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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Palm Beach State to celebrate first new building on Belle Glade campus in 30 years

Programs in the Technical Education Center, the College's first "green" building, are expected to boost training opportunities in the Glades

(Belle Glade, Fla. – Aug. 26, 2010) Palm Beach State College will officially celebrate the opening of its first "green" building with three days of festivities Sept. 16-18 including a Family Fun Day for the community.

The two-story, 33,982-square-foot Technical Education Center is the first new building constructed on the Belle Glade campus in more than 30 years. While other new or recently renovated buildings at Palm Beach State contain eco-friendly features, this is Palm Beach State's first building constructed entirely to the Gold LEED standards of the U.S. Green Building Council.



With state-of-the-art training facilities for programs in corrections/criminal justice, sustainable building construction, welding, sugar technology and cosmetology, the Technical Education Center is expected to provide a much-needed boost in training opportunities for the Glades community, which has been challenged by high unemployment.

The programs will prepare workers for jobs expected to emerge from an economic development plan for the Lake Okeechobee region, including the county jail expansion, a possible inland logistics center and the new FPL power plant.

"It's a great asset. We need a trained workforce. It's going to be wonderful to see this happen," said Brenda Bunting, executive director of the Belle Glade Chamber of Commerce.

Themed “Celebrate our Bright Future...Shades required,” the celebration includes a building dedication at 4 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 16, and tours of the building for high school students on Friday, Sept. 17. The festivities will culminate on Saturday, Sept. 18 with a Family Fun Day from 10 a.m. to noon. It will include tours of the building, financial literacy workshops in Spanish and English, food and entertainment. In addition, the Cosmetology students will provide free manicures and facials for adults. The Family Fun Day is free and open to the public.

The \$13 million project includes \$7.5 million for the building designed by L.D. Astorino and Associates, Ltd., Co. and built by Hedrick Brothers Construction Company, Inc. The College received nearly \$800,000 in community support to assist with the cost of building construction. These contributions are eligible for state matching dollars, which would bring the value to \$1.5 million.

The building, which also includes multipurpose meeting rooms open for public functions, a food service area, wellness center, and classrooms for continuing education courses, is in keeping with Palm Beach State’s sustainability initiatives to conserve energy and resources and help protect the environment. Among the building features are a wastewater recycling system, energy efficient interior lighting, and renewable energy sources. The native landscape design uses storm-water runoff for irrigation, eliminating the need for a permanent irrigation system.

Serving more than 52,000 students annually, Palm Beach State College is the largest institution of higher education in Palm Beach County, providing the bachelor’s degree, 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.

Editor’s note: Media tours of the facility also are encouraged and available for advance coverage of this event. Please call (561) 868-3127 to arrange your tour and for a high-resolution photo of the building.

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