



PALM BEACH STATE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Palm Beach State 15th in nation in production of associate degree graduates

(Lake Worth, Fla. – June 20, 2011) Palm Beach State College remains the 15th largest producer of associate degree graduates among all two-year and four-year institutions in the country that offer such degrees, according to rankings released this month by the education publication, *Community College Week*.

To develop its Top 100 listings, *Community College Week* examined data for the 2009-2010 academic for institutions that offer degrees and certificates. This list includes schools like Palm Beach State that have begun offering bachelor's degrees in addition to associate degrees. The listing shows that Palm Beach State awarded 3,245 associate degrees that year, which is the sixth highest among the institutions in Florida.

Palm Beach State also ranks 14th in the nation in the number of associate degrees awarded to minorities, 16th in the nation in the number of associate degrees awarded to African Americans and 19th in the nation in the number of associate degrees awarded to Hispanics. While those rankings are in line with the previous year's listings, the College, for the first time, ranks in the top 100 for associate degrees awarded to Asian Americans. The College is 76th. The College also jumped from 8th largest last year to the 5th largest producer this year of associate degrees in liberal arts & science, general studies and humanities. *Community College Week's* analysis uses data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Set (IPEDS) completions survey.

The rankings are not surprising for Palm Beach State, which has experienced record enrollment increases over the last several years and seen its student population become increasingly diverse. In addition, as unemployment in Florida hovers in the double digits, universities limit their enrollments and Bright Futures funding shrinks and its requirements stiffen, more students are choosing to get their Associate in Arts first and then transfer to a university.

Serving more than 52,000 students annually, Palm Beach State College is the largest institution of higher education in Palm Beach County, providing bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, professional certificates, career training and lifelong learning. Established in 1933 as Florida's first public community college, it offers more than 100 programs of study at locations in Lake Worth, Boca Raton, Palm Beach Gardens and Belle Glade.

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