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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Respiratory Therapy program is being placed into moratorium**

GREAT FALLS — The Respiratory Therapy program at Great Falls College MSU is being placed into moratorium. Students currently in the program will be able to finish and graduate spring semester of 2021. They will be eligible to take the NBRC examinations to become licensed. The program will maintain full accreditation during this program teach out period. No new students will be accepted into the program as Great Falls College closely studies the current job market.

The program started in 1981 as a one-year Respiratory Technician certificate. In 1984 it expanded to become a two-year respiratory therapist program. In 1990, the Board of Regents approved it as an Associate of Applied Science degree. There have been almost 500 Respiratory Technicians and Respiratory Therapists graduate from the inception of the program. Those graduates account for a substantial number of the respiratory therapists practicing in the state.

The success of the program has been largely due to the unwavering support from the Great Falls medical community, including Benefis Health System, the Great Falls Clinic and, prior to the merger, Columbus and Deaconess Hospitals.

Enrollment numbers have declined over the past several years. Local area hospitals, clinics, and medical practices have few open positions for respiratory therapists. People interested in the career field may enroll at the program at Missoula College.

For more information please contact:

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