary Barros-Bailey, Rebecca Rudman, Donald W. Dew, and Jorge Garcia.
- “Ethical Consultation: Content Analysis of the CRCC Advisory Opinion Archive,” to be published in *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*. Authors are Linda R. Shaw and Frank Lane.
- The CRCC is developing a special joint issue with the *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin* and the *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*, which will contain several articles related to our 2006 Job Analysis Study. The special issue will be published in 2008. 

## CORE Programs


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recognized organizations continued to monitor closely all developments and to keep their members apprised.

“Rehabilitation counseling organizations collaborated successfully and were able to mobilize their membership on this important issue. Through our unified action, as well as the efforts of Virginia Commonwealth University, we were

effective in making our position heard,” said Cindy Chapman, CRCC Executive Director. “The successful outcome for CORE-accredited programs in Virginia demonstrates the importance of outreach and advocacy on state licensure and related matters through collaboration by rehabilitation counseling organizations.”

The CRCC wishes to thank all those who were part of this effort,

including the organizations that reached out to their constituencies. “Together, we were successful in advocating to ensure that qualified rehabilitation counselors—including those from CORE-accredited academic programs—will be available to provide services to those whom we serve: all individuals with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities,” added Linda Shaw, Ph.D., LMHC, CRC, President of CORE. 



## CRCC Commissioners

Fiscal Year 2007–2008

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## Suspension Notice

The Ethics Committee met in March 2007 to examine all evidence relevant to a potential violation of the Code by a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. The Committee convened in accordance with the Guidelines and Procedures for Processing Complaints and found that Elizabeth C. Hopkins, Customer Number 00049785, was in violation of the CRCC Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors, effective as of January 1, 2002. The particular Standards cited included A.4, A.5.a, and A.6.a. The individual's certification as a CRC was suspended for a period of one year. 