

VOLUNTEER STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Project Title: Expanding Access to Respiratory Care

Lead Entity and Fiscal Agent: Volunteer State Community College

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

1. LEA/School District Name: Putnam County School System
2. Employer Partners: Cookeville Regional Medical Center and Livingston Regional Hospital

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## **ABSTRACT**

Volunteer State Community College (VSCC) proposes the "Expanding Access to Respiratory Care" initiative to address the critical shortage of respiratory therapists in the Upper Cumberland region. This program will expand the Respiratory Care Technology AAS program to Cookeville, TN, providing accessible education and career pathways for students in rural communities. Through partnerships with Putnam County Schools and regional hospitals, this project will offer dual enrollment options, hands-on clinical training, and student stipends to remove financial barriers.

With \$1.69 million in requested funding, VSCC will establish a fully operational respiratory care training site, equip students with industry-standard technology, and enhance workforce readiness. This initiative aligns with Tennessee's healthcare workforce development goals, ensuring at least 80% of graduates become Registered Respiratory Therapists (RRTs) and 60-75% secure employment in rural healthcare settings. The program's sustainability plan will integrate state funding and employer-sponsored tuition support beyond the grant period.

VSCC exemplifies twenty-seven years of excellence in training Respiratory Care Technology students. The "Expanding Access to Respiratory Care" project will expand access to a critical healthcare career pathway, enhancing the well-being of rural residents through education and workforce development. By leveraging data-driven initiatives and strong community partnerships, VSCC aims to increase the number of qualified respiratory care professionals in rural Tennessee, improving access to quality healthcare services for underserved populations.

## **SECTION 1: PROGRAM NARRATIVE**

VSCC will serve as the lead entity to implement the Rural Healthcare Pathway Expansion (RHCPE) Grant. Our “Expanding Access to Respiratory Care” project will address two key strategies: 1) Develop Career Pathways and Articulation Agreements; a. Establish healthcare pathways for rural Tennesseans, including flexible options for adult learners; b. Enable students to earn healthcare credentials and practice in rural areas. 2) Provide Student Stipends for Education-Related Costs; a. Offer financial support to student enrolled in eligible health care programs to reduce barriers to completion.

The aim of this initiative is to, VSCC will expand the Respiratory Care Technology AAS program to Cookeville, TN, allowing students to complete coursework and clinical rotations without commuting 72 miles to VSCC’s Gallatin campus RESP Program. Cookeville Regional Medical Center (CRMC) has allocated dedicated laboratory space, providing access to ventilators, oxygen therapy equipment, and telemetry monitors. Additionally, CRMC will offer scholarships for employees transitioning into the respiratory care field, supporting career advancement for working adults.

Volunteer State Community College will partner with Putnam County School System (PCSS) to offer the general education courses required for respiratory care through dual enrollment. This provides secondary students with the chance to complete dual-enrollment prerequisite courses and gain a clear academic and career pathway. They can then finish the remaining prerequisite courses in post-secondary education, ultimately leading to the application and selective entry into the Respiratory Care Technology program.

The "Expanding Access to Respiratory Care" initiative will create an accessible and structured pathway for both adult non-traditional students and high school dual enrollment

students. RHCPE Grant funds will support the purchase of essential equipment not provided by the CRMC partnership, the hiring of initial faculty, as well as travel, training, marketing, and stipends for the first two cohorts of students in the Cookeville RESP Program. Upon completing the program, students will be eligible to apply for Tennessee State licensure and can challenge the National Board for Respiratory Care examinations, which include the Therapist Multiple Choice and Clinical Simulation exams, ultimately earning the Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential.

## **SECTION 2: DEMONSTRATION OF NEED**

Expanding the Respiratory Care Technology program to the Upper Cumberland region will directly address the growing workforce demands for healthcare professionals.

VSCC recently assessed the need to expand its program to the Upper Cumberland by collaborating with Cookeville Regional Medical Center (CRMC) and other key stakeholders in the region. This review identified a significant demand for respiratory care professionals both locally and statewide, emphasizing the need to create a clear career pathway leading to an AAS degree in Respiratory Care Technology along with the necessary industry credentials. CRMC highlighted its own planned expansion, which will further increase the demand for Respiratory Therapists. Respiratory therapy is also recognized as a "Bright Outlook" occupation by O\*NET OnLine<sup>1</sup>, indicating it is an in-demand field. Expanding the program to the Upper Cumberland will help address healthcare needs in rural areas.

The rural counties in the Upper Cumberland that fall under VSCC's TN Board of Regents designated service area include Putnam, Overton, Macon, Clay, Jackson, Pickett, and Smith, which make up half of the fourteen counties in the Upper Cumberland Development District. Putnam County serves as a central location in the region, with two of VSCC's four campuses

located in Livingston (Overton County) and Cookeville (Putnam County). Currently, students from the Upper Cumberland region who are interested in pursuing respiratory care education must commute to VSCC's Gallatin campus, which is 72 miles away from Cookeville. This has included students from the Upper Cumberland area in past cohorts.

Data shows a strong demand for respiratory therapists, both now and in the future. According to O\*NET OnLine<sup>1</sup>, Respiratory Therapy is considered a "Bright Outlook" occupation, expected to grow rapidly in the coming years and offer many job openings. Data from JOBS4TN.GOV<sup>2</sup> and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics<sup>3</sup> reveals over 150 openings for respiratory therapists statewide by 2025, with only 0.01 qualified candidates per job opening. There is a projected 13% national job growth for respiratory therapists from 2023 to 2033, coupled with an aging workforce—25.4% of current respiratory therapists are over the age of 55—creating a significant need for replacement workers. The Tennessee Hospital Association's "TN Health Workforce Projections: 2021-2035"<sup>5</sup> report further underscores the need for qualified and certified Respiratory Therapists across the state, with a projected 30% shortfall by 2035. This gap between workforce demand and supply highlights the urgent need for more qualified professionals in the field.

**Table 1: Labor Market Information Supporting the Need for Respiratory Therapists in the Upper Cumberland Region**

Labor Market Data Source	Data & Demand for Respiratory Therapists (RT)
<i>O*NET Online<sup>1</sup></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bright Outlook occupation – expected rapid growth next several years SOC 29-1126.00</li> </ul>
<i>Jobs4TN<sup>2</sup>/ TN Dept. Of Labor &amp; Workforce Development<sup>2</sup></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occupation Profile:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job Demand = in TN 150 openings (Jan. 20, 2025)</li> <li>Supply &amp; Demand = 0.01 Candidates per Job Opening (Jan. 20, 2025)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> O\*NET OnLine – Respiratory Therapists 29-1126.00 <https://www.tn.gov/workforce/jobs-and-education/exploring-careers/exploring-careers-redirect/occupations-in-demand.html>

<sup>2</sup> TN Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development/JOBS4TN.GOV In-Demand Occupations to 2026 <https://www.tn.gov/workforce/jobs-and-education/exploring-careers/exploring-careers-redirect/occupations-in-demand.html>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listed as In-Demand Occupation (2016-2026) with estimated 15 annual openings in 15 rural Upper Cumberland counties, including 7-rural counties served by VSCC</li> </ul>
<i>U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook</i> <sup>3</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National RT Job Outlook increase by 13% from 2023-2033</li> <li>Projected Employment, 151,400 in 2033 from 133,900 in 2023</li> <li>Growing older adult population will increase demand &amp; need for RTs</li> </ul>
<i>Lightcast</i> <sup>4</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SOC 29-1126: Occupational Age Breakdown shows 25.4% of RT jobs are employed by those age 55+, creating open positions as they retire in 7-Upper Cumberland counties.</li> <li>Respiratory therapy accounts for 88% of the top specialized skills job postings in the Upper Cumberland area.</li> </ul>
<i>GlobalData</i> <sup>5</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2021 TN had 940 FTE shortfall relative to RT needs, meeting only 70% of the need. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2,170 FTE but needed 3,110 to meet the industry demand.</li> </ul> </li> <li>This shortfall is estimated to continue through 2035, projected increase to 1,080 FTE.</li> </ul>
<i>Projections Central State Employment Projections – Projections Managing Partnership (PMP)</i> <sup>6</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-term Occupational Projections (2023-25) Respiratory Therapists: Base (2023) = 3620, Projected (2025) =3920, Change=300, %Change=8.3%, Avg Annual Openings =310</li> <li>Long-term Occupational Projections (2022-2032) Respiratory Therapists: Base (2022) = 3030, Projected (2032) =3670, Change=640, %Change=21.1%, Avg Annual Openings =230</li> </ul>

## Links Between Grant Activities and Local/Regional Needs

TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development<sup>2</sup> reports RTs as an in-demand occupation with an estimated 15-annual position openings in the Upper Cumberland rural counties, including the seven VSCC service area counties of Putnam, Overton, Macon, Clay, Smith, Jackson, and Pickett. Local employer demand: CRMC has 8-full-time RT openings, Livingston Regional Hospital and Ascension St. Thomas Highlands report an ongoing shortage of RTs. Additionally, the lack of a RESP Program in the Upper Cumberland area limits access for high school graduates and non-traditional/adult learners for an opportunity to pursue respiratory

<sup>3</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Respiratory Therapists, at [www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/respiratory-therapists.htm](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/respiratory-therapists.htm) (visited December 15, 2024)

<sup>4</sup> Lightcast Data/[www.economicmodeling.com](https://www.economicmodeling.com) – Lightcast Q3 2022 Data Set on Respiratory Therapists in 7-counties in TN

<sup>5</sup> TN Hospital Association (THA), *Tennessee Health Workforce Projections Report: 2021-2035*, Globaldata, October 2022

<sup>6</sup> Projections Central - State Employment Projections - Projections Managing Partnership (PMP), Sponsored by [US Dept. of Labor](https://www.dol.gov), <https://projectionscentral.org/home>, Long-term 2022-2032 <https://projectionscentral.org/longterm>, Short-term 2023-2025 <https://projectionscentral.org/shortterm>

care as a career. Without a local pipeline, students from rural counties face financial and logistical barriers to entering the field. The “Expanding Access to Respiratory Care” grant program bridges that gap by providing accessible, high-quality education and direct employment pathways.

### **Proposed Expansion of Academic Programs, Work-Based Learning Opportunities, and Needed Equipment**

CRMC will host the VSCC’s RESP program’s laboratory courses onsite within their facility. The space is fully operational with hospital beds, bedside tables, telemetry monitoring, pulse oximetry monitoring, wall outlets for oxygen, medical air, and vacuum to operate respiratory care equipment and to practice and perform laboratory competencies. Lecture courses will be at VSCC’s regional campus. Additionally, the K-12 partnership with PCSS will allow high school students the opportunity to complete the required pre-requisites courses to be eligible for the respiratory care technology program.

The Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) offers an option for a Satellite Campus. The curriculum for expanding the program is complete. The clinical affiliates in the Upper Cumberland/Greater Nashville area are in support of allowing students to attend clinical rotations to meet program requirements and provide direct patient care. The Upper Cumberland expansion of respiratory care will require two full-time faculty with one being a designated site coordinator.

The equipment required, beyond what CRMC has already committed to providing, will be obtained through grant funding. This equipment list is included in the, **Appendix E – Budget Plan**. Per CoARC accreditation requirements, the RESP Program (Cookeville) location must be similar to the base program (Gallatin). The need for all program equipment is to ensure the



students have hands-on practice with all pieces of vital respiratory care equipment prior to clinical rotations. The equipment list aligns with what clinical affiliates are utilizing in patient care. This will allow the respiratory care students to demonstrate competency of respiratory skills, build confidence, and know how to operate equipment before performing procedures on patients.

### **SECTION 3: PROGRAM PLAN**

#### **Detailed Summary of Proposed Program**

VSCC, as lead entity of the Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program in our service area, has led recent assessment of the program's need for expansion to the Upper Cumberland, recognizing the Respiratory Care workforce needs in the region and across the state in addition to a post-secondary career pathway leading to RESP AAS degree and industry-required credentials. In alignment with the RHCPE Request For Proposals Strategy #1, and this grant award, VSCC will facilitate expansion and implementation of the RESP program to Cookeville, TN in partnership with key area hospitals and at least one K-12 school system to provide a career pathway for: 1) adults desiring to transition from their current healthcare field (medical assisting, LPN, or other professions) or non-healthcare employment to a trained, credentialed, certified Respiratory Therapy career; 2) secondary and graduating seniors to clearly identify the dual enrollment courses and post-secondary courses required for the VSCC RESP AAS career pathway.

VSCC has successfully provided the RESP program at the Gallatin Campus for twenty-seven years. The program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) and has graduated over 300 students. Program graduates are highly trained and prepared to obtain the Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential and securing state

licensure, allowing those graduates to begin their Respiratory Care careers. The VCSS RESP Program (see **Appendix B – VSCC RESP AAS Catalog**) is a 16-month, four full-time semesters accelerated program. The five pre-requisite courses required to apply for the RESP Program can be completed in one full-time semester or two part-time semesters. Interested, eligible students must apply to the respiratory care technology program by October 1<sup>st</sup> each year, program applicant interviews are in November with selection of the cohort in December. To qualify for an interview applicants must: 1) complete all pre-requisite courses by the end of the fall application semester, 2) have a minimum GPA 2.5.

The partnership with CRMC is crucial for offering respiratory care education in the Upper Cumberland area. The Memorandum of Understanding with CRMC outlines the hospital's commitment to providing fully operational laboratory space, along with most of the necessary equipment, which helps eliminate over \$220,000 in start-up costs. This collaboration enables VSCC to expand its accelerated, four-semester RESP program to be offered onsite at CRMC. The onsite laboratory location will make it easier for CRMC employees, who may work in other roles within the hospital and wish to transition into the respiratory care field, to access the RESP career pathway. CRMC plans to offer scholarships to these employees, further supporting the recruitment of non-traditional and adult students into the RESP Program in Cookeville. Additionally, the partnership with Livingston Regional Hospital ensures the continuation of LRH's essential role in providing clinical rotations for VSCC RESP Program students, allowing them to gain valuable direct patient care and hands-on experience.

Both hospital partnerships and area marketing will support recruitment of non-traditional/adult learner students who wish to pivot from other health-related employment or other workforce industry jobs to a new Respiratory Care Technology career. VSCC's Marketing,

Communications & Media department will evaluate the best marketing tactics and implement multi-media recruitment efforts in the Upper Cumberland area. VSCC's Admissions department will supportively inform potential VSCC students of the expansion of the RESP Program in Cookeville, TN. Additionally, the Advising Office will supportively provide academic advising to Upper Cumberland adult learners and high school graduates interested in the RESP career pathway.

The K-12 partnership with the PCSS will benefit secondary students obtaining program pre-requisites prior to their high school graduation via dual-enrollment opportunities. The PCSS will collaborate with VSCC to increase awareness of VSCC's new RESP Program in Cookeville, providing a clearly defined career pathway process to Putnam County secondary students. This offers an opportunity for high school students to complete dual-enrollment option pre-requisite courses and have an informed academic and career pathway to complete remaining program pre-requisite courses post-secondary, leading to the RESP program application and selective entry. The five pre-requisite courses are Anatomy and Physiology I and II, Statistics or College Algebra or higher, English Composition I, and a qualifying Social/Behavioral Science course. Medical Terminology is recommended but not required. Secondary students completing pre-requisite courses offered as dual-enrollment options will propel them toward applying for the VSCC RESP program their first Fall semester of post-secondary, allowing them to start the RESP Program, if selected, their first Spring semester of post-secondary.

Upon successful completion of the VSCC RESP program, graduates are eligible to apply for state licensure which permits them to obtain employment within eight weeks filling employment openings for medical facilities. The graduates will be prepared to pass the national

board examinations to obtain the Registered Respiratory Therapists (RRTs) credential. Both items exemplify VSCC's commitment to bridge the gap of industry needs.

In alignment with Strategy 4 of the RHCPE grant RFP, VSCC will provide student stipends for the Cookeville, TN RESP Program students to cover the specified fees of Health Science Course Fees and Liability Insurance Fee and program textbooks purchased through the Volunteer State Bookstore up to \$625/student per cohort cycle (2027-2028 and 2028-2029). This stipend will be considered last dollar, provided to each RESP program (Cookeville) student without stipulation of other forms of financial aid (federal or state) that may or may not cover the specified fees.

### **Detailed Project Timeline and Overview**

VSCC will accomplish project development and implementation per the Project Timeline as included as **Appendix A – Project Timeline**.

### **Identify Key Objectives for Each Phase**

Key Objectives for the “Expanding Access to Respiratory Care” project will support and measure project development and outcomes. The project will focus on Upper Cumberland area rural counties of Putnam, Overton, Clay, Macon, Jackson, Pickett, and Smith, providing career pathway access leading to credentialed Respiratory Care professionals. Upon implementation of the Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program, key objectives will be measured based on retention of students and students obtaining the Registered Respiratory Therapists (RRTs) credential. These objectives and performance measures will ensure the success of VSCC's “Expanding Access to Respiratory Care” project, leading to an increase of well-trained RTs in the local region and state.

<b>Key Objectives (over 48 mos.)</b>	<b>Performance Measures/Metrics</b>
<b><u>Objective 1:</u></b> Recruitment Initiatives/Career Exploration Fair	Collect how many potential students are interested in respiratory care from advertising and marketing. <b><u>Performance Measures:</u></b> Y1 – 50 students participate Y2 – 75 students participate Y3 – 100 students participate Y4 – 100 students participate
<b><u>Objective 2:</u></b> Partnership with Putnam County Schools Dual Enrollment	<b><u>Performance Measures:</u></b> Measure the number of students accepted into respiratory care that completed their pre-requisite courses through dual enrollment. Y1 – 0 students participate Y2 – 2 students participate Y3 – 3 students participate Y4 – 4 students participate
<b><u>Objective 3:</u></b> Reach 20-student max Cohort in the VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program (Cookeville)	By spring 2027, Volunteer State Community College's Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program will begin accepting the first Upper Cumberland Cohort. <b><u>Performance Measures:</u></b> Spring 2026 – Advertise and Market RESP Program Spring 2027 – Accept/enroll 10 students in cohort 1 Spring 2028 – Accept/enroll 15 students in cohort 2 Spring 2029 – Accept/enroll 20 students in cohort 3
<b><u>Objective 4:</u></b> 75% - 80% retention of students for Respiratory Care Technology (RESP)	Number of students that graduate. Measured annually. Information required for CoARC Annual Report. <b><u>Performance Measures:</u></b> Y1 – no cohort, recruiting Y2 – First cohort to begin Y3 – 75% of RESP Program Cohort retained in spring 2028 Y4 – 80% of RESP Program Cohort retained in spring 2029
<b><u>Objective 5:</u></b> 80% – 85% of program graduates will become RRTs (Registered Respiratory Therapists)	Measure data from the NBRC School Summary Report, Therapists Multiple Choice Examination, and the Clinical Simulation Examination. <b><u>Performance Measures:</u></b> Y1 – no cohort, recruiting Y2 – Cohort 1 to begin Y3 – 80% of RESP Program Cohort 1 will become RRTs Y4 – 85% of RESP Program Cohort 2 will become RRTs
<b><u>Objective 6:</u></b> 60% - 75% of program graduates will obtain employment in the Upper Cumberland area, neighboring regions, and across TN	Job Placement Surveys to be completed to collect data on graduate's place of employment Y1 – no cohort, recruiting Y2 – Cohort 1 to begin Y3 – 60% - 75% of the RESP Program Cohort 1 RRTs will be employed in the Upper Cumberland area, neighboring regions, and across TN Y4 – 60% - 75% of the RESP Program Cohort 2 RRTs will be employed in the Upper Cumberland area, neighboring regions, and across TN

## **Project Governance and Accountability Plan**

As part of VSCC's governance and accountability plan, two teams will be established, comprising of key stakeholders. Grant Management at VSCC establishes a team for each

awarded grant and will create the RHCPE Grant Team. Listed members and details are noted in **Appendix C – Governance & Accountability** and include the Lead Project Director, Project Director, Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Business Office representative(s), and Grants Administrator to collectively account for the “Expanding Access to Respiratory Care” project implementation, budgetary/fiscal requirements, and grant reporting. Kimberly Christmon, Dean of Health Sciences, will serve as the project’s Lead Project Director and Mallory Higginbotham, Program Director for the RESP Program, will serve as Project Director. Both Project Directors will have primary responsibility for ensuring project objectives and grant requirements achievement. The RHCPE Grant Team will collaboratively monitor and support objective achievement in addition to reporting and budgetary requirements. When additional departments/divisions across our college are needed to accomplish grant and project initiatives, VSCC and the RHCPE Grant Team will collaborate accordingly. Once the RHCPE Grant is awarded, the team will initially meet to specify responsibilities, a grant timeline with deadlines, and regularly scheduled meetings.

As currently established at the VSCC Gallatin location, the VSCC RESP Program will be responsible for the program’s new Cookeville location accreditation approvals, program operation and implementation, course scheduling and educational experiences, curriculum delivery, RESP Program decision-making structure, purchasing of equipment, training and management of program faculty, and overall program success.

Additionally, to meet accreditation requirements and maintain successful partnerships to complete grant project objectives, a RESP Program Upper Cumberland Advisory Committee will be established to guide the program’s expansion and implementation in Cookeville, TN. The RESP Upper Cumberland Advisory Committee, as listed in **Appendix C – Governance &**

**Accountability** will include RESP Program faculty (Site Coordinator, 12-month instructor, Program Director, and Director of Clinical Education) and Lead Project Director (Dean of Health Sciences) along with employer/industry partners Cookeville Regional Medical Center (CRMC) and Livingston Regional Hospital, K-12 partner Putnam County School System, and other clinical rotation affiliates as needed. The RESP Program Upper Cumberland Advisory Committee will meet regularly to provide oversight, direction, and coordination of project initiatives and objectives for the entire project timeline.

### **Counties Served**

VSCC's TBR designated service area includes the following Upper Cumberland counties, all qualifying as RHCPE Grant rural counties: Putnam, Overton, Clay, Macon, Smith, Jackson, Pickett.

## **SECTION 4: STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP**

### **LEA/K-12 Partnership:**

VSCC's K-12 partner is the Putnam County School System (PCSS). VSCC agrees to educate students in their district about the Respiratory Care program and its required prerequisite courses, job outlook in the Upper Cumberland region, and the critical nature of the need for Respiratory Therapists. They will provide the opportunity for eligible students to take dual enrollment courses that meet the prerequisites of the Respiratory Care program. VSCC will provide PCSS with training and all needed informational materials to promote this pathway option. VSCC will also provide advising and information sessions to PCSS students who elect to pursue this opportunity. This advising will include the purpose of the Respiratory Care program, the prerequisites for applying to the Respiratory Care program, the competitive nature of the application process to the Respiratory Care program and the benefits and transferability of the prerequisite courses and the option to use the AAS Respiratory Care Technology degree toward a

Respiratory Therapy Bachelor (East TN State University and others). PCSS agrees that secondary students need for this partnership to improve the overall awareness of and access to healthcare career pathway guidance in their geographic area. The benefits include a potential increase in the employment rate and income for the rural communities PCSS serves while also increasing access to quality Respiratory Therapy health care.

### **Employer Partnerships:**

Our employer partners, Cookeville Regional Medical Center (CRMC) and Livingston Regional Hospital are strong allies in the Upper Cumberland region. They have demonstrated a longstanding commitment to improving the healthcare workforce in their rural communities. The partnerships are crucial in maintaining the respiratory care program's effectiveness and ensuring its continued impact on the local healthcare workforce. Both facilities are essential clinical affiliate sites, providing students with valuable hands-on clinical experience that enhances their educational journeys. Representatives from the respective respiratory care departments are members of the College's Respiratory Care Advisory Board, offering valuable industry expertise to ensure the program aligns with current healthcare standards. **Appendix D - Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs)**, details the specifics of each partner's role.

## **SECTION 5: BUDGET**

### **Budget Justifications**

All budget item requests are aligned with the implementation and success of the "Expanding Access to Respiratory Care" project outlined in the Program Plan. The \$1.69 million funding request supports:

- Two full-time faculty positions (\$601,774) – Essential for program instruction and site coordination.



- Student stipends (\$101,020) – Covers Health Science Course Fees, Liability Insurance, and textbooks.
- Industry-standard equipment (\$395,500) – Includes ventilators, BiPAP machines, compliance test lungs, and mannequins for hands-on training.
- Marketing and outreach (\$55,000) – Increase awareness and student recruitment.
- Certification exam preparation (\$93,520) – Ensures students achieve high pass rates on RRT exams.
- Indirect costs (8%) cover grant administration, compliance reporting, and operational support, ensuring efficient fund management.

See **Appendix E - Budget Plan** for budget request and line-item details.

## **SECTION 6: SUSTAINABILITY**

VSCC is committed to sustaining the Respiratory Care Technology Program – Cookeville beyond the grant period. Key strategies include:

1. Employer-Sponsored Tuition Support - CRMC and other regional hospitals will offer tuition assistance for employees pursuing RT credentials.
2. State and Institutional Funding – 1) VSCC will integrate RTC program funding into its annual budget after the grant lifecycle. 2) Potential for future THEC and TBR workforce development grants.
3. Flexible Cohort Planning - To prevent oversaturation of the job market, VSCC will adjust cohort sizes based on employer demand and graduation rates.
4. Partnership Focus – VSCC will work closely with current partners while also expanding local and regional employer and K-12 partners.

The "Expanding Access to Respiratory Care" initiative directly addresses Tennessee's rural healthcare workforce crisis. By providing regional training, financial support, and industry partnerships, this program ensures a steady pipeline of highly skilled respiratory therapists. With sustainable funding strategies in place, VSCC is committed to the long-term success of this initiative.

## APPENDIX A - PROJECT TIMELINE

### Detailed Project Timeline

Project Year/Qtr	Actions	Key Responsible Entity(s)
Y1 2025-26, Q1 (Aug-Oct )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop RHCPE Grant Team and RESP Program Cookeville Advisory Team - meeting/responsibility timelines - initial meetings.</li> <li>• Complete CoARC Accreditation for Satellite Campus.</li> <li>• Initiate search and hiring for RESP Program (Cookeville) Site Coordinator and Program Instructor.</li> <li>• Initiate planning &amp; timeline with Cookeville Regional Hospital partner.</li> <li>• Initiate VSCC Marketing/Media dept. to prepare website updates and public release about new program.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y1, Q1.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director, Dean - Health Sciences, Grants Administrator in collaboration with key partners</li> </ul>
Y1 2025-26, Q2 (Nov -Jan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize program equipment list and plan RESP Program location preparations with Cookeville Regional Hospital and VSCC Cookeville or Livingston (as backup)</li> <li>• Develop marketing and recruiting materials for the Upper Cumberland Respiratory Care Technology Program.</li> <li>• Begin planning with the Putnam County School System (PCSS) for career awareness, exploration dates, and dual enrollment opportunities.</li> <li>• Hire project RESP program faculty (grant funded).</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y1, Q2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director, Dean - Health Sciences, K-12 Director, Marketing department, Admissions, Advising</li> <li>• Putnam County School System</li> <li>• CRMC (Cookeville Regional Medical Center), VSCC-Livingston</li> </ul>
Y1 2025-26, Q3 (Feb-Apr)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue procurement of program equipment and program site preparation</li> <li>• Begin promotion and recruitment for Fall 2026 October 1st application deadline for spring 2027 Cohort 1.</li> <li>• Continue collaboration with PCSS initiatives</li> <li>• Program faculty train Site Coordinator and 12-month instructor</li> <li>• Site Coordinator and 12-month instructor to complete CoARC Key Personnel Academy.</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings</li> <li>• Initiate SACSOC preparations to submit for approval</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y1, Q3.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director, Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences, K-12 Director, Marketing department, Admissions, Advising, RHCPE Grant Team</li> <li>• Putnam County School System</li> <li>• CRMC (Cookeville Regional Medical Center)</li> </ul>
Y1 2025-26, Q4 (May-Jul)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue procurement of program equipment and program site preparation.</li> <li>• Continue training RESP program faculty.</li> <li>• Begin process of establishing new clinical sites and clinical affiliation agreements for clinical rotations.</li> <li>• RESP faculty attends the AARC Summer Forum for respiratory care educators.</li> <li>• Continue promotion/recruitment Cohort 1.</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>• Submit for SACSOC approval.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y1, Q4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director, Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences, Office of VP for Research, Assessment, and Special Initiatives, RHCPE Grant Team</li> <li>• CRMC (Cookeville Regional Medical Center)</li> <li>• Livingston Hospital and other clinical rotation affiliates</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX A - PROJECT TIMELINE

Project Year/Qtr	Actions	Key Responsible Entity(s)
Y2 2026-27, Q1 (Aug-Oct)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue program site preparations and promotion/recruitment for cohort 1</li> <li>• Cohort 1 applications are due by October 1st.</li> <li>• Continue establishing new clinical sites and clinical affiliation agreements for rotations.</li> <li>• Establish Upper Cumberland Respiratory Care Advisory Board</li> <li>• Continue collaboration with PCSS initiatives</li> <li>• Finalize SACSOC approval, if needed</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings</li> <li>• Continue training program faculty.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y2, Q1.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Office of VP for Research, Assessment, and Special Initiatives, RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>
Y2 2026-27, Q2 (Nov-Jan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion and recruitment for cohort 2.</li> <li>• Cohort 1 - Review program applicants; Schedule applicant interviews; Select first respiratory care cohort.</li> <li>• Finalize new clinical sites/agreements for clinical rotations.</li> <li>• Continue collaboration with PCSS initiatives.</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y2, Q2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director, Director of Clinical Education, and faculty, Dean - Health Sciences, K-12 Director, Marketing department, Admissions, Advising, RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>
Y2 2026-27, Q3 (Feb-Apr)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion and recruitment for cohort 2.</li> <li>• RESP Program cohort 1 begins semester 1.</li> <li>• Update clinical affiliation agreements between Vol State and clinical affiliates as needed.</li> <li>• Continue collaboration with PCSS initiatives.</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y2, Q3.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>
Y2 2026-27, Q4 (May-Jul)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion and recruitment for cohort 2.</li> <li>• Summer semester cohort 1 begins.</li> <li>• CoARC Annual Report/Self Study due.</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y2, Q4.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX A - PROJECT TIMELINE

Project Year/Qtr	Actions	Key Responsible Entity(s)
Y3 2027-28, Q1 (Aug-Oct)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue program site preparations and promotion/recruitment for cohort 2 - target enrollment is 15 students.</li> <li>Cohort 2 applications are due by October 1st.</li> <li>Third semester for Cohort 1 begins August.</li> <li>Continue mentoring program faculty.</li> <li>Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> <li>THEC Quarterly Report Y3, Q1.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>
Y3 2027-28, Q2 (Nov-Jan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion and recruitment for cohort 2</li> <li>Review program applicants; Schedule applicant interviews cohort 2.</li> <li>Select Cohort 2 respiratory care cohort.</li> <li>Cohort 1 continuing third semester.</li> <li>Continue mentoring program faculty.</li> <li>Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> <li>THEC Quarterly Report Y3, Q2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>
Y3 2027-28, Q3 (Feb-Apr)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion and recruitment for cohort 3.</li> <li>RESP Program Cohort 2 begin semester 1.</li> <li>Cohort 1 completing the fourth/final semester.</li> <li>RESP faculty prepare for Cohort 2 to begin clinical rotations in May 2028.</li> <li>Begin sustainability plan preparations.</li> <li>Continue mentoring program faculty.</li> <li>Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> <li>Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>THEC Quarterly Report Y3, Q3.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>
Y3 2027-28, Q4 (May-Jul)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion and recruitment for cohort 3.</li> <li>Summer semester cohort 2 begins.</li> <li>Cohort 1 graduates - preps for two national board exams.</li> <li>CoARC Annual Report/Self Study due.</li> <li>Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>THEC Quarterly Report Y3, Q4.</li> <li>Continue mentoring program faculty.</li> <li>Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX A - PROJECT TIMELINE

Project Year/Qtr	Actions	Key Responsible Entity(s)
Y4 2028-29, Q1 (Aug-Oct)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion and recruitment for cohort 3.</li> <li>• Cohort 3 applications are due by October 1st.</li> <li>• Cohort 2 third semester begins.</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y4, Q1.</li> <li>• Continue mentoring program faculty.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>
Y4 2028-29, Q2 (Nov-Jan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion and recruitment for Cohort 4.</li> <li>• Review Cohort 3 applicants; Schedule applicant interviews;</li> <li>• Select Cohort 3.</li> <li>• Cohort 2 continuing third semester</li> <li>• Host annual Advisory Committee Meeting.</li> <li>• Continue mentoring program faculty.</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y4, Q1.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>
Y4 2028-29, Q3 (Feb-Apr)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion and recruitment for cohort 4.</li> <li>• Cohort 3 continues first/spring semester.</li> <li>• Cohort 2 continues final semester.</li> <li>• Continue sustainability plan preparations.</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y4, Q3.</li> <li>• Continue mentoring program faculty.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>
Y4 2028-29, Q4 (May-Jul)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion and recruitment for cohort 4.</li> <li>• Summer semester cohort 3 begins.</li> <li>• Cohort 2 graduates - prepares for two national board exams</li> <li>• CoARC Annual Report/Self Study due.</li> <li>• Advisory Team/Grant Team/RESP Faculty meetings.</li> <li>• THEC Quarterly Report Y4, Q4 - Final report.</li> <li>• Close-out grant process.</li> <li>• Continue mentoring program faculty.</li> <li>• Evaluate Objectives and performance measures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VSCC Respiratory Care Technology (RESP) Program Director (Project Director), Director of Clinical Education, Dean - Health Sciences (Lead Project Director), RHCPE Grant Team, RESP Program (Cookeville) Advisory Team</li> </ul>

## Respiratory Care Technology, A.A.S.

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**Degree:** Associate of Applied Science

**Major:** Respiratory Care Technology

*For more information, contact the Health Sciences division at 615-230-3330.*

This program prepares students to become Registered Respiratory Therapists. Respiratory Therapists work under the supervision of a physician to assess, treat, and manage all patient populations who have cardiopulmonary-related issues. Therapists are typically employed within the hospital, clinic and home-care setting, and may also be employed within diagnostic labs with further training.

After fulfilling the college admission requirements, students are required to complete all of the general education courses as outlined, with the exception of Anatomy and Physiology II, with a GPA of 2.5 or higher, prior to beginning the program in the spring. Students may complete AHC 115\* as a recommended optional course. Students are required to submit an application to the Respiratory Care program by the October 1st deadline. Formal screening for program admission is conducted in November. Classes begin in the spring and seating is limited. The RESP program consists of a total of four full-time semesters. The last semester meets one day a week in addition to clinical rotations.

Interested students should contact the Program Director for an information packet. For more information about the program, refer to the Health Sciences Associate of Applied Science Degrees section for Respiratory Care at <https://www.volstate.edu/academics/health-sciences/respiratorycare>.

Licensure requirements for respiratory therapists vary according to state statutes. In Tennessee, practitioners are required to pass the national examinations for certified and/or registered respiratory therapist respectively.

*Students must complete the general education courses prior to acceptance into the program.*

*All students graduating with a degree from VSCC are required to take the E-Proficiency Profile (EPP) to meet graduation requirements. More information can be found at <https://www.volstate.edu/graduation/exit-exams>.*

### Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, the graduate will have developed the skills, knowledge and abilities to accomplish the following:

1. Demonstrate the ability to comprehend, apply, and evaluate clinical information relevant to their role as a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT).
2. Demonstrate the technical proficiency in all skills necessary to fulfill the role as a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT).
3. Demonstrate personal behaviors consistent with professional and employer expectations as a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT).
4. Successfully meet employer expectations by competently performing skills required of a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT).

CIP Code: (31) 51.0908.00 SOC Code: 29-1126

## General Education Requirements - Credits (17)

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- [ENGL 1010 - ^English Composition I](#) Credits: (3)
- [MATH 1530 - ^Introductory Statistics](#) Credits: (3) OR HIGHER
- [BIOL 2010 - ^Human Anatomy and Physiology I](#) Credits: (4)
- [BIOL 2020 - ^Human Anatomy and Physiology II](#) Credits: (4)
- [Social/Behavioral Sciences](#) (Choose any except Geography) Credits: (3)

## Major Core Course Requirements - Credits (54)

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- [RESP 1225 - \\*Cardiopulmonary Pharmacology](#) Credits: (2)
- [RESP 1310 - \\*Cardiopulmonary Pathophysiology](#) Credits: (3)
- [RESP 1399 - \\*Clinical Internship I](#) Credits: (3)
- [RESP 1410 - \\*Fundamentals of Respiratory Care I](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 1420 - \\*Fundamentals of Respiratory Care II](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 1430 - \\*Arterial Blood Gas Analysis and Diagnostic Procedures](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 2290 - \\*Special Topics in Respiratory Care](#) Credits: (2)
- [RESP 2299 - \\*Clinical Internship III](#) Credits: (2)
- [RESP 2300 - \\*Neonatal Respiratory Care](#) Credits: (3)
- [RESP 2305 - \\*Advanced Modalities in Respiratory Care](#) Credits: (3)
- [RESP 2440 - \\*Mechanical Ventilation](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 2445 - \\*Advanced Concepts of Mechanical Ventilation](#) Credits: (4)

## APPENDIX B

- [RESP 2446 - \\*Comprehensive Review I](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 2456 - \\*Comprehensive Review II](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 2480 - \\*Special Projects](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 2499 - \\*Clinical Internship II](#) Credits: (4)

### Total Degree Requirements - Credits (71)

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### Recommended Schedule

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This is a recommended schedule. Learning Support, pre-requisites and other academic factors may impact this schedule. See your advisor to create a degree plan.

DegreeWorks, along with the correct catalog, should be utilized by students for all of their educational planning. Students can monitor their progress toward a degree or certificate and view missing requirements with the DegreeWorks audit, which is accessible through My Volstate.

#### First Year - Fall Semester - Credits (13)

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- [BIOL 2010 - ^Human Anatomy and Physiology I](#) Credits: (4)
- [ENGL 1010 - ^English Composition I](#) Credits: (3)
- [MATH 1530 - ^Introductory Statistics](#) Credits: (3) OR HIGHER
- [Social/Behavioral Sciences](#) (Any except Geography - See General Education Requirements in Catalog) Credits: (3)

#### First Year - Spring Semester - Credits (16)

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- [BIOL 2020 - ^Human Anatomy and Physiology II](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 1410 - \\*Fundamentals of Respiratory Care I](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 1430 - \\*Arterial Blood Gas Analysis and Diagnostic Procedures](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 2440 - \\*Mechanical Ventilation](#) Credits: (4)

#### First Year - Summer Semester - Credits (14)

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- [RESP 1310 - \\*Cardiopulmonary Pathophysiology](#) Credits: (3)
- [RESP 1399 - \\*Clinical Internship I](#) Credits: (3)
- [RESP 1420 - \\*Fundamentals of Respiratory Care II](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 2445 - \\*Advanced Concepts of Mechanical Ventilation](#) Credits: (4)

#### Second Year - Fall Semester - Credits (15)

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- [RESP 1225 - \\*Cardiopulmonary Pharmacology](#) Credits: (2)
- [RESP 2290 - \\*Special Topics in Respiratory Care](#) Credits: (2)
- [RESP 2300 - \\*Neonatal Respiratory Care](#) Credits: (3)
- [RESP 2446 - \\*Comprehensive Review I](#) Credits: (4)
- [RESP 2499 - \\*Clinical Internship II](#) Credits: (4)

#### Second Year - Spring Semester - Credits (13)

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- [RESP 2299 - \\*Clinical Internship III](#) Credits: (2)
  - [RESP 2305 - \\*Advanced Modalities in Respiratory Care](#) Credits: (3)
  - [RESP 2456 - \\*Comprehensive Review II](#) Credits: (4)
  - [RESP 2480 - \\*Special Projects](#) Credits: (4)
-



## APPENDIX C - GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

<b>RHCPE Grant Team</b>	
<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
Kim Christmon	Dean of Health Sciences & Project Director
Mallory Higginbotham	Program Director - Respiratory Care Technology & Project Co-Director
Dr. Terri Day	VP Academic Affairs
Amy Hoffman	Grants Administrator
Charlotte Soporowski	AVP Business & Finance
Name - To Be Determined	Accountant assigned this Grant from Business Office

<b>RESP Program Upper Cumberland Advisory Team</b>	
<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
Kim Christmon	VSCC Dean of Health Sciences & RHCPE Grant Project Director
Mallory Higginbotham	VSCC Program Director - Respiratory Care Technology & RHCPE Grant Project Co-Director
Hillary Lidwin	VSCC Director of RESP Clinical Education
To be Hired via RHCPE Grant	VSCC RESP Program (Cookeville) - Site Coordinator
To be Hired via RHCPE Grant	VSCC RESP Program (Cookeville) - 12-month Instructor
To Be Determined	Cookeville Regional Hospital Partner Representative
To Be Determined	Livingston Regional Hospital Partner Representative
To Be Determined	K-12 Partner Representative
Melinda Edgerton	VSCC Director of Dual Enrollment
Amy Hoffman	Grants Administrator

AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
VOLUNTEER STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
AND  
COOKEVILLE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

This Agreement entered into this 22nd day of January, 2025 by and between VOLUNTEER STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE (hereinafter referred to as the “College”) and COOKEVILLE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER (hereinafter collectively referred to as the “Employer Participants”) is for the purpose of implementing the Rural Health Care Pathways Expansion Grant (RHCPE) Proposal, as further defined below.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Agreement is to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each party as they relate to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s (THEC) Rural Health Care Pathways Expansion Grant (RHCPE) proposal to implement the RHCPE program in the College’s rural service areas. In particular, the Agreement is intended to establish expectations between the designated Employer Participant and the College to provide youth and adults the opportunity to gain valuable educational and training skills to address the labor shortage in the rural health care sector.

**I. ROLES**

**1. COLLEGE ROLE:**

The College agrees to the following responsibilities:

- Serve as the fiscal agent of the grant
- Deliver health career educational opportunities to employees and students of the Educational Participant
- Participate in school career exploration events (no more than one per year per participant)
- Create a Respiratory Care Technology program in a rural county
- Development of youth interest in health careers

**2. EMPLOYER PARTICIPANTS:**

The Employer Participant are responsible for supporting the mission of the RHCPE. Employer participant agree to the following responsibilities:

- Alerting the College of job openings
- Development of youth interest in health careers
- Host tours for youth and adult program participants (no more than one

per year per participant)

- Participate in school career exploration events (no more than one per year per participant)
- Consider graduates for employment
- Serve on occupational advisory boards upon request, and attend requested meetings
- Allocate laboratory space

The Employer Participant agree that there is a need for these programs in their rural communities because of a lack of qualified candidates in health careers in their local geographic area. The benefits include an increased skilled pipeline to their organization and an overall benefit to the rural communities they serve by providing increased access to quality health care.

## II. MISCELLANEOUS:

1. Modification of roles/responsibilities and the sustainability of the program are collectively decided by the parties.
2. An Employer Participant or Educational Participant may terminate its relationship with the program at the end of an academic term with a 30-day written notice to the College.
3. Employer Participants and Educational Participants and may be added through written Amendment to this Agreement.
4. Term. The term of this Agreement shall be through the duration of the grant August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2029.
5. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which together shall be deemed to be original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument. In the event that any signature is delivered by facsimile transmission or by e-mail delivery of a ".pdf" format data file, such signature shall create a valid and binding obligation of the party executing (or on whose behalf such signature is executed) with the same force and effect as if such a facsimile or ".pdf" signature page was an original thereof.

## APPENDIX D

### COLLEGE:

Volunteer State Community College

*Wendi Tostenson*

Wendi Tostenson (Jan 29, 2025 12:23 CST)

Signature

Dr. Wendi Tostenson

President, Volunteer State Community College

Name and Title

01/29/2025

Date

### EMPLOYER PARTICIPANT:

COOKEVILLE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

*Amy Rich*

Amy Rich (Jan 29, 2025 07:47 CST)

Signature

Amy Rich, MHA, BSN, RN

Chief Nursing Officer

Name and Title

01/29/2025

Date

AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
VOLUNTEER STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
AND  
LIVINGSTON REGIONAL HOSPITAL

This Agreement entered into this 22nd day of January, 2025 by and between VOLUNTEER STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE (hereinafter referred to as the “College”) and LIVINGSTON REGIONAL HOSPITAL, (hereinafter collectively referred to as the “Employer Participant”), is for the purpose of implementing the Rural Health Care Pathways Expansion Grant (RHCPE) Proposal, as further defined below.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Agreement is to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each party as they relate to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s (THEC) Rural Health Care Pathways Expansion Grant (RHCPE) proposal to implement the RHCPE program in the College’s rural service areas. In particular, the Agreement is intended to establish expectations between the designated Employer Participant and the College to provide youth and adults the opportunity to gain valuable educational and training skills to address the labor shortage in the rural health care sector.

**I. ROLES**

**1. COLLEGE ROLE:**

The College agrees to the following responsibilities:

- Serve as the fiscal agent of the grant
- Deliver health career educational opportunities to employees and students of the Educational Participant
- Participate in school career exploration events (no more than one per year per participant)
- Create a Respiratory Care Technology program in a rural county
- Development of youth interest in health careers

**2. EMPLOYER PARTICIPANTS:**

The Employer Participant are responsible for supporting the mission of the RHCPE. Employer participants agree to the following responsibilities:

- Alerting the College of job openings
- Development of youth interest in health careers
- Host tours for youth and adult program participants (no more than one

per year per participant)

- Participate in school career exploration events (no more than one per year per participant)
- Consider graduates for employment
- Serve on occupational advisory boards upon request, and attend requested meetings

The Employer Participant agree that there is a need for these programs in their rural communities because of a lack of qualified candidates in health careers in their local geographic area. The benefits include an increased skilled pipeline to their organization and an overall benefit to the rural communities they serve by providing increased access to quality health care.

## II. MISCELLANEOUS:

1. Modification of roles/responsibilities and the sustainability of the program are collectively decided by the parties.
2. An Employer Participant or Educational Participant may terminate its relationship with the program at the end of an academic term with a 30-day written notice to the College.
3. Employer Participants and Educational Participant and may be added through written Amendment to this Agreement.
4. Term. The term of this Agreement shall be through the duration of the grant August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2029.
5. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which together shall be deemed to be original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument. In the event that any signature is delivered by facsimile transmission or by e-mail delivery of a ".pdf" format data file, such signature shall create a valid and binding obligation of the party executing (or on whose behalf such signature is executed) with the same force and effect as if such a facsimile or ".pdf" signature page was an original thereof.

COLLEGE:

Volunteer State Community College

  
Wendi Tostenson (Jan 27, 2025 13:49 CST)

Signature

Dr. Wendi Tostenson  
President, Volunteer State Community College

Name and Title

01/27/2025

Date

EMPLOYER PARTICIPANT:  
LIVINGSTON REGIONAL HOSPITAL

  
Timothy W. McGill (Jan 27, 2025 13:38 CST)

Signature

Tim McGill  
Chief Executive Officer

Name and Title

01/27/2025

Date

AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
VOLUNTEER STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
AND  
PUTNAM COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

This Agreement entered into this 22nd day of January, 2025 by and between Volunteer State Community College (hereinafter referred to as the “College”), and Putnam County School System, (hereinafter collectively referred to as the “Educational Participant”), is for the purpose of implementing the Rural Health Care Pathways Expansion Grant (RHCPE) Proposal, as further defined below.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Agreement is to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each party as they relate to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s (THEC) Rural Health Care Pathways Expansion Grant (RHCPE) proposal to implement the RHCPE program in the College’s rural service areas. In particular, the Agreement is intended to establish expectations between the education participants to provide youth the opportunity to gain valuable post-secondary education and guidance toward a healthcare career pathway to address the labor shortage and skill deficits in the rural health care sector.

**I. ROLES**

**1. COLLEGE ROLE:**

The College agrees to the following responsibilities:

- Serve as the fiscal agent of the grant
- Coordinate dual enrollment and/or dual credit with identified Educational Participant
- Provide the Educational Participant with training and all needed informational materials to promote this pathway option, including prerequisite requirements to pursue the Respiratory Care program, job outlook in the Upper Cumberland region, and the critical nature of the need for Respiratory Therapists
- Provide advising and information sessions to students from the Educational Participant who elect to pursue this opportunity. This advising can include:
  - The purpose of the Respiratory Care program
  - The prerequisites for applying to the Respiratory Care program
  - The competitive nature of the application process to the Respiratory Care program
  - The benefits and transferability of the prerequisite courses for students who are not successfully admitted to the Respiratory Care program



## APPENDIX D

- Deliver health career educational opportunities to employees and students of the Educational Participants
- Create a Respiratory Care program in a rural county

### 2. EDUCATION PARTICIPANTS:

Education Participant agrees to the following responsibilities:

- Educate students about the Respiratory Care program and its required prerequisite courses, job outlook in the Upper Cumberland region, and the critical nature of the need for Respiratory Therapists
- Provide the opportunity for eligible students, as determined by the Educational Participant and the College, to elect to pursue this opportunity
- Managing dual enrollment by providing students who elect to pursue this program the opportunity to take dual enrollment courses that meet the prerequisites of the Respiratory Care program (There is no minimum number of students that must be recruited by the Educational Participant)

The Education Participant agrees that there is a need for this program in their rural communities because of a lack of overall awareness and access in secondary students regarding health careers in their local geographic area. The benefits include a potentially increased employment rate and income for the rural communities they serve and providing increased access to quality health care.

### II. MISCELLANEOUS:

1. Modification of roles/responsibilities and the sustainability of the program are collectively decided by the parties.
2. The Educational Participant may terminate its relationship with the program at the end of an academic term with a 30-day written notice to the College.
3. Educational Participants may be added through written Amendment to this Agreement.
4. Term. The term of this Agreement shall be through the duration of the grant August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2029.

## APPENDIX D

5. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which together shall be deemed to be original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument. In the event that any signature is delivered by facsimile transmission or by e-mail delivery of a ".pdf" format data file, such signature shall create a valid and binding obligation of the party executing (or on whose behalf such signature is executed) with the same force and effect as if such a facsimile or ".pdf" signature page was an original thereof.

COLLEGE:

Volunteer State Community College

Wendi Tostenson

Wendi Tostenson (Jan 22, 2025 16:53 CST)

Signature

Dr. Wendi Tostenson, President

Name and Title

01/22/2025

Date

EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPANT:

Putnam County School System

Corby R. King

Corby R. King (Jan 22, 2025 15:06 CST)

Signature

Corby King, Director of Schools, Putnam County School System

Name and Title

01/22/2025

Date

## APPENDIX E

<b>VSCC Grant Budget</b>				
<b>Rural Health Care Pathways Expansion Grant</b>				
<b>The grant budget line-item amounts below shall be applicable only to expense incurred during the following</b>				
<b>Applicable</b>				
<b>Period: BEGIN: August 1, 2025 END: July 31, 2029</b>				
<b>Object Line-item Reference</b>	<b>EXPENSE OBJECT LINE-ITEM CATEGORY</b>	<b>GRANT CONTRACT</b>	<b>GRANTEE PARTICIPATION</b>	<b>TOTAL PROJECT</b>
1, 2	Salaries, Benefits & Taxes	\$ 834,272.00	\$ -	\$ 834,272.00
4, 15	Professional Fee, Grant & Award	-		-
5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	Supplies, Telephone, Postage & Shipping, Occupancy, Equipment Rental & Maintenance, Printing & Publications	73,235.00		73,235.00
11, 12	Travel, Conferences & Meetings	28,000.00		28,000.00
13	Interest	-		-
14	Insurance	-		-
16	Specific Assistance to Individuals? (Scholarships/Stipends)	101,020.00		101,020.00
17	Depreciation	-		-
18	Other Non-Personnel	149,270.00		149,270.00
20	Capital Purchase	384,000.00		384,000.00
22	Indirect Cost	120,840.00		120,840.00
24	In-Kind Expense	-		-
25	GRAND TOTAL	\$ 1,690,637.00	\$ -	\$ 1,690,637.00

## APPENDIX E – BUDGET PLAN

### Line 1: Salaries and Wages

Two 12-month, full-time faculty positions will be supported 100% by the grant with plans for full institutionalization of positions at the end of the grant contract. A 3% cost-of-living increase is built into the positions.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Grant Budget Faculty #1	71,920	74,078	76,300	78,589	300,877
Grant Budget Faculty #2	71,920	74,078	76,300	78,589	300,877
Total	143,840	148,156	152,600	157,178	601,774

### Line 2: Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes

Benefits are estimated at 30% of salaries.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Grant Budget Faculty #1	32,364	32,364	32,364	32,364	129,456
Grant Budget Faculty #2	32,364	32,364	32,364	32,364	129,456
Total	64,728	64,728	64,728	64,728	258,912

### Line 4: Professional Fees

No professional fees costs.
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### Line 5: Supplies, etc.

Supplies include all materials required to participate in the laboratory component of the Respiratory Care Technology program. One set of supplies is assigned to each student with a maximum enrollment of twenty in the cohort. The supplies cover the entire duration of the program.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Laboratory Supplies for RESP course	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	32,000

### Line 6: Telephone

No telephone costs

### Line 7: Postage & shipping

No postage & shipping

### Line 8: Occupancy

No occupancy

### Line 9: Equipment rental and maintenance

No equipment rental and maintenance

## APPENDIX E – BUDGET PLAN

### Line 10: Printing & publications

No printing & publications

### Line 11: Travel

Travel includes mileage obtained during clinical site visits and travel from the Upper Cumberland region to the Gallatin location for meetings, professional development and training.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
In-State Travel	1000	1000	1000	1000	4,000
Conference Travel Expenses	5400	5400	5400	5400	21600
Total	6400	6400	6400	6400	25600

### Line 12: Conferences & Meetings

Includes registration and meeting expenses to attend the AARC Summer Forum conference for respiratory care educators and managers. Each faculty member will attend yearly.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Conference Registration Faculty #1	600	600	600	600	2,400
Conference Registration Faculty #2	600	600	600	600	2,400
Total	1200	1200	1200	1200	4800

### Line 13: Interest

No interest

### Line 14: Insurance

No insurance

### Line 16: Special Assistance to Individuals

Includes funds to provide scholarships to VSCC RCT Program (Cookeville). This funding will be considered last dollar and provided without stipulation of other forms of financial aid (federal or state) that may or may not cover fees.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Stipends	25255	25255	25255	25255	101,020

## APPENDIX E – BUDGET PLAN

### Line 17: Depreciation

No depreciation

### Line 18: Other Non-Personnel

Robust marketing campaigns are indicated to recruit students and bring awareness to the community about the addition of “Access to Respiratory Care” initiative. Testing fees include examination tools to prepare students for the National Board for Respiratory Care credentialing exams.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Marketing Materials & Outreach	13,750	13,750	13,750	13,750	55,000
Testing Fees	23380	23380	23380	23380	93520
Total	37,130	37,130	37,130	37,130	148,520

### Line 20: Capital Purchase

Students will receive education and training using the latest, technologically advanced respiratory care equipment commonly found in medical facilities. This exposure will enhance their self-efficacy and practical experience, expanding their knowledge base and better preparing them to successfully challenge national credentialing examinations, making them highly attractive candidates to potential employers. The one-time purchases are projected to be last for more to 10 years.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Servo U Ventilator	\$55,000	0	0	0	\$55,000
SIPAP Machine	\$10,000	0	0	0	\$10,000
Resistance and Compliance Test Lungs (2) \$5000.00 each	\$10,000	0	0	0	\$10,000
Mannequins (5) \$2,300.00 each	\$11,500	0	0	0	\$11,500
V30 BiPAP (2) \$10,000.00 each	\$20,000	0	0	0	\$20,000
GE Carescape Ventilator	\$55,000	0	0	0	\$55,000
Drager V500 Ventilator	\$55,000	0	0	0	\$55,000
Drager V800 Ventilator	\$55,000	0	0	0	\$55,000
V60 BiPAP (4) \$15,000.00 each	\$60,000	0	0	0	\$60,000
Hamilton C-1's (4) \$16,000.00 each	\$64,000	0	0	0	\$64,000
Total	395,500				

## APPENDIX E – BUDGET PLAN

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**Line 22: Indirect Cost**

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
Expenses associated with administrative functions such as project reports, financial information, etc. equate to 8% of total cost.	30210	30210	30210	30210	120,840

**Line 24: In-Kind Expense**

No in-kind expenses

## **Volunteer State Community College**

### **POSITION DESCRIPTION**

<b>Position Title:</b>	<b>Instructor of Respiratory Care Technology <del>Site Coordinator</del> 12 Month</b>
<b>Position Number:</b>	<b>XXX</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Health Sciences</b>
<b>Division:</b>	<b>Academic Affairs</b>
<b>Reporting Relationship:</b>	<b>Director of Respiratory Care Technology</b>

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

This position is responsible for delivering quality instruction using integrative technologies. Faculty are expected to provide academic advising to students and participate in college, department and community activities related to the College's mission.

The respiratory (RESP) care- instructor works under the supervision of the Director of Respiratory Care. The instructor participates in the assessment, planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of program curriculum. The instructor conducts classroom, skills lab, and online instruction for RESP courses. The instructor coordinates student advising and associated clinical site management for the Emergency Medical Services Education Program.

### **TYPICAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Teach 38 – 42 TLE per- year via on-ground, online, hybrid or web-enhanced modalities as assigned.

Teach evening, weekend, off-campus, and distance-based courses as required.

Develop curriculum, evaluate and review of credit and non-credit courses.

Evaluate and monitor progress to achieve goals and objectives (and those by any licensing, registering or certifying agency as applicable); assist with affiliation and accreditation efforts.

Recruit and advise students and support persistence/progression through graduation.

Maintain office hours and availability to students.

Complete required College trainings.

Complete all required reports such as attendance, Early Alerts, progress reports, grade submissions and administer and return surveys by the required deadlines.

Attend college, department, and faculty meetings.

Serve on college and department committees.

Attend professional development activities.

Participate in community service.

Comply with all of the College's and TBR's policies and guidelines.



## **APPENDIX E**

The instructor assists in compliance with Tennessee Board of Regents guidelines, licensure requirements, and other state and federal regulations while maintaining program accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon recommendation of Committee on the Accreditation of Educational Programs for EMS Professions (CoAEMSP). The instructor supervises and directs required reporting to Tennessee Department of Health/Office of EMS.

Collaborates with other outside agencies to identify new courses and programs.

Coordinates with Clinical Coordinators on clinical sites including scheduling of students, facilitating orientation to sites, functioning as emergency contact, provides line of communications with clinical sites; travel for training and conferences is required.

Oversees use of facilities and equipment for day, evening, and weekend classes. Maintains inventory of training equipment and assure it is available at each class.

Assist in selection and orientation of instructors and field internship preceptors.

Acts as liaison between students, sponsoring agencies, local medical community and state level certifying/licensing agency; conduct advisory committee meetings.

Recruit and advise students concerning the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Education Program; addresses student concerns regarding instruction and evaluation.

Provide formal lecture and serve as an instructor for classroom and skills labs.

Other duties as assigned.

### **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

Associate's Degree from a regionally accredited institution with minimum of five years full time experience in emergency medical services (EMS) as a paramedic and a minimum of two years educational or instructional experience in EMS training or programs.

Must meet requirements established by the Commission of Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) upon recommendation from Committee on the Accreditation of Educational Programs for EMS Professions (CoAEMSP), and the Tennessee Department of Health/Office of EMS.

Must be licensed or eligible for Paramedic licensure in Tennessee; Paramedic licensure must be free from revocation, denial, or suspension.

Minimum of five years work experience in a clinical practice in a setting which includes active participation in an EMT relationship.

### **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS**

Bachelor's Degree from a regionally accredited institution.

Supervisory or management experience.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND WORK CHARACTERISTICS**

Knowledge and/or experience using a variety of instructional delivery modes.

Ability to communicate effectively and work cooperatively with a diverse faculty, staff, and student population.

Proficient in Microsoft Office applications.

Proven educational or administrative experience in critical thinking, problem solving and judgment skills.

## APPENDIX E

### **WORK HOURS**

37.5 hours per week.

## Volunteer State Community College

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<b>Position Number:</b>	<b>XXX</b>
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Teach evening, weekend, off-campus, and distance-based courses as required.

Develop curriculum, evaluate and review of credit and non-credit courses.

Coordinate the satellite location under the supervision of the program director

Evaluate and monitor progress to achieve goals and objectives (and those by any licensing, registering or certifying agency as applicable); assist with affiliation and accreditation efforts.

Recruit and advise students and support persistence/progression through graduation.

Maintain office hours and availability to students.

Complete required College trainings.

Complete all required reports such as attendance, Early Alerts, progress reports, grade submissions and administer and return surveys by the required deadlines.

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## **APPENDIX E – BUDGET PLAN**

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## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND WORK CHARACTERISTICS**

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Ability to communicate effectively and work cooperatively with a diverse faculty, staff, and student population.

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