



RESPIRATORY CARE BOARD
OF CALIFORNIA

Public protection is our highest priority

3750 Rosin Court, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95834
www.rcb.ca.gov

T: (916) 999-2190 TF: (866) 375-0386
F: (916) 263-7311 E: rcbinfo@dca.ca.gov

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Ricardo Guzman, MA, RRT, RCP
Director, Respiratory Care Program
Napa Valley College
2277 Napa-Vallejo Hwy
Napa, CA 94558

RE: Support for Baccalaureate Degree Respiratory Therapy Program at Napa Valley College

Dear Mr. Guzman:

The Respiratory Care Board of California (Board) fully supports the establishment of a baccalaureate degree respiratory therapy program at Napa Valley College.

As you are aware, the field of respiratory care has expanded significantly over the last few decades with practitioners working in intensive care and acute care units, as well as home care, sleep labs and pulmonary laboratories. In addition, technology and advancements in medicine has broadened this field requiring extensive education and the development of critical thinkers to be successful. Currently the minimum education required for licensure as a Respiratory Care Practitioner is an associate degree. There are currently 36 programs in California with three, including two programs established as part of the community college pilot program, offering baccalaureate degrees.

The Board has long grappled with the fact that the "two-year" program which consistently takes three plus years (with full-time attendance) to complete, is falling short in providing the in-depth education that is necessary to be prepared for employment at graduation. Furthermore, the Board has noticed significant workforce shortages over the last decade that it believes correlates more with the lack of education and qualified candidates, rather than the lack of available practitioners. Employers are demanding more, and fewer new graduates are meeting this demand. The Board believes the community college baccalaureate degree will fill a void in training California's advanced respiratory care workforce. The community college degree is supported by the Board as a cost-effective degree relevant to advanced education.

The Board fully supports the establishment of a baccalaureate degree program at Napa Valley College which has the potential to afford respiratory therapy students with an extended opportunity to earn a baccalaureate degree at the community college level, in support of the Board's mandate to protect and serve California's respiratory care consumers. The Board is certain your institution will produce highly qualified respiratory therapists that will lead the way in improving health care delivery and increasing efficiencies.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Nunez
Executive Officer