

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grant money will help continue PBCC success

(Lake Worth, Fla. – Nov. 15, 2007) More than \$611,000 in grant money has been awarded to Palm Beach Community College through three SUCCEED grants from the Florida Department of Education. These grants will be used to launch a health information management program and expand current programs in teacher preparation and biotechnology.

“These grants will help PBCC continue to be responsive to the education and training needs of our community,” said PBCC president Dennis P. Gallon.

Grant money to establish the county’s first health information management degree program will help fill a need in one of the county’s fastest growing occupations. There are approximately 63 annual openings for certified health information technicians countywide but no local training for them. The more than \$175,000 in grant money will be used to this year to develop curriculum, hire staff, develop partnerships with local healthcare employers where students will fulfill internship requirements as well as other start-up measures.

There is also a huge need for certified teachers in Palm Beach County and with \$150,000 of SUCCEED funds, PBCC will continue to help fill that need through the Teachers on Track (TOT) program, a component of the Educator Preparation Institute. These funds will allow the program to be offered at PBCC at Palm Beach Gardens as well as at Lake Worth. Additionally, the funds will be used for scholarships, textbooks, instructional materials and faculty. The projected enrollment for this program during the 2007-2008 grant period is 265 students.

SUCCEED monies will also help expand the College’s biotechnology program, which has grown faster than anticipated. The grant funds will allow for the added option of offering current core biotech courses in a distance learning format. There will also be an expansion of the internships and business partnerships, a win-win for students and the community as well as other aspects of expanding the program. It is anticipated that the more than \$282,000 grant will help produce a minimum fourfold boost in enrollment and completion in the biotechnology programs within the next three years.

About Palm Beach Community College: Serving more than 45,000 students annually, Palm Beach Community College is the largest institution of higher education in Palm Beach County, providing associate degrees, professional certificates, career and customized training and lifelong learning. Florida’s first public community college, PBCC offers more than 100 programs of study at locations in Lake Worth, Boca Raton, Palm Beach Gardens and Belle Glade.

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