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JSU secures nearly \$1 million grant over five years to aid special-needs population

by [Jackson State University](#) November 24, 2020

Jackson State University's Department of Counseling, Rehabilitation and Psychometric Services in the College of Education and Human Development has received a nearly \$1 million grant over five years (\$199,995 per year) from the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Grant proceeds will be used for JSU's Rehabilitation Counseling Long-Term Training Project, which helps educate students to serve Mississippi's special-needs population.

"Funding from federal agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Education, allows Jackson State University and the College of Education and Human Development to expand our research footprint beyond what would have otherwise been possible," said Dr. Roosevelt O. Shelton, interim dean of the College of Education and Human Development.

By Rachel James-Terry Shelton shared that extramural funding at comprehensive universities represents a kind of validation of the quality and importance of a scholar's work.

For securing the grant, Shelton credits Dr. Frank L. Giles, professor and director of the Rehabilitation Counseling Program, who will also serve as the project director.

Shelton further added that the grant is a verification of the professor's stature as an exemplary and highly valued scholar.

"It is a great day in Mississippi, and at JSU anytime we can secure external funding to support the needs of our citizens. The new grant provides graduate-level rehabilitation counseling students with funding for tuition and a stipend each semester," Giles said.

The professor further added that program graduates could have a middle-class socioeconomic lifestyle with the possibility of earning \$50,000 to \$60,000 annually after a few years of professional work experience in the rehabilitation field.

"In addition, people with disabilities that receive services from our graduates that work with vocational rehabilitation agencies can also benefit from greater employment opportunities and enhanced standards of living. Yes, the grant is a win, win, win," he said.

The project will be housed in the Department of Counseling, Rehabilitation and Psychometric Services.

Giles explained that JSU has a long partnership with the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services.

He shared that funding for the project is critical because Mississippi consistently ranks in the top five states for the percentage of non-institutionalized working-age (ages 21 to 64) people with disabilities, according to a 2018 American Community Survey by Cornell University.

Furthermore, several graduates of the JSU Rehabilitation Counseling Program are currently employed with Mississippi's Department of Rehabilitation Services as rehabilitation counselors providing vocational rehabilitation services for Mississippians with disabilities.

Giles has a long history with JSU and is credited for receiving approximately \$12 million in external funding, including the current project.

The professor is also a previously recognized and qualified forensic vocational expert and rehabilitation life care planner in both federal and Mississippi state courts for individuals with catastrophic injuries, including traumatic brain injuries, bilateral lung transplants and spinal cord injuries.



Dr. Roosevelt O. Shelton is the interim dean of the College of Education and Human Development. (Photo by Charles A. Smith/JSU)



Dr. Frank L. Giles will serve as director of the Rehabilitation Counseling Long-Term Training Project. Giles said the grant can potentially enhance the lives of rehabilitation counseling program graduates and the special-needs population. (Photo by Charles A. Smith/JSU)

Through the Rehabilitation Counseling Program, JSU holds the distinction of being the first HBCU in the United States to obtain and maintain master's level program accreditation since the 1979-1980 academic year from the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE).

CORE merged with the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) in July of 2017. The JSU Rehabilitation Counseling Program was found to meet all CACREP standards for the eight-year accreditation period beginning July 1, 2017, to October 31, 2023.

For more information regarding the Rehabilitation Services Administration scholarships, please contact Dr. Frank L. Giles by emailing frank.L.giles@jsums.edu.



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