

# Contact

FOR THE FRIENDS OF  
PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE

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Serving from the Heart

Student Trustees: Where Are They Now?

Gareth Williams: Hollywood Class Act

New Home for Bachelor's Degrees  
and Honors College

# Learning to Serve

Is there anything more gratifying than helping someone in need? At Palm Beach State College, our students, faculty and staff know well the joy of pitching in to make life better for people in our community.

The caring, generous spirit that permeates all of our campuses is embodied in a broad range of service activities – painting homes for elderly or disabled persons, raising funds to cure cancer and heart disease, cleaning beaches, collecting food and clothing for local families, just to name a few. In addition to community service projects, the College also has launched the Academic Service-Learning initiative, which enables students to undertake specialized service projects as a part of their studies. I invite you to read more about what motivates and inspires our students to serve as they learn.

At Palm Beach State, learning also brings opportunities to develop leadership skills. In this issue of *Contact*, we reconnect with nine former students who have held a unique role at the College: Each was selected to serve a one-year term as the student representative on the College's District Board of Trustees. Though they each have taken different paths to success, they say the trustee experience



was one of the most important in their academic life. The same sense of accomplishment is reflected in the featured stories of other alumni successes. From the Hollywood soundstage to the legal circles of Miami and the international consulate arena, our graduates say they are still reaping the benefits of their first higher education experiences here.

Who will be the next alumni accomplishing great things? It's always hard to predict, but this spring's graduating class includes a historic group: More than 100 graduates will receive the Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervision and Management degree, becoming Palm Beach State's first class of bachelor's degree recipients. We applaud their accomplishment and are confident that all of our graduates are well prepared to contribute their skills and knowledge to benefit our community.

*Dennis P. Gallon*

Dennis P. Gallon, Ph.D., President

# Contact

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**Palm Beach State College, founded in 1933** as Florida's first public community college, is a diverse, comprehensive institution dedicated to serving the educational needs of Palm Beach County. Integrally linked to the community through strong partnerships, the College provides associate and baccalaureate degrees, professional certificates, workforce development and lifelong learning.

Palm Beach State College's mission is to create and sustain a dynamic teaching and learning environment that provides a high-quality, accessible, affordable education, preparing students to contribute and compete ethically and successfully in a diverse global community.

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Early morning before heading to the Guadalupe Center in Immokalee

## Students, Employees Step Up to Help in Times of Need

# Serving from the Heart

BY TABATHA B. McDONALD

**B**efore dawn on a Friday in October, nine Palm Beach State College students piled into a van with a trunk load of bags and boxes filled with clothes, shoes and toiletries.

With no classes on their schedules, they could have slept in. Yet, they were on the Palm Beach Gardens campus at 6 a.m., wide-eyed and eager to make a nearly three-hour drive to deliver the donations to the Guadalupe Center of Immokalee. The nonprofit agency in Southwest Florida provides an array of services to help the rural farming community's poor. It provides a showers program, clothing room and soup kitchen, among other services.

Members of the Spanish Club (Uniendo Culturas), with support from their advisor, Spanish Professor Patricia Betancourt, came up with the idea after watching a documentary, "Immokalee U.S.A.," highlighting the plight of migrant workers and families in a community in which more than 50 percent of the people live below the poverty line. After organizing a collection drive, in partnership with the College's District Diversity Committee, a group of 13, including Spanish Club members, students from Betancourt's Spanish classes and members of the District Diversity committee, delivered mounds of gently-used clothes, shoes, toothpaste, deodorant and soap in a caravan of vehicles. They also spent much of the day in Immokalee getting a close-up look at the work of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, including its fight for fair wages.

"I feel very good because it's an educational and also a community helping trip," said

Yona Mishanina, public relations officer for the Spanish Club. "In my country (Russia), we don't do this. We don't help other people who are living worse than we do. I want to experience helping the community."

"It's going to be a full day, but it's so very rewarding," said Juan Felipe Rico, president of the Spanish Club, prior to the caravan's departure. "There are issues that are happening in our own state, modern-day slavery. We want these people to feel supported and know that we know what's going on there."

The Immokalee collection drive is just one example of many ways Palm Beach State College students and employees have stepped up to help the community. They do everything from raising money for cancer and heart disease research to feeding the hungry and picking up trash in parks and along roads. They paint homes for low income and disabled residents and donate school supplies for local children.

Serving the community is part of the culture of student and employee clubs and organizations at Palm Beach State College, and in times of major tragedies the College mobilizes quickly to help. For example, the College held a collection drive to assist the nation of Haiti after it was devastated a year ago by a massive earthquake, and when a longtime adjunct professor who has no insurance needed money for eye surgery, employees and students pitched in to help.

College leaders say they have an obligation to

*continued on page 5*



**A Sampling of Serving**

- Coastal Clean-Up - Lake Worth Lagoon
- Hypoluxo Scrub Area Clean-Up
- Making Strides Against Breast Cancer
- Special Olympics golf and bowling outings
- Paint Your Heart Out
- Lake Worth Pantry
- Heart Walk
- Guadalupe Center, Immokalee
- HomeSafe - Halloween Craft Party



Visit our YouTube channel and Flickr photo galleries.

*continued from page 3*

teach students to get involved and give back to the community, and they point to research showing that such involvement improves retention.

“Students who participate in community service and are involved in school are more likely to graduate because they connect with others like them,” said Olivia Morris, student activities coordinator on the Lake Worth campus. “I think the real impact is on the students. When you help others, you’re helping yourself, and they’re able to see that.”

There are numerous opportunities for students to serve the community through activities that are required as part of courses with an Academic Service-Learning component or as part of their participation in the Honors College, student clubs or the Center for Student Leadership. Professors often give extra credit to students who engage in community service.

“A big part of the College is being a part of the community and giving back to the community,” said Mareta Iosia-Sizemore, student life manager. “You gain a lot. You feel good about yourself when you’re doing something for somebody else.”

At the Lake Worth campus, the largest of Palm Beach State’s four campuses, the commitment to community service is underscored by a position that was created solely to coordinate and connect students with opportunities to serve.

“I try to present volunteering and service in a fun way so that I can grab their interest...then I let the whole experience speak for itself,” said Chona Castillo, volunteer program specialist. “It is their obligation as college students to give back to their community. I believe as they do it in college, they’ll also do it when they leave college, and they’ll pass it on to their families and their

peers outside of school. Education doesn’t just stop at college.”

Marc Davis, student activities coordinator at the Boca Raton campus, says he is amazed at how little he has to do to encourage students to volunteer; it’s in their hearts.

“A lot of the clubs here take it upon themselves to do service. I don’t have to find the charities and beat them over the head. They feel a sense of charity and giving. Everybody plays a little part, and it all adds up,” he said.

Those on the receiving end say they could not survive without the support of those in the community, including Palm Beach State students and employees.

“We are grateful to anyone who is making any kind of donation because we operate solely on donations,” said Terrie Aviles, director of client services for the Guadalupe Center. “We never turn anything away. We take what we can.”

Organizers at C.R.O.S. Ministries, which operates three food pantries in Delray Beach, Riviera Beach and Lake Worth and a hot-meal kitchen in Delray, agree.

Students from the Lake Worth campus began volunteering each Friday in the fall at C.R.O.S.’s donation clearinghouse, located in nine units at a storage facility in Lake Worth. They sort canned goods and food and arrange items for easy identification and shipment to the food pantries and hot-meal kitchen. The clearinghouse receives about 8,000 pounds of food donations each week, but donations can swell to as much as 12 tons of

food when major drives occur like those led by the U.S. Postal Service.

“All of that has to be sorted. The volunteers for the College play a very important role in getting that food ready to go out to the pantries to be dispersed to the families in need,” said Charles Gates, a volunteer with C.R.O.S. Ministries for more than eight years who coordinates the clearinghouse and oversees most of the operations at the Lake Worth Pantry. “It’s really been a help to us to have them, especially during this season when we start getting all of that food in. We really get inundated.”

Luis Del Valle, a Palm Beach State student who volunteers at C.R.O.S., said he is happy to help. “I feel everyone should at least help out in school or outside of school. I do both. It makes me feel happy that I’m helping out in society.”

*“It is their obligation as college students to give back to their community. I believe as they do it in college, they’ll also do it when they leave college, and they’ll pass it on to their families and their peers outside of school.”*

**Chona Castillo**  
Volunteer Program Specialist

# Academic Service-Learning

## Giving meaning to giving back

BY TABATHA B. MCDONALD

When the Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Palm Beach County needed help promoting the national Text4Baby campaign locally last year, Palm Beach State College students stepped up to the plate.

The 18 students in Professor Heidi Ladika-Cipolla's class developed a marketing plan with social media, public relations/media and graphics components for the campaign designed to help increase the number of healthy births by educating expectant and new mothers on nutrition, immunization and birth defect prevention. The idea is that you can reach mothers best where a majority of the adult population is, on their cell phones.

After discussing the project as a class, the students formed three groups, with each working on different aspects of the marketing campaign. Then, they pulled everything together. The result was a complete campaign with a Facebook page, public service announcements, posters and flyers that rolled out on Mother's Day.

"It was definitely a win-win," said Rhonda Seriani, director of development/marketing for Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies. "The class helped us implement a successful marketing campaign, and the class got the opportunity for hands-on work that they can put in their portfolios."

That is the goal of Academic Service-Learning, which has been introduced in classrooms at Palm Beach State College.

Just under a dozen professors have incorporated service-learning in 35 class sections over the last three years. While community service is deeply rooted in the culture of colleges and universities, service-learning and academic service-learning are becoming more prevalent.

Ladika-Cipolla, who coordinates service-learning at the College, makes clear the distinction between community service and academic service-learning. Academic service-learning is a required component of a course tied to the learning objective, and it is reflected in the student's grade for the course. The students work on a project that benefits the community and is connected to what they're learning in the class. The project includes reflection activities.

"It takes what you've learned and allows you to make a bigger impact on the community. It can be your local community, Palm Beach County or the state of Florida," she said. "Academic service-learning is a teaching tool. It's another way for students to learn and get information. It offers that real life experience. When they see it or hear it first hand, it makes more sense."

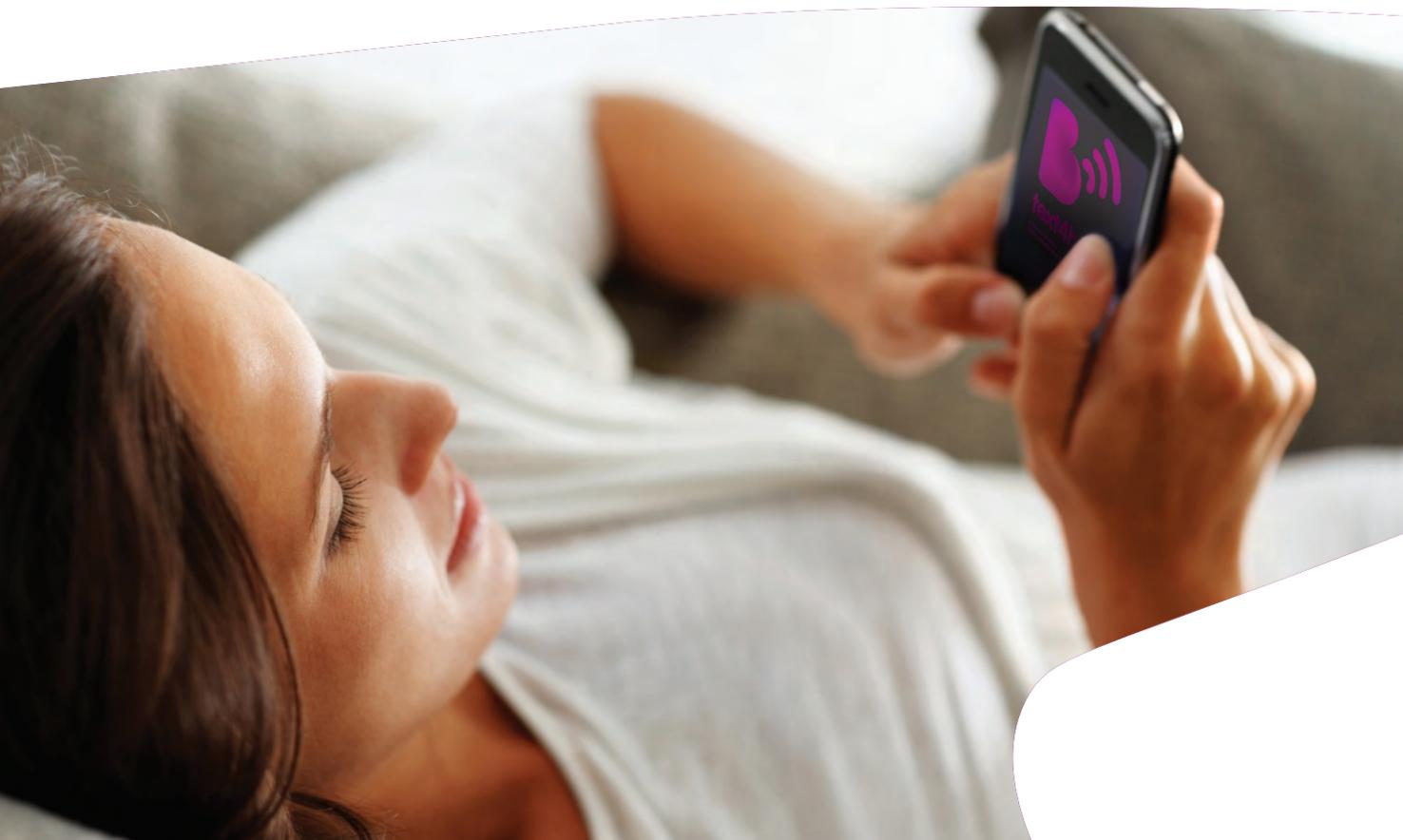
For example, with community service, student clubs may participate in such events as the Relay for Life, raising money for the American Cancer Society, but there is no academic component or reflection activity associated with it. However, with academic service-learning, students would understand the problems relating to heart disease and delve more into connecting it with information they're learning in the class.

"As a College we do many service-oriented activities for our community through our students clubs and organizations. However, service-learning is academic as it relates to student learning. When you are able to relate what is being taught in class to a real-life experience, you learn something from that experience, and you become a better informed citizen," said Dr. Sharon Sass, vice president of academic affairs. "I would love to see our College have a service-learning office where we have all the necessary resources to enable more faculty and students to become engaged in academic service-learning. The benefits to student learning and to the community are invaluable." 

For more projects visit:

[www.palmbeachstate.edu/Service-Learning.xml](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/Service-Learning.xml)

**Academic service-learning** is a required component of a course tied to the learning objective, and it is reflected in the student's grade for the course. The students work on a project that benefits the community and is connected to what they're learning in the class.



# Leaders in the making

**The Palm Beach State College District Board of Trustees created a student trustee position 10 years ago to give the students a voice and a prominent opportunity to hone their leadership skills.**

BY TABATHA B. McDONALD

**F**aith Proper took her seat on the dais next to the five governor-appointed members of the Palm Beach State College District Board of Trustees last fall, becoming the voice for the College's more than 52,000 students.

The aspiring attorney is the 10th student to serve as student trustee since the board established the non-voting position in 2001. Like her predecessors, she quickly settled into the position, attending board meetings, talking to students and meeting with President Dennis Gallon and other key administrators to get a behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to run an educational institution.

"It's been the most amazing experience I've had since I've been at the College," said Proper, who began attending Palm Beach State as a dual enrollment student in spring 2008 when she was a home-schooled high school freshman. "It's exhilarating to see all that happens in order for students to have an affordable education and for the College to function. Sometimes it's difficult to see from the student perspective, but everything really is centered around helping us succeed when we leave here."

Palm Beach State is among only a few of the 28 colleges in the Florida College System with a student trustee position. At other colleges, Student Government Association leaders bring forth student concerns, but they do not have a permanent seat on the dais. Palm Beach State created the position to give students a prominent leadership opportunity and to ensure that their issues and concerns are represented. Trustees said having a student presence on the dais makes a difference, and the trustee position also helps bring together the four campuses, each of which has its own Student Government Association.

"Periodically, issues would come before the Board of Trustees, and someone would ask, 'How do the students feel about this?' Although Dr. Gallon would give what he thought the students were thinking, after a while I thought, we might need to have a student here telling us what the students think," said former Trustee James Watt, who is credited with getting the position in place. An award presented to student trustees at the end of their one-year term is named in his honor.

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Faith Proper is the current student trustee for Palm Beach State.

Former Trustees Susan Baumel and James Watt present Student Trustee Nina Wills with an award. (top right)

Then Sen. Barack Obama greets Student Trustee Ekeyah Wallace at Palm Beach State in 2008.

Eliezer Kinberg, student trustee, left, with then Gov. Charlie Crist and Trustee William Berger at Palm Beach County Day in 2010.

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“We’ve always been interested in trying to create a bridge between students and trustees because we don’t interface with the students very often. This is one way to do it,” said Trustee Carolyn Williams. “It has been mutually beneficial to the student and the trustees, and it has added value to the board deliberations.”

The student trustee attends all board meetings, except those exempt by the Florida Government-in-the-Sunshine Law, and receives the same documentation on matters coming before the board. The student trustee is listed among other trustees on College documents and reports, travels with the trustees to Tallahassee while the Florida Legislature is in session and represents the student body at various College events. Most importantly, the student trustee brings matters important to students to the board and college administrators and provides a student perspective on issues before the board.

“When you have a student who is sitting next to the board on the same platform, it

provides a little more accessibility to the board. It shows that the College is an advocate for students,” said Leonard Bruton, associate dean of academic affairs at the Boca Raton campus, who has chaired the student trustee selection committee for 10 years. The committee, which includes students, faculty, staff and a trustee, selects the trustee each summer after a formal application and interview process.

Although the student trustee does not have a vote, the 10 current and former student trustees say that does not diminish the value of the position. Through the position, students can influence the decisions of the board and the College administration while helping them address student concerns, such as improving the cafeteria food or installing bookshelves in the bathrooms

“It’s got to be one of the most important things I’ve done in my life... I learned more in that job than at any other thing I’ve done... That really opened up a lot of doors for me.”

Todd Maki

to help students with disabilities. They also said the position helped them gain topnotch leadership skills and meet key community, business and political leaders – experiences they otherwise may not have received.

“When I was the student trustee, I had the ear of everybody in the College who I thought could help the students. They were open to listening to what I had to offer,” said Eliezer Kinberg, who served in 2009-10. “I think it’s a position that really has meaning for the College.”

“It’s got to be one of the most important things I’ve done in my life,” said Cpl. Todd Maki, who was the third student trustee and is now in the Army. “I learned more in that job than at any other thing I’ve done in my life. That really opened up a lot of doors for me.”

Former trustee Yury Konnikov said the trip to Tallahassee during the legislative session opened his eyes and fueled his passion for politics. “It really taught me the limits of representation for youth and students at the state level. Students and youth are really not represented well. Had I not been a student trustee, I would have never known about that.”

“It really gave me a huge boost for my self-esteem, as far as leadership, and it allowed me to go on to a lot of leadership positions that I may not have had. It was a great introduction into the local business world,” said Helen Kinney, noting that she was a non-traditional student when she became the first student trustee in 2001.

Ekeyah Wallace, who served in 2008-09, represented the student body and shook hands with Sen. Barack Obama, who hosted his “Growing American Jobs” economic summit with other political heavy hitters at Palm Beach State while on the campaign trail for the White House in October 2008. “It taught me how to conduct myself, and it

definitely helped me as far as going out into the world and not being timid about changing things when they need to be changed.”

Nina Wills, the first and only student from the Belle Glade campus to serve in the position, said she achieved her goal of conducting question-and-answer sessions for students at each campus and raising awareness of the position.

“I was thrust into a leadership position and definitely learned something about myself and how to be a leader and interact with other people,” said Wills, who is now a newspaper reporter. “Everything that I’ve accomplished so far started with being a student trustee. It just prepared me for everything else that followed.”

# Where are they now?

## Student Trustees



2001-2002

**Helen Kinney** runs Steffik Kinney Realty, Inc., which she launched in 2009 after serving as a real estate agent and later operations manager for a large real estate company in Palm Beach County. She served as president in 2009 of the Fort Lauderdale Chapter of the Women’s Council of Realtors and served two years on the board

of directors of the Realtors Association of the Palm Beaches. She is currently serving a third year as a state director for Florida Realtors, recently graduated from the Florida Realtors Leadership Academy and teaches an ethics course for the Realtors Association of the Palm Beaches.



2002-2003

**Minal Weaver** is a personal banker with Chase in Dallas, Texas. She has been in the banking industry since graduating from the College, working first as teller and later teller coordinator at Bank of America. From there she went to Mercantile Bank in Boca Raton as a personal banker before being promoted to assistant manager. She moved to Dallas as a branch manager for Chase, but realized her heart is in working directly with customers to help them with their financial needs.



2003-2004

**Todd Maki** is an Army corporal stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas. He enlisted in 2009 after an unsuccessful bid in 2008 for the Florida House of Representatives District 87 seat. He is currently pursuing master’s degrees at the University of Texas at El Paso and at Trident University International. He received a bachelor’s degree in political science from Florida State University in 2006. While at FSU, he interned for then State Sens. Dave Aronberg and Ron Klein, whom he met as a Palm Beach State student trustee.



2004-2005

**Yury Konnikov** is a systems administrator for Palm Beach County Fire Rescue Information Technology division. He received a bachelor’s degree in information systems at Florida Atlantic University. Konnikov’s interest in government grew while serving as a student trustee, and in 2009 he co-founded the Florida Initiative for Electoral Reform, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that is pushing for electoral reform.



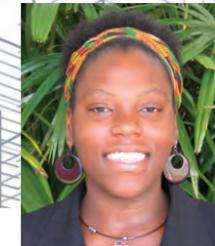
2005-2006

**Misty Filippelli** graduated with a bachelor’s degree in communication from Ashford University in May 2010. She is applying to law schools and hopes to become a lawyer.



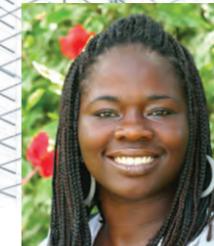
2006-2007

**Nina G. Wills** is a features reporter for the Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers, where she completed an internship last summer. She will complete her bachelor’s degree from FAU with a dual major in multimedia journalism and political science in May. She also has her own blog, “Muck Girl,” with news and information about life in the Glades. She made a cameo appearance last August on the “The Glades” television show on A&E network, in a one-hour episode centered around a topic she covered on her blog.



2007-2008

**Dominique “DeeDee” Desir** received her bachelor’s degree with concentrations in public policy, education and political science from Hampshire College in Massachusetts last May. While a student at Hampshire, she served as chair of the Community Council for the 2009-2010 school year. She currently is working as a community relations coordinator at the headquarters of her church, Joy of Faith Christian Center in Wellington. She plans to pursue a law degree after a two-year break from college.



2008-2009

**Ekeyah J. Wallace** is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in international business at the University of South Florida in Tampa and works full-time.



2009-2010

**Eliezer Kimberg** is pursuing his Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Supervision and Management with a concentration in health management at Palm Beach State. He plans to go to medical school and focus his career on clinical medicine and health care policy.



# A Passion for Clay

## The Art of Victoria Rose Martin

BY MARK UDRY

There is a certain magic in taking an ordinary object and turning it into a work of art. A bolt of cloth becomes a Dior gown, a blank canvas is transformed into the Mona Lisa, a chunk of granite sculpted into a statue of David.

For Associate Professor Victoria Rose Martin, the magic came her senior year in 1994 at the University of Miami, when she took a ceramics class to fill a degree requirement. Martin was majoring in graphic design and wanted to be an illustrator. Before that class, the only time she had worked with clay was scraping it off the underside of her shoes.

"I just picked up a lump of clay and I could do things the other kids couldn't. I remember thinking that I wish this was my major, because I was getting ready to graduate and I really liked the ceramics class," Martin said. "I thought, oh no – what am I going to do?"

Martin received encouragement from Christine Federighi, an arts professor at the university and an internationally recognized ceramics artist. Federighi told Martin to become an artist-in-residence at the university, build a portfolio of work, and apply to the master's program. Martin received a full scholarship and earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in ceramics in 1997 and printmaking in 1999.

She characterizes her clay figures as "a little bit quirky, with sort of a dark undertone to them." Other people have described them as "monster puppets,"

"Marilyn Manson dolls," (a reference to the lead singer of a popular heavy metal band) or characters from a Tim Burton movie. The dream-like figurines are handmade using low-fire clay. They combine animal and human qualities, the surfaces decorated with stamped words and a variety of colors and finishes, including oxides, under glaze, and glaze. Martin has a small studio in her Boynton Beach home she shares with her husband, Jody Pollard, a singer, songwriter and musician.

The inspiration for her work comes from loss and mourning. Federighi, her friend and mentor who fueled her passion for ceramics, died in 2006 after a 12-year battle of cancer. Martin says she began creating the oddly whimsical figures around the time she learned her father was dying a few years ago. Her latest work, a series of paintings with individuals in underwater settings, is dedicated to her mother, who died of heart failure, and her brother Robert, a diver with the city of Tamarac who accidentally drowned on the job in 2010.

### Art with a Message

"It's like Christmas every time Victoria brings us new work; the whole staff comes out to see her work," said Diane Shelly, executive director of the Florida Craftsmen Gallery in St. Petersburg. The gallery represents Florida's fine craft artists and has exhibited Martin's work since 2008. "I particularly like her work, not only because it sells very well but also because it is very timely. Victoria's work has something of a playful, but dark undertone – there's always a message somewhere in her work."

Shelly said the gallery staff was particularly excited last summer to showcase Martin's series of ceramics based on the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Martin started work on the figures shortly after the disaster began last April and created about 30 by the time the well was capped in August.

"I think as artists we can't help but respond to the things we see around us," said Martin. "I would turn on the television and my heart would break seeing all those birds covered in oil, listening to how people were losing their livelihoods to the oil spill."

### The Perfect Balance

Teaching and illustration have become Martin's "bread and butter," a profession that pays the bills and allows her to share her passion for graphic design with her students. Ceramics were "closet art," something she did for enjoyment, but have sold well in galleries all over the world.

Martin began teaching at Palm Beach State as an adjunct instructor at the Boca Raton and Palm Beach Gardens campuses from 2000 to 2002. After a stint in the corporate world as a graphic designer and art director she returned to teaching full time in 2008. Martin is the department chair for graphic design and fine arts on the Lake Worth campus and teaches drawing, painting, art appreciation, multimedia, design fundamentals and digital imagery. She believes she is a tough, but fair instructor, telling her students to become well-rounded by learning print design, web design, photography and writing. Martin also advises students to get a business card and have a website that showcases their work. "I tell them that if they do those two things, they'll always have freelance work," she said.

"Professor Martin knows how to approach a student and give constructive criticism," said Alejandro Milovan, a student in her graphic web design class. "She doesn't criticize us but does point out what is good design and bad design in our work and guides us in the right direction. She takes time with each student, giving encouragement, working with us individually. I've learned a lot from her, and the way she teaches us makes me give extra effort to do my best work."

In addition to her ceramics, Martin also is an accomplished painter; in 2008 she was commissioned to paint pop art-inspired murals at the Venue in London. Another of her public commissions includes a mural at the Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

"I think I've found the perfect balance between my work and my art," she said. "Graphic design is so clean and precise, and there's no room for error. So when I come home from teaching, I'm not staring at a computer monitor all night. I go into my studio, stick my hands in some clay and see what happens."



From the top  
Victoria Martin in her home studio refining two oil spill pieces.

Flying Back in Time makes reference to childhood memories and dreams.

Professor Martin assists a student in her Digital Imagery for the Fine Artist class.

Did I Know explores the loss of her brother.

Black Gloves is a more whimsical sculpture that explores feminine stereotypes.

How Deep's the Oil?

## “Raising Great Expectations” in Lake Worth

With the theme of “Raising Great Expectations,” a gathering of more than 100 local political and business leaders, members of the community and Palm Beach State students, faculty and administrators were on hand Jan. 11 to celebrate the groundbreaking for the new general classroom building on the College’s Lake Worth campus.

When completed in 2012, the 38,000-square-foot, three-story building will house the College’s bachelor’s degree programs and the Floyd F. Koch Honors College. It also will be the symbolic cornerstone marking the College’s transition to a four-year institution.



President Dennis Gallon at the Jan. 11 groundbreaking. See what students and administrators are saying about this exciting new addition on our YouTube channel.



“This building represents the commitment Palm Beach State College has made in creating and sustaining our bachelor’s degree programs,” said College President Dennis P. Gallon. “It will allow our students a seamless transition from our traditional associate degree offerings to a four-year degree.”

Key features of the building include a large outdoor balcony, a three-story atrium lobby, a 170-seat multimedia lecture hall, state-of-the-art, technology-enhanced classrooms with wireless Internet access, multimedia and access to global communications for real-time instruction. The facility will be the first building on the Lake Worth campus constructed to the gold Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards set by the U.S. Green Building Council.

The building will also serve another important function: it will serve as the new “front door” to the campus from Lake Worth Road as the centerpiece of the Central Commons green space design. The \$8 million project was designed by Song + Associates and is being built by Suffolk Construction. The bachelor’s degree programs are currently housed in the Technical Education building, which will be torn down once the new building is completed. ■

# 38,000 sq ft



**A.S.**  
Sustainable  
Construction  
Management

**C.C.C.**  
Sustainable  
Building Specialist  
Drafting for  
Sustainable  
Construction

## New programs set building blocks to a greener future

Palm Beach State College’s newest Associate in Science degree program, Sustainable Construction Management, is teaching aspiring industry professionals about the business and industry applications of environmentally sound building.

Two College Credit Certificate programs, Sustainable Building Specialist and Drafting for Sustainable Construction, are also offered at Palm Beach State to students looking for entry-level employment in the construction field. Each of the 24-credit certificate programs focuses specifically on principles, procedures and theories, technical drawing, how to interpret plans and sustainable construction techniques.

In addition, these programs are popular among those already working in the construction field who want to build their skills or climb the industry ladder. In fact, credit for prior learning and construction work experience is available to those who successfully complete the review process.

Students also can go a step further and transfer into Palm Beach State’s Bachelor of Applied Science program in Supervision and Management. ■

### For more information

[www.palmbeachstate.edu/ConstructionSustainable.xml](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/ConstructionSustainable.xml)  
Call 561-868-3213

[www.palmbeachstate.edu/Bachelor.xml](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/Bachelor.xml)



See the programs:

[www.palmbeachstate.edu/Bachelor.xml](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/Bachelor.xml)

[www.palmbeachstate.edu/Honors.xml](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/Honors.xml)

## Gimelstob Students' Choice Awards honor professors, instructors

**D**edication, preparation and hard work: qualities of a good student and great professor. This year, students nominated and voted for professors who they believe go beyond what is expected to promote student success and inspire enthusiasm for learning. Faculty and staff, as well as students were all previously involved in the nomination and selection process, however, this year only students could participate. Nearly 900 nominee submissions were received, which included comments about the nominees ability to provide direction and clear explanations, build students' self-confidence, develop students' appreciation for the course subject matter, demonstrate how class material applies to the real world and reach students through innovative and creative teaching. The Palm Beach State awards, which include a gold medal and a monetary gift of \$500 for full-time faculty and \$250 for part-time faculty, are named in honor of Herb and Elaine Gimelstob, a Boca Raton couple whose generosity helped establish the Gimelstob Faculty Award Endowment. ■



Professor Andrew Lambert  
Math - Boca Raton



Dr. Silvio Arango-Jaramillo  
Anatomy and Physiology,  
Microbiology and Biology  
- Palm Beach Gardens



Dr. Matilde Roig-Watnik  
Anatomy and Physiology  
- Lake Worth

### The Gimelstob Award WINNERS 2010



Professor Nicholas Larocca  
English - Belle Glade



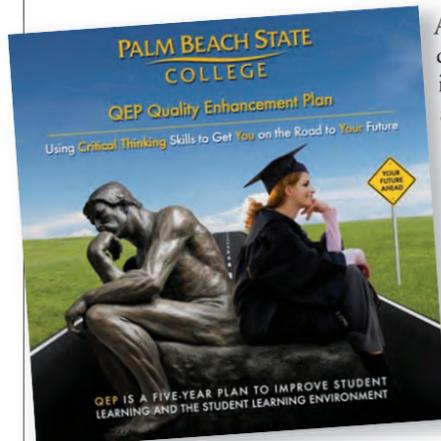
Professor Emily Oliver  
Speech Communication - Lake Worth



Birgitta Fielder  
Practical Nursing - Lake Worth

## “Critical Thinking” is Palm Beach State’s QEP topic

**P**alm Beach State College is launching a comprehensive plan to help students sharpen their critical thinking skills.



To engage students in the process, a poster contest was sponsored by the committee. The winning poster designs were from Lindsay Perry (above) and Todd Price (right).

After an extensive faculty-driven process that included input from students, staff and members of the community through forums and online voting, the College chose “Critical Thinking” as the topic of its Quality Enhancement Plan. As part of its reaccreditation process with the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Palm Beach State is required to identify one major project or

initiative that can be implemented over five years to improve student learning or student learning environments. The College also must thoroughly document how it will assess the initiative or project with measurable goals achievable within that five-year timeframe. More than 140 proposed QEP topics were submitted from faculty, staff and students.

“Tremendous response from a wide variety of College constituents has been overwhelmingly positive,” said Professor Karen Pain, who is chairing the QEP process. “They are eagerly embracing this topic and looking forward to taking the momentum into the implementation phase next year.”

The College is now working on writing the plan in preparation for the SACS committee visit in October 2011. Although preliminary steps will be taken this year, formal implementation of the plan will not begin until after the visit. ■



See the video that explains the QEP on our YouTube channel or at: [www.palmbeachstate.edu/QEP.xml](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/QEP.xml)



## The Fixer

## Estes restores the luster to Panther basketball



Coach Butch Estes

**G**eorge Calvin “Butch” Estes has a reputation for turning around struggling basketball programs. Everywhere Estes has coached he has brought both a winning formula and postseason success. At his last coaching stop at Shoreline Community College in Seattle, Estes took a basketball team that finished 6-21 in his first year to a 20-7 record and the playoffs in his second season. Estes also built (or rebuilt) winning programs at Miami-Dade Community College (2003-2006), Guilford College (1999-2003), Furman University (1985-1994), Presbyterian College (1980-1985). “I take over bad programs and make them into good ones,” said Estes. “It’s not very glamorous, as opposed to coming in and taking over a winning program.”

In the 1990s Estes left coaching for five years to work as basketball analyst for Fox Sports Net. He has also taken assistant coaching positions at East Carolina, Rice and Seattle universities.

Estes earned his B.A. degree in physical education from the University of North Carolina in 1971, where he played freshman basketball and was a student assistant for the legendary coach Dean

Smith. In 1971 he earned his master’s degree in administrative education while a graduate assistant coach at The Citadel.

In his first year as Panthers head coach Estes was named Southern Conference Coach of the Year for his role in reversing the fortunes of the men’s basketball team with a breakout season in 2010-2011.

Coming off a 9-17 record the previous year and finishing last in the Southern Conference, Palm Beach State grabbed the conference crown for the first time in over a decade. Led by All Conference sophomores Chris Colvin and Antonio Johnson, and All State selection freshman Waverly Austin, the Panthers captured the Southern Conference crown with a 9-3 record. In addition, Palm Beach State finished the regular season as the number two-rated team in the state of Florida and ranked twelfth nationally with an overall record of 25-6. The injury-depleted Panthers were ousted from the NJCAA state tournament in the quarterfinals as they fell to Daytona State 72-64.

This season brought Estes’ record as a head coach to 389-301, and in his first year as the Panthers coach, he compiled the second-best season in school history. ■

Sports 2011

# \$1.6 million

BY MARK UDRY

**N**ikki Conners has made tough choices in her life with an eye on a better future – for her and her two children. She was a successful businesswoman in her native Iran but left her homeland to give her two children a better life in this country.

Conners enrolled at Palm Beach State in 2008, earning her Associate in Arts degree in 2009. She is currently taking additional classes at the College while preparing to pursue a bachelor's degree in nursing.

Conners gives credit to the Palm Beach State Foundation in helping her achieve her goals. She was awarded a de Hoernle Endowed Scholarship, available to Palm Beach State students attending the Lake Worth campus. Without the scholarship, Conners said, a college education and a new career would not be possible.

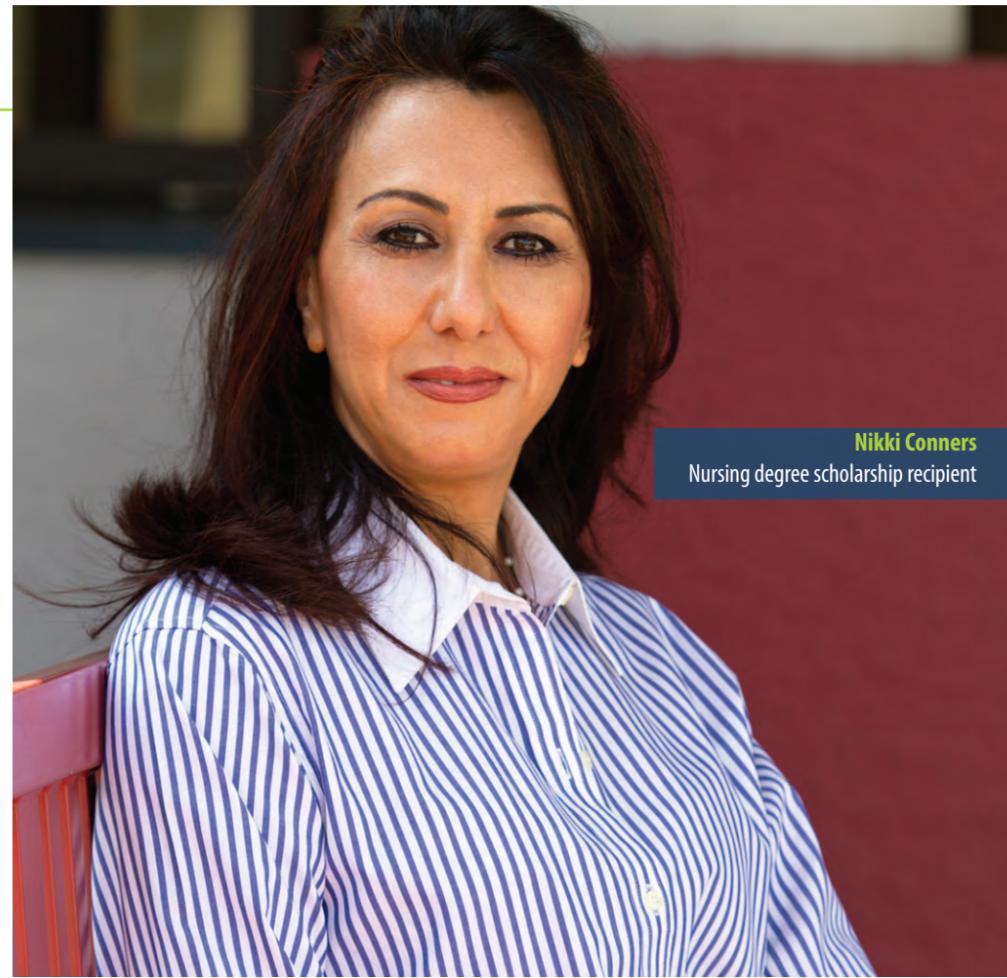
“As a single mother, I have struggled to make ends meet while trying to provide my children the life I never had,” she said. “The scholarship from the Foundation not only lifted my spirits, it also eased my financial burden, allowing me to focus on attaining my degree. That generosity has inspired me to help others, be a better person and give back to my community.”

In 2010 the Foundation awarded more than \$1.6 million in scholarships. More than 1,000 students received financial help from the 175 named scholarships managed by the Foundation. About 900 students

“...Helping others achieve their dream of improving their life through education is the most generous gift of all.”

received scholarship money through the First Generation in College program, established by the Foundation in 2006 after the state legislature appropriated \$5 million to Florida's 28 community colleges to match private contributions dollar-for-dollar to create the funds. The Foundation's state challenge match in 2010 was \$111,000 and it raised \$125,000. With money contributed by the state the Foundation's FGIC fund totaled \$136,000.

“The Foundation is extremely fortunate to have donors who understand that a lack of funding is the number one reason people do not attend college,” said Suellen Mann, executive director of the Foundation. “From corporations, foundations and wealthy philanthropists to working-class people, our donors have remained a consistent source of financial support for our students. Helping others achieve their dream of improving their life through education is the most generous gift of all.”



**Nikki Conners**  
Nursing degree scholarship recipient

### Endowed Scholarships & Planned Giving Endowed Scholarships

An endowed scholarship is a long-term plan in which a donor's contribution is invested. The interest, earnings and dividends are then used to fund scholarships. A specific dollar amount contribution is required to establish this type of scholarship to ensure longevity. With this type of named scholarship, recognition is provided in perpetuity.

Palm Beach State College plans to begin offering a bachelor's degree in nursing in 2012. The Frederick J. and Dorothy A. Luder Endowed Scholarship Fund was recently established with an initial gift of \$200,000 from the Revocable Trust of Dorothy A. Luder for the purpose of providing financial assistance to students who enroll in that program. Students demonstrating financial need and enrolled in the program will receive up to 50 percent of tuition costs.

### Planned Giving

Some donors to the Palm Beach State College Foundation have planned their gifts years in advance and contributed posthumously. Donors can choose to make the Foundation a beneficiary in their will, or establish special trusts/annuities that offer tax advantages while the donor is still living.

Dr. Floyd F. Koch established an endowed scholarship 13 years ago. In his will, Koch also pledged a planned gift contribution of \$210,000 (that will increase in value) towards that scholarship fund for students in the Floyd F. Koch Honors College at Palm Beach State.

### Want to help?

To learn more about endowed scholarships, planned giving or other ways to contribute to the Palm Beach State Foundation, visit [www.palmbeachstate.edu/Foundation.xml](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/Foundation.xml) or call the Foundation office at (561) 868-3450.



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# Gareth Williams

## A Class Act

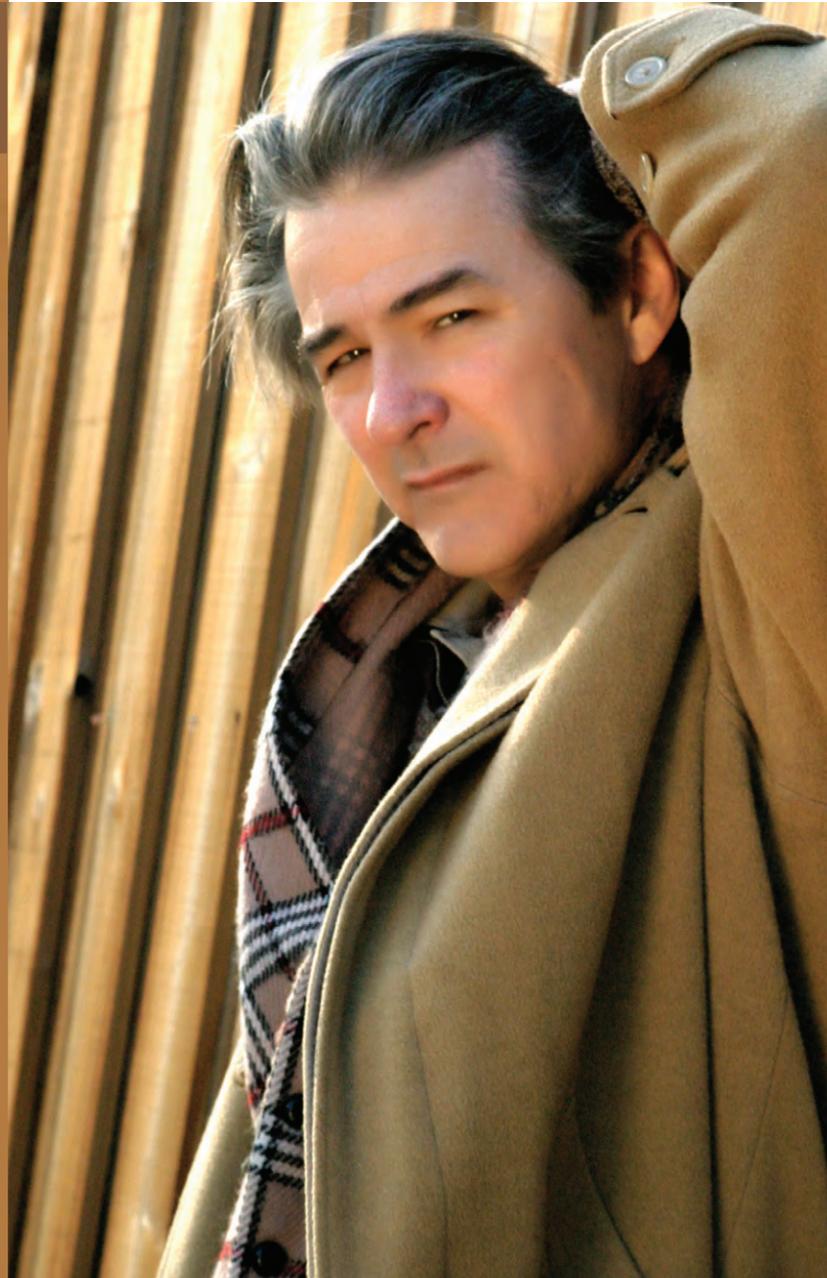
BY MARK UDRY

**G**areth Williams earned his associate degree in 1979 at Palm Beach Junior College when he was known as Gary Francis Williams. While at PBJC, he studied theater with both Watson B. Duncan III and Frank Leahy. He completed an apprenticeship at the Burt Reynolds Institute for Theatre Training in his hometown of Jupiter, studying with Charles Nelson Reilly and Dom Deluise. Williams moved to New York City in 1981 and studied at the famed Herbert Berghof Studio.

Williams is a founding member of Naked Angels Theatre Company, whose members include Tony-, Emmy-, and Academy Award-winning writers, directors and actors. While in New York City he performed in and directed over 50 productions, including “Machinal” at Joseph Papp’s Public Theatre, “Increase,” an opera at LaMama ETC with Lili Taylor and Paul Giamatti, and “The Summer Winds” with Marisa Tomei.

Currently Williams, 53, lives in Los Angeles and has been in over 60 films and television shows, including the Tom Hanks-produced HBO miniseries “From the Earth to the Moon,” “Deadwood,” “The Cell” with Jennifer Lopez and “Hollywoodland” with Adrien Brody. He has appeared in countless guest spots and recurring roles on shows such as “Dawson’s Creek,” “Mad Men,” “The Shield” and “Law & Order.” He continues to work as an actor and director and has recently turned his attention to writing, finishing his first full-length screenplay.

While waiting his turn to audition at a casting call for a television commercial, Williams talked about his career in a telephone interview from Los Angeles.



**Gareth Williams, PBJC class of '79**

Actor | Director | Screenwriter  
Founding member of Naked Angels Theatre Company

### What movie/television series are you working on right now?

“My most recent job was a part on the new ‘Law and Order: Los Angeles’ series. My character is a former L.A. detective, who was the partner of Skeet Ulrich, one of the lead characters on the show. It was a one-episode deal. I had done four separate episodes for the series in New York when I lived there, so I’m sort of on their Rolodex.”

### When did you realize you wanted to be an actor?

“At Palm Beach Junior College – that’s why it took me three years to graduate. I was studying photography, with plans to take pictures of bar mitzvahs and weddings – it was supposed to pay for my surfing [laughs]. I was walking across campus one day and saw this guy building this strange thing out on the lawn. I asked him what he was doing. He said ‘I’m building a set for a play.’ I picked up a hammer, and at the risk of sounding maudlin or sentimental, knew what I was doing with the rest of my life.”

“At the time thought I’d be building sets, drafting blueprints, but I kind of stumbled into acting. [Professor] Frank Leahy would put the technical people in the play, and I was like a pork chop in a bar mitzvah at first – I felt nervous and self-conscious. But after a while, it was like I discovered another continent.”

### What influence did Watson B. Duncan and Frank Leahy have on you as an aspiring actor?

“They taught me everything. My career literally would never have happened without either of them. They instilled in me a strong work ethic, honing the craft of acting, a sense of curiosity – to explore things in different ways. Watson B. Duncan really inspired me, more than anyone else in my entire life. I wound up taking every class he offered. Both men changed my life – I don’t know where I’d be now, but I certainly wouldn’t be working as an actor.”

### Talk about your acting experiences in New York City

“I moved there in 1981 after my apprenticeship at the Burt Reynolds Theatre in Jupiter. One of the other apprentices, Ross Thomas, had been living there for about eight months. He called and told me I didn’t need any money and had a place to stay. I moved up there with \$300 in my pocket. The place we were staying in was with this other PBJC graduate, Gary Glazer. He was living with Alec Baldwin, who was a student at NYU at the time. The two of them had had enough of Ross, so by the time I arrived they tossed us both out in less than three days. So I’m in New York City with \$300 in my pocket and no place to stay. There was also a writers and directors strike at the time, and it effectively dried up all the television and film opportunities in the city. And there the odyssey began.”

“Charles Nelson Reilly told me to study with [actress and teacher] Uta Hagen. The only plan I had was to study with her for as long as I could. I figured it would take me a couple of years to get into [the Herbert Berghof Studio, where Hagen taught acting] because about 1,000 students auditioned for 35 slots in her class, but I got in on the first try. I studied with her for six years. She was the person who helped me hone my craft because she had my nose to the grindstone, always working at it.”

“When I moved to New York I realized I needed a community to belong to, so I wanted to join a theater company. That’s how Naked Angels Theatre Company came about. I walked into the room for the first time and there’s Matt Dillon, Marisa Tomei, Nancy Travis and Gina Gershon. I felt like I was really out of place, but knew it was where I should be. I started out sweeping floors and quickly worked my way into the group. I continue to be a member to this day.”

### Do you have a preference for the stage, acting on television or in the movies?

“It would be either film or theater. Television to me, not to put it down, is something I do for money. But there is some television I’ve done that I consider high art—it doesn’t get any better than ‘Deadwood,’ which was almost like film.”

“With theater you get instant gratification; if it’s going well you can feel it, you can hear it. There’s a relationship you have with the audience. You don’t have that with any other medium. Film brings with it a certain kind of nobility, depending on the project. It’s indelible – millions of people could potentially see ‘Hollywoodland,’ the film I was in with Adrien Brody.”

### Have you ever turned down a role?

“I’ve passed on a few things but my career is not the kind that I have the fortunate position of taking this or passing on that. I usually have to take whatever falls off the truck. Usually if I’m offered something I know it’s been tossed around town quite a bit before it gets to me. I’ve had a few straight offers in my career, which is nice. But having to go in and audition . . . it’s a little tedious.”



### What has been your favorite character that you’ve played?

“I played this idiot cop in ‘Palookaville.’ The movie was this kind of dark, goofball comedy. It was probably the most fun I’ve had on a set. I had this woman run up to me after a screening and said ‘I hated you in this film!’ I apologized, and she said, ‘No, I don’t mean your acting! You were unbelievable, you were great! But your character – I hated him so much!’”

“I’m also very proud of being part of the Tom Hanks-produced series, ‘From the Earth to the Moon,’ where I played the astronaut James Irwin, who was the first astronaut to drive a vehicle on the moon. I actually read with Tom Hanks, which was a little jarring, because he’s such a remarkable actor. But I knew I got the part, because it was one of the few times I worked with a casting director who could also act.”



“Dawson’s Creek”  
Gareth Williams as Mike Potter with Katie Holmes (Joey Potter), and below left with Busy Philipps (Audrey Liddell).

### Are there any actors or directors in particular that you’ve enjoyed working with?

“Alan Taylor, the director of ‘Palookaville,’ a film I was in a few years ago, is one of my favorite directors to work with. Alan Coulter, who directed me in ‘Hollywoodland’ and ‘Law and Order: Los Angeles,’ directed me in theater as well. I love working with both of them. Both of them enjoy the craft of storytelling. They really like actors and understand them – there’s a lot of respect and it’s very collaborative. Both of them are completely exploring your ideas.”

“A lot of times you get on a set, you ask a question of a director and smoke starts coming out of their ears. They’re like, ‘The actor is talking to me, why is the actor talking to me?’ They just want you to hit your mark and say your line; they don’t care what you think.”

### You just finished writing your first screenplay. What’s it about?

“It’s called ‘Next to Paradise.’ It’s about a detective in Venice Beach who is in deep cover and whose life kind of goes to crap. He’s never travelled anywhere and literally takes out a map, throws a dart at it and it lands in Brazil. He goes there, meets a woman, of course, and gets involved in even more trouble. I’ve been working on the screenplay for about three years and I’m pretty happy with the results. It’s going to be a Brazilian-American collaboration.”

### Any advice for aspiring actors?

“I look at my career. I had an admirable, healthy career that rolled along for quite some time. I made a good living for a number of years and then it dropped off a cliff. It was because of type changes. I’m not the young dad anymore, but I’m not really the elder statesman type either. I was travelling all over the world and working all the time, very well respected in the industry, and suddenly the phone stopped ringing. You have to be prepared for that.”

“If I could talk them out of [an acting career] then they shouldn’t be in it to begin with. It’s a brutal business, filled with rejection on a daily basis – there’s heartache after heartache. The interesting dynamic with acting is you’re told you have to develop a thick skin, but it’s not true, because the minute you become inaccessible, particularly to yourself, you’re sunk. You need to remain sensitive, maintain a childlike sense of wonder and curiosity and show vulnerability.”

# Alumni Corner

Palm Beach State College  
College Relations and Marketing  
4200 Congress Avenue  
Lake Worth, FL 33461-4796



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# Alumni Success Stories



**Erik Mintz**

A.A., PBCC, 1988  
B.S., FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY, 1990  
M.E., FAU, 1995

**E**rik Mintz of Delray Beach was a software developer at IBM for 10 years before launching his own software company in 2001. When his firm was acquired by the publicly traded Constant Contact e-mail marketing giant in 2008, Mintz became general manager over a team charged with developing a new event marketing product from the ground up. The company now offers complete event support for small business clients, including setup, promotion, registration, tracking and reporting.

Successfully completing challenging engineering classes at PBCC in the 1980s gave Mintz a solid foundation for advancement in his education and his career choices. "I remember thinking many times that PBCC had prepared me well for the next levels," he said. "I felt confident about the education I received during my time at PBCC."



**Robert A. Rosenblatt**

A.A., PBJC, 1967  
B.S., UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, 1969  
J.D., UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI, 1972

**R**obert Rosenblatt began his legal career as an assistant public defender and later a senior trial attorney, defending high-profile clients charged with serious crimes from murder to terrorism. He founded the Rosenblatt Law Firm based in Miami in 1979. His firm handles personal injury and wrongful death matters as well as a national civil and criminal practice. A member of the Million Dollar Forum, he has obtained several verdicts in excess of that amount for his clients. Rosenblatt also lectures to physicians who are training in the field of forensic medicine.

"While I attended PBJC, I was on the varsity tennis team, I was carrying a high academic load and I was working full time in my father's drug store on the weekends," he recalls. "This taught me valuable time management skills, which I still incorporate in my busy national trial practice."



**Katherine B. Smith**

A.A., PBJC, 1982  
B.S., DeVRY UNIVERSITY, 2010

**W**hen the Bahamas opened its new Consulate Office in Atlanta in 2009, PBJC graduate Katherine B. Smith was appointed the country's first Consul General for the southeastern United States. Her office represents the interests of Bahamian residents in nine southeastern states and actively pursues trade and investment opportunities for the Bahamas. Prior to this appointment, Smith was a senator and parliamentary secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister of the Bahamas.

A native of West End, Grand Bahama, the former Katherine Forbes studied journalism at PBJC and then moved on to positions in public relations, human resources development and hotel operations for several Grand Bahama-based companies. She credits her two years at PBJC as the beginning of her success. "I certainly value that experience as one that has contributed to my educational and professional career to date," she said.