



December 3, 2018

Dear Friends,

Earlier this year, Journey Counseling Ministries launched a new outreach to college students in our area. It's been highly successful. We want to continue and expand the program, but we need help to do this.

The college years can be agonizing as well as exciting. Many students struggle with depression, addiction, unhealthy or abusive relationships, or other challenges. One campus minister, who nearly every week encounters students "going through significant life issues," describes the scope of mental health struggles at James Madison University as "staggering." The JMU student newspaper reports that visits to the counseling center on campus are up 191 percent since 2000, far outpacing the 39 percent growth in the size of the student body. Crisis visits are up 800 percent since 2005. Journey longs to help college students in our area during this formative time in their lives. We know that many would benefit from meeting with our Biblically based, clinically trained counselors.

Unfortunately, counseling is expensive. Just this week we learned of a student who desperately wants to meet with our counselors but can't afford it and is unlikely to receive financial assistance from her parents. We've long provided financial help to clients who can't cover the full cost of counseling. Since Journey opened its doors ten years ago, we've provided more than \$30,000 through our Client Assistance Fund.

This year we started a Student Assistance Program for college students who need counseling but can't afford it. Those who qualify pay steeply reduced counseling fees (everyone makes a small co-payment so they are financially invested in their progress in counseling).

Based only on word of mouth, 18 college students have already participated. The program has allowed these students to receive wise, Biblically based help with serious life issues from our team of gifted counselors. One student wrote, "I had come to a place where I felt isolated from God. I was consumed by toxic emotions and began to believe God didn't identify with my struggle—I started to spiral internally (I believed a lie). Counseling taught me how to control my emotions. I learned how to apply the counselor's advice to my everyday life. Most importantly, I was given tools to tear down unhealthy, destructive habits."

If you're drawn to our vision of helping college students in our area afford counseling, would you please consider contributing to the Student Assistance Program? **Your contribution of \$420 will allow one student to receive six steeply discounted counseling sessions. Our overall goal is to raise \$8,400 over the next year in hopes of supporting 20 students in this program.**

We gratefully accept contributions in any amount, whether designated for the Student Assistance Program, Client Assistance Fund, or general operating fund. Journey Counseling Ministries is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Please visit our website at www.journeycounselingministries.org to make an online donation or send your donation to Journey Counseling at P.O. Box 14, Dayton, VA 22821. Please note "SAP" indicating that your donation is for the Student Assistance Program.

Thank you for your interest in Journey and for considering this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah".

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew".

Sarah DeBoer (Clinical Director) and Andrew Witmer (Chair, Board of Directors)