



# NCTRC® Hardship Fee Waiver Recipient Spotlight

**Jean S.**

National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification® (NCTRC) is proud to spotlight recipients who received financial assistance through the Hardship Fee Waiver program. NCTRC understands that hardships can occur and that individuals may need financial assistance regarding fees associated with the certification application process or to maintain their CTRS® credential. Take a moment to read Jean's story below.

## **How has the waiver of fees impacted your ability to move forward with the CTRS® certification application process?**

The waiver of fees removed a significant financial barrier at a critical point in my educational journey. After completing my degree, I was ready to move forward professionally, but the application costs felt overwhelming given my circumstances. Receiving this support allowed me to proceed with my certification without more delays, and with a sense of relief and encouragement.

## **Tell us about the impact that the NCTRC Hardship Fee Waiver has made in your life.**

This waiver represents more than financial assistance, it represents access, opportunity, and forward momentum. Over the past several years, I experienced a series of compounding life challenges that affected my health, employment, and financial stability. Being granted this waiver helped bridge the gap between where I've been and where I'm working toward going. It has allowed me to continue building a future in a field I care deeply about, without being held back by circumstances I've been actively working to overcome.

## **Tell us why professional certification is important and valuable within the therapeutic recreation profession.**

Professional certification is essential in therapeutic recreation because it ensures a standard of knowledge, ethics, and competence within the field.

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## Jean S. *(continued)*

It helps protect clients while also strengthening the credibility of the profession as a whole. For practitioners, it represents a commitment to ongoing growth, accountability, and evidence-based practice, especially when working with people navigating complex physical and mental health challenges.

### **Additional comments on the impact that the NCTRC Hardship Fee Waiver plays for others and for the professional community.**

Programs like the NCTRC Hardship Fee Waiver play an important role in making the profession more accessible and inclusive. There are many capable and dedicated people who may face financial barriers at different points in their lives. Supporting them in completing certification helps ensure that the field benefits from a wider range of lived experiences, perspectives, and strengths, which ultimately improves care for the communities we serve.

### **What would you like to tell others who may consider applying for an NCTRC Hardship Fee Waiver?**

If you are facing genuine financial hardship, I would encourage you to apply for the NCTRC Hardship Fee Waiver. It can feel vulnerable to share your circumstances, but the process is respectful and supportive. This program through NCTRC exists to help people move forward, and it can make a very meaningful difference in applying for or maintaining your CTRS credential during a challenging time.