

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the first publication of *VISTAS—Perspectives on Counseling 2004*, an exciting new joint venture between the American Counseling Association and Counseling Outfitters/CAPS Press.

This new book is a well-balanced contribution to the field of professional counseling that effectively mirrors the practice, science, and client advocacy pieces of our professional identity. It includes papers prepared by those persons who submitted program proposals for the 2004 ACA Annual Convention in Kansas City *and* took the next step of preparing a VISTAS article. It also includes articles by selected ACA leaders whom Garry Walz, the editor and developer of VISTAS, invited to share their thoughts.

Along with the theme of this convention, *The Professional Counselor: Integrating Practice and Science with Client Advocacy*, came the largest number of research-based presentations that ACA has ever had. We in ACA acknowledge the role of research in our profession, but we tend to be a more applied and practice profession. Research, however, informs practice and we have increased our efforts to promote and feature research with our new evidence-based awards and new section of our flagship journal, the *Journal of Counseling & Development*. This is reflected in both the quantity and quality of research presentations that are offered here.

Also, with the focus on client advocacy, we have increased the culturally-focused and social justice components of our convention and that is also reflected here.

But most of all, we have a strong practice focus in our association, and the programs strongly reflect the applied nature of our profession as well.

I think that you will find this book both an interesting and useful addition to your professional library.

Warm regards,

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President, 2003-2004
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