

# PRESIDENT SWEETING'S SUMMER UPDATE for RTS Orlando Alumni

Dear RTS Orlando Counseling Alumni,

Big changes are ahead for counselor education here in Florida. The State of Florida is considering changing licensure requirements to include graduation from a CACREP-accredited program. If these proposed laws pass and we fail to act, our future graduates will be ineligible for licensure. Many other states have adopted or are considering similar laws. We expect these accreditation standards to be in place in Florida as soon as 2020.

It is our intention to pursue CACREP accreditation, and we want you—our graduates—to be the first to know about this change. We are committed to training counselors who are eligible to serve wherever the Lord calls them, and CACREP accreditation is a key step in equipping our students for service.

While the challenges we'll face along the way to CACREP accreditation are significant, they are not insurmountable. In fact, meeting the accreditation requirements provides an excellent opportunity to expand our program without sacrificing quality.

I want you to understand that we're serious about that last part of the sentence: "without sacrificing quality." We remain absolutely committed to maintaining the cohort experience. The personal connections and extensive hands-on counseling experience that have marked our program aren't going away. In fact, we aim to make a good program even better.

We've developed a three-pronged strategy that would allow our program to thrive and achieve accreditation by 2020.

## HERE'S OUR PLAN:

### 1. Move toward CACREP accreditation

The accreditation process is lengthy and expensive, and we'll need to start as soon as possible in order to be approved by 2020. We've already begun the process by having a CACREP consultant review our program—which leads me to my next point.

### 2. Hire an additional professor.

We meet or exceed CACREP standards in the vast majority of areas. However, in order to achieve accreditation we must overcome one significant hurdle: adding an additional full-time faculty member.

An additional faculty member would allow us to increase our number of students while maintaining low class sizes. In time, the increased tuition from more students would fund this professor—but not at first. We anticipate a need of \$125,000 a year for the first three years in order to fully fund this addition (including salary, benefits, taxes, etc.). Alternatively, a large gift could permanently endow this position, lending stability to the program and lowering costs for students. If this is something you are interested in, please let us know.

*(continued on back)*

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## YES! YOU CAN COUNT ON ME!

Enclosed is my gift for:  the General Fund  Student Scholarships  Counseling Department

Other \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make this **ONE TIME** gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ by:  Check (enclosed) or  Credit Card

I would also like to make a **RECURRING** gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ every:  Month  Quarter

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

### MY CREDIT CARD INFORMATION:

CREDIT CARD ACCOUNT NUMBER:

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

EXPIRES \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ SECURITY CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Expand our counseling clinic.

Currently, our counseling clinic is operating at maximum capacity. With 8 rooms available for supervised use, we are limited to 5,000 appointments each year. This is not enough to keep up with the demand for counseling or enable us to accept additional students (last year we could accept less than half of our MAC applicants).

We're weighing options for growth, which include extending the hours in our current clinic, expanding into a modular building, or purchasing an existing clinic in downtown Oviedo.

### WILL YOU HELP US?

We believe that once we get our expanded program off the ground, it will be self-funding. But we need your help to get started.

Currently, there are no CACREP accredited Christian counseling programs in the state of Florida. If pending licensing laws are passed and we fail to act, our graduates will be ineligible to serve the 18 million Florida residents in their time of need. I'm sure you'll understand the vital role RTS graduates play in reaching hurting people with the love of Christ and the importance of licensure for our graduates.

Will you join us by investing in our program? Any funds you designate for the counseling department (by checking the box on the detachable form below) will be used exclusively for the MAC program, enabling us to respond positively and powerfully to the challenges that lie ahead.

Finally, you know that God's work goes forward by prayer. Jesus said, "... without me, you can do nothing." So, will you pray for God's blessing and provision for RTS Orlando? We need great wisdom as we move towards accreditation and expansion—please join us in seeking the Lord in this matter.

I'd like to pray for you, too. Please use the space below to let us know about specific requests that we can remember before the Lord. I've also enclosed a card that you can use to write a note of encouragement to a student here at RTS—we will give it to a current student.

I hope that we can count on you, those who understand this program best, to help us expand our ministry so that we can thrive in the midst of future challenges.

Yours in His Service,



Don Sweeting, Ph.D., *President*  
*James Woodrow Hassel Professor of Church History*

Contact me any time at [dsweeting@rts.edu](mailto:dsweeting@rts.edu) or 407.278.4406.

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### ALUMNI PRAYER REQUEST

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