



North Orange County Regional Occupational Program  
385 North Muller Street, Anaheim, CA 92801  
(714) 502-5858  
<http://www.nocrop.us>

## **Facts at a Glance**

### **What is the North Orange County Regional Occupational Program?**

North Orange County ROP is a publicly-funded career-technical preparation and training provider. The program prepares primarily high school students and some adults in more than 100 occupations and provides them with job placement assistance. Several ROP programs and classes lead to state and industry certifications. Last year, over 22,500 students enrolled in more than 300 classes, many taking more than one class. More than 18,700 of those were high school students. ROP holds classes on 25 high school campuses and on five ROP campuses. North Orange County ROP is a cooperative venture in career-technical education among five school districts--Anaheim Union and Fullerton Joint Union High School Districts, and Brea Olinda, Los Alamitos and Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School Districts.

### **What is the Mission of the North Orange County ROP?**

The mission of the North Orange County ROP is to provide a high quality, relevant career technical education to a diverse student population. This education prepares students to succeed in employment, career change or advancement, and further education.

### **What Does North Orange County ROP Do for Students?**

- Prepares students of all ability levels for entry-level and advanced employment.
- Offers students opportunities to learn problem solving and communication skills.
- Retrains students in advanced or changing technology.
- Offers opportunities to intern in more than 650 businesses in North Orange County.
- Collaborates with school districts' tech prep and academy program teachers and staff to create quality career education for all students.
- Assists students to prepare for advanced training.
- Presents students with opportunities to earn high school graduation credits and advanced placement or credits at community colleges.
- Strengthens workplace basic skills—job keeping skills.
- Offers job placement assistance and help with resume writing and interviewing skills.

### **What Does North Orange County ROP Do for the Community?**

- Responds to market trends with curriculum that meets job market needs.
- Provides business and industry with a specifically trained, immediately productive pool of skilled employees.
- Hires instructors with at least five years recent industry experience and credentialed by California as teachers.
- Gives business and industry the opportunity to contribute advice on curriculum, textbooks, training environments and instruction to students in their fields.
- Reduces unemployment.
- Provides services to students with special needs through partnerships with state and local agencies, as well as churches and other private social service agencies.

### **How Do Students Enroll?**

High school students register for classes at their home campus. Adults enroll at the Student Services Department, 385 N. Muller, Anaheim, 92801. Call **(714) 502-5858** for information about classes or services or visit ROP on the web at <http://www.nocrop.us>.

## Longitudinal Study Reveals ROPs' Lasting Value on Students' Lives

In a longitudinal study conducted by Dr. Douglas E. Mitchell, of the School Improvement Research Group, at the University of California, Riverside, in October 2006, and funded by the California Department of Education, ROCP students were found to have benefited more from their school experience than a comparison group of their peers. The following excerpts from the study describe concrete results for students who took ROP classes. The data shows that ROP students:

- Improve their high school grade point averages at a greater rate than comparison students.** On average, these students enter ROCP training programs with academic records well below those of a Comparison Group of their high school peers. Nevertheless, as they move through high school they raise their grade point averages by about one-third of a grade – significantly more than that of the Comparison Group of similar students who did not take ROCP courses.
- Enroll in post-secondary education in large numbers.** ROCP graduates report continuing on to post-secondary educational programs at rates comparable to those of the Comparison Group in this study. Though the Comparison Group attends 4-year colleges at a somewhat higher rate, about half of both groups report continuing their education through Community College enrollment (51% for ROCP graduates, 46% for others). Less than 4% of each group is neither in school nor working.
- Earn higher wages than comparison group peers.** ROCP students report employment in jobs that pay significantly higher wages than those held by a comparison group of their peers. With the average salary for all groups running in the \$7 to \$13 per hour range, the ROCP graduates report earning about \$1.57 per hour more. This is despite the fact that ROCP students were initially lower achieving and lower socio-economic than the comparison group. It is particularly important to note that ROCP training leads to higher and more equal wage rates for all gender and ethnic sub-groups within this study. ROCP females earn more than comparison females. Likewise, ROCP students of all ethnic backgrounds make more than comparison group white males.
- Have more success in securing raises and promotions on the job.** In addition to commanding higher hourly wages, ROCP graduates generally report pay raises and job promotion rates higher than other high school graduates (about 5% more frequent raises and promotions).
- Prefer ROCP classes over other subjects.** Only English Language Arts and Music/Art/Drama classes come close to matching their enthusiasm for ROCP course work.

### OBSERVATIONS

Judging by the initial gap in GPAs between ROCP students and comparison students, to a significant degree, high schools are utilizing ROCP to help address the needs of students who are lower in achievement and more at-risk than other non-college preparatory students in their schools. Despite initially lower levels of achievement, ROCP students have substantially less growth in absenteeism between grades 10 and 12 when compared with the higher achieving Comparison Group. This is an important finding because the later job successes of these previously lower achieving students demonstrate that ROCP can be an effective intervention for a broad range of high school students, including those that confront significant challenges to their success – significantly improving employment prospects.

The satisfaction survey data from this study paint a picture of ROCP students who are improving their academic achievement, going on to post-secondary instruction, increasing their employability skills, obtaining higher wage jobs, and having a positive view of their ROCP experiences. It is recommended that further research be conducted to examine larger numbers of ROCP students in order to see if this achievement and work success profile remains constant.

California's ROCPs provide a meaningful educational experience to a broad range of students. They are providing these students with experiences that these students prefer over their other high school training experiences. ROCP training provides students, on average, with both successful entry into the job market and continuing education opportunities after leaving high school.

A delivery system such as ROCP not only provides students with employability skills, but also reinforces academic skills and can be a useful strategy for helping to raise overall high school graduation rates. It can provide strong support for numbers of students pursuing post-secondary schooling. In a state where "approximately 1/3 of all California high school students drop out of school" (ConnectEd 2006), ROCP programs are playing an important role in supporting these efforts to keep kids in school.

