

# Harry R. Smith Advocacy Impact Scholarship Application

In June 2010, the rehabilitation community lost a passionate advocate and visionary with the passing of Michigan's own Harry R. Smith.

Harry was a Past-President of Michigan Rehabilitation Association (MRA) and the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA). He will be remembered for his extraordinary career accomplishments, exhaustive professional service contributions (at the local, state, and national levels), and the significant, long-term impact he had on the lives of citizens with disabilities and professionals for over 35 years.

It is Harry's character that stands out above all. He can be defined by an insatiable search for truth, fairness, and humanity within our rehabilitation service delivery system, as well as his desire for all rehabilitation professionals to continuously review and enhance the laws and public policy that guide and inspire us to positively impact the lives of people with disabilities. Harry was committed to learning new and innovative techniques for service delivery, discussing opportunities for policy change, and re-engaging our advocacy efforts.

It is with this scholarship award that we strive to inspire others to continue in the spirit of Harry's legacy, so in remembrance of his unwavering dedication and impact on our profession, we offer the **Harry R. Smith Advocacy Impact Scholarship**.

This scholarship will provide financial support for:

- Rehabilitation Counseling graduate students
- Rehabilitation Counseling professionals currently practicing
- People with disabilities

Individuals should be currently engaged in or proposing:

- Policy and/or advocacy projects to enhance rehabilitation public policy or civil rights programs related to people with disabilities

The purpose of this scholarship is to:

- Encourage dynamic involvement in state and/or national disability issues with an overarching goal of impacting the lives of people with disabilities through policy change and advocacy efforts

Past advocacy impact scholarships have been awarded for:

- Rehabilitation Counseling graduate students visiting local middle schools for effective outreach, education, and advocacy efforts with students with disabilities
- Creating accessible parks, recreation, and playground space and equipment

Other possible uses of the scholarship include:

- Relevant course at a community college or university
- Public policy proposals, seminars, conferences, events, etc.
- “Grass Roots” advocacy functions such as awareness campaigns, accessibility promotion, and access to affordable assistive technology

Scholarships will be awarded based on the proposed advocacy project’s:

- Quality
- Creativity
- Impact
- Maximum of \$1,500 in MRA funding

Applicants will be notified within 30 days of their submission whether they have been chosen for funding of their proposed advocacy project. ***Applications will be received and approved on a rolling basis with no further applications being accepted after September 30, 2025.***

Please provide a formal written request (no more than 2 pages) stating how you will utilize this scholarship to make an impact on the rehabilitation profession through public policy change and/or disability advocacy. (\*Students will also need to provide a copy of their transcript\*)

**Include statements on the following key areas:**

- Overall objective of your scholarship award
- Desired outcome of your plan
- Anticipated impact on the rehabilitation profession and people with disabilities
- Final summary of budget and planned activity due to committee upon completion no later than Monday, December 1st.