

Rehabilitation Counseling Program Receives \$1 Million Grant | CEHS

The USU faculty members working on the grant include Dr. Trent Landon, Dr. Michelle McKnight-Lizotte, Dr. Kathleen Oertle, and Dr. Tim Riesen.

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Utah State University's Rehabilitation Counseling program has received a \$1 million grant from the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration. The grant is anticipated to allow 25 graduate students over the next five years to pursue training as rehabilitation counselors at little to no cost. Only 30 counseling programs across the nation have been awarded a similar grant.

With an overarching belief in the dignity and worth of all individuals, rehabilitation counselors provide adjustment and career counseling to individuals with physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional disabilities to help them with personal development and independent living. As employment opportunities are expected to increase by 26% in the next six years, there is a strong need for highly trained rehabilitation counselors.

Dr. Trent Landon, assistant professor in the Special Education and Rehabilitation department and principle investigator on the grant, spoke of the importance of qualified rehabilitation counselors in Utah and across the country. "Being mindful of people with disabilities, who are one of the most marginalized groups in our communities, and advocating for their full inclusion in society is very important," Landon said.

Though the majority of students who will be funded by this award will be working in Utah, the remote format of the Masters of Rehabilitation Program allows for students to be trained all over the country. Presently, graduates of the MRC program work in 43 different states as well as Puerto Rico.