

July 20, 2022

## OCC Respiratory Care Program Recognized for High Credentialing Success

O range Coast College's Respiratory Care Program will be recognized on July 26 by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) for its credentialing success. The Distinguished RRT Credentialing Success Award will be presented at the CoARC Awards Ceremony in Palm Springs, and recognizes programs that meet or exceed criteria based on several accreditation metrics, including documented RRT (Registered Respiratory Therapist) credentialing success of 90 percent or above for the three reporting years 2018-2020.

In the state of California, graduates cannot obtain a license to practice Respiratory Care unless they have the RRT credential, and must take two separate credentialing exams in order to be licensed.

"I believe our program's success in meeting the rigorous criteria set by the CoARC can be attributed to several factors: the positivity, strength, and professional depth of program faculty, the hard-working, motivated students, and our graduates who are prepared and con dent in their knowledge and skills and eager to enter the professional workforce," says Director of Respiratory Care Alison Riggio. "Our program's success is also bolst7c5\* OCC's Respiratory Care program is a two-year program that prepares students with the knowledge, skills and behaviors of respiratory care practice as performed by a Registered Respiratory Therapist. Students who complete the program are the healthcare professionals that evaluate, treat, and manage patients of all ages with respiratory illnesses and other cardiopulmonary disorders. One of the main responsibilities of OCC's respiratory care graduates in the care of the critically ill patient is management of the ventilator (breathing machine).

## Orange Coast College Scores A+ on Smoke/Tobacco Free Report Card

O range Coast College is a leader in smoke and tobaccofree policy according to the California Youth Advocacy Network, which released its 2022 College and University Smoke/Tobacco-Free Report Cards in late May. OCC received an A+ grade, outperforming a B average grade in CYAN's Region 8 which includes Orange County and parts of Los Angeles County.

"We are thrilled to receive the highest possible grade on CYAN's smoke and tobacco-free college report card," says OCC President Angelica Suarez. "We are especially proud of the student-led collaborative e ort to transition OCC into a smoke and tobacco-free campus. This accomplishment demonstrates the critical role that participatory governance plays in our College's mission of fostering a respectful, supportive and equitable campus climate."

OCC transitioned to a smoke-free campus in June 2020 after many months of discussion and planning by OCC's Smoke/Tobacco-Free Task Force, which was made up of representatives from all of the College's constituency groups. The e ort was led by students, who were motivated to action after learning that OCC had received an "F" rating on CYAN's Smoke/Tobacco-Free Policy Report Card in 2018.

Students teamed up with Coast health instructor Anna Hanlon to apply for a grant through the Truth Initiative, which OCC received. Hanlon and student representatives also partnered with OCC's O ce of Institutional E ectiveness to conduct a campus-wide survey, with results showing strong support for a transition to a smoke-free campus.

Funding from the Truth Initiative grant helped to fund the implementation of OCC's smoke-free policy, including educating new students and providing assistance to students and employees who are interested in quitting smoking. Additionally, OCC's Student Health Center hired a Smoking Cessation Specialist to oversee cessation e orts.

According to CYAN, studies show that smoke and tobaccofree policies are e ective in preventing commercial tobacco use among young adults as well as helping individuals quit using commercial tobacco. The group writes: "Our hope is that this Report will help expedite the process of policy adoption at the community college and private campuses that are not already smoke and tobacco-free."