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## **PCC's Polysomnography Tech program earns kudos from visiting accreditation team**

**PUEBLO** – Pueblo Community College's Polysomnography Technology program will soon have the distinction of being the only such accredited academic program in Colorado. Not only that, but the eight students in its first graduating class later this month have been trained in one of only 40 such programs in the country.

One year after it was launched, the Polysomnography Tech program drew nothing but positive comments recently in an exit report written by an accreditation team following a site visit to PCC. The visitors applauded the college's ability to stand up such a quality program so quickly.

"They told us that the official accreditation can be expected in two to three months," stated Patricia McCandless, the program's coordinator who is registered as both a respiratory therapist and polysomnographic technologist, which is sometimes referred to as a "sleep tech."

The visiting team's exit report lauded PCC's program for having strong support from its administration, involvement of a medical director, positive and future-oriented students, excellent community outreach and commitment to education, a committed and involved advisory committee, and excellent leadership from McCandless.

The program started at PCC in the fall of 2010 and will have eight students in its first graduating class at the end of this month. The graduates will be Jason Aguirre, Nicole Chapparo, René Curtis, Carol Martinez, Sheila Quintero, Samantha Schauer, Heidi Schockey and Callie Sefcovic.

Polysomnography is a multi-parametric test used in the study of sleep and as a diagnostic tool in sleep medicine. It involves operating a variety of sophisticated monitoring devices, which record brain activity (EEG), muscle and eye movements, respiration, blood oxygen levels, and other physiologic events. Technologists are also involved in the evaluation of various treatment methods.

PSG technologists are typically employed in sleep laboratories located in medical centers, clinical/office settings or free standing sleep labs. Some technologists transition into management and marketing of sleep centers, product sales and support, and public and patient education regarding sleep disorders.

Currently, the average polysomnographic technologist can expect to earn a yearly salary between approximately \$38,000 and \$43,000, and those with advanced training and experience can earn about \$47,000 annually.

Students are accepted into the PCC certificate program after completing prerequisites. Nine students are currently enrolled and ready to start the program in the fall semester that will begin Aug. 22. For information about the program, call 549-3280.

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*Founded in 1933, Pueblo Community College is a premier teaching institution focused on providing academic and service excellence to help its students acquire the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills needed to better their lives. An educational and technological leader, PCC fosters economic development and utilizes strong partnerships in the communities it serves through its Pueblo, Fremont and Southwest campuses.*