

## Memorandum

To: Judy Beachler, Contractor, Office of Instruction, Cosumnes River College

From: Ebony J. Benzing, Research Manager, Center of Excellence (COE), North-Far North region

Date: March 18, 2019

Re: Program Endorsement Request for New Certificate or Degree: Fire Technology – Fire Prevention

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### Background

Cosumnes River College seeks a program endorsement report from the COE regarding the creation of a new degree or certificate program as part of their established Fire Technology program – Fire Prevention. The COE is using data from a November 2018 Program Endorsement Brief to Woodland College on Public Safety occupations to justify support for the creation of this new program.

Several key takeaways from the Woodland report are summarized below. The occupational data shown encompasses Fire occupations from 2007 to 2017 over a nine-county region[1]. The referenced Woodland report on Public Safety (see other attachments) should accompany this memo as part of any program application package.

### Findings

- Historically, Fire occupations showed little to no growth over ten years; in 2007 there were about 3,154 jobs, which declined by less than 1 percent to 2017.
- In 2017, there were about 3,147 Fire occupations in the nine-county region. Projected growth was about average, 5 percent, over the next five years. There were about 242 projected annual openings, including retirements and workers seeking jobs in other occupations.
- Reported median wages were above the Greater Sacramento living wage (\$26.55[2]) at \$28.70 per hour.
- While a vast majority of current Firefighters have obtained either a certificate or Associate's degree (about 61%) at some point in their career, awards levels at regional educational institutions remain low. Greater Sacramento community colleges have awarded, on average, a total of 46 certificates and degrees per year in both the Fire Technology (TOP 213300) and Fire Academy (TOP 213350) programs.

### Recommendations

- Despite the historical little to no growth in fire occupations, the number of annual openings suggests a need for additional hiring due to replacement; retirements are most likely a large driver in these openings. The average annual awards from Fire Technology and Fire



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Academy show a discrepancy between educational program supply and regional workforce needs, indicating an undersupply.

- COE recommends that Cosumnes move forward with establishing its new program in Fire Safety.

Please contact Ebony Benzing, COE Research Manager, for further information at [Ebony.Benzing@losrios.edu](mailto:Ebony.Benzing@losrios.edu) or 916-563-3215.

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[1] 9-county region includes the seven counties of Greater Sacramento (El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba) and Colusa and Lake counties.

[2] MIT Living Wage Calculation for Sacramento MSA - 1 Adult, 1 Child