



Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Associate of Science (AS) Respiratory Care Program at Polk State College. Respiratory Therapists (RT) work with patients who have a variety of heart and/or lung disorders. The RT is an integral member of the medical team and serves as life-support specialists as well as performing a variety of therapeutic, diagnostic, and patient management duties. Common therapeutic procedures include the delivery of oxygen and other medical gases, aerosolized medications, particularly bronchodilators, airway clearance techniques, and mechanical ventilation. Diagnostic testing may include procedures such as arterial blood gas puncture and analysis, pulmonary function testing, and assistance with fiber optic bronchoscopy. Students are trained in the development of both short term and long term patient care plans.

Individuals who choose this career must enjoy working with people and also must be sensitive to the psychosocial and physical needs of the patient. The RT must be able to follow instructions and work well as a team member. In addition to a thorough understanding of human anatomy and physiology with emphasis on the cardiopulmonary system, a background in science and mathematics is essential to student success. Graduates of the program are eligible for credentialing by the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) and for licensure in the state of Florida.

Included in the packet are the following documents:

1. Application for the Respiratory Care Program
2. American Association of Respiratory Care (AARC) Definition of Respiratory Care
3. Statement of Ethics and Professional Conduct; Respiratory Care Scope of Practice
4. AARC at a Glance
5. Guidelines for Individuals with Disabilities
6. Board Examinations and Florida Licensing Information
7. Respiratory Care Program Fees
8. Assignments for RT Applicants

\*Applications for Polk State College are available on line: [www.polk.edu/respiratory](http://www.polk.edu/respiratory)

The Respiratory Care Program is a selective admission, limited access program. The program starts in the fall term. The Respiratory Care Program requires a full time commitment throughout the two year curriculum including a summer term in the first year.

If you have previous training and/or coursework in respiratory care, please explain this in the allotted space of the Allied Health Application. This packet contains an assignment to facilitate an understanding of a career as a respiratory therapist. Information can be obtained on the website: [www.aarc.org](http://www.aarc.org) .

If the application is returned via mail, please send to:

**Shana Kent-Smith, Mail Station #74, Polk State College, 3425 Winter Lake Road Lakeland, FL 33803-9765**

Clinical Experience(s) may be scheduled for morning or afternoon shifts starting in Term II (Year 1). Employment opportunities are excellent throughout the state and nation. Registered respiratory therapists can expect locally starting salaries at approximately \$40,000-\$50,000 annually. For additional information please call me at (863)298-6818 or Tanya Bird DHed, RRT, Director of Clinical Education at (863)298-6874.

Sincerely,  
Shana Kent-Smith, MHA/MEd., RRT  
Program Director, Respiratory Care  
E-mail: [SKent-Smith@polk.edu](mailto:SKent-Smith@polk.edu)